



Report Writing

Unit 5



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4.1. What is research report?

A research report is a formal document that serves to communicate the outcomes of a study.

Here are three key aspects of a research report:

- A research report is a **systematic write-up** or document that presents the findings of a study.
- It includes essential elements such as **methodologies, discussions, conclusions, and recommendations** derived from the research.
- The report functions as a medium to communicate the research work to relevant people and also acts as a source for preserving research for future reference.

4.1. What is a research report?

- The research report writers in making the report good qualitative should remember the saying '**Try to express, not to impress**'.

4.2. Need of a Research Report

A research report serves several crucial purposes in the communication and application of study findings.

Here is the need for a research report:

- It acts as a **decision-making tool**, providing essential information that allows for a large number of important decisions to be made in various areas, particularly within complex business organizations.
- It functions as a **medium to communicate the research work to relevant people** and is also a valuable source for preserving research for future reference.
- It **supports investigation and problem-solving** by enabling committees, commissions, or study groups to examine issues, identify their causes, and present findings, often including recommendations.
- It **facilitates evaluation and control within organizations**, allowing executives to assess the performance of departments and units and ensuring activities align with planned objectives.

4.3. Components of a Research Report

1. Title
2. Abstract
3. Keywords
4. Rationale/background and motivation
5. Aim and objectives of research
6. Literature review
7. Research problem
8. Methodology
9. Research plan and budget
10. Contributions—impact and significance
11. Reference list/bibliography
12. Annexes

Title

- The research title should be
 - specific, direct, concise, meaningful, and easily understandable;
 - not more than one or two lines;
 - must accurately represent the objective and indicate the purpose of the study.
- The title is centered at the top of the page and only important words are used. It includes a very brief statement of the main variables (independent and dependent) in the study.
- The title usually describes the subject matter of the article. For example:
Effect of Smoking on Academic Performance.

Abstract

An abstract, also known as a summary, is a vital part of a research report that offers a quick overview of the study.

Here are four key aspects of an abstract:

- An abstract serves as a brief preview or summary of the research article, allowing readers to quickly understand the study's content and decide if they want to read the full paper.
- It typically summarizes the purpose, methods, results, and conclusions of the study. This includes details like the subject population, research design, data gathering procedures, a summary of results (including statistical significance), and inferences drawn.
- The abstract should be one paragraph and usually ranges from 100 to 250 words. It should not include literature reviews, theoretical background, abbreviations, or citations.
- It is often easiest to write the abstract after the rest of the paper is complete.

Keywords

Keywords are an important element in a research report, providing a quick insight into the study's content.

Here's why they are needed:

- Keywords are part of a "key word list" included in the beginning material of a research report (usually beneath the Abstract)
- They serve to give the reader a 'preview' of what's to come in the research article, much like the abstract does.
- The primary need for keywords is to help potential readers determine whether or not the paper is interesting enough to read by quickly signaling its main topics and themes.
- To be effective, keywords, similar to the abstract, should be clear, concise, and complete in summarizing the core purpose, methods, results, and conclusions of the paper.

Rationale/background and motivation

The rationale, background, and motivation are crucial elements within a research report's introductory sections, setting the stage for the study.

Here's a concise breakdown of its key components:

- Reflects an extensive literature review.
- Outlines what is already known about the topic, including knowledge gaps or "lacunae".
- The rationale or justification explains why the research is relevant and important. It delves into the practical or theoretical concerns that motivated the study, aiming to convince the reader of the problem's existence and the significance of the work
- It involves critically engaging with existing literature (citing, comparing, contrasting, and critiquing) and connecting it to your own research.
- The motivation ultimately leads to the articulation of the research questions or objectives. It clarifies the issues or problems the study aims to solve and provides background for the proposed solution.

Aim and objectives of research

The aim is what the research wants to achieve.

The objectives are the specific steps to reach that aim.

Research Motivation explain why it is important and is being done.

Key Points:

- Research explores real-world problems to find new knowledge.
- It focuses on a specific issue and explains why it matters.
- Objectives help create clear questions or hypotheses to guide the study.
- The goal is to offer a useful solution or better approach to the problem.

