

WORK SAMPLE

Q. Design the best possible research study in to determine whether drinking alcohol has an effect on conformity (peer pressure).

Context: This work sample was part of an exam, as such, it was time constrained and the student had no access to resource material.

First we will want to make operational definitions of peers, and decide what conformity means for this experiment. We will define peers as people of similar ages in the same social institution. For this experiment the subjects will be university students aged 19-21. Conformity will be coming to the same consensus on the task they are working on. On a list of university students of the desired age, the students will be selected at random for each group. The list will be divided by gender first to ensure equal numbers of girls and boys are in each group to reduce confounding variables (variables outside what is being tested that may impact results.) By choosing students at random, we should be reducing bias. The two groups will be split up and sent to different rooms so they can't see what is happening to the other group. If they see the other group they may act differently if they guess what is being studied. Each group will need to be given informed consent once they are aware of the possible risks, and not be forced into participating. Ethics and the well-being of participants, and minimizing harm is very important to psychological research.

Group A will be given alcoholic beverages until they blow the same rating on a breathalyser test – just above the legal limit for driving. It is important the subjects don't come to any harm. The group will then be given a series of pictures depicting a scene and will need to decide what order they need to be put in to make the best story. They will be told they are competing against the other group to see who makes the best story. Group B will be given the same cards and be told they are competing against group A, they will just not be given any alcohol. Each session will be video recorded. A set of evaluators will review the tapes and time how long it takes Group A vs B to decide on how to order the cards to make a story. For best results this will be a double blind study where the subjects don't know the true purpose of the experiment, and the evaluators don't know which group was supplied the alcohol.

By now, we have defined our question which is whether alcohol leads to greater conformity. We have also created our hypothesis and null hypothesis. The hypothesis is: H_1 = supplying alcohol to a peer group will impact conformity. The null hypothesis is: H_0 alcohol has no impact on conformity among peers. The hypothesis is two-tailed as we are not sure if alcohol

will increase or decrease conformity. The experiment has been designed, and will need to be executed. Once that is done, we will need to analyze results. If the hypothesis is correct, we will see statistically significant differences in the time it takes group A vs Group B to come to a consensus on the story. Statistical significance means that the results are great enough that they aren't due to chance. The experiment will need to be repeated a few times to ensure that the first result wasn't due to the specific group being tested and because the sample size is small so mistakes are more likely. If the average time of the A groups is different than the average time of the B groups, we can say that alcohol impacts conformity. We would expect the results to be similar in order for the test to be reliable, and if other tests exist on peers and alcohol influencing conformity, we would need them to have similar results for the test to be reliable. In our analysis we would want to verify our experiment truly measured what we wanted it to in order for it to be valid. Once we determined that there were similar results across trials (test-retest reliability), the observers same to the same results when watching the other tapes (inter-tester reliability), the experiment tested what it was designed to test, and our results are similar to other measures testing the same thing, and the results are statistically significant, we would publish the paper for the scholarly community.

USING THE VALUE RUBRICS- Work with a partner

1. Rubric

Read through the rubric and become familiar with the dimensions. They are the components of the skill of critical thinking.

Read through the level descriptors:

- The grey bands is the original AAC&U wording
- The black bands are the course specific descriptors developed by Queen's
- The examples are in small print, these are demonstrations of what the level might "look like"

The capstone benchmark is intentionally placed on the left, so that it is read first.

2. Work Sample

Read through the work sample; the context of the assessment is important to consider.

3. Evidence

Search for evidence of the student's demonstration of the rubric criteria. Highlight passages that you believe support the attainment of this dimension.

4. Calibration

Discuss the selected evidence and justify your rating with your partner; decide on a final rating. Repeat this process for each of your allocated dimensions.