Theory Lab: Hypotheses and Variables

Instructions

Preferably in groups, rewrite each statement as a *testable hypothesis*, with clearly identified dependent and independent *variables* and, for the last three, the control variable. (You can put DV, IV, and/or CV in parentheses after each.)

Do **not** just write what I've given, nor lightly paraphrase verbs. Copying or paraphrasing wouldn't be much of a college assignment, nor any sort of accomplishment. Instead, deduce clearly testable statements from these vague claims. The task is to *convert* these vague ideas to clear *variables,* the observable ways that a vaguer idea could be measured.

For example, if I gave you "Catholics tend to be Democrats," your might answer "Those who attended mass last Sunday (IV) are more likely to say they voted for Harris than Trump (DV)." That doesn't use the words "Catholic" or "Democrat," which are vague, general, & conceptual; instead, it predicts a specific pattern among values of measurable variables.

This may seem like a dumb struggle, but is precisely the challenge in any research project, and a critical early step in any statistical or methodological work: Before you can study something, you have to figure out what it is and how to measure it.

Secretary (5 pts extra if 3+):   _____

Other group members: _____

_____

Statements

1. Highly educated people tend to be politically liberal.

2. Decriminalization of marijuana can reduce negative consequences of alcohol use.

3. An invasion of illegal immigrants is making American cities unsafe.

4. Social media use can have negative psychological consequences, especially for teen girls.

5. There is a relationship between marital status and happiness among the elderly but not for younger couples.

6. Frequent dating lowers the grades of males but not of females.