Your Master's Dissertation Structure

The Concise Recipe For A Successful Final Report

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This guide is a single-authored effort that aims to introduce master students to the craft of structuring their own dissertations. The devising of the chapters rests on the author's modest experience and readings. This will hopefully ensure a level of diversity and consistency throughout all the parts, with special focus on issues related to research methodology. Therefore, students should go through all the themes, tips, and samples to gain the necessary background knowledge and basics of a master dissertation's requirements sought through the courses' syllabuses of Study Skills, Written Expression, Academic Writing, and Research Methodology.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

APA: American Psychological Association
IMRAD: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results And Discussion
MLA: Modern Language Association
MMA: Mixed-Methods Approach
QDA: Qualitative Data Analysis
PDF : Portable Document Format
PhD: Philosophy Doctor (Doctor of Philosophy)

List of Tables and Figures

Acknowledgements

The idea of developing this guide emerged as a reaction to the scarcity of practice and fragile management of a master's dissertation. This guide is intended to review, in a concise way, the steps that I deem most student researchers should go through. I have always believed that students' reluctance and inability to devise a report stem out of a lack of continuous efforts and rehearsal. Therefore, I have done my best to ensure a level of tutoring and support throughout a series of short chapters and examples.

My grateful thanks go to my WIFE and CHILDREN, who gave me all their time to write this guide; to the undergraduate and the postgraduate research students of our English Language Branch, in Biskra University, for their questions and inquiries in the courses of Research Methodology and Applied Linguistics which encouraged me to embark on this experience; and to all the people who inspired me in one way or another to think critically and strengthen my academic conduct.

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Notes on the Author

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General Introduction

I wrote this modest guide to help Master students to learn how to write a neat dissertation in social sciences. Therefore, I have considered and focused on two main areas: how students can structure their own final report and how they can design a qualitative research study.

Dissertation writing is a challenging experience, and it requires specific knowledge and skills from both parties: teachers and students. The large number of books and articles which have recently been published on research methodology to help students to complete their assignments and dissertations could not prevent "things" from being worse. What is more, the easy availability of these sources has tuned to be an obstacle on the students' way to accomplish their projects and show what they have acquired and learned at university. Thereby, students need to be guided on how to use the knowledge and principles of social sciences, especially as they engage in applying research rules. They need to be given the keys or recipe for developing academic papers.

In this guide, I have employed what the target population may want to find as information from various areas and have discussed in each chapter several interesting points and questions, intending to provide students with insights into solving some crucial methodology problems and prepare them for further studies and research. I have almost built each chapter on a dissertation's component, basing it on the main practices, notions, theories, and philosophies that have been so far developed by experts and scholars. There is a clear distinction between the chapters, but all overlap in and add a portion to the area of dissertation construction. Each chapter has been made in a way that ensures its relationships with the preceding and following chapters. Students can therefore read the guide through from cover to cover, or in sections, or embark on specific portions when they feel they need them.

Most of what I included in this guide comes from online sources, PDF books and articles. I have done my best to combine ideas and tips to fill in the gaps which I have personally observed for more than ten years as a supervisor for both third year (License) and Master students. I have also tried to variegate the sources because I know that relying on only one's experience is not enough and, at times, is even misleading. The overall text is made up of titles and subtitles, and is reinforced with relevant samples to help students to absorb the key concepts easily. The idea is simply to provide them with the necessary tools and techniques that will enable them to improve their performance and get better results.

Chapter 1: The Master's Dissertation

1.1 An Overview on the Document

According to Biggam (2008), a master's dissertation is a document that includes about 15,000 words and that requires from first time researchers to be prepared to make efforts to get through a long journey. In the latter, they pass by different phases or parts; they move from submitting the proposal to the completion of each part (p. 1). On the other hand, because research is in its essence a systematic, critical, and empirical inquiry into one or more aspects of the world, "All students should assume that their work will be subject to public scrutiny and whatever approach is used readers must be convinced that all the recommendations and conclusions are firmly grounded in meticulous work" (Swetnam, 2004, p. 1).

Students, in whatever case, may rely on a host of sources to write their theses or dissertations. Paltridge and Starfield (2007, p. 165-167) propose a list of important books which range between discussing language features of academic writing and focusing on aspects of conducting and writing up research papers. Some of these books are: Bailey (2006), Boddington and Clanchy (1999), Booth *et al. (*1995), Craswell (2005), Dunleavy (2003), Evans and Gruba (2002), Hart (1998), Hart (2005), Kamler and Thomson (2006), Manolo and Trafford (2004), Murray (2002), Phillips and Pugh (2005), Swales and Feak (1994), Wallace and Wray (2006), and Zerubavel (1999). A good structure of a master's dissertation is more or less imitative of *figure 1*, for it presents the core parts of an academic report as they flow naturally from a common perspective. The structure follows the order abstract, introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion, and conclusions. It is worth noting here that the seven components must have been preceded by a title/cover page and that, in some books, the methods chapter appears as *Materials and Methods* and *Results and Discussion* may also appear as one chapter.

Figure 1: Illustration of a dissertation's main components

Source: https://www.researchprospect.com/how-to-write-a-dissertation-conclusion/

1.2 Importance of the Master's Dissertation

Writing a dissertation generally comes at the end of a student's academic experience. The student at this phase conducts research; i.e. collects data, analyzes those data, and then comes up with a report about the findings to show that he has acquired the knowledge and has learned the skills necessary to be a professional in his area. Completing the dissertation implies that the student identifies a problem and seeks to solve it by uncovering the causes behind it. Therefore, succeeding in the completion of the dissertation indicates that the student has been able to synthesize data and to benefit from theories and research findings of other specialists in the field. His success also indicates he has managed to review relevant literature that helped him to establish a foundation for his research (Brown, n. d). Research or rather the process of discovering causes and relationships has for a long time been an indispensable step behind gaining a degree. Thereby, writing a dissertation fulfills an essential part of graduation requirements and paves the way for students to become future professors and researchers in the sector of their interest.

According to Barkley (2016), the significance of dissertation writing lies in the fact that it is the assignment that determines the student's results, his grades and finally his degree. Writing a dissertation, regardless of the subject or topic for which the student writes, entails extensive research and study which ensure success for students. The latter should be aware of what it means to conduct research. It is a task that requires considerable efforts and a lot of time because they have to dig deeply to get the data which help them to strengthen their arguments. They should be aware of what they need to do and how they must do it the right way so as to prove they have done something in their years at school or university and that they are ready to proceed in their careers. Moreover, students should focus, in the writing of the dissertation, on collecting pertinent data and presenting them in the right way to readers.

Besides all these dissertation writing requirements, students should understand that the dissertation completion is subject to factors other than Academic knowledge. These factors must be highlighted in the development and completion of the dissertation. These factors are of two types: internal and external factors. "The internal factors include goal setting, listening, writing strategy, benchmarking, confidence, flexibility, a positive disposition, discipline, adaptability, resiliency, humor, collaboration, and interpersonal skills. The external factors include time, family support, supervisor/institutional consideration, and advisor motivation" (Dominguez, 2006).

Chapter 2: Components of a Master's Dissertation

2.1 Questions to Consider

Walliman (2001) advocates the idea that there are many ways of starting to write the final report or text of a dissertation or thesis, but before embarking on this process it is vital to devise a structure for the work. The best way to set about writing depends on the nature of the paper (article, chapter, thesis, etc). After formulating the structure of the report, students should start with the major questions which they intend to answer through the work, ordering the significant issues in a way that facilitates the devising of a logical arrangement for the components of the report. Newman (1989, pp. 1-20) claims that:

> The final questions must clearly be of such a nature that they will fit into a pattern or structure which can form the outline of the essay. From the answers to these questions your aim must be to construct a coherent, logical pattern of ideas and arguments that will form the structure or backbone of your essay or paper. Into this structure the data which you have discovered can then be fitted to 'flesh out' and support your theme, argument or thesis. (Cited in Walliman, 2001, p. 290)

Following a manuscript for an APA paper, students should think of including eight separate parts: the title page, abstract, text of the paper, reference list, footnotes, tables, figures, and appendices (Perrin, 2012). The inclusion of more or less of these elements differs from one paper to another, but on the whole they are arranged in the order below.

• *Title page*. The opening page incorporates information to label the pages of the paper, highlights the title of the paper, and provides identifying information about the author. An author note may be included at the bottom of the title page.

• *Abstract.* This paragraph presents a brief but detailed overview of the paper, emphasizing key ideas and research procedures.

• *Text.* The text of an argumentative paper or review contains an introduction, body, and conclusion; it is frequently divided using headings that describe the main elements of the discussion. The text of a research study contains an introduction to the problem, an explanation of methodology, a summary of results, and a discussion of the implications of the study.

• *Reference list.* The alphabetically arranged reference list provides publication information for the sources used in the paper.

• *Footnotes.* Content footnotes include clarifying discussions and explanations that might disrupt the flow of the paper. Alternatively, footnotes may be incorporated within the text of the paper using the footnote function of your word processor.

• *Tables.* Numbered tables include technical data in easily interpreted and comparable forms. References within the paper correspond to tables that appear on separate pages near the end of the manuscript.

• *Figures.* Visual images to support ideas in a paper (drawings, graphs, photographs, maps, and so on) appear as numbered figures. References within the paper correspond to the captioned figures that appear on separate pages at the end of the manuscript.

• *Appendices.* Appendices provide supplementary information that supports the ideas in the paper but would be awkward to include in the paper itself (Perrin, 2012, pp. 25-26)

Taking into account the task of outlining a scientific paper, from another point of view, one might rely on the description provided by Yang (1995). In this view, **IMRAD** which stands for **Introduction**, **Materials and Methods**, **Results And Discussion** is the most common format, but a conventional manuscript consists of the following parts: Title, Authors, Abstract, Introduction, Material and Methods, Results (And) Discussion, Acknowledgment, References , Tables, Figures, and Legends for figures (p. 36).

2.2 A Stereotyped Form

Katz (2006) maintains that delivering the content of a scientific paper with less distraction entails the use of what is called a stereotyped form. In other words, organization and appearance must be carefully considered because they constitute the aspect that first attracts the reader's attention. Thereby, authors should take all measures ensuring a smooth move from one part or section to another, enabling the reader to grasp and absorb the content of the paper. The stereotyped format of a scientific paper has seven parts:

1. The Title and the Abstract encapsulate the paper.

2. The Introduction describes where the paper's research question fits into current science.

3. The 'Materials and Methods' translates the research question into a detailed recipe of operations.

4. The Results is an orderly compilation of the data observed after following the research recipe.

5. The Discussion consolidates the data and connects it to the data of other researchers.

6. The Conclusion gives the one or two scientific points to which the entire paper leads.

7. 'The References' lists the many links that tie the paper to the rest of science (p. 53).

The order above, in fact, is the order of the final version of the paper. But, it is not the order required to write the manuscript; i.e. authors should follow the order of the data analysis. Materials and Methods should be fully described before compiling Results; Results must be organized before analyzing them in the Discussion; the Conclusion must be anticipated (known) before writing an Introduction to set the Conclusion in its place; and the Title and Abstract which summarize the paper cannot be developed before having a completed paper (ibid).

Chapter 3: Title Page of a Master's Dissertation

3.1 Nature and Importance

The title page is what first attracts the reader's attention; i.e. what the teacher or supervisor sees before getting in the content of the assignment or dissertation. Though it is the easiest part to develop, it can exert a great impact on the teacher or supervisor's opinion. If it is then well organized and checked before submission, it will give a good impression that will prevail and last throughout the body of the work. However, traditionally the purpose of the **title page** has been conceived to just provide general information such as the student's name, the date, the title of the paper and so forth. Sometimes, the teacher tells the student exactly what must appear in the title page and how it should be formatted (*What is a Title Page? - Formats & Examples*). If the student fails "to include a title page if required could give a negative first impression to whoever is reading your work. It could even cause you to lose marks for presentation, so don't be tempted to skip this simple formatting task that should only take a few minutes to complete" (*What's a Title or Cover Page? And How Do I Make One?*)

3.2 The APA or MLA Terms?

McLeod (2020) mentions that in the APA (7th ed) the title page should include a running head (professional papers only) and page number, the title of the paper, the name of the author(s), and the institutional affiliation. All words should be centered with initial letters of important words capitalized. In addition, double-space and 12-point, Times New Roman font are required. In the APA (7th ed) there is some flexibility regarding the inclusion of Calibri 11, Arial 11, Lucida Sans Unicode 10, and Georgia 11 fonts. Streefkerk (2018) adds that the running head should be left aligned, capitalized, including a maximum of fifty (50) words. The title should be kept shorter than twelve (12) words with no abbreviations or contractions; the name (s) of author (s) must be included in order of contribution without titles (Dr., Prof.) or degrees (PhD, MSc); and a course number or an author's note should be placed on a separate line below the institution.

There are only a few differences between the APA (American Psychological Association) and the MLA (Modern American Association) cover page formatting. The cover page is not required by the MLA, but some instructors may ask students to create one. In this case, the rules are almost the same as in the APA. But, in the MLA the name of the university, college or school is typed on top of the page; the student's name, the course name and number, the instructor's name , and the paper due date are typed in the bottom. Besides, in the MLA cover page there is no running head or page number. The main characteristics of both Cover Page types are illustrated below:

Title of Paper Goes Here

Your Name

Your University

Author Note

(Place author note here, if required)

Sample APA cover page (https://www.aims.edu/student/online-writing-lab/common-formatting/APA-format/title-page.php)

Your University

Title of Your Essay

Subtitle

Your Name

Course Name and Number

Professor Name

Paper Due Date

Sample MLA cover page   (https://academictips.org/mla-format/mla-format-cover-page/)

Chapter 4: Abstract of a Master's Dissertation

4.1 Definitions and Function

The abstract is an essential component which is placed at the beginning of a thesis or dissertation; it represents the first place or part where an examiner can read details about a paper. The abstract is considered to be a summary of a whole work; i.e. all the major elements of the work are condensed in it. Moreover, the abstract often stands as an independent text which substitutes the thesis in case there is no much time to read (Nesbit, 2008). In this same line of thought, McCombes (2019) adds that the abstract reports the aims and outcomes of research in order to give to the readers a clear idea about the paper. The abstract is written on a separate page after having completed all the text of the work; it is usually around 150–300 words and comes after the title page and acknowledgements but before the table of contents ; and it includes the research problem and objectives, the methods, the key results or arguments, as it is exemplified in samples (1) and sample (2):

Sample (1): *George Roy, 2016*

"Killing the Innocent: Illegal Abortion Should be Banned"

The subject of abortion is very popular to discuss in different studies. Illegal abortion is a huge part of it, and in many countries, such operations are allowed without difficulties. I argue that these medical manipulations should be banned. Of course, sometimes a woman's health condition doesn't allow her to carry a healthy child, and a doctor could even recommend abortion. This could also happen if they discovered the fetus has some abnormalities, so without making an abortion, a woman would have a baby with mental or/and physical injuries. There is a big chance that such babies will not be able to live for long. But some religious views are totally against abortion and they suppose only God could give and take lives. It destroys a healthy nation and brings a lot of problems. The dissertation contains studies with a comparative analysis of statistics from countries where illegal abortion is banned and allowed.

Source: https://dissertationauthors.com/blog/how-to-write-an-abstract-for-a-dissertation

Sample (2): *Jessica Mayton, 2018*

"Black Lives Matter: Problems of People with Other Skin Color in History"

Black Lives Matter is a massive social movement in America. It proclaims that black lives matter, all people are equal and free, and people with black skin shouldn't be violated. The problem of people's inequality because of their skin color has existed in our history for a long time. Our society demonstrates black on black violence, for example, gang banging. How then can we prove that black lives matter? Is it only about when a white person commits something illegal on a black person? We should answer "no" to these questions. We shouldn't let our emotions bring any violence. It's obvious we need to respect our own culture and also other cultures and people around us. I state we should let stereotypes go, and accept other cultures and people like something great that deserves respect. Black people came into this world as all other people. We all are equal, and we all are great no matter how many flaws we may have. Black lives matter not only because in the Declaration all men are proclaimed to be equal. The dissertation contains some examples from history when someone tried to break the rights of black people without any punishment.

