A large, thick black L-shaped frame surrounds the central text. The top horizontal bar is on the left, the left vertical bar is on the left, and the bottom horizontal bar is on the right, with the right vertical bar on the right.

WRITING THE CONFIRMATION REPORT

Part of the Core Writing Skills series

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Today's plan ...

- What is the confirmation process? What are its objectives?
- What's involved in a confirmation report?
- How does the confirmation report relate to your literature review?
- What kind of expression can be used in the conformation report?

Introductions ...

- Your discipline/college?
- How did you come to do your PhD?
- What is your research about?
 - And why is it important?

Activity #1

- What is a confirmation report? *Discuss.*

What is a confirmation report?

The confirmation report identifies:

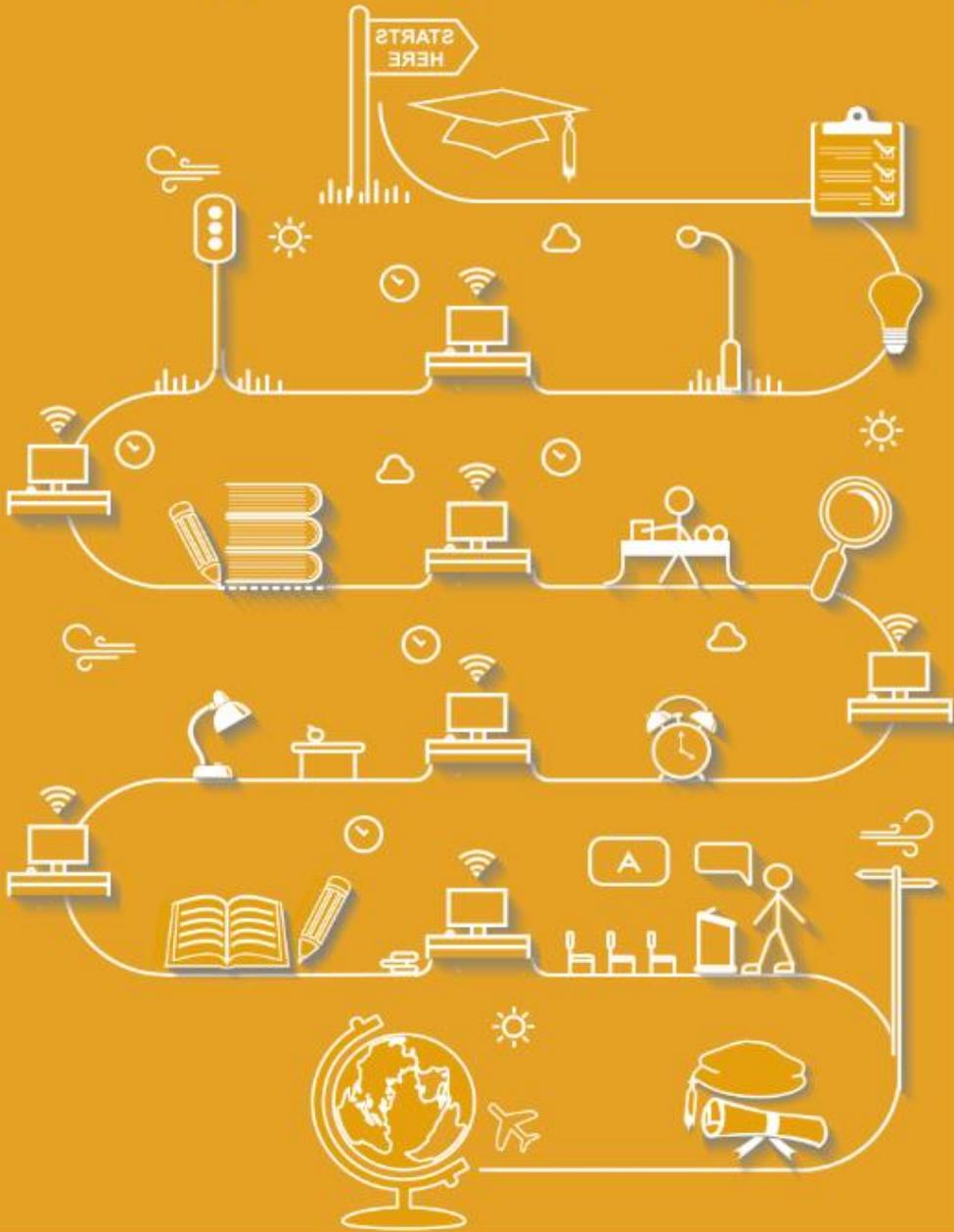
- What work is to be done
- Why this work is significant
- What about the work is original and represents a contribution to knowledge
- When the work will be completed including indicative research outcomes
- How the work is to be done.

