Research Methods and Statistics through Kickball – How to read a scientific journal article

Taken from the APA Publication Manual 5th edition 2001

1. **Title** - A title should summarize the main idea of the paper, simply. It should be a concise statement of the main topic and should identify the actual variables or theoretical issues under investigation and the relationship between them.

2. **Abstract** - An abstract is a brief comprehensive summary of the contents of the article; it allows the reader to survey the contents of an article quickly and obtain enough information to decide if they want to read the entire article. It should be under 250 words.

   For an experimental study it should describe:
   - the problem under investigation, in one sentence if possible.
   - the participants or the subjects, specifying pertinent characteristics such as number, age, sex, etc.
   - the experimental method, including any equipment used, data gathering procedures, and the names of tests used.
   - the findings, including statistical significance levels.
   - the conclusions and the implications or applications.

3. **Introduction** - Introduce the specific problem you will be studying and describe the research strategy you want to take. Develop a background by discussing other literature/theories/research you have read on the subject. State your purpose and your rationale for doing the study (I wanted to find out what would happen if... It is important because...).

4. **Methods** - This section describes in detail how the study was conducted. This allows the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of your methods and the reliability of your results. It should be good enough to permit others to duplicate your work.

5. **Results** - The results section summarizes the data collected and the statistical analysis conducted on the data. Charts and graphs are helpful in summarizing the important data that answers your hypothesis.

6. **Discussion** - Evaluate and interpret the implications of your results, especially with respect to your original hypothesis. Examine, interpret, and qualify your results; why is what you found important and meaningful?