

# SA Journal of Human Resource Management/ SA Tydskrif vr Menslikehulpbronbestuur

## Qualitative Research Study

### **Manuscript Specifications:**

**Font Type:** Times New Roman

**Font Size:** 12

**Line Spacing:** 1.5

**Page Margins:** Bottom & Top = 2.5cm  
Left & Right = 2 cm

**File Format:** Microsoft Word (.doc) or Open Office (.dot) **NOT (.docx format)**

**General Formatting:** At the last pages of this author guideline

**Enquiries:** Potential contributors are invited, before formal submission, to enquire whether or not a particular article would be of interest, or to obtain advice about the way in which a manuscript should be prepared for submission.

**Operations Coordinator contact:** Liezel Grunewald, email: <mailto:submissions@sajhrm.co.za>

**Editor-in-Chief contact:** Prof Gert Roodt, email: <mailto:editor@sajhrm.co.za>

**Covering letter:** When submitting a manuscript, authors should provide a separate covering letter with the following information: the full name(s) and title(s) of the author(s); the position, affiliation (university or organisation), and contact details of each author; and the author to whom all correspondence should be addressed. It should also include a paragraph summarising briefly the nature of the contribution made by each of the authors listed on the article to the research performed.

### **Length of Manuscript:**

About 25 pages text only (maximum), excluding tables, figures and the list of references.

### **Manuscript Guidelines**

**Title:** Informative but concise eg.: Names of questionnaires, countries, and or authors start with capital letters.

**Author:** Name(s), include full first name, e.g. Gert P. Roux, not G.P. Roux. The name of the department and the University of each author. **The e-mail address, postal and phone number of the corresponding author should be included.**

**Abstract:** In English, not more than 250 words. If the article is written in Afrikaans please include an English title in the abstract. The abstract should state concisely the scope of the work and the principal findings, the following should be sub-headings:

- **Orientation** – A brief theme sentence to orientate the reader about the overall issue or problem area addressed in this article.
- **Research purpose** – The main research aim or purpose of the study is stated.
- **Motivation for the study** – The rationale or motivation for the study is provided.
- **Research design, approach and method** – The research design, approach and method is briefly explained with specific reference to the target population and the sample size.
- **Main findings** – The main results/findings of the study is summarized.

- **Practical/managerial implications** – A summary of the practical or managerial implications is briefly stated.
- **Contribution/value-add** – A concluding statement indicates the contribution or value-add of the study in addressing gaps or contradictions in the literature.

**Key words:** Use five [5] words not already included in the title, separated by a semi-colon. Refer to the discipline; sub-discipline; field; theme; research design; context

**Synopsis:** Afrikaans articles (or articles in any other official SA language) must also have a synopsis of the article of between 500-600 words in English (the entire synopsis appears in italics).

We also ask that you upload a brief biographical note (entered into the ‘Bio statement’ box during the submission process). This note will appear online in our ‘About the Author’ section should your article be published with us.

## Manuscript Contents

The manuscript contains five sections, namely the introduction, research design, results, discussion and the references. All these first-level headings appear in bold capital letters and are centered.

### INTRODUCTION (first-level heading)

The introductory section normally contains the following seven elements; headings are indicated in [brackets]:

- (1) [**Key focus of the study**] A thought-provoking introductory statement on the broad theme or topic of the research (why should I even bother to read further?);
- (2) [**Background to the study**] Providing the background or the context to the study (explaining the role of other relevant key variables in this study);
- (3) [**Research purpose**] Indicate the most important controversies, gaps and inconsistencies in the literature to be addressed by this study;
- (4) [**Trends from the research literature**] Cite the most important published studies previously conducted on this topic or that has any relevance to this study (provide a high-level synopsis of the research literature on this topic);
- (5) In view of the above (in 4) state the core research problem and specific research objectives that will be addressed in this study;
- (6) [**The potential value-add of the study**] Explanation of the study’s academic (theoretical & methodological) or practical merit and/or importance (provide the value-add and/or rationale for the study); and
- (7) [**What will follow**] Provide the reader with an outline of what to expect in the rest of the article.

