

## C/ DETAILED OUTLINE

- **Step zero: Suggested steps to read and analyze the paper**

- Read the Title, Abstract, and Introduction
  - The title and abstract give an overview of what the paper is about.
  - The introduction provides background context, states the purpose/aims of the study, and briefly mentions the main theories/arguments.
- Skim through the Methods and Results sections
  - The methods section describes how the study was conducted. Skim this to get an idea of the sample, procedure, measures used, etc.
  - The results section reports the main findings. Skim this to get a sense of the key results.
- Carefully read the Discussion section
  - This is where the main arguments, contributions, and implications of the study are discussed in detail. Focus on understanding the authors' interpretations and conclusions here.
- Refer back to Title, Abstract, and Introduction
  - Revisit these sections to solidify your understanding of the overall study purpose, context, and key points.
- Read the Conclusion
  - The conclusion summarizes the main takeaways and implications of the study.
- Answer questions by referring to relevant sections
  - Use your understanding from the critical sections to answer questions about the study's purpose, theories, contributions, limitations, relation to concepts, etc.
- Form your own opinion
  - Based on your analysis, develop your own view on the study's arguments and merit.

→ In short, focus on the introduction, discussion, and conclusion sections to get a solid understanding of an academic paper's core elements. Refer to the methods and results as needed for context. Use this understanding to thoughtfully answer questions and form an opinion on the study.

- **Step 1: Bibliographic Details**

- **Q1 How do you cite this article according to RMIT Harvard Business Referencing style?**

- Citing a Direct Quote (1-2 sentences):
  - Explain how to cite a direct quote from the article.
  - **Example:** "When directly quoting from the article, place the quote within quotation marks and follow it with the authors' last names and the year of publication in parentheses. For example, use “...” (Ali and French 2019) at the end of the quote."
- Citing When Paraphrasing (1-2 sentences):
  - Describe how to cite the article when paraphrasing its content.
  - **Example:** "In cases where you paraphrase the article's content, mention the authors' last names followed by the year of publication in parentheses at the end of the paraphrased content. For instance, write 'Ali and French (2019) suggest that...' before or after the paraphrased material."
- Writing the Full Reference (2-3 sentences):
  - Provide instructions on how to list the article in the reference list.
  - **Example:** "In the reference list, start with the authors' last names and initials, followed by the year of publication in parentheses. Then, write the title of the article in single quotation marks, followed by the journal name in italics. Next, include the volume and issue numbers, the page range of the article, and the DOI number. An example is: Ali M and French E (2019) 'Age diversity management and organizational outcomes: The role of diversity perspectives', *Human Resource Management Journal*, 29(2):287-307, DOI: 10.1111/1748-8583.12225."

## ● Step 2: Brief Overview/Description

### ○ Q2 Indicate the aim of the study

- State the Primary Aim of the Study (1-2 sentences):
  - Begin by clearly stating the main aim or objective of the study as presented in the sample.
  - **Example:** "This paper aims to explore the existence of a positive correlation between age diversity practices and work-life programs in organizations."
- Detail the Aspects of the Study's Aim (1-2 sentences):
  - Explain what specific aspects of this relationship the study aims to investigate.

- **Example:** "Particularly, it seeks to understand the effects of these practices and programs on organizational outcomes, including the moderating effects of diversity perspectives."
- Contextualize the Study (1-2 sentences):
  - Mention the context in which the study is set, as provided in the sample.
  - **Example:** "The hypotheses for this investigation are provided within the context of the Australian business environment, focusing on for-profit organizations."
- Explain the Scope of the Study's Investigation (1-2 sentences):
  - Describe the breadth of the study's examination across different organizational aspects.
  - **Example:** "In doing so, the study examines how these relationships impact various organizational domains, specifically across human resource management (HRM), financial, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) settings."

**NOTES:**

- Ensure the aim is specific and directly related to the research topic.
- Be clear about the connection between the key elements and why they are important for the study.

○ **Q3 Outline the main argument/s and key theory/ies**

- Introduce the Primary Theory (1-2 sentences):
  - Start by naming the main theoretical framework used in the study.
  - **Example:** "The study primarily utilizes social exchange theory  
  
→ to examine the dynamics of age diversity management  
  
→ to evaluate its effects on organizational outcomes"
- Describe the Theory's Application in the Study (2-3 sentences):
  - Explain how the theory is applied in the context of the study.
  - **Example:** "Social exchange theory is applied here to understand how organizations and employees engage in a mutual relationship, based on cost-benefit analyses, focusing on how this interaction influences trust, loyalty, and commitment among employees."
- Link the Theory to the Study's Argument (2-3 sentences):

