

Scholarly Articles

Defining a Scholarly Article

Scholarly sources are concerned with academic study, especially research for individuals such as, students, teachers, professors, or any other professional who need current information to stay informed of changes to their profession or area of expertise. Many scholarly journals are *peer reviewed* or *refereed*, that is, articles published in them have been subjected to a rigorous approval and editing process by other scholars in that discipline.

Physical Characteristics

- Dull in appearance; minimal color and design; nothing "flashy"
- Continuous Pagination; page numbering does not restart with page one for each issue
- Internal illustrations are generally limited to charts, tables and graphs; no photographs unless it is a journal within the discipline of art.
- Minimal or no advertising.
- Usually published by an association, institution or a scholarly press
- May contain book reviews
- May publish an annual index or can be located through an indexing service
- Often an index or table of contents is listed on the front or back cover of the journal issue

Content Characteristics

- Authors are identified, sometimes names are accompanied with a brief biographical sketch of the individual indicated the author's credentials in the discipline and what institution he/she is affiliated. There is no reporter, the information is coming directly from those involved with the research.
- Resources consulted by the author are identified. Scholarly articles contain a bibliography of references and footnotes or endnotes.
- May include an abstract to provide the reader with a quick overview.
- Information targets a specific audience or discipline.
- May report new research or review past research.
- Contains specialized language and jargon. It anticipates the reader has prior knowledge about the discipline and familiarity with terminology.
- May be lengthy. The information presented will be comprehensive not summarized.

Obvious Observations

An obvious indicator of a scholarly journal is the terminology used in the periodical title: *journal*, *review*, and *quarterly*.

Identifying Scholarly Articles in a Database

To identify a database that contains scholarly articles, read the description of the database. These descriptions (which are directly below the database name) provide a researcher some insight into the content and coverage of scholarly information. Databases that provide scholarly and popular articles may include an option to narrow by a search limiter that specifically targets peer-reviewed information.

The screenshot shows the EBSCO Research Databases search interface. At the top, there are navigation links for "New Search", "Folder", "Preferences", "New Features!", and "Help". Below this is the "EBSCO Research Databases" logo and a menu with "Basic Search", "Advanced Search", "Visual Search", and "Choose Databases". A green navigation bar contains "Sign In to My EBSCOhost", "Keyword", "Publications", "Subject Terms", "Cited References", "Indexes", "Images", and a "Language" dropdown. A search bar with "Find:" and "Search" and "Clear" buttons is present. Below the search bar, it says "in Academic Search Premier" and "Folder is empty". The main content area is titled "Refine Search" and "Results". Under "Limit your results:", there are several options: "Full Text" (checkbox), "References Available" (checkbox), "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals" (checkbox, circled in red), "Published Date" (Month and Year dropdowns), "Publication" (text input), "Publication Type" (dropdown menu with options: All, Periodical, Newspaper, Book), and "Number Of Pages" (All dropdown and text input). At the top right of the refinement area, there are links for "Limiters", "Expanders", and a "Reset" button.

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