The first-level heading is **INTRODUCTION**. However, second-level headings may be used in this introductory section. These subheadings are flush with the margin, and are typed in lower case; bold starting with a capital letter. The INTRODUCTION section consists of an introduction to the article and a literature review.

If lists of bullet points are presented, they should be in the following format:

- *Longevity*. How long individuals live.
- *Prognosis*. How well an individual responds to challenges of disease or trauma.
- *Mental health*. General level of mental functioning

Avoid using lists that contain more than 10 bullet points.

### **Synthesis and Critical evaluation of the literature**

A synthesis and critical evaluation of the literature (not a compilation of citations and references) should at least include or address the following aspects:

- (1) Conceptual (theoretical) definitions of all key concepts;
- (2) A critical review and summary of the themes emerging from previous research findings (constructs, research participants, research designs, objectives, etc.) on the topic;
- (3) Including a review of existing approaches towards the measurement of relevant constructs; and
- (4) A clearly established link exists between formulated hypotheses (or objectives) and theoretical support from the relevant literature. The stated hypotheses follow directly on the section where the literature was reported.

### **RESEARCH DESIGN** (first-level heading)

The first-level heading **RESEARCH DESIGN** is typed in capital letters, centered and in bold. Only **three** second-level headings follow on the research design and they appear in lower case, bold and are flush with the margin.

#### **Research approach** (second-level heading)

A brief description of the research approach followed in the study should be included. It should, for instance, explain from which qualitative tradition the study is and also motivate why this approach is specifically required. The author(s) may state their scientific beliefs (ontology and epistemology) if these have an effect on the choice of the research approach.

#### **Research strategy** (second-level heading)

Qualitative research makes in most instances use of the case study method where a single case or multiple cases are used either to develop or to test theory. The research case(s) should therefore be fully described here and which populations/ cohorts they present.

#### **Research method** (second-level heading)

Under the research method the author(s) provide at least descriptions on the following third-level headings, namely: research setting, entrée and establishing researcher roles, sampling, data collection methods, recording of the data, data analyses, strategies employed to ensure data quality and reporting.

These headings are typed in bold and are flush against the margin. Fourth-level headings (italics) may be used under each of these headings (as described above).

#### **Research setting** (third-level heading)

The author(s) provide a brief description of the research setting and unique characteristics of this setting in this section.

#### **Entrée and establishing researcher roles** (third-level heading)

The author(s)/researchers explain how access was negotiated and/or obtained to enter the research setting (if not already part of the setting) and if and how gate-keepers were used to gain access to the research setting.

### **Sampling** (third-level heading)

The qualitative sampling procedures used in the study, such as cueing, purposive sampling or snow-balling are described and motivated in this section.

### **Data collection methods** (third-level heading)

In this section the author(s) explain where the data was sourced and which data collection methods (e.g. semi-structured or unstructured interviews, focus-groups) were applied. In some instances solicited documents are also used.

### **Recording of data** (third-level heading)

The author(s) in this instance explain how the data was accurately recorded, safely stored and managed without compromising the quality of the data.

### **Data analyses** (third-level heading)

In this case the author(s) explain which methods of data analyses were applied. Different data analyses techniques result in different variations of qualitative research.

### **Strategies employed to ensure quality data** (third-level heading)

This sub-heading is optional here. Author(s) can explain how and why specific techniques are applied to ensure the integrity of the research data and for promoting the quality of the study. This can be either explained under all the sub-headings above or under this separate sub-heading. This is especially important if the authors are an integral part of the research setting.

### **Reporting** (third-level heading)

Author(s) should also explain which reporting style (qualitative writing style) will be followed in reporting the research findings.

## **FINDINGS** (first-level heading)

The next heading is **FINDINGS**, which appears in capital letters, bold and is centred. This section presents the results of the investigation in the sequence of the formulated objectives or formulated postulates/propositions (if applicable).

## **DISCUSSION** (first-level heading)

The next heading is **DISCUSSION**, which appears in capital letters, in bold and centred.

