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Psychology Higher level Paper 3

14 November 2025

Zone A morning | Zone B morning | Zone C morning

1 hour

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the passage carefully and then answer all the questions.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[24 marks]**.

The stimulus material below describes a study in which the aim was to see if the COVID-19 lockdowns had an effect on the amount of time children and adolescents spent on physical activities and recreational screen time.

The global response to the COVID-19 pandemic often involved lockdowns. The term lockdown covers a variety of different measures aimed at reducing physical interaction between people for a certain period of time. Examples of such measures included stay-at-home orders and curfews.

5 The COVID-19 pandemic provided researchers with a unique opportunity to gather data about how lockdowns affected a range of human behaviours. Researchers who had access to data that was collected before the first lockdowns have been able to carry out studies where the independent variable only occurred because of a natural event. In these types of studies, the independent variable is not manipulated by the researchers. In this experiment, the naturally occurring conditions of the independent variable were before and during the lockdowns.

10 Two dependent variables were measured. These were the amount of time that children and adolescents spent on physical activities and the amount of time that children and adolescents spent on recreational screen time. Physical activities include playing sport, walking, cycling, gardening and helping with chores around the house. Recreational screen time includes watching TV and using computers and smartphones for activities that are not related to school.

15 The researchers collected quantitative data on the amount of time that 10- to 15-year-olds in one European country spent on physical activities and recreational screen time in the months immediately before and during the COVID-19 lockdowns. The volunteer sample of almost 2,000 participants from 158 different cities and towns had an equal number of males and females.

20 The participants and their parents were fully informed about the aims of the research and all signed consent forms. They were also given information about how the participants' data would be protected and informed that their identities would be kept anonymous in the report.

After all the data was collected and processed, the researchers used bar graphs to show the differences in the total amount of time that the participants had spent on physical activities and on recreational screen time, before and during the lockdowns.

25 The results showed that time spent on physical activities and recreational screen time both increased during the lockdowns. Although the time spent taking part in organized sporting activities with other people decreased, solo activities such as walking and cycling increased. Researchers also found that the time spent on recreational screen time increased by a greater amount than the time spent on physical activities.

Answer **all** of the following three questions, referring to the stimulus material in your answers. Marks will be awarded for demonstration of knowledge and understanding of research methodology.

1. (a) Identify the research method used and outline **two** characteristics of the method. [3]
(b) Describe the sampling method used in the study. [3]
(c) Suggest **one** alternative **or one** additional research method that could be used to investigate the aim of the original study, giving **one** reason for your choice. [3]
 2. Describe the ethical considerations that were applied in the study and explain if further ethical considerations could be applied. [6]
 3. Discuss the possibility of generalizing the findings of the study. [9]
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References:

Schmidt, S.C.E., Anedda, B., Burchartz, A., Eichsteller, A., Kolb, S., Nigg, C., Niessner, C., Oriwol, D., Worth, A. and Woll, A., 2020. *Springer Nature*, [online] 10 (21780) Available at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-020-78438-4> [Accessed 24 July 2024]. Reference redacted. Source adapted.