

**The Research Instrument:** The research instrument or a tool is described as a device used to collect the data. It facilitates variable observation and measurement. The type of instrument suitable for use by the researcher depends on the data collection method selected. Instrument selection and or development require a high degree of research expertise because the instrument must be reliable and valid.

**Ways of searching for Research Instrument**

1. Read professional journals so as to learn (i) what kind of instruments are being used for similar studies (ii) their format (iii) their style (iv) how they are used by the writers.
2. Read books that provide a description or an actual copy of various instruments for the reader.
3. Talk with other researchers who may know of certain tools they have developed for themselves or who may have used tools developed by others.
4. Combine or adapt one or more tools used by other researchers.
5. Develop his/her own instrument to fulfil a specific need

**Guidelines for developing an instrument**

1. The instrument must be suitable for its function
2. The research tool will only be effective only as it relates to its particular purpose.
3. The instrument must be based on the theoretical framework selected for the study.
4. The instrument must be valid
5. The content of the instrument must be appropriate to test the hypothesis or answer the question being studied.
6. The instrument should be reliable
7. The devised research tool should provide comparable data every time the subject uses the instrument.
8. An instrument should include an item that directly asks questions on the hypothesis.
9. The research tool should be designed and constructed in such a way that cheating is minimized.
10. The instrument should be free of bias
11. A good instrument is free of build-in clues.
12. The instrument should not contain measures that function as hints for desired responses.
13. The researcher may need to read extensively to identify which aspects of the theory are appropriate for investigation.
14. The researcher through the instrument must be able to gather data that are appropriate in order to test the hypothesis or to answer the question under investigation.
15. The researcher should gather a group of items from such sources such as persons knowledgeable in the field, accepted theories or hypothesis, personal experience, or materials from studies reported in books and professional journals.
16. The response given by the respondent in the research study should solely be his/her own. There should be no contamination through outside influences such as someone else's ideas or products. Therefore the respondent who agrees to participate

in a study is responsible for supplying information or for exhibiting behaviour that is truly his/her own.

### **Types of Research Instruments**

1. Questionnaire
2. Check list
3. Distribution
4. Interview
5. Observation
6. Records
7. Experimental Approach
8. Survey Approach