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dissertation discussion example for inspiration and brainstorming ideas for breaking writing blocks. Heres a doctoral thesis discussion chapter example. Before reading this blog, you should know some essential tips you need to have in mind when working on the document. Be consistent. Your dissertation discussion chapter is a part of bigger research, and it should be in line with your whole work. Understand your reader. You're writing an academic text that will be analyzed by professionals and experts in the same field. Be sure that you are not trying to simplify your discussion. Be logical. Do not jump into a new line of discussion if you did not delineate it as a research question at the beginning. Be clear. Do not include any data that was not presented in the result section. Consider word choice. Use such terms as our data indicate or our data suggests instead of the data proves. Use proper format. Follow the formatting rules specified by a specific paper style (e.g., APA style format, MLA format, or Chicago format) or provided by your instructor. At this stage, it should not be a question for you on how to write a discussion chapter in a PhD thesis or dissertation. Lets make it clear. It is not a result section but still a place to elaborate on data and go deeper with explanations. Dissertation discussion section includes some intro, result interpretations, limitations, and recommendations for future research. Our team encourages you to use examples before starting your own piece of writing. It will help you to realize the purpose and structure of this chapter and inspire better texts!If you have other questions regarding the PhD writing process, check our blog for more insights. From detailed instruction on how to write a dissertation or guide on formatting a dissertation appendix, weve got you covered. Need expert assistance?Order dissertation discussion from our proficient writers. They will take a significant burden off of you. Instead, they will carry out high-level academic work in a short time.Dissertation discussion section is used to go right after the result chapter. The logic is simple you share your data and then go to the elaboration and explanation of it. Check the sample thesis we provide to students for details on structure.It is not a surprise that dissertation discussion chapter is extremely significant for the research. Here you will go into the details of your study and interpret results to prove or not your hypothesis. It should take almost 25% of your work.Thesis or dissertation discussion used to have some rules on using tenses. You need to use the present tense when referring to established facts and use the past tense when referring to previous studies. And check your text before submission to ensure that you did not miss something.The answer is easy. Discussion section of a dissertation should not include any new findings or describe some unsupported claims. Also, do not try to feel all possible gaps with one research. It may be better to outline your ideas for future studies in recommendations.Article posted on:Mar 24, 2023Article updated on:Dec 28, 2024Finishing your research means wrapping it all up clearly. Chapter 5 presents the Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations, helping you make sense of your findings, reflect on what they mean, and guide what comes next. This guide walks you through how to structure Chapter 5, what to include in each section, and how to present your final insights with confidence. Chapter 5 is the final chapter of your thesis, dissertation, or research paper. It brings everything together by interpreting your results, stating your conclusions, acknowledging limitations, offering practical or theoretical recommendations, and highlighting the studys implications. This chapter helps readers understand: What your findings mean in the real world or in theory How your research contributes to existing knowledge What should be done based on your results What future researchers can explore further Where your study may have been limited Chapter 5 isnt just a summary; its your chance to make your research matter. Chapter 5 follows a structured layout that allows you to move logically from analysis to application. Each section builds from the last, leading the reader from findings to conclusions and action. What to Include in Chapter 5 Summary of Findings: Recap your key results clearly and concisely Discussion: Interpret what the results mean, supported by theory and literature Implications: Show how your findings impact practice, policy, or theory Limitations of the Study: Acknowledge weaknesses or constraints in your research Recommendations: Suggest actions for practitioners or future researchers Conclusion: Provide final thoughts and wrap up your research Covering these sections ensures your study ends with clarity, value, and purpose. Start Chapter 5 with a brief paragraph previewing what this final chapter will cover. Its like a roadmap guiding the reader through your conclusions and takeaways. What to Include: Brief recap of your research aim and Chapter 4 Overview of what will be discussed in Chapter 5 Establish the final purpose of this chapter Learn More About: Coming Soon: How to Write the Introduction to Chapter 5 Coming Soon: How to Start Chapter 5 Strong This section gives a clear recap of your most important results. No interpretation yet, just the facts. What to Include: Concise summary of each major finding Organize findings by research question or hypothesis Highlight patterns or standout results Avoid re-copying Chapter 4 tables or figures just summarize them Learn More About: Summary of Findings Explained How to Write the Summary of Findings Coming Soon: Examples of Summarizing