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# Psychological assessment example report

Writing up Psychological InvestigationsThrough using this website, you have learned about, referred to, and evaluated research studies. These research studies are generally presented to the scientific community as a journal article. Most journal articles follow a standard format. This is similar to the way you may have written up experiments in other sciences.In research report there are usually six sub-sections:(1) Abstract: This is always written last because it is a very brief summary:Include a one sentence summary, giving the topic to be studied. This may include the hypothesis and some brief theoretical background research, for example the name of the researchers whose work you have replicated.Describe the participants, number used and how they were selected.Describe the method and design used and any questionnaires etc. you employed.State your major findings, which should include a mention of the statistics used the observed and critical values and whether or not your results were found to be significant, including the level of significanceBriefly summarise what your study shows, the conclusion of your findings and any implications it may have. State whether the experimental or null hypothesis has been accepted/rejected.This should be around 150 words.(2) Introduction:This tells everyone why the study is being carried out and the commentary should form a 'funnel' of information. First, there is broad coverage of all the background research with appropriate evaluative comments: "Asch (1951) found...but Crutchfield (1955) showed..." Once the general research has been covered, the focus becomes much narrower finishing with the main researcher/research area you are hoping to support/refute. This then leads to the aims and hypothesis/hypotheses (i.e. experimental and null hypotheses) being stated.(3) Method:Method - this section is split into sub-sections:(1) Design:What is the experimental method that has been used?Why?Experimental Design type independent groups, repeated measures, matched pairs? Justify?What is the IV, DV? These should be operationalised.Any potential EVs?How will these EVs be overcome?Ethical issues? Strategies to overcome these ethical issues(2) Participants:Who is the target population? Age/socio-economic status, gender, etc.What sampling technique has been used? Why?Details of participants that have been used? Do they have certain characteristicsHow have participants been allocated to conditions(3) Materials:Description of all equipment used and how to use it (essential for replication)Stimulus materials for participants should be in the appendix(4) Procedure:This is a step-by-step guide of how the study was carried out when, where, howInstructions to participants must be standardised to allow replicationLengthy sets of instructions and instructions to participants should be in the appendix(4) Results:This section contains:A summary of the data. All raw data and calculations are put in the appendix.This generally starts with a section of descriptive statistics measures of central tendency and dispersion.Summary tables, which should be clearly labelled and referred to in the text, e.g., "Table One shows that..." Graphical representations of the data must also be clear and properly labelled and referred to in the text, e.g., "It can be seen from Figure 1 that..."Once the summary statistics have been explained, there should be an analysis of the results of any inferential tests, including observed values, how these relate to the critical table value, significance level and whether the test was one- or two-tailed.This section finishes with the rejection or acceptance of the null hypothesis.(5) Discussion:This sounds like a repeat of the results section, but here you need to state what you've found in terms of psychology rather than in statistical terms, in particular relate your findings to your hypotheses. Mention the strength of your findings, for example were they significant and at what level. If your hypothesis was one tailed and your results have gone in the opposite direction this needs to be indicated. If you have any additional findings to report, other than those relating to the hypotheses then they too can be included.All studies have flaws, so anything that went wrong or the limitations of the study are discussed together with suggestions for how it could be improved if it were to be repeated. Suggestions for alternative studies and future research are also explored. The discussion ends with a paragraph summing up what was found and assessing the implications of the study and any conclusions that can be drawn from it.(6) Referencing (Harvard Referencing):References should contain details of all the research covered in a psychological report. It is not sufficient to simply list the books used.What you should do:Look through your report and include a reference every researcher mentioned. A reference should include; the name of the researcher, the date the research was published, the title of the book/journal, where the book was published (or what journal the article was published in), the edition number of the book/volume of the journal article, the page numbers used.Example: Pavlov, A., Madigan, S.A. (1970). Noun imagery and frequency in paired-associate and free learning recall. Canadian Journal of Psychology. 