Large-Scale Assessments: Developing assessment publications

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Process for developing assessment documents

• Planning
• Writing
• Reviewing
• Re-writing
• Proof-reading
• Add publication details
• Formatting and design
• Final review
• Printing and dissemination
Planning considerations

- Content (informed by data analysis and reporting plan)
- Style and structure of document
- Expectations of organisation/client
- Team involved
- Timeframes
- Quality assurance processes
Writing considerations

Ensure that:
1. the document is structured in a logical way
2. assessment information is reported accurately and appropriately
3. the key messages stand out
4. providing sufficient detail is balanced with writing concisely
5. the information is engaging, providing information that is relevant to readers
6. clear, consistent and accessible language is utilised
1. Document structure

- Present information in a logical order that is appropriate for the particular type of dissemination product
- Use informative headings
- Get early feedback on the draft structure
- For reports, include an executive summary
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2. Accurate reporting

• Include sufficient background information about the assessment (why, who, when, what, how)
• Consider what data is available and what reporting is appropriate for the analysis
• Acknowledge any limitations
• Provide readers with information on how to interpret the results
• Be wary of over-interpreting the results
• Reference prior research or other assessment programs (where relevant)
I used to think correlation implied causation.

Then I took a statistics class. Now I don't.

Sounds like the class helped.

Well, maybe.
3. Key messages

Some ways to make important messages stand out:
• Reiterate key messages (rephrasing the information)
• Formatting
• Consider the placement of the information (e.g., in executive summary, chapter introductions and conclusions)
• Use graphs and images
• Use examples to illustrate key points
• Limit the number of key messages included in summaries
Introduction

ASER 2014 marks the tenth year of the Annual Status of Education Report. Each year since 2004, ASER has reached almost all rural districts in the country with three basic questions: Are children enrolled in school? Can they read? Can they do basic arithmetic?

ASER is the only source that makes current data on schooling and learning available for all states in India. Using a household survey methodology, ASER collects data for a representative sample of children from every state and almost every rural district in India. On average ASER reaches over 500 district each year, surveying an average of 650,000 children in more than 16,000 villages in the country. This is about twice the size of the rural sample of the NSS surveys, which provide estimates for poverty, employment, and other socioeconomic indicators in India.

Each year data collection for ASER is done in the months of September, October and November. The report is released in January of the following year. This enables data about learning to be made available during the same school year in which the data was collected. In each year’s report, basic tables on enrollment, reading, arithmetic and school facilities are published for each state and for India as a whole. This information is available well in time to be used for planning for the next school year.

To mark the 10th year of the ASER exercise, this supplemental report presents trends over time in enrollment, reading, arithmetic and English for children in rural India. The assessment tools for each of these three domains are comparable over time. Reading and arithmetic assessments have been done every year since the inception of the ASER survey. English assessment has been done in 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2014. The data tables reported here cover the years 2006 to 2014. ASER 2005 data is not included in this report because the sampling in the first year was different from that in subsequent years.

This ASER Supplemental report summarises four types of data tables: • Trends over time • Enrollment trends over time: Here the focus is mainly on trends in the proportion of children out of school (age group 6-14) by gender as well as the proportion things to keep in mind while reading this report

- The number of districts mentioned in the report is based on the 2001 census, which has been used as the sampling frame for ASER for the entire duration of the exercise.

- In the data tables, estimates have not been presented if the sample size was insufficient.

- In the schooling and learning tables, data is categorized by school type. Because ASER data is collected from households, children’s schooling status is reported by children themselves, or by other members of the household. For example, a child who is attending school is classified as learning from home, even if the child is not attending school.

- Every year, ASER samples 30 villages per district from the Census 2001 village directory, and surveys 20 households in each selected village. All children in the age group of 3-16 years are surveyed in the sampled households. Therefore, the number of villages and households visited by ASER surveys has remained consistent. However, the number of children surveyed has fallen by about 25% between 2006 and 2014. This drop is in all probability due to the increase in the number of rural households since 2006. Census 2011 notes that there was a 24% increase in rural households since Census 2001. Yet, the rural population increased by only 12%, during the same period. This means that the average rural household size has gone down resulting in fewer children per household.

http://img.asercentre.org/docs/Publications/ASER%20Reports/ASER%20TOT/fullasertrendsovertimereport.pdf
NAPLAN helps parents, carers and educators to see if children are meeting important numeracy and literacy standards. It is used to support school improvement processes by enabling principals and teachers to monitor their students’ progress over time and to identify areas of strength and development.

Federal, state and territory education ministers have agreed that NAPLAN will move online from 2017, over a three-year period.

NAPLAN online will provide better assessment, more precise results and faster turnaround of information.