Research Results Here, you go beyond the results and explain what they actually mean. Link your findings to the literature, theories, and previous studies you cited in Chapter 2. What to Include: In-depth interpretation of findings How your results support or contradict past research Connections to your theoretical framework Possible explanations for unexpected results What the findings reveal about the research problem Learn More About: Coming Soon: Discussion of Findings Explained Coming Soon: How to Write the Discussion Section Coming Soon: Linking Findings to Literature and Theory This section answers the So what? question. Show the real-world value or academic contribution of your research. What to Include: Practical implications for educators, policymakers, professionals, etc. Theoretical contributions (new insights, model development, etc.) Relevance to current societal or industry issues Clear connection between findings and implications Learn More About: Coming Soon: Implications of the Study Coming Soon: Writing Practical and Theoretical Implications Be honest about what your study couldnt cover. This isnt a weaknesses part of being academically honest and rigorous. What to Include: Shortcomings in design, sample, time, or method Limitations that affected results or generalizability Possible sources of bias How these limitations impact interpretation Learn More About: Coming Soon: Limitations of the Study Explained Coming Soon: How to Write Study Limitations Coming Soon: Differences Between Delimitations and Limitations Based on your findings and limitations, suggest next steps for both practice and research. What to Include: Actionable steps for professionals or institutions Suggestions for policy or program improvements Topics or methods for future research How future studies can overcome your limitations Learn More About: Coming Soon: Recommendations Explained Coming Soon: How to Write Strong Research Recommendations Coming Soon: Examples of Effective Recommendations Wrap up your study with clarity and finality. Reaffirm your contribution and reflect briefly on your research journey. What to Include: Revisit your main research problem and objectives Reaffirm how your findings addressed them Short final message on the value of the study End on a strong, reflective note Learn More About: Coming Soon: Writing the Conclusion Coming Soon: How to Write a Strong Chapter 5 Conclusion Whats the difference between findings and discussion? Should I include all my results again in Chapter 5? Can I include limitations that werent planned? How long should Chapter 5 be? Should recommendations be based only on findings?Be objective when interpreting results Always connect back to your research questions Avoid repeating data from Chapter 4Focus on meaning Use academic tone, but dont overcomplicate Show confidence in your results, but acknowledge limits Avoid introducing brand new topicsstay within scopeHow to Structure and Format Chapter 4: Results and Findings How to Write Your Research Conclusion Effectively Common Mistakes in Chapter 5 Writing Aligning Your Findings, Implications, and RecommendationsDownloadable Chapter 5 Writing Checklist Stay organized Sample templates for Discussion and Recommendations Expert video breakdowns of final chapter writing Recommended readings on academic research discussion writing Chapter 5 is your final pitch. Its where you make your case, reflect on your study, and offer clear takeaways. Done right, this chapter shows your depth as a researcher and the value of your work. Keep it sharp, reflective, and structured. Too many students end their papers with weak conclusions because they dont know what Chapter 5 is really for. This guide was built to change that. We created this as your go-to reference for confidently writing your final chapter. Whether youre a high school senior, college researcher this structure will help you deliver a strong, final impression. Note: Were not your schools official research coordinator, but we provide reliable support to help you stay on track. Always follow your institutions final guidelines and formatting requirements. Many students get stuck or delayed simply because they dont know how to structure their research or where to begin. Youve just taken your first important step by landing on this guide. Heres what you can do next: Explore writing guides for each chapter from proposal to conclusion Access templates, outlines, and writing samples Understand what your professors are really looking for Get redirected to detailed pages for Chapters 1 to 5 Share this guide with your friends online to help others too! Information DisclaimerNotice: Philscholar is an informational platform dedicated to sharing scholarship and grant opportunities. While we provide guides and articles to assist with admissions and scholarship applications, we do not directly process applications or award scholarships. Users are encouraged to verify all details independently, as information is for reference purposes only. While we strive for accuracy, scholarship criteria, deadlines, and other details may change without prior notice. For further verification or inquiries, please refer to the official sources provided at the end of the content section. By subscribing, youll get the latest news, deadlines, and tips delivered straight to your inbox. Look for scholarships that match what youre good at and what you want to achieve as well as Research topics. If you need help, leave a comment or send us a message. Were here to guide you.Was this article helpful? Depending on your preference for writing, the findings and discussion sections can be the most rewarding sections of your total dissertation. By this point, you actually get to write about what you have done, rather than what others