

DEDUCTION SKILLS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES IN "A STUDY IN SCARLET"

WRITTEN BY SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

Shahana Parveen P P, School of Behavioural Sciences, Kannur University

Content Analysis

Ms. Amina Mehara

December 15, 2021

ABSTRACT

Sherlock Holmes is the famous detective character presented by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in A Study In Scarlet. Sherlock Holmes one of the most vivid and enduring characters in English fiction and crime fiction. "A Study in Scarlet" is the story of how Sherlock Holmes solved the murder of Joseph Stangerson and later, Enoch Drebber. Through the deductive and observational skills of Holmes he solved that case. The main focus of this paper is on the deductive skills shown by Holmes in A Study In Scarlet. The results reveal that in most investigative situations Holmes used his deduction skills to reach the correct conclusions. This paper also revealing the eccentric, obsessive and use of drugs by Holmes and the judgemental attitude of Watson.

KEYWORDS: Deduction skills, Sherlock Holmes, Content analysis

INTRODUCTION

Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was a Scottish writer best known for creating Sherlock Holmes, one of the most vivid and enduring characters in English fiction. Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was a physician and writer. In 1887, he created the character Sherlock Holmes for A Study in Scarlet, the first of four novels and fifty-six short stories featuring Holmes and Dr. Watson. The Sherlock Holmes stories are considered classics of crime fiction. Conan Doyle was a medical student when his professor, Dr. Joseph Bell, impressed him with his ability to observe the smallest detail about a patient's condition. This expert in

diagnostic reasoning served as the inspiration for Conan Doyle's fictional character Sherlock Holmes, who made his debut in the 1887 Beeton's Christmas Annual novel-length narrative *A Study in Scarlet*.

The semiautobiographical books *The Firm of Girdlestone* (1890) and *The Stark Munro Letters* (1895), as well as the collection of medical short stories *Round the Red Lamp*, contain additional details about Conan Doyle's medical training and experiences (1894). The world's first and only consulting detective, created by Conan Doyle, is logical, cold, and calculated, which stands in stark contrast to the paranormal ideas he explored in *The Mystery of Cloomber*, a short story from this time period (1889). Conan Doyle wrestled with a complicated set of diametrically opposed views throughout his life, and his early interest in both scientifically verifiable facts and certain paranormal experiences is an example of this.

A Study in Scarlet, a short story by Conan Doyle that was published at the end of 1887 in the publication *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, introduced Sherlock Holmes for the first time. In 1888, it was reissued as a book. Conan Doyle was researching for his historical book "*Micah Clarke*," which was set in the 17th century, at the same period. He appeared to view writing detective stories as his serious labour and the Sherlock Holmes character as merely a tough diversion to test his writing skills. Conan Doyle eventually had the idea that the expanding British magazine industry would be the ideal setting for an experiment in which a recurrent figure would appear in fresh stories. He pitched his idea to *The Strand* magazine, and in 1891 he started releasing fresh Sherlock Holmes tales. In England, the magazine pieces were a huge success. A sensation was made out of the investigator who utilises logic. And readers eagerly anticipated his most recent escapades.

Conan Doyle quickly became a very well-known author as a result of *The Strand* magazine's publication of his Sherlock Holmes stories. More stories were needed by the publication. But, the author requested an unreasonable amount of money because he didn't

want to be overly identified with the now-famous investigator. Conan Doyle requested a payment of 50 pounds per story in the hopes that he wouldn't have to write any more stories. When the magazine accepted, he was astounded and continued to write about Sherlock Holmes. Conan Doyle came up with a technique to finish writing the stories even while the public was obsessed with Sherlock Holmes. He eliminated the character by having him and his adversary Professor Moriarty perish while travelling over Switzerland's Reichenbach Falls. When notified of the intended plot, Conan Doyle's own mother begged her son not to kill off Sherlock Holmes.

The British reading audience was incensed when the narrative in which Holmes died was released in December 1893. More than 20,000 subscribers to magazines cancelled them. Businessmen reportedly put mourning crepe on their top hats in London, according to reports. Holmes, Sherlock Was Reborn After being released from his relationship with Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conan Doyle developed new novels and created the Napoleonic army soldier Etienne Gerard. The popularity of the Gerard stories paled in comparison to that of Sherlock Holmes. Conan Doyle published a play about Holmes in 1897, and actor William Gillette made a name for himself portraying the detective in New York City's Broadway. By including the well-known meerschaum pipe, Gillette gave the character another dimension.