Literature Review

A literature review is an extensive examination of existing knowledge to identify what is known and pinpoint knowledge gaps.

It grounds the study by critically engaging with prior research

It demonstrate that the researcher is aware of previous work done on the problem and that their proposed research is not a duplication of effort

Research Problem and Solution

Research Problem

- Specific issue to be investigated.
- Highlights its importance and existing knowledge gaps.

Methodology

- The methodology section of a research report acts as the blueprint for collecting, measuring, and analyzing data, showcasing the method used to reach the research conclusions.
- It details what the researcher performed to achieve the results mentioned.
- Methodology is also mostly shown in a graphical representation.
- It allows others to understand and potentially replicate the research.
- The Methodology section, also known as "materials and methods" or "procedure," is the part of the report that explains exactly how the study was conducted. It serves as a "cookbook" of the experiment, providing enough detail for another researcher to duplicate or replicate your study.
- The Methodology section is written in the past tense and should be complete, detailed, and clear. It is important to not include any results or interpretations in this section, as its sole purpose is to describe the how of the study. It is typically organized using subheadings such as 'Subjects/Participants', 'Apparatus', and 'Procedure' for clarity.

Research plan and budget

The research plan and budget are vital for organizing and managing a research study effectively.

Here are four key aspects concerning the research plan and budget:

- A research plan, detailed in the methodology section, clearly describes how the study will be conducted. This includes outlining the participants, materials or equipment used, and the precise step-by-step procedures for data collection, sampling, and statistical analysis.
- The purpose of a well-defined research plan is to ensure transparency and reproducibility. It acts like a "cookbook," providing enough detail for another researcher to duplicate or replicate the study, allowing findings to be verified.
- Research demands considerable time and money. Therefore, it's a key consideration that the report must be prepared within the budgeted amount to avoid excessive costs.
- During the planning phase, researchers should create an outline or "roadmap" for the report, which includes setting a time frame for its completion and submission, ensuring efficient progress of the study.

Contribution, impact, and significance

The contributions, impact, and significance sections in a research report explain the value and importance of your study's findings.

Here are four key aspects in simple English:

- **Contributions** highlight the new knowledge or unique ideas your research brings. This often means your study fills a gap in what we already know or offers a new, better way to understand or solve a problem.
- **Significance** explains why your research is important or relevant. It clarifies the practical or theoretical reasons that made the study necessary, showing why its findings matter to others in the field or in society.
- The **impact** describes what your study's results mean and their real-world effects or consequences. This section shows how the new information from your research can be applied.
- Together, these aspects show how your research offers solutions or improved ways to deal with issues, creates valuable new information, and can guide future decisions or investigations.

Reference list/bibliography

As with any scholarly research paper, you must cite the sources you used in composing your proposal.

- References - lists only the literature that you actually used or cited in your proposal.
- Bibliography - lists everything you used or cited in your proposal with additional citations of any key sources relevant to understanding the research problem.

Annexes

- Support Documents: Annexes, also referred to as appendices, are applicable support documents.
- Purpose & Presentation: They should be included and satisfactory, providing additional relevant information, and sections like references, which function similarly, normally do not count towards the total length of your proposal.

Other Parts of Research Report:

- **Funding and Acknowledgement:** This section thanks people or groups who helped or funded the research.
- **Table of Contents, List Figures, List of Tables and Abbreviations:** These lists help readers quickly locate sections, images, tables, and understand abbreviations within the report.
- **Title Page and Copyright Page:** The title page displays the report's name, author, and institution, while a copyright page indicates legal ownership.
- **Declaration and Recommendation:** The recommendation section suggests future actions or studies based on the findings, and a declaration serves as a formal statement or certificate.
- **Certification Page:** This is a formal certificate or statement typically placed at the beginning of the report.

4.4. A case study on any research project

Task:

- Choose a real research report and analyze it.

Instructions:

- Explore how the report is structured.
- Focus on key components: background, objectives, methodology, etc.
- Reflect on strengths and areas for improvement.