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1. Meaning of Research Report

Research report is a means for communicating research experience to others. A research report is a format statement of the research process & its results. It narrates the problem studied, methods used for studying it and the findings + conclusions of the study.

Objectives

- Purpose of research report
- **Steps in drafting reports**
- Characteristics of research report
- **Editing the final draft**
- Functions of research report
- **Evaluating the final drafts**
- Types of research report
- **Contents of reports**
- Styles of reporting

Meaning of Research Report

Mostly, research work is presented in a written form. The practical utility of research study depends heavily on the way it is presented to those who are expected to act on the basis of research findings. Research report is a written document containing key aspects of research project.

Research report is a medium to communicate research work with relevant people. It is also a good source of preservation of research work for the future reference. Many times, research findings are not followed because of improper presentation. Preparation of research report is not an easy task. It is an art. It requires a good deal of knowledge, imagination, experience, and expertise. It demands a considerable time and money.

Meaning of Research Report

A research report is a document prepared by an analyst or strategist who is a part of the investment research team in a stock brokerage or investment bank. A research report may focus on a specific stock or industry sector, a currency, commodity or fixed-income instrument, or on a geographic region or country. Research reports generally, but not always, have actionable recommendations such as investment ideas that investors can act upon.

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2. Writing a Research Report

Writing a report is the last and, for many, the most difficult step of the research process. The report informs the world what you have done, what you have discovered, & what conclusions you have drawn from your findings. The report should be written in an academic style. The language should be formal and not journalistic.

3. Process to write an effective Research Report

An effective research report has – at least-the following four characteristics

- **Focus:** an effective report emphasizes the important information
- **Accuracy:** an effective report does not mislead the reader
- **Clarity:** an effective report does not confuse the reader
- **Conciseness:** an effective report does not waste the reader's time

Process to write an effective Research Report

Working Ahead

- **You can begin writing the report of your study before you have actually done the study**
- **You can begin writing the introductory section of the report as soon as you have decided on the general approach your study will follow**
- **You can write the method section of the report before you have analyzed the data**
- **You can begin writing the results section of the report before you finish analyzing the data**

4. Terminology, Notation, and Writing Style

- Know your audience and what terms they understand.
- **Label each variable in your report with a term that describes only what it actually measures.**
- If your report introduces a new concept, don't use labels that are commonly used for some similar concept.
- **If you introduce a new term, make sure the readers understand that you are introducing a new term.**
- Use short, descriptive labels.
- **Don't use the same term to mean two or more different things.**
- Don't refer to the same thing by two or more different names.

5. Abbreviations

- **Avoid unfamiliar abbreviations**
- **You may find that using abbreviations makes it easier for you to write the report**
- **Include the complete phrase at least once**
- **Be careful when you make up a new abbreviation**

6. Mathematical Notation

- **Each symbol should have one and only one meaning**
- **Don't change notation**
- **Avoid new uses for symbols that have traditional meanings for your readers**

7. Writing style

- **Avoid long sentences**
- **First-person pronouns such as I and we are now allowable in scholarly writing**

Writing each section of the Report

- **Writing the Introduction**
- **Decide what background information to include**
- **State the research questions early**
- **State the research questions in plain & simple language**
- **State the research questions precisely**
- **Before you cite a paper (or article, book chapter, etc.), read it and think about it**

8. Writing the method section

- **Begin with an explanation of the logic of the research design**
- **Include the important details; leave out the unimportant details**
- **Think about how much detail to include in describing your procedures**
- **If you transformed any variables, explain why**

9. Writing the Results Section

- **Put the most important results up front**
- **Think about which statistical information to include**
- **Think about how to present the statistical information**
- **Start with the tables and graphs**
- **What really matters is the size of the effects**
- **Don't report meaningless significance levels**
- **Use statistics that communicate your results clearly**

10. Tables

- The tables that are intended to communicate the main results should appear in the body of the report
- **For the tables in the body of the report, smaller is better**
- To make your tables readable, don't include more precision than you need
- **Label your tables clearly**
- You can use tables for non-numerical information

11. Graphs

- Graphs are nearly always the best way to show comparisons or relationships between numbers
- **Label each graph clearly**
- Don't try to put too much information into a single graph
- **Don't let the graphing software make all the decisions**
- Make the symbol shapes and shadings meaningful
- **Specify the range of values**
- Adjust the shape of the graph to avoid distortions

12. Writing the discussion section

- **Return to the research questions**
- **Point out the limitations of your study**
- **Discuss possible alternative explanations for the results of your study**
- **Compare your research results to the results of other studies on the same topic**
- **Conclude by explaining the importance of your study**
- **What about suggestions for further research?**

The Abstract

- **Write the abstract last**
- **Establish priorities**
- **Keep it within the word limit**

13. Writing for journals

- **Who reads project reports?**
- **Who reads journal articles?**
- **Journal space is limited**
- **Use the format specified by the journal you are writing for**
- **Look at the journal**

14. Research Report Format

Traditional written reports tend to be produced in the following format.

I. Title Page

a. Title of the research project

b. Name of the researcher

c. Purpose of the research project

For example, 'A research project submitted on partial fulfilment of the requirements of XYZ University, New Delhi, for the degree of _____.

d. Date of publication

Research Report Format

II. Tables of Contents

In this section, the contents of the report, either in chapters or in subheadings, are

Example

Contents	Page No.
Introduction	
Chapter I Theoretical Framework and Review of Related Literature	
Chapter II Research Design	
Chapter III Data Analysis and Interpretation	
Chapter IV Summary and Conclusion	
Suggestions for Further Research	
References / Bibliography	
Appendices	
Appendix I Questionnaire for Employees	
Appendix II Questionnaire for Managers	

Research Report Format

III. List of tables

This section includes the title and page number of all tables.

