



## REVIEW

# Research on the Construction of Doctoral Dissertation System

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### ABSTRACT

This paper initially forms its own doctoral dissertation system by summarizing and sorting out the *Research and Practice* classroom system and the *Writing Skills of Doctoral Dissertation* teaching material system, which are studied in the doctoral course. Through criticism and innovation, a set of doctoral dissertation system consisting of six major systems: preparation system, content system, organization system, supervision system, supports system and verification system is finally formed. This dissertation writing system will provide reference and help for doctoral students and researchers.

## 1. Introduction

Doctoral dissertation is essential in all doctoral education models, and some key principles play an important role in the writing of many humanities and social science disciplines, therefore, in order to become a good doctoral student, you need to master some basic skills to write a good article. A comprehensive and systematic research on writing skills has a 40% to 50% certain effect on the success of doctoral students in obtaining doctoral degrees. At the same time, the capability to complete a doctoral dissertation depends on the research ideas of doctoral students, independent innovation, hard work, application practice, skills to master specific knowledge, and the mastery of the methods. However, doing research and efficient writing is not a separate process, but two aspects that are closely connected in the process of intellectual development, which need to be carried out simultaneously. Before starting a new journey in doctoral dissertation writing, the author has begun to explore the

selected subjects and their research skills, while learning and practicing writing knowledge and skills, is of great significance for the successful creation and completion of the dissertation. In order to ensure that the author's dissertation is a well-organized and well-structured article in the reader's eyes, and adhere to the commitments made in this paper, the doctoral dissertation system described in this paper is constructed, which will be of great benefit to my doctoral dissertation writing and future career.

## 2. Doctoral Dissertation System

### 2.1 Preparation System

#### 2.1.1 Knowledge Reserve

Baixiang Lu (2016) believes that before carrying out doctoral dissertation, it should reserve knowledge from the following four aspects to keep the dissertation going smoothly.

(1) Master the Purpose and Process of Scientific Re-

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Its contents include scientific process and research design; the starting point of research; the theoretical construction in management research and the opportunities and challenges in constructing the theory of China's management science.

#### (2) Research Methods of Management Science

Its contents include the design and evaluation of empirical research; the questionnaire survey in field research; the use of secondary data in management research; case studies in field research; qualitative research and its data analysis and the management and organization of contextual research.

#### (3) Measurement Statistics Method in Management Research

Its contents include the measurement of theoretical constructs; structural equation models; the establishment and research methods of regulatory variables and intermediate variables and multi-level theoretical models.

#### (4) Research Publication Process

The content includes preparation for submission and review process; the experience of a dissertation from the presentation of the issue to the process of publication. The above knowledge can be obtained by reading research method related books, professional journals and internal reports of authoritative organizations.

### 2.1.2 Time Management

The first key step for doctoral students to open their dissertation writing is to set aside time to purposefully think and develop their own ideas. And they should cultivate the habit of thinking on time according to their own characteristics, divide the thinking time into several independent stages, and focus on the sole thinking content at each stage. By persevering in your records, you will find yourself gradually getting creative ideas or insights inadvertently.

### 2.1.3 Tutors and Communication

On the one hand, you need to find a tutor suitable for you, because the tutors themselves are skilled and experienced in writing, and they are willing to invest a lot of time and energy. By communicating with the tutors, doctoral students can learn better writing skills. On the other hand, it is possible to organize seminars with classmates and groups, which will help doctoral students improve their thinking skills and communication skills, including topic selection, etc. The choice of the scope of the dissertation and the setting of the theme need to be taken seriously to avoid overly broad and narrow topics. Of course,

personal ambitions and interests need to be considered first in the selection process, but the views of others are equally important, since an unquestioned dissertation topic often fails to provide a valuable academic direction for students, and it is not possible to support students during the assessment phase.

In the first six months or one year after starting the dissertation creation, you are required to complete the preparation system part and form early ideas for the dissertation. These ideas are exactly the same as those of sculptors who are sculpting: they first choose a large stone and outline the most primitive "rough outline" on it before a long chiseling work can be done.

## 2.2 Content System

Innovation is the soul of the doctoral dissertation. Any dissertation that can be called scientific research must be innovative, with new discoveries and hypotheses. This is the most basic requirement of the doctoral dissertation. Shuying Xu et al. (2015) emphasize that dissertation perfectly demonstrates new discoveries and generally answers three questions:

(1) What is the innovation point, the dissertation should clearly express the proposed new findings and their subject matter;

(2) Why should we propose this innovation point? The dissertation should explain the actual and theoretical background proposed by the innovation point, that is, to persuade itself to make the reader feel that such innovation has academic and practical significance, and it is worth spending energy to study;

(3) Answer the question of whether this innovation is true, and present arguments and arguments to support the innovation of dissertation.

