

Article Reading Three: Quantitative Method Article

This is an article that would be classified as quantitative research. As many authors have noted, quantitative research focuses on empirical evidence that is measurable. While most often the numbers are not absolute, they generally represent a continuum of opinion. The data gathered allows researchers to draw objective conclusions.

In this article, pay particular attention to how the researcher frames the research questions. How do the questions help the author design questions that can measure the respondent's opinion? Also note the method used to gather the data. The quality of the method impacts the quality of the conclusions.

First, skim the entire article to get a bigger picture of what the scholar is trying to communicate. Second, read the article with the questions below in mind. Some of the questions focus on your ability to comprehend the article. Other questions address your understanding the methodological choices the author made.

Article Comprehension

1. Why might the authors think that a communication perspective is more appropriate to studying SNS than the concept of narcissism?
 - a. Because communication studies is broader than psychology
 - b. Because the sites are communication tools
 - c. Because users are engage in active self-presentation
 - d. All of the above
 - e. B and C only
2. The literature review demonstrated which of the following
 - a. That there is strong consensus on the research on SNS
 - b. That the research results are mixed with respect to SNS
 - c. That there is no quality research on SNS
3. The authors most likely had what kind of sample given their summary of the participants?
 - a. Simple Random
 - b. Stratified Random
 - c. Convenience
 - d. Network or Snowball
4. The authors' research "suggests that the posting of self-focused information and photos on Facebook reflect a positive attitude about such information sharing, not narcissism" (p. 116). In that case, if we were to infer a causal relationship which one is most likely?
 - a. Facebook use increases positive attitudes about information sharing
 - b. Positive attitudes about information sharing increase Facebook use

5. What were the two limitations of the study shared by the authors?

Method Comprehension

6. On page 111 they offer RQ2. Why is that needed? What will that tell us that RQ1 alone will not?

7. On page 116 the authors discuss limitations of the study. Why do they claim the attitudes toward openness measure has face validity but needs further research to assess the instrument's construct validity?

8. There are some basic obligations for doing quantitative research. Rate how well you think the author did by circling the number that best reflects you perceptions.

a. Explain how variables were measured:

Not well 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Well

b. Describe how sample was collected:

Not well 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Well

c. Describe sample:

Not well 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Well

d. Describe the steps and methods for analyzing the data:

Not well 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Well

e. Connect specific study to existing literature:

Not well 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Well

Reflections and Connections

9. So it would seem we have two basic motives for being online, 1) the “new narcissism” that emphasizes the self-absorption and “look at me” dynamics. There could also be motives to stay connected and communicate with others. Does the motive matter? If someone is on SNS for 2 hours a day, would the motive matter?

10. What question would you ask the authors of this study to help you understand research or RP 2 better?