

# ZFA – Checklist for articles\*

(Criteria may not apply to all text categories; see author guidelines at [www.online-zfa.de/page/147](http://www.online-zfa.de/page/147))

## General

- The paper has not yet been published elsewhere or submitted for publication (cover letter)
- Font Arial, font size 12, line spacing at least 1 ½
- Setting of line numbering (WORD)
- All abbreviations in the text are explained when first used.
- The length of a sentence never exceeds a maximum of 3 lines.
- Avoid unnecessary Anglicisms and foreign words.
- Max. manuscript length, incl. Fig./Tab. and bibliography (but without summary/abstract/keywords) – is 20,000 characters

## 1. Cover sheet

- Title in German and English, informative, concise, max. 100 characters
- Abbreviations in the title are the exception.
- Contact data of the corresponding author is given (address, telephone, E-mail)
- The total number of characters (incl. blanks) is given

## 2. Summary/Abstract (own page, max. 3500 characters)

- The summary is structured (see author's guidewww.online-zfa.de/page/147).
- A maximum of 5 keywords is given.
- The summary gives the content of the paper.
- The methodology section outlines the procedure and mentions the study type.
- In review papers, the search strategy is given under "Methodology".
- English abstract corresponds to the German summary.
- English abstract was (ideally) checked by a *native speaker*.

## 3. Background

### What is the issue, why is this study important?

- First sentence/paragraph makes clear what the paper is about.
- Current basic work on the topic is **briefly** mentioned and documented with quotations.
- It is made clear why this paper is important.
- The main question and any ancillary questions are described clearly.
- These questions are answered later in the discussion.

## 5. Methodology

### How was the study conducted?

- The type of study is given clearly.
- The target population and the setting are described clearly.
- Recruitment is described clearly.
- The sampling strategy and access to the field are described for qualitative studies.
- In review papers, the search strategy is given under "Methodology".
- Inclusion and exclusion criteria (recruitment) are described.
- The instruments for data collection and evaluation are described.
- A sentence/section on data protection is included (if applicable).
- A sentence/section on the decision of the ethics committee is included (if applicable).
- The statistical analysis is mentioned concisely and quoted if applicable.

## 6. Results

### What was found?

- The sociodemographics of the participants (physicians, patients, etc.) are described.
- Reference is made in the text to numbered tables and illustrations.
- Tables and illustrations should *save text* and are therefore only mentioned briefly in the text.
- A duplication of text and Tab./Fig. must be strictly avoided.
- The results are only described here and *not discussed*.
- Only those results are given which are also discussed later on.
- The percentages are rounded without decimal places.
- As a rule, literature is not quoted in the results section.

## 7. Discussion

### What do the results mean?

- The discussion is structured into: 
  1. Brief summary of (only) the most important results;
  2. Comparison with other papers;
  3. Significance/consequences for family practitioners;
  4. Strengths and weaknesses of the paper
  5. Conclusions (optional), with references to future research where appropriate
- No discussion of results which do not appear in the results section.
- Conclusions relate (only) to own results.

## 8. Conflicts of interest

- Conflicts of interest are fully named by each author in his own document.

## 9. References

- As a rule, the maximum number of literature references is 20 (exception: *systematic reviews*)
- Every literature reference is quoted according to ZFA specifications without exception.
- Quotations are numbered sequentially in Arabic numerals in the text [numbers in square brackets].
- Every quotation from the literature in the manuscript is also listed in the bibliography.
- Every literature reference in the bibliography is also quoted in the manuscript.
- Quotations from Internet pages are ended with "last accessed on..."
- All passages from other works are carefully quoted.

## 10. Illustrations and tables

- Tables/illustrations should *save text* and are only mentioned briefly in the text
- All tables and illustrations are numbered.
- All illustrations and tables have a legend.
- All abbreviations in tables and illustrations are explained in the legend.
- In the case of external illustrations, the source is referenced.