Typical Qualitative Article Outline

## Introduction

This is where we describe what is known and agreed upon regarding this topic. This section should lead the reader to an understanding of the problem that this study sought to explore.

## Purpose of the Study

This is a very short paragraph telling explicitly what the study will investigate. Then list your research question(s) or statement of the phenomenon or area to be problemitized.

## Method

In this section you will likely have several subsections. This most commonly include: Research Design, Data Sources, Population & Sample (if appropriate), Data Collection Procedures, Data Analysis, Issues of Rigor and Ethics, and Delimitations.

## Results

Your results are presented in subsections. The subsections will be determined by your research design and your findings. Look for examples of articles that used the same design as your study. You only present major findings. Articles must be kept as succinct as possible. Qualitative studies often make use of direct quotations from data sources as a way of ensuring the “voice” of the researched is heard.

## Discussion

This is the section of your article where you explain your results and connect them to the extant literature. ***Depending on the qualitative tradition, the discussion may be presented in tandem with the results (as in most Case Studies) or it may be presented after the results (as in Grounded Theory).*** Make sure your explanatory claims are supported by your data, your analysis, and/or the literature. Clearly identify if each of the findings from your study (1) supports (confirms) previous findings, (2) extends (helps us better understand the nuances of) previous findings, or (3) are not in agreement with previous studies (calls previous findings into question).

Important Note: In this narrative always try to “lead with YOUR results.” That is, state a finding from your study and then explain how the finding is connected to the literature. Do not write a paragraph about the extant literature and then explain how your study fits with it.

## Conclusions

This section is where you summarize what has been learned from your study. Think of it as completing this prompt: “Because of this study, we now know . . .” To whom can we apply these findings? Conclusions are based on the findings of your study – ***not*** your literature review. You may want to include recommendations for further study here, but the list should be concise and much shorter than one would find in a dissertation.