

The Format Of A Methodology Chapter: A Guide

Introduction

This document is not a model of writing your methodology chapter just a guide to some of the considerations and format you should consider. Engage with your supervisor to clarify their preferences.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

The methodology chapter is normally chapter 3, after the introduction and the literature review. Remember to include some linking sentences to the previous chapter (introduction)

3.1 Research Methodology

In this section you will describe what you are going to do, not explain what a research methodology is. You do not need to include the research wall or the research onion in this section.

3.1.1 Philosophy

Positivist or phenomenological? Justify your choice. How will you use your philosophy's advantages in your project? How will you work around any disadvantages? If you plan to use a mixed-methods approach, explain which parts of your project use which philosophy. Keep this short it is usually a brief overview of the conceptual framework of YOUR project. No need for an extensive review of research philosophy.

3.1.2 Strategy

Deductive or inductive? Justify your choice. How will you use your strategy's advantages in your project? How will you work around any disadvantages? If you plan to use a mixed methods approach, explain which parts of your project use which strategy. Be concise and definitive.

3.1.3 Approaches

Why did you choose these approaches? If you are doing a case study then briefly explain the situation covered.

3.1.3.1 Literature Review

3.1.3.2 <Approach 2>

3.1.3.3 <Approach 3>

3.1.4 Limitations

Are there any limitations on your project? What external factors could prevent your project from being a success? How did you address these limitations? What assumptions did you make?

3.1.5 Ethical Issues

Are there any ethical issues related to this research? Is there any potential of physical, mental, or reputational harm to the researcher, any participants, or to the university?

3.1.6 Validity, Reliability & Generalisability

3.1.6.1 Validity

Is this a good way to investigate this problem?

3.1.6.2 Reliability

Would a different researcher investigating the same problem be likely to get the same results?

3.1.6.3 Generalisability

What range of situations do your results apply to? Could they be used for similar problems or similar organisations, or with similar data sets?

3.1.7 Data Evaluation Methods

3.1.7.1 Data Collection

What types of data do you plan to collect? How do you plan to collect this data? If you are doing a survey, then how many respondents will you need, and how do you expect to contact those people? What is the minimum amount of data needed for your project? What will you do if you cannot collect enough data?

3.1.7.2 Data Evaluation

How will you evaluate your data? What statistical analysis techniques will you use? If you are performing an experiment then what are your experimental hypotheses and what level of statistical significance will you use? How will you present your data?

3.2 Development Methodology

In this section you will describe what you are going to do, not explain how your development or analysis methodology works.

3.2.1 Software Development Methodology OR Other Relevant Major Methodology

State which software development you will be using and justify your decision. If you are doing a data mining project then you should state which data mining methodology you will be using.

3.2.2 (Optional) <Any Other Relevant Subsidiary Methodologies>

Some projects may use more than one methodology. If this is the case for your project, state which other methodologies you will use and justify your decisions.

3.3 Resources

In this section you will describe what you are going to use, not explain what a resource is.

3.3.1 Hardware Resources

What hardware will you be using? Is there anything other than a normal networked PC?

3.3.2 Software Resources

What software will you be using? What versions? If you need to download specialised software from anywhere, where will it come from?

3.3.3 (Optional) Information Resources

If you need external data for your project, where will that data come from?

3.3.4 (Optional) Human Resources

Do you need people other than yourself and your supervisor to provide input to your project? If your project includes user testing or a survey then you need to identify how many subjects you need and how you will contact these people.

At the end of the chapter write a final paragraph to link it to the next chapter of your report.