

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.

The authors do as well as can be expected with the written word, but one might expect the reader's motivation to drag sometimes. Effective counsellors facilitate trust and safety in an interpersonal climate which encourages risk taking, exploration, and self-discovery. Since sustained effort at self-exploration is a process which is enhanced by the support and feedback of others, this book ideally should be used in conjunction with individual or group counselling. The authors devote one chapter to assets and liabilities in education and work. How the client has experienced school and job related tasks is often a major focus when employment and retraining decisions are to be made. Sharing with a counsellor facilitates memory and focus on self-exploration.

The book maximizes exploration through written exercises but what about the integration that counselling promotes? In addition to the emotional arousal and distress which usually accompanies important decisions, decision making may involve evaluation and redecision following the implementation of a plan. Here, too, a counsellor may be helpful.

Another argument for using the book in conjunction with counselling concerns the examples used in the book. The examples are inspiring, but what about the woman who encounters lack of support and anger from her family? Surely the support and skill of a trained professional would enhance the book for a woman encountering difficulty or lack of support in making choices. Counsellors sensitive to the special needs of women understand that many women who have found their self-definition in home and family may be fearful of their ability to enlarge their sphere of influence outside the home. Some women may find the paper and pencil exercises difficult to do on their own and their experience of failing to learn and utilize decision making skills might prove detrimental to self-esteem and future hopes without the support of others. Experience with consciousness-raising suggests the value of a group in promoting readiness to change. The chapter on assertiveness might be particularly enhanced through group counselling, modeling, behavior rehearsal with feedback, and support.

Changes in how one uses time, particularly changes in household routines, may involve feelings about one's sense of self and femaleness. Chapter Six entitled "What Do I Consider in Changing" is excellent. Here the reader is helped to understand how husbands, children, and friends may respond to changes in addition to how the individual woman may feel during change. The chapter discusses questions of self-worth, confidence, time management, finances, personal satisfaction, ideas and feelings about wife and mother roles.

In exploring plans for the future, the authors cover many alternatives including taking courses; accepting part-time, low paying work; and acquiring a full-time career. The advantages and disadvantages of several life styles are discussed including a fair and full coverage of voluntarism, homemaking, and part and full-time employment. While the authors acknowledge the economic realities of divorce and widowhood, they appear to value all options available to women including the homemaker role. Also, they recognize the dead end trap of a low paying job and present alternatives as steps to independence not as goals in themselves.

The authors use many examples of women who have gone through the decision making process while the example of one woman's experience is used throughout and given in detail. The illustrations show women in a number of lifestyles including home and family. Women are depicted in clear visual images of strength and variety. The impact is one of the vitality and promise of women. At the end of every chapter an annotated list of books is given for suggested further reading. Overall, the book accomplishes its goal of providing decision making skills in an interesting way and contributes to the image of strong women as active problem solvers capable of personal and social change.

Taylor, E.S. *On the Job*. (Now is Tomorrow Series). Agincourt, Ontario.: The Book Society of Canada Ltd., 1979.

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There are two main questions which I want to deal with in this review. The first is: "Is *On the Job* a good book?" and the second is: "Should school counsellors run out and buy it?" The answer to the first question is an unequivocal "Yes!" The answer to the second question is a slightly more cautious "Yes, but . . ."

*On the Job* is a thoroughly attractive and useful student textbook which focuses on the question: "What do people need to know as they enter the labour market?" In a momentary and uncharacteristic lapse the first line of Chapter 1 says, "This book is about work.", but this is not really true. It is about *jobs*, as the title itself indicates. This distinction is worth making, for counsellors especially, since work is a much broader and more encompassing term and *On the*