

Experimental Psychology PSY 360

Research Reports



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What We Will Cover in This Section

- What a research report is.
- Anatomy of a research report.
- Kinds of research reports.
- Sources.



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What is a Research Report?

A formal document that presents the results of some empirical study.

- Usually peer reviewed.
- Usually published.
- Usually presents original research.
- Has a highly structured format.

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Research Paper Format



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Abstract

- Summarizes the research report in 100-150 words.
- Lets the reader decide if the study is of interest.
- Generally summarizes
 - Introduction
 - Method
 - Results
 - Discussion.
- May over simplify.

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Introduction

- Describes the specific problem being studied.
- Summarizes previous research.
- Describes the basic research strategy.
- Describes the research hypothesis.

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Method

- Describes in detail how the study was conducted.
 - Participants.
 - Apparatus.
 - Manipulations.
 - Measurement tools.
 - Procedure.
- Should be so detailed that the reader could replicate the study.

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Results

- Describes the data collected, any statistical analyses, and the conclusions drawn from the statistical analyses.
- The most difficult section to understand.

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Discussion

- Summarizes the results, presents the implications of the data and may include a critique of the study.
 - Includes alternative interpretations of the data.
 - Describes the limitations of the study.
 - May suggest further research.

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Reference Section

- Lists all research that was reviewed for this study in APA format.
- If a study is referenced, it appears here.

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Table

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for total aggression scores by category

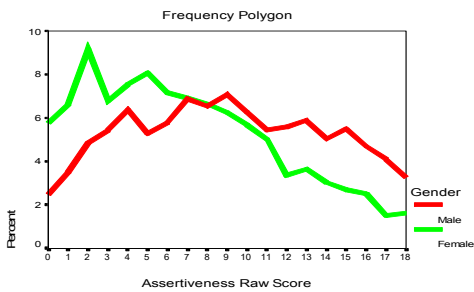
Music Categories	Count	Mean	SD
Agg. Classical	14	56.00	14.14
Agg. Popular	14	51.29	17.05
Calm Classical	15	28.27	7.92
Calm Popular	15	29.73	9.36

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Figures #1



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Figures #2



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Primary Research

- This report summarizes the research done by the authors.
 - Typically summarizes a single research project.
 - Usually the only report; it is unethical to report the same study in several publications.
 - Successful replications are rarely published.

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Literature Review

- This report summarizes all of the research done on a particular topic.
 - Typically focus on a specific area.
 - Review what is known and what is not known in the area.
 - Very good source of information on a specific topic area.

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Theoretical Paper

- This is a publication that develops a theoretical explanation for a some particular area.
 - Typically the authors support their theory with data from primary research.
 - Typically authors describe why their theory is better than other theories.

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Meta Analysis

- A research report that summarizes a number of research results by combining the statistical findings from many studies.
 - Provides a general assessment of the relationship between similar variables.
 - The focus is on statistical data, not conceptual information.

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Assignment

See Library Scavenger Hunt.

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The End

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