

Sample Research Protocol
Title of Your Study
Your Name, Co-Researcher Names, and Faculty Advisor

Include a quick introduction to your proposed study. Briefly discuss relevant theory and past research in your field. Include discussion of how your study fills a gap in the literature and why it should be conducted. Feel free to use in-text citations of relevant sources. This usually only needs one to two paragraphs.

Method

Participants

Move into a detailed analysis of what you will actually be doing in the method section. First, discuss what your participant pool will consist of. How will you recruit these participants? Will all these participants be adults? Will they participate anonymously or in-person? What compensation will they receive, if any, for participating?

Materials and Procedure

Next, go into a step-by-step, detailed description of what participants will be doing. Make sure you discuss the measures that you will use and how they will be recorded. If you use pre-established measures make sure you cite them appropriately. Don't forget to include how participants will provide consent and how they will be debriefed. These two documents/forms are crucial to ethical science. Additional points to consider are if any deception will take place. If so, justify your reasoning, and ensure participants will be fully informed afterwards as to what occurred.

As a last step, you may want to discuss how the data will be analyzed. Specific hypotheses you wish to test can also be included. You can also include what the data will be used for, whether it be for a class project, poster presentation, or published article.

References

Don't forget to include a full APA-style bibliography of any sources you cited.

A sample HSRC protocol is copied below:

Research Protocol: Your Name

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX: Sex Positivity and Message Framing Among Young Women

Sexual relationships in teens often come with unintentional consequences such as: unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and diseases. Previous studies have been conducted to examine effective ways to communicate unhealthy outcomes of having sex. However, very few studies look at how to effectively communicate healthy outcomes of having sex. The current study will be looking at how to communicate positive outcomes of having sex by using gain-message framing.

Message framing is the theory “that refers to presenting a persuasive message in terms of expected gains or losses associated with an advocated behavior” (Salovey 1997). An example of positive message framing regarding sexual relationships would be, “you will gain so much trust between you and the partner you choose”. A loss message would focus more on the consequences, such as, “you will give up respect others have for you once engaging in sex”. Few studies have focused on gain framed outcome of having sex.

The current study will use subjects who identify as female between the ages of 18 to 22. They will access the study through SONA system and receive SONA credit for participating in the survey. After agreeing to participate via the consent form, they will be asked general questions about their feelings toward sex positivity and how they received their sexual education. Following, they will be asked to read one of two messages about the possible outcomes of having sex, one gain-framed and one loss-framed. The second survey they receive will measure evaluations of the message.

The research will be analyzed with an ANOVA, with type of framing as the independent variable, and indicated positive outcomes as the dependent variable. Other individual difference variables, such as previous sexual education will also be examined. This research will be used as an Independent Study at the College of Wooster, and the results will be shared with my advisor.

References

Lagina, N. (n.d.). Parent-Child Communication: Promoting Sexually Healthy Youth. Retrieved

October 05, 2016, from <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/>

PROMOTING HEALTHY SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT AND SEXUALITY. (n.d.). Retrieved

October 05, 2016, from <https://brightfutures.aap.org/>

Salovey, P., & Sluyter, D. J. (1997). Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Educational implications. *New York: Basic Books.*

Yost, Megan R(2010). "Development and Validation of the Attitudes about Sadomasochism

Scale." *Journal of Sex Research* 47.1 : 79-91. Web.

Consent Form

The consent form is a vital part of any research experiment. The consent form should accurately outline the study to the participant and should inform them of any risks they could incur. Participants must sign or otherwise agree to the study. Make sure you keep a copy of all consent forms you collect.

A sample consent form for a different study is copied below:

CONSENT FORM
THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER
Title of Your Study
Your Name, Class of 20XX
Advisor: Faculty Name, Department of Psychology

Purpose of Research: This study investigates the effect of one's personal beliefs on the perceived differences of people with different sexualities.

Procedures to be Used: If you choose to participate in this study you will be asked to answer several questions about your attitudes toward gay and lesbian people. You will also be asked to read two research abstracts and answer questions regarding them. There are no right or wrong answers to the survey questions; we are interested in your honest opinions and attitudes. You must be 18 years or older and a resident of the United States to participate.

Duration of Study: Completion of the survey should take no longer than 30 minutes.

Risks to the Individual: Some questions on attitudes towards homosexual people may elicit discomfort. You are free to skip any question you do not feel comfortable answering. The risks from the other survey questions are no greater than what you would experience in everyday life.

