

INTRODUCTION TO ACADEMIC RESEARCH

EXAM PRACTICE PAPERS & CASE STUDIES

SECTION A: CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1: Student Study Habits

A researcher wants to examine how study habits affect academic performance among undergraduate students. She distributes a questionnaire to 150 students and analyses the responses using statistical software.

Questions:

1. Identify the research method used.
 2. What type of data is being collected?
 3. State one advantage of this method.
 4. Identify one limitation.
 5. Suggest one ethical consideration relevant to this study.
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Case Study 2: Port Worker Experiences

A researcher conducts in-depth interviews with 12 port workers to understand their experiences with workplace safety.

Questions:

1. What type of research is being conducted?
 2. Why is this method appropriate?
 3. Identify the data collection tool used.
 4. State one strength and one weakness of this approach.
 5. How can the researcher ensure reliability?
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Case Study 3: Online Learning Effectiveness

A lecturer compares exam scores between students who attended online classes and those who attended face-to-face classes.

Questions:

1. Identify the independent and dependent variables.
 2. What type of research design is this?
 3. Suggest a possible hypothesis.
 4. Identify one possible source of bias.
 5. Suggest how validity can be improved.
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SECTION B: SHORT ANSWER PRACTICE

1. Define reliability in research.
 2. What is a research hypothesis?
 3. Differentiate between population and sample.
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4. State two qualitative research methods.
 5. What is plagiarism?
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SECTION C: ESSAY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Essay 1

Explain the stages of the research process. Provide examples to support your answer.

Essay 2

Compare and contrast qualitative and quantitative research methods. Include strengths and weaknesses.

Essay 3

Discuss the importance of ethics in academic research. Use relevant examples.

Essay 4

Evaluate the role of the literature review in academic research.

SECTION D: FULL PRACTICE EXAM PAPER

Time: 2 Hours

Instructions: Answer ALL questions

Question 1 (Compulsory - 20 marks)

Define academic research and explain four of its key characteristics.

Question 2 (20 marks)

Explain the research process in detail. Illustrate your answer with examples.

Question 3 (20 marks)

Compare qualitative and quantitative research methods. In your answer, discuss:

- Data collection methods
 - Strengths
 - Limitations
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Question 4 (20 marks)

A researcher is studying the impact of social media on student performance.

Answer the following:

1. Formulate a research question
 2. State a hypothesis
 3. Identify variables
 4. Suggest a suitable research method
 5. Identify two ethical considerations
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Question 5 (20 marks)

Discuss plagiarism and academic integrity. Explain how students can avoid plagiarism in their research.

SECTION E: ANSWER GUIDE (BRIEF)

Case Study 1 Answers

1. Quantitative research
2. Numerical data
3. Large sample/generalizable
4. Limited depth
5. Informed consent/confidentiality

Case Study 2 Answers

1. Qualitative research
2. Provides detailed insights
3. Interviews
4. Strength: rich data; Weakness: small sample
5. Use consistent procedures

Case Study 3 Answers


1. Independent: mode of learning; Dependent: exam scores
2. Comparative/experimental design
3. Online learning affects performance
4. Selection bias
5. Use controlled variables


SECTION F: EXAM TIPS

- Allocate time per question
- Use clear headings in essays
- Support answers with examples
- Revise key terminology thoroughly


Additional Support

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