8.9 Ethical Implications of Research Studies and Theory: 10-minute Pack

AQA 7182 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Outline three ways journals or professional bodies can help reduce social harm from published research findings on sensitive topics such as genetic influences on behaviour.

(Total for Question 1 is 6 marks)

2 Explain briefly how the way findings are interpreted and applied can create ethical problems, using an example where a small correlational result about group differences in a trait is presented to the media.

(Total for Question 2 is 3 marks)

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Question 1

outlines first way, e.g. require authors to include a plain language summary highlighting limitations and ethical implications oe	**M1**
explains why this helps, e.g. reduces misinterpretation by journalists and the public oe	**A1**
outlines second way, e.g. require an ethics statement including consultation with stakeholder groups and possible societal impacts oe	**M1**
explains why this helps, e.g. forces authors to reflect on harms and provides reviewers with material to judge social sensitivity oe	**A1**
outlines a third way, e.g. encourage press embargoes and coordinated press briefings with responsible framing oe	**M1**
explains why this helps, e.g. gives time to prepare careful messaging and reduce sensationalist headlines oe	**A1**

Answer: Journals can require plain language summaries that stress limitations and effect sizes, require explicit ethics statements showing stakeholder consultation and discussion of societal impact, and encourage embargoed, coordinated press briefings so findings are framed responsibly rather than sensationally.

Question 2

identifies that misinterpretation or overgeneralisation of findings is an ethical concern oe	**M1**
applies to the example: a small correlational result may be reported as evidence of innate group inferiority, ignoring causality and effect size oe	**A1**
explains the harm: such misreporting can reinforce stereotypes, influence policy, or justify discrimination oe	**A1**

Answer: If a small correlational result about group differences is presented as proof of innate inferiority, this overgeneralisation misleads the public. Ignoring causality and effect size can reinforce stereotypes and be used to justify discriminatory policies, so interpretation and application carry ethical responsibility.

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