

ACADEMIC MEDICINE

Journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges



Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

Checklist of Publication Criteria for Research Reports

Mission Statement: Academic Medicine serves as an international forum for the exchange of ideas information, and strategies that address the major challenges facing the academic medicine community as it strives to carry out its missions in the public interest..

Relevance to the Journal's Mission

- The study addresses a serious challenge facing the academic medicine community, e.g., quality of care; the physician workforce; the intersection of health care policy and academic medicine; funding and financial management; the role of the medical school in the university and the community; industry-academia relations; the role of technology in medicine and medical education; conflict of interest issues; clinical research at AHCs; innovative business alliances; the globalization of medical education; effective approaches for managing educational programs; particularly innovative curricular initiatives; and many other topics (see the November 2005 Editorial).
- The study is multi-institutional, longitudinal, illustrative of changes in actual behavior or outcomes, or demonstrative of meaningful influence to the quality of medical education.
- The study significantly adds to or enhances the existing literature on the subject in question.

General Criteria

- The study has generalizability because of the selection of subjects, setting, and educational intervention or materials.
- Prior publication by the author(s) of substantial portions of the data or study is appropriately acknowledged.
- There is no apparent conflict of interest.
- The abstract is structured (Purpose, Method, Results, Conclusions) and congruent with the text.
- The conclusions in the abstract are justified by the information in the abstract and the text.
- The text is well written and easy to follow, using appropriate vocabulary and minimal jargon.

Introduction/Background

- The introduction builds a logical case and context for the problem statement, which is clear and well articulated.
- The conceptual framework is explicit and justified and the research question is clear, concise, and complete.
- The variables being investigated are clearly identified and presented.
- The literature review—mainly of primary sources—is up-to-date and well integrated.
- The literature is analyzed and critically appraised.
- The number of references is appropriate and their selection is judicious; there are no instances of plagiarism, and reference citations are complete and accurate

Method

- The research design is defined and clearly described, and is sufficiently detailed to permit the study to be replicated.
- The location, date, and duration of the study are identified, as are the investigators.

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- The design and conduct are plausible and appropriate (optimal) for the research question.
- The design has both internal validity (potential confounding variables or biases are addressed) and external validity (subjects, settings, and conditions).
- The design allows for unexpected outcomes or events to occur.
- The development and content of the instrument are sufficiently described or referenced, and are sufficiently detailed to permit the study to be replicated.
- The measurement instrument is appropriate given the study's variables; the scoring method is clearly defined.
- The psychometric properties and procedures are clearly presented and appropriate.
- The data set is sufficiently described or referenced; adequate data quality control is described.
- Observers or raters were sufficiently trained.
- There is an explicit statement of approval by an institutional review board (IRB) for studies directly involving human subjects or data about them.
- The population is defined clearly, both for subjects (participants) and stimulus (intervention), and is sufficiently detailed to permit the study to be replicated.
- The sampling procedures are sufficiently described.
- Selection bias is addressed.

Results

- Data analysis procedures conform to the research design, are sufficiently described, and are sufficiently detailed to permit the study to be replicated.
- The assumptions underlying the use of statistics are fulfilled by the data, such as measurement properties of the data and normality of distributions.
- The number and variety of statistical tests and analyses are appropriate (optimal).
- If statistical analysis involves multiple tests or comparisons, proper adjustment of significance level for chance outcomes was applied.
- Power issues are considered in statistical studies with small sample sizes.
- In qualitative research that relies on words instead of numbers, basic requirements of data reliability, validity, trustworthiness, and absence of bias were fulfilled.
- The data reported are accurate (e.g., numbers add up) and appropriate.
- Measures of functional significance, such as effect size or proportion of variance accounted for, accompany hypothesis-testing analyses.
- Results are organized in a way that is easy to understand; they are presented in context and effectively.
- The results are complete; the amount of data presented is sufficient and appropriate.
- Tables, graphs, or figures are used judiciously and agree with the text.

Discussion and Conclusion

- The conclusions are clearly stated; key points stand out.
- The conclusions follow from the design, methods, and results; justification of conclusions is well articulated.
- Interpretations of the results are appropriate; the conclusions are accurate (not misleading).
- The study's limitations are discussed and alternative interpretations for the findings are considered.
- Statistical differences are distinguished from meaningful differences.
- Personal perspectives or values related to interpretations are discussed.
- Practical significance or theoretical implications are discussed; guidance for future studies is offered.