



## Reading and Analysing Journal Articles

Presenter: Vanessa van der Ham  
Centre for Teaching and Learning  
V.Vanderham@massey.ac.nz

### Issues in reading efficiently and effectively

- What kind of journal article are you reading?
- What are the features of this kind of article?
  - Understanding the structure and function of sections will help you to read efficiently and effectively
- Which information from the article do you need to use for your research?
  - How much of the article do you need to read closely?
- How do you use this information in your assignments?
  - Read with a purpose

Te Kōwhiri  
ki Pōwhiri  
**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**

### What kind of journal article?

**1. Research reports**  
Report on individual studies that have been done

**2. Review articles**  
Review the research of others to provide a critical overview of a topic

Present new theories or adapt or challenge existing ones

} *Different purpose*

} *Different format*

Te Kōwhiri  
ki Pōwhiri  
**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**

### How do you identify the kind of article before you start reading?

- Read the Title
- Read the **Abstract**

*The Abstract provides you with an overview of the study:*

- What the research was about
- What was done
- How it was done
- What the researchers found
- How the researchers interpreted the findings

**Research report**

#### A thematic content analysis of children's food advertising

**Michele Roberts and Simon Pettigrew**  
University of Western Australia

*Purpose of study?*

In an era of unprecedented childhood obesity, uncertainty exists as to whether attitudes and behaviours modelled in food advertising are influencing children's diets. An audit of food advertising aimed at children was conducted to identify elements that may influence children's food socialisation. Quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods were used to provide (1) descriptive statistics of incidence and (2) a thematic analysis of messages contained in a sample of food advertisements screened in Perth, Australia, during children's morning television programming. Across 28.5 hours of children's programming, 950 advertisements were aired, 212 of which were for food products. The qualitative themes evident in the ads were the prevalence of grazing, the denigration of core foods, exaggerated health claims, and the implied ability of certain foods to enhance popularity, performance and mood.

#### Abstract

In an era of unprecedented childhood obesity, uncertainty exists as to whether attitudes and behaviours modelled in food advertising are influencing children's diets. An audit of food advertising aimed at children was conducted to identify elements that may influence children's food socialisation. Quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods were used to provide (1) descriptive statistics of incidence and (2) a thematic analysis of messages contained in a sample of food advertisements screened in Perth, Australia, during children's morning television programming. Across 28.5 hours of children's programming, 950 advertisements were aired, 212 of which were for food products. The qualitative themes evident in the ads were the prevalence of grazing, the denigration of core foods, exaggerated health claims, and the implied ability of certain foods to enhance popularity, performance and mood.

Reasons for research

Aim of research  
Specific purpose

Method

Findings

Quantitative

Qualitative

## Research report

Articles generally include: Components
<b>Abstract:</b> Brief summary highlighting reasons for study, methods and findings * <b>Theories that have relevance to the research</b>
<b>Introduction:</b> Brief review of theoretical background & earlier research on topic; reasons for current research *
<b>Method:</b> How research was conducted & materials used
<b>Results:</b> Details on findings and statistical tests, with summaries of data in the form of charts/graphs/tables
<b>Discussion:</b> Analysis, interpretations, implications of results
<b>Conclusion:</b> Summary of key findings, implications for the field and suggestions of future directions for further research *

(Adapted from Lim, 2003)

## Introduction section

Often features:

- **Background information – context of research**
  - why is the research area important?
  - statistics often used as evidence of importance
- **Brief review of the literature**
  - what has been studied previously on the topic?
  - how it has been studied?
  - what has been found?
  - how do the findings of different studies compare?
  - what are the limitations of these studies?
  - what are the gaps in existing knowledge on the topic?
- **Focus of current research**
  - which gap in existing knowledge will the study fill?

### Introduction

Over 25% of Australian children are obese or overweight (Royal Australian College of Physicians 2004). While it is clear that child obesity is caused by an imbalance of energy, it is uncertain what has caused this imbalance to reach epidemic proportions. Many factors are explored in the literature, such as increased snacking, reduced physical activity and food advertising. The latter remains one of the most intensely debated and least understood potential causes of child obesity and as such was selected as the focus of this study. The messages embedded in food advertisements targeted at children were content analysed for the purpose of providing practitioners with insight into the possible cumulative effects of advertising on children...

Why is the topic important?

What has been studied before on the on the topic?

What was the focus of this study? Why?

What was done?

Who will benefit?

### Introduction (continued)

It is important for advertisers to be aware of the potential for their messages to undermine healthy eating behaviours and as a result raise concerns among parents and policy makers. Such research is timely as the advertising industry is under increasing pressure to develop practices less likely to undermine healthy eating and more likely to encourage a balanced diet (McDonald 2003).

