

Finding Empirical Research Articles

What is an empirical research article?

The Reference Databases available at the USF Library give citations, abstracts, and sometimes full text to a wide variety of sources: popular magazines, trade journals, academic journals, newspapers, etc.

Often people look for a specific type of article: *an empirical research article*. *Empirical studies use data derived from actual observation or experiment*. Original research papers that describe empirical studies and their results are published in academic journals.

Many academic journals are *peer-reviewed*. Peer-reviewed journals have a peer-review board (panel of experts from the field) that selects and approves articles for publication. Peer reviewed journals often contain empirical research articles.

To determine if an article is an empirical research article, use these guidelines:

- **What is the name of the journal?**
Popular magazines like *Newsweek* or *Time* don't publish empirical research articles; publications like the *Journal of Educational Research* or the *Journal of Educational Psychology* do.
- **How long is the article?**
An empirical research article is usually substantial, not 1 or 2 pages.
- **Does the article contain references to other works?**
Serious researchers always cite their sources.
- **Does the abstract of the article contain variations of the words *study, measure, subjects, data, survey, or statistical* to describe the empirical research?**

How can I find empirical research articles?

Databases have a broader definition of “research” than strictly empirical studies. Some databases are better than others for finding empirical research articles. Each has techniques that let you search for empirical research articles more effectively.

ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center)

ERIC includes articles and documents on education research and practice.

- Limit results to research articles by selecting **Publication Type (PT=)** and entering **research**. Also search the **Publication Type Index** for other publication types under **Browse Indexes**.

Build your search strategy

Keywords (KW=) (teacher burno or)

and eg:

Publication Type (PT=) (research or)

Education Full Text

Education Full Text contains citations, abstracts, and some full text articles from over 478 periodicals and yearbooks in education research.

- Limit your search to *Peer Reviewed* journals by checking the appropriate box on the search screen.

InfoTrac OneFile

InfoTrac offers you a choice of several different databases. For a broad range of topics: use *InfoTrac OneFile*. For business and management topics search only *General BusinessFile ASAP*.

- Limit your search to *peer-reviewed publications*.
- Or search by **Subject**, then **Narrow** by *subdivision* and try these subheadings:
 - ◆ Measurement
 - ◆ Psychological aspects
 - ◆ Reports
 - ◆ Research
 - ◆ Statistics
 - ◆ Surveys
 - ◆ Usage

For example: Subject *Organizational Change*
Subdivision *research*

- Also try a keyword search on your topic and “statistical data”
For example: *Type 2 Diabetes and statistical data*

ProQuest ABI/Inform

ProQuest includes several different subject databases. It includes articles from popular business magazines, trade publications, and scholarly academic journals. *ABI/Inform* focuses on business and management information.

- Limit your search to *scholarly journals, including peer-reviewed*.
- Most empirical research articles are assigned a content code of 9130.
- To search for empirical research articles, combine your topic with cc(9130).
For example: *job satisfaction and cc(9130)*

CINAHL (Current Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature)

- Limit your search to research articles by clicking on *Limit Your Search*.
- Under DT-Document Type, select *Research*. Click *Set Limits*.
- Or combine your topic with **research in dt** limits your results to articles defined as research. For example: *pediatrics and research in dt*

PsycINFO

PsycINFO focuses on psychological research, including applied psychology.

- Limit results to research articles by selecting **Publication Type (PT=)** and entering **research**. Also search the **Publication Type Index** for other publication types under **Browse Indexes**.
- Many of the articles in *PsycINFO* are empirical research articles.