Examples

Table No.	Title	Page No.
1.	Pie chart showing the age of distribution of respondents	
2.	Bar graph showing the popularity of menu items	

Research Report Format

IV. Acknowledgement

In this section, the researcher may acknowledge the institute, principal, faculty guides (both research guide and technical guide), research participants, friends, etc.

V. Introduction

This section introduces the research, setting out the main aims and objectives. It is actually rationale for the research.

Research Report Format

VI. Theoretical framework & review of literature

This section includes all the background research information that has been obtained from the literature review. You must indicate from where all the information was obtained. Thus, it is mandatory to keep a complete record of everything the research has read. Otherwise, there are chances that the researcher could be accused of plagiarism, which is akin to intellectual theft.

VII. Research Design

This section includes all practical details followed for the research. After reading this, any interested party should be able to replicate the research study. It includes the methods used for data collection, sampling procedures, tools used for data collection, and analysis of data.

Research Report Format

VIII. Data Analysis and Interpretation

If you have conducted a large quantitative survey, this section may contains tables, graphs, pie charts, and associated statistics. If you have conducted a qualitative piece of research, this section may be a descriptive prose.

IX. Summary and Conclusions

You sum up your findings and draw conclusions from them, perhaps in relation to other research or literature.

Research Report Format

X. Recommendations

If the research has been conducted for any organization, this section could be treated as the most important part of the report. Sometimes, this section is included at the beginning of the report.

XI. Suggestions for further research

Research is a continuous process. This section shows how research could be continued. This could happen as some results are inconclusive or the research itself has thrown up many more research questions that need to be addressed. It also shows the honesty and integrity of the researcher-that he has a wider perspective and has actually not tried to cover up the shortcomings.

Research Report Format

XII. List of Reference/ Bibliography

The list of references contains only the details of those works that have been cited in the text. It includes sources not cited in the main text, but those that are relevant to the subject of study, specifically in case of larger dissertations or theses. Small research projects may need just a reference section to include all the literature that has been referred to in the report.

XIII. For Books

- a. Authors' surname (alphabetically), followed by their initials.
- b. Date of publication
- c. Title of the book in italics
- d. Place of publication and publisher

Research Report Format

XIV. For Journal Articles

The title of the article appears in inverted commas and the name of the journal comes in italics, followed by the volume number and pages of the article.

Example

Madaan, KVS. 'Influence of British Rule on Indian Culture'. *Journal of Tourism*. 10 – 18.

Research Report Format

XV. Appendices

This is specifically required in case of questionnaires or interview schedules made for conducting the research; it may be useful to include them in the report as an appendix.

Appendices do not count towards your total number of pages or words. It is a useful way of including relevant material so that the examiner can gain a deeper understanding of your work by reading it.

Research Report Format

XVI. Certificate

Certified that this research project titled _____ is the bona fide record of work carried out by _____ for final year _____.

Technical guide Research coordinator Principal

Place _____

D a t e _ _ _ _ _

15. Oral presentations

An oral presentation is a formal, research-based presentation of your work. Presentations happen in a range of different places. For instance, if you work at a company that assigns people to teams to collaborate on projects, your project team might give an oral presentation of your progress on a particular project. If you work with a nonprofit organization that hosts an annual meeting at which the organization shares its activities, budget, and goals with funders and community members, you might give an oral presentation delivering that information. Learning how to construct and deliver an effective oral presentation is a useful skill. We're referring to oral presentations given to report on a research project and your research findings.

16. Expectations of Oral presentations

For a class presentation, your professor might give you a list of requirements and expectations for your presentation. For a conference presentation, it might be assumed that you already know the requirements and expectations for a presentation or you might be provided some guidelines and expectations. The best thing to do when planning a conference presentation is to get answers to the following questions

- Who will attend this conference & potentially my presentation? What can I assume they know? What can I assume they'll need explained? (More on this below.)**
- What is the typical method of presenting at this conference? For instance, do people "read" a paper out loud? Do they show a slideshow? Do people typically engage the audience (e.g., by asking questions, or asking for feedback)?**
- How much time will I have to present? Will I be able to show a slideshow?**

17. Styles of Reporting

- **Communicate to a specific audience**
- **Structure the presentation**
- **Create audience interest**
- **Be specific and visual**
- **Address validity and reliability issues**

18. Types of Research Report

- **Technical reports**
- **Popular reports**
- **Summary reports**
- **Research abstract**
- **Research article**

19. Contents of the Research Report

A. Prefatory Items

- Title page
- List of graphs/figures/charts
- Declaration
- Abstract or synopsis
- Certificates
- Preface/acknowledgements
- Table of contents
- List of tables

20. Body of the Report

- **Introduction**
- **Theoretical background of the topic**
- **Statement of the problem**
- **Review of literature**
- **The scope of the study**
- **The objectives of the study**
- **Hypothesis to be tested**
- **Definition of the concepts**
- **Models if any**
- **Design of the study**
- **Methodology**
- **Method of data collection**
- **Sources of data**

Body of the Report

- **Sampling plan**
- **Data collection instruments**
- **Field work**
- **Data processing and analysis plan**
- **Overview of the report**
- **Limitation of the study**
- **Results:** findings and discussions
- **Summary, conclusions and recommendations**

B. Reference Material

- **Bibliography**
- **Appendix**
- **Copies of data collection instruments**
- **Technical details on sampling plan**
- **Glossary of new terms used**