

Writing Conclusions

Conclusions are shorter sections of academic texts which usually serve two functions. The first is to summarise and bring together the main areas covered in the writing, which might be called 'looking back'; and the second is to give a final comment or judgement on this. The final comment may also include making suggestions for improvement and speculating on future directions.

In dissertations and research papers, conclusions tend to be more complex and will also include sections on the significance of the findings and on recommendations for future work. In some research papers, the conclusion is not presented separately from the discussion section; the two sections may be combined. However, separate conclusions are nearly always expected for dissertations and essays.

Restatement of aims

This study set out to ...

This paper has argued that ...

This essay has discussed the reasons for ...

In this investigation, the aim was to assess ...

The aim of the present research was to examine ...

The purpose of the current study was to determine ...

The main goal of the current study was to determine ...

This project was undertaken to design ... and evaluate ...

The present study was designed to determine the effect of ...

The second aim of this study was to investigate the effects of ...

Returning to the question posed at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that ...

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| This study set out to | predict which ... establish whether ... determine whether ... develop a model for ... assess the effects of ... investigate impact of ... better understand the ... find a new method for ... evaluate how effective ... assess the feasibility of ... test the hypothesis that ... explore the influence of ... gain a better understanding of ... objectively measure and assess ... examine the relationship between ... compare the two ways of treating ... critically examine the ways in which ... evaluate a new method of measuring ... provide the first systematic account of ... understand the views and experiences of ... review in detail the available information on ... |
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| This study has | examined | <p>the role of ...</p> <p>the impact of ...</p> <p>the nature of ...</p> <p>the concept of ...</p> <p>the differences between ...</p> <p>the relationship between ...</p> <p>the peer reviewed literature on ...</p> <p>the factors which are thought to contribute to ...</p> |
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Summarising research findings

This study has identified ...

This study has shown that ...

The findings clearly indicate that ...

The research has also shown that ...

The second major finding was that ...

These experiments confirmed that ...

X made no significant difference to ...

This study has found that generally ...

The investigation of X has shown that ...

The results of this investigation show that ...

X, Y and Z emerged as reliable predictors of ...

Multiple regression analysis revealed that the ...

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that ...

The relevance of X is clearly supported by the current findings.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that ...

Suggesting implications for the field of knowledge

In general, therefore, it seems that ...

The results of this study indicate that ...

These findings suggest that in general ...

The findings of this study suggest that ...

Taken together, these results suggest that ...

An implication of this is the possibility that ...

The evidence from this study suggests that ...

Overall, this study strengthens the idea that ...

The current data highlight the importance of ...

The findings of this research provide insights for ...

The results of this research support the idea that ...

These data suggest that X can be achieved through ...

The theoretical implications of these findings are unclear.

The principal theoretical implication of this study is that ...

This study has raised important questions about the nature of ...

The following conclusions can be drawn from the present study ...

Taken together, these findings suggest a role for X in promoting Y.

The findings of this investigation complement those of earlier studies.

These findings have significant implications for the understanding of how ...

Although this study focuses on X, the findings may well have a bearing on ...

These findings raised important theoretical issues that have a bearing on the ...

Significance of the findings or contribution of the study

The findings will be of interest to ...
This thesis has provided a deeper insight into ...
The findings reported here shed new light on ...
The study contributes to our understanding of ...
These results add to the rapidly expanding field of ...
The contribution of this study has been to confirm ...
Before this study, evidence of X was purely anecdotal.
This project is the first comprehensive investigation of ...
This study provides the first comprehensive assessment of ...
The insights gained from this study may be of assistance to ...
This study establishes a quantitative framework for detecting ...
This work contributes to existing knowledge of X by providing ...
This is the largest study so far documenting a delayed onset of ...
Prior to this study it was difficult to make predictions about how ...
The analysis of X undertaken here, has extended our knowledge of ...
The empirical findings in this study provide a new understanding of ...
This study has been one of the first attempts to thoroughly examine ...
This paper contributes to recent historiographical debates concerning ...
This study appears to be the first study to compare the experiences of ...
The present study adds to the growing body of research that indicates ...
The present study is the only empirical investigation into the impact of ...
This approach will prove useful in expanding our understanding of how ...
The study has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of ...
The study has confirmed the findings of Smith *et al.* (2001) which found that...
This new understanding should help to improve predictions of the impact of ...
This is the first report on X from a nationally representative cohort of patients.
The methods used for this X may be applied to other Xs elsewhere in the world.
These findings will be of broad use to the scientific and biomedical communities.
The X that we have identified therefore assists in our understanding of the role of ...
This is the first study of substantial duration which examines associations between ...
The findings from this study make several contributions to the current literature. First,...
These findings contribute in several ways to our understanding of X and provide a basis for ...

