

RESEARCH GUIDELINES

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- What is the main question or hypothesis in this project?
- What is the purpose of this study - exploratory, descriptive or explanatory?
- Is this basic or applied research?
- What are the main concepts?
- How are the main concepts defined?
- Are they the right concepts for the question at hand?
- Are the relationships between concepts outlined? Why or why not?
- Are these relationships substantiated with evidence from previous studies and logic?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Is the presentation of argument relevant and logical?
- Is there a clear progression through support for key ideas to the value of the research question?
- Is the author's voice present with support found in the literature?
- Is there a clear argument in favor of this research?
- Is there evidence both for and against the value of key concepts and relationships?

RESEARCH DESIGN

- What research design is used?
- Is the research design appropriate for the question at hand?
- What is the unit of analysis?
- What sampling techniques are used?
- How are the concepts measured?
- Is the data quantitative or qualitative data?
- What collection methods are used?
- What is the time dimension in this research?

FINDINGS

- Are the data valid and reliable representations of the empirical reality they attempt to capture?
- How, if at all, are the data adjusted, i.e. weighted, summarized or grouped?
- How are the data reported?
- Are the data presented in a way that is understandable?
- Is the data presentation comprehensive or are selected aspects presented?

- What data analysis tools are employed?
- Are they the right tools for the level of measurement?
- Are any assumptions inherent in the analysis tools violated/
- Do the analysis tools provide information to support or refute

DISCUSSION

- What are the main points in the discussion?
- What aspects of the project are highlighted?
- Does the discussion illuminate the findings and apply them appropriately?

CONCLUSIONS

- What conclusions are drawn from the data?
- Are the conclusions a logical extension of the data?
- To whom or what do the conclusions apply?

ADDING TO THE KNOWLEDGE BASE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- What is the significance of this research?
- What might you have done differently?
- What still needs clarification/exploration?

These questions are guidelines for your article critiques. You may feel there are other questions you need to ask for your purposes. **It is essential that you question what is reported in a critical way.**