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Structuring the Discussion

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What is 'Discussion'?

- ❑ Discussion is the 'soul' of the paper.
- ❑ This is where the results are 'interpreted' in light of previously available data
- ❑ Provide context to your findings.
- ❑ Connect the dots. Tell a story!
- ❑ Include strengths and limitations in this section as well.



Do's and Don'ts of Discussion

✓ Start with the key message

Open with the most important and impactful finding.

✓ Explain your findings

Interpret expected / unexpected outcomes, including any novel result.

✓ Highlight why the findings matter

Clarify the clinical, scientific, or practical significance.

✓ Connect your findings to the literature

How your results align with, differ from, or add to previous studies.

✓ Maintain a clear narrative flow

Guide the reader smoothly through your line of reasoning.

✗ Do NOT repeat the Results section

Very common mistake.

Discussion is interpretation—not repetition.

✗ Do not make tall claims

Avoid overstating the strength or impact of your findings.

✗ Avoid vague statements

Ensure every claim is precise and evidence-based.

✗ Do not ignore contradictions

Address inconsistencies or negative results openly.

Highlight the strengths / limitations

For example,

- Study design
- Sample size
- Study population characteristics – diversity, demographics etc
- Validated outcome measures
- Confounding factors / bias
- Novelty
- External validity of results

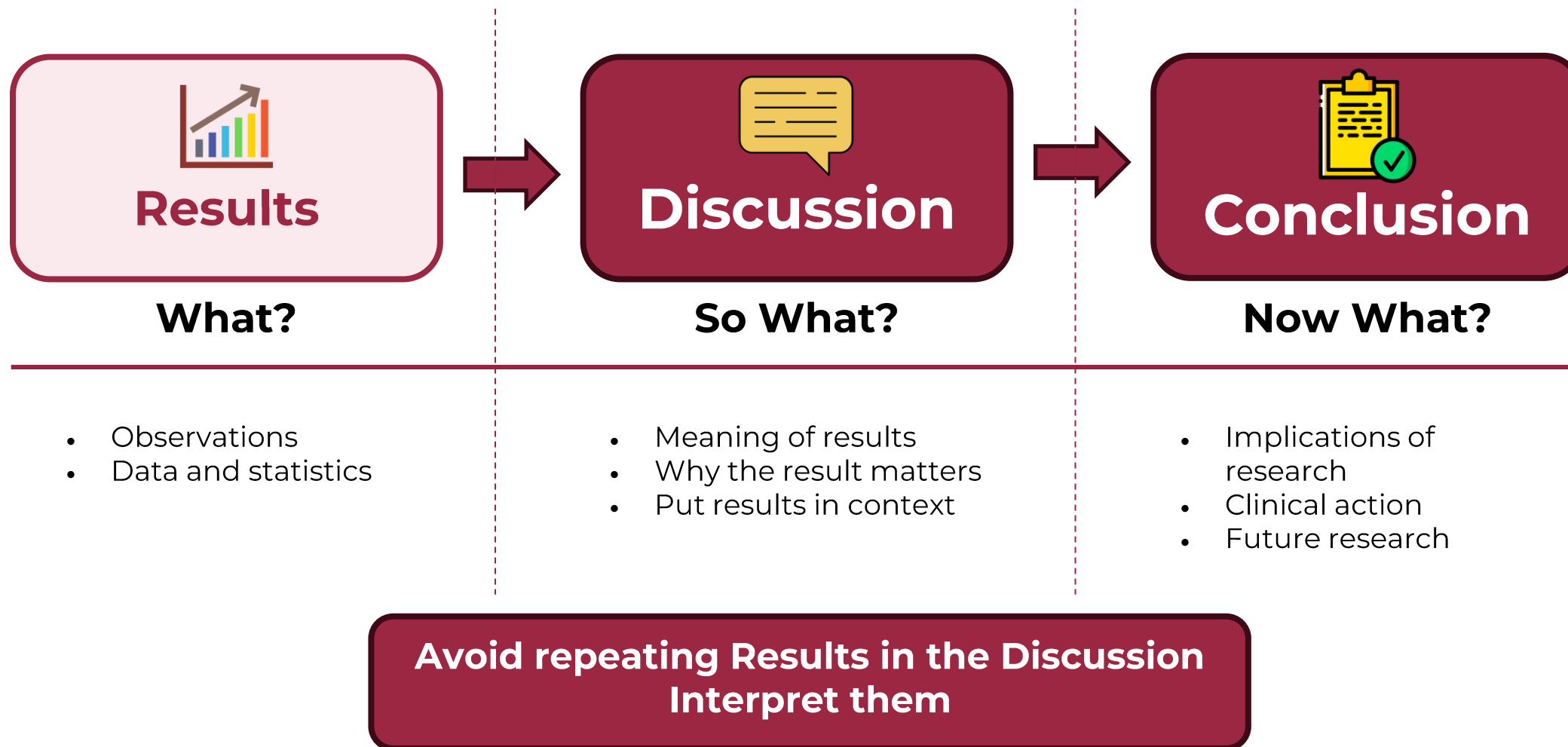
Justify limitations

Suggestions to overcome limitations for future research

Conclusion

- Summarise the answer to the research question
- Ensure that conclusion is derived from results only; avoid general statements
- Future directions

From Results to Discussion



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