

Jonathan Lopez

Writers for Engineers

Elisabeth von Uhl

3/3/20

Introduction:

Video games, often not the first image when talking about anything scientific, and much less being the subject of a detailed lab report. These lab reports specifically analyze the effect modern video games have on youth behavior and assess if it is good or bad. Three specific lab reports have been chosen to see how well they convey their information to the reader and these reports are, "Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?" by Paul J.C. Adachi, "The Effect of Video Game Violence on Physiological Desensitization to Real-Life Violence." by Nicholas L. Carnagy et al., and "Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior ." by Stuart Johnstone. These lab reports vary in effective communication while following writing standards. We will look at the differences and decide which is the best, second best, and worst.

Abstract:

The abstract of any report is one of the most important aspects that needs to be thought about and written carefully as it can sometimes make or break any connection with the reader. This is due to how short abstracts are and how it must get the reader's attention and get the main point of the report across. The question arises, how well do these lab reports accomplish these goals and if they accomplish them in the most effective way?

The first lab report I will discuss is " Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior." by Johnstone. The abstract for this report is one that accomplishes the

goal in spades when compared to the other two lab reports. It starts off with a good hook by mentioning who relates to the idea of the report . It specifically says “Parents often express concerns about that technology, particularly video has on their children.” (Johnstone, 2013, para. 1) The very first sentences introduces the reader to who the target audience is, the subject of the report, and what specifically about the subject will it focus on. This acts as the foundation for the rest of the abstract and the lab report while not sounding too technical or unnatural. This hooks the reader in since it is relatable and sort of acts upon a reader's emotion with the mention of a parent, leading to an investment to continue.

This is not seen with the other two lab reports where they do not achieve the same level as the Johnstone report. While the other two lab reports do get across what the contents are, it does not try to grab the reader’s attention and just tell information. This may cause the reader to lose interest in the rest of the report and just search for another. This is seen in the lab report titled, “The effect of video game violence on physiological desensitization to real-life violence” by Carnagy et al. where the very first sentence where according to Carnagy et al.,(2006) “Past research shows that violent video game exposure increases aggressive thoughts, angry feelings, physiological arousal...” (para. 1) It does not mention who this is supposed to target and gives no context on why this report matters unless the reader is really interested in the subject.

This is also seen in the abstract for the next report, “Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?” by Adachi and Willoughby. There is no real sense of connection and was just written for seemingly, no real reason. In its first sentence, it mentions what video games mention in youth development and if it has a more positive or negative impact (Adachi &

Willoughby, 2006, para. 1). But the abstract is not usually the sole reason to keep a reader's attention in a lab report.

Data and Results:

Arguably, the most important part of any lab report is the data and results it has produced. Both act as a cornerstone of sorts for each report where it is highlighted through graphs and proofs of connections to the real world. The results of the data are determined through many factors such as where and how it was obtained, and if it is reliable because not all data is true or relevant for a particular report.

The report that meets this expectation most effectively is Carnagy et al. report for many reasons. First, the presentation of the data is the strongest as it provides graphs and visuals about the information which can show how two or more seemingly unrelated aspects are connected to each other. Next, it discussed how the efforts of the authors lead to the obtained information. It talked about the process and how the authors followed the scientific method where they did a "...causal test of the hypothesis...four experiment characteristics are necessary..."(Carnagy et al., 2006, para. 13). Then the lab report talks about what the data obtained from all the tests conducted by the authors meant to them and how the question of the report could be best answered scientifically. This proper analysis and presentation is what makes it the best report.

The next two lab reports fall very short in this section, when compared to the report of Carangy et al. for many individual reasons. The second best lab report for the data and results section is "Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?" by Adachi and Willoughby. This is because it followed the same procedure of the best report where everything is clearly divided and defined. , but the problem arises in the data itself. The lab report is reliant

on other reports for data and does not conduct its own. This is not bad but can strip away some validity for the reader, even if everything else was independently made. This would be a problem if a lot of the information was derived from an outside source.

This is what this lab report, "Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior." by Johnstone did. This one major flaw that makes it the worse out of the three reports is it did not conduct its own research and analysis but instead used information from different studies. This nullified the validity of the report as the reader cannot really trust any reports that did not conduct its own research and ideas, instead of relying on others which could have their own problems. Even if the information is presented in the best manner with proper diction and sentence structure, all of it is countered due to this fact.

