

## Structured abstracts

Starting next issue, the PERJ will adopt structured abstracts proposed by Mosteller, Nave, and Miech (2004).

A structured abstract is a formal and compact summary of an article's main features and findings. As does a table or a figure, it has a predictable structure that compresses information into a small space and can be read independent of the main body of the article. The structured abstract is longer and more detailed than the standard paragraph-style narrative summary. On the printed page, the structured abstract appears between the title and the main body of the article. It includes basic items applying to all articles (i.e., background, purpose, research design, and conclusions) and several additional items that apply to some articles but not to others (i.e., setting, population, intervention, data collection and analysis, and findings). (p. 29)

Authors of Refereed Article and Technical Report submissions may use the following template (Mosteller et al., 2004, Fig. 2; Kelly & Yin, 2007, Table 1). (Suggestions for key items to be included in these sections are given by Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy (2005).)

**Background/Context:** Description of prior research on the subject and/or its intellectual context and/or its policy context (*The abstracted study's niche, specialization, narrower focus, or goal within the prior research context*)

**Purpose/Objective/Research question/Focus of study:** Description of what the research focused on and/or why (*Claim or claims examined by the study (e.g., initial hypotheses can serve as claims)*)

**Setting:** Specific description of where the research took place (*Qualifiers and exceptions in choice of settings and possible implications for replication or other use of the research findings*)

**Population/Participants/Subjects:** Description of the participants in the study: who (or what), how many, key features (*Qualifiers, exceptions, and other possible idiosyncrasies in the pool of participants*)

**Intervention/Program/Practice:** Specific description of the intervention, including what it was, how it was administered, and its duration (*Assurances or cautions regarding the fidelity of implementation*)

**Research design:** Description of the research design (e.g., qualitative case study, quasi-experiment, secondary analysis, analytic essay, randomized-controlled field trial) (*Confidence in the findings likely to be associated with the choice of research designs and the stage of the research investigation*)

**Data collection and analysis:** Description of plan for collecting and analyzing data, including description of data (*Grounds, warrants, and other data collection or analysis shortfalls (e.g., incomplete data, low response rates)*)

**Findings/Results:** Description of main findings with specific details (*Major objections and rebuttals (e.g., rival explanations)*)

**Conclusions/Recommendations:** Description of conclusions and recommendations of author(s) based on findings and overall study (*Author's confidence in conclusions and recommendations*)

Here is a structured abstract for the Refereed Article of Oyam (in this issue):

### Structured abstract

**Background:** To succeed in today's world requires learning and innovation skills, life and career skills, and information, media, and technology skills. These 21st century skills can be taught and learned using inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, collaborative learning, and reciprocal teaching.

**Purpose:** Find college teachers' level of awareness of and extent of pedagogic practices for enhancing 21st century skills of students.

**Participants:** 180 college teachers from seven curriculum strands in a large Philippine university during the 2015–2016 school year

**Research design:** Descriptive-comparative research

**Data collection and analysis:** A researcher-constructed, self-administered questionnaire asked participants to rate themselves on how aware they were of eleven skills and on how often they practiced four pedagogic practices. Means, analyses of variance at a .05 significance level, and post hoc analyses using the Scheffé test were used. Interviews with some school administrators were conducted to validate the results from the responses.

**Findings:** The participants were fully aware of the eleven skills, with those from some strands being significantly more aware and those from one strand being significantly less aware. Inquiry-based learning was

practiced to a very great extent while the other three practices were practiced to a great extent. The extent of pedagogic practices varied significantly when participants were grouped according to strands.

**Recommendations:** Administrators could provide support to teachers from the strands identified as less aware or practicing to a lesser extent. Similar studies could be conducted in other schools to improve the generalizability of the findings.

Here is a structured abstract for the Refereed Article of Titular and Magbuo (in this issue):

### Structured abstract

**Background:** Photovoice can be used as a pedagogical tool to help students describe how they understand a concept.

**Purpose:** See how students describe learning and show how phenomenography can be used in higher education teaching and learning.

**Participants:** Twelve second-year undergraduates in a Philippine university during the 2015–2016 school year

**Research design:** Phenomenography using photovoice

**Data collection and analysis:** Students in two sections wrote reflective descriptions of learning and took related photographs. These photo reflections were exhibited to students of a college. Of the fifteen participants whose photo reflections were chosen by vote, twelve participated in the study. The researchers identified themes in the reflections they shared during a focus group discussion.

**Findings:** Learning in a constructivist classroom was described as an experience, a goal, a process, and an expression.

**Recommendations:** Teachers could provide a reflection activity after each learning episode.

### References

- Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy. (2005). *Reporting the results of your study: A user-friendly guide for evaluators of educational programs and practices*.
- Kelly, A. E., & Yin, R. K. (2007). Strengthening structured abstracts for education research: The need for claim-based structured abstracts. *Educational Researcher*, 36(3), 133–138.
- Mosteller, F., Nave, B., & Miech, E. J. (2004). Why we need a structured abstract in educational research. *Educational Researcher*, 33(1), 29–34.