

# How to Identify a Research Article

G H S O N L i b r a r y

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## What is a Research Article?

You have received an assignment to complete a research article review or possibly use only research articles to support your information.

How can you tell the difference from a professional nursing article and a research based article? Does your instructor intend for you to use a quantitative or qualitative research process?

### Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Dynamics

<b>Quantitative</b>	←	method	→	<b>Qualitative</b>
Biophysical	←	topic	→	Psychosocial
Sample	←	scope	→	Case
Interventionist	←	mode	→	Observational
Objective	←	ideology	→	Subjective
Neutral	←	politics	→	Partisan

### Quantitative Research Methods

#### Core components in a Quantitative Nursing Research Article

Problem formation/research question Review of the literature Framework Purpose/ Problem Design Sample Size	Methods Findings Analysis of Data Confidentiality/protection of human rights Communicating Conclusions/Results
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There are a number of core components that are consistently found in quantitative research articles. They are generally easily identifiable because they are often headings within the articles. There are times when the reader must identify and label these core components while reading the article. This will assist the reader in validating that the article is indeed research based. Researchers need specific sample sizes to validate the information gathered from surveys or questionnaires.

## **Qualitative Research Methods**

There are similarities in the steps completed with both qualitative and quantitative research, qualitative research focuses on the words, meanings and perspectives of those being studied and how those perceptions may change over time instead of analyzing numbers. In a qualitative research study, "the number of participants is adequate when additional sampling provides no new information about the topic", thus it is a matter of judgment".

### **It is research, but will it work for my assignment?**

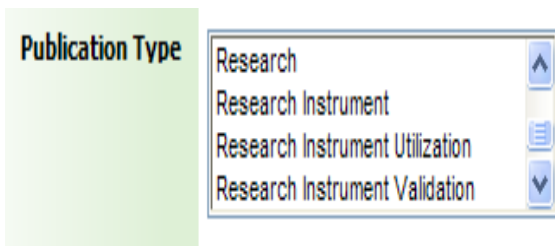
Let's be honest, often times research articles are very detailed and lengthy. Is this article worth reading? There are some steps the reader can take to see if the article will answer the question being posed. Read through the abstract. Does it still sound good? Look at the problem/purpose and then skip to the conclusion. If it is still of interest, read the entire article. If the article will not fulfill your need, do not take the time to read it. Use the time to find another article that will meet your requirements. So now that the usability is established, let's look at the article. Is it complete? Does it have the Core Components in a Qualitative Nursing Research Article listed previously? These components are generally found in the order listed. If it is not complete, what are the gaps? Are there many? Can the research be comprehensive without that information? Does it make sense? Is the information consistent?

### **How do I find research articles?**

If a research article is needed quick, take a look at the Graham School of Nursing Library physical journal collection. We have a number of journals that focus on research. Many of the other journals have a research section per issue\*. Some journals to look are:

Applied Nursing Research, Clinical Nursing Research, Journal of Nursing Scholarship, Journal of Professional Nursing, Nurse Education Today, Nursing Ethics, Nursing Outlook, Nursing Research, Nutrition in Clinical Practice\*, Oncology Nursing Forum (directed to online research articles), Perspectives in Psychiatric Care\*, Psychiatric Services\*, Simulation in Healthcare.

When searching in electronic databases such as CINAHL, the search can be limited by language, year published and most importantly, to finding research articles. The publication type can be narrowed to Research. As a note of caution, this will take out of the equation all the journals that have a research section or one research article per issue because the journal would not be classified as research.



***As always, we want to remind all students that if you have any questions please see a library staff member so we can assist you in completing your assignment.***

## ***Explanation of Terms and Phrases***

**State the research problem** – The problem is generally phrased as a specific question with a narrow focus.

**Review of the literature** – Reading articles about the problem will provide information about the issue, how it has been studied and potentially point out what areas need further research.

**Framework** – Defines what kind of research activities can be used to produce specific outputs.

**Purpose/Problem** – Describes why is the study important and how the findings might be used.

**Design** – How the research is going to be organized; how the information will be gathered and then analyzed.

**Sample size** – What number is needed to get accurate statistics?

**Methods of data collection** - Who is going to be studied? What population? What is their age? Their sex? Will there be interviews? Will there be information gathered from the review of the? Laboratory data? Examinations?

**Findings**- What are the results of the data collection?

**Analysis of Data/Confidentiality** - How will the data be analyzed? How will the answers be used to answer the research question?

**Communicating conclusions/Results** –The researcher will often use presentations and publications to share the results of their research. The research will also include how these results might be used for future research or areas that need additional research.

## **References**

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