Discussions:

Once all the data has been gathered and analyzed, what does that mean for authors who wrote them and potential future research? The discussion portion of a lab report includes ways of improving research and what other factors to look at that were not looked at in the original report. This leads to how these specific lab reports were able to reflect on itself and help future scientists write more effective lab reports.

The best report to do this was by Carnagy et al. This is due to how clear it was made to the reader on where this section started, through subtitles in the report, and starting off by saying "Numerous important theoretical questions remain for future research." (Carnagy et al., 2006, Future Research Section, para. 1) This immediately tells the reader that this report was not meant to answer the question definitively, but instead serve as a platform to work off. It looks at other analyzes other factors that make this report flawed like the different types of media available

such as movies or television changes or original results (Carnagy et al., 2006, Future Research Section, para. 2). Finally, what makes this lab report the most effective on reflection is realizing the failure to include any counter-arguments that could be made about the results of the data. It comes to the conclusion that video games do desensitize the people who play them but then asks “Can we help medical students become comfortable with the types of physical and emotional trauma they will experience...”(Carnagy et al., 2006, Future Research Section, para. 3 It presents other ideas that can be explored for future research and acknowledges other arguments instead of ignoring them or not really exploring such ideas. How do the other lab reports fair then?

While the next two lab reports follow a similar format like the first, they both have shortcomings with one being a bit more noticeable than others. The second best lab report is “Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?” due to similar reasons and the first lab report discussed. This report clearly sections everything in the paper with proper subtitles to distinguish data from thoughts. But then what the contents inside the dections is what drags it down as it is not as analytical as the first report. It follows the same idea of the report by Carnagy et al. but does not give suggestions on how to come to a more definitive answer.

The problems on the lab report by Stuart is worse than the previous one by Willoughby and Adachi due to different reasons. First off, there are no subtitles or no words that show where each different section begins or ends. There are only paragraphs in the lab report with the only section being clearly defined is the abstract. Next, there are no proper transitions between the paragraph and jumps to different ideas, confusing the reader as to what to make of the information. This is seen in paragraphs eight and nine by Stuart where it talks about data from other reports, to kid feedback on improvement. However, Stuart’s Lab report does one thing

right which is emphasizing important ideas through text size difference. This at least lets the reader know what are important facts to keep in mind when reading but nothing else after this. It will be hard to improve the lab report but has a foundation set.

Conclusion:

When looking at all the reports and looking at the important aspects for each, which is overall the strongest report? The honor goes to the report by Carnagy et al. due to informing the reader with its own facts and properly analyzing the facts. Although it falls short like in the abstract and some data presentation, the report is overall really strong with clear transitions between ideas and sections while providing good analysis. The next best report is "Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development " by Adachi and Willoughby due to similar reasons of Carnagy et al. report. It has proper structure of a lab report, has clear sections with transitions so the reader knows what is where, but where this falls short is in the analytical aspect of the report. It does not really say what to do after and just briefly discusses the results but nothing else. Finally the worst lab report is "Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior." by Stuart. This lab report does not excel or meet some standards for a lab report like not having subtitles to define sections or providing good analysis. This lab report is not clear with where each idea is talked about and just jumps from topic to topic with no transition. Also, this lab report has weak diction and bad sentence structure where everything being is needed to be read twice to understand each time. Overall these lab reports varied with how effective they were, despite talking about something seemingly childish, video games.

Lab Report Sources: (APA)

1. Adachi, Paul J.C., and Teena Willoughby. "Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?" , 2 Nov. 2012,
<https://journals-sagepub-com.ccnny-proxy1.libr.ccnny.cuny.edu/doi/10.1177/0743558412464522>.
2. Carnagey, Nicholas L, et al. "The Effect of Video Game Violence on Physiological Desensitization to Real-Life Violence." *Science Direct*, 17 June 2006,
<https://www-sciencedirect-com.ccnny-proxy1.libr.ccnny.cuny.edu/science/article/pii/S0022103106000825>.
3. Johnstone, Stuart. "Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior ." *IEE Xplore Digital Library*, IEE, 13 Mar. 2013,
<https://ieeexplore-ieee-org.ccnny-proxy1.libr.ccnny.cuny.edu/document/6479437/citations#citations>