State/territory education authorities will make decisions about the logistics and timing to move NAPLAN online for their state/territory. These groups will also lead implementation in their state/territory.
4. Level of detail

- Will depend on the publication type, the audience and the importance of the information
- Take into account the likely background knowledge of the audience
- Back up statements with evidence
- Explain graphs and tables in the text
- Provide sufficient detail to support understanding of the information
- Provide readers with details about where they can access further information
- Include lengthy/detailed tables in appendix, where appropriate
PISA 2012: How Australia measures up

The PISA 2012 assessment of students' mathematical, scientific and reading literacy

Sue Thomson
Lisa De Bortoli
Sarah Buckley

CHAPTER 1 Introduction

The main goals of PISA
What PISA assesses
Features of PISA 2012
How results are reported
What participants did
Cognitive assessment
Context questionnaires
Time of testing
Participants in PISA 2012
Countries
Schools
Students
PISA in Australia
Organisation of the report
Further information

5. Engaging readers

• First impressions count!
• Present the information in a way that engages readers, so that they will want to find out more.
• Readers need to feel convinced that the results are valid and reliable, and that the information is important and relevant.
• Address questions and policy issues that will be of interest to the target audience.
• Use well designed graphs, tables and images.
• Use a writing style and tone that is appropriate for the audience and type of document.
What you want to say.

What they're interested in.

Relevance

http://parlormultimedia.com/publishing/content/raise-bar
WHY NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT SURVEY MATTERS?


http://img.asercentre.org/docs/Publications/ASER%20Reports/ASER%202014/fullaser2014mainreport_1.pdf
6. Clear communication

• Write clearly and concisely
• Explain the results and possible implications (make the readers’ job as easy as possible)
• Limit acronyms and abbreviations
• Explain technical terms and use consistent terminology
• Use the appropriate tense
• Use the active not passive voice
• Review and proofread!
http://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1012&context=mteg

Terminology and conventions used in this report

Reporting of student data
The report uses “Class 6” students as shorthand for the MTEG Afghanistan target population. The target population is defined as Class 6 students (taught in Dari or Pashto) from government schools in 13 Afghan provinces.

The figures in this report are estimates that apply to the Class 6 population. To obtain these estimates, the sample data is weighted to the estimated number of students in the Class 6 population.

Rounding
All statistics, including their totals and differences, are rounded for reporting purposes. Because of rounding, some figures in some tables may appear inconsistent.

Where a value of 0 is reported it means that the value is less than 0.05.

Statistical significance
Statistical significance shows that the differences identified are likely to be reflected in the population, rather than being the result of the random nature of the data.

The 95% confidence level is used throughout this report to compute confidence intervals and statistical significance.

Differences which are statistically significant and positive are identified by a triangle “Δ”; the differences that are statistically significant and negative are identified by an inverted triangle “V”; and the differences that are not statistically significant are identified by a dash “-“.

Standard errors are not published here but will be available in the technical report.

Correlation
A correlation coefficient shows the strength of association between two variables. The correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to 1, with 0 meaning there is no correlation, values greater than 0 showing positive correlation, and values less than 0 showing negative correlation.

For ease of discussion, the following descriptions will be used in this report when the correlation coefficient is statistically significant:

- Correlations of 0.5 and higher are considered to be moderate to strong.
- Correlations lower than 0.5 are considered to be weak to moderate.

The same scale and descriptions are used for negative correlations (e.g., -0.5 or less is a moderate to strong negative correlation).

Acronyms
ACER Australian Council for Educational Research
MTEG Monitoring Trends in Educational Growth
PISA Project for International Student Assessment
Reviewing process

• May include review by internal team and by client/external reviewers
• People with different areas of expertise may need to review different sections
• Have someone review the whole document to check for consistency (an editor)
• Identify what feedback is needed at what stage (for example, feedback on the structure/big picture, detailed feedback on phrasing)
• There are many stages of reviewing and re-writing – ensure sufficient time is allocated
Proof-reading process

• Detailed check for errors (for example, in spelling, punctuation, grammar, references)
• Will often include checking document against a style guide
Publication details

• Information to include:
  – List of authors
  – Copyright details
  – Publisher details
  – ISBN and/or E-ISBN

• This information helps with identification, marketing and referencing the document
Formatting and design

• Utilise the expertise of graphic designers, where possible

• Identify where it could be useful to use infographics and images

• It is important to schedule time for checking after the formatting has been done
Printing and dissemination

Considerations include:

• Will there be online and/or print versions?
• How many copies should be printed?
• How should the document be publicised?
• How should the document be distributed?
Activity: Developing a summary pamphlet

In groups, you will be developing a summary pamphlet based on an existing thematic report (see activity sheet)

This activity will include:

• reading the report
• writing the draft pamphlet
• receiving feedback from others (and providing others with feedback)
• revising the pamphlet, in light of the feedback
• reflecting on the activity
We will try not to take this approach...

This is a nice 200 page comprehensive report.

Now can you cut it down to 2 pages? Maybe just take away the methods, evidence and findings?

@clysy

Reflection

• What was your experience of this task?
• What are the strengths of the pamphlet your group developed?
• What improvements could be made to the pamphlet your group developed?
• How would you approach designing a summary pamphlet in the future, for a different target audience?
Useful resources


Note: For the examples used in this presentation, please refer to the URL provided on the slides