

RESEARCH METHODS MADE EASY

A SIMPLER WAY TO UNDERSTANDING RESEARCH

SABRETTA ALFORD, MA, LMSW

SESSION 1: APA STYLE AND INTRODUCTION

APA STYLE – OVERVIEW (Major 5 Sections in Red)

Title Page

Abstract

Introduction

Method

Results

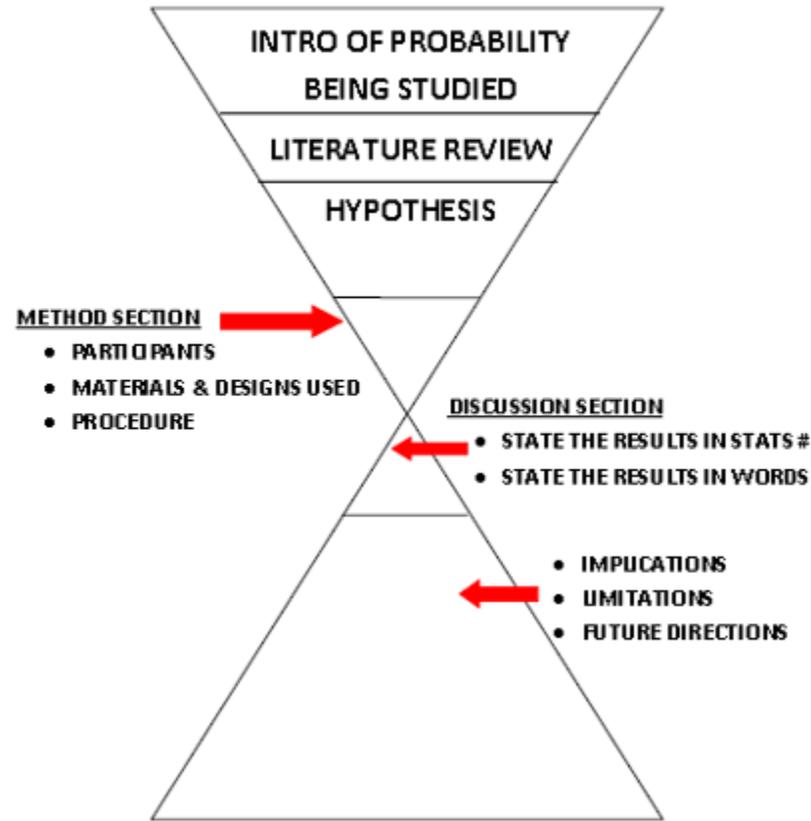
Discussion

References

Footnotes

Tables

Figures



**THIS IS HOW YOUR
TITLE PAGE
SHOULD LOOK!!!!**

Running Head: THE EFFICACY OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION

The Efficacy of Spirituality and Religion as a Coping Mechanism to Manage Stress in Older
Adults

SSW71500 – Research Methods I

Michelle Jones

Professor Sabretta Alford

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Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College

Introduction & Literature Review

Purpose: To justify why you did the study you must:

- Introduce the problem being studied
- Review relevant research (literature review)
- State your hypotheses AND provide a rationale for your hypotheses (given previous research, why did you make your hypotheses?)

This section of the paper starts very broad and becomes more narrow toward the end

Method Section

Purpose: To provide details about the sample and procedures of your study so other researchers can replicate it

- Sections Participants
- Materials (sometimes Design & Materials)
- Procedure
- This section is narrow (i.e. specific to your study)

Results Section

Purpose: to provide a clear description of the results of your statistical analyses from your study.

- e.g., “As hypothesized, GPA was positively correlated with self-esteem, $r(100) = .50, p = .01$.”
- This is the narrowest section of the paper

Discussion Section

Purpose: To restate the key results without using statistics

- to discuss the implications of the results
- to highlight any limitations to the study
- to provide suggestions for future research

This section starts narrow and gets broad again toward the end

Introduction Section – In Depth

1. The Problem Being Studied

Convince the reader that the topic is important

- Provide the general context for the research project
- Broadly present the issue that you've chosen to study
- Ideally, highlight the human element of the research by connecting the research to a human experience

