

20.7: Animal Research

Learning Objectives

- Gender difference in attitudes toward the use of animals in research



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Overview

The use of animals in research is a controversial and emotionally charged issue. Personal feelings regarding the use of animals in research vary widely. While many believe that the use of animals in research has been and continues to be essential, others want the practice stopped by cutting off funding or the passing of legislative restrictions. Research on human attitudes toward the use of animals in research has consistently shown systematic differences of opinion with gender differences among the largest.

In this study, a convenience sample of 34 University of Houston - Downtown students completed a simple survey that asked their gender and how much they agreed with the following two statements: "The use of animals in research is wrong," and "The use of animals in research is necessary". They rated their agreement with each of these statements on a 7-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

Questions to Answer

Is there a gender difference with respect to the belief that animal research is wrong? Is there a gender difference with respect to the belief that animal research is necessary?

Design Issues

This is self-report data. It is possible that the willingness to admit to thinking animal research is wrong or necessary is what differs by gender, not how the participants actually feel.

Descriptions of Variables

Table 20.7.1: Description of Variables

Variable	Description
Gender	1 = female, 2 = male
Wrong	high scores indicate that the participant believes that animal research is wrong
Necessary	high scores indicate that the participant believes that animal research is necessary

Data Files

Animals.xls

Links

American Association for the Advancement of Science

References

- Eldridge, J.J. & Gluck, J.P. (1996) Gender differences in attitudes toward animal research. *Ethics & Behavior*, 6(3), 239-256.
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- Wuensch, K. L. & Poteat, G.M. (1998). Evaluating the morality of animal research: Effects of ethical ideology, gender, and purpose. *Journal of Social Behavior & Personality*, 13(1), 139-151.

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