Source: https://dissertationauthors.com/blog/how-to-write-an-abstract-for-a-dissertation

4.2 Types of Abstracts

Students should consider the existence of many types of abstracts so as to be able to select one. A descriptive abstract, for instance, is used to describe the research without judging the work or its outcomes. On the contrary, an informative abstract goes beyond the general description of the paper and explains the thesis, results, and the main evidence for the topic (*How to Write an Abstract And Why It's Important*). Alspach (2017) mentions that there are two general types of abstracts as far as journal articles are concerned: unstructured and structured. The function of unstructured abstracts is to summarize the contents of a paper in a narrative paragraph. Whereas, the structured abstracts specify distinct sections such as Background, Methods, Results, and Discussion for the sake of rapid comprehension and consistency, which makes it possible for journals to use both types of abstracts.

Some scholars (Halpern and Phelan, 2017) have identified a set of questions which may assist in producing a good abstract and they maintain that students do not need to answer these questions in the order in which they are listed, but should emphasize them in the writing of a good abstract.

1. ***What is the central issue or question or problem driving your inquiry?*** You might not state the question or problem in an explicit sentence or two in the essay, but you should articulate it in your abstract.
2. ***What is your answer to this question or problem?*** Again, you might not state this answer in a single sentence in the essay, but you should state it explicitly in your abstract.
3. ***What steps does your article take to get to this answer?*** What is your method of analysis, and how does your argument proceed? You should mention the key concepts, theories or texts you rely on to make your case.
4. ***How does your article contribute to an existing scholarly conversation?*** In other words, what's your answer to the "so what?" question? Effective abstracts often begin by addressing this question, characterizing the state of the scholarly conversation about the problem or question and highlighting how the article intervenes in that conversation.

In addition, they recommend that students should not wait until they have finished their text to write the abstract. They are advised to try writing it at different stages in the course of writing the whole work and use what they discover on their way about the project to clarify and reinforce their argument (ibid).

Chapter 5: Introduction of a Master's Dissertation

5.1 identifying the Introduction

McCombes (2019) states that the introduction or *Chapter One* of a dissertation is an essential part and it targets the reader's attention from the very beginning. The introduction chapter aims principally to tell the reader about the research question or research problem, the reason behind it, and the way it will be approached. The introduction chapter can be broken down into the following steps:

1. **Topic and context**: what does the reader need to know to understand the dissertation?
2. **Focus and scope**: what specific aspect of the topic will you address?
3. **Relevance**: why is this research worth doing?
4. **Aims and objectives**: what did you aim to find out and how did you approach it?
5. **Overview of the structure**: what will you cover in each chapter?

Lempriere (2019) claims that the introduction is the exact place where to narrate what it is discussed in the thesis, and this is the reason for which many students encounter problems. The introduction aims at: (1) stating the importance of the topic and situating its context, (2) discussing the gap the work will fill in and presenting the main questions, and (3) discussing the value of the study and detailing the research aims, the structure, and limitations. The introduction should provide the reader with the following: what the thesis is about, why it is important, how it was conducted, and how it is laid out.

If applied carefully, the guidelines discussed on **how to write a dissertation's introduction** will show students how to structure it in a way that allows them to understand the entire dissertation or thesis and how to draw the attention of their readers. Two sample introductions are given below where the major requirements expressed in McCombes 's and Lempriere's (2019) words could be found.

Sample (1): A COVER FOR THE SPPPV

(Single-Person Pedal-Powered Vehicle)

Concern about global warming and urban air pollution have become central issues in transport policy decision-making, and as a result much research in recent years has focused on the development of vehicles which are environmentally friendly. Air quality in cities is currently significantly lower than in rural areas (1) and this has been shown to be directly linked to the level of vehicle emissions from private cars. (2) Due to the fact that urban transport policy in the UK is designed to reduce or discourage the use of private cars, (3) there has been an increase in the sale of non-polluting vehicles such as the SPPPV (Single-Person Pedal-Powered Vehicle). However, although the number of SPPPV users has increased, safety and comfort issues need to be addressed if the number of users is to increase to a level at which a significant effect on environmental pollution can be achieved.

Researchers have studied and improved many aspects of the SPPPV. In 1980, Wang *et al.* responded to the need for increased safety by designing an SPPPV surrounded by a 'cage' of

safety bars, (4) and in 2001 Martinez developed this further with the introduction of a reinforced polymer screen which could be fitted to the safety bars to protect the cyclist's face in the event of a collision. (5)The issue of comfort has also been addressed by many design teams; in 1998 Kohl *et al*. introduced an SPPPV with a built-in umbrella, which could be opened at the touch of a button, (6) and more recently, Martinez (7) has added a mesh filter which can be placed over the entire cage to reduce the risk of environmental pollution. However, the resulting 'cage' or cover is aerodynamically ineffective due to the shape of the umbrella and the weight of the mesh filter.

In this study, we used computer simulation to model the aerodynamic effect of the existing safety and comfort features and we present a new design which integrates these features in an optimally- effective aerodynamic shape (Clasman-Deal, 2010, pp. 42-43).

Sample (2): *Imen Keskes*

"Relationship between leadership styles and dimensions of employee organizational commitment: A critical review and discussion of future directions"

Introduction

Leadership has been always a crucial issue since organizations and companies are permanently in a constant struggle to be increasingly competitive. Leadership is an important function of management which helps to maximize efficiency and to achieve organizational goals. The word leadership has been described in terms of the position, personality, responsibility, influence process; instrument to achieve a goal, behaviors (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2007). Most definitions have a common theme of directing a group towards a goal. Therefore, the leadership can be broadly defined as the relationship between an individual and a group built around some common interest wherein the group behaves in a manner directed or determined by the leader (Shastri, Shashi Mishra & Sinha, 2010). Leaders can influence the behavior of their followers through the use of different styles, or approaches, to managing others. For the past three decades, a pair of predominant leadership styles (transactional and transformational leadership) has received a significant amount of attention.

On the other hand, employee commitment has long been a topic of interest to organizational researchers (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993; Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1984; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982). One of the main reasons for its popularity is that organisations have continued to find and sustain competitive advantage through teams of committed employees. Many researchers found that an organization's success is determined, in part, by having a high degree of organizational commitment (Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2003; Brooks, 2002; McElroy, 2001). Organizational commitment has attracted considerable attention in theory and research because of its attempt to understand and clarify the intensity and stability of employee dedication to work organizations (Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-Lamastro, 1990). Research literature states that organizational commitment is defined as a subordinate's identification with the mission, goals, and vision of the organization. According to Eisenberg, Monge and Miller (1983), organizational commitment has been defined in a variety of ways. Most theorists, however, include one or more of the following three attitudinal elements as an integral part of their definition:

- a strong belief in and acceptance of the organizations goals and values;

- a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and

- a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. Generally, higher or lower levels of commitment have been shown to be a major driver of employees staying with or leaving an organization (Shaw, Delery, Jenkins & Gupta, 1998).

Employee commitment reflects the quality of the leadership in an organization (Stum, 1999). Organizational commitment provides a broad measure of the effectiveness of leadership which offers a way to further explore the subject of the relationship between leadership and commitment. However, organizations are always looking for the committed human resources in order to achieve its strategic objectives. Specifically, supervisors have the responsibility to emphasize to their subordinates their link and contribution to the success of the organization and to understand the significance of building a positive relationship with their respective subordinates to enhancing the subordinate's commitment to the organization (Truckenbrodt, 2000).

In the present paper, an extensive bibliographic research about leadership and organizational commitment has been done. The main objective is to study and discuss the relationship between leadership styles and dimensions of organizational commitment. This study has allowed to highlight and propose some areas for future research (Keskes, 2014).

5.2 Designing the Introduction

Cassuto (2018) states that because the aim is to turn the reader into an interested consumer of the dissertation, the student should design his introduction in a way that welcomes readers and shapes their expectations of the subsequent chapters. The student should bear in mind that his first and most important readers are the members of his dissertation committee. The family members and best friends can be added to the list because they may help in clarifying the introduction and the whole dissertation in a way or another, especially if the student writes with all these people in mind. To satisfy the needs of all this audience, the student should principally:

- **Situate his work** (What question is he trying to answer? And by answering it, which scholarly conversations is he entering? What difference is he making in those conversations? Why should the reader care?).

- **Give a preview of the research** (Summarize his findings, and then break them down by category).

- **Explain his methodology** (What tools — conceptual, interpretive, digital — has he used to do his work? How has he used them? Perhaps most important, why did he choose them?).
  Define key terms (When readers understand how he is defining keywords, they will read with comfort and anticipation, knowing that the writer is by their side) (ibid)

To conclude, Radhakrishna (2008) mentions that" A well-written introduction is important in attracting and sustaining readers' interest in the study. The saying **"**first impression in the best impression**"** holds good for writing introduction or writing chapter one thesis/dissertation".

Chapter 6: Materials and Methods of a Master's Dissertation

6.1 What is it?

The Materials and Methods chapter or portion of a Master's Dissertation is also another challenging task for most students. In this chapter a student is supposed to enlist the methods and tools used for his research and the materials that assisted in reaching the conclusion or conclusions. Enlisting materials such as books, newspapers, and the Internet helps the readers to find the data used and get access to the source of the research. In other words, this step increases the validity of the work. On the other hand, if the researcher justifies the choice of the methods such interviews, questionnaires, and observations that he employed the readers will be more convinced about the necessity and importance of the thesis or dissertation (*How to create PhD theses: materials and methods*, 2017). Erdemir (2013) explains:

> If the authors provide sufficient detail, other scientists can repeat their experiments to verify their findings. It is generally recommended that the materials and methods should be written in the past tense, either in active or passive voice. In this section, ethical approval, study dates, number of subjects, groups, evaluation criteria, exclusion criteria and statistical methods should be described sequentially. It should be noted that a well-written materials and methods section markedly enhances the chances of an article being published (p. 10)

What one might understand from this quotation is that besides the abovementioned benefits of the Materials and Methods chapter, it is this part of any research that paves the way for further work on the same topic. Other researchers may rely on any shortcoming or gap in ethics, population, or methods to carry out other studies. A more detailed structure of the Materials and Methods chapter states that it is made up of the following adapted items:

Introduction: The introduction restates the research purpose and describes the organization of the chapter.

Rationale for research approach: This section describes the research tradition or paradigm (qualitative research, quantitative research, etc.) and the research methodology (case study, action research, etc.) with a rationale for their suitability regarding the research questions.

Research context: This section describes and justifies the selection or choice of the research setting, providing the history, background, and issues relevant to the problem.

Research sample and data sources: This section

　　一explains and justifies the sample, population and sampling procedures used.

　　一describes the characteristics and size of the sample, and provides other pertinent demographic information; and

─outlines ethical considerations pertaining to participants, shedding light on how rights of participants were protected.

Data collection methods: This section describes and justifies all data collection methods, tools, instruments, and procedures, including the manner, time and place, and who collected the data.

Data analysis methods: This section describes and justifies all methods and tools used for data analysis (manual and/or computational).

Limitations and delimitations: This section identifies potential weaknesses and the scope of the study. Limitations are the uncontrolled conditions or problems that restrict the study's scope or affect its outcome. Whereas, delimitations are the controlled conditions or parameters that the researcher intentionally imposes in order to limit the scope of a study (participants of certain ages, genders, or groups; conducting the research in a single setting).

Summary: A comprehensive summary overview covers all the sections of this chapter, recapping and highlighting all the important points (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012, pp. 8-9).

Below are two samples of the *method chapter* which give a comprehensible picture of what to include in each of the above parts and the language and style used in the section or chapter.

Sample (1): CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHOD

In this chapter the writer will discuss the research design, population and sample, the data collection and instrument, and the data analysis.

A. Research Design

In this study the writer wanted to get the information about the students' problem in writing a research proposal. In this case the writer will use the design descriptive qualitative. According to Ary Descriptive research is studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current status phenomena. In qualitative research, there is little or no statistic. According to Cristine Marlow stated that qualitative the interpretive approach generally uses words (qualitative data) rather than numbers or concepts that can be quantified (qualitative data), rich description of phenomena can be produced.

This research includes the type of case study using descriptive qualitative method. Case study has the characteristics as stated by the experts as a study that is conducted intensively, detailed and depth toward an organization, institution or certain phenomenon. Case can be an individual, an institution or a group considered as a unit in the research.

Correlating to the explanation, this research was a case study because of its characteristics. This study attempts to explore certain information about a phenomenon or case of a subject. The case of this research was students' problems in writing a research proposal and the subject was the fifth semester students of English education department, state institute for Islamic studies Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

Due to this research was a case study, it uses descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive method is a method that researches the status of human, an object, a set of condition, a system of thought, or even a class of phenomenon at the present. Qualitative research is a research procedure which produces written or spoken descriptive data of research that is possible to observe. This research uses that method because it is appropriate to the objectives of the research which focuses on students' problems in writing a research proposal and the possible causes of the problems in writing a research proposal are faced by students. The results of the research emphasize more toward the data interpretation found in the field. The results are not written in

the form of figures and tables with statistical measures, but it is illustrated in the form of describing words to the results and it is presented in narrative.

B. Location of the Study

The research was conducted at IAIN Sunan Ampel which located on Jl. Jend. Achmad Yani 117 Surabaya Tel. (031) 8410298, 8413300 Fax. (031) 8413300.

C. Subject of the Study

Research subject was a person who is the objects of research being investigated. The objects of this research are students' problems in writing a research proposal and the possible causes of the problems in writing a research proposal are faced by students. Based on the objects above, the subject of this research is the students at fifth semester. A writing lecture who handles these classes also becomes the subject of this research.

D. Population and Sample

Population and sample are very important in conducting a research. According to Donald Ary a population is defined all members of any well-defined class of people, events or objects. According to Sugiyono, the population is groups of subject that is determined by the researchers to be studied and drawn the conclusions. The number of population greatly affects the course of population. If it is large, researcher will likely find some difficulties in conducting the research, for examples; limited funds, energy and time. To overcome these problems, researcher may take the sample.

Donal Ary stated that sample is part of population or the representation of a population. A sample is small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. The sample is a representation of the total population. It is made to make the research easier to run optimally. What was learned from the sample and the conclusions derived represent the whole respondents. Therefore, the sample taken from the population should be truly representative.

The population of this study were the students of English education department state institute for Islamic studies Sunan Ampel in academic year 2011//2012 or they are now still studying writing IV.

The technique that the researcher used is random sampling. According to Donald Ary, random sampling was that all members of the population have an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. Descriptive research typically used larger sample; it is sometimes suggested that one select ten to twenty percent of the accessible population for the sample. The researcher
used 15 students of fifth semester as sample.

E. Data Collection and Instrument

The researcher chooses two instruments in collecting all the data, they are documentation of students' text research proposal and interview.

1. Documentation of students' text research proposal

Documentation is the investigation, collection, control, preservation, preparation, use and supply of documents, with a view to obtain descriptions and enlightened knowledge and evidence, in this case, including the usefulness of archives and libraries (E. Martono).

According Suharsimi Arikunto, documentation explaining the technique is to look for data about things or variables in the form of notes, transcripts, books, newspapers, magazines. Inscription agenda for information embodied data relating to clients under investigation.

The purpose of documentation is to complement the data that has not been mentioned by the informant and to know how much data can be accounted for. Documentation methods in this study are intended to get the data the students through personal book student registration books. psychological test results and the study of students.

The first method of data collection was the documentation of the students' text research proposals. The researcher asked to the lecturer writing task of research proposal has been done by students. The research proposals was then analyzed in the term of elements to answer the first research question, i.e. to identify the students' problems in writing a research proposal based on their work.

