



Examiners' Report Lead Examiner Feedback

January 2021

Pearson BTEC Nationals
In Children's Play, Learning and Development

Unit 4: Enquiries into Current
Research in Early Years Practice
(31599H)

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Introduction

This was the third January series of this unit. Learners are required to show their understanding of research processes, including methods of data collection, interpretation of research findings, and the implications of research findings for practice in the sector. They should show an understanding of the considerations such as ethics, confidentiality, and the viability of conducting research in practice that need to be taken into account before carrying out research in the sector.

The question paper follows the format identified in the sample assessment materials. The paper is split into four activities. Each activity requires learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different aspects of research. This includes methods of data collection, their advantages and disadvantages, the implications of the research for individuals, early years' settings and the wider society. Marks for each activity are allocated in accordance with the specification design.

Each of the questions has been marked using a 'levels based' approach to assessment where the overall quality of the response is considered rather than the specific number of facts stated from the indicative content, although this does have a bearing on the quality of the response. More detail can be found below in the individual question section of the report.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

- The paper examines learners' understanding of the methods used in a study of the involvement of parents in reading to their children in the early years. It requires them to consider the implications of parental involvement in early reading with their children and the implications of the findings for practitioners in early years settings. Learners are required also to show an understanding of key factors that should be taken into account when conducting research in practice.
- Activity 1 requires learners to review the stimulus material, a small study by the Book trust promoting the use of materials for reading with young children (aged 12-30 months) to parents less likely to engage voluntarily with literacy activities with their children. Learners are asked to comment on the research method used, a pre-and post-intervention self-completion survey about families' use of materials provided to them. Learners needed to review this method of data collection and to

compare this with the methods used in research about this topic that they have sourced themselves. Marks are available for work related to both sources, with additional credit being awarded for learners able to provide comparisons and conclusions.

- Activity 2 requires learners to review the relationship between parents and the setting, focusing on the additional engagement of parents with the setting following the intervention. Learners should discuss the impact of a positive relationship between the parent and the setting on children's enjoyment of reading.
- Activity 3 requires learners to consider the implications of the promotion and development of early literacy skills for practice in early years' settings. The response should include reference to the article and the implications of information learners have found within the research they have looked at.
- Activity 4 focuses on research practices needed to investigate the impact of involving parents in the child's early education. Learners are required to critique a research proposal, making suggestions for improvement where necessary.
- Throughout the paper, where learners were able to show application of their knowledge, they were able to access the higher mark bands for the activities. Where basic knowledge was evident, but little application was demonstrated within the responses, learners were not able to do this.
- It should be noted that responses overall were of a varied standard, with some learners able to address the paper effectively whilst others were clearly not so well prepared. Some learners were able to demonstrate an understanding of research practices and offer realistic critiques of these as well as making suggestions for the application of findings within a classroom environment.
- As this paper is based on the material provided in Part A, centres are encouraged to ensure that learners focus on the material provided by Pearson for this activity. Some learners commented within their work that they had accessed the original source material which informed Part A. Whilst this was not generally an issue in their responses, centres are reminded that the questions and expected range of responses is based on the materials provided in Part A, and that reference to the original article will not allow access to additional marks.
- Using the SAM materials during centres' preparation for this paper will

allow learners the opportunity to practice how to structure and present their responses in order to attain the marks available to them. This should include opportunities to practice analysis and make recommendations for future practice. Referring to the mark scheme during the activities will familiarise them as to the level of analysis and judgement required in Level 3 assessment.

Individual Questions

Activity 1

Many learners discussed the research methods used in the source material *or* the methods used in the material they had researched by themselves to support their work. Where they were able to include and comment on the methods used in both sources, showing an understanding of the use of data in research through evaluative comments and referring also to the reliability of the conclusions, they were able to access mark band 4 for this question.

Example 1

The learner has addressed all aspects of the question, and the comments related to suitability demonstrate effective evaluation. The discussion around both reliability and validity show a thorough understanding of the research methods in relation to the Bookstart Corner project.

