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FINAL RESEARCH PAPER
TEMPLATE & WRITING GUIDE

A chapter-by-chapter structure for the standard 5-chapter thesis /
final research paper, with guidance on how to write every section
(Undergraduate & Postgraduate / MA / MBA level)

Prepared for students and researchers
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ABOUT THIS TEMPLATE

This guide lays out the complete, standard structure of a final-year or postgraduate research thesis the same five-chapter structure used and approved by university supervisors and examining boards. Each chapter and sub-section below is listed exactly as it should appear in your Table of Contents, followed by a short explanation of what that section must contain and practical guidance on how to write it.

The structure follows the conventional pattern used by most Business, Social Science, and Management departments (research design → literature review → methodology → data analysis → conclusions), the same pattern found in theses that have been reviewed and approved by an advisor and a panel of internal and external examiners. Use it as a working checklist: as you draft each chapter, tick off the sub-sections and apply the writing tips provided.

TIP: Keep this structure even if your specific department's guideline renames a section (e.g., "Research Approach" instead of "Research Design"). Examiners look for these functional parts background, problem, gap, method, findings, conclusion regardless of the exact label used.

STRUCTURE AT A GLANCE

Below is the full outline your final document should follow, from the cover page to the appendices.

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PRELIMINARY PAGES

Cover / Title Page

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Institution name and logo
- Full thesis title (should state the topic, and where relevant, the case/company and location studied)
- "Prepared by:" and the author's full name
- "Advisor:" and the supervisor's name and title (e.g., Dr., Mr., Mrs.)
- The submission statement, e.g. "A Research Thesis Submitted to the School of Postgraduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment for the Award of Degree in ..."
- Month/Year and City, Country of submission

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Keep the title short, specific, and descriptive it should name the variable(s) studied, the case organization (if any), and the location, e.g. "The Impact of X on Y in the Case of [Organization], [City], [Country]".
- Use the exact submission wording required by your department/college do not paraphrase it.
- Center all text and use a clean, formal font (Times New Roman 12–14pt is standard).

Example (from an approved thesis): "THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP STYLE ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN THE CASE OF ADDIS BANK SC, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA" the title names the independent concept (leadership style), the dependent concept (organizational performance), the case organization (Addis Bank), and the location (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia).

Declaration

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A signed statement that the work is the student's original work
- A statement that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, for a degree at any other institution
- Name, signature, and date lines for both the student and the advisor

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- This is a formal declaration, not a narrative section use the standard wording your institution provides, and do not alter the legal meaning of the statement.
- Leave signature and date lines blank (to be signed by hand or digitally at submission).

Approval Page

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A certification line stating the examining panel has read and recommends the thesis for acceptance

- Name/signature/date lines for the Supervisor, Internal Examiner, External Examiner, and Head of Department

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- This page is completed and signed after your defense leave the signature lines blank when submitting the draft.
- Confirm the exact list of signatories required (some departments add a Dean or Program Coordinator line).

Acknowledgments

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Thanks to God/a higher power, if desired, and to family for their support
- Formal thanks to the advisor for guidance and comments
- Thanks to friends, colleagues, or organizations that assisted the research

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Keep it to one short paragraph or a few sentences this is not the place for lengthy narrative.
- Always name your advisor formally, using their correct title (Dr., Prof., etc.).
- Write in first person, past tense, and keep the tone sincere and professional.

Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Every chapter and numbered sub-section with its page number
- A separate list of all figures (charts, diagrams) with captions and page numbers
- A separate list of all tables with captions and page numbers

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Generate these automatically using your word processor's heading styles and "Insert Table of Contents / List of Figures / List of Tables" tools never type page numbers by hand, as they will shift as you edit.
- Number figures and tables sequentially by chapter (Figure 2.1, Figure 4.1, Table 3.1, Table 4.1, etc.).
- Update all three lists as the very last step before final submission.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- An alphabetical list of every abbreviation or acronym used in the paper and its full meaning

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Add an entry the moment you introduce a new abbreviation in the text; don't leave this until the end, or you will miss ones you have forgotten you used.
- Spell out every abbreviation in full the first time it appears in the body text, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses, e.g. "organizational performance (OP)".

