

5 During your course you will have studied Rosenhan's (1973) study.

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Evaluate Rosenhan's (1973) study.

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Rosenhan's aim was to see if psychiatrists could distinguish between the sane and insane. However, in reality, Rosenhan looked at if psychiatrists could distinguish sane people pretending to be insane, so this means that there was low validity.

Rosenhan used 12 hospitals across 5 states ^{in the US}, which were varied, e.g. private, new, old, and the amount of staff. Therefore, this means results may be generalisable to the rest of the US, however, may not be generalisable to other countries.

Furthermore, as Rosenhan used the mental health institutions, there is high ecological validity as the participants, patients and nurses ~~may~~ are in their natural environment.

All 8 pseudopatients called up the hospitals as saying they could hear a same-sex voice saying the words 'empty,



the hollow and thus, this was standardised and therefore allows for replication and test for reliability.

Rosenhan used a covert participant observation therefore he was able to see first hand what it was like in a mental hospital. This means there was high validity. However, his notes may have been subjective as to what he interpreted, so this lacks validity.

In conclusion, whilst Rosenhan's study was quite valid, ^{there was still issues as} ~~he deceived the participants by using~~ a covert observation, ~~perhaps~~ the nurses may have questioned their ability as were unable to notice that the pseudopatients were sane. So therefore, the study was quite unethical.