Content analyses have commonly been employed to assess the possible effects of food advertising on children. **The following section outlines previous analyses and is followed by a description of the data collection process used in the current study.**

Literature review → Method

Explanation of benefit to field

How has the topic been studied in the past?

Use structural cues in the text to help you read and understand

### Critiquing the Introduction

#### Background information – context of research

- Is there a clear *purpose* to the research?
- Is it clear why the *general research area* is important?
  - Eg. Which problem is the research addressing and what is the extent of the problem?
- Is it clear why the researcher has chosen to focus on the *particular aspect* of the problem examined in the study?
- Is it clear *how* the research will contribute to the field of study and/or to practice in the field?

Forever discovering

To Kaitiaki  
Ki Pihonui



### Content analyses

#### Brief review of the literature:

Content analysis research has a long history in the field of advertising to children, originating with studies by Barcus in the 1970s (summarised in Barcus 1980). Hastings' review of the literature on advertising to children identified 41 content analyses of food advertisements aimed at British children (Hastings et al. 2003): 16 surveyed the amount of food advertising to children, 21 considered the nutritional value of the foods advertised, 8 compared advertised foods to the recommended diet and 15 analysed theme appeals. A primary finding was that food advertised to children is overwhelmingly unhealthy and not supportive of healthy eating guidelines. This finding is consistent with the outcomes of numerous Australian studies (Dibb 1996; Hill & Radimer 1997; Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) 2003; Zuppa et al. 2003; Morton et al. 2005; Neville et al. 2005).

Review article: Rich source of leads to readings on the topic

What did the review find?

How does this compare with the findings of other studies?

The existing content analysis literature provides much information about the quantity of food advertising and the types of foods advertised. Little is known, however, about the food attitudes and behaviours implicit in this advertising and how children might interpret these messages. This study addresses the first of these issues by examining the themes most evident in a sample of food advertisements targeting children... This study provides both frequency data and a thematic interpretation that in combination offer greater insight into the extent and nature of the messages children are exposed to when viewing food advertising.

**Leads up to main point:**

**Summary:**  
Existing knowledge on the topic

↓

**Gaps) in the research**

↓

**How this study Addresses gap(s)**

**What is the unique contribution of this research?**

### Literature review leading to research topic

**Previous research on the topic**

- Theories
- Studies
- Reviews

What was studied?  
How was it studied?  
What were the findings?

**Comparison of findings**  
Areas of agreement  
Areas of disagreement

**Contribution of the studies**  
Limitations of the studies  
Gap(s) in the research

**Synthesis and critique of previous research**

**How current study addresses gap(s)**

### Critiquing the literature review

- Is the literature reviewed taken from appropriate sources?
  - peer reviewed journals
  - academic books
- Does the writer refer to relevant research on the topic
  - both current and classic?
- Are main concepts clearly defined and discussed?
- Is the review written *critically*? Does the writer show strengths and weaknesses, contributions and limitations of previous research?
- Does the review lead logically to the research question(s) or hypotheses?

### Method: How was the research conducted?

Quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods were used to provide descriptive statistics of incidence and a thematic analysis of messages contained in a sample of food advertisements screened in Australia during children's television programming ... Three weeks' data were collected (Monday to Friday on Channel 10 from 7–8.30am and Saturday on Channel 7 from 7–9am) from the two Perth commercial television channels with morning children's programming...

*Do you need to analyse or use the study's methodology for your own research?*

### Critiquing the method section

- **Is the method chosen appropriate to the research question?**
  - is it the best way to find out what the researcher wants to know?
- **Instruments for data collection**
  - are they described sufficiently?
- **Participants**
  - *Ethical considerations* and how they were addressed  
Eg. description of the informed consent procedures where appropriate (including parental consent for minors)
  - Are the participants described in enough detail? (Eg. Gender, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status). Details should be relevant to the issues being studied.
- If a sample of a population was studied, is the method of sampling described?

### Results

**Quantitative results**

*Frequencies*

The 28.5 hours of children's television programming sampled contained 950 advertisements. This equates to more than 33 advertisements per hour of television viewed. These advertisements included 212 advertisements for food products and represented 30 discrete advertising campaigns.

It is notable how few food products were advertised in the three-week period. Several of the 30 campaigns were repeated many times, often appearing twice in the same break. In one particular morning slot (1.5 hours), Twisties Bag of Bones was advertised 11 times and JJ Snacks were advertised seven times.

**This degree of repetition highlights the need to consider the implications of intense repetition for behavioural/attitudinal modelling as described in social learning theory (Bandura 1977).**

*Implications of results*

## Results (qualitative)

### Thematic analysis

Four major themes were identified in the advertisements: the prevalence of grazing, the denigration of core foods, exaggerated health claims, and the implied ability of certain foods to enhance popularity, performance and mood.

