

Glossary

Attrition. Occurs where data from study participants is missing because a participant does not respond or drops out.

Control group. The group that does not receive the treatment or intervention being studied.

Effect size. A value that measures the strength of the relationship between two variables in a population or a sample-based estimate of that quantity. The reporting of effect sizes facilitates the interpretation of the magnitude of impact.

Grey literature. Research produced outside of traditional commercial or academic publishing.

Heterogeneity. The degree of variability of data between studies.

Loneliness. A subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship. It happens when we have a mismatch between the quantity and quality of social relationships that we have, and those that we want.

Meta-analysis. A statistical technique used to combine the results of two or more studies.

PICO. A tool used that helps researchers develop a search strategy by identifying the criteria for four key elements that each study must meet in order to be included: Population, Intervention, Comparator and Outcomes.

Propensity Score Matching (PSM). A statistical technique that enables evaluators to construct a counterfactual group to estimate the impact of an intervention.

Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT). A research design involving a robust comparison between one or more groups receiving an intervention (treatment group) and a group that does not receive the same intervention (control group) through randomly assigning participants to each group.

Randomisation. The process by which participants in a trial are assigned by chance to separate groups that are given different treatments.

Statistical Significance. A measure of the probability that the relationship between two or more variables is caused by something other than chance.

Theory-based design. A research design that is used to explore causal chains thought to bring about change by an intervention.

Wait-list control design. A research design whereby a group of participants receives the same intervention or treatment as those in the treatment group but at a later time.