

Research Activity #3: Developing and Honing Research Questions and Their Hypotheses & Researching Relevant Empirical Literature Using PsycINFO

REVISED Due Date: Tuesday, 2/25/2020 – To be submitted in class

- Three completed tables
- PsycINFO abstracts & 1st page of corresponding articles

Goals

- To construct empirical questions that effectively focus and guide sound investigations
- To identify aspects relevant to published, ongoing, and potential studies
- To learn how to research for and obtain empirical studies published in **peer-review journals** from the electronic database PsycINFO

This research activity consists of two parts that inform one another. **Part I** entails reporting on or developing outlines that distinguish research questions, hypotheses, and methodologies for three research scenarios. **Part II** requires searching for empirical literature relevant to each of the three research scenarios.

Read this entire assignment first to become familiar with the requirements, including use of blank table templates and PsycINFO instructional guidelines.

Essential Aspects of Research Questions: Investigating phenomena requires identifying the focus of the inquiry. Oftentimes, the main motivating questions that initially emerge are broad in nature, making reference to an area of study in vague terms.

These broader questions then undergo revision and honing to become specific empirical questions that identify precisely what observable “occurrence” or “event” will be examined and how it will be measured or assessed. Familiarity with existing theoretical and empirical work relevant to the inquiry and keen observation of the phenomena of interest contribute to informing the ways in which the empirical questions will be shaped and fine-tuned.

Empirical questions should comprise the following salient aspects:

- a.) Concrete observable “occurrences” or “events” under investigation
- b.) Explicit indication of comparisons to be made, where applicable
- c.) Reference to forms of measurement or assessment

Hypotheses/Expectations are testable and unconfirmed statements that explain or predict the relationships between variables in particular circumstances.

Part I: Provide responses that address the following six aspects for each of the three research scenarios listed on page two. Record your responses in the blank table templates provided in the accompanying MS Word file.

- 1.) Main motivating research question that characterizes the general area of study
- 2.) Skeletal profile of the participants and their communities (e.g., 25 US ten-year-olds of Latin American heritage who attended music camp, 12 of whom are males and 13 of whom are females)
- 3.) At least one empirical question, specifying comparisons to be made, where applicable
- 4.) Identification of independent and dependent variables that pertain to the study
- 5.) Operationalized categories of what would be measured, assessed, or coded in the study
- 6.) Hypotheses/expectations that correspond with the empirical questions formulated.

An illustration of a completed table of responses for a fictitious research scenario is provided on page three.

Part II: Search PsycINFO for empirical articles relevant to each of three scenarios and print out requested materials described on page two.

Scenarios # 1 and #2: People often encounter difficulties attending to multiple stimuli or events at the same time. These challenges seem to affect one's performance in activities.

Scenario #1 – Experiment #2 in Stroop (1935)

Part I: For this scenario, your responses to the six aspects listed on page one **require** reading Stroop (1935), particularly his description of Experiment #2.

Part II: Search **PsycINFO** for ONE empirical article about the Stroop Effect published in a **peer-review journal** (Refer to PsycINFO Guidelines on page 4). You **must** print out:

- a.) Abstract of the article as it appears in the PsycINFO database
- b.) Actual 1st page of the corresponding article as it appears in the journal
(This first page will likely include the abstract. However, the abstract in this form does not qualify as the print out of the article's abstract for this assignment.)

Scenario #2 – Class Stroop Experiment

Part I: Your responses to the six aspects listed on page one **must** be based on information from the following sources:

- a.) Stroop Experiment website (faculty.washington.edu/chudler/words.html)
- b.) Stroop (1935)
- c.) Class Stroop Data on page 5

Part II: Search **PsycINFO** for ONE empirical article about the Stroop Effect published in a **peer-review journal** that is different from the article you selected for Scenario #1. (Refer to PsycINFO Guidelines on page 4.) You **must** print out:

- a.) Abstract of the article as it appears in the PsycINFO database
- b.) Actual 1st page of the corresponding article as it appears in the journal
(This first page will likely include the abstract. However, the abstract in this form does not qualify as the print out of the article's abstract for this assignment.)

