Pilot Study in Physical Therapy

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The Pilot Study

Pilot Study

- A pilot study is a preliminary small-scale study that researchers conduct in order to help them decide how best to conduct a large-scale research project.
- A pilot study is a small feasibility study designed to test various aspects of the methods planned for a larger, more rigorous, or confirmatory investigation.
- Pilot study is the study to be conducted before the large study to be conducted, to check feasibility of study, like methods, plan, fund, unplanned problems while conducting the study.

Objectives of Pilot Study

- Identify potential confounding variables
- Researchers may use pilot studies to refine training strategies for research
- Is to evaluate the adequacy of their planned methods
- To guide final execution of large scale research
- To test instruments, tools or questionnaire
- Its kind of rehearsal to your final project
- S to evaluate the adequacy of their planned method
- To save time, frustration, and resources
- It is an essential component of good research
- Pilot studies play a vital role in health research

How to conduct pilot study

Sample Size

Existing methods for sample size calculations typically focus on how to select an appropriate sample size for a pilot study such that various parameters of interest can be estimated with sufficient precision (e.g., the effect size, the standard deviation of the outcome measure, its reliability, or adherence or attrition rates). Such calculations may also play an important role in deciding whether to proceed with the primary trial in the first place. These considerations have led to various guidelines for choosing an appropriate sample size for a pilot study, such as 12 participants per group, values in the range of 10 to 40 participants per group depending on the parameter of interest, at least 9% of the main trial's sample size, or at least 50 participants.

Design

For implementation feasibility or pilot studies, as is the case for these types of studies in general, the selection of research design should be guided by the specific research question that the study is seeking to address Although almost any study design may be used, researchers should review the merits and potential threats to internal and external validity to help guide the selection of research design for feasibility/pilot testing

Measures

The selection of outcome measures should be linked directly to the objectives of the feasibility or pilot study. Where appropriate, measures should be objective or have suitable psychometric properties, such as evidence of reliability and validity.