

Online Supplement B: Quality assessment criteria

Quality Indicator for QUANTITATIVE studies

Quality Indicator	Detail
Research question	Is the research question(s) or hypothesis clearly stated?
Study Participants	Is the participant group appropriate for the study being carried out (number, characteristics, selection, and homogeneity)? Were the participants from more than one location?
'Data' collection method	Are the methods used reliable and valid for the research question and context?
Completeness of 'data'	Have participants dropped out? Is this attrition rate less than 50%? For questionnaire based studies, is the response rate acceptable (60% or above) or has the response rate issue been addressed appropriately?
Control for confounding	Have multiple factors/variables been removed or accounted for where possible?
Analysis of results	Are the statistical methods appropriately used? If not, why not?
Conclusions	Is it clear that the data justify the conclusions drawn as reported in the abstract?
Reproducibility	Could the study be repeated by other researchers?
Theoretical Perspective	What is the theory? Is it explicit?
Study design	What is the design of the study? Is it explicit?
Ethical issues	Were all relevant ethical issues addressed? If not, what wasn't addressed?

Quality Indicator for QUALITATIVE studies

Quality Indicator	Detail
Research question	Is the research question(s) clearly stated?
Study Participants	Is the participant group appropriate for the study being carried out (number, characteristics, selection and homogeneity/diversity)? Are the participants from more than one location?
Theoretical Perspective	What is the theory? Is it explicit? Is it apriori or post hoc?
'Data' collection method	Are the methods used reliable and valid for the research question, context and theory?
Completeness of 'data'	Have participants dropped out? Is this attrition rate less than 50%?
Analysis of results	Are the analytical methods appropriately used? Was there more than one person developing the thematic coding framework (if there was one)? If not, why not?
Conclusions	Is it clear that the data justify the conclusions drawn as reported in the abstract?
Reproducibility	Could the study be repeated by other researchers?
Study design	What is the design of the study? Is it explicit?
Clear explanation of methods of data collection and analysis	Is there a clear account of the process of data collection and analysis? Is there sufficient data (quotations) to judge whether the authors' interpretation is adequately supported? Alternatively, do the researchers rely too heavily on verbatim quotes with little of their own description of themes?

Fair dealing	Does the research design explicitly incorporate a range of different perspectives so one group is not presented as if it represents the whole truth about a situation.
Ethical issues	Were all relevant ethical issues addressed? If not, what wasn't addressed?
Attention to negative cases	As well exploring alternative explanations for the data, have the authors discussed elements in the data that (apparently) contradict the 'main trend' of the phenomena under study.
Reflexivity	Have the authors reflected on their role(s) in the study? What is the relationship between the researcher and the participants?

Quality Indicator for MIXED METHODS studies

Use both sets of indices depending on the part of the study you are assessing – and also consider the issue of 'Triangulation' - are the results from either two or more different methods of data collection (for example, interviews and questionnaires) comparable? Did the researchers look for patterns of convergence to develop or corroborate their interpretation?