

HSP3M – Social Scientist Research Process

Step 1 - IDENTIFY A RESEARCHABLE PROBLEM,

a need for information. It is important the topic be researchable and that it should be within your resources and capabilities. The topic should not be too broad and should not have too many variables. The topic should stimulate your interest or curiosity or arouse doubts.

Step 2 - REVIEW or SURVEY PREVIOUS RESEARCH and writings relevant to the possible research topic.

- a) to see whether adequate answers have already been found to the questions the researcher has in mind
- b) to gain a better understanding of the nature of the problem
- c) to gain insights regarding approaches that might be used to efficiently attain the outcomes desired.

This research is done using scholarly materials / journals.

Step 3 - FORMULATE YOUR RESEARCH QUESTION.

Identify specifically the nature of the information desired to formulate the specific research problem. The problem should be stated fully and precisely in objective terminology in a complete grammatical sentence. It should be written so that others can understand it without the prompting of the researcher.

Step 4 - HYPOTHESIS Determine the kinds of information needed to permit sound conclusions about the issue (or issues) in question. In this step the previously stated problem and related subproblems are now viewed through questions or logical constructs - called **hypotheses**. Your hypothesis steers the researcher in some direction to gather facts that will provide the most valid answers.

Step 5 - DETERMINING RESEARCH METHOD Consider the target group to be used and the most appropriate means to gather your data, how it's to be collected, by who, and deadline. The researcher determines the most appropriate and efficient instruments for gathering data, considering validity, ethics etc...

Step 6 - COLLECTION OF DATA

Researchers must take care to ensure that the procedures for implementing the study will acquire the appropriate data. It's important that sufficient and appropriate subjects participate to constitute a valid sample.

Step 7 - ORGANIZE AND ANALYZE DATA

The method of data analysis should be determined before collecting the data to ensure that the suggested treatment is appropriate to the data collected and the manner in which it is organized.

OUR RESEARCHABLE PROBLEM

Part time jobs and academic performance

Previous Research - VISIT

<http://www.lemieuxhsp3m.wikispaces.com>

Click on Unit 1 Introduction

Scroll down to get your Research Articles already chosen for you

COMPUTER LAB DATES

OUR QUESTION

Does having a part-time job affect academic performance?

YOUR HYPOTHESIS

Your educated GUESS BASED ON THE LITERATURE READ

YOUR METHOD - Survey **DRAFT DUE DATE:**

February 25, 2011

DATA COLLECTION

Feb. 28 - Mar. 4

IN CLASS DATA ANALYSIS

March 4

SURVEY GUIDELINES / EXPECTATIONS

1. Identify 15 questions you would need a person to answer to prove or disprove the hypothesis (see page 175-6 of your text).
2. Create three “distracter questions” to obscure the true purpose of your survey (see page 176 of your text).
3. It is very important that every person who answers your survey be able to respond to one of the options.
4. Administer the survey to 15 St. Peter’s students. It is strongly recommended that you show me a rough copy of your survey before you distribute it to your peers.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

1. Organize the results into categories or groups that make the data useful and relevant (see page 207 of your text)
2. Calculate a single average set of results for your group (see page 207-08 of your text)
3. Present your results in chart form. It is recommended that the charts be created on a computer, but neatly hand drawn charts are acceptable.

PRESENTATION OF DATA - RESEARCH REPORT

A research report is a technical paper that presents your research in the social sciences. For your research report use the following format:

Title - In the title identify the main idea of your paper and include the variables.

Abstract (5 marks) - In the abstract, write a concise summary of the topic that you investigated. Include the research, the methods, the results, and the meaning of the results. Length: 200-250 words

Introduction (20 marks) - In the introduction, state the importance of the topic you researched. Relate the topic you researched to recent articles, studies and literature on the subject. Be specific about the issues surrounding the topic. Note: you must find at least 3 separate pieces of literature on the subject researched. A Level 4 paper will discuss the findings of an academic journal on the topic being researched.

Methods (10 marks) - In the method, describe the hypothesis and the specific research method you used to test the hypothesis.

- **Sample Group** In this section, describe the parameters you used to select the participants for the study and how you selected a representative sample.
- **Instruments** In this section, describe the survey, questionnaire, interview or observation schedule, or experiment used in your investigation.
- **Procedure** In this section, outline, step by step, how you conducted the research. Describe what you said and did in precise action terms.

Results (15 marks) - In the results, state your main findings, supported by detailed descriptions of the evidence and including case studies or statistical analysis.

The results for each of your important questions used in your survey, not the distracter questions, should be included. For each question - the question should be stated

- the results should be displayed in a table
- graph (by using the best method of representation) should be used to display the information.

Survey (10 marks)

Discussion (15 marks) - This is the section where you interpret the results to your questions. Explain why or why not the results of your survey questions supported your hypothesis. Comment in this section on the intervening variables and other possible problems such as the effectiveness of the distracter questions etc.

In the discussion, summarize the results of your research, explain how the results relate to the review of literature and outline the implications of the results.

Conclusion (5 marks) Summarize your report by stating how/how not your results proved/disproved your hypothesis.

References (5 marks) In a research paper, include citations to tell the reader where you found the information. Use in-text citations (Csinos, 2005) to refer your reader to the bibliography at the end of the paper that acknowledge all of your sources. Use the American Psychological Association (APA) style in the social sciences.

An excellent resource for APA Reference Style is the following website:

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/library/info1010/apa.html>