have said about your subject area. Granted that at some point in the discussion you are going to have to link back to this previous research. But you still have the opportunity to demonstrate how you have met that coveted gap in the research and generally made a useful contribution to knowledge. There are many ways to write up both your findings and discussion. In shorter dissertations, it might make sense to have both of these comprise one section. In longer pieces of work, these chapters are usually separate. Information contained in this section will highlight the finer details of writing up your findings and discussion sections. We will use the model of Description Analysis Synthesis, which are typically the three components readers expect to see in these two sections. By the time you're ready to write up your findings, we assume that you've already completed the analysis of your findings. By now, you should know what you are going to write about. We also assume that you have used some sort of software program to help you with the organisation of your findings. If you have not completed this process, you must do so before beginning to write. If not, your findings chapter may end up a confusing and unorganised mess of random information. If you need help in this area, make sure to seek it out before beginning to put your findings down on paper. One of the main issues that students tend to encounter when writing up their findings is the amount of data to include. By the end of the research process, you've probably collected very large amounts of data. Not all of this can possibly appear in your dissertation without completely overwhelming the reader. As a result, you need to be able to make smart decisions about what to include and what to leave out. One of the easiest ways to approach this task is to create an outline. In approaching the outline, it is in your best interest to focus on two key points. Firstly, you need to focus on answering your research questions. Secondly, you must include any particularly interesting findings that have cropped up as you completed your research. An outline will give you the structure you need, and should make the whole process of presenting your findings easier. We realise that it is going to be a difficult process to pick and choose pieces of data to include. But you must be diligent in the work that you cut out. A findings chapter that is long and confusing is going to put the reader off reading the rest of your work. The findings chapter is likely to comprise the majority of your paper. It can be up to 40% of the total word count within your dissertation writing. This is a huge chunk of information, so it's essential that it is clearly organised and that the reader knows what is supposed to be happening. One of the ways you can achieve this is through a logical and organised introduction. There are four main components that you introduce into should include: Reminding the reader of what you set out to do A brief description of how you intend approaching the work up of the results Placing the research in context Letting the reader know where they can find the research instruments (i.e. the Appendix) It may be helpful to think of your introduction as the opposite of a good movie. You probably love watching films that keep you on your toes. They gradually build suspense, then surprise you with a dramatic plot twist just when you thought you'd sussed the story line. Well, your findings chapter is sort of like a really lame movie script. With a findings chapter, there should be no suspense for the reader. You need to tell them what they need to know right from the beginning. This way, they'll have a clear idea about what is still to come. A good introduction will start by telling the reader where you have come from in the research process and what the outcome was (in a couple of paragraphs or less). You need to highlight the structure of the chapter (as you generally will do with all chapters) and where the reader might find any further information (e.g. in the appendices). So, you have created an outline for your findings and highlighted what you thought was most interesting or important for your project. Now you need to consider how you might present these findings in the most logical way to the reader. This is really going to depend on the type of project you have created. For example, if you have completed a qualitative research project, you might have identified some key themes within the software program you used to organise your data. In this case, highlighting these themes in your findings chapter may be the most appropriate way to proceed. Not only are you using information that you have already documented, you are telling a story in each of your sections (which can be useful in qualitative research). But what if you undertook a more quantitative type study? You might be better off structuring your findings chapter in relation to your research questions or your hypotheses. This assumes, of course, that you have more than one research question or hypothesis. Otherwise you would end up just having one really long section. This brings us to our next student mistake trying to do too much within one section. Subheadings are ultimately going to be your friend throughout your dissertation writing. Not only do they organise your information into logical pieces, they give the reader guidelines for where your research might be going. This is also a break for the reader. Looking at pages and pages of text without any breaks can be daunting and overwhelming for a reader. You don't want to overwhelm someone who is going to mark your work and who is responsible for your success (or failure). When writing your introduction, be clear, organised and methodical. Tell the reader what they