

# BT 623: Research Methodology

## Lecture 17: Types of Research Reports



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# What is a Research Report?

*A research report is a concise document that summarizes the findings, methods, and conclusions of a research study or investigation. There are various types of research reports available for different purposes.*



<https://www.formpl.us/blog/research-report>



## **WRITING A RESEARCH REPORT**

- A research report is a publication that reports on the findings of a research project or alternatively scientific observations on or about a subject.
- Research assignments like projects, investigations, explorations, thesis, dissertations fall in this category.
- 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 as an objective and accurate source of information.

## **Nature of Research**

1. Quantitative Research Report
2. Quantitative Research Report

## **Qualitative Research Report**

- 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 (Formplus 2020).

## **Quantitative Research Report**

- 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 (Formplus 2020).

## **FEATURES OF A RESEARCH REPORT**

A good research report is marked by certain features:

1. A good research report should be written lucidly, precisely in simple language and should provide a detailed presentation of the whole of research processes.
2. It should present the data in tables and figures with suitable objective explanations. The end part should include the concluding remarks, the prime findings and recommendations, if any.
3. The language and style should be academic, formal, less flaunting and simple.
4. The report is normally based on the first hand information collected by the researcher. However, the reports written on the basis of secondary data are also presented in a systematic and lucid manners.

5. A research report should normally be written in the third person and avoid use of pronouns like, 'I', 'Me', 'My' etc.

6. The report should facilitate the reader with systematic presentation like proper headings, title, sub-titles, tables, graphs, parts and even bullet points where required.

7. The reports normally forward recommendations too as the solutions to the problems and policy making by the concerned authorities, corporate organizations, institutions and governments.



# Different Types Of Research Reports

1. Technical
2. Popular
3. Survey
4. Market Research
5. Case Study
6. Analytical
7. Review
8. Experimental
9. Descriptive
10. Exploratory
11. Explanatory
12. Policy



<https://www.expressanalytics.com/blog/data-reporting/>

# 1. Technical or Scientific Reports

Technical and scientific reports communicate research findings to experts and professionals in a particular field.

- **Characteristics:**

- These reports include technical jargon, detailed methodologies, and in-depth analysis.
- They often have a standardized format for peer review.
- **Example:** An example of a technical research report would be a report explaining the results of a laboratory experiment that investigated the heat conductivity of various materials.

## 2. Popular Reports

Popular reports are designed for a general audience and aim to inform, educate, or entertain on a wide range of topics.

- **Characteristics:**
- Includes clear and jargon-free language
- Uses storytelling, visuals, and anecdotes to engage readers
- Prioritizes readability over deep analysis.
- **Example:** A user-friendly science report on recent black hole discoveries is an example of a popular report. It explained how the black holes form, what they are like, and why they matter in the universe. This report is for people interested in astronomy without deep scientific expertise.

### 3. Survey Reports

Survey reports include data collected through surveys and focus on presenting insights and opinions on specific issues or questions.

- **Characteristics:**
- Contains information on survey methodology, including sample size and data collection methods.
- Presents statistical summaries like percentages and charts.
- **Example:** An online questionnaire surveyed college students' eating habits. After research, the survey report provided data on popular food choices, fast-food consumption frequency, and factors impacting students' dietary decisions. It includes visual charts and aims to guide cafeteria menu planning and promote student wellness.

## 4. Market Research Reports

Market research reports provide insights into consumer behavior, market trends, and industry analysis.

- **Characteristics:**
- Includes market surveys, competitor analysis, and consumer demographics.
- Helps businesses in making strategic decisions.
- **Example:** An example of a market research report would be a report on the global organic food market, including consumer preferences, market segmentation, and growth projections for the next five years.

## 5. Case Study Reports

Case study reports focus on an in-depth examination of a single entity, often to explore complex, real-life situations.

- **Characteristics:**
- Includes detailed descriptions of the case, data collection methods, and analysis.
- Common in business and psychology fields.
- **Example:** A report that includes an examination of the success factors and challenges faced by a tech startup during its initial growth phase is an example of a business case study report.

## 6. Analytical Research Reports

Analytical research reports involve a deep analysis of data to uncover patterns, trends, or relationships.

- **Characteristics:**
- Uses statistical tools and software to analyze data comprehensively
- Common in fields like economics and social sciences.
- **Example:** A financial report analyzing the performance of a portfolio of stocks over a five-year period, including risk assessment and trend analysis, is a detailed analytical report example.

## 7. Review or Literature Survey Reports

Literature review reports provide an overview of existing research on a specific topic, highlighting gaps and trends.

- **Characteristics:**
- Synthesizes findings from various sources and provides a historical context
- Often offers recommendations for future research.
- **Example:** A report summarizing existing research on climate change, highlighting key findings, and identifying gaps in current knowledge is an example of a literature review report.



## 8. Experimental Research Reports

Experimental research reports involve controlled experiments to test hypotheses and determine if the results support or reject the hypothesis.

- **Characteristics:**
- Uses random sampling and control groups to minimize bias.
- Includes detailed descriptions of the experiment, hypothesis, methods, and statistical analyses.
- **Example:** A psychology research report investigating the effects of sleep deprivation on cognitive performance, with one group deprived of sleep and another allowed normal sleep, is a clear example of an experimental research report.