In order to answer the above questions, there are three aspects, namely, the expression of innovation points, the theory and actual background of innovation points, and the argumentation of innovation points. The innovation point expresses the contribution of the dissertation, that is, the results of their own research work, the background review sets off the value of the dissertation, and the argument shows the credibility of the innovation point, the three are indispensable.

Although the writing of the doctoral dissertation has its own format according to each university, it is recommended to organize according to the structure shown in Figure 1 from the requirements of the innovation point model. The first and last parts of the doctoral dissertation, the abstract and conclusion, are not the main part of the dissertation, but they are very important and are read more times than any other part. The abstract is a brief descrip-

tion of the innovation point, and it needs to be the one that “draws the finishing touch”. The first chapter introduction should reflect the content of “research design” and play a role in the analysis of problems. The following arguments are organized according to innovation points. In general, an argument for innovation or a hypothetical argumentation process should be reduced to a chapter, and several arguments are arranged for several arguments. The introduction is the “outline”, and the arguments are “details”. With the introduction, the role of each chapter in the entire dissertation has been positioned. The argumentation process of the relevant research hypotheses of the various arguments constitutes the entity of the dissertation. The conclusions include the results of the research work and its value discussion.

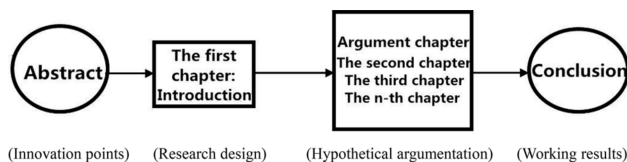


Figure 1. The dissertation writing structure

### 2.2.1 Abstract

The abstract is a miniature version of a dissertation that allows the reader to roughly judge its value and must be brief and concise. The abstract of the general English journal dissertation, no more than 200 words, and the Chinese dissertation does not exceed 300 words, and generally does not divide the paragraph; a paragraph is the completion of the abstract. The abstract of doctoral dissertation can be segmented and the number of words can be more, but 800 Chinese characters are enough. In general, the primary reader of the doctoral dissertation is the review professor. The reviewer must first read the abstract, such as the abstract can clearly tell the reviewer the innovation point of the dissertation and its value, attract the reviewer and produce a good first impression, which means that the abstract is written successfully.

### 2.2.2 Introduction

Any postgraduate dissertation must first ask questions, often with the title “the raise of problem” or “introduction”, the purpose of which is to clarify the problem. From the perspective of research work, clarifying the problem is the stage of the topic selection. The choice of the topic is good, which means that the direction is right and will not be abandoned halfway. From the perspective of dissertation writing, the problem is clarified and written, which can arouse the reader’s interest and read it further. The problem must be clear, there can only be one theme, so it

is necessary to pay attention to “small topics, big articles.” The chapter on clarifying the problem can be divided into five components, namely the actual background of the problem; the definition of the problem; the literature review; the questions and assumptions to be studied. At the same time, the “hypothesis tree” can be used to comprehensively reflect the results of the research design in the identification phase. The top level is the subject, the core assumption, and the next level of assumptions is the support and refinement of the previous level hypothesis. The theme reflects the value of the dissertation. The multi-level hypothesis constitutes the research entity of the dissertation. The deductive process from the top-level to the lowest-level hypothesis is precisely the process of deepening the research work. With a hypothesis tree, dissertation or research work has a clear goal, and the research work can be carried out in depth according to the structure of the hypothesis tree.

### 2.2.3 Argument

First of all, in the opening of the argumentation chapter, we need to explain the research hypothesis of this chapter, and let the reader understand the position of this research hypothesis in the overall research design of dissertation. It is also possible to make a brief summary of the research status of this hypothesis, which will demonstrate the theoretical value of this hypothesis. Next, the working hypothesis design is described. This part of the work consists of three interrelated and completed content, namely hypothetical conversion, working hypothesis representation and variable design. The next two steps are data collection, processing, and data analysis. After the data analysis, in some cases, the content of “mechanism analysis” can also be added. Finally, there should be a brief summary.