One of the research methods used in this article was a randomised before (pre-intervention) and after (post-intervention) self-completion survey with families to whom the Bookstart Corner programme was being delivered.

How have self-completion surveys as a method of data collection for research been used in this study compared to others you have researched about the issue?

Your answer should include:

- other methods of research used to explore the issue
- how reliable the results of the research methods used are.

(15)

In this activity I will be talking about how self-completion surveys as a method of data collection for research has been used in the first article called Evaluation of bookstart England: Bookstart corner, March 2015 compared to my own secondary research articles.

In the article "Evaluation of bookstart England: Bookstart corner, March 2015" authors ~~see~~ Sean Demack and Anna Stevens use pre-intervention and after post-intervention surveys as a method of data collection. Using these as methods may have good benefits and may be very reliable but also may have many downfalls. A benefit of using these surveys as a method are that the families could give their most sincere opinions and feelings, making a lot more easier to be a big impact when using bookstart after, causing it to become a lot more easier to analyse and get a good conclusion.

from it making it reliable and valid however, a downfall from also using surveys as a method is that the after post-interventions surveys could be biased regarding to Bookstart a stated in the findings "that the Bookstart Corner program^{me} is highly valued amongst parents^t and practitioners..." by not also stating the downfalls within the Bookstart Corner leads to the surveys slightly being ~~to~~ biased and not giving a full overview of it effectiveness upon the parents and the children.

In my first secondary research "Parent Involvement in early Childhood education and its impact on development of early language and literacy skills: An Exploration of one head start program^s Parent Involvement Model," the author Lindsay A. Koch also used surveys to collect data from the parents and families who were having their children attending Early Beginnings head start program. Even though with the surveys she gained a good amount of results indicating the great impact of the Early Beginning head start program she also used a variety of different methods to help her come to a reliable and valid conclusion, one of the other methods used were one-on-one interviews. By using these one-on-one interviews

She was able to include open-ended questions to help her have a good discussion and get in-depth answers from the participants, making it beneficial as she was then able to confirm or disconfirm certain findings when she was conducting her analysis so that she would be able to also get more reliable and trust worthy results so that her research could be proved to be valid. However, by her to the author using a variety of different methods called methodology she would need to ensure that she had ~~the~~ triangulation research because if not then all are conclusions would be different and they would not be valid leading to her not getting the research done she wanted and having to repeat and change a few things to get valid results.

In my second secondary research called "Parent Involvement and Early Literacy" the author ^{based their article upon the} Qinyun Lin ~~used the method~~ ~~see secondary~~ "Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-1999" by the author using secondary research from a longitudinal study may have benefits and quite a few downsides upon the authors research.

and conclusion. The benefits from using secondary research from a longitudinal ~~res~~ study is that due to the research being taken over a long period of time ensures that the results and the conclusion is valid and is reliable to use when needed, also giving it enough time to be analysed and proofread, however, a downfall of doing so is that with there not being stated or used a variety of different methods and only relying on the secondary research could cause Qiyun Lin's article to be invalid and unreliable as they are only stating what has already been stated before in the first research.

In my third ~~res~~ secondary research article called "Parent involvement in elementary school and educational attainment" the author Wendy Niedel Barnard also used a variety of different methods to help his data collection and results become valid. They used a good study sample, and a variety of different quantitative research such as questionnaires, tables, surveys of sample group and much more. The benefits of using a good sample

group is that it will help to get a variety of different opinions and answers and will help to a range of different point of views ~~ex~~ from the participants. Having all these different views and opinions will help to make the study and the conclusion a lot more valid as they are ensuring that they are getting trustworthy information to make an honest result and finding. However, when also using the sample group it can have major downfall as if it is a too big sample group it can lead to the author making it a longitudinal study due to not gathering all the data from all the participants involved in this study so by ensuring the sample group is good but small ~~as~~ can help to improve results and help to make the study as useful as possible.

