What is REDCap?[1]

REDCap is mainly a tool for data collection. Two most common ways of data collection with REDCap is **surveys** (when invited respondents enter the data) and **databases** (when researcher enter the data). The latter one is common in experimental studies, phone interviews, and paper-based survey studies.

Types of REDCap projects

Traditional project. The traditional or classic project meets the needs of a wide range of data collection strategies. This is the simplest type of project, yet it can collect hundreds or even thousands of data points. Using multiple data collection instruments is common. All data entry happens within the project, while users are logged in. For this reason, the instruments may also be called data entry forms. Examples of traditional projects include entering experimental data, data extraction for systematic reviews and meta-analyses, phone or paper surveys. This type of project can also be used to store project management data, such as contact information of research assistants, their timesheets, etc.

Single survey project. A REDCap survey is a data collection instrument created in REDCap and then made publicly available. It is built using the same methods as traditional REDCap data entry forms. But in the survey project type, a public instrument link is then distributed to other people, allowing them to submit data directly to your project. REDCap can assist you in sending out the survey link and tracking responses. Respondents go to the secure webpage and submit their data to you from anywhere at any time. There is no login required, so all that a respondent needs is a device having internet access. Project users can login to REDCap to access their respondents' data.

Longitudinal project. The longitudinal projects are designed to capture the same variables multiple times over a specific period of time.

Longitudinal project with scheduling. A longitudinal project with scheduling is one of the most complex project types in REDCap. It allows for repeated use of data collection instruments, and it automatically populates the calendar with record-specific events. Calendar events can then be used to enter data.

Operations project. REDCap is suitable for collecting administrative and educational data, workflow and quality improvement, and registries and book keeping. Any category of data can be stored in any project type.

Types of data in REDCap

REDCap allows for the following types of data

- *Text* – single-line text box (for text and numbers)
- *Notes* – large text box for lots of text
- *Dropdown* – dropdown menu with options
- *Radio* – radio buttons with options
- *Checkbox* – checkboxes to allow selection of more than one option
- *File* – upload a document
- *Calc* – perform real-time calculations
- *SQL* – select query statement to populate dropdown choices
- *Descriptive* – text displayed with no data entry and optional image/file attachment
- *Slider* – visual analogue scale; coded as 0-100
- *Yesno* – radio button with yes and no options; coded as 1, Yes|0, No
- *Truefalse* – radio buttons with true and false options; coded as 1, True|0,False

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