

Guidelines to Introduction

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Summary guidelines Introduction

- Para 1: background, setting stage, from broad to narrower focus (in discussion the reverse); challenges
- Para 2: Focus, problem statement, conflicting findings, gap in literature, however, why important/interesting/the 'hook'
- Para 3: data- unique, interesting suited to address issues, also address challenge of others (legitimacy)
- Para 4: contributions, reconcile, extend current insights, improve our understanding, limit generalizability; why interesting

Paragraph 1

- Setting the stage; engage those who may care, who is your audience
- References as signal crucial at this stage, what are the key articles/theories you build on
- The introduction provides the 'interpretative frame' (Grant, AMJ, 2011)
- The stage setting may end with challenge or debate in the current literature

Paragraph 2

- The research question or problem-statement; build on what we know, but show what is we do not know.
- Gap-spotting
 - Conflicting findings; confusion/ambiguity
 - Under-researched; overlooked
 - Lack of application; either testing and using theory
- However, 'nobody has done it' is not sufficient as legitimation. Be able to answer 'so what' question.
- It must be interesting, new insights different/deviating from prevailing logic and taken for granted world of their audience (Davis, 1971)
- Problematization (Alvessen & Sandberg, AMR, 2011) important, there must be a need to think different
- What is the puzzle; theoretical or empirical anomaly (windmills in US, where is least wind??)

Paragraph 3

- Unique data-set; stress methodological quality, independent data sources or specifically designed to measure particular variables/address certain problems
- Data-set provides an answer to ‘our problem’, but also addresses the challenge posed by/call for more: use quote to find legitimacy in your data/problem combination (‘Addressing recent calls for “more complex...” (..), we therefore sought to identify...’ (Stam & Elfring, 2008, 98))

Paragraph 4

- Make explicit in what way the paper contributes to the literature, either by numbering the contributions or summarizing them in a few sentences.
- Types of contributions:
 - Reconcile conflicting findings
 - Extend theory; wider generalizability
 - Limit generalizability or boundaries of existing theory
- Beware that these new insights are interesting; they ‘deny old truths’ (related to problem) or attack the taken-for-granted insights (see your first paragraph)