

## WRITING A JOURNAL PAPER: THE STRUCTURE BEHIND IT

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### ABSTRACT

This workshop aims to provide explicit guidance on the writing of a research article, from the organization of the abstract to the conclusion. The theoretical knowledge for the workshop is drawn from decades of research on the rhetorical structure and conventions of research articles in various disciplines, including a comparison of the research writing of native speaker and non-native speakers of English. The workshop begins with a presentation of the structure of a research article in terms of the moves and steps of different sections of the article (Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, Conclusion). Following this, participants are taken through an analysis of the structure of some sample research articles in the science and arts to develop their awareness of the rhetorical structure of a research article. Finally, participants are given hands-on practice in analysing either their own or provided draft research articles in order to identify weak links in the article for improvement. This workshop is designed to help academics develop critical knowledge of writing conventions of research articles to help them compete for research space and justify their work in an international research discourse community.

### KEYWORDS

Research writing, research article, rhetorical organisation, genre analysis

### INTRODUCTION

Research is “the application of the scientific approach to the study of a problem” (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1990, p. 22) to acquire reliable knowledge. The knowledge from the research is disseminated through avenues such as conferences, books and journal papers. Good conferences attended by authorities in the field are avenues to find out the frontier of knowledge and nowadays, increasingly, conferences have proceedings either in print or CD form which allow the paper to be put on record for public access. Books take a longer time to be published and the data are usually dated. Although useful for providing basic information in a particular field, books are not good sources to obtain the latest information in a particular research area. Publishing books or book chapters is a different ball game from journal papers as books are generally published for its commercial value. Since research books do not have a large market, publishers may not be that interested. Writers also consider the sales network of publishers to ensure that the books are well-marketed and the research findings are cited by others. Citation affirms the value of research findings. Reputable international journals use citation as the main factor in deciding quality of the paper. Journals are *the* avenue to publish research findings as they are created for this purpose. Journals welcome submissions of well-written papers reporting sound research, most without page charges. Some journals are open-access, meaning that no subscription is required whereas others charge institutional and individual subscription rates.