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IRPP Paper and Discussion

For this assignment, I participated in a variety of online surveys and in person research studies. The specific studies that I participated in were STEM, BASIC, Relationship Between Auditory Stimulation and Taste Sensitivity, A Study on Food Tasting, and Understanding the Socioeconomic Influences on Financial Decision Making. Each study was different and I had to use a different skill set for each in order to be a good participant.

The first study that I participated in was STEM. STEM was an in person lab study that involved questionnaires, having to tell a personal story, and two simple tasks. The researcher had me to go into a room and answer survey questions such as how I would react to certain situations and my emotions at that point in time. The study also asked me to tell the researcher a personal story about a time I felt ashamed. I then had to tell the computer the same story and it talked back to me and asked further questions. Lastly, I had to do a pain reaction test. The researcher had me put my finger in a contraption and he placed a weighted metal ball on my middle finger. He asked me to tell him when the weight caused me pain as he was timing how long it took for me to feel anything. This project taught me how much more in detail psychology can go into emotion and personal feelings or pain. This study relates to our class because we both had to send out surveys and research what other people were thinking.

The next study I participated in was BASIC. For this study, I participated in a brief, 30 minute online study of behavior, affect, social interaction, and cognition. I answered questions

about my emotions at that exact point in time and had to make decisions based on stories that the survey inquired about. This study was also on cognition and made sure you were paying attention by randomly telling you to select a certain response. For example, I would be going through the study and then out of the blue a question would pop up that said “select strongly agree”, just to make sure the participant was keyed in. What I learned from this study is that researchers need to be extremely specific and careful when doing their studies because often times survey participants can have skewed responses. This relates to our class because we also had to be careful in asking precise, recognizable questions when creating our survey.

I also participated in Relationship Between Auditory Stimulation and Taste Sensitivity. This study had me taste a variety of spicy foods such as hot cheetos, serrano peppers, hot sauce, and many more. I had to taste each food two times. Following the first time I tried each of the foods, I was prompted to listen to a heavy metal song for about four minutes. After the song, the researchers prompted me to try each spicy food again to see if my taste buds had changed. They made sure to look at my facial expressions and have me use a scale to rate the foods spiciness. I learned from this research study that heavy metal music did not affect my taste buds because the spicy foods were just as spicy after listening to the song. I also learned that it is important to research your project as many times as need be to perfect it. This study relates to research methods because in our class, we also did this by creating two projects to make sure that every detail was perfect and studied. We were able to include more details the second time around and use different research methods.

The next study that I participated in was called A Study on Food Tasting. This study included eating spicy foods then having to make decisions where you could win “fake money”.

There were four different piles of cards labeled A, B, C, and D and each time you picked a card you would win \$50 or \$100, or win \$100 but lose \$250 and so on. Before the first 25 cards the researcher had me eat some plain chips and then make my decisions. After those 25 cards, she had me eat some spicy chips before finishing the project to see if my decision making would change. I learned from this study how precise and detailed a person's study must be in order for everything to go right. For this study, the researchers had to count out everything from the money, to the chips, to the piles of cards in order to get the proper results they were looking for. This relates to research methods because we also had to be precise. We had to be precise when picking the number of questions that would be on our survey, picking the number of people to send our survey to, and many more.

The last study I participated in was called Understanding the Socioeconomic Influences on Financial Decision Making. This study focused on determining what college students spend their money on and how they budget. I had to take a survey that asked me how much on average do I spend my money on certain things such as food, tuition, entertainment, and more. The researchers in this study wanted to find a correlation between college students and the socioeconomic financial decisions they made. This study taught me that research doesn't always have to be keyed in on one specific topic. The survey that was conducted was more broad and allowed for students to write their own responses. This relates to research methods because although our survey was more precise, we learned about the different kinds of open ended questions and ways to gather information with broad spectrum questions.

In conclusion, participating in Sona was a great experience for me. I enjoyed these research projects because I found myself in many different types of research. Being a part of a

school wide project made me feel more involved as a student and a more engaged learner in our class.