

The Research Paper Checklist

Adapted from Appendix B in *Writing for Sociology* (2nd Edition)¹

Section 1: Research Question

- ___ Clear, focused, and feasible research question
- ___ Description of variables
- ___ Explanation of possible relationship
- ___ Description of theory-testing or theory-generating research
- ___ Operationalized variables
- ___ Description of why question is meaningful

Section 2: Literature Review

- ___ Overview of theoretical perspectives
- ___ Appropriate citations, quotes, and paraphrasing
- ___ Explanations of errors and/or gaps in literature
- ___ Justification for research
- ___ Discussion of any relevant epistemological issues

Section 3: Research Design/Methods

- ___ Description of study population
- ___ Explanation of sampling methods and frame
- ___ Description of how to get entrée
- ___ Justification for chosen method

Section 4: Ethical Considerations

- ___ Addresses voluntary participation, informed consent and confidentiality
- ___ Minimization of risk/harm to research subjects
- ___ Possible benefits for participants
- ___ Discussion of researcher's social position/power dynamic

Section 5: Feasibility Study and Preliminary Analysis

- ___ Description of patterns in the data
- ___ Connects data to hypotheses/previous literature
- ___ Discusses fit of research design to research question

Section 6: Conclusion

- ___ Discusses possible changes
- ___ Main lessons
- ___ Connects findings to larger social issues/processes

¹ Courtesy of Jennifer Randles.