Scenario #3 – Dog Companions and the Elderly

Certain dog breeds have been found to be invaluable service dogs for the blind and overall warm and comforting companions to humans of a variety of ages. Healthcare professionals wonder whether the elderly who reside in assisted living rehabilitation facilities may benefit socially and emotionally from visits with dogs.

Part I: Design one study based on this scenario that addresses the six aspects listed on page one. Keep in mind this scenario has the potential to generate multiple investigations.

Part II: Search **PsycINFO** for ONE empirical article about dog companions and/or the elderly published in a **peer-review journal** (Refer to PsycINFO Guidelines on page 4). You **must** print out:

- a.) Abstract of the article as it appears in the PsycINFO database
- b.) Actual 1st page of the corresponding article as it appears in the journal
(This first page will likely include the abstract. However, the abstract in this form does not qualify as the print out of the article's abstract for this assignment.)

Checklist of Items to Submit for Fulfillment of Research Activity #3:

Scenario #1	Scenario #2	Scenario #3
Experiment #2 in Stroop (1935)	Class Stroop Experiment	Dog Companions and the Elderly
▽ Table	▽ Table	▽ Table
▽ PsycINFO Abstract	▽ PsycINFO Abstract	▽ PsycINFO Abstract
▽ 1 st Page of Article	▽ 1 st Page of Article	▽ 1 st Page of Article

Example of Responses to a Scenario: Ethnographic research suggests that children of different cultural communities vary in the ways they learn. Unlike US European American middle-class communities, some cultural communities around the world do not have access to formal schooling or tend not to rely on schools as contexts for children’s learning.

Main Motivating Research Question	Participants & Their Communities	Specific Empirical Questions	Operationalized Categories	
<p>What differences exist in children’s opportunities to learn in different cultural communities?</p>	<p>20 – 3-year-olds (½ males & ½ females) from each of 2 communities:</p> <p>European American middle-class community of New York, US – where formal schooling is compulsory and widely available</p> <p>Indigenous community of the Andes in Peru – where formal schooling is not available</p> <p>Total Participants: 40 children</p> <p>Reasons for this age group: not yet expected to attend school or contribute largely to families’ workload in these communities.</p> <p>Thus, this age group allows for examining which practices are prioritized in preparing children for future engagement in school and/or mature activities in their respective communities.</p>	<p>Are Andes children more often involved in work than New York children?</p> <p>Do New York children engage more frequently in lessons than Andes children?</p>	<p><u>Types of Activities</u></p> <p>Lessons: using lecture-like & question-response-evaluation formats to teach something explicitly (like teachers asking students questions to which the teachers already know the answer)</p> <p>Work: activities that contribute to the households’ subsistence, including performing errands</p> <p><u>Forms of Engagement</u></p> <p>Participation: contributing in some way to an activity</p> <p>Observation: watching and/or tracking others’ participation in an activity</p>	
		<p>Independent Variable(s)</p>		<p>Community - 2 Levels: New York & Andes</p>
		<p>Gender – 2 Levels: Male & Female</p>		
		<p>Amount of time spent in activity (i.e., lessons & work)</p> <p>Amount time spent in form of engagement (i.e., participating in & observing lessons and work)</p>		<p>Hypotheses/Expectations</p>
		<p>Andes children are expected to observe or contribute to work more often than New York children.</p>	<p>New York children are expected to observe and participate in lessons more frequently than Andes children.</p>	
		<p>New York children are expected to observe and participate in lessons more frequently than Andes children.</p>		

Guidelines for Online Access to the UNH Library's PsycINFO Database

To search and access empirical articles using the **PsycINFO** database:

1. Go to **www.library.unh.edu**
2. Click on link **Databases**
3. In **By Title** search box, type **psycinfo** and click on the **Search** button
4. Click on the link **PsycINFO**
5. Click on the link **Connect to this database**
6. If required, enter your *username* and *password* to login into **PsycINFO**
7. In **PsycINFO**, search the topic by typing in relevant terms in the search boxes.
Leave the choice **Select a Field (optional)** on the drop-down menu.
8. Click on the **Search** button.
9. Under search boxes:
 - a.) In left-hand column, **Refine Results** should be viewable (If not, click on >> on left-hand side to expand column.)
 - b.) Under **Limit To**, click on the link **Show More**.
 - c.) When **Search Options** window pops up, scroll down to **Publication Type**, select **Peer Reviewed Journal**, and click on the **Search** button at the bottom of the pop-up window.
10. Under **Search Results**, click on titles of the publications to access abstracts generated by **PsycINFO**
11. Under **Tools** in right-hand column (If Tools not visible, click on << on right-hand side to expand column.):
For immediate print out of abstract ONLY – Click on **Print** & select options below in pop-up window:
 - a.) Uncheck **HTML Full Text (when available)**
 - b.) Select **Standard Field Format** and **Detailed Citation and Abstract** in its drop-down menu.
 - c.) Then, click on **Print** for a hardcopy of the **PsycINFO** abstract for the article.

OR

To Email yourself BOTH abstracts & articles to print out later – Click on **E-mail** & select options below in pop-up window:

- a.) Fill-out your information for boxes – **Email to, Subject, and Comments**
 - b.) Uncheck **Send in plain text format**
 - c.) Uncheck **HTML Full Text (when available)**
 - d.) Leave check mark for **PDF as separate attachment (when available)**
 - e.) Select **Standard Field Format** and **Detailed Citation and Abstract** in its drop-down menu.
 - f.) Then, click on **Send**.
12. Return back to view the abstract. *If the article is available online in PDF format, access it and print its 1st page in one of three ways below.* ***First pages of the articles must be in PDF format, not HTML.***

In left-hand column:

Click on **Check for UNH Full Text** and follow appropriate prompts from there to access article.

OR

Click on **PDF Full Text**, if present. When article on screen, choose download or print icon. Then, click on the link **Result List** to return to abstract.

OR

If opted for E-mail option in Step 11 & library has digital access, check your email for PDF of article.

For articles *not available online*, verify that the UNH Dimond Library houses the journal and volume you require. Then, search library's journal section stacks and photocopy the 1st page of the article.

****If article is not part of the UNH Library online or hardcopy collection, choose an alternative article.****

Class Stroop Data

The table below contains the data collected from your classmates' and your participation in the online Stroop Experiment (Research Activity #1). These data will be utilized to complete this research activity (RA #3) and, later, Research Activity #8.

- ▽ Word Set #1 (Condition #1): Ink colors that correspond with color names
- ▽ Word Set #2 (Condition #2): Ink colors that do not correspond with color names

ID Number	Gender	Age	Year in College	Location	Word Set #1 (Time in Seconds)	Word Set #2 (Time in Seconds)
1	Female	21	Junior	Apartment bedroom	12.991	28.954
2	Female	20	Sophomore	Dorm room	8.449	26.427
3	Female	19	Sophomore	Bedroom	10.579	28.660
4	Female	19	Sophomore	Library	14.834	17.491
5	Female	20	Junior	Apartment bedroom	16.698	24.165
6	Female	19	Sophomore	Dorm room	13.961	25.745
7	Male	24	Junior	Library	28.393	32.672
8	Female	20	Senior	Dorm room	9.342	14.951
9	Male	20	Junior	Library	23.421	21.652
10	Female	20	Sophomore	Apartment bedroom	15.113	32.653
11	Female	20	Sophomore	Dorm room	11.450	13.902
12	Female	20	Sophomore	Dorm room	14.551	20.906
13	Female	19	Sophomore	Bedroom	18.648	24.724
14	Female	20	Sophomore	McConnell	10.594	17.998
15	Male	19	Sophomore	Kitchen table	17.412	24.120
16	Female	21	Junior	Apartment living room	11.256	19.431
17	Female	19	Sophomore	Family home	17.194	21.374
18	Male	20	Sophomore	Apartment bedroom	23.658	29.582
19	Female	19	Sophomore	McConnell	12.600	29.000
20	Female	19	Sophomore	Dorm room	17.207	26.158
21	Female	19	Sophomore	Apartment living room	13.864	25.637
22	Female	20	Sophomore	Bedroom	18.939	24.006
23	Female	21	Senior	Apartment kitchen	15.217	21.316
24	Male	20	Sophomore	Library	16.849	32.066
25	Male	19	Sophomore	Dorm room	12.372	18.202