

Theme 2, Writing

Writing your Procedure Section

What does the Section on Methods/procedure Do

In this section of your academic report or lab report, you describe the details of the way the experiment was performed, how the equipment was configured, the way the data was collected, etc. You describe the steps you completed during your investigation. This is your procedure. Be sufficiently detailed that anyone could read this section and duplicate your experiment.¹

What you will mention in your method:

- (Participants)
- Materials/tools/instruments
- Procedure/steps
- Design and analyses

We will only practice one type of research: surveys (questionnaires and interviews).

Example

A total of 120 IT students, 70 females and 50 males, participated in this research. An online survey was designed. It consisted of 20 questions. The link to the survey was activated on 20th March 2016 and was kept open for three weeks. Links to the survey were sent to a total of 400 IT student email addresses. By the end of the third week, the survey was closed. The collected responses were then analysed and categorized according to students' academic background.

¹ Extract from: <https://rodzah.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/how-to-write-lab-report.pdf>

Exercises

*Use the information below to write a short procedure section for an academic report: Do 1 with your colleague, 2 by yourself in class, and 3** by yourself outside class.*

1.

A Comparison between First Year and Forth Year IT Students' Attitude Towards Using Blackboard at the University of Bahrain

400 students: 200 1st year IT students, 200 4th year students

Paper-based survey

30 questions, all multiple-choice questions

distribute in university, 4th March 2016

Collect responses

Analyse responses, SPSS 16.0.

2.

Effects of User Interface Design of Smartphone Application on Users

700 Employed people in Bahrain, age: under 50 years; 300 females, 400 males

Interview

15 questions

In Seef Mall and Manama Souq, 10th-20th July 2016

Collect responses

Analyse responses, Chi-square test

3. **

Effects of Using Grammar Online Exercises on UoB Students' English Language Level

600 first year business students- University of Bahrain, two groups, 300 each

Ask Group 1 to use online grammar exercises after each English session

Ask Group 2 to use textbook and paper handouts

One semester- from September 20th to December 20th 2014

An online English grammar test, 60 multiple-choice questions

Compare the results of the two groups

Giving reasons why a particular method was adopted or rejected

A major advantage of X is that ...
The benefit of this approach is that ...
This method is particularly useful in studying ...
The design of the questionnaires was based on ...
One advantage of the X analysis is that it (present simple) ...
Another advantage of using X is that it (present simple) ...

A major problem with the X method is that ...
The main disadvantage of the X method is that ...

Describing the characteristics of the sample

Only children aged between 10 and 15 years were included in the study.
The participants were divided into two groups based on ...
Two groups of subjects were interviewed, namely X and Y. The first group were ...
The project used a sample of 32 first year modern languages students.

Describing the process: infinitive of purpose

To measure X, a question asking ... was used.
To determine whether ..., the cells were incubated for ...

The process was repeated several times in order to remove ...

Describing the process: other phrases expressing purpose

For the attitude questions, a Likert scale *was used*.
For the purpose of height measurement, subjects *were asked* to stand ...
For the purpose of analysis, two segments *were extracted* from ...
For the estimation of protein concentration, 100 µL of protein sample *was mixed* with ...

Describing the process: typical verbs in the passive form

All participants *were sent* ...
The data *were analysed* using ...
Responses *were obtained* from ...
Collected emails *were used* to ...
Data *were collected* using interviews in ...
The experiments *were run* using custom software written in...
Two sets of questionnaires *were completed* by ...
A total of 256 samples *were taken* from 52 boreholes (Figure 11).
Data management and analysis *were performed* using SPSS 16.0.
Data *were gathered* from multiple sources at various time points during ...
The pilot interviews *were conducted* informally by the trained interviewer ...

Describing the process: sequence words and phrases

To begin this process, (Sentence, past tense)...
The first step in this process was to ([v]...)...

The subjects were *then* shown a film individually and were asked to ...
The results were corrected for the background readings and *then* averaged before ...

Finally, (sentence, past tense)
The final stage of the study comprised an interview with ...

Describing the process: using + instruments

Data were collected using two high spectral resolution Xs.
A test was carried out using X software and ...
The data were recorded on a digital audio recorder and transcribed using a ...