The Hound of the Baskervilles, a Holmes novel, was serialised in The Strand from 1901 to 1902. By putting the narrative five years before Holmes' passing, Conan Doyle was able to avoid mentioning his passing. But because there was such a high demand for Holmes tales, Conan Doyle effectively brought the legendary detective back to life by claiming that no one had truly seen Holmes fall from the falls. The crowd accepted the explanation, glad to hear new tales. Till the 1920s, Arthur Conan Doyle continued to write about Sherlock Holmes. The writer passed away on July 7, 1930. His passing garnered enough attention to make the front page of the New York Times the next day. He was described as a "Spiritist,

Writer, and Founder of Renowned Fiction Detective" in a headline. Of course, Sherlock Holmes continues to exist and can still be seen in movies today.

Arthur Conan Doyle penned the detective story *A Study in Scarlet* in 1887. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, who would go on to become the most well-known detective team in popular fiction, make their first appearance in the novel. The title of the book is taken from a speech given by consulting detective Holmes to his friend and biographer Watson about the nature of his work, in which he refers to the murder investigation in the story as his "study in scarlet" and says that it is our responsibility to unravel, isolate, and expose every inch of the "scarlet thread of murder" that runs through the colourless skein of life. When the story originally came out, both its primary protagonists and the public were not really interested in them. There are only 11 complete copies of Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887, the magazine where the story first appeared, and they are very valuable. *A Study in Scarlet* is one of just four full-length books included in the original canon, despite Conan Doyle having written 56 short stories featuring Holmes. *The Sign of the Four*, which was released in 1890, came after the first book. The first piece of detective fiction to use a magnifying lens as a research tool was *A Study in Scarlet*.

In deductive reasoning, a conclusion is demonstrated to necessarily follow from a series of premises, the first of which denotes a self-evident truth or established fact. Inferring predictions from general rules or theories is a procedure that relies on deductive reasoning in the empirical sciences. Deduction While using this method of reasoning, a person starts with a well-known assertion or widespread belief and works backwards from there. Deduction essentially begins with a hypothesis, considers the options included in that hypothesis, and draws a conclusion. Deductive reasoning has the advantage that your conclusion will always be true if your original premises are true in all circumstances and your reasoning is sound.

Because there are so few premises that are certain to be true all the time, deductive reasoning has limited application in the real world.

Miller studied the use of Sherlock Holmes' deductive reasoning techniques to medical diagnosis in 1985. Her research revealed that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, a physician, modelled Sherlock Holmes after one of his instructors and included many of the didactic traits of the 19th-century medical diagnostician into Holmes' persona. In this essay, the author examines Holmes's deductive reasoning strategies and how they relate to medical diagnosis in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The study *Arthur Conan Doyle, Joseph Bell, and Sherlock Holmes: A Neurologic Relationship* was carried out by Westmoreland and Key in 1991. They discovered that neurologists can claim Sherlock Holmes as one of their own, much like doctors in a number of other medical disciplines. The fact that so many neurologic disorders—including seizures, stroke, syncope, encephalopathies, and head trauma—are described in the short tales and novels lends credence to that claim. The essay also discusses Conan Doyle and Joseph Bell, the forerunners of Sherlock Holmes, and their capabilities of observation and deductive reasoning, as well as how these abilities might be used to solve medical issues.

An investigation on *Sherlock Holmes: An Expert's View of Expertise* was done in 2008 by Andre and Fernand. They discovered that there has been a lot of research done recently to better understand the cognitive structures and processes that underlie expert behaviour. Research in a variety of sectors, including science, athletics, games, and mnemonics, has revealed that experts and novices have quite varied perceptual capacities. These variances may also underlie other cognitive disparities in learning, memory, and problem-solving. From the eyes of a distinguished, if fictional, expert, Sherlock Holmes, this essay assesses the advancements made in recent years. Use Sherlock Holmes as an example to demonstrate expert processes as they are articulated in the most recent ideas and studies. In

particular, Conan Doyle's hero is described in a way that highlights the importance of perception as well as the nature and influence of specialist knowledge. The second section of the paper discusses a number of topics that recent expertise research has seldom touched on. These gaps encompass, among other things, various types of reasoning, how emotions affect cognition, and how experts' knowledge and cognitive abilities change with age. So, although being over a century old, Conan Doyle's novels exhibit amazing examples of professional behaviour, including the treatment of subjects that are mostly ignored by modern scholarship.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

One of the most memorable and enduring fictional characters in English literature is the detective Sherlock Holmes, who was created by Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle. In 1887, he developed the Sherlock Holmes persona for *A Study in Scarlet*. The Sherlock Holmes tales set important precedents for crime fiction. Since they were written between 1887 and 1927, Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes tales have captivated generations. This has prompted the creation of several adaptations across various mediums. Many shows, books, and films have repeatedly brought the investigator to life.

