WRITING INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The introduction leads the reader from a general subject area to a particular field of research. It establishes the context and significance of the research being conducted by summarizing current understanding and background information about the topic, stating the purpose of the work in the form of the research problem supported by a hypothesis or a set of questions, briefly explaining the methodological approach used to examine the research problem, highlighting the potential outcomes your study can reveal, and outlining the remaining structure of the paper.

IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD INTRODUCTION

Think of the introduction as a mental road map that must answer for the reader these four questions:

➤What was I studying?

➤Why was this topic important to investigate?

➤What did we know about this topic before I did this study?

➤How will this study advance new knowledge or new ways of understanding?

STRUCTURE AND APPROACH

The introduction is the broad beginning of the paper that answers three important questions for the reader:

➢ What is this?

➢ Why should I read it?

➢ What do you want me to think about / consider doing / react to?

Think of the structure of the introduction as an **inverted triangle of information**. Organize the information so as to present the more general aspects of the topic early in the introduction, then narrow your analysis to more specific topical information that provides context, finally arriving at your research problem and the rationale for studying it and, whenever possible, a description of the potential outcomes your study can reveal.

These are general phases associated with writing an introduction:

1. Establish an area to research by:

➤ Highlighting the importance of the topic, and/or

➤ Making general statements about the topic, and/or

➤ Presenting an overview on current research on the subject

2. Identify a research niche by:

Opposing an existing assumption, and/or

Revealing a gap in existing research, and/or

Formulating a research question or problem, and/or

Continuing a disciplinary tradition.

3. Place your research within the research niche by:

Stating the intent of your study,

Outlining the key characteristics of your study,

Describing important results, and

Giving a brief overview of the structure of the paper.

HOW TO DRAFT AN EFFECTIVE INTRODUCTION

➢**Your introduction should clearly identify the subject area of interest**. A simple strategy to follow is to use key words from your title in the first few sentences of the introduction. This will help focus the introduction on the topic at the appropriate level and ensures that you get to the subject matter quickly without losing focus, or discussing information that is too general.

➢**Establish context by providing a brief and balanced review of the pertinent published literature that is available on the subject.** The key is to summarize for the reader what is known about the specific research problem before you did your analysis. This part of your introduction should not represent a comprehensive literature review. It consists of a general review of the important, foundational research literature [with citations] that lays a foundation for understanding key elements of the research problem.

HOW TO DRAFT AN EFFECTIVE INTRODUCTION

➢ **Clearly state the hypothesis that you investigated**. When you are first learning to write in this format it is okay, and actually preferable, to use a past statement like, "The purpose of this study was to...." or "We investigated three possible mechanisms to explain the...."

➢ **Why did you choose this kind of research study or design?** Provide a clear statement of the rationale for your approach to the problem studied. This will usually follow your statement of purpose in the last paragraph of the introduction.

STAGES IN A THESIS INTRODUCTION

state the general topic and give some background

provide a review of the literature related to the topic

define the terms and scope of the topic

outline the current situation

evaluate the current situation (advantages/ disadvantages) and identify the gap

identify the importance of the proposed research

state the research problem/ questions

state the research aims and/or research objectives

state the hypotheses

outline the order of information in the thesis

outline the methodology

WRITING THE DISCUSSION SECTION

Discussion section is the most important section which provides answers to research questions and solutions to problems that justifies the research.

In research report writing, discussion means looking at the issue or problem that is being investigated based on the results of the research and implications from different angles and sides.

In discussion section, you should discuss the possible causes of observed findings or results based on underlying characteristics or theory

If there are different contributory factors, you need to describe their relationship and to assess their important contribution to the research.

If certain parts of the findings or results are not understood for various reasons, the discussion should acknowledge this lack of understanding.

STRATEGIES IN WRITING THE DISCUSSION SECTION

The discussion section may include the following approaches:

1. **Explain results of findings of the research**

➤**Give reasons for the findings**

Bases on Figure 3, the results clearly show that most of the students who took part in the survey preferred the pre paid plan. Only a small fraction of the students used the post paid plan as opposed to those who used the pre paid plan. The results were anticipated as the respondents were all students, and the pre paid plan seemed to be the most suitable plan to cater for the needs of the students as they paid for what they used only. While there a handful of students from wealthy families, the majority of the students simply could not afford the post paid plan.

➢ <u>Explain the scenario or circumstances</u> during the data collection period or at the time of experiment which might have some influences on the results of the research

There are several factors that make phone calls not so popular among students. The most obvious factor was financial restraint. Students generally lived on shoestring budget and could not afford the luxury of spending too much on making calls. These factors helped make SMS the most popular means of communicating with friends and family.

➢ Explain the results based on the <u>limitations or constraints</u> of the research during the data collection

One of the most peripheral services through the cell phone was to get sports results. This was highly anticipated as students usually followed sports events on regular basis, especially the Malaysian Premier League. Since the majority of the respondents were female students, the findings of the research did not show any significant result in the use of this peripheral services for sports.