2. Interview

Interview is a method of data collection with the question and answer unilateral and done in a systematic and based on the research objectives. In general, two or more people to be physically present in the process of question and answer. Meanwhile, according to Moleong "interview is a conversation with a purpose. The conversation was conducted by the two parties, namely the interview (interviewer) is asking his interviewee (interviewee) that provides an answer to that question" Referring of opinion on interviews conducted by the researcher and the respondents in this research room of the prescribed period and at the line with the agreement between the researcher and the respondent. As for the interview in terms of implementation, distinguished by:

1. Free interviews (in guided interview), in which the interviewer asks independent anything, but also considering what data will be collected.
2. Guided interviews (guided interview), the interviews were conducted by interviewers with a complete and detailed list of questions such as those referred to in a structured interview.
3. Free interviews guided the combination of free interviews and guided interviews.

Interview method is indispensable and influential in the process of collecting data in the study, the researchers first prepare materials that will be presented that includes an outline of what will be asked, or prepare a structured interview guide. Then do the interview in accordance with the desired. Here researchers are actively asking questions and provoke discussion toward a particular problem to the data source in order to obtain answers to existing problems so as obtain research data.

In the interview this way researchers use interviews guided the researchers took a series of questions and also ask things related to the explanations that have been presented. Sources of data in this study were students and lecturers.

So the researcher chosen the second source of data was the interview with all participants of the study. it is technique which the data collected through face-to-face interaction between the interviewer and the respondent. The researcher here was researcher himself and respondents were students and lecture. The interview was carried out after the process of the students' text research proposal that analysis has been completed. It is used to obtain more comprehensive data on their perspective, especially on the second research question, i.e. the possible causes of the problems in writing a research proposal based on their works.

The content And procedure of the interviews are organized in advance based on the data gained from the text analysis. Each student was given questions based on the problem they faced; while lecturers was given questions based on the general problems faced by the students.

F. Data Analysis

After collecting the data do separation selectively adapted to problem raised in the study. After the processing is done with the editing process, by recheck the data obtained the data, whether the data is good enough and can be quickly prepared for the next process. A systematic and consistent that the data obtained, contained in a draft concept was made into a primary basis in providing analysis.

According to Patton explains that data analysis is the process of arranging the order of the data, organize into a pattern, category, and description of the basic unit. Meanwhile, according to Taylor defines data analysis as a process of detailing a formal effort to find a theme and formulate a hypothesis (idea) as suggested and as an attempt to provide assistance and theme of the hypothesis. If assessed, essentially the first definition is more focused organizing data while the second emphasizes the intent and purpose of the data analysis. Thus, these definitions can be synthesized into: organizing data analysis process and sort the data into patterns, categories and basic units of description that match the theme and can be formulated as a working hypothesis based on the data.

The data were analyzed through qualitative data analysis on the basis of the research questions. As discussed in data collection section, there were two sources of data in this study, namely: the students'' research proposals and interview. The followings were the steps of data analysis for each source of data.

1. The students' text research proposals

As pointed out by Travers, the procedure of text analysis in case study follows the procedures laid out in the related theory. For this purpose, this study used the theory of genre analysis and SFL to analyze the students' research proposals. The analysis is in terms of the elements the students employed in their research proposals to achieve the communicative purpose of each element in the research proposals.

There are four steps of text analysis applied in this study. *First*, each chapter of the research proposal, i.e. introduction, literature review, and methodology, was analyzed to see its elements. *Second*, the analysis of elements was carried out to compare and contrast to those proposed by theorists mentioned in chapter two. It has shown the students' problems to apply appropriate elements of a research proposal to convey its communicative purposes.

As result, it answered the first research question, i.e. to identify the students' problems in writing a research proposal.

Third, each student's problems are categorized in the form.

# Students 1-15 The major elements in research proposal			
	Problem		
	Introduction	Literature Review	Methodology
Elements			

Fourth, the result of the analysis of all students' text research proposals are described and discussed in the major elements in research proposals. After described the data, the researcher did interview for students and lectures for getting more information about problems and the causes of problems that they are faced.

2. Interview

The data from interview are analyzed in three steps. *First*, the interviews were transcribed or converted in to written form. *Second,* the transcribed were given back to the respondents to check whether it has reflected what they meant to provide data for analysis. *Third*, the transcripts were condensed into briefer statements in which the main sense of what is said is rephrased in a few words.

Finally, the data would be percentage and categorized by using data analysis with regard to the research questions i.e. the problems faced by the students, the possible causes of problems based on their work.

G. Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed a concise account of the methodology in the resent study. It includes the research design, Location of the Study, Subject of the Study**,** Population and Sample, Data Collection and Instrument, and data analysis. The next chapters ……presentation and analysis of data based on the results of the analysis of each source of data, i.e. the students' text research proposals and interview (*CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHOD In this chapter…*)

Sample (2): Method

Participants

Participants in this study included 75 Loyola University New Orleans students. Participants included 41 females and 34 males between the ages of 18 and 23. All participants in this study were volunteers. Some participants were recruited from the Psychology Human Participants Pool by signing up on a sheet posted on the psychology board and by convenience sampling.

Materials

Informed consent forms were used containing information about procedures, benefits and risks of participating, an explanation how to acquire the results of the research, availability of counseling services, voluntary participation, and contact information of the researchers. The purpose of the study was also on the consent form. Additional materials included a self-compiled survey (see appendix). The survey included six demographic questions which included GPA. The survey also included a section in which the participant was asked to list how many piercings

and tattoos they have and where they were on their body. Earlobe piercings were excluded. A personality survey was also included to see if there were significant differences between those with body modification and those without. This survey was a Likert scale in which there were 15 adjective pairs. The participants were asked to select the number along the scale that most closely describes them or their preferences.

Design and Procedure

The research design of this study was non-experimental and co-relational as it studied the relationship between the presence of body modifications and GPA. The variables in this study were body modification, which could range from nobody modification to more than two body modifications, and GPA. As participants arrived they were asked to have a seat and sign two informed consent forms. One was to be turned into the researcher and one was to be kept for the participant. After obtaining informed consent, the researcher gave each participant a survey packet and explained EXAMPLE METHOD SECTION 2 that they may cease participation at any time. The researcher then asked the participants to please read the directions carefully and fill out both the demographic and body modification sections of the survey to the best of their ability. After the surveys were completed and turned in the researchers debriefed the participants and told them that the study was actually looking for a correlation between body modification and GPA. The participants were then asked if they had any questions and thanked for their cooperation (Krell, 2003).

6.2 The Importance of Methods and Materials

The good researcher is the one who enables other researchers to replicate his work (s). His detailed records and reports of events and phenomena give them the opportunity to verify the findings. In several cases, it has been proved that many studies cannot be replicated because there is insufficient detail in the methods and there is no easy access to further details and authors even if they are required (Langley, 2007). Kallet (2004) states that "The methods section of a research paper provides the information by which a study's validity is judged. Therefore, it requires a clear and precise description of how an experiment was done, and the rationale for why specific experimental procedures were chosen" (p.1229). In other words, the methods section explains plainly the whole process of answering the research question, including the design and choice of the methods. Additionally, it describes the use of material and their preparation, the measures taken, the calculations performed, and tests done in the study to analyze the data (ibid).

According Azevedo et al. (2011), it is crucial to write the methods and materials section in a clear and concise manner, but in a way that facilitates to present enough information for the reader. In journal articles, this section should answer questions like "who", "what", "where", "when", "why" and "how". It is also crucial that the methods and materials should be clear, well-ordered, and ideally structured to avoid confusion and ambiguity (ibid).

Chapter 7: Results and Discussion of a Master's Dissertation

7.1 Do's and Don'ts

Writing a good results and discussion chapter of a thesis or dissertation is an important part in research. However, the results and discussion chapter or chapters (it could appear in two separate chapters) presents a great challenge for most students for the following reasons:

* The work is not planned properly (i.e. the literature does not naturally link to the actual research undertaken).

* Students do not really understand what is expected here.

* Students fail to analyze any data. Instead, they simply state what the response was for each question

* Students think that by writing a written summary of the results that are visually depicted is an adequate discussion (Stainton, 2020).

Some scholars tell us that once a student has conducted his research, analyzed the findings and written the results, the most difficult part of writing the dissertation comes out: the discussion. According to them, the latter is the place where to settle down all the parts of research into a cohesive narrative; i.e. the place where to consider and reconsider the whole work from beginning to end (Azar, 2006). Below are some do's and don'ts for students to emphasize in the writing of their research's story:

1. **Do: Provide context and explain why people should care. DON'T: Simply rehash your results.** The student should start with a one-paragraph summary of the main findings and then explains the findings and show how they match other ones in previous studies. The next step is to cover the implications and their importance and value.

2. **Do: Emphasize the positive. DON'T: Exaggerate.** The student is required to avoid exaggeration; the student should also use the verbs and expression which fit in the nature of the work (correlational, experimental, etc) in order not to go too far from the data and conclusions. The limitations of the study must not be mentioned at the very beginning.

3. **DO: Look toward the future. DON'T: End with it.** While mentioning the limitations, the student should open the door for further studies, but without too much talk about the future because the present keeps the reader's eye on what is in the dissertation, not outside it. The student should end up the discussion with a strong paragraph, including precise and concise expressions, to leave his mark.

4. Do not: Start with limitations instead of implications.

5. Do not: Make strong claims about weak results.

6. Do not: Restate the results without interpretation or links to other research.

7. Do not: Offer no concluding statements or end with the limitations (ibid).

To easily understand what the *Results and Discussion of a Master's Dissertation* is about and what the students should do or do not do, an excerpt of a sample is provided blow. Only the elements deemed to be of practical help are presented; the author counts on the reader's checking of online or print copies of dissertations to marry between theory and practice.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study was an attempt to know about the awareness of women regarding the health issues with regards to menopause and problems faced during this stage. As stated in the previous chapter, the researcher selected a sample of 300 respondents residing in Rajkot city. On this representative sample, a survey was carried out to find out the extent of awareness and problems faced by women during this period of transition. An interview schedule was used to collect data for the study. This schedule comprised of background information, awareness scale, symptomatic problem list and other open as well as close ended questions. The results obtained were put through statistical analysis and are presented in this present chapter. For the better understanding the results were divided and presented under following four heads.

4.1 Background information

4.2 Awareness

4.3 Problems

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

4.1 Background Information
The first section, in the interview schedule, dealt with the personal information related to the background of the respondents. The information collected in this section was further put to a statistical analysis. The results obtained are presented here in this chapter.

4.1.1 Age-wise distribution
The sample for the study was divided into three categories according to their age. Table - 4 shows the percentage distribution for the same. It was found that somewhat equal numbers of respondents were from all the three categories.

Table 4

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO AGE

Sr. No.	Age	N	Percentage
1	40 years to 44 years	113	33%
2	45 years to 49 years	087	29%
3	50 years to 54 years	100	33%

4.1.2 Education-wise distribution
The Table-5 below shows the percentage distribution of the sample according to their education. It could be seen that thirty eight percent of respondents had education till 12th std. only.

Table 5

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

Sr. No.	Education	N	Percentage
1	Illiterate to std. 4th	028	09%
2	Std. 5th to std. 12th	114	38%
3	Graduate	091	30%
4	Post graduate and above	057	19%
5	Professional Degree	010	03%

4.1.3 Marital Status-wise distribution

Table 6

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO MARITAL STATUS

Sr. No.	Marital Status	N	Percentage
1	Married	258	86%
2	Unmarried	027	09%
3	Single	004	01%
4	Divorcee	003	01%
5	Widow	008	03%

The respondents for the study were mostly married. The researcher also came across few who were either divorcee or single. It was thought to be right to study whether there might be any difference in the problems suffered by those who never had a pregnancy. That is why this aspect was considered as one of the variable.

4.1.3 Occupation-Wise distribution

Table 7

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO OCCUPATION

Sr. No.	Occupation	N	Percentage
1	Housewives	176	59%
2	Working	117	39%
3	Private Practice	007	02%

It may be that the awareness of the women regarding any aspect might depend on how large her circle is. The researcher thought it best to consider this aspect as an independent variable and so nearly fifty percent of the respondents included were working outside their homes. Also the workload on the female may affect her physiological problems due to menopause and was studied further.

4.1.4 Type of Organization-Wise distribution

Table 8

DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Sr. No.	Type of Organization	N	Percentage
1	Government	020	07%
2	Semi-government	006	02%
3	Private Sector	019	06%
4	Educational Institute	079	20%
5	Non-Working	176	59%

When distributed according to the type of organization for those gainfully employed outside their homes, it was found that majority were in the educational institutes. This might be because Rajkot is still a city with traditional mindset and where working of females outside the home was not accepted easily. Teaching was the only profession which was considered preferable career for females. And so when working women of +40 were traced most of them happened to be in educational institutes.   (Chapter 4 Results and Discussion)

7.2 Other Tips

According to academics, the **Results** and **Discussion** in some types of reports "can fulfill different purposes. In a design report, the results and discussion may involve an evaluation of the design or method used. In a feasibility or case study, the results and discussion section would involve measuring the feasibility or evaluating the success of one or more solutions" (Cited in *Results and Discussions*). But, in writing these sections in a report students are faced with the decision of whether to combine the results and the discussion sections, or keep them separate? Combing them allows for more coherence in the text because the results are discussed immediately after they have been presented; while, keeping them separate, permits the student to discuss all of the results at one time. In other words, the student should not discuss the results until he has presented all of them (ibid). The decision to use anyone of these methods depends on the nature of the research, the student's capacities, and the supervisor's advice and preferences.

The *data presentation, analysis, and interpretation section* is used as a substitute for results and discussion. So, as the new terms connote, students should present the results, show the analysis, and interpret the outcome of the analysis (Regoniel, 2015). In presenting the results of the study, students should use **graphs, tables, or photographs** to represent the observations and measurements, use **subheadings** to represent the objectives, and state clearly **key results** at the beginning of paragraphs. In writing the discussion, however, students should well present **trends and spatial differences** (changes), use **insightful interpretation of results**, make **generalizations** if there are enough samples, and shed light on the study's contribution (ibid).

Chapter 8: Conclusion of a Master's Dissertation

8.1 Putting all the pieces together

The dissertation conclusion is the part of the dissertation where the student should finish the work 'on a high note'. That is, the student should put together all the pieces discussed in the body chapters; the student may put forward recommendations or suggest related areas for further research; the student may also, in the last section of the conclusion, comment on the limitations of the study without spending too much time and space on the uncovered areas. Furthermore, new theories or information are not advisable to be included in the conclusion. In some universities, a section in which the student reflects on what he/she has learned from the dissertation as skills or acquired as knowledge in the conclusion is expected, but it all depends on the university requirements (Essays, 2018).

Because the conclusion is an important part of a dissertation, especially in terms of what it gives as an overview about the whole work to the reader, it is not always easy to write one. Below are some tips or ingredients to be included in the conclusion as observed by Trzeciak and Mackay (1994):

* A **summary** of the main part of the text.

* A **deduction** made on the basis of the main body.

* Your **personal opinion** on what has been discussed.

* A statement about the **limitations** of the work.

* A **comment about the future** based on what has been discussed.

* The **implications** of the work for future research.

