

# General Structure of a Research Paper

## \*\*\*INTRODUCTION\*\*\*

Introduce Broad Topic

Review the Literature

Illustrate GAP in Literature

Introduce Research to Fill GAP

State the Hypothesis or Research Question

**Introduction:** Begins with the topic and narrows down to the specific focus of the paper (i.e. the funnel structure)

Include only literature that is **RELEVANT** to your paper in terms of setting the reader's expectation for your research question. (Include citations!)

Demonstrate the unique thing **YOU** are doing in your paper – has anyone ever looked at this before? Is this a different population, measure, method, etc.? Is this a replication of someone else's work? Your intro should lead the reader think "yeah, this really **DOES** need to be studied!"

**Methods:** Include enough detail that someone could replicate your study.

**Results:** Include the facts and only the facts. No interpretations.

**Discussion:** Begins by restating the results (no statistics, just words). Then explain **WHY** you got the results you did – did they support your hypothesis? Why/Why not?

How do/don't your results make sense in light of the published literature? Were your findings consistent/inconsistent with what is known in the field?

How do your findings potentially affect the larger field? Do they inform future practices? Do they illuminate a new problem or issue? What should future research do/investigate in light of your findings?

What were the limitations of your study? (No research is perfect!)

**References** You must include them. In APA style, they are on a separate page and listed alphabetically.

## \*\*\*METHODS\*\*\*

## \*\*\*RESULTS\*\*\*

## \*\*\*DISCUSSION\*\*\*

Summarize Results

Explain/Interpret Results

Connect back to the Literature

Talk about Broad Impact

Mention Limitations and Future Research

## \*\*\*REFERENCES\*\*\*

