



# On Being a Leader Scholar: Embracing the Dependent Variable

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# Examining Variables



**Variables** are any characteristics that can take on different values, such as height, age, species, or exam score.



The **independent variable** is the **cause**. Its value is *independent* of other variables in your study.



The **dependent variable** is the **effect**. Its value *depends* on changes in the independent variable.

# Scholar Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Defining	Defining problems and clarifying needs
Using	Using appropriate methods to design and manage research projects
Applying	Applying a range of research techniques to gather relevant information
Developing	Developing frameworks and identify and test theories
Gathering	Gathering relevant information
Evaluating	Evaluating past research using electronic databases
Analyzing and interpreting	Analyzing and interpreting data
Presenting	Presenting research results in various forms

# Scholars in a VUCA World

01

Examining  
Emerging  
Needs

02

Examining  
Wicked  
Problems

03

Examining  
Best Practices

04

Experimenting  
Based on Good  
Theory

# “The Tender Trap”

## Love for the Independent Variable(s)

Unyielding attachment to passion initiatives can lead to a host of biases in the planning, data collection, analysis, and publication phases of research.

Being naïve to results while treating what people think and feel (learning, satisfaction, self efficacy) as dependent variables



## Independent variables often make poor surrogates for dependent variables


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- **Implementation of a program:** May be necessary to reject a program intervention: Value may exceed the cost of the initiative.
- **Learning:** Learning without the proper application of knowledge, skills, and abilities in a given context can be a waste of time
- **Psychological measures:** Sometimes “dissatisfaction” or some types of “stress” are appropriate

# Embracing Sound Theory

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Embracing  
Sound  
Practice by  
Embracing the  
Dependent  
Variable





Remember: You are not alone! Engage with the DSA and Faculty to:

- Grapple with needs – Seek to understand the performance issue (need) with leaders, managers, and practitioners
- Grapple with theories – Seek to understand the relationship between knowing/learning, the process variables, and the performance outcomes
- Grapple with the research design process: Seek to employ the appropriate research methodology

# Fundamental Belief



Experience **without theory** is blind, but **theory without** experience is mere intellectual play. Immanuel Kant



Theory without practice is empty, practice without theory is blind. Kant?



Enjoy the Conference!

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