In conclusion, all the different articles used all a different amount of methods helping them ^{to all} come to no different conclusion and different results than each other as all these different methods had different benefits and different downfalls from one another.

The response above gained 13 marks

Example 2

There is a basic and clear description of research methods used in the source material, with reference to data collation and extraction. There is reference to other methods of data collection (interviews) but no reference to other studies that have used this method. Work is largely superficial. The conclusions on reliability are not supported. A sound basic effort is presented.

Summary :

One of the research methods used in this article was a randomised before (pre-intervention) and after (post-intervention) self-completion survey with families to whom the Bookstart Corner programme was being delivered.

How have self-completion surveys as a method of data collection for research been used in this study compared to others you have researched about the issue?

Your answer should include:

- other methods of research used to explore the issue
- how reliable the results of the research methods used are.

(15)

Sheffield Hallam University has completed this evaluation of the Bookstart Corner initiative which is run by Book Trust, which is a reading charity that promotes children's reading. The methodological approach was to conduct randomised before (pre-intervention) and after (post-intervention) self-completion survey with families whom the Bookstart Corner programme was being delivered to.

The self-completion^{survey} method of data collection for research has been used to make a comparison to investigate any changes from before taking part in Bookstart Corner and after. Many other ~~was~~ methods that have been researched about the issue include questionnaires with both open and closed questions. This is because open questions tend to give more information such as the thoughts, feelings and motivations behind the answer.

The results of this method may not be reliable because participants may answer untruthfully and respond how they think the surveyor would want them to.

Another method that I have researched about the issue is interviews. These can take place face to face or by using electronic connections such as Skype. Advantages of this method are that the topic can be discussed in depth and the surveyor can find out more information including the reasons, motivations and thoughts behind for the answer. Disadvantages of interviews are that they take a long time to complete and the interviewer could influence the responses by letting their own opinions show. The results of this method can be reliable if the interviewer remains non-judgemental and does not show their own opinions.

The self completion survey method did include some open questions to find out overall what parents thought of the programme, for example "Very helpful in giving me confidence to read to my child." However the conclusion identified that they believe a control group would be

required to take into account any natural change.

Using both qualitative and quantitative methods will increase the amount of information gathered. As they will be statistics as well as some behaviour and reasons why they have answered. Also the researcher could use triangulation, which is using at least three separate methods to collect data. For example researcher could use questionnaires, interviews and secondary research for this issue. The aim of triangulation is to show similarities in the findings from three different methods. This will also add reliability to the research.

The response above gained 4 marks

Activity 2

In this question there was a notable difference between learners who were able to address the question in relation to the involvement of parents in their children's literacy development and those who wrote more generally about children's reading skills when in a setting. Example 1 shows a clear focus on the subject area including reference to different sources of evidence. Example 2 does not address all areas of the question or the assessment criteria, with marks awarded accordingly.

Example 1

A clear summary of the findings of the source material is presented. The work shows some analysis of the issue, the importance of parents being involved with their child's reading and draws realistic conclusions from the source material and additional research information. There are some examples of the impact of parent/child reading on future skills and the wider impact of this. The learner has used secondary research findings and demonstrated a sound understanding of the relationship between these and the findings and implications of the source material. A well-structured response accessing marks in mark band 4.

Activity 2

The research article discussed the benefits of parental involvement in their child's reading and indicates that the Bookstart Corner programme exerts a positive influence on a wide range of factors for the families receiving the programme.

The article states that '...monitoring forms showed a marked change in practitioner views about family behaviours; following Bookstart Corner the majority of practitioners (62%) believed the family to be playing and engaging as a normal part of daily life after the visits compared with 23% who were doing this at the point of the first visit'.

How do the issue and conclusions in this study relate to your own secondary research?

