

Discussion Three - Correlation and cause & effect

Discussion Topic for Weeks 2 & 3

Describe why correlational research cannot be used to provide support for a cause-and-effect relationship between variables. Identify two (or more) psychological variables that might be related and describe what causes there might be for a relationship that might exist. At least *three* different possible causes for their relationship should be described.

:Instructions

Discussion board *primary posts* should be well written, using college level writing and vocabulary, properly referenced (using both in-text citations and full references at the end of the post) using *scholarly or academic sources*, and should be at least 300 words in length (not counting quoted material or references). There should be at least one reference to an academic or scholarly source to support statements made. References should be in appropriate APA formatting standard (except that hanging indents are not required since Canvas does not do those

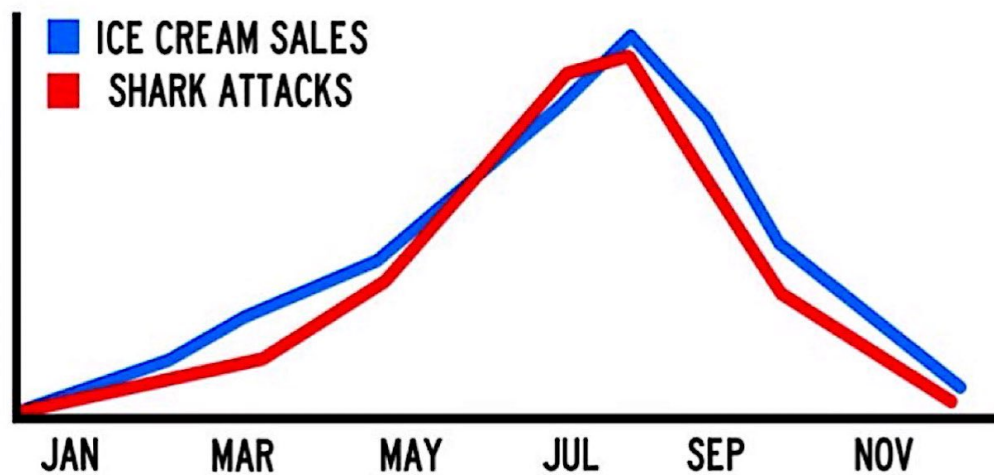
At least two responses to fellow students' posts are also required. Two additional responses can earn two points of extra credit each. Responses to peers should be substantive (discussing the topic, not going off on unrelated tangents or simply being a litany of compliments) and at least 100 words in length (again).

So, the DB asks you to talk about two variables that might have a relationship that could be explored with a correlation. I would recommend that you talk about the behavioral variables you intend to use for your research project. The list, again: self-esteem, optimism, resilience, sleep disturbance, depression, anxiety, and stress

A correlation can show a relationship and that relationship *might* be because one variable influences the other directly... **but** it may be coincidental or caused by some other factor

As an example... did you know that there is a direct relationship between ice cream sales and shark attacks? In periods when more ice cream is sold, there are also more shark attacks! Does ice cream attract sharks? So sharks search for ?people with ice cream in their bellies

CORRELATION IS NOT CAUSATION!



Both ice cream sales and shark attacks increase when the weather is hot and sunny, but they are not caused by each other (they are caused by good weather, with lots of people at the beach, both eating ice cream and having a swim in the sea)

Or is the weather hot and sunny when ice cream sales are higher and when people are more likely to be splashing about in the ocean? So there is a third factor: good weather, hot days; that is the cause of both of these other things' .variation

So, there IS a correlation, a relationship, between sales of ice cream and shark attacks...
.but one does not cause the other

A correlation CAN occur when one variable influences the other... but one cannot be sure!

Discuss your own variables... what outside factors *might* influence one or both of the variables so that they have a relationship but .may not have a cause-and-effect relationship

I hope that helps to clarify any confusion on the .topic