

Social Sciences Research Assignment

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this assignment is to practice the skills associated with creating and analyzing research within the social sciences. Some aspects of the following assignment are done as a group, and others are individual. The bulk of the marks will be allocated to your individual contributions. Please consult the rubric on the class website for how you will be marked.

TASK:

You will collect and analyze data related to teenage behaviour. You will EITHER **design a survey** (to be filled in digitally by Mackenzie students) OR **conduct a fieldwork observation** in a location of your choice. Once you have collected your information, you will analyze your findings and draw conclusions about some aspect of teenage behaviour.

STEP 1: RESEARCH PROPOSAL (GROUP):

1. Complete the Proposal by filling out the document as a group.
2. When your group is satisfied with your proposal, submit and wait for feedback from your teacher before moving on to the next steps.

STEP 2: DESIGN YOUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (GROUP):

OPTION A - SURVEY

1. Brainstorm subtopics as they relate to your overall topic. Decide which group members will create questions for each subtopic.
2. The group should create and share a single Google doc to create their survey questions. Each person in the group should create 5 questions regarding your subtopic chosen above for a total of 15 – 20 (depending on the number of people in your group). Keep in mind that the results of your survey questions should help you answer your research question. Therefore, you should design your questions with this in mind. Do not waste questions on who you will give it to (eg. Are you male or female?). Make sure all questions also have answering options provided.
3. When all members have finished writing their questions, the group should peer edit the survey to make sure all the important questions are asked and that there is no overlap between individuals in the group. If there are any other issues, fix them at this time. Also consider the order of the questions.

OPTION B - FIELDWORK OBSERVATION

1. Brainstorm subtopics as they relate to your overall topic. What specific behaviours are you looking for? Decide on how you will record these behaviours (both qualitative and quantitative measures).
2. The group should create and share a single Google doc to create their 'Fieldwork Notetaking Sheet' where you will record all of your observations. Make sure that you have a consistent way of measuring the behaviours you are observing (eg. checklist, scale from 1-5, stop watch, etc.). Keep in mind that the results of your observations should help you answer your research question. Therefore, you should design your 'Fieldwork Notetaking Sheet' with this in mind. Make sure all observations are measurable and that each group member agrees on how they will be used.
3. Peer edit the 'Notetaking Sheet' in your group to make sure all the important information is gathered. If there are any other issues, fix them at this time. Also consider where/when each group member will conduct their fieldwork observation.

STEP 3: CONDUCT YOUR RESEARCH:

(to be completed only after teacher approval of methodology)

OPTION A - SURVEY

Send out the surveys!

The teacher will assist you with this once your proposal and research methodology have been approved.

OPTION B - FIELDWORK OBSERVATION

Choose a location at school. For one hour, observe the various events, conversations, and interactions that take place. Using your 'Fieldwork Notetaking Sheet', write at least one page of observation notes, jotting down what you see, hear, etc. Be as detailed and focused as possible.

Do not do this until your proposal and research methodology have been approved by the teacher

STEP 4: ANALYZE THE RESULTS (INDIVIDUAL):

After all your surveys/observations have been completed, follow these steps:

1. As a group, examine the statistics for each question/behaviour being recorded so that it can be quantitatively analyzed. You will be given class time to discuss this.
2. In preparation for the individual written analysis, brainstorm what major results about your topic have come from your survey. What are the “main findings”? Consider looking at the results as a whole to do this. Brainstorm as many as you can and choose three main ideas.
3. Individually, write the analysis of your research results (2 pages, double spaced). When analyzing the results, consider the following structure:
 - Begin with a writing plan:
 - For each “main finding”, choose the individual survey questions/results that most directly support that main idea. Now you are ready to write your analysis.
 - Use PPE format to help you
 - “What is your **point** about teenage behaviour?”
 - “What statistics **prove** it?”
 - “**Explain** how your statistics relate to your point about teenage behaviour?”

Final Product:

- First short ‘introduction’ paragraph:
 - Include your topic, research question and hypothesis and who you surveyed/observed (all grades, males vs. females, times and locations, etc.).
 - State whether you proved or disproved your hypothesis
- Next 3 paragraphs (1 ‘main finding’ each):
 - What does your research tell you about the answer to your research question and about human behaviour? This is a statement and explanation of what the ‘main finding’ is.
 - The survey questions and statistics (percentages) that prove that your ‘idea’ is correct. You can use as many survey questions/observations as you want as your evidence.
- Final ‘reflection’ paragraph:
 - What did you learn from doing this assignment? Consider writing about:
 - the challenges of writing good questions and providing options
 - the challenges of designing fieldwork observations
 - how reliable your results are
 - anything that may have gotten in the way of achieving reliable results