### Denigration of core foods

A subtext in the sampled ads was the denigration of unprocessed foods in conjunction with the depiction of desirable packaged 'alternatives'. In an ad for Subway children's meals, children removed their sandwiches from their lunchboxes, stared at them with emotions ranging from dismay to disgust, and returned them to their lunchboxes uneaten. The children were then shown smiling and eating a Subway Kids' Pak.

*How closely do you need to analyse the results section for your research?*

## Critiquing the results section

- Is the process used to analyse data clearly described?
- Do the results provide an answer to the research question?
- Where Tables are provided, are they clearly presented and well titled and captioned?
- Does the researcher **highlight** statistics from the Table?

**As Table 3 shows, the greatest number of food advertisements were for bread, cereals and grains (21.2% of all advertised foods), followed by beverages (19.7%). Fast food (18.2%) and snacks, sweets and desserts (16.8%) , comprised a relatively large proportion of advertising, whilst all other food groups featured considerably less. All food groups featured in advertising.**

(Source of extract: Hawkins, 2003, pp. 56-57)

## Discussion & Conclusion

### Often features:

- Summary of the findings of the study
- Comparison of the findings with previous research on the topic
- Discussion of the meanings and implications of the research  
*Comments about future use*
- Recommendations about further research or policy decisions or practice in the area

### Conclusions

Over three weeks of children's commercial morning television, 212 advertisements for food products were aired. Food advertising comprised 22.3% of the ads sampled and 30 discrete food campaigns were identified. Analysis of the food groups advertised revealed consistency with previous Australian quantitative content analyses that found the most frequently advertised foods to be... In addition, the messages contained in the advertisements communicated numerous themes that disregard healthy eating practices.

The outcomes of this study are relevant to numerous stakeholders, including the food and advertising industries, policy makers, child health advocates and academic researchers. Fuelled by concerns about childhood obesity, there is escalating demand for responsible food advertising to children (McDonald 2003). To respond appropriately to these concerns, the food and advertising industries need to focus on the overall, cumulative effect of food advertisements as this will determine how much external influence may be brought to bear on these industries in the future. One means of doing this is to improve their ability to review campaigns for potentially harmful messages that may have unintended consequences for children. This study provides an example of how such a review can be performed.

Summary of findings

Comparison with previous research

Discussion of meanings and implications of research

## Critiquing discussion and conclusions

- How do the researchers interpret the results of the study?
- Do the conclusions drawn by the researchers seem reasonable? Why? Why not? If not, what are the problems? Provide possible alternative explanations for results.
- Are the limitations of the research described?
- Does the researcher point out whether the results of the study are consistent with the results and theories described in the literature review?
- Does the writer discuss possible implications of the results? (Eg. Actions that could be taken based on the results of the study)
- If the writer makes recommendations for further research on the topic, are these specific?
- Is it clear *exactly* what value the research adds to the field?

## Citing research articles in your assignments

- What you include in the citation will depend on the point you're making in your assignment
- You're using the research to back up what *you* say
- Make sure your voice comes through clearly

Forever discovering

To Kaitiaki  
ki Pākehanga



MASSEY UNIVERSITY

**Make sure *your voice* is clear in referring to the study in your assignment**

**Example 1:**

One of the factors that may influence children's perceptions of healthy core foods is the negative attitudes towards these foods modelled in some food advertising aimed at children. In their analysis of...Roberts and Pettigrew (2007) identified the denigration of core foods as one of the themes that emerge...They cite the example of an advertisement for Subway children's meals which shows children...

Make a point

Use the study to support your point

**Example 2:**

Several studies have reported a high degree of repetition of discrete campaigns advertising food products in children's television programming (eg. Aitkens, 2004; Roberts & Pettigrew, 2007; Smith & Jones; 2005). Roberts and Pettigrew (2007) analysed the content of ...and found that that...They suggest that this repetition might have implications for...

Make a point

Use the study/studies to support your point

**Look at journal articles to see how it's done**

**Difference between research reports and review articles**

Article	Purpose
Research reports	Give a first hand account of a research project/study <i>Includes elements of review</i>
Review articles	Review the research of others to provide a critical overview of a topic
	Present new theories or adapt or challenge existing ones

**Review article 1**

**The effectiveness of policy and health education strategies for reducing adolescent smoking: A review of the evidence**  
Willemsen, M.C., & de Zwart, W.M.

**Abstract**

This paper identifies the most effective measures to prevent smoking among adolescents. A review was made of the international literature concerning a ban on tobacco advertising, restrictions on sales to youth, product regulation, price increase of cigarettes and educational strategies. It is concluded that isolated measures produce little effect. Most effect may be expected from a combination of a complete ban on tobacco advertising, increasing prices, restricting tobacco product sales to tobacconists, mass media education aimed at youth and intensifying school education. A less effective measure is limiting the age at which adolescents are allowed to buy cigarettes.

