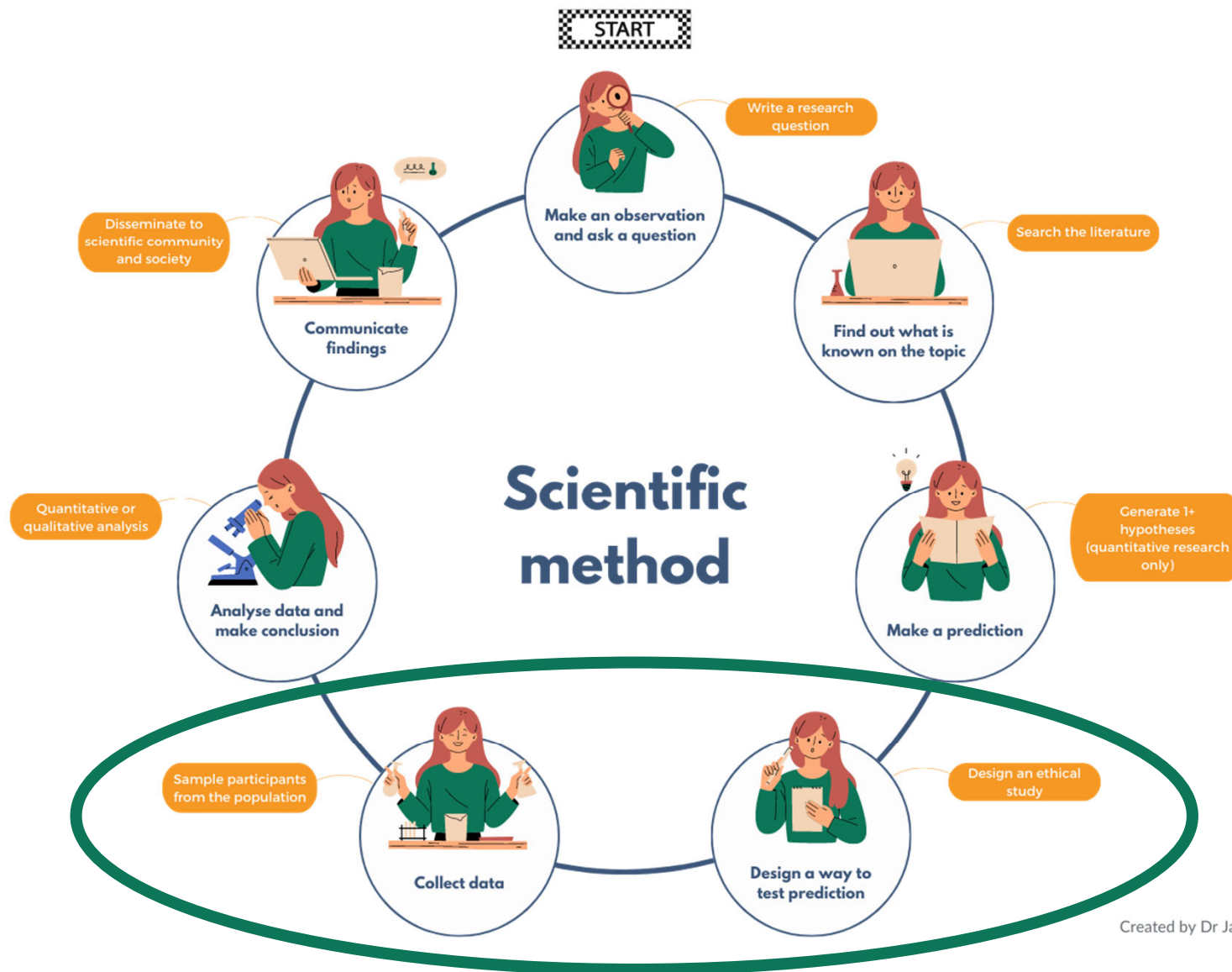


Lab report video 3

Method section



Purpose of the Method section

To let the reader know:

- Who the participants in the study were
 - Helps the reader to understand who the study may be **generalisable** to
- How the researcher measured the key variables
 - Lets the reader know exactly how variables were **operationalised**
- How the study was conducted and what the participants did
 - If detailed enough, should allow study to be **replicated**

Structure of the Method section

1. Participants

- Who the participants were

2. Materials

- How the researcher measured the key variables

3. Procedure

- How the study was conducted and what the participants did

1. Participants

This sub-section should tell the reader:

- How participants were selected (i.e., sampled)
- How many participants there were
- Who the participants were in a general sense
 - Key demographics

Sidebar on measurement

- In psychology, we are typically measuring unobservable things, e.g., people's feelings, thoughts, opinions, beliefs, attitudes, personality, etc.
- This is most often done through self-report measures, i.e., asking people to assess themselves
 - Flawed but convenient approach
- This involves a questionnaire that asks participants to read a series of items, consider how the items apply to them, and give a response
- For example, using the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS) to measure psychological distress

Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995)

DASS		<i>Name:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<p>Please read each statement and circle a number 0, 1, 2 or 3 which indicates how much the statement applied to you <i>over the past week</i>. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any statement.</p> <p><i>The rating scale is as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">0 Did not apply to me at all1 Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time2 Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of time3 Applied to me very much, or most of the time					
1	I found myself getting upset by quite trivial things	0	1	2	3
2	I was aware of dryness of my mouth	0	1	2	3
3	I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all	0	1	2	3
4	I experienced breathing difficulty (eg, excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion)	0	1	2	3
5	I just couldn't seem to get going	0	1	2	3

2. Measures

This sub-section should tell the reader how you measured each of the key variables.

For each variable, you want to state:

- Name of measure used and what it is intended to capture
 - Remember to cite the authors of the measure
- How many items the measure has
- How many points are on the response scale and what the end points were
 - E.g., “...a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very frequently*)...”
- A representative example item
 - Gives the reader a sense of how exactly the variable was measured
- How reliable the measure was
 - Cronbach’s alpha

Scale reliability

- We want to assess how well each scale performed to give us an indication of quality of the data we have collected
- Assessed by scale reliability
- The reliability of a scale means how consistent and stable the measure is
- Assessed using a statistic called Cronbach's alpha (α)
 - Tells you to what extent the items in your measure are all consistent with each other (i.e., internal consistency)
 - The more internally consistent the scale items are, the more reliable the scale is considered to be
 - We will provide you with these statistics

How to interpret Cronbach's α to assess scale reliability

- Ranges from 0 to 1, with 1 indicating higher internal consistency
- Use the following table to interpret Cronbach's α :

Cronbach's α	Internal consistency interpretation
≥ 0.9	Excellent
$\geq 0.8 - < 0.9$	Good
$\geq 0.7 - < 0.8$	Acceptable
$\geq 0.6 - < 0.7$	Questionable
$\geq 0.5 - < 0.6$	Poor
< 0.5	Unacceptable

- Write in a full sentence at the end of each description of each scale in the Measures sub-section
 - For example: "Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.62, showing questionable reliability."

Note: \geq means equal to or more than; $<$ means less than

3. Procedure

This sub-section should tell the reader how the study was conducted and what ethical considerations were made.

You should include the following:

- Whether the study was approved by the ethics committee or if it was exempt from ethical review as it was for educational purposes
- Whether participants were informed about the purpose of the study or if they were deceived
- Whether participants gave informed consent before taking part
- What participants did exactly and in what order
- How long, on average, it took participants to complete the study

Skills involved in completing the Method section

- Providing an accurate description of the research process conducted for the study
 - If done properly, should enable replication
- Communicating clearly and professionally

Questions

Please post any questions you might have on the discussion boards.