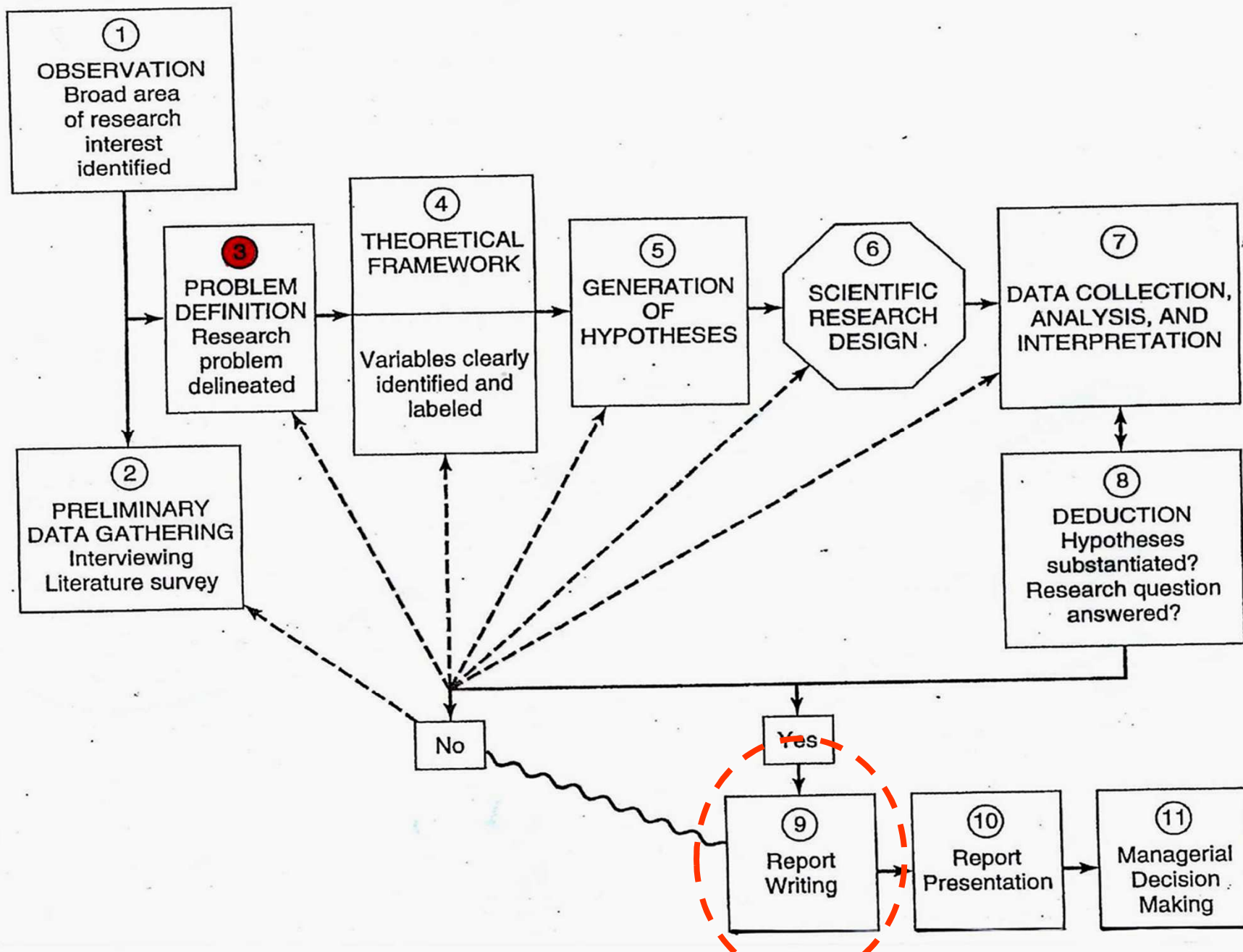# Dissertation Writing

Professor Yuksel Ekinci

Figure 4.1
The research process for basic and applied research.

Recommended Structure for Dissertation

- **Preliminary Content**

    Title Page

    Abstract

    Acknowledgements

    Table of Contents

    List of Tables/Figures

    List of Abbreviations

- **Main Body Content**

    Chapter 1: Introduction

    Chapter 2: Literature Review (name of the chapter?)

    Chapter 3: Literature Review (name of the chapter?)

    Chapter 4: Methodology

    Chapter 5: Findings

    Chapter 6: Conclusion (including *recommendations* & *limitations*)

- **Rounding off Content**

    References / Appendices

Dissertation Writing Style

- Demonstrating that the study is a scientific investigation

- Adopting academic writing style

    - Formal + Objective

    - Concise

    - Varied

    - Cautious

    - Connected

Constructing Table of Contents

Marketing as a Tool for Achieving Service Quality in the Five Star Hotels in Paris, France

Q1. Discuss strengths and weaknesses of the table of contents distributed.