- Make a clear connection between the theory and the study's main argument.
- **Example:** "This approach highlights how effective diversity management, specifically in age diversity, can lead to enhanced organizational outcomes, including improved HRM, CSR, and financial performance."
- State the Hypotheses (1-2 sentences):
  - Clearly state the hypotheses derived from the theory.
  - **Example:** "Accordingly, the study proposes two hypotheses: one predicting a positive correlation between age diversity practices and organizational outcomes, and another linking work-life programs with organizational outcomes."
- Introduce the Second Theory (1-2 sentences):
  - Mention the second key theory used in the study.
  - **Example:** "In addition to social exchange theory, the study also incorporates contingency theory to further understand organizational diversity perspectives."
- Explain the Second Theory's Relevance (2-3 sentences):
  - Discuss how the second theory is relevant to the study's arguments.
  - **Example:** "Contingency theory is employed to explore how an organization's perspective on diversity, especially age diversity, influences its approach to equality and diversity management, particularly in contexts where the value of diversity is perceived as low."
- Develop Hypotheses Based on the Second Theory (2-3 sentences):
  - Formulate additional hypotheses based on the second theory.
  - **Example:** "The study then formulates hypotheses concerning the impact of age diversity practices and work-life programs on organizational outcomes, moderated by the organization's diversity perspective. It posits that organizations with a synergy perspective on diversity exhibit stronger correlations in these areas compared to those with a focus solely on fairness and discrimination."

### ● Step 3: Critical Analysis

#### ○ Q4 What is the main contribution of the manuscript to both the literature and practitioners?

- Introduce the Theoretical Contributions (1-2 sentences):
  - Start by stating the main theories to which the manuscript contributes.
  - **Example:** "The manuscript offers significant theoretical support for both **social exchange theory and contingency theory.**"

→ Part 1: Explain Contributions to Social Exchange Theory (2-3 sentences):

- Detail how the study contributes to understanding social exchange theory.
- **Example:** "It examines the impact of age diversity management and organizational outcomes, elucidating how businesses can foster perceptions of age-diversity practices and work-life programs as beneficial exchanges between employees and organizations. This understanding enhances trust, loyalty, commitment, and overall business performance."
- Refine Understanding of Social Exchange Theory (2-3 sentences):
  - Discuss how the study refines the comprehension of social exchange theory.
  - **Example:** "Moreover, the study refines the social exchange theory by exploring how different performance methods in managing age diversity impact these exchange relationships."

→ Part 2: Discuss Contributions to Contingency Theory (2-3 sentences):

- Explain the manuscript's contributions to contingency theory.
- **Example:** "Additionally, the findings enrich our understanding of contingency theory by demonstrating the contingent impacts of age diversity management on HRM, financial, and social performance."
- Outline Practical Contributions for Enterprises and HR Managers (2-3 sentences):
  - Highlight how the findings can be beneficial for enterprises and HR managers.
  - **Example:** "Practically, the study's insights into age diversity practices and work-life programs assist enterprises and HR managers in

enhancing employee retention, profit, CSR performance, and ensuring top-management's commitment to diversity management."

- Discuss the Moderating Effects and Managerial Implications (2-3 sentences):
  - Explain the moderating effects of diversity perspective and its importance for managers.
  - **Example:** "The manuscript also underscores the moderating effect of diversity perspective, urging managers to acknowledge employee differences and foster inclusion and equity in the workplace."
- Highlight Organizational Strategies Derived from Findings (2-3 sentences):
  - Conclude by suggesting strategies for organizations based on the study's findings.
  - **Example:** "Lastly, the findings advocate for organizations to actively communicate age-inclusive practices and manage diverse workforces effectively, thereby increasing employee awareness and securing their benefits."

- **Q5 What is the main limitation of the study?**

- To identify limitations

- Closely examine the methodology section. Look for study design elements like:
    - Was it cross-sectional or longitudinal? Cross-sectional designs have limitations for inferring causality.
    - Were variables assessed via self-report? If so, consider biases in self-reports.
    - How many sources did variables come from? Single source studies have limitations compared to multiple sources.
    - What was the sample type and size? Convenience or small samples limit generalizability of findings.
  - **Examples of common limitations**
    - Limitations are generally grouped into two categories, methodology and research process.
      - **Methodology limitations**
        - Methodology may include limitations due to:
          - Sample size
          - Lack of available or reliable data

- Lack of prior research studies on the topic
- Measure used to collect the data
- Self-reported data
- **Research process limitations**
  - Limitations during the research process may arise from:
    - Access to information
    - Longitudinal effects
    - Cultural and other biases
    - Language fluency
    - Time constraints