The most well-known detective, Sherlock Holmes, used logical reasoning to solve problems. Deductive thinking moves from the general to the particular or specific. Deductive reasoning involves drawing conclusions based on implicit information in the premises rather than adding new information. When applied correctly, deductive reasoning yields conclusions that are said to have deductive validity. If and only if it is impossible for both the premises and the conclusion(s) to be untrue, then an argument is deductively valid. By starting with true premises and using logical principles to reason, deductive validity offers the reasoner a wonderful guarantee: the conclusion you arrive at cannot be untrue.

This study focus on the first book of Arthur Conan Doyle “*A Study in Scarlet*”, it is one of only four full-length novels. The novel also includes the psychological factors such as

Holmes sometimes obsessed with his thoughts and lead to compulsive behaviours. Holmes use cocaine. His way of perceiving the external world is different from others. His deductive reasoning and leading to the logical conclusion is also brilliant. This content analysis focus to explore the deduction skills of Sherlock Holmes in “A Study in Starlet”.

OBJECTIVES

Major objective

- To find out the deduction skills of Sherlock Holmes in A Study in Scarlet written by Arthur Conan Doyle.

Specific objectives

- To find how many times the eccentric character projected in “A Study in Scarlet”.
- To explore the eccentric characteristics of Sherlock Holmes in “A Study in Scarlet”.
- To find out how many times he use drugs in “A Study in Scarlet”.
- To find out the situations he use drugs in “A Study in Scarlet”.
- To find out the obsessive character of Holmes in “A Study in Scarlet”.
- To explore the judgemental attitude of Watson in “A Study in Scarlet”.
- To explore the commitment of Holmes towards his profession in “A Study in Scarlet”.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Deductive reasoning moves from the general to the particular or specific. Deductive reasoning involves drawing conclusions based on implicit information in the premises rather than adding new information. By starting with correct premises and using logical reasoning, you cannot arrive at a wrong conclusion. Deductive validity, on the other hand, is a characteristic that solely applies to deductive reasoning.

Eccentricity is the term used to describe a person's eccentric or strange behaviour. Without being clearly maladaptive, this behaviour would normally be viewed as strange or unneeded. Eccentricity is compared with normal behaviour, which is almost everyone in society's

method of resolving specific issues and pursuing certain goals in daily life. Eccentrics are people who constantly act in a benevolently eccentric manner.

Obsessions are persistent and frequent ideas, urges, or pictures that elicit unpleasant feelings like revulsion or worry.

METHODOLOGY

Beginning with a less specific research objective, qualitative researchers typically gather huge volumes of relatively unprocessed data from a limited number of participants and then describe the findings using non statistical methodologies. In-depth accounts of human behaviour in its actual environments can also be found in qualitative research. The study's methodology was content analysis. The process of content analysis entails examining all written and spoken verbal materials, including books, magazines, newspapers, and other documentary items. Every time one is interested in the study of the nature of verbal materials, the analysis of content is a key activity. For instance, a review of research in any field includes a content analysis of previously published research articles. The analysis could be subtle or quite straightforward. When we pursue it based on specific qualities of the paper or vocal materials that can be recognised and tallied, it is at a simple level. In content or document analysis, the main sources of information and data include books, journals, bulletins or catalogues, syllabus, court decisions, images, films, cartoons, autobiographies, compositions, records, reports, printed forms, themes or other academic work, and so on. It is the responsibility of the researchers to confirm the reliability of this extracted data. The existence of specific words, topics, or concepts in the qualitative data can be found via content analysis. The researcher's focus in this content analysis is on Sherlock Holmes' deductive abilities. The dialogues between Watson, Sherlock Holmes, and the other two private detectives provide insight into deductive reasoning.

MATERIAL

The 132-page book "A Study in Scarlet" by Arthur Conan Doyle was chosen as the research material. A Study in Scarlet's ebook was published on July 12 of that year. The investigator Sherlock Holmes, one of the most memorable and enduring characters in English literature, was created by Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle, who is most recognised for his work on the genre of crime fiction. Ward Lock & Co. was the publisher of the book. This book was chosen because it is the first in the Sherlock Holmes series created by Arthur Conan Doyle. For the first time, Doyle was describing Holmes.