This section normally contains the following eight elements:

- restate the main objective of the study;
- reaffirm the importance of the study by restating its main contributions;
- summarise the results in relation to each stated research objective or research hypothesis;
- link the findings back to the literature and to the results reported by other researchers;
- provide explanations for unexpected results;
- provide the conclusion and recommendations (implications for practice);
- point out the possible limitations of the study; and
- provide suggestions for future research.

Second and third-level headings may be used.

## REFERENCES (first-level heading)

References begin on a separate page. References cited in the text should all be included in the list at the end of the paper. Full references at the end of the paper, arranged alphabetically by surname, chronologically within each name, with suffixes a, b, c, etc. to the year for more than one per year by the same author. Note that the second and subsequent lines are indented. This journal makes use of the APA reference style. We have an APA style guide which you can be download from the journal website.

## General Specifications of Manuscript

### Layout

- The text should be 1.5-spaced.
- Start each paragraph at the margin (no tabs to indent first line). Place a blank line between paragraphs to separate.

### Heading styles

- First level headings: (Boldface, upper case, centred, on a separate line, 14pt)
- Second level headings: (Boldface, normal case, justified at left margin, on a separate line, 12pt)
- Third level headings: (Boldface, normal case, justified at left margin, on a separate line, 10pt)

### Citations in the text

- In referring to a work by three, four or five authors all the relevant names have to be furnished in the **first** reference to the work, e.g.: ...the traditionalist personality (Riesman, Denney & Glazer, 1968, p. 40) restrains him from doing...  
In **later** references to this work only the first author's name is stated, and the abbreviation '*et al.*' is used: ...due to his "other-directedness" modern Western man in a sense is at home everywhere and yet nowhere (Riesman *et al.*, 1968, p. 40)...
- In referring to a work by six or more authors, cite only the surname of the first author followed by *et al.* (italicized and with a full stop after "al"), and the year for the first and subsequent citations. **In the reference list, provide the initials and surnames of the first six authors, and shorten any remaining authors to *et al.***
- When titles of journals or books are mentioned, they should be italicised, not underlined.
- If the citation follows a quotation, place the parentheses after the quotation marks but before the end punctuation. For example: 'for the future of telecommunications' (Smith 1987).
- Single quotation marks are used for all quotations; to highlight a quote within a quote, please use double quotation marks. If citations are longer than 30 words, please do not use single quotation marks; rather indent the citation and italicise it, positioning parentheses containing the author(s), year and page numbers of the publication cited on the line after the citation, right aligned.

### Tables and figures

In Step 4, upload all tables, figures, images, and supplementary files:

- Tables should be saved and uploaded as separate Word (.doc) or RTF (.rtf) files, not DOCX (.docx).
- Ensure all personal identifying information is removed from the supplementary files as per the [provided instructions](#). Please note that this is not required for book reviews.
- Figures and images should be saved and uploaded using high quality image formats: BMP, TIFF, EPS, JPEG (uncompressed); not GIF or compressed JPEG.
- Audio and video files should be saved and uploaded using the MPEG format (MP3 for audio and MPEG for video).

**Acronyms:** If a phrase with an established acronym is used (eg SAN Parks – South African National Parks),

and appears more than five times, please include the acronym in brackets after first mention of the phrase, then use the acronym only. Please note that acronyms should not be used in abstracts.

**Units:** The use of units should conform to the SI convention and be abbreviated accordingly. Metric units and their international symbols are used throughout, as in the decimal point (not the decimal comma), and the 24-hour clock.

**Spacing and punctuation:** There should be one space (not two) between sentences; one space before unit terms (e.g. 5 kg, 5 cm, 5 mmol, 5 days); no space before % or °. Thousand/millions are marked with a space, not a comma (e.g. 1 000, 1 000 000) Ranges are expressed with an extended hyphen, not with a short hyphen.

**Dates, italics, and spelling:** Dates are written in the following style: 12 July 1908. Phrases within the text that are not English (for example, *et al.*) should be italicised. British (not the American) spelling convention is followed, for example organisation, not organization.

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**Note:** Ensure that the article ID [reference] number is included in the subject of your email correspondence.