* Important **facts and figures** not mentioned in the main body

(https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/globalpad/openhouse/academicenglishskills/writing/conclusions/)

The importance of the conclusion lies in the fact that if it is well-written, it enables the student to show the reader that there is an understanding of the research problem; it offers an opportunity to leave a lasting impression; it offers an opportunity to position the study within the context of past research about the topic; it enables the student to build on the impact of his findings; and it provides the student with new insights into contextualizing the research problem based on the results of his study. For more understanding of the overall structure and ingredients of a master dissertation or thesis conclusion, the samples below are proposed:

Sample (1): *Scott Richard Clucas, 1997*

"Construction as a Curriculum Organizer for Technology Education"

Conclusion

This dissertation was the result of an investigation into the relative importance of construction as a curriculum organizer for the field of technology education. In particular, it concentrated on the

relationship between construction technology and the principles of general education and technological literacy. The review of literature focused on the historic roles and meanings of this curriculum organizer and these principles as the discipline evolved from the industrial arts into technology education. Operational definitions were synthesized and the linkages between them was clearly identified. To address technology education's contribution to general education, or the full development of the human personality, the spheres of human/technology interaction model was developed. The model is based on the idea that people interact with technology and evaluate those interactions from three fundamental perspectives. Those perspectives were identified as the civic-life sphere, the personal-life sphere, and the work-life sphere. One hundred and forty-eight faculty members of technology teacher education programs in colleges and universities throughout the United States were surveyed. A 77% return rate was obtained. The survey included four major sections in addition to requesting limited information about the respondents and their programs. The four major sections asked the respondents to: 1) Evaluate potential goals for a K-12 technology education program. 2) Determine the relative importance of 10 study areas or curriculum organizers as they related to each of the three spheres of interaction. 3) Determine the percentage of the technology education curriculum that should be allocated to each of the three spheres of human/technology interaction. 4) Provide selected information about the way construction is offered and taught in technology teacher education programs. Medoid cluster analysis was used to evaluate the data derived from the goals of technology education portion of the survey. Using this information, three clusters were formed and initial respondent membership for each cluster was established. Subsequently, discriminant analysis was used to accomplish three goals: 1) Refine the initial assignment of respondents to the clusters. 2) Identify those variables that offered a significant level of discrimination between clusters. 3) Determine the accuracy of assignment to the clusters or groups. The canonical correlation 2, calculated by the discriminant analysis program, indicated that 66.3% of the variance was explained by the variables that were significant at a .05 level. After comparing the mean scores of the discriminating variables across the three clusters, one cluster was identified as favoring technological literacy, one favored industrial technology education, and one was ambivalent. T-tests were used to determine if any significant difference existed between clusters or groups. It was of particular interest to this research that no significant difference was found related to the relative importance of construction. All groups concluded that construction should comprise approximately 10% of the technology education curriculum. Finally, a schedule was established which allocated various percentages of the curriculum to each of the 10 study areas or curriculum organizers as they relate to the three spheres of human/technology interaction. This schedule was based on the relative importance assigned by the technological literacy cluster. The technological literacy cluster offered the most balanced allocation of the technology education curriculum across the three spheres of human/technology interaction (Clucas, 1997).

Sample (2): Conclusion

In summary, it can be suggested that this study was aimed at examining the impact of four specific aspects (consistency, involvement, adaptability and mission) of organizational culture on overall performance of a firm. The study was conducted with the help of adopting a 'positivist' approach. This might be attributed to the fact that it would be necessary to use participant experiences, facts and data collected from secondary literature so as to derive meaning. In order to gather participation for the study, invites (clearly explaining the objective and methodology of this study) for participation were sent out to 42 manufacturing firms across UK. The researcher however only received a positive response from 3 firms. Two sets of questionnaires (one for employees and the other for management officials) were mailed out to these three participating firms. Participants who had also provided their consent for the telephonic interview were then contacted. Responses were recorded on the researcher's computer (which was kept locked at all times) and in the researcher's university locker. All participant data was destroyed as soon as the researcher finished analyzing data and analyzing

the same in context of this research. All participants were informed that they would be able to access research results once the study is complete.

Analysis of collected data revealed that employees felt that being knowledgeable about an organization's mission enables them in aligning their personal and professional objectives, setting realistic goals and remaining motivated. Similarly, managers also felt that that presence of a clear mission statement helped them in motivating their employees, retaining them and giving them clear work directions. Further, research results also indicated that both employees and managers valued the aspect of flexibility in work environment and felt that flexible working arrangements help in improving overall organization performance by keeping employees comfortable and allowing them to appropriately maintain their work-life balance. In context of adaptability and consistency, the study indicated that although adapting to situations that arise is necessary, having a core set of values, policies and procedures is necessary. Overall, the study clearly demonstrated the importance of attributes of flexibility, adaptation and consistency for delivering superior performance.

The study was limited in terms of its validity and generalizability as data was collected from a total of 3 firms in a single country. Additionally, the aspect of researcher bias might come into picture and this would negatively impact reliability of research results.

(https://www.myassignmentservices.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/conclusion.pdf)

8.2 Extra Tips

Below are some practical tips to highlight when drawing the conclusion. The list has been elaborated to give students some ideas, and put them on the right track.

1. Students should go back through the paper and note the claims they have made and make sure to address them in the conclusion.

2. Students should make sure they remind the reader of the paper's main argument.

3. Students should not summarize, but synthesize in the conclusion. They should find ways which might help them to bring their claims together so that the reader discovers they are significant.

4. Students should think about the scope of the paper (materials). Students should show the reader they are considering the broader context of the subject.

5. Students should eliminate doubt. Students should make sure to end confidently by avoiding phrases such as "of course, this is not the only," and "of course, there are other perspectives on."

6. Students should never use phrases such as "the arguments above" or "the examples mentioned throughout this paper." They are supposed to be sure to address their claims specifically.

(A Brief Guide to Writing Conclusions)

Chapter 9: Literature Review of a Master's Dissertation

9.1 Definition and Position

Wright (2016) claims that the literature review is not a summary or description of what has been written about a topic, nor is it "everything" that a student has read about that topic. It is a critical overview of research that is relevant to the student's research question (p. 2). The literature review, in terms of position, can be a part of the introduction, a separate chapter, or integrated throughout the work (ibid, p. 4). According to Hofstee (2006), however, the literature review is always placed after the introduction and before the method chapter. If in the introduction the researcher tells the reader what he is going to do and invites him to read on, in the literature review the reader needs to be provided with what has been published before by other researchers on the same topic; i.e. with a theory base and an analysis of relevant works (p.91). A literature review has many purposes in the dissertation. It shows that the researcher or student is aware of what is going on in the field; that there is a theoretical background for the work proposed; that there is a context for your work; that the work is important; and that the work will have contribution to the existing body of knowledge (ibid).

The literature review section or chapter of a dissertation is not different from an essay. It is made up of: introduction, discussion (main body), and conclusion (*Figure 2*). The structure of a good literature review (Brown, 2019) is a whole conception of this part from beginning to end. A researcher may follow the points described below and rely on samples (1) and (2):

1. Critical Thinking (the researcher needs to think of and focus on the sources of data he will use and how he will use them).

2. Reading Different Literatures (the researcher should read various relevant literatures).

3. Draft Selected Researches (the researcher drafts most closely related research parts).

4. Compare and Evaluate (the researcher compares and evaluates those readings to find gaps)

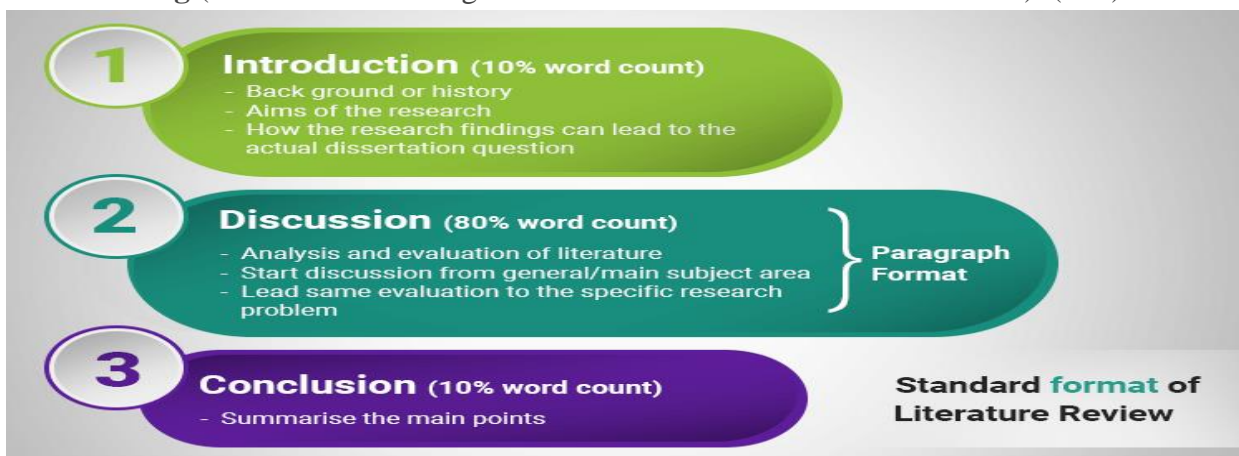**5. Formatting** (the researcher arranges his whole literature in a standard format) (ibid)

Figure 2: Standard format of literature review
Source: https://www.crowdwriter.com/blog/how-to-structure-a-literature-review-of-dissertation

"Living with chronic illnesses: How are those with a chronic illness treated by their families since their diagnosis?"

Literature Review

Chronic physical illness and chronic mental illnesses are reviewed separately here due to the tremendous differences in the two. In this study they will be compared against one another to cross analyze the differences and similarities in how the family member is treated depending upon their type of illness.

Chronic Physical Illness

Chronic physical illnesses vary in types and intensity, but have one characteristic in common: they recur throughout time, usually at random intervals. The uncertainty that comes along with a diagnosis along these lines can greatly affect family communication and relationships.

Marriage. Marriage is the basis of most families in many cultures. Keeping the marital bond strong could be very difficult in the face of a chronic physical illness. A chronic physical illness could potentially change the daily lives and interactions of the entire marital relationship. It is important to discuss the communication that occurs around these illnesses in order to understand how those who have one have been treated since their diagnosis based on research already conducted around similar communication processes. Badr and Acitelli (2005) found that in couples that used relationship talk, or talking about the nature and direction of the relationship, chronically ill couples had more benefit than a couple that did not include someone who had a chronic physical illness did. This literature proves that in a situation where a spouse is chronically ill, it is important to use communication to make one another aware of certain things such as how one felt about a situation, or what one needs or expects from their partners. Talking about the state of the relationship can be helpful for chronically ill people to express fears in relation to their illness and the marriage. Berg and Upchurch (2007) suggested that collaborative talk is the type of communication that is commonly correlated with positive results. This shows that it is important for married couples to talk about their situation together to keep their relationship strong since these tactics have been proven to be helpful for the couple. Shuff and Sims (2013) add on to this by stating that couples that are aware of their partner's expectations of communication in the marriage are more successful in supporting one another. Being aware of the partner's desires and being able to fill them is central to satisfaction in the relationships' functioning. Marital coping and sharing is not limited to relationship talk though. Another powerful way of sharing within the family is through narrative.

Narratives. Something that is strongly recognized and praised throughout literature on chronic physical illnesses is narratives. Several studies (Freeman & Couchonnal, 2006; Ott Anderson & Geist Martin, 2003; Walker & Dickson, 2004) stress the importance of narratives for the family healing process. Narratives are beneficial because they allow research to capture personal accounts of illness, and let the ill person be a gatekeeper to their own information about their illness. Ott Anderson and Geist Martin (2003) state that those with a chronic physical illness are more likely to actively share if their feelings and perceptions are confirmed by other people, especially friends and family. Some chronic illnesses have a negative social stigma to them, and confirmation that people will be respectful is important to getting the patient to open up about their experiences. Narratives and storytelling help families to communicate about changes that have taken place. Ott Anderson and Geist Martin (2003) conclude that the ever changing identity in the face of illness never stops, it is an endless development. Sharing through narrative in cases of chronic physical illness has the potential to better family communication because the patient is able to clearly and concisely explain what is happening to them from their personal point of view. This can help the family identify what the patient has gone through, as well as understand new emerging identities. However, Lorde (1980) points out an important paradox where sometimes patients may be empowered by giving a narrative account of their story, while others may feel anxiety from reliving those moments of their life. According to Grotcher and Edwards (1990), when participants used communication to reduce their fear of

their illness, they were likely to communicate about their illness more often. Walker and Dickson (2004) show that narratives are important in understanding and meeting the expectations of the family members when they are chronically ill. Often times people will have expectations for their family members without verbally expressing them, leaving family members more often than not confused about what direction to take. However, a narrative or forms of storytelling in the case of a chronic physical illness may reflect some of the patients unfulfilled needs, and help family members to identify them.

Chronic Mental Illness

A chronic mental illness can be extremely hard for families to cope with given the negative social stigmas that exist about the illness in most societies around the world today. A chronic mental illness in a family member could lead to almost constant care and monitoring, depending upon the illness and the intensity. Families may find it difficult to cope with or come to terms with a family member's diagnosis of a chronic mental illness due to the many challenges it presents. Much of the literature surrounding mental illness in the family is psychology based, and there is a strong need for communication based studies to better understand these unique families.

Marriage. An important aspect of the family dynamic is marriage. It is the foundation of most families, and gives people feelings of stability. Communication is essential to marriage, but little literature exists exploring the communication around a diagnosis of a mental illness. However, much literature exists on its effects on marriage. Perry (2014) focused on social networks and stigma in relation to those with a serious mental illness. A spouse is a very prominent and strong part of a married person's social network. If someone is entering or exiting a marriage, their social network changes in many different ways. Perry (2014) found that the stigma of a mental illness had contact with the social network and the relationship between the two works ambiguously together. Meaning that the social network responded to the mental illness through their own thinking, and proving that spouses typically control family conversations. Spouses decide the climate of the family views and values towards different topics as they raise their offspring, if they choose to have any. Segrin (2006) shows that there is a strong call for communication scholars to explore the way that families interact, especially about mental illness, and that a positive or a negative attitude can set a precedent for what future family communication will be like based off of how spouses interact. The different communication processes that couples partake in set examples for children to interact based on. Adding mental illness to the mixture, Schmaling and Jacobson (1990) show that wives that are depressed are more likely to make an aggressive comment to their husbands than wives that are not depressed would, and depressed wives have less positive discussions than their counterparts. These aggressive statements could likely become a stressor for the marriage or produce negative schemata of marriage for children or adolescents in the family. Segrin (2006) offers that depression has a large impact on the family, and usually just creates more problems that tends to result in fueling depression. However this assertion could also be true of the communication patterns surrounding may other types of mental illnesses in the family.

Parent-Child. Looking at the parent-child relationship in reference to mental illnesses, it is known that parents are the primary caregivers to children and adolescents with chronic mental illnesses. Literature mainly focuses on the illness from the parents' perspective, rather than the child's, suggesting that little is known about children's perceptions of their parents' mental illnesses. Richardson, Cobham, McDermott, and Murray (2013) explained that parent's feelings of loss about an adult child with a mental illness focuses on grieving about ambiguous losses, like the child's loss of self or identity. This loss and grieving process has the potential to shape the families behaviors and patterns of communications. Since there are usually no tangible effects of a mental illness, parents may often find it hard to cope with a diagnosis and come to terms with it. Even harder for families to process is the fact that in most cultures and societies in the world, there is a negative social stigma to having a mental illness. Richardson et al. (2013) also noted that parental grief over the child's mental illness was not socially acceptable. Several studies (Richardson et al., 2013; Chadda, 2014) discussed this notion that parents felt as though the illness or their own grief should be hidden because it is not socially acceptable. Most of the

struggles that parents in this situation face are with the topics of self-concepts and identities, with variance to whether it is their own, or their child's'. Richardson et al. (2013) found that the child's illness changed the parents own identity. Since the identity and self are such fluid concepts, it is important to understand the self and different identities as well as the changes that occur with the two in accordance to both the parents, and the children. There is little literature in regards to mental health's effects on self-concepts and identities. Aside from the self, another important factor to contend when discussing mental illness between the parents and children is parenting styles effects on these children with mental illnesses. Hamond and Schrodt (2012) explored the effects of the different parenting styles on children's mental health and concluded that there was no statistically significant evidence that the different styles had an effect on mental health. However Hamond and Schrodt (2012) continued by noting that findings indicated that acts of affection and authority make limited, but important, improvements to the child's mental health. When it is the parent in the relationship who is mentally ill, the communication process is entirely different. As found in Van Loon, Van de Ven, Van Doesum, Witteman, and Hosman (2014), where adolescents internalizing and externalizing behaviors were correlated to parents mental illness. Parents with mental illnesses were found to have a negative effect on the adolescent or child, the whole family, and even the parent and child's interactions (Van Loon et al., 2014). This literature exemplifies that parental mental illness controls more channels of communication than a child or adolescent's mental illness does. While much literature exists about families and mental illness, unfortunately very few scholars focus on the talk that occurs about the family member with the illness, and the communication around this topic.