(15)

The conclusion in this research study that 62% of practitioners believed families to be playing and engaging as a normal part of daily life, this factor along with others showed the programme had a positive influence on a range of factors. It encourages book ownership, increased frequency of reading and encouraged the use of services such as the library and children's health centre. Encouraging book ownership from a young child's age will spark creativity and imagination in them that they can use in their own stories or when they are playing games with friends. They can imagine what certain characters describes in books look like, they can be creative in what actions they would be doing so. This can encourage children to read more books like this or want to read completely different books. Reading books with stories and rhymes can help with a child's

language development and introduce them to new vocabulary.

In my secondary research ~~of~~ Hancock's article in 2016 proved Demacks and Stevens' conclusion as they stated they marked a change in views about family behaviours and about ~~play~~ ^{families} playing and engaging as part of normal life. In my research in Hancock's conclusion it states that with the Bookstart corners choice of resources put ~~into~~ early into a literacy gift, literacy was more visible and understandable for receiving families, meaning that children and their parents can then play and engage with literacy activities with the help from bookstart. Understanding and having literacy be visible for parents to see is a huge advantage for children as they can now participate and develop with their literacy through activities their parents can set up after their book start sessions. The parents in this study observed how the practitioners worked with a child as they were demonstrating to a parent what literacy learning may look like in action, this is so they could get tips and become more

Confident with making and engaging in these activities with their children they will confide in knowing if the literacy activity is benefiting their children's development this could be through language, ~~and~~ communication and listening. As stated in the Demerkes and Steiner's research study parents confidence and enjoyment had risen from the pre session questions as to the post session questions.

In another of my secondary research articles Parent engagement from preschool through grade 3 - in 2013 by Smith, Sheila, Robbins, Taylor, Stigman, Shannon, Mathur and Kisha, this conclusion is also agreed with in this article. Parent engagement in children's education is increasingly viewed as an essential support to children's learning in early care and through the school years. It states that providing guidance and resources from companies such as bookstart will promote increased parental engagement outreach, this is linked back to Demerkes and Steiner's article as families behaviours are changing. With effective parent engagement combined with learning support

on early care will increase children's chances of achieving their full potential.

Overall ~~long~~ the issue and conclusion in the original research relates to my own Secondary research conclusions well, because in them they both state how parental engagement in play and learning will benefit children, also they state that families behaviours towards this are changing because of the Betterstart corner.

The response above gained 13 marks

Example 2

There is a clear basic description of the impact of parents' involvement in their children's reading, with outcomes stated. There is little reference to the wider impact of the research findings however. The brief references to the secondary research has isolated links to the key issue, parents reading with their children, resulting in a sound basic response in mark band 1.

The research article discussed the benefits of parental involvement in their child's reading and indicates that the Bookstart Corner programme exerts a positive influence on a wide range of factors for the families receiving the programme.

The article states that '...monitoring forms showed a marked change in practitioner views about family behaviours; following Bookstart Corner the majority of practitioners (62%) believed the family to be playing and engaging as a normal part of daily life after the visits compared with 23% who were doing this at the point of the first visit'.

How do the issue and conclusions in this study relate to your own secondary research?

(15)

The research article discusses the benefits of parental involvement in their child's reading and shows that Bookstart Corner has a positive influence on the families that have received the programme.

In my secondary research according to Bookstart Corner, 99% of practitioners have seen an increase in awareness of the importance of sharing books. Also 87% of settings delivering Bookstart Corner worked with families who were not previously accessing services such as libraries and children's centres.

From the research I have gathered it has proven that Bookstart Corner has had a positive influence on families across a range of areas. My findings suggest that parents are encouraging books and rhymes and spending

more time with their children. According to Bookstart Corner, 97% practitioners have seen Bookstart corner result in parents and carers spending more quality time with their child.

The research that I have found has also demonstrated that families have been encouraged to use services such as libraries and the children's centres. There was evidence that disadvantaged families, eg non-working families, used a greater number of services that had been delivered by the children's centre.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) says that between the age of 12-30 months, which is the target group of the research article 'Children should have an interest in books and rhymes and may have favourites'. Therefore at this age parents/carers need to be introducing their children to reading as it can help the children learn words and extend their vocabulary.