need to know and try to organise the information in a way that makes the most sense to you and your project. If in doubt, discuss this with your supervisor before you start writing. Qualitative data largely encompasses longer and more detailed responses. If you have conducted things like interviews or observations, you are likely to have transcripts that encompass pages and pages of work. Putting this all together cohesively within one chapter can be particularly challenging. This is true for two reasons. First, it is always difficult to determine what you are going to cut and/or include. Secondly, unlike quantitative data, it can often be difficult to represent qualitative data through figures and tables, so condensing the information into a visual representation is simply not possible. As a writer, it is important to address both these challenges. When considering how to present your qualitative data, it may be helpful to begin with the initial outline you have created (and the one described above). Within each of your subsections, you are going to have themes or headings that represent impactful talking points that you want to focus on. Once you have these headings, it might be helpful to go back to your data and highlight specific lines that can/might be used as examples in your writing. If you have used multiple different instruments to collect data (e.g. interviews and observations), you are going to want to ensure that you are using both examples within each section (if possible). This is so that you can demonstrate to more well-rounded perspective of the points you are trying to make. Once you have identified some key examples for each section, you might still have to do some further cutting/editing. Once you have your examples firmly selected for each subsection, you want to ensure that you are including enough information. This way, the reader will understand the context and circumstances around what you are trying to prove. You must set up the examples you have chosen in a clear and coherent way. Students often make the mistake of including quotations without any other information. It is important that you embed your quotes/examples within your own thoughts. Usually this means writing about the example both before and after. So you might say something like, One of the main topics that my participants highlighted was the need for more teachers in elementary schools. This was a focal point for 7 of my 12 participants, and examples of their responses included: [insert example] by participant 3 and [insert example] by participant 9. The reoccurring focus by participants on the need for more teachers demonstrates [insert critical thought here]. By embedding your examples in the context, you are essentially highlighting to the reader what you want them to remember. Aside from determining what to include, the presentation of such data is also essential. Participants, when speaking in an interview might not do so in a linear way. Instead they might jump from one thought to another and might go off topic here and there. It is your job to present the reader with information on your theme/heading without including all the extra information. So the quotes need to be paired down to incorporate enough information for the reader to be able to understand, while removing the excess. Finding this balance can be challenging. You have likely worked with the data for a long time and so it might make sense to you. Try to see your writing through the eyes of someone else, which should help you write more clearly. Presentation of quantitative data can be equally as challenging as the presentation of qualitative data, but for very different reasons. For example, with the qualitative data you might be concerned about length. Quantitative data poses the risk of overwhelming the reader with numbers, statistics, and percentages that can make heads spin with confusion. Something to consider first with numeric data is that presentation style depends what department you are submitting to. In the hard sciences, there is likely an expectation of heavy numeric input and corresponding statistics to accompany the findings. In the arts and humanities, however, such a detailed analysis might not be as common. Therefore as you write out your quantitative findings, take your audience into consideration. Just like with the qualitative data, you must ensure that your data is appropriately organised. Again, you've likely used a software program to run your statistical analysis, and you have an outline and subheadings where you can focus your findings. There are many software programs available and it is important that you have used one that is most relevant to your field of study. For some, Microsoft Excel may be sufficient for basic analysis. Others may rely on SPSS, Stata, R, or any of the other programs available through your institution or online. Whatever program you have used, make sure that you document what you have done and the variables that have affected your analysis. One common mistake found in student writing is the presentation of the statistical analysis. During your analysis of the data, you are likely to have run multiple different analyses from regressions to correlations. Often, we see students presenting multiple different statistical analyses without any real understanding of what the tests mean. Presentation of quantitative data is more than just about numbers and tables. You must explain your findings and justify why you have run/presented the tests that you have. You could also explain how they relate to the research question. However, depending on how you have organised your work, this might end up in the discussion section. Students who are not confident with statistical analysis often have a tendency to revert back to their