



Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Checklist:

Begin with an overview of the general topic to establish the context of the study and orient the reader to the field. Do not overstate the topic, as you will address the topic more fully in Chapter 2.

Describe the larger context in which the problem exists.

Present an overview of why this research topic is relevant and warranted.

Briefly explain what research has been done on the topic and why the topic is important practically and empirically (applied and PhD) as well as theoretically (PhD).

Clearly lead the reader to the problem statement to follow. The reader should not be surprised by the problem described later in the document.

Do not explicitly state the study problem, purpose, or methodology, as they are discussed in subsequent sections.

Devote approximately 2 to 4 pages to this section.

Statement of the Problem

Checklist:

Begin with “The problem to be addressed in this study is...” This statement should logically flow from the introduction and clearly identify the problem to be addressed by the study (current citations needed).

Succinctly discuss the problem and provide evidence of its existence.

Identify who is impacted by the problem (e.g., individuals, organizations, industries, or society), what is not known that should be known about it, and what the potential negative consequences could be if the problem is not addressed in this study.

Ensure the concepts presented are exactly the same as those mentioned in the Purpose Statement section.

Do not exceed 250-300 words.

Purpose of the Study

Checklist:

Begin with a succinct purpose statement that identifies the study method, design, and overarching goal. The recommended language to use is: “The purpose of this [identify research methodology] [identify research design] study is to [identify the goal of the dissertation that directly reflects and encompasses the research questions to follow].” Because the purpose is a critical piece of the entire study, it needs to be given careful attention and must be written in clear and concise language.

Indicate how the study is a logical, explicit research response to the stated problem and the research questions to follow.

Continue with a brief but clear step-by-step overview of how the study will be (proposal) or was (manuscript) conducted.

Identify the variables/constructs, materials/instrumentation, and analysis.

Identify the site(s) where the research will be (proposal) or was (manuscript) conducted using general geographic terms to avoid identifying the specific location. To avoid compromising participants’ confidentiality or anonymity, use pseudonyms.

Do not exceed one paragraph or one page.

Introduction to Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

Checklist:

Identify the guiding framework. Present the key concepts, briefly explain how they are related, and present the propositions relevant to this study.

Explain how the framework guided the research decisions, including the development of the problem statement, purpose statement, and research questions.

If more than one framework is guiding the study, integrate them, rather than describing them independently. Do not select a separate framework for each variable/construct under examination.

Do not exceed two pages. A more thorough discussion of the theoretical/conceptual framework will be included in Chapter 2.



Introduction to Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

Checklist:

Provide a brief discussion of the methodology and design to include a description of the data collection procedure and analysis. Do not include specific details regarding why the methodology and design were selected over others. More detailed information will be included in Chapter 3.

Cite the seminal works related to the selected methodology and design.

Indicate why the selected research methodology and design are the best choices for the study by explaining how they align with the problem and purpose statements as well as the research questions. Do not simply list and describe various research methodologies and designs.

Devote approximately one to two pages to this section.

Research Questions

RQ1

RQ2

Hypotheses

H1₀

H1_a

H2₀

H2_a

Introduction to Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

Checklist:

Present research questions directly answerable, specific, and testable within the given timeframe and location identified in the problem and purpose statements.

Include the exact same variables/constructs, participants, and location mentioned in the problem and purpose statements. No new variables/constructs should be introduced.



Significance of the Study

Checklist:

Describe why the study is important and how it can contribute to the field of study.

For applied studies, explain how the results might both be significant to leaders and practitioners in the field and contribute to the literature. For PhD studies, explain how the results advance the guiding framework and contribute to the literature.

Describe the benefits of addressing the study problem, achieving the study purpose, and answering the research questions. While the problem statement should articulate the negative consequences of not conducting the study, this section should highlight the **positive** consequences of completing the study.

Do not exceed one page.

Definitions of Key Terms

Term 1

Term 2

Checklist:

Alphabetize and bold terms directly related to the dissertation topic and not commonly used or understood.

Paraphrase the definitions of the terms using complete sentences and provide a citation for each one (e.g., According to Smith and Wesson (2022), XXX refers to ...).

Do not define theories, conceptual frameworks, statistical analyses, methodological terms, or the variables/constructs under examination.

Summary

Checklist:

Briefly restate the key points discussed in the chapter. Review the headings and/or table of contents to ensure all key points are covered.