The findings in this study suggest that reading with parents or carers is important for the children. My own research shows that the findings are correct reading aloud to children will allow the children to read along, which at first is reciting from memory however in time the child will begin to recognise words and letter sounds.

The response above gained 4 marks

Activity 3

The question requires learners to consider strategies that settings can develop and use to promote children's development of literacy in their early years. Some learners were not able to address this focus effectively, instead seeming to use the question as an extension of their response to question 2. There was a notable lack of reference to wider issues in many responses, which limited to opportunity for these responses to access all the marks available here.

Example 1

This response addresses all aspects of the question, with supporting information provided through reference to early years' theory, which strengthens the response. The work addresses a range of implications for using strategies within settings to engage children in the development of literacy skills. There is clear reference to wider research and the recommendations for practice are effectively supported.

Within the pre-release, it reflects on the current provisions that are in place such as the Early years Foundation Stage statutory Framework 2017 (EYFS,2017). Within the EYFS 2017 it highlights the importance of focusing on children's reading at such as young age, which is included in their prime areas. The EYFS 2017 encourages children to listen to stories from others (Vygotsky 1929, More Knowlegdable Other, where the children learn from others), talking to others (communication and language) which should be ecnouraged by Practitioners/ Teachers. This implicates, that the bookstart programme has a determental effect on children from such a young age as it helps them to express their thoughts and feelings, develop Early Language Skills and begin to graps the differences between spoken and written langaauge ' Parents more likely to use puppets... sing or say rhymes... when they read together'.

Skinner 1968, shows that children learn to read through operant conditioning and imiation of others through a prompting and postive enviromnetal influence. This suggets that the programme helps the children to be able to learn from others such as parents. However this could be limaitaion for the families, who have low literacy skills. This shows that Providing

the parents with a DVD and a rhyme sheet that includes the help parents need to share stories effectively and understand what the programme is all about 'carefully selected resources. This increases that the recommendations for change should be increasing the confidence of parents abilities to help the children language and literacy. the Programme should be shown to all parents, even those who feel they do not need it as it can provide additional support for families in situations that can never be predicted, ' need to ensure that its programme and resources fit the needs of children, families and practitioners and stakeholders'. This should mean that the EYFS, 2017 should ensure that the programme or the help is implemented within all setting and the appropriate training should be completed and to work with multi-agencies such as library or children's centres, ' Practitioners revealed that following the sessions, parents were now sharing books, stories and rhymes with their children outside the session'.

Source 1, also reflected the current provision of the EYFS, 2017 within early years education such as Nuseries as it encourages settings and the programme to show progress under the prime areas of development such communication and language. the implications of this will be that the more interactions with parent; books, rhymes and stories, included in the programme can have a big effect on the childrens language and literacy development. this is also encouraged within setting through the partnership between practitioners and parents and already seeing an impact on the children's holistic development. This signposts families onto a range of additional services providing ongoing support (family learning courses etc)' home based programme and is delivered by children's centres staff, providing free resources for the family and enabling centres to enhance their existing work with families'. It also provides extra help for children or families who have additional needs as it helps their start in the starting process and the 2 year development check. the programme could also be encouraged by speech and language therapists that more reading and resources are made available for children at home as well as within the session. The recommendations I would suggest within the Early Years provision is that Practitioners potentially need more training to 'be skilled in adapted the resources to the context and the children's and parent's interests'. this increases encouragement from schools, more awareness about the help available. the Government should also be able to increase the participation through World Book Day or even National Book Start Week. This is due to Chomsky's 1986 theory that children have an

innate ability to learn language so all the people around the child should make it easy for them to access and to encourage it more often such as at home or at school.