Consideration is also given to the limitations of the proposed research, implications for further work and any informing requirements concerning ethics.

THE PHD CONFIRMATION PROCESS



Your PhD journey ...



- Induction process
- Developing your thesis question
- Literature review
- 6-monthly report
- **Confirmation event**
- 6-monthly report
- Research skill development training
- 6-monthly report
- Research skill development training
- Research skill development training
- 6-monthly report
- Research skill development training
- 6-monthly report
- Research skill development training
- Submit thesis
- 6-monthly report
- Oral examination
- Graduation

Full time: Within 12 months
DClinPsych: At most 12 months
Part time: Within 18 months

Objectives of candidature confirmation procedure

What happens and why

- provide peer feedback to the candidate on the work completed to date through **open discussion of the candidate's research proposal**
- provide confirmation that **the project is appropriate to the degree** for which the candidate is enrolled – **and the timeframe** (3-3.5 years for full-time, 5.5 years for part-time study)
- determine **whether a candidate has made suitable progress** during the initial stage of the candidature
- ensure that **adequate resources and facilities** are available
- confirm that **satisfactory supervision arrangements** are in place
- **identify any specific problems** or issues (for example, ethics or intellectual property) needing to be addressed; and
- **determine whether the candidature should continue.**

DOCTORAL CONFIRMATION OF REGISTRATION PROCESS

Purpose

1. For a confirmation panel to confirm that the candidate has made sufficient progress in the provisional year to warrant being moved to full registration and that he/she demonstrates capability to carry out independent research and respond to academic critique. Evidence of this includes:
 - Satisfactory completion of any required coursework with at least a B+ and any other requirements laid out in the Statement of Expectations
 - Effective knowledge of the literature in the field and other fields that may be relevant to the topic
 - Ability to successfully plan, design and implement research and related tasks
 - Ability to successfully interpret data and findings
 - Ability to successfully communicate and present research; in writing, orally, and by other means as necessary
2. To ensure the project is academically robust, feasible within the time frame and potential risks identified and mitigated where possible.

Expectations of the Candidate

Part 1

To produce a substantial confirmation report (3,000-10,000 words). The length should be agreed with the supervisors as preferences vary between disciplines. The report should be submitted to the Chair of the

Source

https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/fms/Research/Graduate%20Research%20School/Documents/Confirmation%20of%20Registration%20Process%20Guidelines%2017_07_15.pdf?62160B90E4168482C7A908CA11BDA9DA

Or search:
doctoral research
school
confirmation
registration

Typical proposals

- The written part:
 - 3000-10000 words
 - *Submit via your primary supervisor to the confirmation committee*
 - *Detail how you have met the requirements in your **Application for Provisional Registration** (eg a 6000 word literature review; a clear statement of research objectives; a conceptual framework; a chapter framework; a full research proposal etc.). You will be expected to achieve at least a B+ in each one of any courses that are required*
- The two oral parts:
 - *20-30 minutes presenting **at a PG research seminar** in your academic unit*
 - ***Defending your proposal in front of the confirmation committee.***

Demonstrate

What to prove

- Effective **knowledge of the literature** in the field (and other relevant fields)
- Ability to successfully **communicate** and present research; in **writing + orally** (and other means as necessary)
- Ability to **successfully plan, design and implement** research and related tasks
- Ability to successfully **interpret data** and findings
- Any other abilities relevant to the research topic as may be required by the confirmation committee
- Satisfactory completion of any required coursework to the specified standard

WRITING THE CONFIRMATION REPORT

Structure and Style



Typical proposals

- (A concise abstract)
- A concise statement of the research **thesis**
- The **rationale and importance** behind the research
- A **critical** summary and analysis of **relevant literature**
- An explanation of the **conceptual framework** to be used and/or a summary of **experimental methods and equipment requirements** appropriate to the research topic
- A **budget summary detailing resources**
- A summary of progress to date including **preliminary data and resources developed**
- A **proposed schedule** and timeline for the phases of the study, including a **date for submission**
- A brief **bibliography**

Literature Review

VS.