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| These findings | illustrate how ... could be used to help ... are important because ... are particularly relevant for ... provide insights into whether ... enhance our understanding of ... provide additional evidence for ... will help other researchers design ... highlight the potential usefulness of ... add to a growing body of literature on ... provide strong empirical confirmation that ... represent a major breakthrough in the way ... provide important insights into the role of ... make several contributions to the current literature. are relevant to both practitioners and policy-makers. |
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| <p>This research The present study</p> | <p>extends our knowledge of ... has demonstrated, for the first time, that ... will serve as a base for future studies and ... should prove to be particularly valuable to ... makes several noteworthy contributions to ... has offered a framework for the exploration of ... has provided additional evidence with respect to ... has several practical applications. Firstly, it points to ... has shed a contemporary light on the contentious issue of ... is important in furthering our understanding of the role of ... confirms previous findings and contributes additional evidence that suggests ..</p> |
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| <p>This is the first study</p> | <p>to identify ... to show that ... to investigate ... to test the effects of ... to firmly establish that ... to provide evidence for ... to reveal the presence of ... to investigate the effect of ... to use objective measures to ... to report an association between ... to integrate modelling approaches intended to ...</p> <p>that has used ... that has found ... that has revealed ... that has measured ... that has presented evidence for ... that has investigated the effects of ... that has documented the impact of ... that has evaluated the effectiveness of ... that has shown a clear-cut positive effect of ...</p> |
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Significance of the findings with a qualification

Notwithstanding these limitations, the study suggests that ...

Whilst this study did not confirm X, it did partially substantiate ...

Despite its exploratory nature, this study offers some insight into ...

Notwithstanding the relatively limited sample, this work offers valuable insights into ...

Although the current study is based on a small sample of participants, the findings suggest ...

Commenting on the limitations of the current study

A limitation of this study is that ...
 Being limited to X, this study lacks ...
 The major limitation of this study is the ...
 This study was limited by the absence of ...
 One issue with the current study was that ...
 Thirdly, the study did not evaluate the use of ...
 The generalisability of these findings is limited ...
 The scope of this study was limited in terms of ...
 The study is limited by the lack of information on ...
 The most important limitation lies in the fact that ...
 A limitation of using this kind of data is that it precludes ...
 Study limitations make an overall conclusion about X extremely difficult.
 Finally, a number of important limitations need to be considered. First, ...
 The findings in this report are subject to at least three limitations. First, ...
 However, these findings are limited by the use of a cross sectional design.
 The principal limitation of this analysis was the variance in the design of ...
 This limitation means that study findings need to be interpreted cautiously.
 A potential source of bias for the study is the influence the researcher had upon ...
 With regard to the research methods, some limitations need to be acknowledged.
 The generalisability of these results is subject to certain limitations. For instance, ...
 The present study was subject to a number of potential methodological weaknesses.
 Several limitations to this pilot study need to be acknowledged. The sample size is ...
 The project was limited in several ways. First, the project used a convenience sample that ...
 The lack of X in the sample adds further caution regarding the generalisability of these findings.

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| <p>This The current The present</p> | <p>study research investigation</p> | <p>was limited by ... has only examined ... has not been able to establish ... has only considered the context of ... has not been able to confirm earlier ... was unable to analyse these variables. was not specifically designed to evaluate factors related to ...</p> |
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| <p>However, these results may not be applicable to</p> | <p>all types of ... all situations. other species. patients who ... all clinical settings. organisations which ... other groups within ... the wider population.</p> |
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| Another source of uncertainty | is has been | the role of ... the estimate for ... the assumption that ... the variation of X over time. associated with changes in ... the possibility of measurement errors in ... |
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X makes these findings less generalisable to ...
 It is unfortunate that the study did not include ...
 The main weakness of this study was the paucity of ...
 Since the study was limited to X, it was not possible to ..
 An additional uncontrolled factor is the possibility that ...
 It was not possible to assess X; therefore, it is unknown if ...
 An issue that was not addressed in this study was whether...
 An arguable weakness is the arbitrariness in our definition of ...
 A number of caveats need to be noted regarding the present study.
 The responses relating to X were subjective and were therefore susceptible to recall bias.
 The sample was nationally representative of X but would tend to miss people who were ...
 One source of weakness in this study which could have affected the measurements of X was ...
 With a small sample size, caution must be applied, as the findings might not be transferable to ...
 Although the study has successfully demonstrated that ..., it has certain limitations in terms of ...

