

Psychology experiment essay sample



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Are you looking for a fun experiment that you can perform for a psychology class? This experiment on gender and memory is relatively quick and easy to perform, which is a bonus if you are short on time and resources.

Could gender differences play a role in short-term memory? We often hear women complain that their husbands can't remember important dates like anniversaries or birthdays, but could this phenomenon be due to something like memory differences between men and women. Some previous research has found a significant relationship between gender and memory, while other studies have no such relationship between memory and test scores.

Key Terms and Definitions

Hypothesis

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Short-term Memory

Long-term Memory

Possible Research Questions

Could one gender be better on specific types of memory tests? For example, might girls be better at memory for stories and boy be better at memory for object recall?

Is one gender better than the other at remembering words or numbers?

Develop Your Hypothesis

Once you have formulated a good research question, the next step is to develop your hypothesis. Remember, your hypothesis is a specific statement

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about what you expect to find in your experiment. For example, your hypothesis might sound like one of the following statements:

Female participants will score higher on tests for memory of stories than male participants.

Male participants will score higher on tests for memory of numbers than female participants. Plan Your Experiment

Now that you have a hypothesis, the next step is to carefully plan your experiment. Where will you find participants? What materials do you need? In many cases, your classmates might be willing and able to serve as the participants for your study. If that isn't possible, you might need to look for volunteers from your school or community.

It is a good idea to talk to your instructor at this point. He or she might have specific rules you need to follow with regards to obtaining participants, or you might be required to get permission to perform your experiment from your school's Institutional Review Board.

Once you have established where you will find your participants, you need to start getting together all of the materials you will use to complete your experiment. In this case, you are going to need some type of memory test. The specific type of test you use will depend largely on your hypothesis. If you are testing for memory of story event, then you will need to either find an existing test and obtain permission to use it or design your own assessment. If you are looking at something like short-term memory for

words or numbers, you could create your own pool of items similar to the list of words found in this short-term memory experiment.

Collect Data and Analyze Results

Once you have your hypothesis, participants, and materials ready to go, it is time to collect the data. Remember, since gender is your independent variable, you are going to want to make sure that all other elements of your experiment are held constant. All participants should receive the same test under the same conditions. Each subject should be given the same amount of time to review the materials and the same amount of time to complete the memory test.

After you have collected the data, you need to then analyze the results. Did you find any evidence to support your hypothesis? Were your results statistically significant? Prepare a report that details your hypothesis, procedures, materials, participants, and results. Your instructor may require you to present this in a specific format, such as a bulletin board presentation or a lab report.