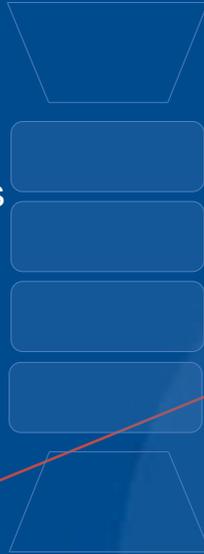
Confirmation Report

Typically follows the same structure as a short essay (this can vary across disciplines):

- Introduction (optional)
- Main body
 - Organised discussion of topics / themes / main findings (highlight relevant links between theory/literature and research)
- Conclusion (optional)

(Usually written as a thesis chapter)

Can include ... some of these



Main differences???

Purpose and audience

- To inform the reader of your knowledge about the topic

- Abstract
- Introduction – outlines rationale, objectives, and clearly states objectives
- Literature review - critical analysis
- Research methodology - summary
- Risk analysis – successful completion (e.g. budget, ethics, equipment)
- Research findings – summary (and any preliminary data)
- Bibliography

(Word limit varies. Usually around 3,000 words, but can be up to 10,000)

Purpose and audience

- To reassure the university that you know what you are doing

Abstract (short!)

- Thesis
- **Rationale and importance** behind the research
- Your overall sense of the relevant **literature**
 - *main findings,*
 - *main tensions,*
 - *main areas that have been looked at ...*
 - *where there are **gaps your research fits into!***
- Your **conceptual framework** and/or **experimental methods** and **equipment requirements**
- Progress to date – summary of **preliminary data** and **resources developed**
- **Date for submission**

Introduction (300-1000)

What to write



Introduction (300-1000)

- The **rationale and importance** behind the research
 - *Keep them clear for a non-expert*
 - *References*
 - *Why is this topic so important? Think broadly. Size, costs, cultural importance ...*
What would happen if no one looks into this?
 - *What do people know already?*
 - *What haven't they focused on before – eg NZ / post-2004 / neoliberal tensions / your compound ...?*
 - ***Why haven't they focused on NZ / post-2004 / neoliberal tensions / your compound ...?***
- Clear **objectives** and/or a **hypothesis or thesis**
 - *Bullet points*
 - *Revise*
 - *Logic*







Literature review (1500-5000?)



- Justifying your objectives / hypothesis / thesis
- Justifying your **conceptual framework** and/or **experimental methods** and **equipment requirements**



Literature review (1500-5000)

- “Effective knowledge of literature in the relevant field”
- Your overall sense of the relevant **literature**
 - *main findings,*
 - *main themes,*
 - *main tensions,*
 - *main areas that have been looked at ...*
 - *awareness of the complexities of the area ... (consider scope, disparities, unclear things)*
 - *Where are the **gaps your research fits into?!***













More specifically – a lit. review is a critical evaluation:

It should present an organised discussion that: ...

- Provides a summary and **critical** examination of the existing research
 - **Highlights** where other authors/researchers agree or disagree
- **Shows how** previous research is relevant to / and different from my study
- **Makes clear** where there are flaws in the existing literature

It should not: ...

- **Provide an exhaustive overview of everything ever written**
- **Read like a descriptive list or summary of separate books/articles**

Literature review (1500-6000?)

- Your sense of the relevant literature

- *main findings*

- “As Huxtable (2009) summarises, ...”

- “Recent scholars agree that ... (Smith, 2015; Jones, 2018; Chappelle, 2019)”

- *main tensions*

- “Contrary to Chappelle (2017), Comber (2018) believes that ...”

- *main areas that have been looked at ...*

- “While Thomson (2013), Gerrard (2017), and Freeman and Murray (2019) have investigated ..., **only Jamieson (2014)** has considered this from a structuralist perspective, in France.