### 2.2.4 Conclusion

This part mainly clarifies the hypothesis verification results, namely the main innovation of dissertation, including the discussion of the theoretical and practical significance of the analysis results, such as the modification or supplement of some existing theories, the improvement of analytical methods and the role of management practices. At the same time, the conclusions can also provide questions and suggestions for further research based on this research. Some of the dissertation concludes with one sentence: “Obviously, there are still many issues to be studied in depth”, or give a list of questions. These statements are in line with the facts, but they are of little significance. They must be combined with the working practices of the dissertation, especially the existing defects and defi-

ciencies, to propose the ideas and significance of further research.

## 2.3 Organization System

The organization system emphasizes the ability to construct dissertation materials into an organic whole, mainly from the design of a structurally rigorous dissertation macrostructure and organizational chapter or short dissertation microstructure.

From the macro structure of dissertation, longer texts usually need to be broken down and organized into a series of chapters. This task does not seem to be a problem. First calculate how many words you plan to write, and then calculate how many parts you want to divide, and then determine the opening theme and the ending argument. In this way, it's clear that the composition of the text from the beginning to the end is clear, but the chapter division is not so simple. There are still many things to keep in mind. The structure of the dissertation must be easy for the reader to understand, allowing the reader to see the logic, organization, and continuity of the chapter arrangement. So having a better, planned chapter organization usually improves the quality of the doctoral dissertation. The organizational structure of the doctor's dissertation usually has three solutions. The first approach is to focus on the relationship between the overall dissertation and the core, where the core is the most value-added part, which contains special contributions to the academic research of the discipline. The second approach is to analyze the choice between "tightening" and "expansion" when the material is sorted as a whole. The third way is to choose a suitable way from a limited way of explanation. Doctoral dissertation requires creative, non-literary writing methods. The above three ways are explained in detail below.

### 2.3.1 Overall and Core

After determining the length of the dissertation body, you need to divide the body into several pieces. A basic principle for organizing any text is that the words should be divided as evenly as possible, and divided into chapters in the doctoral dissertation. Uniform chapter division can make the reader's expectation match the actual situation; they can know the length of the chapter in advance. The core of dissertation reflects the originality through the use of "independent judgment ability". The core part of the chapter contains the most innovative or unique research part in nature, which is the part that determines whether you can obtain a doctoral degree. The term "independent judgment ability" as used herein refers to the dissertation

author's ability to organize a large number of theoretical or thematic arguments in an orderly and fluent manner, and to study the problems analyzed by others from a relatively unique perspective. In the dissertation, not all content can be the core. The dissertation also includes a certain amount of non-core content that is imported and exported.

When thinking about organizing the above three materials to import content, core content and export content, it is necessary to follow the imported content as much as possible for the entire doctoral dissertation with a maximum of two chapters. The core content accounts for five-fifths of the total number of dissertation words, that is, five chapters. The exported content accounts for one or two chapters of the entire doctoral dissertation. Clearly defining the core and non-core content of a dissertation is a very laborious process. And honestly defining the core content is equally critical to the effective organization of the dissertation. Once you have identified the core content, you need to carefully guide the reader and build it. Dissertation titles, abstracts, chapter titles, catalog pages, leading edges, import chapters, etc., all need to mobilize all important organizational structures to highlight, propose and organize the core content of the dissertation. An important orientation tool for organizing dissertation is a three- or four-page scrolling dissertation outline.

### 2.3.2 Tightening or Unfolding

Zuhuai Li (2015) pointed out that the doctor dissertation has three chapter ordering methods, which we can call: "tightening" mode, "expanding" mode and "compromising" mode. The austerity model is the most common and general ordering method, and it records four or five years of research in the approximate order in which research activities occur. There are usually two, three or even four literature review chapters on the catalog page; followed by a boring or predictable method chapter; followed by only three to four chapters of detailed substantive, applied or empirical research chapters. Finally, there is a very brief closing chapter. The negative impact of such an austerity model on the dissertation author is difficult to estimate. Compared with the austerity mode, the unfolding mode has more advantages. The reader can get in touch with the original research earlier, can see more results analysis, and better understand the close relationship between the research results and the relevant early literature.

### 2.3.3 Description mode

There are only four basic long-form textual explanations in the humanities and social sciences: descriptive, analyt-



ical, argumentative, and matrix models. Effective organizational classification should be easily accessible and acceptable to readers. In order to make the chapter structure of the dissertation clearer and smoother, you can combine any two of the previous three methods to get four possible combinations: The analytical description supplemented by an argumentative statement, the analytical description supplemented by a descriptive statement, the argumentative statement supplemented by an analytical description and the argumentative statement supplemented by a descriptive statement (Patrick et al., 2003). The matrix model has many benefits for doctoral students. This mode always produces enough classifications to summarize the dissertation chapter. The organization of the above dissertation structures is very important. When you determine the organization of the dissertation, there will always be at least one method that suits you.