Example (from an approved thesis): *ALS: Authoritarian Leadership Style; DLS: Delegative Leadership Style; ELS: Ethical Leadership Style; OP: Organizational Performance; SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences; TLS: Transformational Leadership Style.*

Abstract

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- The purpose/objective of the study, in one or two sentences
- The research design and methodology used (quantitative/qualitative, sample, technique)
- A one-line summary of the key findings
- The main recommendation(s)
- A short list of keywords

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Write the abstract LAST, after every chapter is finished — you cannot accurately summarize results you haven't yet written.
- Keep it to a single paragraph, typically 200–350 words, with no citations, abbreviations without definition, or figures/tables.
- Follow this internal order: purpose → method → sample/data → key result(s) → recommendation.
- List 4–6 keywords underneath, matching the terms examiners/search engines would use to find your study (e.g., your independent and dependent variables).

CHAPTER 1

Chapter One orients the reader: why the topic matters, what specific problem you are addressing, what you intend to find out, and how the rest of the paper is organized.

1.1 Background of the Study

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- General context of the topic, moving from broad theory to the specific area of the study
- Why the subject (e.g., leadership, marketing, HR practice) matters to organizations generally
- A narrowing statement that leads naturally into the specific problem

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Use a funnel structure: start broad (define/introduce the general concept), then narrow to the industry, then to the specific gap your study addresses.
- Support claims with citations from textbooks and journal articles — this section should read as informed, not opinion-based.
- End with a sentence that leads directly into 1.2 Statement of the Problem, so the transition feels natural rather than abrupt.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- The specific gap, inefficiency, or unresolved issue your research responds to
- Evidence (citations, statistics, prior findings) that this is a real and unresolved problem
- A clear statement of why existing literature/context does not already answer the question (the "research gap")

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- This is the most scrutinized section of Chapter One be precise about what is NOT yet known or NOT yet done, not just what the general topic is about.
- If studying a specific case/organization, explicitly state that no (or very few) prior studies exist on that organization/context this justifies why your specific study is needed.
- Avoid vague language like "this is an important issue" instead state concretely what is missing, e.g. "limited studies have examined X in the Ethiopian banking sector, and none have studied [Company]".

1.3 Research Questions

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A numbered list of the specific questions the study sets out to answer normally one question per independent variable

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Phrase each question so it can be directly answered by your data analysis in Chapter Four (e.g., "What is the effect of X on Y?").
- Keep the number of research questions aligned with the number of independent variables/hypotheses in your conceptual framework.
- Use consistent phrasing across all questions for readability (all starting with "What is the effect of..." or similar).

1.4 Hypothesis

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A numbered list of null hypotheses (H0), one per independent variable, each stating "no significant effect"

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Write hypotheses in the null form (H0) if your study will use significance testing (regression/ANOVA) this is standard for quantitative theses, since you statistically test to reject or fail to reject H0.
- Make sure each hypothesis mirrors its corresponding research question and specific objective, in the same order, so a reader can trace Q1 → H01 → Objective 1 → Chapter 4 result 1.

Example (from an approved thesis): H01: Transformational leadership has no significant effect on organizational performance. H02: Authoritarian leadership has no significant effect on organizational performance.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 General Objective

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- One sentence describing the overall purpose of the entire study

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- State it broadly enough to cover all your specific objectives combined it should read almost like a restatement of your thesis title in sentence form.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives**WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES**

- A numbered list of concrete objectives one per independent variable/research question

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Start each specific objective with an action verb: "To identify...", "To examine...", "To assess...", "To determine..."
- Keep a strict 1-to-1 match between research questions, hypotheses, and specific objectives examiners check this alignment closely.

1.6 Significance of the Study**WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES**

- Who benefits from the findings (the organization/industry studied, policymakers, future researchers, students)
- How the findings will practically be used?

