

2013 Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Patient Counseling
RESEARCH CRITIQUE CHECKLIST

PART I

Research Question

- Is a significant problem addressed? Is a compelling argument made for significance? What background information is provided?
- Were the aims of the study clearly delineated?
- Will this study contribute to increased knowledge or understanding?
- Will this study contribute to enhanced practice?
- What is the magnitude of impact of this study?

Theory-Hypothesis Link

- Is there a stated hypothesis?
- Does the stated or implied hypothesis relate to the research question?
- Is the emphasis theoretical or applied?
- Will this study contribute to increased knowledge or understanding?
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Literature Review

- Is the literature relevant?
- Is the literature timely?
- How many articles are cited? Does this appear sufficient given your understanding of the topic?
- What is the quality of references or publications?
- Can you tell if seminal articles included?
- Do references reflect cross fertilization of ideas from other disciplines? Does this seem appropriate given the research topic?

PART II

Measurement

- Will the measures help answer the research question?
- Are the measures quantitative or qualitative?
- What are the data sources? Is data primary or secondary?
- How will the data be collected? From whom? When?
- Are the independent, dependent, and control variables clearly defined, identified?
- How were the measures operationalized?
- Do the measures measure what they are supposed to measure?
- Are the measures reliable and consistent?
- Are the measures trustworthy?
- Is the unit or level of analysis specified?
- What are other advantages, not previously noted, in using the proposed measures?
- What are other disadvantages, not previously noted, in using the proposed measures?

PART III

Study Design

- Will the design help answer the research question?
- What specific design was used? (Try to name and draw)
- How much control does the researcher have over the design?
- What types of comparisons are being made? What analysis is proposed?
- How long is the study?
- How many observations are being made?
- How many participants are involved? Is an IRB needed? Are there ethical concerns?
- Was the study well administered and executed?
- Are the study results generalizable? If so, to whom?
- To what extent are extraneous factors adequately controlled? Could the results suggest an alternative interpretation? If so, is this addressed?

*This research checklist is used in research methodology courses in the PATC MS program . This checklist is a modification/abbreviation by Dr. Diane Dodd-McCue of the checklist used in ALHP761, the mandatory research methodology course in Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Allied Health Professions PhD program. Please note that its content mirrors the major points emphasized in many other research critique outlines used in any number of disciplines, at undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as for journal reviews and grant proposals. These points are not unique to healthcare or hospital chaplaincy and are applicable to interdisciplinary research and quality improvement activities.