secondary school mathematics skills. They commonly document the mean, median, and mode for all of their results. Now, these three outcomes can be important. But having a good understanding of why you are proceeding with this strategy of analysis is going to be essential in a primarily quantitative study. That noted, there are different expectations for an undergraduate dissertation and a PhD thesis, so knowing what these expectations are can be really helpful before you begin. Thanks to modern technology, making graphs and figures to correspond to your work needn't be a tedious and time-consuming task. With a few clicks and keyboard taps, a beautiful graph, figure or table can appear in your document. Be wary, however, of common mistakes students tend to make when including these in their dissertation writing. The first is the use of colour and/or variables. Depending on the presentation of your dissertation, you may be required to print out a final copy for the marker(s). In many cases, this final copy must be printed in black and white. This means that any figures or graphs that you create must be readable in a black and white (or greyscale) format. This can be challenging because there are only so many distinct shades of grey. In a pie chart, you might show one section as purple and the other as green. Yet when printed, both the purple and the green translate to approximately the same shade of grey, making your graph suddenly unreadable. Another common error is overwhelming the reader with graphs and tables. Let's think about your outline and subheadings. If you're including a table under each subheadings, it needs to be relevant to the information that is being discussed in that chapter. There is no correct or incorrect number of graphs that should exist within the section, but you should use your judgement about what looks appropriate. The final mistake we see is the duplication of writing (or absence of writing) when presenting a graph. Some students will present their findings in a graph or table and then write out this information again below the graph. This defeats the entire purpose of using the graph in the first place. So avoid this at all times. Conversely, other students sometimes include a graph or figure but nothing else. Doing this denies the reader of context or purpose of said graph or figure. At some point, a balance needs to be struck where the reader has the information they require to really understand the point being made within the section. Whether you are writing a PhD, Masters or Undergraduate level dissertation, the discussion chapter (or section in a shorter dissertation) is going to be one of the most influential. This section is all about how you have 1) answered your research questions and 2) positioned yourself within the larger field of research. As you progress within this chapter, everything you write is going to have value and make a contribution to the overall field of knowledge. The structure of your discussion chapter is really going to depend on what you are trying to do and how you have structured your findings. If you chose to structure your findings by theme, it might make sense to continue this into the analysis chapter. Other people might structure it according to the research questions. This clearly indicates to the reader how you have addressed your study. Marking a dissertation usually requires the marker to comment on the extent to which the research questions have been addressed. So by structuring a dissertation that lays out each research question for the marker, you are making their job easier. Needless to say, this a great thing. Like any other chapter in your thesis, an introduction is an essential component of your discussion. By this point, the reader has gone through your findings and is now looking for your interpretation. Therefore, at the end of your discussion introduction you should highlight the content that each of the subsections will cover. A conclusion to your discussion section (or a chapter summary) is also going to be beneficial. The length of the analysis chapter is usually quite long, so a wrap up of the key points at the end can help the reader digest your work. It can also help ensure that the reader actually understands the points you are trying to highlight within your project. It is difficult to put into words how important the critical thinking element is to your discussion chapter. Without any critical thinking, you are really doing yourself a disservice. It will affect the mark that you obtain on your overall dissertation. This is why the analysis chapter is usually weighted quite heavily on the marking rubric. We tell students about critical thinking and the importance of it on a daily basis. And yet, there does seem to be a general confusion about what critical thinking entails, i.e. what constitutes critical thinking versus what is a simple description. Critical thinking asks you to provide your own opinion on your topic, which can be daunting at first. For much of your academic career, you've likely been asked to use research to justify a position that has already been set. Unlike critical thinking, this requires you to use other peoples ideas. But even if you're new to it, try and get to grips with what critical thinking entails and use it in your work. How you choose to organise your discussion is entirely up to you. It can be beneficial for the discussion chapter to mirror the structure of the findings chapter (though not always). For this purpose, you are going to need subheadings. Subheadings need to be informative but not too long. It is possible to layer your subheadings, so you might have a Chapter 2, a Section 2.1 and then a 2.1.1 and then a 2.1.1 and 2.2.2. Usually anything after 3 numerical points does not get a number