Commenting on the strengths of the current study

A key strength of the present study was the ...
 The main strength of this study is the exclusion of ...
 One strength of this study is the high rate of follow-up, ...
 The key strengths of this study are its long duration and ...
 The strengths of the study included the in-depth analysis of ...
 Although the findings should be interpreted with caution, this study has several strengths ...
 One of the strengths of this study is that it represents a comprehensive examination of the whole ...

Recommendations for further research work

The question raised by this study is ...
More research using controlled trials is needed to ...
What is now needed is a cross-national study involving ...
More broadly, research is also needed to determine ...
This research has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation.

It would be interesting to assess the effects of ...
It is recommended that further research be undertaken in the following areas:
It would be interesting to compare experiences of individuals within the same ...
It is suggested that the association of these factors is investigated in future studies.

A further study could assess the long-term effects of ...
Further work needs to be done to establish whether ...
Further studies need to be carried out in order to validate ...
Further experimental investigations are needed to estimate ...
Further studies regarding the role of X would be worthwhile/interesting.
Further investigation and experimentation into X is strongly recommended.

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| Further research | might explore ... could usefully explore how ... should focus on determining ... is required to determine whether ... in this field would be of great help in ... should be carried out to establish the ... should be undertaken to explore how ... on these questions would be a useful way of ... needs to examine more closely the links between X and Y. could also be conducted to determine the effectiveness of ... |
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| Further | work is needed to fully understand the implications of ... research is required to establish the therapeutic efficiency of ... modelling work will have to be conducted in order to determine ... experiments, using a broader range of Xs, could shed more light on ... research in other Xs is, therefore, an essential next step in confirming ... |
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A *future* study investigating X would be very interesting.
In terms of directions for *future* research, further work could ...
In the *future*, it will be important to explore the potential use of ...
Another possible area of *future* research would be to investigate why ...
A number of possible *future* studies using the same experimental set up are apparent.
In terms of *future* work, it would be interesting to repeat the experiments described here using ...

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| Future studies should | <p>include ... focus on ... target specific ... clarify whether ... attempt to identify ... assess the impact of ... explore the effects of ... seek to minimise bias by ... investigate the degree to which ... concentrate on the investigation of ... address the questions raised by this research.</p> |
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| More research | is required is needed | <p>to account for ... in order to determine which ... to determine the efficacy and safety of ... to examine the long-term efficacy and safety of ... to better understand when implementation ends and ... to develop a deeper understanding of the relationships between ...</p> |
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| Further | research is studies are | needed required | to better understand | <p>why ... how ... the nature of ... the causes of ... the impact of ... the reasons for ... the influence of ... the extent to which ... the role that X plays in ... how X is associated with ... the risks associated with ... the underlying causes of ... the possible link between ... the relationship between ... the discrepancies between ... the mechanisms underlying ... the effectiveness and safety of ... the complex linkages between ... the complex interaction between ... the complex association between ...</p> |
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The study should be repeated using ...
This would be a fruitful area for further work.
Several questions still remain to be answered.
A natural progression of this work is to analyse ...
Considerably more work will need to be done to determine ...
The precise mechanism of X in insects remains to be elucidated.
These findings provide the following insights for future research: ...
Large randomised controlled trials could provide more definitive evidence.
A greater focus on X could produce interesting findings that account more for ...
The issue of X is an intriguing one which could be usefully explored in further research.
If the debate is to be moved forward, a better understanding of X needs to be developed.
I suggest that before X is introduced, a study similar to this one should be carried out on ...
More information on X would help us to establish a greater degree of accuracy on this matter.

Implications and/or recommendations for practice or policy

Other types of X could include: a), b) ...
Greater efforts are needed to ensure ...
There is, therefore, a definite need for ...
A second broad recommendation is that ...
Provision of X will enhance Y and reduce Z.
Another important practical implication is that ...
Moreover, more X should be made available to ...
The challenge now is to fabricate Xs that contain ...
Unless governments adopt X, Y will not be attained.
These findings suggest several courses of action for ...
A reasonable approach to tackle this issue could be to ...
This particular research finding also points to the need for ...
Continued efforts are needed to make X more accessible to ...
These findings have implications within the clinical setting for ...
The findings of this study have a number of practical implications.
There are a number of important changes which need to be made.
Management to enhance bumble-bee populations might involve ...
This study suggests that X should be avoided by people who are prone to ...
A key policy priority should therefore be to plan for the long-term care of ...
This information can be used to develop targeted interventions aimed at ...
Taken together, these findings do not support strong recommendations to ...
Ensuring appropriate systems, services and support for X should be a priority for ...
The findings of this study have a number of important implications for future practice.
An implication of these findings is that both X and Y should be taken into account when ...