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Address at least two audiences: (1) the practical/industry beneficiary and (2) the academic community (future researchers who can build on your work).
- Be specific about the practical value e.g., "helps bank management design a leadership-development policy" rather than a generic "this study will be useful".

1.7 Scope of the Study**WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES**

- The subject/thematic boundary of the research (which variables are and are not covered)
- The geographic boundary (which branches, city, or region)
- The population boundary (which respondents)
- The time boundary (the period the study covers/how long the data collection took)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- State scope in four dimensions conceptual, geographic, population, and time so a reader immediately knows the study's boundaries.
- Keep this section short (one paragraph); avoid repeating content already covered in Objectives.

1.8 Limitations of the Study**WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES**

- Constraints that affected the study (e.g., limited geographic coverage, time, access to respondents)

- How these constraints affect the generalizability of the findings?

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Be honest, not defensive every study has limitations, and acknowledging them shows methodological maturity to examiners.
- Frame each limitation as an opportunity, briefly noting how future research (Chapter 5.4) could address it.

1.9 Organization of the Paper

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A short paragraph summarizing what each of the five chapters' covers

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Write one to two sentences per chapter, in chapter order this acts as a roadmap for the reader and is usually written last, once the outline is final.

CHAPTER 2

Chapter Two situates your study within existing knowledge: the theories that explain your variables, prior empirical studies with similar aims, the gap those studies leave open, and the conceptual framework that will guide your own analysis.

Introduction

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A short paragraph previewing the structure of the chapter (theoretical review → empirical review → gap → framework)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Keep this to 3–5 sentences it is a signpost for the reader, not new content.

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Formal definitions of the key concepts/variables in your study, drawn from established scholars
- A dedicated sub-discussion for each independent variable and the dependent variable
- The theories/models that explain the relationship between your variables

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Organize with one clearly labelled sub-section per variable (e.g., a paragraph block on each leadership style, then one on the dependent variable) so the reader can map this chapter directly onto your conceptual framework.
- Always cite the source of every definition/theory never state a definition as your own opinion.
- Compare and contrast how different scholars define the same concept where relevant, rather than only providing one definition.

- End by explicitly discussing how leadership style (or your independent variables) relates conceptually to performance/your dependent variable this bridges theory to your specific study.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Summaries of prior real-world studies (not theory) that examined similar variables
- Each summary should note: the researcher(s), study location/context, method used, sample size, and key finding

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Present studies in a logical order chronological, or from broadest/international context down to studies closest to your own country/sector.
- For every study reviewed, explicitly state the finding/conclusion, not just the topic a reader should be able to answer "so what did they find?" from your summary.
- Favour recent (last 10 years) and directly relevant studies; include a mix of international and local/national studies if available.
- Do not simply copy abstracts paraphrase in your own words and keep each summary to one focused paragraph.

2.3 Summary of Literature and Research Gaps

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A synthesis of what the theoretical and empirical review collectively show
- An explicit statement of what remains unexamined the specific gap your study fills

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- This section should directly echo and strengthen your Statement of the Problem (1.2) by this point you have the literature evidence to back up the gap you claimed earlier.
- Be specific about geography/context, e.g. "limited research exists in Ethiopia, and none on [this organization]" this is what justifies your specific study design.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A diagram showing the independent variable(s) on one side and the dependent variable on the other, with arrows indicating hypothesized relationships
- A short paragraph explaining the diagram and citing the source it was adapted from (if applicable)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Keep the diagram simple: boxes for each variable, arrows pointing from independent variables toward the dependent variable.
- If you adapted the framework from another author's model, cite that source under the figure and note any modifications you made.
- Make sure every variable shown in this diagram also appears in your Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Objectives consistency here is heavily checked by examiners.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter Three explains, in enough detail that another researcher could replicate your study, exactly how you designed the research, who you studied, how you collected data, and how you analyzed it.

Introduction

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A short paragraph orienting the reader to the study area/organization and previewing the chapter's sub-sections

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Briefly re-introduce the organization/context being studied (size, sector, location) before diving into design details.

