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WEAKNESSES OF RESEARCH METHODS IN EXPERIENTIAL AND SIMULATION STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

Al Edge: Research Methodology in Business Gaming: A
critical Review

Simulation implies that a realistic model is devised which can be used to test reality. The business simulation (or game), while simple in comparison to an actual firm, appears to provide a complex task suitable for experimental use in the study of variables related to management research. However, review of the literature indicates that much of the research in this area is still in a primitive stage of development. These studies are characterized by limited methodology, general observation by the game administrator, and opinion surveys of participants.

Some studies have attempted to develop a wider range of experimental conditions and better controls over variables. Some examples include the use of fixed decision rules, individual vs. group type of feedback, group structure, speed of decisions, etc. These studies are at least beginning to identify constraints and the influence of variables and hopefully will lead to creative application of design methodology to the questions being investigated.

John Slocum: Methodological Issues in Management
Education

The amount of rhetoric concerning evaluation methodology including information on criterion development, evaluation designs, and problems of performing evaluation in management education has exploded. Efforts at evaluation appear to be evolving through a series of stages. In the most primitive stage, appropriate methodology is ignored and decisions are based upon anecdotal reactions. In the next stage, which is just as unproductive in providing information, the research strategy is dependent upon strict adherence to the basic experimental methodologies used in psychological laboratories. This stage is characterized by designs that do not recognize the constraints imposed by the environment or the influence of the multitude of organizational variables. The third stage is when methodologies are matched to the constraints of the environment. It is characterized by careful consideration of threats to validity, and the creative application of design methodology to the questions being investigated. This session will focus on criterion problems associated with this third stage.