*Synthesis and critique of previous research on a topic* → **Conclusion(s)**

**Introduction**

- *Background information* – why research topic is important
- *Purpose of the review*

This review identifies the most effective interventions to prevent smoking onset, viewing measures that a government may take, as well as health education strategies. The effectiveness of the following five measures is examined: restrictions on advertising and sales; product regulation; excise duty increases; and health education strategies...

**Method: How was the research done?**

This review started from primary empirical research data on the effectiveness of measures as described in reports and scientific publications, supplemented with secondary literature (meta-analyses and prominent surveys). A systematic literature study was performed, using electronic data files (Online Current Contents, Medline, Psychlit, and EMBASE).

**Results: What did the researcher(s) find in the literature?**

*Restrictions on tobacco advertising*

- Tobacco advertising and smoking initiation
- Effectiveness of banning advertising
- Alternative forms of tobacco promotion

Themes/issues that emerge in the literature

*Restrictions on sales to adolescents*

- Age limits
- Restricting sales to tobacconists only

Set out under headings and sub-headings

*Product regulation*

- Labelling
- Ban on small packaging

Synthesis and critique of research

*Price increase of tobacco products*

*Health education*

- Mass-media campaigns targeted at youth
- Smoking prevention programmes in schools

## Results: What did the researcher(s) find in the literature?

### Health education

### Synthesis of research

#### Smoking prevention programmes in schools

At best, anti-smoking school education can postpone smoking initiation by some years, but does not lead to abandonment (Bruvold, 1993; Lynagh et al., 1997). However, research by Flynn et al. (1998), proved that a school smoking prevention programme can result in longer-lasting effects when combined with a mass media campaign propagating the same message. Loyd et al. (1998), in a review of school interventions, concluded that school education may not be sufficient to affect adolescent smoking, but that it is necessary to bring about changes.

*Great source of links to other research on the topic*

## Conclusions

This review shows that isolated actions have little effect in reducing youth smoking. The greatest effect may be expected from a combination of the following six measures.

- (1) A considerable price increase of tobacco products because of the direct effect on youth tobacco consumption.
- (2) A complete ban on tobacco advertising, including alternative promotional activities by...

In their review of ..., Willemson and de Zwart (1999) concluded that isolated actions have a very limited effect on ...and that a combination of several actions is likely to be most effective. These actions include...

## Review article 2

### Developing a global leadership model

Allen J. Morrison  
University of Western Ontario

#### Abstract

Much of the challenge of developing more and better global leaders has fallen on human resource managers who have largely been oriented to domestic leadership models. This article reviews the latest thinking on global leadership and presents a framework for developing company-specific competency models. By embracing a systematic approach to structuring a global leadership competency model, human resource managers can have a huge impact on the globalization of their companies. The article also suggests where additional research can contribute to the understanding of how cultural leadership differences can best be dismantled as companies move along the path to globalization.

## Articles that review theory in light of new research on a topic

- Provide critical overview of theoretical models
- Trace development of models, including adaptations by original researcher and by other researchers
- Discuss contribution and limitations of models
- Discuss way forward to an adapted or new model
- Sometimes present a new model

*Articles can be rich source of theory for assignments*

## Developing a Global Leadership Model

### Introduction

#### Leadership models and theory

Domestic leadership literature  
Contingency theory and global strategy  
Cross-cultural management literature

#### Global Leadership Competency Models

Company-specific global leadership competency models  
Academic global leadership competency models  
Summary of research  
Identifying the attributes of an effective competency model

#### Next steps

## In summary...

- Research reports and review articles have different purposes and different formats
- Understanding the structure and functions of sections helps you to read more efficiently and take what you need out of the article
- Make sure *your voice* is clear in citing research
  - you're using the research to back up what *you* say
- Use journal articles to help you in your own academic writing

**References**

- Lim, L. (2003). *Reading journal articles*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdtl.nus.edu.sg/success/sl12.htm>
- Manchester University. (2006). *Academic phrasebank*. Retrieved from <http://www.phrasebank.man.ac.uk/index.htm>
- Morrison, A.J. (2000). Developing a global leadership model. *Human Resource Management, 39*(2-3), 117-131.
- Roberts, M., & Pettigrew, S. (2007). A thematic content analysis of children's food advertising. *International Journal of Advertising, 26*(3), 357-367.
- Willemsen, M.C., & de Zwart, W.M. (1999). The effectiveness of policy and health education strategies for reducing adolescent smoking: A review of the evidence. *Journal of Adolescence, 22*(5), 587-599.

**Centre for Teaching and Learning Website:**

Massey Homepage



Teaching and Learning



Centres for Teaching and Learning



Information for students