Reviewing the literature leads back to the question: how are those with a chronic illness treated by their families since their diagnosis? Analyzing both mental and physical illnesses and the family communication processes around them are essential to furthering the conversation that communication scholars are creating to understand these unique families.

Source: https://www.academia.edu/30155469/Living_with_chronic_illnesses_How_are_those _with_a_chronic_illness_treated_by_their_families_since_their_diagnosis

Sample (2): *Maura K Little*

"Living with chronic illnesses: How are those with a chronic illness treated by their families since their diagnosis?"

Review of Literature

Prevelance of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is something that is has become a new social phenomenon in today's society. It can often times leave students unable to escape their bullies and leave them feeling alone and helpless. Faucher, Jackson, and Cassidy (2014) performed a study on 1925 students across four Canadian universities that found 24.1 percent of students had been the victims of cyberbullying over the last twelve months. These shocking numbers show that nearly one in every four people have been the victims of this phenomenon. This statistic is interesting however because when compared to studies that were done amongst younger age students you see that the numbers are drastically different. Wegge, Vandebosch, and Eggermont(2014) found that among 1,458 13-14 year old students that considerably less students reported being cyberbullied. This is very similar to what Vanderbosch and Van Cleemput (2009) found among 2052 students in the 12-18 ranges which concluded that 11.1 percent of students had been victims of cyberbullying. This research concludes that cyberbullying appears to be more prevelant in students as they get older. Wegge et al. (2014) also noted that 30.8 percent had been victims of traditional bullying.

This raises the question as to why it seems to be less prevalent among younger students. Is it possible that they simply don't have as much access to the tools of Cyberbullying 5 cyberbullying that students at the university level have, or they possibly aren't as technologically advances as their older peers? It continues to raise questions about the issue of cyberbullying as well as what classifies the perpetrators as well as what are their reasons for harming others.

The types of people who bully. An important factor when analyzing cyberbullying is trying to understand the types of people who are the aggressors. The first thing that needs to be discussed when analyzing this is the simple matter of gender when it comes to who is generally the aggressor. Slonje and Smith (2008) found that when it comes to cyberbullying males are more often than not the aggressors with males being reported as the cyberbully far more often than females. Slonje et al (2008) also found that 36.2 percent of students were unaware of the gender of their aggressors. This is intriguing because for one its is the same percentage as the number of males who bullied, but most importantly because it shows that over 1 in 3 students don't actually know who is bullying them, which adds to the fear and stigma that is related to cyberbullying and not being able to escape the perpetrators.

The types of people who are victims. Researchers have also conducted various studies on the types of people who are cyberbullied, or what is often referred to as "cybervictomology". Abeele and Cock (2013) conducted a study, which concluded that the gender of victims varied greatly depending on the form of cyberbullying. Abeele et al. (2013) found that males are more likely to be on the receiving end of direct cyberbullying while females are more likely to be the victims of indirect cyberbullying such as online gossip among peers. These findings appear to remain true to social social norms where males are viewed as more confrontational and females are often stereotyped as gossipers.

While not many studies look at the gender of the victims many studies do research things such as the characteristics of the victims. Faucher et al. (2014) found that there were numerous reasons that people felt they were the victims of cyberbullying such as their personal appearance, interpersonal problems, as well as simply having discrepancies about their views. Davis, Randall, Ambrose, and Orand (2015) also conducted a study about victims and their demographics, which looked at the reasons people, were cyberbullied. Some of the results in the Davis et al. (2015) study addressed other reasons for being bullied in which they found that 14 percent of victims had been bullied because of factors such as their sexual orientation.

These are all very important because it fits the profile of the traditional bully that many people envision but it shows that it transfers over into the cyber world as well. This leads on further questions about the relationship between the two and how the cyberbullying is influencing where and how the harassment is continuing.

The relationship between bully and victim. The relationship between aggressor and victim is also something that has been heavily research among professionals. Beran and Li (2007) conducted a study that involved 432 middle school students and concluded that just under half of the studnets had been victims of cyberbullying as well as traditional bullying. This is true across multiple studies. Wegge et al. (2014) also concluded that people who were bullied in traditional manners had a much higher likelihood to become victims of cyberbullying. Another interesting relationship between bully and victim is that studies have also shown that people who are victims are likely to become aggressors in the online world. Beran et al. (2007) confirms this by stating "students who are bullied through technology are likely to us technology to bully others". Faucher et al. (2014) also found similar results claiming that male and female students decided to bully people online because they were bullied first.

Research has also been done that looks at how the bullies find their victims. Wegge et al. (2014) studied the perpetrators preferences in victims and found that 27 percent were in the same grade, 14.2 percent were in different grades and a staggering 49.6 percent were not schoolmates of the bullies. This evidence somewhat contradicts that of the other studies that state victims are generally bullied at school and at home because it shows that nearly half of the bullies prefer to bully people they don't go to school with and possibly have do not know at all. This continues to build and add to the idea of cyberbullying in that it allows bullies to create their own personas and images in order to try and intimidate and influence others without actually providing a physical intimidation factor.

Effects of Cyberbullying

The first part of this literature review focused on the demographics of the bullies and their victims, but now we will focus on the lasting effects and the trauma it brings to the victims as well as the different forms of cyberbullying. While the platforms used are different the lasting effects that the bullying has on the victims are very similar. Faucher et al. (2014) concluded that one of the main effects that cyberbullies had on university students was that they were unable to accomplish some of their school assignments. While, many people think of effects of bullying to be simply depression or low self esteem this study brought light to a much different more unexpected issues. Beran et al. (2007) also found similar responses from victims of cyberbullying claiming that they often didn't achieve the same marks in school and had lower concentration. These findings indicate that the lasting impact that a cyberbully has on their victims is often more harmful than what most people can see on the surface.

Pieschl, Porsch, Kahl, and Klockenbusch (2013) found that cybervictims generally were less distressed during the second confrontation with a cyberbully. This interesting finding indicates that victims of cyberbullies may actually become desensitized to the aggression over time lessening the effects of the bullying.

Victims coping techniques. When being faced by a bully it is important that victims learn to cope and move on from their experiences in order to prevent them from suffering in their personal and professional life like some of the victims in previous studies. Davis et al. (2014) conducted a study on victim coping techniques where they broke the techniques into two distinct categories, which were behavioral and cognitive strategies. Davis et al. (2014) found that 74 percent of participants preferred behavioral strategies and of those 74 percent, 69 percent of those people found the strategies to be effective. These behavioral strategies included seeking social support, making a creative outlet, or ignoring and blocking the bully. Because of the growing trend of cyberbullying there have been people who have developed different programs to help raise awareness for cyberbullying as well as offer help to the victims. One of these programs is known as Cyberprogram 2.0. Garaigordobil and Martinez-Valderrey (2015) conducted a study testing the effectiveness of this program and found that it was effective in decreasing the amount of traditional as well as cyberbullying, but also and more importantly it raised empathy among classmates towards the victims of these actions. This is a big step in combatting bullying because peers are constantly influencing each other. If the general consensus among the class is that bullying is not funny and not right because they empathize with the victims than it can go a long way in changing the social norm. If the attention is not longer given to the bully by classmates and victims it could potentially cut back on the frequency of this act.

With that being said it raises the question instead of trying to cope, why not just remove yourself from the situation all together and not give the bully what they desire? Arntfield (2005) discussed the risk associated with using social media and concluded that "intrinsic rewards that were not tied directly to winning as much as they were to fantasies of power, celebrity, sexuality, and elevated social status that came with participating, win or lose.". This conclusion is one that is very accurate and relevant to the way adolescence as well as university level students think in today's society. The fact of the matter is in order to fit in and be considered "cool" amongst your peers you need to be on social media to understand many of the things that are talked about amongst students. Whether it be trending hashtags, viral videos, or popular memes these are all things that are commonly shared and talked about between peers. While students may run the risk of being bullied on these sites, they also run the risk of being bullied for not knowing the newest updates in our culture, it is truly a viscous cycle.

Forms of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying gives the bully a much larger spectrum to choose from when it comes to how exactly they want to intimidate their victims which may be why it is often easier for them to carry out the act. Of all the different ways to cyberbully Faucher et al. (2014) found the most common platforms for cyberbullying to be social media, text messaging, and email which were used to bully students about half of the time followed up by blogs forums and chat rooms which were 25 percent. This is no surprise that social media is the most common platform for cyberbullying because it can allow for the bully to remain completely anonymous to

your average victim. This allows people who may not fit the mold of your average bully to create a fake account and build their own persona in order to bully others. Multiple studies also address a critical factor of using social media or the Internet to bully others, which is that; the photos or hurtful comments can remain in cyberspace virtually forever. Davis et al. (2014) mentions how they received viewed several responses that talked about "how their traditional bullying experience would have been magnified if they had occurred in todays digital era". Faucher et al. (2014) also talk about how cyberbullying has a longer "shelf life" than your average bullying. This plays such a huge role because with the aggressive material on the internet it can often be revisited and the pain can constantly be brought back to light for the victims making the experience that much more traumatic.

Social media is very prevelant among cyberbullies but there is also extensive research done on cell phones and the role they play in the act of cyberbullying. Abeele et al. (2013) studied various aspects of mobile phone bullying and found that the most prevalent type was gossiping via text message, followed by gossiping over the phone, and concluded with threatening others over text message. Abeele et al. (2013) also found that girls were more often than not the perpetrators of gossiping while boys made slightly more threats via cell phone…………………..

Source:https://www.academia.edu/27598547/Cyberbullying_How_Physical_Intimidation_Influ

ences_the_Way_People_are_Bullied

9.2 Types of literature review

There are four main types of literature review: traditional, systematic, meta-analysis and meta-synthesis. The traditional (or narrative) literature review aims principally to analyze and summarize the literature by presenting a complete background about the topic in order to underscore new research streams, identify gaps or recognize discrepancies. According to Coughlan et al. (2007), researchers use this type to refine, focus, and shape research questions and develop theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The systematic literature review is more rigorous in reviewing the literature; it is often used to answer very structured and specific research questions. The meta-analysis literature review is concerned with taking the findings from the literature and analyzing these findings by using statistical procedures. Polit and Beck (2006) claim that meta-analysis methods are useful in drawing conclusions and detecting patterns and relationships between findings, and that meta-synthesis takes findings from qualitative studies and evaluates and analyses them so as to build on previous conceptualizations and interpretations (Cited in O'Gorman and MacIntosh, 2105, p. 31-32). The traditional literature review and the systematic literature review are the most important and dominant of all types, but the former uses a critical approach and the second aims to spot light on all the literature about the topic to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic (ibid).

Chapter 10: Body Chapters of a Master's Dissertation

10.1 What and how long are they?

One of the important steps which must go before starting a dissertation or thesis is deciding about a logical construction and organization of chapters, sections and sub-sections. The final report should clearly reflect logical details and findings. The aim is to establish a logical move regarding the background and major ideas and conclusions within the work. The researcher is then supposed to introduce, argue, and conclude a central idea in each chapter, and thus the order of the chapters of a dissertation will be determined by both the research project (aims) and the deeper understanding of the area that the researcher develops in the course of conducting his research (*The Layout of the Dissertation or Thesis*). The classification of chapters of a standard dissertation can be achieved by taking into account the order: **Introduction**; **Literature review**; **Methods and materials**; **Research results and discussions**; and **Conclusion** (*How to Write Dissertation Chapters: Your Ultimate Guide*)**.** The other sections which students need to include in their dissertations are: Bibliography list; Abstract; Acknowledgments; Table of contents; List of figures and tables; Title page; and Appendices (ibid).

When students finish their coursework and assignments, they begin their research to complete a dissertation. At this level, the most frequent question which they ask is: how long should a dissertation be?, and the answer is, of course, the structure and length of the dissertation is determined by the department's or institution's protocol. Thereby, students should first start by reviewing the department's or institution's rules and then move to check recent dissertations which have been developed and accepted in the same department or institution, and more specifically the ones chaired by their supervisor. Regardless of the project and other requirements, in a five-chapter dissertation which involves an Introduction chapter, Literature Review, Methodology, Results, and Discussion, the number of pages in each chapter could be as follows:

Introduction: 10-15 pages
Literature Review: 20-25 pages
Methodology: 10-15 pages
Results: 5-10 pages
Discussion: 15-20 pages (*How Long Should A Dissertation Be?*)

When students start writing the manuscript, they are advised to design a plan of the dissertation. The plan can be developed based on common template features, but students may change and adjust any part of this plan depending on emerging requirements and ideas as they proceed in the work. The plan is very helpful in guiding the students in accordance with the already scheduled tasks. The structure below might be used as an initial plan by any student (*Writing the Dissertation*).

Dissertation Structure	
Section	**Section Information**
Introduction	The field of study, the research question, the hypothesis (if any) or, more generally, the research question that is to be investigated. It should also include a summary of the contents and main arguments in the dissertation.
The Literature Review	Usually, this comes immediately after the introductory chapter. This may be more than one chapter, but should certainly be written in sections. This should include previous work done on the field of study and anything that you consider to be relevant to the hypothesis or research question and to its investigation. It will include a large number of references to the literature in your chosen area.
Methodology	This section should include an account of the research questions and/or hypotheses to be investigated, relevant methods of investigation and an argument for why you think these methods are the most appropriate ones for the question and for your circumstances. You should consider the benefits of your chosen method as well as identifying any disadvantages and how you overcame them. Ethical issues and the ways in which you dealt with them should be noted. This section should also discuss any variations from the original fieldwork plan, and should conclude with a reflection on the experience of doing fieldwork.
Findings	This section should present the main findings of your research together with an account of the strengths and weaknesses of your data relative to your research question/hypothesis. You may also wish to include an evaluation of any difficulties you encountered in collecting and analyzing data, together with an assessment of how this affected your plan of research.
Evaluation	Here you can provide an assessment of whether and how well you were able to answer your research question and/or confirm/reject your hypotheses.
Discussion	This chapter must relate the findings to the theoretical/policy discussion in your literature review. You should NOT introduce any new literature at this stage.
Conclusions and Recommendations	An overall assessment of what you found out, how successful you were and suggestions for future research.

Table 1: A dissertation's initial plan.

Source: http://www.socscidiss.bham.ac.uk/writing.html

Before students start writing the manuscript, they may read from the above plan the following ideas. In the *Introduction Chapter*, they should present the context, the research question, the research main hypothesis, and a précis of the dissertation structure. The *Literature Review* is the second part in the dissertation which can be composed of more than one chapter and is written in sections. Besides, it includes any literature relevant to the topic. The *Methodology Chapter* should contain the methods of investigation and the justification of their choice, the ethical issues and how they were dealt with. In the findings, Evaluation, and Discussion Chapter (s) students are required to present the main findings, an assessment of the confirmation or rejection of the hypothesis, and a general assessment of what has been reached together with suggestions for future investigations (ibid).