INDICATORS

The major objective of the study is to find out the deduction skills of Sherlock Holmes in A Study In Scarlet. Deduction In this form of reasoning a person starts with a known claim or general belief, and from there determines what follows. The coding categories involved in this analysis are deduction skills, eccentric characters, drug usage, obsessive characters, judgemental attitude and the commitment of Sherlock Holmes towards his profession. The indications of deductive skills can be taken from the conversations of Holmes, Watson, Lestrade and Gregson.

The second objective is to find out the eccentric characters and its frequencies shown by Holmes in A Study In Scarlet. Eccentric is an unusual or odd behaviour on the part of individual. This can be drawn from the explanation of Watson, when Watson explaining the behaviours shown by Sherlock Holmes.

The third objective is to find out the situations of drug using by Holmes and find out its frequency. This is assessed from the Watson's descriptions about Holmes habits.

The forth objective is to find out the obsessive characters shown by Holmes. Obsession is the persistent unwanted thoughts that produce distress. The investigation leads to the obsessive characters. The fifth objective is to find out the judgemental attitude of

Watson. Judgemental is a negative word to describe someone who often rushes to judgement without reason.

The sixth objective is to find out the commitment of Holmes towards his profession. Commitment is a processes of cognitive dissonance may then increase the perceive value of the target and this may lead to increased involvement and motivation, it can be seen in the behaviours of Sherlock Holmes.

PROCEDURE

The objective of the study is to find out the deduction skills of Sherlock Holmes in A Study In Scarlet written by sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The analysis is done based on the major and specific objectives of the study. Coding involves identifying specific responses that suitable for the objectives and tallying the responses. Relevant informations are obtained from the description of Watson and the conversations between the characters are read thoroughly and understand the occurrence of the objectives. Then tally and convert into a table form.

RESULTS

Table 1

Deductive skills, eccentric characters, drug usage, obsessive characters and commitment of Sherlock Holmes in A Study In Scarlet

Indicators	Frequency
Deductive reasoning	8
Eccentric characters	5
Drug usage	2
Obsessive characters	1

Commitment	7
------------	---

Table 1 shows the deductive skills, eccentric characters, drug usage, obsessive characters and commitment of Sherlock Holmes expressed in different situations of a case investigation and its frequencies in A Study In Scarlet. The frequency of deductive skill of Sherlock Holmes in A Study In Scarlet is 8. The frequency of eccentric characters of Sherlock Holmes in A Study In Scarlet is 5. The frequency of drug usage by Sherlock Holmes in A Study In Scarlet is 2. The frequency of obsessive character of Sherlock Holmes in A Study In Scarlet is 1. The frequency of commitment of Sherlock Holmes towards his profession is 7.

ANALYSIS

The study's objective was to evaluate Sherlock Holmes' deductive abilities in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel A Study in Scarlet. The investigator Sherlock Holmes, one of the most memorable and enduring characters in English literature, was created by Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle, who is most recognised for his work on the genre of crime fiction. A Study in Scarlet, a book written by Ward Lock & Co., contains Sherlock Holmes' first published appearance. As a private eye, Holmes used his abilities to solve cases by applying deductive reasoning.

In deductive reasoning, a conclusion is demonstrated to necessarily follow from a series of premises, the first of which denotes a self-evident truth or established fact. Inferring predictions from general rules or theories is a procedure that relies on deductive reasoning in the empirical sciences. Deduction While using this method of reasoning, a person starts with a well-known assertion or widespread belief and works backwards from there. Deduction essentially begins with a hypothesis, considers the options included in that hypothesis, and draws a conclusion.

"A Study in Scarlet" is the story of how Sherlock Holmes solved the murder of Joseph Stangerson and later, Enoch Drebber. The book is written from the perspective of Dr. John Watson, a retired Afghanistan soldier and doctor, who accompanies Holmes on his investigations in Victorian England. This analysis is focus on the deductive skills of Sherlock Holmes. By analysing the Book it is clearly shown that Holmes was using his own deductive skills in solving the investigation. When Watson meet Holmes at first time Holmes recognize Watson's job and where he came from. That was a shocking experience for Watson. Later Holmes describes about how he arrived to that conclusion. When comparing with the other objectives results shown that deductive skills is more shown by Holmes. In another situation Watson make a deal with Holmes regarding with a person walking through the street. Watson said that he is a message carrier but Holmes replied that he would be a retired sergeant of marines. Later that person comes to his home and reveals that he was a retired sergeant in marines. It also create a good impression in Watson related to Holmes. Also the observational skills of Holmes helps to reach the deductive conclusions. From the conversation of Holmes researcher can easily identify the approaching style of Holmes is different from the other two private detectives. Holmes carefully examined all things related to the case and reaching the exact conclusions related to crime. For deduction he observed the verbal, non-verbal body languages of an individual even the tattoos. He stating that all the deduction skills are learned through the continuous exposures of investigations if once he make mistake, in the next time he will not make it and adapt quickly to the new investigative styles. Holmes deductive thinking also explains the critical way of thinking.