Q2. If possible, make recommendations for improvement.

Abstract

- Should be written last

- A good abstract includes;

  – Statement of the aim(s)

  – Description of the methodology (*e.g.*, survey)

  – Summary of the main findings

  – Managerial implications

CASE 1: ABSTRACT

The catering sector includes a wide range of food service outlets from institutional caterings to exclusive fine-dining restaurants. Past research has been done in different food service outlets. However, it seems that there is not enough research about customer satisfaction in a University context.

This study aims to assess customer satisfaction with campus restaurants using a variety of variables that affects perception of the service. The modified SERVQUAL scale was used to measure service quality in camps restaurants (Parks, 1998). Other variables included in the questionnaire to measure customer satisfaction were: comparison standards (expectation and experience-based norm), overall satisfaction, intention to return and recommend behaviour.

Significant results are found throughout the study. Firstly, results show that the modified SERVQUAL scale is a reliable and valid instrument for measuring service quality in campus restaurants. Secondly, experience based norm was found to be a better comparison standard than others in assessing customer satisfaction. Thirdly, students' satisfaction with the campus restaurants were low.

1. Introduction Chapter

- Must be written after main chapters (e.g., literature review, methodology, conclusion) and just before writing the abstract

- A good introduction chapter has 3 main qualities

  – interesting,

  – clear,

  – indicate direction

- Introduction chapter must include

  – Background of the study

  – Purpose of the study

  – Structure of the study

Literature Review

The documentation of a comprehensive review of published and unpublished work from **secondary data sources** in the area of specific interest to the researcher

- Risk of **"re-inventing the wheel"** is reduced

- **Problem statement"** can be made with greater clarity & precision

- A good Literature Review is *precise*, *comprehensive*, and *concise*

- A good LR ensures that important variables are not omitted (e.g., key choice criteria used for Management Dev Prgms)

2/3: Literature Review Chapters

- Each chapter should begin with *introduction* and end with *conclusion* or *summary of the chapter*

- A typical <u>introduction</u> part includes *importance, aim* & *outline* of the chapter

- A typical <u>conclusion</u> part starts with chapter summary and finishes with *key* findings

- The body of the chapter is made of paragraphs

   A *paragraph* is a basic unit or organisation in academic writing where a series of related sentences develops one main idea.

Literature Review Chpt Continued

- A good paragraph has 3 important qualities;
  - unity
  - coherence (e.g., organizing work chronologically)
  - adequate development (e.g., introducing past statistics)

Case 2

(1) There are several ways in which the Hotel industry is important to a country. **(2)** Firstly, it is an employer of much labour, providing thousands of jobs in many different areas of the industry. **(3)** However, many of these jobs are very badly paid. **(4)** Secondly, it gives business to other industries e.g. greengrocers, food and drink producers, gas and water suppliers etc. **(5)** In addition it earns foreign currency which means it contributes significantly to the country's balance of payments. **(6)** Furthermore hotels are an important source of amenities for local residents. **(7)** Hotels may be classified into five types according to quality.

4. Methodology Chapter

4.1. Introduction

4.2. Objectives of the study & hypotheses

4.3. Research design (e.g., research approach, sampling, measurement of variables, reliability and validity issues, data analysis plan)

4.4. Research instrument

4.4.1. Pilot study results

4.5. Summary or Conclusion

5: Findings Chapter

- The most original part of the dissertation/project

 A good findings chapter should report;

  - data collection process

  - demographics of the sample

  - key results with appropriate graphs & tables.

    (*e.g.* reliability and validity of measures, findings with descriptive/inferential statistics, content analysis)