STRATEGIES IN WRITING THE DISCUSSION SECTION

2. **<u>Compare the findings</u>**

➢Compare the findings of the research with the findings of other research within the same field (discussed in the literature review section)

It can be summarized that SMS was the most popular means of communication among students of higher learning institutions. This trend was very much expected as students live on strict budget. This was similar to the findings of another study conducted by Parem et al.(2003) at University XYZ which found that SMS was the primary reason why students owned a handset.

➢Compare and relate the different findings of the research to highlight certain results as significant

Cell phone call rates are based on the location of the caller and the location where the destination number was registered. Since the student population came from different parts of the country, making long distance calls to family members back in he respective states could be very expensive for students. Therefore, the number of calls made by the students to the family members compared to the SMS was relatively small. This shows that financial limitation was a significant factor in the lives of students in the higher learning institutions.

STRATEGIES IN WRITING THE DISCUSSION SECTION

3. **evaluate the findings**

Evaluate the results by providing an assessment of the findings. Since you know the scenario of the issue or problem, you can decide whether the results obtained are <u>as expected</u> and have turned out to be <u>successful</u>, or otherwise, i.e. the results <u>are unexpected</u>, <u>unsatisfactory or insignificant.</u>

Better coverage of certain service providers means that service is available over a wider coverage. One of the service providers claimed that its cellular network offered a more stable and wider coverage in most parts of Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak compared to the other service providers. This claim seemed to have found credibility among the students in most institutions of higher learning. However, there was no way of verifying this claim as there had been no studies conducted on the network coverage of all service providers in the country. As such, the responses by the students on the better coverage of one service provider seemed to be based on heresay.

STRATEGIES IN WRITING THE DISCUSSION SECTION

4. **Infer from the findings**

Inferring means developing your view points and ideas based on the facts and results from the responses that you have accumulated through survey or interviews. This is what most researchers need to do in order to make sense of their findings. If the findings are left in their statistical form, no one would be able to understand them. So, be creative and do not be afraid to speculate.

The traffic information was the least attractive peripheral service provided by the hand phone service provider among the respondents. (inference) This was expected as the university was situated far from the busy metropolitan area. Apart from that, many of the students lived on campus and did not need traffic information to go to their classes. As such, traffic information may not be useful to them.

WRITING CONCLUSION

WHAT IS A CONCLUSION?

The conclusion section is where you sum up the main points of the report.

The conclusion should relate to the objectives and results of your research.

The purpose of a conclusion is to tie together or integrate the various issues covered in your research and for you to draw logical deductions based on the research findings.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A CONCLUSION?

A typical conclusion usually had the following elements:

➢Overview of the study

➢Restatement of the objectives

➢Review of the findings

➢Implications of the findings

➢Limitations of the research (optional)

1. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

An effective way to start writing your conclusion is for you to give a brief summary of what the research is all about, that is, the why and how you conduct the study in a nutshell.

This study/ research gives/ gave an account of and the reasons for the widespread use of....

This study/ research/ project has investigated.....

2. RESTATEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES

Start with the most significant objective.

The restatement should not be exactly the same as the way they are stated in the introduction.

As mentioned earlier in the introduction, the purpose of this study was to investigate/ find out/ evaluate

To reiterate, this study set out to investigate/ find out/ determine

Returning to the research questions at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that..

3. REVIEW OF THE FINDINGS

This part of your conclusion needs you to state whether or not the objectives of your research have been achieved and whether they are as you have expected.

You may have several findings to present and if this is the case, you should start with the most important one and then proceed to the less important ones.

This study has shown that….

The findings of this study that in general….

One of the significant findings that emerges from this study is…

The major findings of the research is that………

4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

Implications are the conclusions or deductions that you have arrived at based on your findings.

It is important to discuss the implications because they will be the basis to make the recommendations on what course of action to be taken to solve the identified problem.

The evidence from this research suggests that.....

The results of this study indicate that..

The results of this support the idea that…

In general, it seems that…

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Limitations are the weaknesses that you have identified in relation to your study.

One of the limitations of the research is……

However, the findings of the research cannot be generalized to other population…..

The research was limited in several ways. First, the research….

The present study was limited by….

SAMPLE CONCLUSION

This research investigated the usage of cellular phones among Permata University students. Primary data were collected by randomly distributing questionnaires to 50 students. As mentioned earlier in the introduction, the purpose of this study was to investigate students' preference with regards to service providers and plans and the peripheral offered by cellular service providers.

Overview of the study

Restating the objectives

The following conclusions can be drawn from the study. To begin with, this study has shown that Simax is the top service provider in Permata University due to its better network coverage compared to other service providers. In addition, the prepaid plan is the most popular choice among Permata university students. With regards to peripherals, SMS is the most popular means of communication among Permata university students since it was found to be more economical compared to making calls. Lastly, MMS holds the biggest potential in attracting customers from a list of new peripherals services to be offered by service providers.

