

## Research Report Writing: An Introduction

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### ABSTRACT

*A research paper writing is an essential aspect of academics. Publication of research findings is an Integral part of research. Writing research reports is a creative process. It is important for a researcher to learn and apply principles and techniques of report writing for effective dissemination of the research findings. In this article an effort has been made to emphasize on what is a research report is? What are the characteristics of a Good Research Report? What are the types of Research Report? And what should a research report include? This article provides a general introduction to writing research reports.*

**KEYWORDS:** Research, Academic, Research Report, Qualitative, Quantitative.

### INTRODUCTION

Research report writing is an essential activity for a contemporary teaching faculty in institutes of higher education. Academic writing refers to a style of expression that researchers use to define the intellectual boundaries of their disciplines and specific areas of expertise. A research report is a reliable source to recount details about a conducted research. Research reports are recorded data prepared by researchers or statisticians after analyzing information gathered by conducting organized research, typically in the form of surveys or qualitative methods.

#### What is a Research Report?

A report is a short, sharp, concise document which is written for a particular purpose. It generally sets out and analyses a situation or problem, often making recommendations for future action. It is a factual paper, and needs to be clear and well-structured.

A research paper is a piece of academic writing that provides analysis, interpretation, and argument based on in-depth independent research.

A research report is a well-crafted document that outlines the processes, data, and findings of a systematic investigation. It is an important document that serves as a first-hand account of the research process, and it is typically considered an objective and accurate source of information.

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## **Characteristics of a Good Academic/Research Report**

A Research report presents various facts and evidences relevant to its subject matter. It should acknowledge all sources and these should be referenced throughout. Plagiarism is a crucial issue in today's work. The report writer must take care of this. The language of a research report is usually precise, concise and clear. A well-written research report should have following qualities:

1. It should serve the purpose stated in report brief and conform to its specifications.
2. It should process and interpret relevant data.
3. It should present the content in a logical and coherent manner.
4. It should be consistent with the instructions of the report brief.
5. It should present conclusions that are rational and based on the evidence and analysis.
6. It should contain appropriate rational recommendations where required.

## **What are the types of Research Report?**

The research report is classified into two types:

### **1. Qualitative Research Report**

This is the type of report written for qualitative research. It outlines the methods, processes, and findings of a qualitative method of systematic investigation. In educational research, a qualitative research report provides an opportunity for one to apply his or her knowledge and develop skills in planning and executing qualitative research projects.

A qualitative research report is usually descriptive in nature. Hence, in addition to presenting details of the research process, you must also create a descriptive narrative of the information.

Qualitative research is expressed in words. It is used to understand concepts, thoughts or experiences. This type of research enables you to gather in-depth insights on topics that are not well understood.

Common qualitative methods include interviews with open-ended questions, observations described in words, and literature reviews that explore concepts and theories.

### **2. Quantitative Research Report**

A quantitative research report is a type of research report that is written for quantitative research. Quantitative research is a type of systematic investigation that pays attention to numerical or statistical values in a bid to find answers to research questions.

In this type of research report, the researcher presents quantitative data to support the research process and findings. Unlike a qualitative research report that is mainly descriptive, a quantitative research report works with numbers; that is, it is numerical in nature.

Quantitative research is expressed in numbers and graphs. It is used to test or confirm theories and assumptions. This type of research can be used to establish generalizable facts about a topic.

Common quantitative methods include experiments, observations recorded as numbers, and surveys with closed-ended questions.

### **What should a research report include?**

The structure of a research report has several components. The purpose is to provide a general guide. Therefore, these should be used in the context of the specific kind of academic report you are supposed to and going to write.

#### **1. Title Page**

The title page contains the title of the report along with the purpose of the report. Other details e.g., description of name, the date, affiliation etc. are also included in the title page.

#### **2. Terms of Reference**

Under this heading one can briefly explain about the motivation, and methods followed in the report, occasionally in the form of a suitable or a single paragraph. Moreover, sometimes this term of reference are integrated in the title page itself.

#### **3. Abstract or Summary.**

The Abstract or Summary is a very important section of the report. It briefly describes the content of the report, which includes the aim, background, methodology, findings etc. This should be accommodated in a single page. Detailed discussions are not required. Only outline of the main points need to be included.

The Abstract is the most important part of a research report (except possibly for the title).

Many people who read the abstract will not read any other part of the report.

Write the abstract last. Although the abstract will be the first thing the readers read, it should be the last part of the report that you write.

#### **4. The Table of Contents**

This page provides the list of different chapters, sections, subsections etc. along with the corresponding page numbers. The purpose of the contents page is to enable the reader quickly scan the list of headings and locate them efficiently. Numbering system used in the report should be clear and consistent over the entire body of the report

#### **5. Introduction.**

In your introduction you should include information about the background to your research, and what its aims and objectives are.

#### **6. Review of Literature**

A literature review is a comprehensive summary of previous research on a topic. The literature review surveys scholarly articles, books, and other sources relevant to a particular area of research. The literature review has its own voice. The sources of information are not extensively quoted or “copied and pasted.” Instead, the author puts facts and ideas into his or her own words while pointing out where the information came from.

A literature review is a piece of academic writing demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the academic literature on a specific topic placed in context. A literature review also includes a critical evaluation of the material; this is why it is called a literature review

## **7. Methodology / Technique**

This is the most important section of the report where all the important information lies. This chapter/section contains detailed discussions on various aspects of the methodology or technique followed in the work. Many details, e.g. procedures followed, equipment used, sources of materials, precautions etc. are included here.

## **8. Results**

A short description of the results along with calculations conducted to achieve the goal will form this section of results. The results section includes the description of the results of the investigation or experiment. It is augmented with appropriate diagrams, graphs or tables, supporting findings. Results should be presented in a logical order. While the main findings can be included in this chapter

## **9. Discussion**

The results are discussed in extreme detail in this section along with a comparative analysis of reports that could probably exist in the same domain. However, the data and results you have collected must be analysed and discussed in the context of the problem or issue. In case the discussion is long, it may be partitioned into the sections.

## **10. Conclusion**

The conclusion section briefly sums-up the contents of the previous chapter. It shows the overall significance of what has been covered. No new material is presented in the conclusion section. It only highlights the main points of the reports

## **11. Bibliography**

The bibliography lists all references, either in alphabetical order by author, or by the order of appearance in the report. All published sources must be referred to in the report. Different styles of using references and bibliography are in vogue. One has to conform to the specific convention followed by concerned authority.

## **CONCLUSION**

Research Report writing develops the power of designing, organization, co-ordination, judgement and communication. Research Reports provide information, which has been compiled as a result of research and analysis of data and issues. A research report helps to present the findings in a way the intended audience will find easy to read and understand. It allows to present information in a precise and concise manner. It is time-efficient and practical because, in a research report, you do not have to spend time detailing the findings of your research work in person.

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