24, pp353-361.Other Rules Make sure that the references are placed in alphabetical order.Exam Tip: In the exam, the types of questions you could expect relating to report writing include; defining what information you would find in each section of the report, in addition, on the old specification, questions linked to report writing have included; writing up a method section, results section and designing a piece of research.In addition, in the exam, you may get asked to write; a consent form, debriefing sheet or a set of standardised instructions.Writing a Consent Form for a Psychological Report Remember the mnemonic TAPCHIPSYour consent form should include the following:(1) Title of the Project;(2) Aim of the study?(3) Procedure - What will I be asked to do if I take part?You should give a brief description of what the participants will have to do if they decide to consent to take part in the study (i.e. complete a 15-minute memory test etc ) (4) Will your data be kept Confidential?Explain how you will make sure that all personal details will be kept confidential.(5) Do I Have to take part?Explain to the participant that they don't have to take part in the study, explain about their right to withdraw.(6) Information? Where can I obtain further information if I need it?Provide the participant with the contact details of the key researchers carrying out the study.(7) Participant responses to the following questions:Have you received enough information about the study? YES/NODo you consent for your data to be used in this study and retained for use in other studies? YES/NODo you understand that you do not need to take part in the study and that you can; withdraw your participation at any time without reason or detriment? YES/NO(8) Signature from the participant and the researcher: will need to be acquired at the bottom of the consent form.Writing a set of Standardised Instructions for a Psychological InvestigationWhen writing a set of standardised instructions, it is essential that you include:1. Enough information to allow for replication of the study2. You must write the instructions so that they can simply be read out by the researcher to the participants.3. You should welcome the participants to the study.4. Thank the participants for giving their consent to take part.5. Explain to the participants what will happen in the study, what they will be expected to do (step by step), how long the task/specific parts of the task will take to complete.6. Remind participants that they have the right to withdraw throughout the study.7. Ask that participants at the end if they have any questions.8. Check that the participants are still happy to proceed with the study.Writing a Debriefing Form for a Psychological ReportThis is the form that you should complete with your participants at the end of the study to ensure that they are happy with the way the study has been conducted, to explain to them the true nature of the study, to confirm consent and to give them the researcher's contact details in case they want to ask any further questions.Thank the participants for taking part in the study.Outline the true aims of the research (what were the participants expected to do? What happened in each of the different conditions?)Explain what you were looking to find.Explain how the data will be used now and in the future.Remind the participants that they have the right to withdraw now and after the study.Thank participants once again for taking part.Remind the participant of the researcher(s) contact details.Designing ResearchOne of the questions that you may get asked in the exam is to design a piece of research. The best way to go about this is to include similar information to what you would when writing up the methodsection of a psychological report.Things to Consider...(1) Design:What is the experimental method/non-experimental method will you use? (Lab, field, natural experiment? Questionnaire (open/closed questions?), Interviews (structured, unstructured, semi-structured?), Observation).Why? (does this method allow a great deal of control? Is it in a natural setting and would show behaviour reflective of real life? Would it allow participants to remain anonymous and therefore, they are more likely to tell the truth/act in a realistic way? Does the method avoid demand characteristics?) Experimental Design type ( independent groups, repeated measures, matched pairs? Justify you choice?)What is the IV, DV? These should be operationalised (how are you going to measure these variables?)Any potential EVs? (Participant variables, experimenter effects, demand characteristics, situational variables?)How will these EVs be overcome? (Are you going to out some control mechanisms in place? Are you going to use standardised instructions? Double or single blind? Will the experimental design that you are using help to overcome EVs?)Ethical issues? (What are the potential ethical issues and what strategies are you going to use to overcome these ethical issues?) (2) Participants:Who is the target population? Age/socio-economic status, gender, etc.What sampling technique has been used? Why?Details of participants that have been used? Do they have certain characteristicsHow have participants been allocated to conditions (have you used random allocation? Why have you adopted this technique?) (3) Materials:Description of all equipment used and how to use it (essential for replication) (4) Procedure:This is a step-by-step guide of how the study was carried out - from beginning to end, how are you going to carry out the study.



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