3.1 Research Design

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- The type of research design used (descriptive, explanatory, exploratory) and justification for the choice
- A restatement of the independent and dependent variables under study

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Name the design type explicitly and justify it in one sentence tied to your objective (e.g., "descriptive, to describe the variables; explanatory, to test the relationship between them").
- Cite a research methods textbook/author to support your design classification.

3.2 Target Population

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A definition of "population" as used in research
- The specific group the study draws its sample from, with the total population size and its source (e.g., HR records)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- State the exact total population figure and cite where you obtained it (e.g., the organization's HR department, as of a stated date).
- Clearly state any population boundary (e.g., only staff in a specific district/branch/region), matching your Scope of the Study (1.7).

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.3.1 Sample Size

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- The formula used to calculate sample size (e.g., Yamane's formula), with the calculation shown step by step
- The final sample size, and (later, in Chapter 4) the actual response rate achieved

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Show the actual formula and substitute your numbers into it do not just state the final sample size without the calculation; examiners check the arithmetic.
- Name the confidence level and margin of error you assumed (typically 95% confidence, 5% error).

Example (from an approved thesis): $n = N / (1 + N \cdot e^2)$; with $N = 2,396$ and $e = 0.05$, $n = 2396 / (1 + 2396 \times 0.05 \times 0.05) = 342.77 \approx 343$ respondents.

3.3.2 Sampling Technique

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Whether a random or non-random technique was used, and which specific method (e.g., stratified random sampling)
- Justification for why that method suits the population structure (e.g., departments/strata)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Explain the mechanics of the technique in your specific case e.g., how the population was divided into strata (departments/branches) and how respondents were then randomly picked within each stratum.

3.4 Types and Source of Data

3.4.1 Types of Data

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Whether the study is quantitative, qualitative, or mixed, with justification
- Details of any scale used (e.g., a 5-point Likert scale) and how it was constructed/translated

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- If using a Likert scale, name the scale points explicitly (e.g., 1 = Strongly Disagree ... 5 = Strongly Agree) and cite the source of the scale methodology (e.g., Likert, 1932).
- Mention translation procedures if the questionnaire was administered in more than one language.

3.4.2 Source of Data

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Primary data sources (e.g., questionnaires administered directly to respondents)
- Secondary data sources (e.g., journals, books, company documents, prior research)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Define primary and secondary data briefly, then state clearly which you used for which purpose (e.g., primary data for analysis, secondary data for the literature review).

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A description of the questionnaire (or interview guide) used, including its sections/parts

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Describe the structure of your instrument e.g., "Part I collects demographic data; Part II measures each independent variable using 5 items per construct".
- State whether the instrument was adapted from previous validated studies, and cite them.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure**WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES**

- The practical steps followed to distribute and collect the instrument
- Who the instrument was distributed to and how

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Describe the process chronologically: preparation → distribution → follow-up → collection, so it could be replicated by another researcher.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation**3.7.1 Descriptive Analysis****WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES**

- The descriptive statistics tools used: frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, etc.

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- State the software used for analysis (e.g., SPSS, version and year) this belongs in this sub-section.
- If you will use a mean-interpretation scale (e.g., 1.00–1.80 = strongly disagree ... 4.21–5.00 = strongly agree) to interpret Likert results in Chapter 4, define and cite that scale here.

3.7.2 Pearson Correlation Analysis**WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES**

- What Pearson correlation measures and why it was chosen
- The interpretation scale used for the correlation coefficient (r)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Cite an accepted interpretation guideline for the strength of r (e.g., Cohen, 1988: small $\approx .10$ – $.29$, medium $\approx .30$ – $.49$, large $\approx .50$ – 1.0).

3.7.3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis**WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES**

- Why regression was used (to test the predictive/explanatory effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable)
- The regression assumptions that will be tested (linearity, normality, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- State the regression model conceptually (e.g., $OP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot TLS + \beta_2 \cdot ALS + \beta_3 \cdot DLS + \beta_4 \cdot ELS + \epsilon$) so Chapter 4's coefficient table is easy to interpret later.

3.8 Validity

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- How the instrument's validity (that it measures what it claims to measure) was ensured?