Another source (4), uses the EYFS, 2017 to reflect the importance that language and literacy have on the child as it is stated as a requirement to be implemented in the children's life as they should provide opportunities for children to begin to read and write, 'children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite interests'. The implication this has on early years provisions is that it provides by schools that have many opportunities to expand their reading skills 'book gifting and advice to parents is a cost-effective way of raising standards'. This can be encouraged and changed within Early Year Provisions by with the Book Start Programme, parent Book mornings within early years and encouragements of parent/ child reading at home. This can also help children who have English as an Additional Language and is behind on the reading and speaking of the language so the extra help provided to child and parent could have a major impact on this school readiness of reading to being a large factor within their development. Parents, who have low literacy skills or who generally lack in confidence in their own reading ability can be provided further guidance and provided with resources to take home and work with the child at home, 'encourages positive relationships with books... parental encouragement, parent confidence and enjoyment'. Source 2 can also relate to this as it shows that 'parent child initiative can have a positive effect in improving parent literacy'. The recommendations that the Early Year Provisions can change will be to invite families to free services such as rhyme and story time at library and children centres and to make the families feel welcome and not judged, which will increase participation.

Overall, the EYFS, 2017 has a detrimental effect and impact on families partnerships with settings, the awareness of extra resources and help as well as 'extremely cost-effective as well as an efficient way of producing not only higher standards in literacy but also higher the standards across the curriculum' (source 4).

The response above gained 16 marks

Example 2

This response demonstrates a clear lack of focus, with key areas of focus being addressed almost inadvertently within the piece. The response does not address the significance of the source material research findings for practice or demonstrate any real application to practice. Marks are awarded for some suggestions, such as the reference to the cost implications of implementing a literacy strategy, which is acknowledged as a wider issue in context. There is, however, no development of any relevant issues raised.

The research study states 'The comparative analysis showed positive significant changes in parental perceptions of their child's engagement and enjoyment in reading, and of their interest in reading.'

What implications does this have for improving provision for children to develop their reading skills in the early years?

In your answer you should refer to the article and your own secondary research.

(20)

In the article 'Evaluation of Bookstart England' the article states that the parents feel more confident knowing what books are best for their child. This may cause implications at their child's setting as if it doesn't provide the certain books that are best for one specific child then the setting will have to provide more resources. This article's findings can be generalised as the article states 'random variation through the use of tests of statistical significance, finding does not necessarily indicate that the Bookstart corner programme has had a causal impact on the parents or children'. This can also be a limitation as the programme may not have a significant effect on the parents and their children.

In the article 'Beneficial effects of Bookstart in temperamentally highly reactive infants', the findings state that

Bookstart was a significant predictor of language development and verbal interaction. Also, Bookstart shows effect when children have a highly reactive temperament, whereas the effects are not significant in a less temperamentally reactive group. Infants showed less positive and more negative emotions when lying on their backs e.g. bath time, dress, play, face wash activities. Implications to this article are that it was published in 2014 so it's not a recent article. Also, parents were not satisfied with their child's responses in attempts to initiate verbal interactions and may be more inclined to not want to participate in Bookstart.

In the article, 'to what extent does the Bookstart scheme affect the role of the public librarian', the findings of the research were that overall the interviews and questionnaires the librarians carried out were positive towards Bookstart. They were very enthusiastic about the scheme. Also, that there is a lack of knowledge from parents about the Bookstart scheme. Implications suggest that there is a lack of funding towards the scheme and that it could

affect staff morale. This information can contain a bias error due to receiving most of the findings information from Bookstart workers. Findings to this research can be generalised as they show that librarians enjoy and have a positive outlook on the scheme, but due to a lack of funding may make them question if the scheme is worthwhile.

Finally, in the article 'Service innovation and policy diffusion: an exploratory study of the Bookstart programme in Taiwan', the findings to this research are that charitable institutions, local politicians and leaders, local authority and the ministry of Education played an main role in getting Bookstart to spread through out Taiwan.

Implications for this is that the article was published in July 2013, so it may not be valid or reliable anymore. The article can not be generalised as it doesn't have a ~~concrete~~ main limitation related to the Bookstart scheme.