The body chapters should elucidate and strengthen the dissertation with what has been collected and critically analyzed as data. The results and their significance should be assigned a considerable space; the explanations should be complete and the observations should be adequate to fit in the argument they are intended to highlight. In each chapter, the researcher should start by a portion of the problem that the chapter is assigned to cover, the tools or methods employed in the portion, and a detailed description of the points to be dealt with. Moreover, the last paragraphs of each chapter should sum up the central ideas of the chapter (Rahim, 1996, p. 7)

The body chapters between the introduction and the conclusion are not structured in any way: their logical flow is imposed on the topics or issues that constitute the dissertation or thesis. Also, the division of each chapter into sections and sub-sections is another example of structure imposition, but this time it is in terms of information presentation. To go further inside the bits of information, the researcher needs to utilize a numbering system to make the order clear to the reader (*Thesis Writing – Body Chapters*). Below is a thesis outline that indicates these orders.
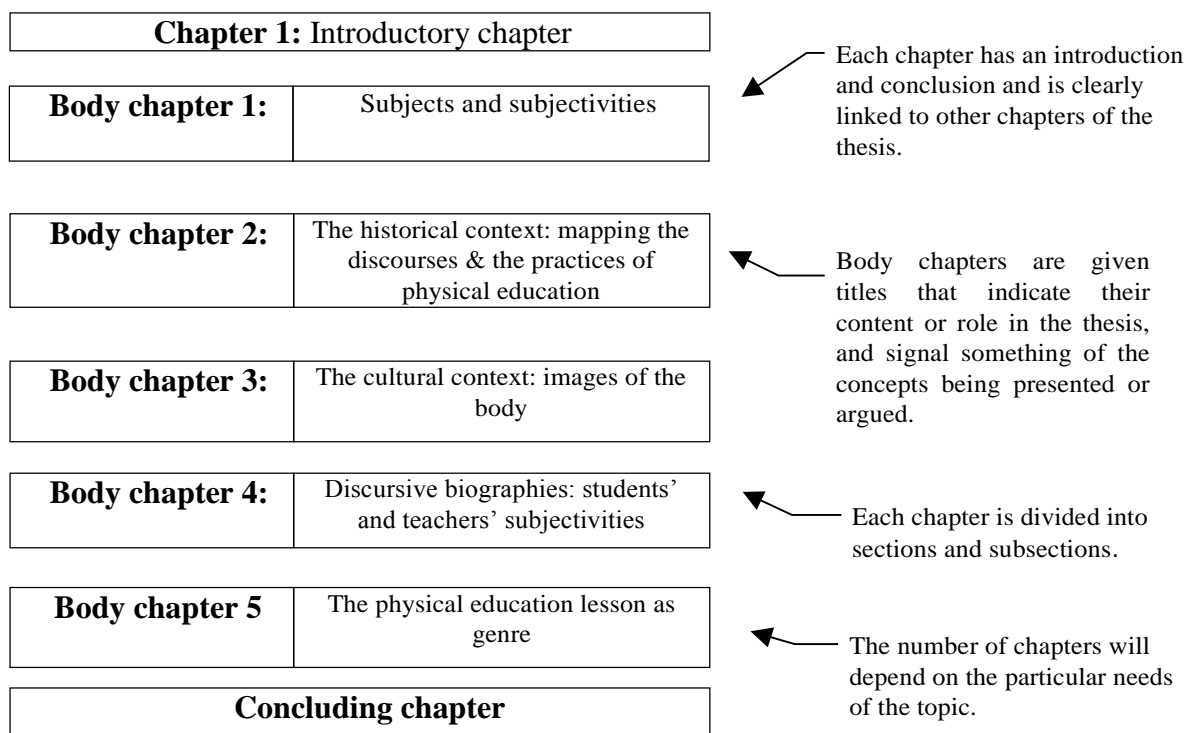
Chapter 1: Introductory chapter	
Body chapter 1:	Subjects and subjectivities

Each chapter has an introduction and conclusion and is clearly linked to other chapters of the thesis.

Body chapter 2:	The historical context: mapping the discourses & the practices of physical education

Body chapters are given titles that indicate their content or role in the thesis, and signal something of the concepts being presented or argued.

Body chapter 3:	The cultural context: images of the body

Body chapter 4:	Discursive biographies: students' and teachers' subjectivities

Each chapter is divided into sections and subsections.

Body chapter 5	The physical education lesson as genre
Concluding chapter	

The number of chapters will depend on the particular needs of the topic.

Figure 3: A thesis outline
Source: https://documents.uow.edu.au/ content/groups/public/@web/@stsv/@ld/documents/ doc/uow195707.pdf

10.2 Useful Tips

In writing the manuscript, students need to consider some working tips which help them to keep track of their dissertation path. Below is a list of these tips:

1. **Keep the right proportions** (Students should ensure that the main body of the dissertation is given the largest space in comparison with the introduction and conclusion, for the body is the most important part in the dissertation)

2. **Start writing as soon as you can** (Word processors allow Students to write, omit, and add text fragments with ease. So, they should benefit from these means).

3. **Pay adequate attention to the conclusion** (Students often write the conclusion at some speed due to other demands such as time constraints and fatigue, which does not allow them to give to the conclusion the attention it deserves. Students should pay more attention to this point so as to finish the work properly).

4. **Review the introduction** (Students should reconsider the introduction once they have completed their draft because some new thoughts may have emerged and the students' initial intentions may have changed while writing).

5. **Think about appendices (**If the text length has gone beyond the word limit, then students may remove some parts of it and place them in an appendix or appendices).

6. **Think about citations** (In most disciplines, students are expected to include reference to recognize work by academics. Students are not supposed to quote substantial pieces of text; they can summarize the idea in their own words and then apply the citation rules).

7. **Discuss drafts with your supervisor or a friend** (Students may benefit from their supervisor's and friends' feedback to improve their drafts).

8. **Review and edit what you have written** (Before the submission date, students should read the draft so as to take a more critical look at what they have written).

(McMillan and Weyers, 2007, pp. 224-226)

Below is an adapted checklist for the body of the dissertation. This checklist offers different notes and/ or standards which may help students to structure the body chapters and keep them on the right way.

- Separated into chapters with chapter titles.
- Appropriately formatted according to chosen style manual (APA, MLA, …)
- Headings and subheadings are consistently formatted throughout the document.
- A subheading at the bottom of the page must have at least one line of text beneath it. Otherwise, the subheading may be moved to the next page.
- Text is double-spaced throughout.
- You may insert blank lines at the bottom of one page in order to keep a single Table from breaking, or when inserting a Figure (*Body of Thesis or Dissertation- Thesis and …*).

Chapter 11: Research Designs and Research Methods

11.1 Demystifying Relevant Concepts

What is the difference between Research Design and Research Method?

Research design and research method are very important concepts in any research. The research design is the plan which describes in detail how the research method will be used to answer the research question (s). The design includes aspects such as research methodology, participants or sample, and data collection procedures. Whereas, methods are general ways of setting about questions and can be qualitative or quantitative (Lee, n.d).

When people conduct research, they aim to come up with solutions to problems and answers to questions. If the findings are to be accurate, there must be a firm design which determines the overall approach and techniques chosen to be used in the study. In some studies, the researcher uses more than one method, while, in others one method can be sufficient (Kane, 2017). Besides, not all methods fit all the studies which may be conducted by students. Therefore, "the aims of research will determine which factors are most important in the design" (ibid).

From the literature above, one may understand that the term design is the description, steps, choices, efforts, and all details of what has been done to answer the questions or solve the problems from the beginning to the end of research. On the other hand, the method, considered as one entity, be it qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of both, signifies the general way or ways, followed by the researcher to answer the questions or solve the problems. One may also understand that method and approach, in this specific sense, can be used interchangeably.

What is the difference between Research Methods and Research Methodology?

The terms "Research methods" and "research methodology" are often confused by many people though they are part and parcel of research. The research method refers to any of the research methods which are used to investigate a topic and establish an understanding about it; whereas, research methodology is the systematic approach to collect and analyze data in the research process (Bhasin, 2019). According to Brookshier (2108), a ***method*** simply means the tool a researcher uses to answer his research question such as the interview, while the ***methodology*** "is the rationale for the research approach, and the lens through which the analysis occurs…. The methodology should impact which method(s) for a research endeavor are selected in order to generate the compelling data" such as phenomenology and ethnography. Moreover, Asong (2011) states "My understanding is, a research methodology is the guiding doctrine of discovering knowledge whereas a research method is the tool for fulfilling the principles of the

research methodology". That is, the term methodology is a substitute for the principles or guidelines which the researcher follows to answer the question or solve the problem, while the method is the tool that he uses to collect and /analyze the data.

From the above literature, it is clear that the term method, in its narrower sense, is the equivalent in meaning of the term tool, instrument, or even technique in some books. This distinction is based on the idea that it is used to collect and/ analyze data. It is also clear, from the same literature, that methodology or research methodology is the synonym of approach or overall method (as is the case in question one) which impacts or determines the choice of the data collection methods or tools. All that is required in fact here is a clear stand, demystification of terms, and above all a level of consistency.

Which research method (approach/methodology/strategy) should students choose?

Choosing the right research method (approach/methodology) to answer the questions may be the most difficult task for the bulk of students once they have selected a topic. To help students to overcome the situation, psychologists suggest the following:

- **Let the literature be your guide** (A thorough literature review is the best starting point for students to choose their methods, for the evaluation of previous works can suggest ways to answer the research questions).

- **Choose what is most important** (Students should not think to include in their dissertations every variable related to their interest; they have to be selective).

- **Tap others' expertise** (Students should rely, at least, on one committee member or a colleague for advice and orientation).

- **Remember that the dissertation is not a life's work** (When choosing research methods, students should consider how long it will take them to complete the project) (Winerman, 2005)

Because in research people are generally required to count things and/ talk to people, research methods (approaches/methodologies/strategies) are broadly classified into two types: quantitative and qualitative research methods. The former type is concerned with quantifying things by asking questions of the type "how long?" and "how many?" and is interested in generalizing the results, while, the latter seeks to gather qualitative information; i.e. qualitative methods try to get an understanding of the reasons and motivations behind people's actions and experiences and how these people receive the world (other people's behaviours, actions, or other phenomena). Qualitative methods aim to provide insights into interpreting phenomena and generating ideas (MacDonald and Headlam, 2011). The following tables provide comprehensible and comprehensive details of the key features of two types of research methods and their data.

They show principally that quantitative and qualitative research methods have different ways for collecting data, and that they help researchers to answer different kinds of research questions.

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Aim	The aim is to count things in an attempt to explain what is observed. The aim is a complete, detailed description of what is observed.	The aim is a complete, detailed description of what is observed.
Purpose	Generalisability,prediction, causal explanations	Contextualisation, interpretation, understanding perspectives
Tools	Researcher uses tools, such as surveys, to collect numerical data.	Researcher is the data gathering instrument.
Data collection	Structured	Unstructured
Output	Data is in the form of numbers and statistics.	Data is in the form of words, pictures or objects.
Sample	Usually a large number of cases representing the population of interest. Randomly selected respondents.	Usually a small number of nonrepresentative cases. Respondents selected on their experience.
Objective/ Subjective	Objective – seeks precise measurement & analysis	Subjective-individuals' interpretation of events is important
Researcher role	Researcher tends to remain objectively separated from the subject matter.	Researcher tends to become subjectively immersed in the subject matter.

Table 3: Key features of quantitative and qualitative research methods
(MacDonald and Headlam, 2011)

Quantitative research	Qualitative research
Focuses on testing theories and hypotheses	Focuses on exploring ideas and formulating a theory or hypothesis
Is analyzed through math and statistical analysis	Is analyzed by summarizing, categorizing, and interpreting
Mainly expressed in numbers, graphs, and tables	Mainly expressed in words
Requires many respondents	Requires few respondents
Closed (multiple choice) questions	Open-ended questions
Key terms: testing, measurement, objectivity, replicability	Key terms: understanding, context, complexity, subjectivity

Table 4: Quantitative and qualitative research methods (Thattamparambil, 2020)

For choosing to use qualitative or quantitative research methods, Streefkerk (2020) advices students to use quantitative research if they want ***to confirm or test*** something like a theory or hypothesis and to use qualitative research if they desire ***to understand something*** such as concepts, thoughts, and experiences. Streefkerk (ibid) mentions that students may use a

qualitative, quantitative or mixed method approach, and that it all depends on criteria such as the type of the approach, the research questions, the type of the method or methods, time, money, availability of data, and access to respondents.

10.2 Types of Qualitative Research Methods (approaches/methodologies/strategies)

Qualitative research is the process of studying people and things as they are found in nature. As it was mentioned above, the main focus is on understanding the why and how humans behave in different situations, and it does not seek to count or generalize the findings. It is also known as a scientific research method which does not look for obtaining numerical data (Vashishtha, 2019). Below are the five major types of qualitative research:

1. Ethnography (In this method, the researcher embeds himself into the daily life and routine of the subject or subjects. Either as an active participant or an observer, the researcher experiences their customs, traditions, mannerisms, reactions to situations, etc).

2. Narrative (In this method of qualitative research, the researcher gathers data or facts from one or two subjects through interviews, documents, etc. over a period of time. Based on a theme, these are then pieced together to derive answers and suggestions).

3. Phenomenology (The Phenomenology qualitative research method is used to study an event or activity as it happens, from various angles. Using interviews, videos, etc., the researcher can add extra information using perspectives and insights from the participants themselves about the activity or event).

4. Grounded Theory (Grounded theory starts with a question or collection of data. Through systematic data collection and analysis, recurrent ideas or elements are coded, and the codes are categorized. Based on these categories, new theories can be formed).

5. Case study (The case study method is used to gather in-depth and detailed information about a subject, which could be any entity, organization, or event. The nature of this qualitative research method can be explanatory or exploratory) (ibid)

11.2 Types of Quantitative Research Methods (approaches/methodologies/strategies)

The quantitative research method is concerned with quantifying and analyzing variables in order to attain results. It utilizes and analyzes numerical data by employing statistical techniques to answer different types of questions like "how much" and "how many" (Apuke, 2017)

Under the quantitative research method are these ways of collecting factual information:
- **Surveys** (Surveys involve a list of multiple-choice or rating questions that are asked either in person, over phone, or online. In the report, information about the when and where the survey is conducted may precede the findings).

- **Experiments** (In this method, the researcher performs a test under controlled and manipulated variables to establish cause-and-effect relationships. It is also strategic to describe fully the design of the experiment in your report).

- **Existing data** (In this method, the researcher gathers data from existing sources such as published dissertations, articles and archives for inclusion in the analysis. Students are advised to include information on the source of material, how the data was initially produced, and the criteria highlighted to select the date range).

- **Observations** (This is the task of observing people in their natural environment where variables are uncontrolled).

- **Content analysis** (This is the effort of scientifically recording the presence of certain words or a set of texts to examine communication patterns)   (Thattamparambil, 2020)

11.3 The Mixed-Methods Approach

The term "mixed methods" is an emergent methodology of research that mixes or integrates systematically quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation. The fundamental principle of this methodology is that the integration of two approaches allows for a more complete and reliable employment of data than the quantitative or qualitative data collection and analysis can use in isolation (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2013).

In fact, researchers have mixed qualitative and quantitative data for a long time, but the understanding and use of the Mixed-Methods Approach as a concept has emerged only in the 1980s. Today, mixed methods studies are very challenging because they require more work and resources, time, and a broader set of skills to combine the quantitative and the qualitative approaches (Molina-Azorin, 2016). Mixed-Methods or mixed methodologies, according to Almeida (2018),

> are employed when both comparative analysis and the development of aspects of the study need to be undertaken comprehensively and in depth. The use of mixed methods turns possible to overcome the limitations of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, allowing the researcher to get rich information that could not be obtained using each method alone

That is, the major advantage of using the Mixed-Methods Approach is to explain and interpret data extensively and fill in the gaps that might have been left by any of the approaches alone. A second advantage of MMA is the energetic bond between the qualitative and quantitative parts of the single study. However, the interpretation of data using the new framework can be disadvantageous in that it takes time and efforts because the new approach requires training and mastery of the methodology, which may lead to a learning curve for the

researchers who have had the experience of implementing only quantitative or qualitative methods (Hughes, 2016). Besides, the MMA should not be considered as "a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. However, mixed-methods research can also include the mixing of qualitative methods only, or quantitative methods only" (Plastow, 2016).