From the dissertation microstructure, the chapter is a component of a dissertation. In the process of designing the content structure of the dissertation chapter, you need to pay attention to the following: divide the chapter into sections; design the title and subtitle; handle the beginning and end. First, divide the chapter into sections. A standard 10,000-word chapter should have four major sections. The titles of these sections are called “first-level headings” because the section is the most advanced organizational tool and the part that contains the most text in each chapter. Second, design the title and subtitle. The font size, font, and position of the title should be set in the following order: the first-level title (the unique numbered title) is the most prominent, the second-level sub-heading is less prominent, and the third-level sub-heading (in the case of the three-level title) is the least prominent. All headings should be more obvious than normal text in order to provide the reader with a clear visual signal indicating where each section is in the argument structure of the entire chapter.

Finally, the beginning and the end are processed. The beginning and end of chapters and chapters are the most critical content that motivates readers to expect, build a framework of ideas, and decide whether to bring readers to the right track at the outset, and of course the most difficult part to write. There are many ways to create a good start with a strong momentum, depending on the subject and the type of dissertation. The three common methods are: adding quotations, introducing vivid examples or other compelling empirical information, proposing contradictions or academic problems. The handling of the ending needs to be cautious, and a logical, organized and general summary of the section is required in the last paragraph of each section. It is best to avoid mechanically repeating what you discussed in this section.

## **2.4 Supervision System**

### **2.4.1 Dissertation Evaluation**

Imagine the basic idea of a dissertation reviewer reviewing the dissertation.

(1) Discriminate whether there is any researcher’s own actual work and contribution, that is, innovation points. This requires that the theoretical framework or system that clarifies the research is based on what new discoveries are based, and that the innovation points must be perceived as new knowledge, with clear connotations, and the level of generalization should not be too high or too abstract.

(2) What are the weights of these innovations? This requires clarifying the problem part to clearly explain the background of the problem, and at the same time, what kind of theoretical system the problem under study belongs to, and the level and orientation of the problem are exactly described. Choose the closest representative literature or theory as a reference point to compare and analyze your own work innovations.

(3) Whether the innovation of dissertation is established. After reviewers identify the innovations in a dissertation, attention is focused on the process of innovation.

### **2.4.2 Self-examination**

From a methodological point of view, the scientific nature of dissertation and its practical and theoretical value can be examined from the aforementioned internal validity and external validity. This translates into some self-examination questions that help doctoral students discover the deficiencies in their dissertation writing. First, the dissertation clarifies the section. It is necessary to clarify whether there is a clear explanation of the research question, whether the research question can be explored by collecting and analyzing data. Second, the literature review section. It is necessary to find out whether the literature review is logically reasonable, whether it is comparative analysis of various viewpoints of the literature around the subject, whether there are comments and summaries. Again, assume the presentation. It is necessary to clarify whether the hypothetical statement is clearly implemented at the variable level, assuming that the proposed theoretical basis is correct, and whether the test conditions are met. Finally, verify the method section. Here you need to figure out the research objects, study design and steps, data analysis and conclusions.

### **2.4.3 Sentence Expression**

In the writing of doctoral dissertation, the problem of insufficient expression of the sentence often appears. Al-

though it does not seriously affect the quality of the dissertation, it reflects the professional level of the author's writing. Here mainly explains the usage of numbers and the problem of writing statements. The general principle of the digital use of scientific publications is that Arabic numerals should be used wherever Arabic numerals can be used and are well decent. However, in the text statement, the words "I" and "we" should be avoided as much as possible. Dissertation is also inseparable from the opinions and contents of other documents, and the writing of citations is in line with the convention. The citation must indicate the source in a note.

## **2.5 Supports System**

The supports system here is also called protective measures. doctoral students need to prepare some protective measures, that is, once the high-risk factors in the research plan have not developed according to the established goals, you need to change the strategy to make up for it. For example, you initially believe that you can make some theoretical progress, but this progress may not be as easy to implement as you might think. In this case, can you turn to more reliable and predictable things, such as comments and comments on the thoughts of an important author in your field? For example, if you want to closely associate variables A and B in empirical analysis, but finally find that the connection does not exist or is very subtle, what conclusion can you draw? In the above considerations, you must design the problem to be meticulous and impeccable, and prepare a set of backup measures in the research plan to take action when certain factors in the plan fail to meet expectations.