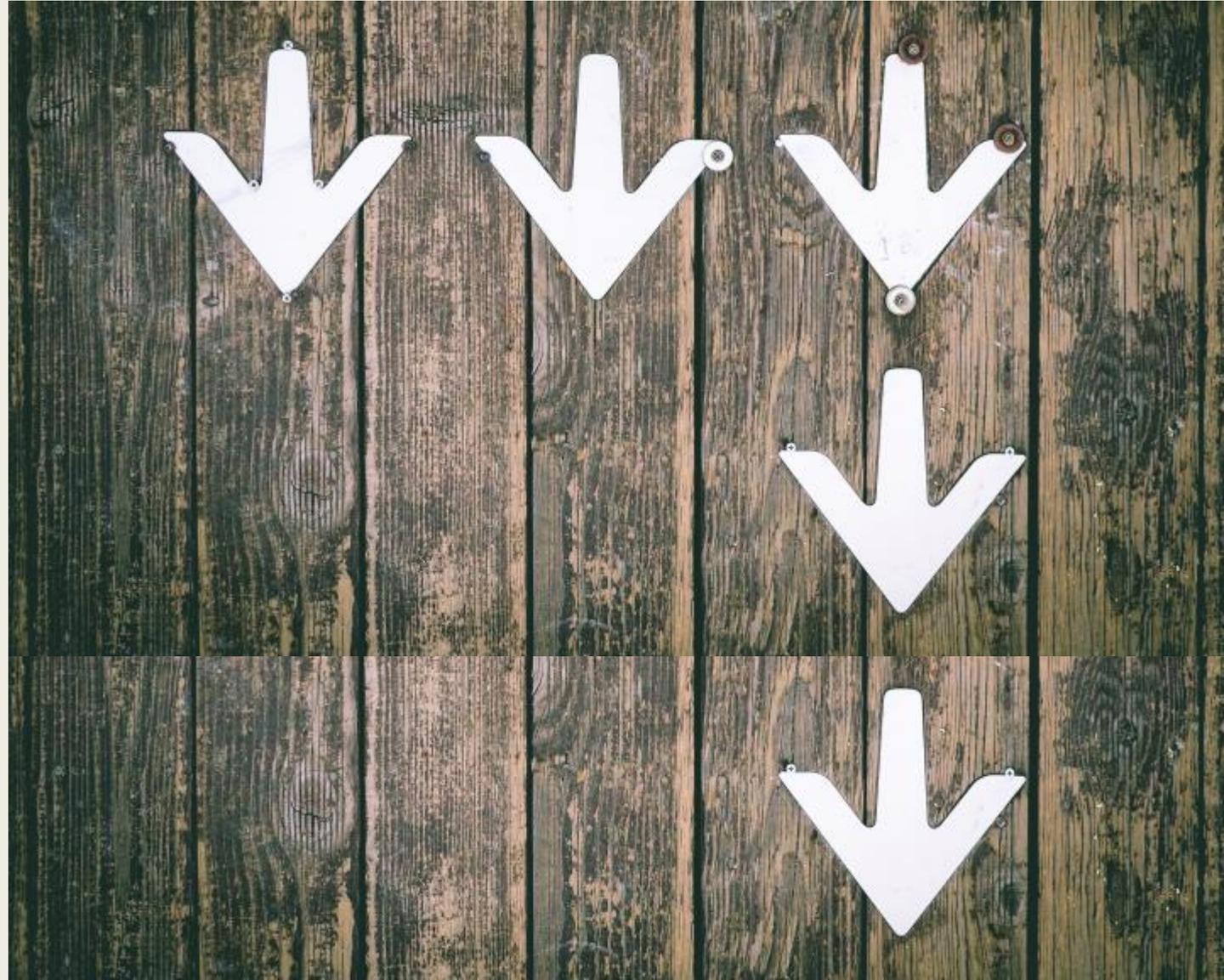
- *Where are the **gaps your research fits into?!***

- “**Limited research** has been conducted in New Zealand (Todd, 1996; Wutzler, 2008).”

Organising the literature review

- The broad topic is this
- They know this about it
- And this

- But they are undecided about this
- And it's been hard to research about this
- And no one has even looked at this!



Literature review checklist. Does it...	Check
Identify who the major theorists are?	
Demonstrate an informed understanding of the topic (e.g. terminology, theories, definitions, concepts)?	
Identify prominent research methodologies?	
Identify what research has already been done?	
Find and highlight gaps in the research?	
Link these gaps back to the aim of your research (to emphasise it's relevance and importance)?	
Recognise the main areas of agreement or disagreement in the existing literature?	
Demonstrate the importance of your research questions and why they are both significant and interesting?	
Convince the reader of your research's originality and its ability to make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on this topic?	