and would not appear in your table of contents. When creating titles for your subheadings, consider how they are going to look in the table of contents. They need to fit on one line, ideally, so putting your research question as the subheading might end up being too long. Conversely, one- or two-word subheadings usually doesn't give enough information about the purpose of the section. Finding this balance is important. But remember you can always edit your subheadings retrospectively. Presentation of your analysis is going to be one of the more challenging things that you have to undertake. Your chapter needs to be long enough to effectively demonstrate how your findings link to previous research. But many students often put too much information (especially duplicated information) into the analysis chapter. Ideally, you will be able to concisely and effectively link your research to what has been researched previously. But this can be a challenge. You don't want to repeat what has been said in your literature review or the findings. But you need to pull examples from both of these sections in order to make the points that you need to. So, how do you tackle this? One way is by referring the reader back to previous chapters, sections, or subsections. This process can generally be done at the end. You can put in a place holder until you know how your sections will be numbered. For example you might write: In Section XYZ, the theme of was discussed. Findings from this study indicate. (see Section XYZ for details). While XYZ is obviously not going to be the same section, by using the same abbreviation, you can then search XYZ after you have completed writing and replace each term with the appropriate number. This also makes the proofreading process easier. If you are submitting an electronic version of this document, you may also consider hyperlinks to take the reader to the different sections. But be aware that this can be considerably more work, so you should allow for this in your timescale if it's something you wish to implement. Hopefully, you now have some insight into how to prepare your dissertation findings and discussion sections. Let's outline the main takeaway points: It is essential that you keep in mind the describe, analyse, synthesise model. The findings chapter is essentially the describe part. You need to ensure that you have clearly identified data that relates to your research questions, hypotheses, or themes of your study. For the describe component, you are not looking to support your work with other research, but rather to present your contribution. It is also important to consider your data in the describe section. If you have qualitative data, ensure that you have edited the quotes and examples to a reasonable length. Pick quotes that accurately represent your theme. Try not to focus solely on one or two participants (if possible). Ensure that you are demonstrating links between multiple instruments, if you used them. If you are using quantitative data, be careful about how many statistical tests you run. Make sure you can justify why you chose one particular test over another. When presenting graphs, use a colour scheme that's appropriate for the reader when printing in black and white. Ensure that graphs and tables are appropriately explained, but that the information provided is not duplicated. From the describe element, you move into the 'analysis' and 'synthesis'. These parts usually appear in the discussion and ask you to employ your critical thinking skills to demonstrate how your research fits into the bigger picture. It is often the case that your analysis holds the most weight in the marking scheme. So you should spend considerable time ensuring this section is appropriate. It needs to demonstrate how you have attempted to answer your research questions. Finally, create an outline before you begin. While this might seem tedious at first, filling in the sections with the appropriate information will mean that you are not writing things over and over again. It'll also make sure you do not go wildly off topic. It is always beneficial to have a second set of eyes assess your work for any errors or omissions. Many students choose to contact professional editors to help with this as they hold the relevant expertise to guide you on the correct path to creating a perfect discussion section that is ready for submission. In terms of presentation, both the findings and discussion chapters will benefit from a clear and logical introduction and chapter summary. Remember that both of these chapters are meant to inform. You are leading the reader on a journey, so make sure they stay on the path and arrive at the final destination with you! Your dissertation is the most important part of your degree, and for that reason, you want to get it right. Our writing service offers you customised support from trusted academics, either with a single chapter or your entire dissertation. Click below to find out how we can help. Biggam, J. (2021)Succeeding With Your Master's Dissertation: A Step by Step Handbook. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill. O'Siochru, C. (2023)A Student Guide to Writing Research Reports, Services, Theses and Dissertations. London: Routledge. Scribbr (2021)How to Write a Dissertation Results Section. Available at: 3 August 2024).

**Difference between findings and discussion in dissertation. How to write findings and discussion. How to write findings and discussion in research. How to write discussion section in research paper. Dissertation findings and discussion example. How to write a findings section for qualitative research. What is a discussion in a dissertation. How to write a discussion for a research paper. How to write results and discussion in a research paper.**