

Table 8.4 Outline of the Structure for a Mixed Methods Journal Article

<p>Title (foreshadows the mixed methods research and design)</p> <p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of the problem • Issue • Literature on the research problem or issue (focused on establishing the need for studying the research problem or issue) • Deficiencies in previous studies (incorporate need for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data) • Audiences for the study • Purpose statement (written using script that applies to type of design) • Research questions (order quantitative and qualitative questions according to timing and priority in study) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Qualitative research questions – Quantitative research questions or hypotheses – Mixed methods research questions <p>Related Literature Review (optional, depending on priority and use of theory; a broad literature review about the topic of the study that narrows the focus to the specific issue or problem of the study)</p> <p>Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall approach (mixed methods) and definition of mixed methods research • Type of mixed methods design used (define, give reasons for using design, cite studies using design in field) • Diagram of procedures (may include as appendix) • Data collection (order quantitative and qualitative collection methods according to design) • Data analysis (order quantitative and qualitative analyses according to design) • Validity <p>Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merge results in convergent, embedded, transformative or multiphase designs (sometimes we see separate reports of quantitative and qualitative results, with merging in the discussion section) • Connect results in sequential, embedded, transformative, or multiphase designs (present the results in the sequence in which they are used—e.g., qualitative results followed by quantitative results) <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize results (merged or connected) • Explain results • State limitations • State future research • Reiterate the unique contribution of the study <p>References</p> <p>Appendixes (tables, figures, instruments, protocols)</p>

section might report the separate results from both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis, or it might report the results of both types of data analysis plus the results of the mixed methods merged analysis. When the latter is presented, the researcher might present joint displays that relate the themes to the quantitative variables. Alternatively, the merged analysis may be saved for the discussion section and be seen more as a side-by-side comparison of results from the two databases. In an explanatory design, the quantitative results are presented first followed by the qualitative results. The reverse is true for an exploratory design with the qualitative findings discussed first followed by the quantitative results. An interim phase, such as found in the sample outline of a mixed methods dissertation in Table 8.2, illustrates how the results might have a qualitative phase, an instrument development interim phase, and a quantitative phase. In an embedded design, the results section typically focuses either on the quantitative data or the qualitative data, depending on which is the major data set in the study. Because many authors who use the embedded design report their quantitative and qualitative studies separately, the results may not focus on both data sets but on either the primary or the secondary data set. In many of the embedded design experimental trials we have reviewed, the authors have reported the quantitative trial in an article separate from that in which they report the qualitative study. Strange, Crabtree, and Miller (2006) have discussed writing forms in the health sciences, such as publishing from a mixed methods study in separate quantitative and qualitative papers, staging their papers as separate articles in a single issue of a journal, or integrating their methods into a single article. In transformative as well as multiphase designs, the authors may also report the qualitative and quantitative results separately in different reports. If the researcher is publishing results in more than one journal article, we recommend that both articles make reference to the use of mixed methods research and that the studies be cross-referenced so they both can be identified and located.

- In the discussion section, we find the interpretation of the results, as well as a discussion relating this interpretation to the literature, the limitations of the study, as well as future research. How should the interpretations be reported in a mixed methods study? In a convergent design, the interpretation of the results may reflect the merging of the data, and the authors will compare the findings from the quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to answer the mixed methods research question. In explanatory and exploratory designs, the interpretation often mirrors the sequence of the data collection and