Steps to completing a literature review for your thesis

1. Locate relevant sources on your research topic and investigate all relevant links to other literature.
2. From the emerging literature, identify/categorise sources accordingly (e.g. themes / theories / approaches / ideas).
3. Introduce these thoughts and ideas to the reader using a logical structure (e.g. by theme/approach/chronological order, or any other structure that may apply).
4. Introduce and discuss each theme/theory/approach by:
 - Highlighting evidence from relevant sources, such as debate that agrees or disagrees.
 - Critically analysing and relating back to your own research.

Literature Matrices

Discuss:

How have you been organising your notes?

Sources ✓ name of publication ✓ type of information source ✓ full reference entry	Main Points ✓ most important points in note form	Summary ✓ 2 or 3 sentences in your own words which give you a quick reminder of the essence of what you read	Relevance to ... ✓ Assignment focus ✓ Reflective assignment: personal/professional development
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Sources	Key words	Findings	Implications/use	Strengths/Limitations	Ideas
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Citations	Theoretical /Conceptual Framework	Research Question/s - Hypothesis	Methodology	Analysis & Results	Conclusions	Implications for Future Research	Implications for Practice
Article 1							
Article 2							

Keeping track of sources & relevant information

Themes/Topics	Sources
<p>Online gaming culture Highly relevant</p> <p>Related (but less relevant)</p>	<p>Yee 2009, 2014; Bertozzi and Lee 2007; Kolhatkar 2014; Wakeford 1997; Turton-Turner 2013; Featherstone and Burrows 1995; Schott and Thomas 2008; Shaw and Warf 2009, 2011;</p> <p>Ash 2013; Pile 2010; Pain 1991; Juul 2012; Lee and Hoadley 2006; Janz and Martis 2007; Dill and Thill 2007; Brenick et al. 2007;</p>
<p>Feminist theory/research Highly relevant</p> <p>Related (but less relevant)</p>	<p>Pain and Smith 2008; Valentine 1989; Dumitrica and Gaden 2009; Boellstorff 2008; Turkle 1995; Wajcman 2004; Grosz 1994; Gatens 1996; Haraway 1991; Longhurst 2005, 2009; Parr 2002; Bingham 2005; Del Casino 2009; Shapiro 2010; Butler 1990, 1991, 1993; Wajcman 2004; Sunden 2009; Johnston et al. 2000; Johnston and Longhurst 2008; Brown et al. 2009; McDowell 1997;</p> <p>Eklund 2011; Huh and William 2010; Bell et al. 2001; Holloway and Valentine 2001; Del Casino and Brooks 2014; Pulos 2013; Hubbard 2009; Fortim and de Moura Grando 2013;</p>
<p>Digital/virtual geographies Highly relevant</p> <p>Related (but less relevant)</p>	<p>Crang et al 1999; Valentine 2001; Warf 2005; Dodge and Kitchin 2009; Kinsley 2013a; Hillis 1999; Del Casino 2009; Shaw and Warf 2009, 2011; Hubbard et al. 2005; Damasio 2005; Gatens 1996; Bell et al. 2001; Madge and O'Connor 2005; Holloway and Valentine 2001;</p> <p>Kwan 2002; Blunt and Dowling 2006; Meadows 2007;</p>
<p>Methodologies Online research methods</p> <p>Feminist research approach</p> <p>Autoethnography</p>	<p><u>Madge and O'Connor 2005</u>; Rose 2001, 2012; Madge et al. 2004; Gibbons and Nuttal 2012; Hine 2005; Spencer 2009;</p> <p>Shurmer-Smith 2002; Moss 2002; Holloway 1997; Valentine 1999; Cupples 2003; Johnston 2013; Rose 2001, 2007, 2008;</p> <p>Butz 2010; Brown 2012b; Ali 2014; Besio 2005; Cook 2005a & b; Ellis 2011; Jones and Watt 2010;</p>

Conceptual framework and/or experimental methods and equipment requirements (700-2500?)

