**Qualitative Research Evaluation Tool**

for Articles in the Social Sciences

Use this Qualitative Research Evaluation Tool as a guide to help you:

1. **Assess if you are looking at a qualitative research article** (i.e., it focuses on in-depth meaning of a phenomenon, has an abstract, makes references to other academic articles, is in a peer-reviewed journal, includes a doi number, has elements of the following questions, etc.).
2. **Evaluate the quality of the research article** (i.e., in general, the more explicit these elements are detailed in the article, the more confidence you can have of its quality).

This tool is not intended to be comprehensive nor address all research variations. There is not a magic number for how many of these must be present in a “good” article, but more make it easier to evaluate and potentially apply to research or practice. Learning how to assess and evaluate research takes time, effort, and guidance, and this checklist is intended to help in that process.

| **Front Matter** | |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Is the title focused and engaging? |  |
| 1. Does the author have qualifications to be a credible authority? |  |
| 1. Are there keywords that fit the study? |  |
| **Abstract** | |
| 1. Is the context for the study mentioned? |  |
| 1. Is the purpose clear? |  |
| 1. Are the methodology and method stated? |  |
| 1. Is there a brief summary and interpretation of the results? |  |
| 1. Is the significance or implications mentioned? |  |
| **Introduction** | |
| 1. Is the problem or issue that led to this research clearly stated? |  |
| 1. Does background information / literature situate the problem in context? |  |
| 1. Are there gaps or problems identified in the literature? |  |
| 1. Is the significance or importance for this study detailed? |  |
| 1. Is there a clear purpose or aim for this research? |  |
| 1. Are any theories, theoretical frameworks, or conceptual frameworks described and used? |  |
| 1. Is the role or proximity of the researcher to the topic or participants detailed? |  |
| 1. Does the author express his or her paradigm or worldview perspective taken to the research (e.g., constructivism, pragmatism, post-positivism, transformative, etc.)? |  |
| **Literature Review** | |
| 1. Is there a section devoted to the (peer-reviewed) literature to contextualize the research? |  |
| 1. Does the literature provide various sides of an issue? |  |
| 1. Does the literature detail a gap that requires this research? |  |
| 1. Is the literature cited current (within 5 years of the article)? |  |
| 1. Are classic studies, authors, or highly cited references in the research area mentioned? |  |
| 1. Are in-text citations provided with limited direct quotes? |  |
| 1. Does the literature naturally build to the research questions? |  |
| 1. Are all in-text citations matched in the reference list? |  |
| 1. Is there a summary to help the reader understand take-aways? |  |
| **Methodology and Method** | |
| 1. Is the research design (methodology and methods) described? |  |
| 1. Is the research question(s) explicit and realistic? |  |
| 1. Is the methodology (e.g., case study, narrative inquiry, ethnography, grounded theory, etc.) detailed and fit for the research question? |  |
| **Data Collection** | |
| 1. Is it clear how and why the participants were selected? |  |
| 1. Were ethical issues and consent explicit? |  |
| 1. Is the sample size adequate for the methodology? |  |
| 1. Were interview questions provided by the author? |  |
| 1. Were the data collections methods piloted? |  |
| 1. Is it clear how the data was collected from the participants? |  |
| 1. Were the participants and setting appropriate to the research questions? |  |
| **Data Analysis** | |
| 1. Were the steps in data analysis clearly described? |  |
| 1. Did the data analysis process flow from the methodology? |  |
| 1. If transcripts were involved, were they reviewed / confirmed / member checked by the participants? |  |
| 1. Was it clear how the themes or understandings developed? |  |
| 1. Was evidence of the data analysis demonstrated by quotes or other means so the reader can understand the process? |  |
| 1. Were limiters / delimiters identified? |  |
| 1. Can trustworthiness (credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, etc.) be established? |  |
| **Discussion of Findings** | |
| 1. Were key findings / themes organized and expressed? |  |
| 1. Was there evidence from the participants / sample to justify the findings? |  |
| 1. Do the findings answer the research question? |  |
| **Implications / Next Steps** | |
| 1. Are realistic implications for practice identified? |  |
| 1. Are next steps for future research identified? |  |
| **References** | |
| 1. Was there a Reference List? |  |
| 1. Did the items in the references match the in-text citations throughout the study? |  |