**1. Comparing Research Methods**

For each of the following research methods, define the method and then list two positive and two possible negative aspects of this method. In other words, what strengths and weaknesses does each have?

There are 5 difference methods for research when it comes to psychology. I will explain the definition and both positive and negative aspects of each of the following methods: 1) Case Study, 2) Naturalistic Observation, 3) Correlational Research, 4) Experimental Research and 5) Survey/Interview Research.

The case study method, which is study of one or more individuals, such as a survey, and study of a certain group of people over a specific topic or trials. In my opinion, this method is positive in the aspect that it can obtain a large amount of data quickly, randomly and on a broad range of issues. As outlined in the reading, the negative of this type of method is that it leaves room for inaccuracies when those involved are not either truthful, or maybe misunderstand the questions or manipulate for a different reason. There is also the issue of differences interpreting the information given.

The Naturalistic observations is when conclusions are based by observing behavior rather than relying on lab information. This works best when trying to determine behaviors in humans and animals. This can be positive when you need to observe someone in their own environment and why certain things can trigger behaviors. The text indicated that it lacks control that you would likely see in other methods the other issue can be the observers interpretation or influence in what would otherwise not be in their environment,

In correlation research, the examination of relationships between variables, the most positive aspect is that they can correlate doing one thing with a direct variable of another. The easiest way to understand that is to basically understand simple reasons.”Smoking” is linked to a certain percentage of lung cancer patients. We all know this as fact. Scientifically this is true. However what are the variables ? Second hand smoke, one pack vs three packs a day, gender, race, etc. Are there more of one than the other. This gives us a variable on a numerical basis that is easier to follow. This method helps us to identify “risk” groups and helps understand underlying causes and the relationships between them. This however does not always make a strong case in one variable. For instance, I heard one time that eating too many hot dogs can cause cancer in your children ? Is that because several children with cancer ate hot dogs ? I don’t know many kids that don’t eat hot dogs so that is not enough basis for me to believe that variable to be fact.

In Experimental research, cause and effect is used to determine variables. This is one of the most widely used methods because it helps researchers through experiments determine what will happen. Often in clinical trials such as in the medical field, one set of people are given the “drug” and another set is given the “placebo”. It looks like the drug but isn’t. Then the researchers gather the information from both groups to determine the outcome. I personally really like this method but a lot of people join trials for the free medication to certain products to see if it will help and if they get the placebo, nothing will change. These are controlled experiments that help determine percentages of people that a drug may or may not help. One of the biggest drawbacks is that the group that is taking the placebo or not, maybe able to guess because of side effects or no changes at all.

In Survey/interview research this can be done by posting surveys or taking in person interviews to determine answers to questions. I take a lot of surveys, they are often paid. I don’t mind even if they are not. This is common when determining customer service issues for companies and it can be voluntary and helps them in the long run help consumers. They do all kinds of surveys, a lot are online now. And they can interview you online, phone, email or in person. It is convenient and often less costly than other methods. It can be in the privacy of your own home and you can be completely honest without any interference.

All methods are determined which is best by the results or the event you're wanting to monitor. Some work for some reasons and would not work for others. You would want to find out the best way for what you're looking for before trying several at once. This is the way the world works. Observing, asking, questioning, experimenting. Without all these methods, we would never be as advanced as we are now. It helps researchers do their jobs and cures for things we never even thought possible. I appreciate all methods and participate in as many research methods that I am asked to do. My little way of helping I guess you could say.