11.4 Quantitative and Qualitative Data Collection Methods (Tools)

Everyone needs to collect data in research, for data help people to understand other people and things. Collecting data requires the researcher to choose the right data collection methods or tools to gain useful insights and do research within the time allocated. The most well-known data collection methods are:

- Interviews
- Questionnaires and surveys
- Observations
- Documents and records
- Focus groups
- Oral histories (Ainsworth, 2020)

Some of these methods are quantitative and others are qualitative. "In general, questionnaires, surveys, and documents and records are quantitative, while interviews, focus groups, observations, and oral histories are qualitative" and "There can also be crossover between the two methods"(ibid).

The questionnaire

According to Wilson and McLean (1994), the questionnaire is a very useful instrument for collecting (often) numerical data. It can be used in the absence of the researcher and is fairly easy to analyze (Cited in Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005, p. 245). However, the researcher should consider the fact that "Questionnaire respondents are not passive data providers for researchers; they are subjects not objects of research". In other words, they are entitled to answer the questions or withdraw; they should be guaranteed that the research will not harm them; that their answers will be confidential and anonymous; and that they will not be obliged to answer offensive, misleading, biased, irritating, impertinent and abstruse items (ibid). As for the construction of the questionnaire, the format should be considered as important as the wording of the questions. That is,

- The questionnaire should be spread out and uncluttered (Researchers should not fit more than one question on a line).
- Words should never be abbreviated to save space (Abbreviated words can be confusing to the respondent who may interpret them incorrectly).

- Ample space should be left between questions on each page (Leaving a double space between a question and the following one is ideal).

- Instructions should be made clear and displayed next to the question (the respondent should indicate his response in a way that is clear enough).

- Questionnaire items should be so precise that the respondent knows exactly what the researcher is asking (The researcher should avoid double-barreled questions or questions with multiple parts).

- There should be efforts to order the questions in a way that they do not affect subsequent questions (The researcher may estimate the effects of different question orders and choose the ordering with the smallest effect) (Crossman, 2019).

The interview

The employment of the interview in research has given human subjects a new status: they are now no longer viewed as controlled sources of data, but negotiators of meaning and active participants in knowledge production through conversations (Kvale, 1996, p.11, Cited in Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005, p. 267). In the broadest sense of the word, interviewing is the process in which usually two individuals exchange information about a job, a promotion, a special assignment, information for intelligence purposes, or other questions, and the information exchanged should be limited to facts (Trull, 1964). Below are useful tips that a researcher should emphasize in the construction of the interview:

- A moderate amount of preplanning can obviate unfortunate occurrences.
- If the objective of the interview is well-known in advance, the individual will be allowed to prepare for the talk before the actual involvement.
- A written outline of important points to be covered reflects consideration for both parties.
- In presenting information, a speaker allocates blocks of time to various items on his agenda. If no time limit is established, the presentation can continue indefinitely.
- The general tone of the interview should be one of helpfulness and friendliness so as to minimize the immediate barriers to forthright communication.
- At the beginning of an interview an allowance should be made for the interviewee to adjust to the interview environment.
- The interviewee is sensitive to all reactions by the interviewer. The interviewer may, for instance, repeat phrases that have already been expressed to encourage the respondent to expand the discussion with details on a relevant issue.
- A succinct summary of information from time to time allows for clarity in the communication process and gives the informant a mirror of what has just occurred (ibid).

Focus groups

In focus groups, the interaction is between the participants, not between the interviewer and participants. In this case, it is the participants' agenda that is dominant and their interaction is the source of data for the researcher (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005, p. 288). Devault (2019) explains :

> A focus group is a gathering of deliberately selected people who participate in a facilitated discussion intended to elicit consumer perceptions about a particular topic or area of interest. These discussions should be held in an environment that is non-threatening and receptive. Unlike interviews, which usually occur with an individual, a focus group allows members to interact and influence each other during the discussion and consideration of ideas.

Focus groups have several advantages over the other data collection methods (tools). They allow for obtaining information from many respondents without having to use the survey; they are flexible in terms of design; and they are conducted to identify the respondents' perceptions and thoughts (ibid). Ghelber (2020) adds that "A focus group is a qualitative research tool that businesses use to gather information about customer experience, sentiment and opinion about new ideas, products or services. The group is gathered of deliberately selected participants, usually 6-12 people, chosen to participate in a facilitated open and free discussion". The members of the group or participants should be selected based on their relevance to the topic, and by using probability sampling methods the research can create a diverse group. Most participants are paid to take part in focus groups, but they are chosen carefully and tested in advance (ibid).

Though focus groups are advantageous in some aspects of research, they have some drawbacks which should be highlighted here.

- Compared to individual interviews, focus groups are not efficient in covering maximum depth on a particular issue. Some members may not express their honest and personal opinions about the topic at hand.
- Compared with surveys and questionnaires, focus groups are much more expensive to execute. Participants sometimes offer their time for free; others will have to be compensated (paid).
- Moderators can impact the outcome of the focus group discussion. They may, intentionally or inadvertently, inject their personal biases into the participants' exchange of ideas (Writing, 2019).

Observations

Bowling (1997) mentions that observation helps to comprehend more than people can tell us about situations (Cited in Kohn, and Christiaens, 2013). In observations, the researcher's eyes and ears are involved to record human behaviour, especially in terms of its frequency and duration. The data which derive from the different events or actions recoded are used to describe the target behaviour or the independent variable (*Chapter 6: Methods of Data Collection*). Some of the reasons behind the use of observation as a data collection tool in research are:

- When the nature of the research question to be answered is focused on answering a "how" or "what" question.

- When the topic is comparatively unexplored and little is known to explain the behaviour of people in a particular setting.

- When it is important to study a phenomenon in its natural setting.

- When self-report data (asking people what they do) is likely to be different from actual behavior (what they actually do).

- When implementing an intervention in a natural setting, observation may be used in conjunction with other quantitative data collection tools (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

Like the other data collection methods (tools), the observation method has advantages and limitations. A selection of the latter is presented as follows:

Advantages of the Observation Method

- Provides direct access to research phenomena.

- By observing, the researcher can collect, check and record accurate data.

- It does not require too much technical knowledge.

- The observation method is one of the best ways to formulate a hypothesis, for the researcher can observe and come to know about the activities, perceptions, likes and dislikes of people.

- The observation method does not require the willingness of the participant to record. The researcher can observe from a distance and record his findings.

Disadvantages of the Observation Method

- This method faces a severe disadvantage because it takes a longer time frame.

- There is a chance of higher observer bias in the observation method.

- Many of the incidents are abstract like love, affection and the researcher cannot gain an exact and correct account of them.

- The social phenomena generalization made by observation are not considered reliable.

- In some cases, it is seen that two persons observing the same phenomena come at different results and this can lead to faulty perceptions (Bhasin, 2020).

11.5 Designing a Qualitative Research

Before one embarks on designing a qualitative research, one should have a good understanding of the research design process and should have (made) decisions that have to do with the design. Each decision gives birth to other subsequent decisions which, in turn, require critical and reflective thinking (McKillop, 2016). The following are 4 key questions to think about when starting the qualitative research process.

1. Why are we doing this research?

At the onset of the project, it is necessary to be sure of the why one is doing research. The perspective from which one answers the question will greatly impact the plan (design) and the how data are going to be collected.

2. How are we going to conduct this research?

As far as qualitative research is concerned, there are several ways to opt for. As it was explained earlier, surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations, among others, are all pertinent data collection methods (tools). All that the researcher has to do is to choose the method that best suits his study, or the method that enables him to gather as many and relevant data as possible for his study. Going back to the benefits of the questionnaire, the interview, and the observation, the researcher finds a firm basis for making the best choices.

3. Who are the participants?

It is worth knowing some features of the chosen participant population beforehand in research. The researcher may need to have a predetermined sample size and how the participants' groups are organized (sex, origin, cultural background, etc). All these aspects and or traits will certainly assist in shaping the outcomes of the study.

4. How are we going to analyze the data?

Because the choice of the approach or methodology is very influential on the way data are analyzed, one should think about the data analysis procedures and techniques from the beginning. Also, coding the data and using software can be thought of at an earlier stage (ibid).

11.5.1 Sampling, data collection, and data analysis in Qualitative Research

Sampling decisions should be made to obtain the richest and most possible information to answer the research questions. In qualitative research, non-probability and purposive sampling is usually used (Ploeg, 1999). Purposive sampling is a non-probability sample and "can be very useful in situations when you need to reach a targeted sample quickly, and where sampling for proportionality is not the main concern" (Crossman, 2020). Therefore, in qualitative research, it is indispensable to underline the concepts of sample size and sampling designs which "have not

gained much recognition among qualitative researchers" (Omona, 2013, p. 173) because it is still thoght and argued that providing readers with information about the aforementioned components matches more the need for generalizing the findings as is the case in quantitative research.

Ploeg (1999) maintains that the most common data collection techniques (methods) in qualitative research are interviewing and participant observation. Participant observation is used "to gain a meaningful knowledge about the existence of a specific social world through experiencing "real" social milieus or through lived experience" (Ali, 2016), but it is criticized on the basis that the people being studied can be affected by the researcher himself. As for interviewing, in qualitative research "…the semi-structured or unstructured interview is often used and this can be carried out in various ways" (Bolderston, 2012). Among the benefits of the interview is that "the interviewees can express their viewpoint, in private, without a framework imposed by the researcher. Depending on the type of interview, the researcher can adapt the line of questioning to explore emerging topics- an approach that is not usually possible in survey research, for example" (ibid, p. 68).

Concerning Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA), there is a range of processes and procedures whereby researchers move from the data collected into explaining and interpreting the people and situations investigated in the study (Sunday, n. d). In QDA, the deductive and the inductive approaches are employed. The deductive approach is used when the time and resources are limited or when the qualitative research is just a small part of large quantitative study; whereas, the inductive approach is used when the qualitative research is a major design of the investigation (ibid).

11.5.2 Reporting in Qualitative Research

Roath (2017) summarized the task of reporting the findings of a qualitative study by saying:

> A qualitative report is a description of an event, activity, observation, research or experience. The structure of a qualitative report includes an abstract, introduction, background to the problem, the researcher's role, theoretical perspective, methodology, ethical considerations, results, data analysis, limitations, discussion, conclusions and implications, references and appendix. Choice of words and visual aids depends on intended audience. Be concise and use the past tense.

Wise (n.d), in more detail, proposed the following (adapted) list of actions for researchers when reporting qualitative findings:

1. Note patterns and themes.
2. Make initial, intuitive sense.

3. Group things that seem similar.

4. Make a kind of figurative grouping of data to achieve more integration among diverse pieces.

5. Make contrasts and comparisons by clustering and distinguishing observations.

6. Include particulars (data) into the more general categories.

7. Reduce the number of variables, grouping them by category or theme.

8. Note relationships between variables.

9. Find intervening variables.

10. Make conceptual/theoretical coherence.

NB (1): for more information about the standard criteria for reporting qualitative research findings, students should visit:

https://apastyle.apa.org/Reporting-Qualitative-Research-in-Psychology-Ch1-Sample.pdf

NB (2): The figure below gives students an overall picture of a qualitative research design
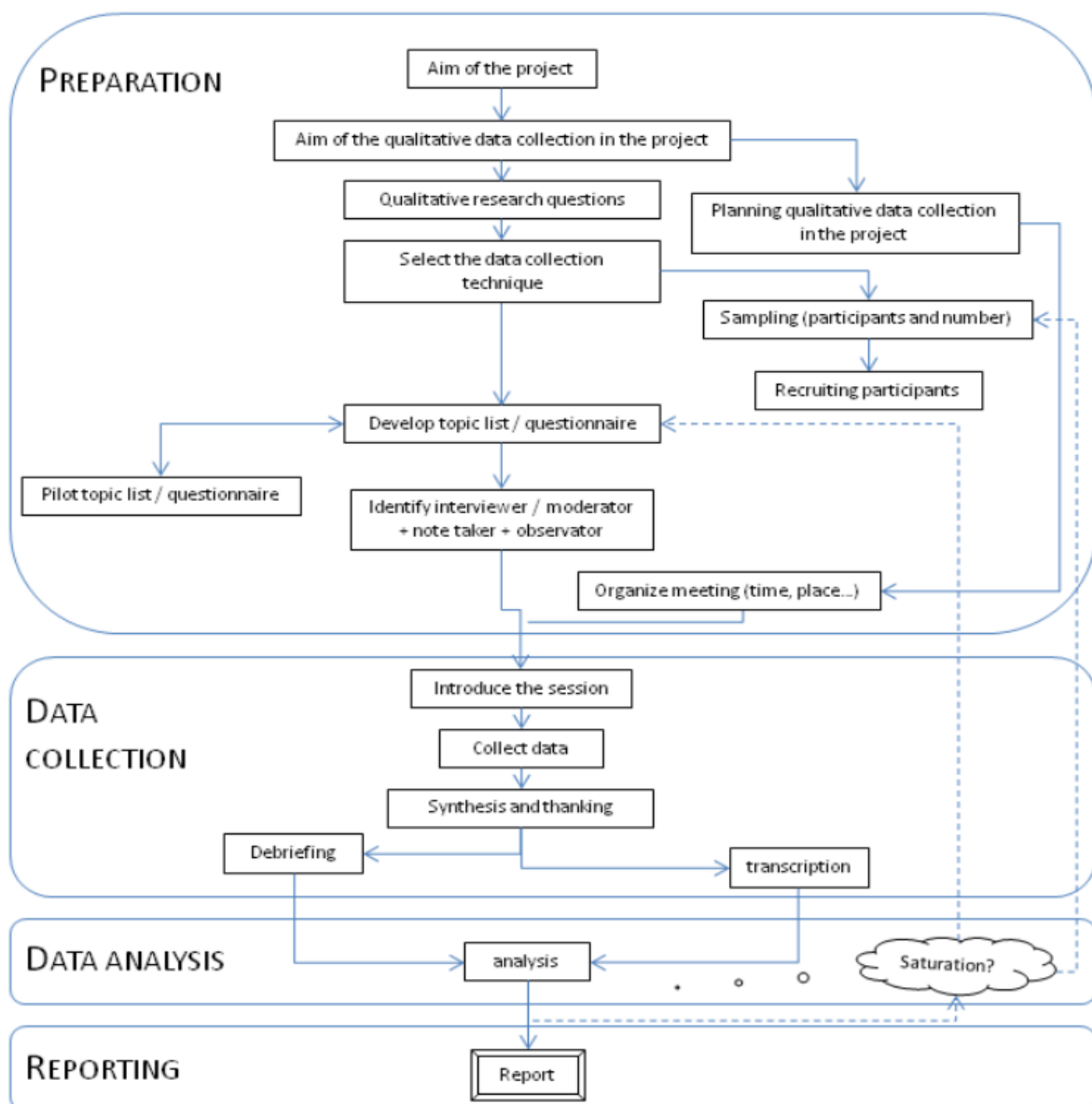
Figure 4: A sample qualitative research design (Kohn and Christiaens, 2013)

Chapter 12: Sample, Population, and Sampling Methods

12.1 On Defining Sample and Population

Sampling is defined as "a process used in statistical analysis in which a predetermined number of observations are taken from a larger population. The methodology used to sample from a larger population depends on the type of analysis being performed, but it may include simple random sampling or systematic sampling" (Tuovila, 2019, May 29). Fleetwood (n.d) introduces sampling by saying:

> Sampling is a technique of selecting individual members or a subset of the population to make statistical inferences from them and estimate characteristics of the whole population. Different sampling methods are widely used by researchers in market research so that they do not need to research the entire population to collect actionable insights. It is also a time-convenient and a cost-effective method and hence forms the basis of any research design. Sampling techniques can be used in a research survey software for optimum derivation.

From both quotations, one may notice that sampling is a way of selecting, for instance, a number of students (20, 30,…etc) from a larger group/population (first year, second year,…etc) in order to understand the population (characteristics, habits, practices,…etc) based on the study of the sample selected/chosen. Besides, sampling is used by researchers to gain time and efforts. One may also notice that there are several sampling method/ways, and thus there are many sample types and each type fits in a research design, approach and method. *Figure 5* illustrates these ideas.