- Introduce the Main Limitation (1-2 sentences):
  - Begin by stating the primary limitation of the study.
  - **Example:** "The main limitation of this study lies in its narrow focus on certain demographic diversity practices, thereby limiting the generalizability of the results."
- Detail the Specific Limitation Regarding Diversity Management (2-3 sentences):
  - Elaborate on how the study's focus on a limited range of demographic diversity affects its findings.
  - **Example:** "The research primarily concentrates on a narrow range of demographic diversity in examining diversity management and organizational outcomes. This constraint may lead to less effective management of broader diversity aspects, potentially reducing the inclusivity and utilization of employees within organizational structures."
- Suggest Areas for Future Research (1-2 sentences):
  - Propose areas that future research should cover to address this limitation.
  - **Example:** "To overcome this limitation, future studies should encompass a more extensive spectrum of demographic diversity and incorporate varied HR practice approaches."
- Discuss Limitations in Generalizability (2-3 sentences):
  - Highlight issues related to the generalizability of the study's findings.
  - **Example:** "Another significant limitation is the study's restricted ability to generalize its findings due to low response rates and the need for more careful interpretation of results."
- Emphasize the Need for Cross-Cultural Examination (1-2 sentences):
  - Stress the importance of considering organizational culture and cross-cultural aspects in future research.
  - **Example:** "Given the impact of organizational culture on generational diversity management, future research should place greater emphasis on cross-cultural age diversity management in a comparative context."
- Highlight Additional Areas for Future Investigation (1-2 sentences):
  - Mention other elements that were not explored in the study but are important for future research.
  - **Example:** "Additionally, exploring the moderating effects of age diversity, organizational climate, and age-inclusive leadership are crucial areas that would add significant value to future research in this field."

- **Step 4: Statement of Relevance**



○ **Q6 In what way does the article relate to the concepts outlined in the course?**

- Introduce the Connection Between the Article and Course Concepts (1-2 sentences):
  - Begin by stating the direct link between the article and key concepts from the course.
  - **Example:** "The study directly correlates with key concepts and theories explored in our course, specifically within the topics of Culture and Diversity & HRM."
- Discuss the Article's Alignment with Diversity Management Concepts (2-3 sentences):
  - Elaborate on how the article and the course module both address diversity management.
  - **Example:** "Regarding Diversity Management, both the module and the article offer insightful expositions on how organizations perceive and manage employees' needs and diversity values. This relates closely to the concepts of Diversity and Inclusion, emphasizing the integration of inclusive approaches in organizational settings."
- Highlight Similarities in Theoretical Perspectives and Strategies (2-3 sentences):
  - Explain how both the article and course discuss similar theoretical perspectives on organizational culture and diversity management strategies.
  - **Example:** "Furthermore, both the article and the course materials emphasize the importance of diversity, exploring different theoretical views on organizational culture. They also discuss the implementation of various programs and strategies as part of HRM to manage workforce diversity effectively."
- Outline Differences in Focus Areas (1-2 sentences):
  - Point out areas covered in the study that differ from or expand beyond the course content.
  - **Example:** "However, the study delves into specific performance measures related to age diversity management and its impact on organizational outcomes, areas which have not been extensively covered in our course."
- Discuss the Study's Comprehensive Approach (2-3 sentences):
  - Describe how the study provides a more detailed framework, models, and strategies related to diversity and inclusion.

- **Example:** "The article excels in specifying detailed frameworks and models, presenting distinct tactics and strategies in hiring, talent development, and leadership. These aspects are used to promote and enhance diversity and inclusion, offering a more comprehensive approach than what has been discussed in our course."

○ **Q7 What is your opinion regarding the argument/s expressed by the authors?**

- Express Agreement with the Study's Context (1-2 sentences):
  - Start by agreeing with the context or background provided by the authors in the study.
  - **Example:** "I concur with the authors' perspective on the challenges posed by an aging workforce, as highlighted at the outset of the study."
- Discuss the Relevance of the Issue (1-2 sentences):
  - Explain why the issue addressed by the authors is relevant and important.
  - **Example:** "This issue is particularly pertinent for practitioners in companies, as it sheds light on the repercussions an age-diverse workforce can have on a company's overall performance and the influence of organizational intervention strategies."
- Comment on the Study's Examination and Convincing Nature (1-2 sentences):
  - Provide your opinion on how well the study examines the relationship between age diversity practices, work-life programs, and organizational outcomes.
  - **Example:** "The study's thorough examination of the relationship between age diversity practices, work-life programs, and organizational outcomes, through diverse perspectives and theoretical hypotheses, is both well-executed and convincing."
- Mention the Practical Utility of the Research (1-2 sentences):
  - Comment on the usefulness of the research for companies and managers.
  - **Example:** "Additionally, the research offers valuable insights for companies and managers in effectively managing an age-diverse workforce to achieve superior organizational outcomes."
- Relate the Findings to Personal Career Aspirations (1-2 sentences):
  - Discuss how applying the findings of the study could be beneficial in your own career, particularly if you aspire to be an HR manager.
  - **Example:** "As someone aspiring to a career in HR management, applying these findings will be beneficial. Understanding employee

differences and the importance of incorporating diverse and inclusive programs into strategic human resources is crucial for enhancing organizational effectiveness."