**Example: how to report/present results in a stand-alone findings chapter**

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| **FOCUS OF ANALYSIS: Does the Internet Help or Hurt Democracy? An Empirical Analysis of the Effects of Internet Use on Political Participation and Attitudes**  **Overview of the chapter**  The literature directs us to three theories which underpin this research. Some would argue that exposure to the internet will have damaging effects for political participation and political attitudes, while others believe that it mobilises citizens to become more involved in the political process, or that the damaging nature of internet use has a minimal impact and actually proves beneficial to citizens who are previously politically engaged. This dissertation aims to distinguish which of these proves most pertinent to British democracy, using secondary data analysis from ESS to do so. The data will be cross tabulated before regression analysis is run, allowing conclusions to be drawn for or against each hypothesis. Therefore, the chosen method will allow us to determine whether internet use disengages or mobilises the public and whether it has a positive or negative impact on democracy.  **Data from statistical tests:**  **As mentioned previously, in order to determine the overall impact of internet use on democracy and to prove or disprove the chosen hypotheses, empirical analysis of data was necessary to achieve significant results. Therefore,** **cross tabulations** **of internet use on both political participation and attitudes were conducted prior to a series of regression analyses**. **While the cross tab demonstrates an initial relationship between the internet and political participation and attitudes**, **regression provides deeper analysis of the probability that internet use will effect participation rates and political attitudes in either a positive or negative direction**. **As shown by the tables, each regression was undertaken in two rounds; the first model excluding education and income as control variables, the second including them. The analysis was conducted in this particular way as it leads to some interesting findings which will be discussed in later sections**.  This chapter will be split primarily into four sections. Firstly, it will display the initial cross tabs which demonstrate the existence of relationships between internet use and political participation and trust. Secondly, it will focus on the impact of internet use on political attitudes, relaying results from a linear regression model of internet use and trust in politics. Furthermore, the third section will discuss the logistic regressions of whether the internet impacts political participation, using both boycotting and voting as the dependent variables for testing. Finally, a brief discussion of the results will be provided. It is hoped that the analysis of each of these models’ findings will help to determine whether any of the proposed hypotheses hold stature and if the internet does in fact help or hurt democracy.  **3.2 Cross Tabulation**  **In order to assess whether internet usage affects democracy in any way, simple cross tabulations were conducted. They helped to evaluate whether there are any existing relationships between internet use and political participation, as well as internet use and political attitudes. Three different cross tabulations were run, with the first displaying the impact of levels of internet use on voter turnout, the second presenting associations between net use and boycotting and the final identifying relationships between the internet and political trust**. The results of each are summarised and highlighted in Table 1 and this section will discuss each of these in turn.  As shown by Table 1, **the overall net impact of internet use on political participation is small.** **No major correlation can be identified between** higher levels of voter turnout and increased internet use, **suggesting** that internet use does not greatly influence turnout at elections. Despite this, **a more significant relationship is prevalent** between internet usage and boycotting. Table 1 demonstrates that the frequent internet user is more likely to boycott a certain product (58%) than an infrequent internet user (42%). **This result proved to be significant (sig. =.002) when a Pearson’s Chi-Square test was included in the analysis, providing some support** for the mobilisation theory and indicating that the internet does have a positive impact on some aspects of political participation.  Table 1 **Impact of Internet Use on Political Participation and Attitudes**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  |  | Internet Use  *Infrequent* | *Frequent* | |  |  |  |  | | *Boycott certain product in last 12 months* | *No* | 50% | 50% | |  | *Yes* | 42% | 58% | |  |  |  |  | | *Vote in last national election* | *No* | 49% | 51% | |  | *Yes* | 51% | 49% | |  |  |  |  | | *Trust in Politics Mean (0-30 scale)* |  | 10.35 | 11.27 |   Notes: Entries are row percentages  Moving away from participation and directing a focus onto political attitudes, it can be seen that there is (similar to that of voter turnout) an extremely modest increase of political trust when there is an increase in the use of the internet. Even though frequent internet users do display slightly higher levels of trust in politics than infrequent users which technically falls in line with mobilisation theorists, the difference is minimal (mean of 11.27 compared to 10.35 on a 30 point scale) and cannot therefore be used to support any of the proposed hypotheses.  **The cross tabulation analysis therefore indicates** **that the overall net impact of internet use on political participation and attitudes appears to be small. Despite some positive relationships being present, it cannot be determined from these results whether internet use mobilises or disengages individuals and further analysis must be undertaken.**  **3.3 Linear Regression on the Impact of Internet Use on Political Trust**  **The above results are merely suggestive** **and with other factors proving to be influential on political participation and attitudes, a more comprehensive regression analysis was conducted in order to control for aspects such as age, gender, position on left or right of political scale, education and income and provide more reliable results**. The results in table 2 are thus derived from a linear regression of internet use on political attitudes.  The regression shows that in model one internet use has a positive relationship with trust in politics (B= .792, sig. = .012). This illustrates that internet use leads to higher trust levels and provides an element of support for hypothesis 2b. However, as already discussed, the variables within this model are not solely responsible for explaining political trust and within this instance the model is fairly weak with an R² value indicating that the results only contribute 2% to explaining trust in politics (R²=.021).  Table 2 **Linear Regression Internet Use on Trust**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |  | B (S.E) | B(S.E) | | | *Constant* | .613(.744)\*\*\* | 7.775(.996)\*\*\* | | | **Internet Use** | .792(.316)\* | -.087(.383) | | | **Gender** | .216(.290) | -.163(.344) | | | **Age** | -.007(.009) | .019(.012) | | | **Placement on Left/Right Scale** | .433(.078)\*\*\* | .347(.093)\*\*\* | | | **Secondary Education** |  | .003(.483) | | | **Advanced Vocational Education** |  | 1.293(.605)\* | | | **University Education** |  | 2.860(.590)\*\*\* | | | **Middle Income** |  | .402(.433) | | | **High Income** |  | .982(.483)\* | | | R² | .021 | .050 | |   Notes: Dependent variable: Trust in Politics  Entries are unstandardized linear regression coefficients with standard errors in brackets  Reference categories: Internet Use – Infrequent; Gender – Male; Education – Less than Secondary; Income – Low Income  \*Significant at p.<.05 \*\*Significant at p.<.01 \*\*\*Significant at p.<.001 | **Maintaining a clear structure and flow between chapters:**   * The writer very clearly introduces the findings chapter by firstly linking back to the previous literature reviewed * She reminds the reader of the study’s aim and the hypotheses being tested.   **The writer here links back to the fuller explanation provided in the methodology chapter on how the data were to be analysed. She provides a clear explanation of the statistical tests, summarizing the purpose of the tests and reiterating their suitability for this study – this adds to the structure, focus and clarity of her dissertation.**  The writer then clearly breaks down the structure of the findings chapter. She outlines the content of each section very precisely. This makes it easy for the reader to follow exactly how the findings are presented and tested.  **The writer again explains the purposes of the statistical tests as they are applied to her data. It is a common feature of dissertation writing that important points are frequently reinforced to demonstrate clarity of your understanding and their relevance to your dissertation aim or research question**  The writer then provides a very clear, exact and straightforward commentary on the findings from the test. These are illustrated in table.  **It is important to provide a brief summary of the findings: The writer offers a summary of the findings from the statistical test. This in a carefully worded statement that ensures accuracy in reporting only what the test indicates.**  **This is a really important sentence. Here the writer clearly demonstrates her understanding of the link between the statistical tests she applies: while one test can only be ‘merely suggestive’, regression analysis is used to gain more reliable results** |

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