Review of the findings

SAMPLE CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that cost and network coverage are the two important factors that will influence students' choice in selecting hand phone service provider, plan and peripherals. However, these findings are only true for Permata University students and cannot be generalized to other university students. The same study needs to be conducted with students from other universities to see if there are any similarities with the factors that will influence studnts' choice in selecting hand phone service provider, plan and peripherals.

Implications of the findings

Limitations of the study.

THE DOS AND DON'TS OF CONCLUSIONS

Dos

Draw conclusions for each major issues raised in the study.

E.g. it was found that MMS holds the biggest potential in attracting customers from a list of new peripheral services to be offered by service providers.

State the findings and give specific explanations if necessary.

E.g. *simax proved to be the top service provider due to its better coverage compared to other service providers.*

Don'ts

Do not introduce new ideas or facts.

E.g. hand phones can also cause brain cancer (when health issue is not mentioned in the objectives of the study).

Do not focus on minor results of the study.

Do not exaggerate the implications of your findings.

E.g. only simax provides the best service to its customers.

THE DOS AND DON'TS OF CONCLUSIONS

Dos

Use discourse markers to ensure cohesion.

E.g. *furthermore, SMS is the most popular means of communication among students. This is because it is more economical compared to making calls.*

Select verb tense according to functions of the statements.

E.g. *the purpose of this study was …(purpose). It was found that…(results). This could be due to …(explanations).*

Don'ts

do not generalize the findings.

E.g. *all university students have hand phones.*

Do not apologize by saying such things as

"I may not be an expert" or "at least this is my opinion".

WRITING RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

It's the section of the report where you give suggestions or actions to be taken based on your findings.

They are written as action statements using clear and specific language.

They should be written in order of importance.

They should be related to the conclusions of your study and should not include any new facts or ideas.

Do not present recommendations based on your beliefs or biases that are not supported by data.

TYPES OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. recommend actions to be taken based on the findings

Other service providers ought to provide good coverage and improve their promotional strategy if they want to compete with Simax.

Students should opt for post paid plan if their talk time is more than 267 minutes per month as it is cheaper than pre paid plan.

2. recommendations to other researchers (suggestions)

Since this study had only focused on Permata University students, it is recommended that further studies be carried out on students from other universities to see whether there are any similarities in the findings. Furthermore, further research could also explore the different types of promotional strategies used by the service providers to attract customers and the effectiveness of these strategies. Lastly, although hand phone is a necessity, it might be a good idea to investigate the effects of using hand phone on peple's health so that the public will be more aware of the hazards of using it.

Read the following conclusion and recommendation and critically analyze it.

This study investigates the impact of the foreign capital inflows and economic growth on stock market capitalization in 18 Asian countries by using the panel data from the period of 2000-2010. The ARDL bound testing co integration approach confirms the valid long run relationship between considered variables. Results indicate that foreign direct investment has significant negative economic growth has significant positive relationship with the stock market capitalization; whereas, the results of workers' remittances is found insignificant in long run. The error correction model confirms the significant positive relationship of economic growth workers' remittances while, FDI has negative and significant impact on stock market capitalization in short run. Results of causality test based on Toda and Yamamoto (1995) show the bidirectional causal relationship of foreign direct investment and direct economic growth with stock market capitalization. However, no causal relationship is found in between workers' remittances and stock market capitalization. It suggested that investor should not idealize the inflow of workers' remittances to invest in Asian stock markets in long run. Simultaneously, size of the economy is a better leading indicator for Asian stock markets. On the other hand, inflows of FDI may mislead the investor to invest. Investor should keep an eye whether FDI come in the competition of domestic market or not? If this happens so investor should not invest in the stock market of host country.

For the given conclusion, write recommendations.

Price and quality of food

While it was generally agreed that the price was reasonable and the variety wide, more than half of those surveyed felt that the quality of food should could be improved upon particularly in the areas of the taste of the food, size of food portions and freshness of ingredients.

Competition

Many canteen users, especially staff, were attracted by a new food court at the new neighborhood shopping centre opposite the polytechnic. Canteen takings were also affected by six newly installed non-carbonated health drinks vending machines located in the canteen. Many staff also found sandwiches from the sandwich bar located outside lecture theatre 4 of DP tasty and healthy. Compounding the problem could be the canteen did not seem to serve enough types of healthy food.

Canteen operating hours

Respondents, majority of whom were staff, were dissatisfied with the canteen operating hours. They wished the canteen to be opened as early as 8 am to cater to those wanted to have breakfast or avoid the lunch crowd.

Ambiance of the canteen

The ambiance of the canteen was not conducive for having meals due to the lack of air conditioning and high noise levels. The music played by the newly installed juke box worsens the situation as the selection of music turns away the adults. Hence, to improve the canteen recommendation must address the problems identified in the above areas.