## **2.6 Verification System**

### **2.6.1 Dissertation Defense**

The defense is the last level of the doctor's dissertation. Before the defense, it has been approved by the reviewer to organize the defense. The success of the defense depends fundamentally on the quality of the dissertation work. The innovation is clear, valuable, and the argument is sufficient. This is the foundation. However, from the perspective of defense technology, doctoral students also have some notable points. First, we must analyze the psychology of the audience. It is necessary to get the response from the short-term timetable. Secondly, according to the needs of the respondents, draw and organize lectures. At the defense meeting, the time for introducing the dissertation is generally 0.5-1 hour. In less than 1 hour, the research work to be introduced in 1-2 years is obviously targeted. Finally, this process is a process of answering

written questions according to review opinions and other impromptu questions. The respondent committee mainly examines the independent thinking and judgment ability of doctoral students. The answers to the questions should reflect their own level. The answer content is accurate and pertinent, not the interpretation of the background. The brief answers are the best on the point.

### **2.6.2 Dissertation Publication**

The publication of journal dissertation is a way for doctoral education model to assess the research ability of doctoral students, and it is also an important way for doctoral students to enter the academic circle. Although the journal dissertation appears to be a personal work, it is not solely determined by the author: the entire professional community determines the norms and practices of academic journals, which in turn affects which works can be published, and the editors and reviewers of a journal decide the specific conditions that apply to each article. The most commonly used journal dissertation scoring criteria are: The originality and novelty of the method require significant theoretical or practical significance; Combining previously complex framework-based data into a simple new framework, all manuscripts submitted to journals should be original and have not previously been published in any journal; Academic and accuracy, journal dissertation should accurately and completely summarize existing research literature directly related to central research issues; The quality of writing, after meeting many other requirements, journal articles should be readable; Research methods, each journal focuses on publishing articles that apply self-argument methods and present the method from multiple perspectives; Theoretically, to promote the re-conceptualization of a particular topic, or to propose a topic that will lead to a series of empirical studies in the coming years; The appeal and importance of professional readers is relevant to the journal's mission and appealing to a wide range of readers. At the same time, unusual or particularly useful dissertations usually make one or more contributions: The findings and findings are clear and easy to understand; The experimental design is very clever and can be used as a model or "example" for other researchers to learn from; Obtaining surprising discoveries and these findings still make sense in the theoretical context; Overturning previous assumptions; Putting forward a new approach to the problem; research findings.

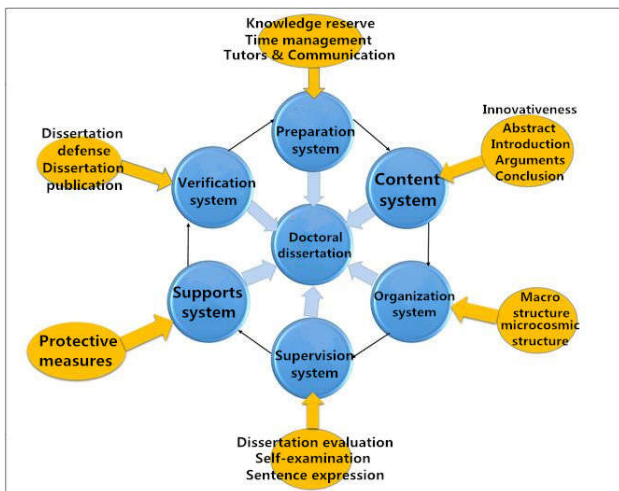
## **3. Conclusion**

Through the detailed explanation of the six major systems of doctoral dissertation, this research draws a diagram of the

construction of the doctoral dissertation system (Figure 2).

In fact, dissertation writing, like other writings, requires a lot of time and effort, and it is never easy to come up with results. In the process, doctoral students may be rejected, criticized, and may be required to modify works that they have spent so much time creating. In order to take some detours, each doctoral student should have some inherent rules or rules in the research work or the doctoral dissertation writing process, and write the dissertation more standardly. Through the six systems of this paper, the author can easily do the following three things in the doctoral dissertation:

- (1) There are basic norms to improve the efficiency and quality of doctoral dissertation writing;
- (2) Through different systems, it can play a role in mutual promotion and evaluation;
- (3) Having a system is equivalent to having a way of thinking and methodology for research and writing.



**Figure 2.** The construction of doctoral dissertation system

*Notes:* The outermost circles represent the elements; the middle circles represent the process, and the innermost circle represents the output.

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