

ABSTRACT

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SUBJECT POOL PARTICIPATION: COERCION, UNDUE INFLUENCE, AND EDUCATIONAL VALUE

The present study assessed students' perceptions of their participation in a university subject pool. Participants in this study were 199 students (74 men; 125 women) enrolled in Introductory Psychology courses during Spring 2009 semester at California State University, Fresno. Participants completed a 22-item questionnaire to assess perceptions of coercion in the conditions of participation, the undue influence of incentives (i.e., extra credit and money), and the educational value of participation. Reliability statistics revealed moderate to poor internal consistency between the items included in each subscale. No analyses were conducted on the money subscale ($\alpha=.16$). One-sample *t* tests were conducted for the remaining three subscales. Students did not perceive the conditions of their participation as coercion. Student perceptions of extra credit indicated that students did not perceive extra credit incentives for research participation as inappropriate. Also, students perceived past research participation as educationally valuable. The implication of this research is that administrating university subject pools according to ethical guidelines reduces the potential to coerce. Including a research component in Introductory Psychology courses may be educationally valuable.

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