- The literature review should have noted what others have done
 - *Main theorists, main methods*
 - *Justify your planned method*
 - Why this rather than another? Relate to your question
 - What potential issues are there – limitations?

*“Ability to successfully **design, plan, and implement** research tasks”*

*“Ability to successfully **interpret data and findings**”*

- The framework should “fall out of” that review

- Provide details here

- *Overall principles, specific methods*
- *Equipment needs – “**adequate resources and facilities are available**”*





nd/c

- The fram
- Provide
 - Overall principles
 - Specific methods
 - Equipment needs

Proposed budget summary

- Give details to justify the budget – think it through carefully, cost-effectively
 - Details of resources
- “Ability to successfully plan, design and implement research and related tasks”

Progress to date (700-3000?)

- Summary of **preliminary data and resources developed**
 - *“identify any specific problems or issues (for example, ethics or intellectual property) needing to be addressed”*
 - *“Ability to successfully interpret data and findings”*

- How you have met the requirements in your Application for Provisional Registration
 - *“eg a 6000 word literature review; a clear statement of research objectives; a conceptual framework; a chapter framework; a full research proposal etc. You will be expected to achieve at least a B+ in each one of any courses that are required”*

Proposed schedule / timeline (1-2 pages?)

- Put in milestones for different phases
- Include the submission date (make it early – contingency plan?)

“Ability to **successfully plan, design and implement** research and related tasks”

Bibliography

How does a
bibliography differ
from a reference list?

- Show you've done your research
- Don't get carried away!

General principles



Written style

- Formal
- Simple, clear

Check out ...

- Other recently published theses from your own school/discipline
- Manchester academic phrasebank: <http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>
- OWLL for a list of **signposting words and phrases** you can use when: referring to sources; describing methods/ theories/ideas; comparing, contrasting and being critical, etc.: <http://owll.massey.ac.nz/pdf/studyup-essays-2-handout.pdf>
- OWLL for a template to help with analysing and **summarising sources**: <http://owll.massey.ac.nz/pdf/litreview.pdf>

Tip: Try to anticipate reader's questions by asking yourself 'overview' type questions like:

- “What is my point here?”
- “What makes me think this?”
- “What is my evidence?”
- “So what? ... Why is it important to discuss this?”

Your voice in the literature review

Guide the discussion using your voice

- Show the relationship between the studies
- Show how the research is linked to your research

Research by Adams (2002)



Research by Black (2003)



Research by Cage (2003)

Beyond description → analysis, critique

Smith and Jones (2004) analysed the content of advertisements on New Zealand television during a one week period between the hours of 3 pm to 6 pm, with the intention of examining the nutritional quality of food in television food advertisements targeted at children. They found that the majority of the food advertisements analysed were for foods that were high in fat, sugars and sodium.

↑
Description only

Smith and Jones (2004) analysed the content of advertisements on New Zealand television during a two year period between the hours of 3pm to 6pm each day, with the intention of examining the nutritional quality of food in television food advertisements targeted at children. They found that the majority of the food advertisements analysed were for foods that were high in fat, sugars and sodium. The study provides a basis for comparing advertising patterns over time. However, it does not include any discussion of eating situations or eating behaviour as shown in the advertisements.

- *Strengths of research*
- *Showing gap(s) in current knowledge*

Example: Contrastive statements

2.15 Correlates of Burnout

Individual Level Correlates

Despite the obvious relevance of personality variables such as 'hardiness,' and individuals denoted as 'feeling types' or 'thinking types,' little attention has been given to these variables in empirical research, and evidence for their association is inconclusive. More attention has been given, however, to attitudinal variables such as job involvement, job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation...

(Whitehead, 2001, p. 39)

Uses a negative opening phrase

Example: Raising hypotheses, questions or needs

Bushnell and Choy (2001) conducted an analysis of permanent long-term arrivals and departures for the period 1992-2000 in various skill categories – low skilled, semi-skilled and high skilled occupations. They found that, during the 1990s, there was a net in-flow of people in high-skill occupations, and net out-flows of people in semi- and low-skilled occupations. Their conclusions was... rather than a ‘brain drain,’ ...New Zealand is experiencing a ‘brain exchange’ with the rest of the world. This of course raises a critical question, that is, whether employers are accessing all the skills that new immigrants are bringing to New Zealand.

(Coates, 2003, p. 5)