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Explain concretely how validity was addressed e.g., adapting questions from previously validated instruments, or expert/advisor review of the questionnaire before distribution.

3.9 Reliability

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- The reliability test used (typically Cronbach's Alpha) and the acceptable threshold
- A table reporting the Cronbach's Alpha value and number of items for each variable

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Present the reliability results in a clean table: one row per variable, showing Cronbach's Alpha and number of items, plus an overall total.
- Cite the accepted threshold for reliability (commonly 0.6–0.7 or above is acceptable) and briefly state whether your results meet it.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- How informed consent was obtained
- How confidentiality/anonymity of respondents was protected
- The respondents' right to withdraw without penalty

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- State plainly that participation was voluntary, anonymous, and used strictly for academic purposes this is a required statement in almost every ethics review.

CHAPTER 4

Chapter Four presents your actual results first describing who responded, then describing the variables, then testing the relationships and hypotheses set out in Chapter One, and finally discussing what the results mean.

Introduction

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A short paragraph restating the general and specific objectives, to remind the reader what the analysis is trying to answer

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Keep this brief 3–5 sentences that reconnect the reader to Chapter One's objectives before presenting new data.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- The response rate: number of instruments distributed vs. returned/usable, and the resulting percentage
- Tables and charts (gender, age, marital status, education, position, tenure, etc.)
- A short narrative describing the pattern shown in each table/chart

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Always open this section with the response rate (e.g., "343 distributed, 318 returned, 92.7% response rate") this establishes the credibility of your sample.
- Pair every table with at least one chart where useful (pie chart for gender, bar chart for age, etc.) and a short paragraph translating the numbers into plain language.
- Report figures consistently: frequency, percent, and cumulative percent for each demographic variable.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A results table for each variable (each independent variable and the dependent variable), showing N, minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation per item
- A narrative interpretation of each mean score using your defined interpretation scale
- An overall mean and standard deviation per variable

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Give each variable its own labelled table and its own interpretation paragraph do not merge all variables into one table.
- Interpret every single item's mean using the scale you defined in 3.7.1 (e.g., "a mean of 4.05 indicates respondents agree that ..."), then close with the overall variable mean and what it implies.
- Be consistent: always report N, Min, Max, Mean, and Std. Deviation for every item.

4.3 Inferential Analysis

4.3.1 Correlation Analysis

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A Pearson correlation matrix showing R-values and significance (p-values) between every independent variable and the dependent variable
- A narrative interpreting the strength, direction, and significance of each relationship

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Present the full correlation matrix as a single table (all variables against each other), then interpret each independent-variable-to-dependent-variable relationship separately in the text, referencing your Chapter 3.7.2 interpretation scale.
- State clearly for each pair whether the relationship is significant ($p < 0.05$ or $p < 0.01$) and whether it is small, medium, or large.

4.3.2 Regression Analysis

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Regression assumption checks (linearity plot, normality skewness/kurtosis)
- Model Summary table (R , R^2 , Adjusted R^2)
- ANOVA table (F-value and significance of the overall model)
- Regression Coefficients table (unstandardized B, standardized Beta, t , and significance for each variable)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Present the assumption checks first (a reader should see the model is statistically valid before trusting its results).
- Explain the Adjusted R^2 in plain language: "X% of the variance in [dependent variable] is explained by [the independent variables]".
- Interpret the ANOVA F-test as the overall significance of the model, before moving to individual coefficients.
- Interpret each coefficient's Beta and significance value one variable at a time, and identify using the standardized Beta values which independent variable has the strongest effect.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A restated list of each null hypothesis
- The decision (reject/fail to reject) based on the regression significance value for each
- A summary table listing every hypothesis, its significance value, and its result

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Address each hypothesis individually, in the same order used in Chapter One, referencing the exact p-value from your Chapter 4.3.2 coefficients table.
- State the decision rule explicitly: if $p < 0.05$, reject H_0 (the effect is significant); if $p > 0.05$, fail to reject H_0 (the effect is not significant).
- Close with a clean summary table so the reader can see all hypothesis outcomes at a glance.