Literature Review (LR) – In Depth

- ❑ The LR provides the rationale for your study
- ❑ Synthesizes what has been studied on the topic already
 - What are the key theories and studies on the topic? Where do the researchers agree? Where do they disagree?
- ❑ It should focus on the studies/theories that are most relevant to your study

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Literature Review - SYNTHESIZE

- Synthesizing by fusing, reordering, recalling, retelling to create new meaning or understanding
- Draw conclusions to create new meaning based on sound reasoning and authentic information
- Apply new understanding to approach the problem being studied

Rationale (pt. 1)

- This is where you tie the past research from your LR to your current study
- What are the gaps in the literature (i.e. what we don't yet know)?
- Show how your study builds on past research and how it will expand our understanding of the topic

Rationale (pt. 2)

- Most specific section of the introduction
- Here you make specific predictions about your research (x is related to y; x causes y)

State your hypothesis

- What you're actually testing in the rest of your paper

APA STYLE – GENERAL POINTS

Rationale (pt. 1)

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General Points about the Introduction

- ❑ **Point 1:** You are telling a story, so describe the main characters (variables) and put them in context (previous research).
- ❑ **Point 2:** Your audience: assume that the reader does not know a lot about the specific topic, but knows basic research methods.

General Points about the Introduction

□ **Point 3: Citations**

- There are several cases when you must cite other authors.
 - 1) When you are quoting something someone else said exactly (put in quotation marks)
 - 2) When you are paraphrasing what someone said
 - 3) When you are talking about someone else's research

– If you do not use citations, then you are plagiarizing, which is a very serious offense



Citations: Examples

Direct quote:

- ❑ As Wellford and Cronin (2000) state: “homicide cases, like all other cases, begin with different levels of “solvability” and differ in regard to the probability of an arrest” (p. 8)

Paraphrasing:

- ❑ Mouzos and Muller (2001) argue that solvability is dependent on the crime itself, but they also suggest that police response to a crime is key to its solvability.

Discussing someone’s research:

- ❑ Other researchers have also found the location of body disposal sites to be better predictors of offenders’ home bases than abduction sites, thus affecting the cases’ solvability (Canter & Hodge, 1997).



□ Point 4: Heading

- There is no heading for the Introduction section in APA style.
- Instead of a heading, include the title of the paper
- The title should be centered at the top of the page

example

Patterns of Consistency and Change 4

The consistency of inconsistency in serial homicide:
Patterns of behavioral change across series

Linkage analysis is a crucial part of the investigative process when faced with a possible series of related offences. While the use of forensic and physical evidence is the most efficient way of facilitating the linkage process (Grubin, Kelly & Brunson, 2001), such evidence may be absent from the crime scene. However, it has been proposed that behavioral evidence is always

Reference Section – Specifics

Purpose: to provide the reader with list all of your sources in alphabetical order.

- Every source cited in an APA study paper **MUST** be listed in the References section
- The reference section must be presented in a very specific order.
- Makes it easier for other readers to find these sources.

1. Author's last name,

- Use the “and” sign (&) before the last author
- Place a comma between authors
- Place a comma before the “and” sign, even if there are only 2 authors
- Example: (Sandberg, Ahlström, & Kristensson)

2. Year of publication

- Place in parentheses
- Follow with a period
- Example: (2017).

3) Title of publication

- Capitalize ONLY the first word of the title and the first word after the colon (if there is one).
- Followed with a period
- Example: It is all in the framing: How inequality framing affects academic training.

4) Title of the Journal

- Capitalize each important word.
- Italicize the title of the journal
- Follow this with a comma
- Journal of Personality and Social Psychology

5) Volume number of the journal

- Italicize it
- Follow with a comma
- 30,

6) Page numbers

- Include the full range of pages
- Do not italicize the page numbers
- Finish with a period.
- 157-171.

How to reference an article

- Author's last name, followed by initials
- Year of publication
- Title of publication
- Title of the Journal
- Volume number of the journal
- Page numbers

Sandberg, M., Ahlström, G., & Kristensson, J. (2017). Patterns of Somatic Diagnoses in Older People with Intellectual Disability: A Swedish Eleven Year Case–Control Study of Inpatient Data. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 30(1), 157–171. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.12230>