## 9. Descriptive Research Reports

- Descriptive research reports aim to provide a comprehensive picture of a phenomenon, group, or situation. They seek to answer the “what” and “how” questions.
- **Characteristics:**
- Typically, it relies on observations, surveys, and content analysis.
- Focuses on describing and summarizing data.
- **Example:** A report describing the distribution of endangered species in a specific national park based on field observations is an example of a descriptive research report.

## 10. Exploratory Research Reports

Exploratory research reports are conducted when there is little prior knowledge about a subject. They aim to identify key variables and research questions.

- **Characteristics:**
- Involves open-ended interviews, focus groups, and literature reviews.
- Findings are preliminary, serving as a basis for further research.
- **Example:** An example of an exploratory research report would be a report that a newly established company creates to investigate the potential factors influencing employee turnover.

# 11. Explanatory Research Reports

Explanatory research reports seek to understand the relationships between variables and explain why certain phenomena occur.

- **Characteristics:**
- Uses experimental designs, surveys, and statistical analyses.
- Provides in-depth insights into the research problem.
- **Example:** A report explores the relationship between smoking habits and lung cancer incidence in a population using a longitudinal study and statistical analyses. This is an example of an explanatory research report.

## 12. Policy or White Papers

Policy or [white papers](#) aim to inform policymakers, stakeholders, and the public about specific issues and recommend actions.

### **Characteristics:**

- Presents research findings in a concise and accessible manner
- Often consists of policy recommendations.
- **Example:** An example of a policy research report is a policy paper on renewable energy adoption, outlining the environmental and economic benefits. It may also include recommendations on incentives for clean energy initiatives.

# **Components of Research Reports**

These are some common components you must know while writing different types of research reports.

## **1. Title Page:**

- Title of the Report
- Your Name
- Institutional Affiliation
- Date

## **2. Abstract:**

Add a concise summary of the research, including the research question or objective, methodology, key findings, and implications. Typically, it should be no more than 150-250 words.

## **3. Table of Contents:**

Include a list of sections and subsections with page numbers.

#### **4. List of Figures and Tables:**

If your research includes numerical data, add all the statistics and tables along with their corresponding page numbers. It is similar to a table of contents for quantitative data.

#### **5. List of Abbreviations and Symbols:**

Include any abbreviations or symbols you have used in the report and their meanings.

#### **6. Introduction:**

- Provide background information on the topic.
- State the research question or objective.
- Explain the significance and purpose of the study.
- Provide an outline of the report's structure.

#### **7. Literature Review:**

- Review relevant literature and previous research on the topic.
- Identify gaps in existing knowledge.
- Explain how your study contributes to the field.

## **8. Methodology:**

- Describe the research methods and techniques that you used.
- Explain the sampling methods, data collection, and data analysis procedures.
- Discuss any ethical considerations.

## **9. Results:**

- Present the findings of your research.
- Use tables, figures, charts, and graphs to illustrate key points.
- Include descriptive and inferential statistics as needed.

## **10. Discussion:**

- Interpret the results and relate them to the research question.
- Discuss the implications of your findings.
- Compare your results to previous research.
- Address any limitations of your study.



## **11. Conclusion:**

- Summarize the main findings and their significance.
- Restate the research question and how it was addressed.
- Suggest areas for future research.

## **12. References:**

Include a list of all the sources cited in your report in a standardized citation style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago).

## **Importance of different types of research reports**

1. Research reports share new knowledge with the academic and scientific community, advancing understanding in various fields.
2. They offer a structured account of the research process, essential for transparency, replication, and reference.
3. Reports hold researchers accountable, allowing others to assess the validity and reliability of their work.
4. These reports influence policy, business strategies, and practical applications, such as medical research shaping healthcare and market research guiding businesses.

## **Limitations of different types of research reports**

1. Research reports may reflect biases from the researcher or funder, so it's crucial to assess the methodology.
2. Findings may not always apply to different contexts or populations.
3. Access to some research reports is limited, restricting important information.
4. Conducting, writing, and publishing research can be time-consuming.

## **Referencing:**

1. Your report must follow an acceptable academic style of referencing.
2. According to Butcher (1981: 226), there are four referencing systems from which to choose:
  - i. The short-title system;
  - ii. the author-date system (also known as the name-year system, Harvard system or parenthetical referencing system);
  - iii. The reference by number system (also known as the Vancouver system);
  - iv. The author-number system.

## **Writing a bibliography**

- There are several well-established systems for writing a bibliography and your choice is dependent upon the preference of the discipline and university.

## **Summary**

- Writing your report is the most crucial step in the research process as it communicates the findings to your research supervisor and readers.
- Styles of research writing vary markedly among researchers but all research reports must be written clearly and concisely.
- A badly written report can spoil all the hard work you have put into your research study.

## References:

- <https://www.educba.com/types-of-research-reports/>
- “Research Methodology WRITING a RESEARCH REPORT.” 2021. ResearchGate. 2021.  
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- Ranjit, Kumar. *Research Methodology A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners*. fourth ed. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2014.