Figure 5: Sample-population relationship (Singh, 2018)

12.2 Sampling Methods

McLeod (2019) begins a topic entitled "Sampling Methods" by these important remarks:

- Sampling is the process of selecting a representative group from the population under study.

- The target population is the total group of individuals from which the sample might be drawn.

- A sample is the group of people who take part in the investigation. The people who take part are referred to as "participants".

- Generalisability refers to the extent to which we can apply the findings of our research to the target population we are interested in.

In addition to the knowledge inferred from the first two quotations, one may add the idea that the students comprising the sample are called the participants in the study or investigation and the act of generalizing the results over the whole population is associated with the type of research or study, its objectives, and the type of sample (representative or non-representative) which results from the sampling method or technique used by the researcher.

Because we are generally interested in investigating phenomena in large groups of people in social sciences, the large group of people in such an investigation is the target "population". The latter, in some studies, is unmanageable and in other studies is fairly small. However, it is not easy to study every single person in that target population; thereby, researchers have to select a sample or sub-group. The aim is simply to generalize the results from the sample to the target population (ibid).

Before getting into the details of sample types, the researcher must choose a sampling method or technique. In fact, on the whole, there are two sampling methods: Probability Sampling (random sampling) and Non-probability Sampling (non-random sampling). *Table 5* below shows the different sampling techniques (Taherdoost, 2016, p. 20).

Sampling Methods/Techniques	
Probability Sampling	**Non-probability Sampling**
Simple random Stratified random Cluster sampling Systematic sampling Multi stage sampling	Quota sampling Snowball sampling Judgment sampling Convenience sampling

Table 5: Sampling techniques

Singh (2018) describes the above *Probability Sampling* and *Non- Probability Sampling* categories as follows:

12.2.1 Probability Sampling: This Sampling technique uses randomization to make sure that every element of the population gets an equal chance to be part of the selected sample. It is alternatively known as random sampling.

Simple Random Sampling

Every element has an equal chance of getting selected to be the part sample. It is used when we do not have any kind of prior information about the target population

Stratified Sampling

This technique divides the elements of the population into small subgroups (strata) based on the similarity in such a way that the elements within the group are homogeneous and heterogeneous among the other subgroups formed. And then the elements are randomly selected from each of these strata. We need to have prior information about the population to create subgroups.

Cluster Sampling

Our entire population is divided into clusters or sections and then the clusters are randomly selected. All the elements of the cluster are used for sampling. Clusters are identified using details such as age, sex, location etc.

Systematic Clustering

Here the selection of elements is systematic and not random except the first element. Elements of a sample are chosen at regular intervals of population. All the elements are put together in a sequence first where each element has the equal chance of being selected.

Multi-Stage Sampling

It is the combination of one or more methods described above. Population is divided into multiple clusters and then these clusters are further divided and grouped into various sub groups (strata) based on similarity. One or more clusters can be randomly selected from each stratum. This process continues until the cluster cannot be divided anymore. For example country can be divided into states, cities, urban and rural and all the areas with similar characteristics can be merged together to form a strata.

12.2.2 Non-Probability Sampling: It does not rely on randomization. This technique is more reliant on the researcher's ability to select elements for a sample. Outcome of sampling might be biased and makes difficult for all the elements of population to be part of the sample equally. This type of sampling is also known as non-random sampling.

Convenience Sampling

Here the samples are selected based on the availability. This method is used when the availability of sample is rare and also costly. So based on the convenience samples are selected.

Purposive (judgment) Sampling

This is based on the intention or the purpose of study. Only those elements will be selected from the population which suits the best for the purpose of our study.

Quota Sampling

This type of sampling depends on some pre-set standard. It selects the representative sample from the population. Proportion of characteristics/trait in sample should be same as population. Elements are selected until exact proportions of certain types of data are obtained or sufficient data in different categories is collected.

Referral/Snowball Sampling

This technique is used in the situations where the population is completely unknown and rare. Therefore we will take the help from the first element which we select for the population and ask him to recommend other elements who will fit the description of the sample needed. So this referral technique goes on, increasing the size of population like a snowball.

12.2.3 Processes and Illustrations (a few examples)

Simple random sample

To create a simple random sample, a researcher should follow these (adapted) steps.

1. Number each member of the population from 1 to N.
2. Determine the population size (N) and sample size (n).
3. Select a starting point (Close your eyes and put your finger on any number on the list).
4. Choose a direction in which to read (up to down, left to right, …etc).
5. Use technology to select random integers/digits (= n) between 1 and N.
6. Move from the number chosen randomly (starting point) to reach the number required/sample size (Crossman, 2020).

In the example below (**Figure 6**), the population is (N= 12), the sample is (n= 4), and the random integers/digits are (4: 2, 5, 8, 10). The result is a sample of 4 elements (2, 5, 8, and 10).
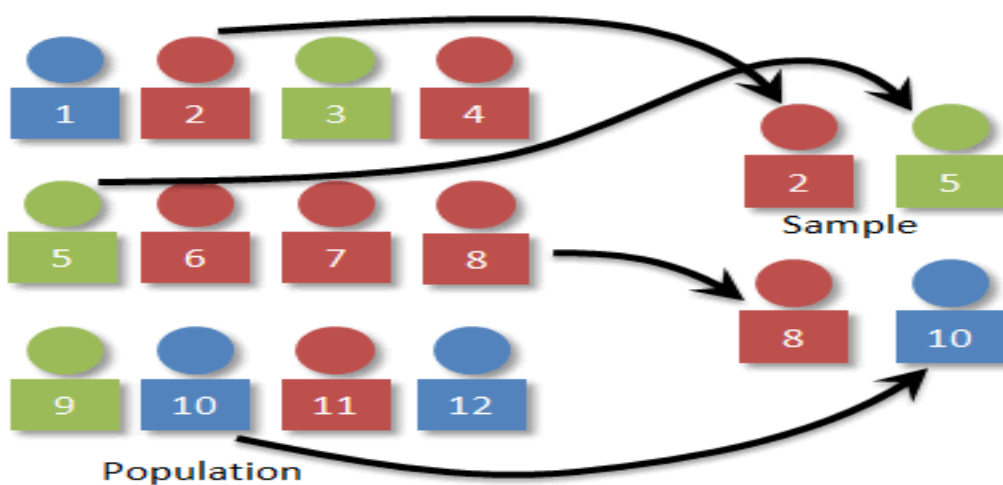

Figure 6: Simple random sampling

Source: https://faculty.elgin.edu/dkernler/statistics/ch01/1-3.html

Stratified Sample

As is was explained earlier, stratified sampling is a sampling technique in which the researcher divides the whole population into different subgroups or strata, then randomly selects the final elements proportionally from the different sub-groups or strata. In the meantime, the researcher must take these notes into consideration:

- The strata must be non-overlapping; each individual must belong to only one sub-group.
- The researcher must use simple probability sampling within the different strata.
- The most common strata used in stratified random sampling are age, gender, socioeconomic status, religion, nationality and educational attainment (Explorable.com, 2009).

Therefore, following the same steps as in the example above, the researcher will be able to create a stratified random sample out of the strata (simple random) samples. *Figure 7* illustrates these steps. The figure shows that the researcher selects a random sample (element) from each stratum.
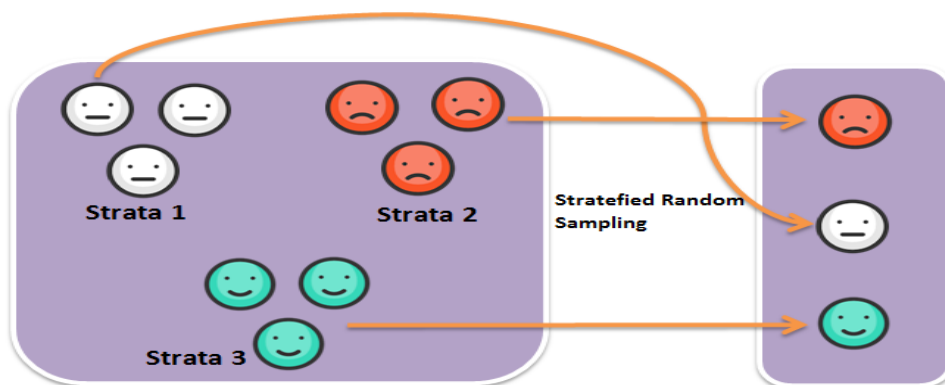
Figure 7: Stratified (random) Sampling

Source: mpling-in-r-dataframe-2/www.datasciencemadesimple.com/stratified-random-sa

Convenience sample

According to Dörnyei (2007), convenience sampling (Haphazard Sampling or Accidental Sampling) is a non-probability (non-random) sampling wherein members of the target population that meet some practical criteria such as easy accessibility, availability, or the willingness to participate are included (Cited in Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2016).

For a clearer illustration of a convenience sample, Taylor (2019) offers several examples where the researcher may want to use a convenience sample:

- To determine the proportion of green M & Ms produced by a factory, we count the number of green M & Ms in our hands that we took out of the package.

- To find the mean height of all third-grade students in a school district, we measure the first five students who are dropped off in the morning by their parents.

- In order to know the mean value of homes in our town, we average the value of our home with our neighbors' homes.

- Someone wants to determine which candidate is likely to win an upcoming election, and so she asks everyone in her circle of friends who they intend to vote for.

- A student is working on a survey of students' attitudes toward college administrators, and so he talks to his roommate and other people on the floor of his residence hall.

In all the examples above, it is clear that the researcher opts for the easiest way (s) of collecting data from the nearest sample like the first five (5) students to arrive at school, the neighbouring houses around the place where he lives, the group of his roommates, and so on. *Figure 8* portrays all the aforementioned situations in one picture. The figure shows that the researcher selects five (5) elements out of twelve (12) because they are accessible, available, or willing to take part in the study.
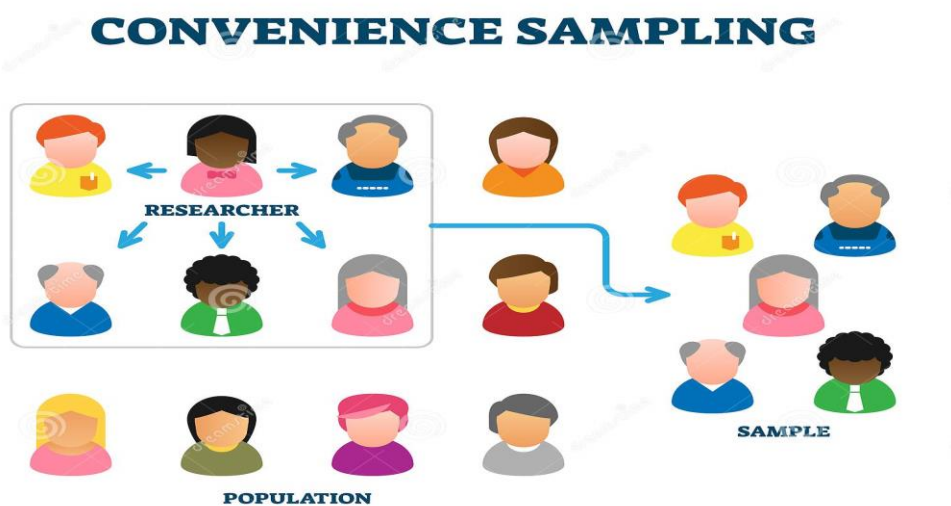
Figure 8: Convenience (non-random) Sampling

Source:https://www.dreamstime.com/convenience-sampling-method-example-vector-illustration-diagram-social-study-technique-population-data-research-projects-image175044541

Purposive Sample

Ames, Glenton, and Lewin (2019) maintain that "In a qualitative evidence synthesis, too much data due to a large number of studies can undermine our ability to perform a thorough analysis. Purposive sampling of primary studies for inclusion in the synthesis is one way of achieving a manageable amount of data". That is, "In purposive sampling, we sample with a *purpose* in mind. We usually would have one or more specific predefined groups we are seeking" (*Non-probability Sampling*). A good example of this technique can be seen in the

street: people stopping other people and asking them if they could be interviewed; the interviewer may be looking for females aged between 30-40 years old, and with this criterion in mind, among others, he asks them a predetermined list of questions (ibid). These characteristics can be well illustrated by *Figure 9.*
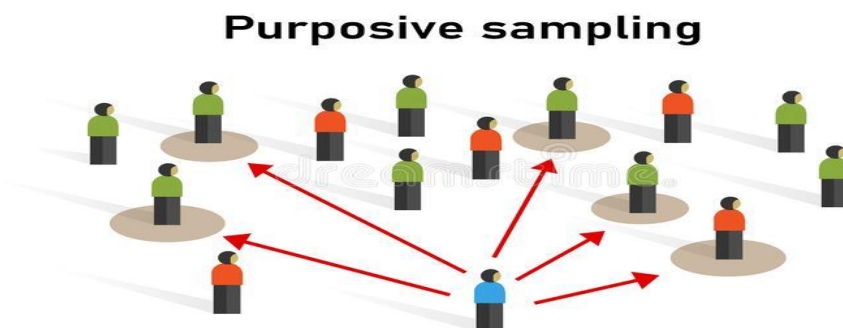

Figure 9: Purposive (non-random) Sampling

Source: https://www.dreamstime.com/purposive-sampling-sample-taken-group-people-statistic-method-non-probability-technique-vector-image169045653

12.3 Sample Size

To determine the sample size in a study, especially by those who never did statistics at university or have forgotten it, the following tips should be taken into account:

- **The minimum sample size is 100** (A number agreed on by most statisticians. But, if the population is less than 100, then the researcher needs to survey the elements/subjects).

- **A good maximum sample size is usually 10% as long as it does not exceed 1000** (Sampling more than 1000 people will not add much to the accuracy given the extra time and money it would cost).

- **Choose a number between the minimum and maximum** (The minimum sample of a school which has 6000 pupils enrolled would be 100, and the maximum sample would be 600. If the researcher wants to be a bit more scientific, then he uses the table below; he simply chooses the column that most matches the population size. Then he chooses the row that matches the level of error he is willing to accept in the results).

Margin of error	Size of population					
	>5000	5000	2500	1000	500	200
±10%	96	94	93	88	81	65
±7.5%	171	165	160	146	127	92
±5%	384	357	333	278	217	132
±3%	1067	880	748	516	341	169

Table 6: Scientific principles of sample size

Source: Bullen (n.d) (http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-choose-a-sample-size/)

General Conclusion

In the first two chapters of the present guide, I have covered few preliminary ideas which have basically to do with dissertation writing and its components, including the different questions that students should emphasize when they start thinking about dividing their final report into parts, sections, and subsections, and all the conditions under which this form of organizing the work takes place. I have also presented the most well-known and relevant formatting strategies for dissertation and thesis structuring. I have presented tips which may offer new insights into good dissertation organization.

In the six subsequent chapters, I have highlighted the main parts of a master's dissertation, from the title page to the conclusion with special emphasis on the *IMRAD* approach, attempting to identify the most important requirements and practices in terms of traditions and writing styles, giving more importance to the *APA* writing style with practical examples or samples as immediate support. In the last four chapters, however, I have made special efforts to shed some light on aspects which, in my opinion, have not been given the status they deserve. I have observed for many years that the *Literature Review* and the *Body Chapters* of a dissertation or thesis have been considered to be identical and, at times, completely different and separate in our context. *Designing Qualitative Research* and *Sampling Methods* have also been a kind of ambiguity, or rather, abstraction for the majority of students. The inclusion of these four chapters is meant to help students and teachers to conceptualize and practice qualitative research, distinguish between the literature review and the other chapters, and understand what to write and not to write in the literature review, and whether or not the generalizability of findings matters in social research.

I hope this guide will provide a firm and confident stand for master students, novice and less knowledgeable practitioners and improve their academic performance. I also hope this guide will bring some change and make a significant contribution to EFL academic practices. Moreover, I hope this guide will be the starting point and user-friendly text for students undertaking research at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

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