

Christensen, L.B. *Experimental Methodology*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1977, pp. 372.

Reviewed by:

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Experimental Methodology is an excellent introductory text. The presentation does a good job of organizing the basic issues involved in experimental research. Content is somewhat basic but serves as a meaningful introduction to the area of experimental methodology.

Concepts are clearly presented in most instances with good use of explanatory notes and examples. The text overall, chapter, is well organized. The introduction to each chapter links concepts together and establishes a rationale for the content within each chapter. The summaries are also excellent.

At times the clarity of the text is lost through unnecessary repetition, wordiness, and overstatement. In a few instances there is unnecessary expansion into more complex issues to the detriment of the general tone established.

There are a few specific concerns that bear some reflection. In the chapter entitled "The Experimental Approach" (Chapter II) several issues arise. Though the advantages of experimental research are well presented they are procedural in nature. The disadvantages mentioned are more humanistic. I would suggest that the issue of disadvantages has been minimized. In *Counselling and Accountability*, Bruck *et al.*, (1973) suggest this is a much more important and broader issue than has been presented by Christensen.

In a similar vein, a major issue in psychology, the inferring of internal processes from overt behaviors, is superficially alluded to here. The problem is more critical and as such deserves more precision in discussion than is given. So too the stress on peoples' uniformity tends to deny their uniqueness. Research findings suggest that results are often more individual and situation specific, an issue which this section tends to overlook.

There is an implicit message that though there may be disadvantages and problems, the experimental approach is "best." A more useful and valid position would be a detailed look at the question of advantages/disadvantages with specific guidelines as to when viable alternative approaches appear to be more appropriate.

The chapters entitled "Control in Experimentation" (Chapter V) and "Techniques for Achieving Constancy" (Chapter VI) are confusing as both

titles are misleading. The former appears to be more a reflection of possible sources of variance, what *should* be controlled. The latter discusses how control is *achieved*. Given this re-orientation, the chapters are generally well presented with appropriate reference to an excellent standard text by Campbell and Stanley, (*Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research*, 1968).

In summary, *Experimental Methodology* provides a useful introductory review of the basic issues in experimental research. However, prior to commencing any research project reference to more rigorous sources would be necessary.

Cammaert, L.P., & Larsen, C.C. *A Woman's Choice: A Guide to Decision Making*. Champaign, Illinois: Research Press, 1979, 191 pp.

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A Woman's Choice: A Guide to Decision Making is a self-help book written directly to the female reader. This book carries the reader through a number of chapters each of which asks a question about making decisions. From "Where Do I Start?" to "How Do I Put It All Together and Make It Work?" the reader is lead through the process of decision making via structured exercises. The authors' intent is to equip women with a set of decision making skills which will be useful in a variety of situations. The emphasis in this book as evidenced by the exercises and examples is to facilitate future planning for women who are contemplating life changes such as returning to school or work.

Decision making as presented in this book is a useful process for everyone, yet the authors make no apologies for writing specifically for women. The authors appear to understand clearly women's conflicts, doubts, and fears. The authors alert women to the fears they may be experiencing as they engage in the self-assessment process. Thus, for individual self-learning, the book offers support to women venturing into the unfamiliar and oftentimes alarming areas of decision and choice. This is a book for counsellors to recommend to female clients and to read themselves. It will be especially useful for those counsellors who are unfamiliar with the conflicts and special needs of women.