**Step 2: Describe your methods of data collection**

Once you have introduced your overall methodological approach, you should give full details of the [methods](https://www.scribbr.com/yst_prominent_words/methodology/)you used to conduct the research. Outline the tools, procedures and materials you used to gather data, and the criteria you used to select participants or sources.

**Quantitative methods**

**Surveys**  
Describe where, when and how the [survey](https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/survey-research/) was conducted.

* How did you design the questions and what form did they take (e.g. multiple choice, rating scale)?
* What [sampling method](https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/) did you use to select participants?
* Did you conduct surveys by phone, mail, online or in person, and how long did participants have to respond?
* What was the sample size and response rate?

You might want to include the full questionnaire as an appendix so that your reader can see exactly what data was collected.

**Experiments**  
Give full details of the tools, techniques and procedures you used to conduct the experiment.

* How did you [design the experiment](https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/experimental-design/)?
* How did you recruit participants?
* How did you manipulate and measure the [variables](https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/types-of-variables/)?
* What tools or technologies did you use in the experiment?

In experimental research, it is especially important to give enough detail for another researcher to reproduce your results.

**Existing data**  
Explain how you gathered and selected material (such as publications or archival data) for inclusion in your analysis.

* Where did you source the material?
* How was the data originally produced?
* What criteria did you use to select material (e.g. date range)?

**Quantitative methods example**

The survey consisted of 5 multiple-choice questions and 10 questions that the respondents had to answer with a 7-point Likert scale. The aim was to conduct the survey with 350 customers of Company X on the company premises in The Hague from 4-8 July 2017 between 11:00 and 15:00. A customer was defined as a person who had purchased a product from Company X on the day of questioning. Participants were given 5 minutes to fill in the survey anonymously, and 408 customers responded. Because not all surveys were fully completed, 371 survey results were included in the analysis.

**Qualitative methods**

**Interviews or focus groups**  
Describe where, when and how the [interviews](https://www.scribbr.com/tips/how-do-you-incorporate-an-interview-into-a-dissertation/) were conducted.

* How did you find and select participants?
* How many people took part?
* What form did the interviews take (structured, semi-structured, unstructured)?
* How long were the interviews and how were they recorded?

**Participant observation**  
Describe where, when and how you conducted the observation.

* What group or community did you observe and how did you gain access to them?
* How long did you spend conducting the research and where was it located?
* How did you record your data (e.g. audiovisual recordings, note-taking)?

**Existing data**  
Explain how you selected case study materials (such as texts or images) for the focus of your analysis.

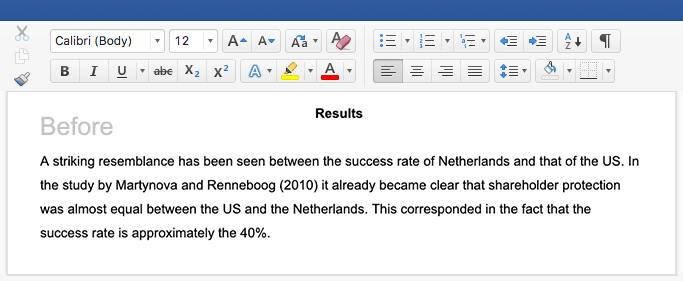
* What type of materials did you analyze?
* How did you collect and select them?

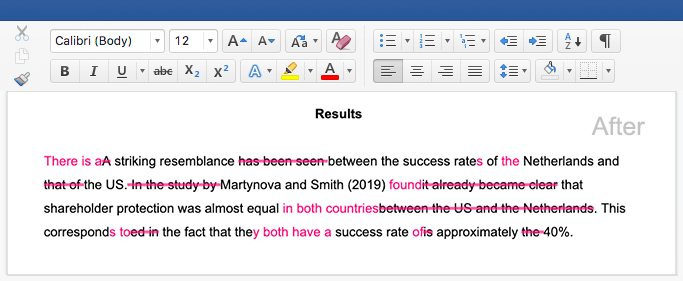
**Qualitative methods example**

In order to gain a better insight into the possibilities for improvement of the product range, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 8 returning customers from the main target group of Company X. A returning customer was defined as someone who usually bought products at least twice a week from Company X. The surveys were used to select participants who belonged to the target group (20-45 years old). Interviews were conducted in a small office next to the cash register, and lasted approximately 20 minutes each. Answers were recorded by note-taking, and seven interviews were also filmed with consent. One interviewee preferred not to be filmed.

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