The second character projected in Holmes is the commitment to his profession. He rarely takes vacation from his work. Majority of the days he spends in his laboratory. In own risk Holmes found a re-agent which is precipitated by haemoglobin and by nothing else. Holmes also wrote articles related to observation and deduction from his own research works

to help other detectives. He also made some studies that are helpful for the investigative purposes. During the time of investigation Holmes will forget all other things around him, his focus must be on collecting the clues for investigation. These actions are revealing that Holmes is fully committed to his profession and he kept his passion towards that profession. This commitment can be considered as the organizational commitment, it can be defined as a view of an organization's member's psychology towards his or her attachment to the organization that he or she is working for. Sherlock Holmes work as a private detective. Based on the theory of organizational commitment, that is three component model involves three distinct components of organizational commitment that are affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. All these commitments are shown by Sherlock Holmes towards his profession.

The third projected characteristic is eccentric characters shown by Holmes in *A Study In Scarlet*. The term eccentric referred that they behave in a strange way and have habits or opinions that are different from those of most people. Holmes also expressed some eccentric characters such as beating the dead bodies to know about bruises produced after death, during any complex situation Holmes will not talk for days, sitting without any reactions for more hours and during the investigation time he make exclamations, groans, whistles and little cries. The eccentricity in his behaviour is not much pathological in nature that all are related to the difficulty times he faced during his investigation.

The forth projected characters are using of drugs and judgemental attitudes of Watson. This analysis shown that Holmes occasionally smokes. He use drugs when he wants to change his mood or to increase or divert his thought process in another way. And the judgemental attitude of Watson clearly shows that Holmes had no clear cut ideas related to the basic knowledge in the universe but he has deeper level of knowledge in the crime investigation. Holmes know each and every cases happening around the world and he only

acquire the knowledge needed for him, the other information are avoided from entering into his memory. By comparing with other objectives the least projected character is obsession of Holmes. Watson reported that when Holmes get a new case then he will always obsessed with the thoughts and sometimes he forgot the necessary needs of him due the over thinking related to cases. Holmes is an interesting character. He shows many psychological relevant concepts through his investigation. many studies are conducted based on the connection between Holmes and Cognitive psychology and Psychoanalysis and Sherlock Holmes.

CONCLUSION

Sir Arthur Conon Doyle's character Sherlock Holmes is an important character in the field of crime investigation. Sherlock Holmes first appeared in A Study In Scarlet. Holmes mostly use his deductive skills in solving a crime investigation. He genuinely shows his commitments towards his profession and fully involved as a good person with effective professional skills. He also expressing some eccentric characters, obsessive characters and drug usage, these characteristics are also related with his professional works. This study can be used as a base for other research work on the same topic. As a scope, Sherlock Holmes was an interesting characters in the field of crime investigation, so the analysis of Holmes particular characteristics will help the beginners or the professionals who deals with crime investigation. Proper usage skills will help other professionals to deal effectively and successfully in their case investigation. As a limitation, this study only focuses on the A Study In Scarlet. Later the publication of A Study In Scarlet, sir Arthur Conon Doyle wrote many other novels of Sherlock Holmes. So the detailed view of all novels leads to a clear understanding of Holmes, but this study provide the information only from A Study In Scarlet.

REFERENCES

- Andre, D., & Fernand, G. (2008). *Sherlock Holmes-an expert's view of expertise*. *British Journal of Psychology*, 99(1), 109-125.
- Doyle, A.C. (2008). *A Study In Scarlet*. Gutenberg.
- Frankel, J.R., & Wallen, N.E. (2006). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. (6th ed.). McGraw Hill.
- Galotti, K.M. (2008). *Cognitive Psychology*. Thomson Wadsworth.
- Kothari, C.R. (2004). *Research methodology, methods & techniques*. (2nd ed.). New Age International Publishers.
- Miller, L. (1985). *Sherlock Holmes's methods of deductive reasoning applied to medical diagnostics*. *Western Journal of Medicine*, 142(3), 413.
- Singh, A.K. (2008). *Tests, Measurement and research Methods in Behavioural Sciences*. (3rd ed.). Bharati Bhawan Publishers.
- Westmoreland, B.F., & Key, J.D. (1991). *Arthur Conan Doyle, Joseph Bell and Sherlock Holmes: A Neurologic Connection*. *Archives of neurology*, 48(3), 325-329.