In conclusion, the articles 'Evaluation of Bookstart England' and 'Beneficial effects of Bookstart in temperamentally

highly reactive infants' came to a similar conclusion with similar findings and implications, linking to parents. They both state that parents do not have enough information on Bookstart and they don't know if it's good or not. Teachers should receive more training on it to give parents all the information they need to take part in the Bookstart scheme.

The response above gained 5 marks

Activity 4

The question requires learners to critically analyse a research proposal linked to the reading skills of children aged 4 years. Most learners managed to make reference to the validity and reliability of the research strategy, although not all were able to link their ideas to suggestions for practical changes to implement the research activity. Stronger responses showed some evaluation with reference to key issues such as confidentiality and ethical practice. Stronger learners were able to suggest changes to the proposal to strengthen its validity and were also able to include realistic suggestions for undertaking the research activity.

Example 1

This response addresses all aspects of question, including validity, reliability and ethical considerations. There is evidence of a good understanding of collecting, collating and interpreting data and of interpreting the research findings. The work makes effective and consistent reference back to the case study, and the changes suggested are realistic, practical and likely to result in more reliable conclusions from the research outcomes. A mark band 4 response is presented here.

In the given research proposal, a museum ~~arrange~~ the research is due to visit 3 early years settings to investigate how effective parents reading to their children is for 4 year olds. They will be using ~~quantitative~~ ^{quantitative} observations to assess this in settings, looking at the children against their reading opportunities. The research will then be used to understand parental

engagement on children's reading skills and development.

Firstly I will be evaluating how valid and reliable the data will be following the research proposal. The method they are using to collect data is ~~to~~ observation tick lists for practitioners to complete. These observations may not be very reliable as ^{the} children may act differently if you are watching them. Another issue for observations is that they are being completed by the staff in the setting this may show bias or the observations could be rushed which would affect the reliability of results especially as observations can be difficult to remain objective. If the researcher wanted valid and reliable data from observations, these should have been completed more than one time as there are ^{many} factors that would affect a child from being themselves. The research should also include another method which is qualitative, this would ensure staff can go into detail as what is happening may not be an option on the ticklists. My suggestion would

be to complete interviews on the parents to understand their experiences and what they do with their child for reading. I would also ensure that the observation checklists are completed multiple times ~~of~~ over a time period as this would show progress and ensure that the results are reliable. A mix of methods should help the validity and ensure triangulation in the conclusions.

Next I will be evaluating my weaknesses or limitations in the research and then making suggestions on how to improve or fix these. As I just mentioned, I would bring in another data collection method, possibly on the parents as this would ensure the research is getting to see the parental involvement as wanted in the proposal rather than just the effects of it after in settings. Another limitation would be the sample group. The research proposal is not specific enough, it mentions 3 settings for children aged 4 years however it does not go into enough details. ~~It~~ It does not state location or

demographics, where these settings are? This is an issue as results would vary if one setting is in the North of the UK and one in the South, to overcome this there should be more detail for where the settings are. The proposal mentions only 3 settings however not how big the class size is, the number of children who to be observed could vary from 3 to 90 children. Only having 3 settings is an issue as parents may not want their children involved and this could leave very few children, however if a full class of 30 children are taking part this is putting stress on staff. To overcome this the researcher proposal should mention more settings e.g. 10 reception classes and mention how many children from each e.g. 5 children per reception class. The setting type is not addressed as well, do they want it on SEND settings or Montessori schools or public schools? This needs to be specified to ensure results are valid. The proposal mentions how they want to research the development of children's reading skills, however to see the effect ~~will~~ or change or development, any observations should be

completed before and after a time period of parental engagement which would mean a longitudinal study or even observations to be completed on children receiving and not receiving parental engagement.

