

Questions to ask When Reading Research

Quantitative: Follows the outline of the abstract.

Purpose: Is the purpose of the study stated clearly and consistently?

Rationale: How does the author's stated purpose/question fit into previous research in the area?

Method:

Sample: Procedures

Design: How does the author's research design help to address the questions?

Variables/Measures: Are the measures reliable and valid for the stated variables?

Procedures: Are procedures clearly explained and consistently followed?

Analysis: Does the choice of analysis fit the nature of the data?

Findings/Results: Are the findings presented clearly in relation to the central questions?

Conclusions/Interpretations: Are the author's conclusions tied to the results of the study? To previous research?

Implications of Results: What new conceptual or methodological contributions does the study make?

Future Research: Do the suggestions for future research relate to the study?

Qualitative: More situational depending on the specific research tradition.

1. What is the quality of on-site observation?
2. How much freedom of access was the researcher granted?
3. What was the intensity (amount) of observation?
4. Triangulation – Were multiple methods of data collection used?
6. Was there a sampling plan to get representative views?
7. Were measures unobtrusive?

Expectations:

- Those associated with the tradition e.g. case study, ethnography
- Context - should have detailed descriptions of the subjects/environment.
- Multi-method - should have more than one means of gathering data from subjects about the topic.
- Logical Arguments - the discussion and conclusions should be grounded in the data and relate logically to it.