



Identifying Different Types of Articles

Not all articles in scholarly journals are “research”. The types of articles will vary depending upon the purposes of the author. Here are the major types of articles you will find:

1. Research or Empirical Studies

These articles are reports of original research. They present hypotheses or research questions, as well as objectives, literature review, and results. The format is based on a logical structure presented in distinct sections, usually in this sequence:

- *Introduction*: development of the problem under investigation and statement of the purpose of the article;
- *Method*: description of the procedures to conduct the investigation;
- *Results*: report the findings;
- *Discussion and conclusion*: summary, interpretation, and implications of the results.

2. Literature Reviews

Literature reviews (different from book review) are critical evaluations of materials that have been already published. They contain a summary, discussion, or assessment of works on a specific area, and will clarify a problem related to the topic under discussion. Literature reviews are useful to summarize previous investigations, identify relations and inconsistencies in the literature, and suggest solutions to solve the problem.

When evaluating a literature review, consider the authority of the author (good literature reviews are written by experts in the field). Check also the bibliography included in the article, which may contain suggestions for other sources and ideas.

3. Case Studies

Case studies are reports describing aspects concerning to a specific individual, group, community, or an organization. These articles illustrate a problem and indicate possible solutions for it.

4. Book Reviews

Book reviews are articles that describe and evaluate a book. It is focused on book's authority, purposes, and content. Depending on the journal, there may be a specific section for this kind of article.

5. Editorial, Commentary, or Reply

Editorials, commentaries, or replies are brief articles that contain opinions on an issue, topic, or study previously published. The writing style is persuasive, intending to convince the reader to adopt a certain perspective. In general, it doesn't include references.

6. Discussion

Discussions are full-length articles used by authors to discuss opinions, issues, and ideas. It may sometimes look similar to a research study, but it doesn't have the same formal structure and it is not always based on existing literature. The main focus of this kind of study is to explore new areas, suggest topics for future research, and share opinions.

Sources used for this handout:

Writing for the behavioral and social sciences: Types of articles. (2010). In American Psychological Association, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). (pp. 9-11). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

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