

Step-by-step plan

33

Write the Introduction section of your profile paper. Include the topic, the reason for and relevance of your research, your main and sub-questions and a literature review.

34

Make a reference list according to APA guidelines.

35

Polish your profile paper: make sure the sections fit together logically.

36

Prepare your presentation.

- Determine the characteristics of your target audience and adjust your presentation accordingly.
- Determine your presentation goal.
- Determine your presentation format.

37

Be curious. Ask new research questions based on your research.

32

Write the Conclusion section of your profile paper.

31

Describe the implications of your research: *what* would your recommendations be based on your research, and to *whom*?

30

Assess the reliability and validity of your research and the representativeness of the sample.

29

Describe the limitations of your research and make recommendations for further research.

28

Give a possible explanation for not getting certain results and substantiate this using academic sources.

27

Give a possible explanation for your conclusion.

26

Confirm or reject your hypothesis(es).

25

Answer the research question.

Glossary

Reliability

Reliability means how accurately the research has been conducted. In the best case, the results of your research were hardly influenced by chance. In order to determine the level of reliability of your research, answer the question: To what extent would a different researcher find the same results based on your research?

Hypothesis

A hypothesis is your expectation of what the answer to the research question will be. It's based on theories or previous research. You need to formulate a hypothesis in order to be able to test your expectations with your research methods.

Representativeness

Representativeness means the extent to which your group of participants matches the population your results will be about. In order to determine the level of representativeness of your sample, you need to answer the question: To what extent is your sample an accurate reflection of the general population your research is about?

Validity

Validity is the extent to which you measured what you intended to measure. Is your measuring instrument the best one to answer your research question? In order to determine the level of validity of your research, you need to answer the question: To what extent have you measured what you intended to measure?

Descriptive (understand the (relations between the relevant variables)

- Describe: explore or explain variables
- Compare: look at similarities or differences between two or more variables.
- Define: determine characteristics.

Exploratory (explore the relevant variables in order to create a new theory or expectation)

- Explain: look for explanations for/relations between variables.
- Predict: make a thorough assessment on a future event or phenomenon.

Testing (test a certain expectation or hypothesis).

This is the only type of main question that can be a closed question.

- Test: testing whether a certain hypothesis/theory is true and what the effects are.
- Evaluate: assessment of one or more variables in relation to a certain norm.

Design (understand how a certain improvement or solution would work)

- Design: develop a research-based design to improve a situation or solve a problem.
- Give advice: develop research-based advice to improve a situation or solve a problem.

Step-by-step plan

1

Discover your own interests. Choose a theme.

2

Look at the world from a themed perspective to discover ordinary and extraordinary things.

3

Ask curious questions about the theme.

4

Familiarise yourself with the theme (read a lot!) and save important information and source references. Write a short summary of each source.

5

Map out which topics belong to this theme and choose a topic.

6

Find out what you know about the topic, what's generally known about it, and what nobody knows yet.

7

Determine your research goal.

8

Formulate a research question.

9

Formulate sub-questions, one for every keyword.

10

Formulate hypothesis(es).

11

Write down your main question and sub-questions.

My research goal is:

To describe

- ☐ Describe
- ☐ Compare
- ☐ Define

To explore

- ☐ Explain
- ☐ Predict

To test

- ☐ Test
- ☐ Evaluate

To design

- ☐ Design
- ☐ Give advice

Checklist:

- ☐ My question is not a look-up question.
- ☐ I'm curious about the answer.
- ☐ I can conduct this research myself.
- ☐ The question is specific (it includes who, what, where, when, why and how).
- ☐ My question contains the right keywords.
- ☐ My question doesn't contain any umbrella terms and is well-delineated.

24

Write the Results section of your profile paper.

23

Display your data in an organised way. Use graphs or tables.

22

Report the steps you took and provide a detailed description of what you did.

21

Conduct your research.

- ☐ Interviews
- ☐ Survey/questionnaire
- ☐ Observations
- ☐ Experiment
- ☐ Design research
- ☐ Literature review/ source research

12

Choose your research methods.

13

Choose your participants/test subjects. Make sure your research will be representative.

14

Choose (and devise) your measuring instrument.

15

Make sure your methods are valid: your measuring instrument should be suitable for your research goal.

18

Determine how you're going to record the results.

19

Think about what can go wrong during the research process and how to prevent this.

20

Write the Methods section of your profile paper. Describe how you went about your research, what measuring instruments you used and who your participants were.

16

Make sure your methods are reliable, so your research will be reproducible.

17

Make a step-by-step plan and a schedule for your research process.