Compensation and Benefits: This survey will be administered via Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants who are MTurk workers will be paid 20 cents. Participants will not receive direct benefits. The indirect benefits from this study include the possibility of learning more about one's attitudes and beliefs.

Confidentiality: All data collected for this research will be anonymous and confidential.

Costs: There are no costs for participation in this study.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw: You may refuse to participate in the study. If you do choose to participate and during the study you change your mind, you are able to withdrawal your participation. Participants who withdraw will not be paid.

Questions: Feel free to ask any questions while completing the study. If you find that you have more questions after the study, feel free to contact the researcher at youremail@wooster.edu for any questions you may have. You may also contact the faculty adviser at facultyemail@wooster.edu.

TO GET PAID, YOU MUST GO TO THE VERY END OF THE SURVEY WHERE YOU WILL FIND A VALIDATION CODE. THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 40 QUESTIONS. I WILL CHECK YOUR RESPONSE TIME TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE ACTUALLY READING THE QUESTIONS. PLEASE KEEP THE HIT WINDOW OPEN WHILE TAKING THE SURVEY.

Consent: Please select the appropriate box below to continue. Selecting “I am 18 years old and agree to participate and continue” will indicate that you have decided to agree to participate in this study, and that you have read and understood the information above, and that you are at least 18 years of age. Selecting “I wish to exit” will end your participation.

Debriefing Form

The debriefing form is presented to your participants after their complete participation in your study. The debriefing form should inform your participants of what they did in the study, and how their data will be used. If you used any form of manipulation or deception, you should make that evident to your participants in the debriefing. Ensure that your participants have a way to contact you on the form. Participants are encouraged to keep their debriefing form so that they have a record of their study and your contact information. A sample debriefing form is presented below:

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT DEBRIEFING FORM

Title of Your Study

Your Name

The College of Wooster
Department of Psychology

1. What is the general aim of the research?

The general aim of this research is to see if there is a relationship between religious, political, and cultural beliefs. We are especially interested in examining how supernatural natural beliefs (e.g., beliefs in the healing power of crystals) relate to other attitudes.

2. Is this correlational or experimental research?

This research is correlational. We are simply looking at relationships among responses to the different questions.

3. What topic in introductory psychology does this research illustrate?

This area of research falls within the area of personality psychology, as well as social psychology.

4. Where can I learn more about this type of research?

This journal article may be helpful in learning more about this research:

Boden, M. T. (2015). Supernatural beliefs: Considered adaptive and associated with psychological benefits. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 86, 227-231.

5. Who is the person supervising this research and how can I contact him or her?

Dr. Faculty Member is supervising the research and they can be contacted via e-mail at facultyemail@wooster.edu.

Thank you for your participation in this study. Please refrain from discussing this experiment with others, as this might jeopardize the research results.

Other Materials

If you are conducting survey research, make sure you upload a PDF of your survey to the HSRC application. If using Qualtrics, this can easily be done by going to “Tools” > “Print Survey” > “Save as PDF”. Otherwise, make sure you include copies of your measures and stimulus materials in the HSRC application. The more information you provide, the greater your chances of being approved by the HSRC.

If you are using Amazon mTurk to recruit participants, you also must upload a copy of your mTurk job description. This is the brief summary of the mTurk job that workers will read. A sample mTurk description is below:

Name of Your Study
MTurk Description

This study is open to workers 18 years of age and older living in the USA. You will be presented with two research abstracts about sexuality and will be asked to answer questions about them. You will also be asked questions about your thoughts and feelings of people with different sexual orientations. You may skip any question you do not feel comfortable answering. You will be paid \$0.20 for your participation in this study.

If you are emailing students on campus, or otherwise recruiting via email, you must include a copy of what will be sent to others regarding your study. If you are recruiting campus-wide instead of just through SONA, this may apply to you. A sample email is below:

Dear Wooster Student,

I am writing you to ask for your assistance with a study I am conducting for my I.S. on motivation for social activism. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate. The study will take you approximately 10-15 minutes of your time. If you choose not to respond within the first week, we will send you a reminder in one week. This study is anonymous, so please do not enter any identifying information. I pledge to keep your data confidential and only to report aggregated results in any published scientific study. You can access my survey through the following link

www.mysurveylink.edu

Participation in this survey is voluntary, and you may withdraw from participation at any time. I greatly appreciate your time and effort in my project, and hope you have a great semester. If you have any questions regarding my research or my survey, please contact me at my Wooster email, myemail@wooster.edu

Sincerely, Your Name