  - positive and negative aspect of the study results

Presentation Guidelines for Figures//Tables/Graphs/Maps

- A useful editorial rule: *Introduce, Show & Explain*

Figure 5.1. shows age groups…

Figure 5.1. Age Group (n=292)
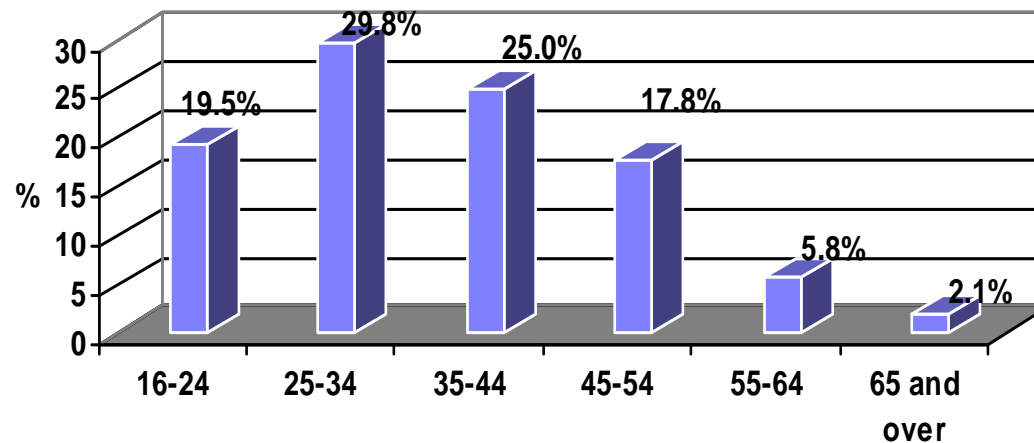
As can be seen from Figure 5.1…..

Presentation Guidelines Cont.

- They should help and not hinder the communication process

- The source of them must be referenced unless it is your own

- They should not be overloaded with too much information

- Enough detail must be added to make it self explanatory

Table 5.1. Customers' Evaluation of Service Quality (n = 292)

No	Attributes	Mean*	Std. D.
10	The hotel had a convenient location	4.12	1.01
33	Staff seemed to anticipate what I wanted	3.89	1.16
5	Food was delicious	3.84	1.12
2	The hotel was tidy	3.71	1.06
1	The hotel was clean	3.46	1.22
18	Staff were helpful and friendly	3.09	1.23

* (1) strongly disagree, (5) strongly agree

Presenting Inferential Statistics Test Results

Table 5.2.Evaluation of Service Quality by Gender: Independent Samples t-Test

Constructs	Gender	n	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Significant (2-tailed)
Intangibles	Male Female	61 59	4.79 5.39	1.39 1.34	-2.39	.01*
Tangibles	Male Female	61 59	4.76 5.01	1.20 1.19	-1.13	.25
Overall Satisfaction	Male Female	61 59	4.62 5.11	1.36 1.19	-2.07	.04*

*Statistically significant at p < .05

Inferential Statistics Cont.

Correlation Matrix

Table 5.3. Linear Relationship between Variables: Pearson Correlation

Constructs	ATTs	CS/D	OSQ
Overall Attitude (ATTs)	1		
Customer Satisfaction (CS/D)	0.68**	1	
Overall Service Quality (OSQ)	0.52**	0.50**	1

* Statistically significant at p < 0.01 level.
** Statistically significant at p < 0.05 level.

Table 2.2 Question-Matching Technique

Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
Aim of the Study/ Approach/ Purpose	**Theoretical Framework/ Key Concepts**	**Information Goals**	**Type of Questionnaire/ Method of Administration**	**Relevant Questions**	**Suitable Data Analysis Method**
To investigate the most preferred soft drink among residents in [X] town.	A. Consumer preference of soft drinks.	1. To determine the most preferred soft drink.	Closed-response questions/ Interviewer administered.	Q1. Name of soft drinks.	Frequencies and percentages.
Deductive approach.	B. Consumer Demographics.	2. Profiling consumers who purchase soft drinks.		Q2.Year of residency.	Means and standard deviations. Frequencies and
Descriptive study.				Q3. Current place of residency.	percentages.
				Q4. Age.	Frequencies and percentages.
				Q5.Occupation.	Frequencies and percentages.
				Q6. Gender.	Frequencies and percentages.

Source: Ekinci (2015, p.32)

Presenting Qualitative Findings

TOPIC: Impacts of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty in the UK Telecommunications Industry.

Key Themes & Supporting Statements

1. *Understanding of CRM*

2. *Implementations of CRM to reduce customer churn*

   "there is no use of churn reduction measures if the service provider does not know who it is aimed at". *(CRM Manager A)*

   "Data warehousing and mining is an effective way to identify potential customers who might switch. There are many complex algorithms, which large organizations use, like Amazon.com, which can pin point the segment of customers who might switch". *(Company Director A)*

6. Conclusion / Recommendation Chapter

6.1. Summary of main conclusions

6.2. Contribution of the study

   (e.g., theoretical & methodological contributions)

6.3. Managerial implications

6.4. Limitations

6.5. Further research areas

References

In alphabetical order of author using Harvard Referencing System.

http://libguides.reading.ac.uk/citations

Appendices

Research Instrument.
Interview Transcript.

Useful videos for referencing, writing essays, projects and dissertations.

http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/studyadvice/sta-videotutorials.aspx