Lastly, I will discuss the factors that need to be considered when setting up this research. When setting up a proposal such as this, there ~~are~~ ^{are} ethical considerations and legislation to follow. The research should involve BERA before being carried out. Ethics needs to be considered when completing the observations. Parents need to be fully explained reasoning and what is involved in the research, no deception. Everyone involved should have the right to withdraw and have to give fully informed consent. They should be explained how they will be protected from harm and assured of confidentiality. Legislation such as the Human Rights Act and GDPR 1998 should be followed. You can look at the blue eyes vs brown eyes example of how research needs to follow ethics as they did not and there is

a lot of controversies linking to it. Any research skills need to be considered, this should include organisation. The set proposed is organised well for the consideration of the data after it has been collected and is organised as it mentions where the observation tick list is coming from. However time management should have been included, there is no mention to how long the research is planning to take, no mention to if the research is longitudinal. There could be more information about how the research will be neutral and include no bias through the study. They could have outlined or included ~~that~~ that the practitioner carrying out the observation is not going to be the child's key worker for example. Lastly the objectives could have been clearer and made in depth of what they are looking for within "effectiveness of parental involvement". I think the purpose needs to focus more on the link from children to books rather than parental engagement as this is not really explored in the research. I would suggest that the research proposal is looking to evaluate children's relationships with reading in the early years settings.

The response above gained 14 marks

Example 2

This work addresses the points required for this question, but they are mostly not developed or fully explained or related to all essential key areas, such as ethics. There are few realistic suggestions for change and they are not explained or developed within the work. Eg 'there may be some limitations or weaknesses to my research proposal. I will try to plan around these as they arise' – supported by weak example. Work is insufficiently developed to access marks above mark band 1.

in your report you must cover:

- the ways in which this research could provide valid and reliable data analysis of the development of children's reading skills
- potential limitations or weaknesses of the research proposal and how these could be addressed through suggesting changes or additions
- factors to be considered in setting up the research activities, which may include purpose and objectives, research skills and ethical considerations.

(15)

In my research I am going to investigate the effectiveness of involving parents in their child's reading. I will begin by visiting 3 different settings and talking to the Early years educators about the strategies that are currently being used for the teaching of reading. I will observe

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the children and record when they are using opportunities to develop reading and language skills independently. I will then review all the data that has been collected from each setting. I am carrying out this research to compare children's ability to use and develop reading skills when alone compared to when supported by different adults.

I am going to do these observations ~~of~~ over a 3 week period, however the research will fall over 4 weeks. My sample group is going to be 4 year olds from primary school settings. My target group will be the future generation of children as after the research new strategies can be put in place to support children's development regarding their reading skills. I am going to be using a quantitative research method which is a checklist

observation. This will allow me to present my data in a visual way. My research will be reliable as ~~is~~ I am able to carry it out at different settings.

When looking at carrying out research it is also important to look at Ethics. ~~Research~~ I am going to ensure my research has ethical consideration by discussing with parents/carers of the children and gaining their informed consent. This means telling them exactly what I am going to do and getting consent to carry it out.

I will also inform them that they have a right to withdraw at anytime throughout the study. I will also inform them that all information is kept private and confidential. This is done by not using names and personal information when writing up my article.

There may be some limitations or weaknesses to my research proposal. It is important that I am able to plan around these factors if they arise. Such as a parent may not consent to their child participating in the study. I would then have to ensure this child is not part of the study and only observe those which written consent.

The response above gained 4 marks

Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, learners should:

- Demonstrate an understanding of research methods and processes
- Be able to compare and evaluate different methods of research depending on the area of investigation
- Appreciate the difference between qualitative and quantitative data generated through research investigations
- Focus their responses clearly on the specific demand of the question and respond accordingly
- Make links between research findings and early years' practice
- Link the findings of research to wider social contexts
- Show an understanding of how research findings impact on the development of early years practice
- Show an understanding of key concepts in research practice, including ethics, confidentiality, validity and reliability
- Be able to interpret research findings in context
- Be able to present ideas using appropriate and clear language



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