4.5 Discussion

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- An integrated interpretation of the descriptive and inferential findings together
- A comparison of your findings with the empirical studies reviewed in Chapter Two do they agree or disagree, and why?
- An explicit answer to each research question posed in Chapter One

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- This is where you interpret, not just repeat, your results explain what the pattern of findings means for the organization/field studied.
- Directly reference at least two or three of the empirical studies from Chapter 2.2, stating whether your results are consistent with or different from theirs, and offer a possible reason why.

- End by explicitly linking each finding back to its research question, so the chapter closes the loop opened in Chapter One.

CHAPTER 5

Chapter Five closes the thesis: it summarizes what was found, states the conclusions that follow from those findings, offers practical recommendations, and points toward future research.

Introduction

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A short paragraph restating the research questions the chapter will address

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Keep this to a brief paragraph this chapter should not introduce any new data or analysis.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A bullet-point or short-paragraph summary of the key correlation results
- A summary of the key regression/model results (R^2 , strongest predictor, etc.)
- A summary of the descriptive results (which variables/practices were present, absent, or uncertain)

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Summarize only do not introduce new analysis, tables, or citations here; every fact stated should already appear in Chapter Four.
- Use short, numbered or bulleted findings statements for clarity and easy examiner reference.

5.2 Conclusion

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A restatement of the study's purpose and objectives
- The overall conclusion drawn from the findings for each hypothesis/objective

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Write conclusions as generalized statements/implications drawn FROM the findings distinct from Section 5.1, which lists WHAT was found; this section explains what it MEANS.
- Address each specific objective from Chapter One in turn, concluding whether it was met and what was learned.

5.3 Recommendations

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Specific, actionable recommendations addressed to the organization/industry studied
- Recommendations should follow logically and directly from the findings and conclusions

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Each recommendation must trace back to a specific finding avoid generic advice not supported by your data.
- Write recommendations as action statements directed at a specific audience, e.g., "the bank industry should...", "management should..."
- Present recommendations as a numbered or bulleted list for clarity.

5.4 Implications for Future Research

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- Suggestions for what future researchers could study next, based on this study's limitations and findings

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Directly address the limitations you noted in Section 1.8 for each limitation, suggest how a future study could resolve it (e.g., wider geographic coverage, additional variables, a different dependent variable).

REFERENCES

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A complete, alphabetically ordered list of every source cited in the body of the paper

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Use one citation style consistently throughout (APA is most common for Business/Management theses) check your department's required style.
- Every in-text citation must have a matching reference list entry, and every reference list entry must be cited at least once in the text cross-check this before submission.
- Use reference-management software (Zotero, Mendeley, or your word processor's built-in citation tool) to keep formatting consistent and avoid manual errors.

APPENDIX

WHAT THIS SECTION INCLUDES

- A copy of the full questionnaire/data collection instrument as distributed to respondents
- Raw statistical output (e.g., full SPSS tables) that supports the summarized tables shown in Chapter Four
- Any supporting letters (e.g., permission to collect data from the organization), if required by your department

HOW TO WRITE THIS SECTION?

- Include the cover letter/introduction paragraph that was shown to respondents, explaining the study's purpose and confidentiality assurance, exactly as it was distributed.
- Label each appendix item clearly (Appendix A, B, C...) and reference the appendix letter/number at the relevant point in the main text where useful.

FINAL SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Before printing or submitting your final research paper, confirm the following:

- Every chapter, section, and sub-section listed in this guide is present and in the correct order
- Research Questions, Hypotheses, Specific Objectives, and Chapter 4 results all align 1-to-1
- Table of Contents, List of Figures, and List of Tables are auto-generated and page numbers are correct
- All tables and figures are numbered sequentially by chapter and captioned
- Every in-text citation has a matching entry in the References list, and vice versa
- The Abstract was written last and accurately reflects the final findings
- The Declaration and Approval pages carry the correct required signature lines
- The document has been proofread for consistent terminology (e.g., variable names/abbreviations used the same way throughout)

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