

REPORT WRITING



Meaning:-

“A report is a statement of the result of an investigation or of any matter on which definite information is required.”

(Oxford English Dictionary)

Objectives

- Understand the purposes of a report.
- Plan a report.
- Understand the structure of a report.
- Collect information for your report.
- Organize your information.
- Use an appropriate style of writing.
- Present data effectively.
- Understand how to lay out your

Two main types of reports

(a) Thesis:

(b) A long essay or dissertation involving personal research ,
written as part of a university Doctorate degree.

(c) Dissertation:

A long essay, especially one written for a university
degree or diploma.

Significance Of Report

- A Major component of the research study as the research remains incomplete without report.
- Reports communicate the planning, policies, and other matters regarding an organization.
- Reports discloses unknown information.
- Reports help the top line in decision making.
- A true and balanced report also helps in problem solving.

Attributes of a good report

- A report should be in a **proper format**. The report should have all the essentials components such as title, introduction, findings & recommendations.
- A good report should be **properly dated & signed** by the concerned authority or by the chairman of the committee or by all committee members.

This has a legal significance and needs special attention in report writing.
- A lengthy report is not necessary.

Report should be **brief and compact** document, it should give complete picture of problem under investigation.

Attributes of a good report

- A good report is one which is drafted in a **simple and clear** language.

Its should not be difficult and a reader should be able to **understand** the entire report **easily, exactly & quickly**.

- In a report writing attention should be given to certain essential **technical details**. For eg: the pages and paragraphs of the report should be numbered properly. Marginal heading and titles should be given. This gives convenience to the readers.

Attributes of a good report

- The data collection, analysis and interpretation of the data conclusions drawn and the recommendations made in report should be made accurate so as to make the whole report **reliable** and **dependable** for future reference and also for policy decisions.
- Writing reports **needs skills** and this task should be accomplished by the researcher with the utmost care.

Preliminary Material

- **Title of Report**
- **Table of Content**
- **Abstract/
Synopsis**

Body of the Report

- **Introduction**
- **Literature review**
- **Methodology**
- **Results**
- **Discussion**
- **Conclusion
Recommendations**

Supplementary Material

- **References/
Bibliography**
- **Appendices**

Title page

- The title itself is an important opportunity to tell the potential reader what your research is about.
- Format for the title page is likely to be a required in our discipline, we you need to check what that is.

Title page should bear:

- The title of the dissertation,
- The degree for which it is submitted,
- The anticipated year of graduation, and
- The student's first name, initials and surname
- An accurate word count

Table Of Contents

- a) The titles of parts, sections or chapters and their principal, and their principal subdivisions should be listed in the Table of Contents and must be worded exactly as they appear in the body of the report.

It is advisable to use numbers for;

Heading: e.g. 5 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Sub-heading: 5.2

Sub sub-heading: 5.2.1

- b) Major headings and sub-headings are typed closer with the left margin.
- c) Candidate is free to label or give title for each chapter as sensibly possible.

Declaration of Originality (optional)

- The dissertation gives you the opportunity to carry out an original piece of research.
- This does not mean attempting to do something totally unrelated to anything tackled in the past

'I hereby declare that this dissertation has been composed by me and is based on my own work'

*Signature:*_____

Acknowledgement

In this part, every person whom you want to mention or dedicate your work can be added here. It might be:

1. Family
2. Friends
3. Respondents
4. Colleagues
5. Fellowmates
6. Subordinates
7. Professor....etc

Abstract / Summary

- The abstract should be placed immediately before the first chapter of the report.(not more than 300 words)
- It should take the form of a short factual statement identifying the topic of your study, the approach adopted & the findings.
- Including the conclusions.
- It is likely to be used by future students and by other researchers.
- The abstract should give a brief exposition of the research problems. purposes of the study, scope of study, research approach and limitation.

Introduction

- Background of study
- Statement of the problem
- Research Question
- Objective of study
- Limitations
- Company Profile

Literature Review, Or Context Of The Study

The purpose of this chapter is to show that you are aware of where your own piece of research fits into the overall context of research in your field. To do this you need to:

- Describe the current state of research in your defined area;
- Consider whether there are any closely related areas that

You also need to refer to;

- Identify a gap where you argue that further research is Needed
- Explain how you plan to attend to that particular research gap.

This can lead logically into a clear statement of the research question(s) or problem(s) you will be addressing.

In addition to the research context, there may be other

Relevant contexts to present for example:

- Theoretical context;
- Methodological context;
- Practice context; and
- Political context.

Methodology

Methodology Checklist

Does the methodology (or research method) section

- explain when, where, and how the research was done?
- Include subsections or informative headings as appropriate (e.g., evaluation criteria)?
- Mention which **method/tools** were use to collect data

Purpose of Methodology

The method section answers these two main questions:

1. How was the data collected or generated?
2. How was it analyzed? In other words, it shows your reader how you obtained your results. But why do you need to explain how you obtained your results?

Result / Discussion

- If you've organized, displayed and analyzed your data, it's time to write it up, and the place for this is the results section.
- The key to a great results section is in describing your results - you need to tell your readers exactly what you found out. This is where you document what was observed or discovered. It is not the place for discussion.

Things to remember when writing up results include...

- Focus on the key results
- Be clear and concise
- Don't go into too much detail
- Let your pictures do the talking
- However, be careful not to omit anything
- Describe your results don't explain or discuss them - this is what the discussion section is for!

Discussion

This section has four purposes, it should:

- Interpret and explain your results
- Answer your research question
- Justify your approach
- Critically evaluate your study

Conclusions

- This chapter tends to be much shorter than the Discussion.
- It is not a mere summary of your research, but needs to be conclusions as to the main points that have emerged and what they mean for your field.

Recommendations

These can take two forms:

- Recommendations for further study, or recommendations for change, or both
- Each recommendation should trace directly to a conclusion.

References

- Whenever you cite information (this includes graphics) from another source, you must credit the source in your References.
- Always check with your instructor to determine which reference style to use.

Appendices

When to use them

- Material that is related but supplementary to the main argument
- Brief material referred to throughout your dissertation, such as a piece of legislation or historical document
- Complex tables or data

Examples of appendix materials

- Transcription(s) of interviews(s)
 - Examples and/or full results of questionnaires
 - Materials not published in standard sources such as correspondence between you and an author whose writing you are researching
 - Large tables of data
-

MECHANICS OF WRITING A REPORT

1) Size And Physical Design:

- Unruled paper of standard size
- If it is in hand written than use black or blue ink.
- Margin:

Right side: half inches.

Left side: One or One and half inches.

- Header and Footer:

One inches from the sides spaced should be left.

2) Layout:

The layout of the research report and various types of reports have been described in this presentation earlier which should be taken as a guide for report writing in case of particular problem.

3) Treatment of quotations:

Definition or Quotations should be placed in quotation marks and double spaced forming an immediate part of the text.

4) Footnotes:

Footnotes serves two purposes:

a) Page Number:

There should be page number in the report, if single side than page number page number should be written in centre or at the right side at the bottom of the page.

b) For Cross References:

Asterisk(*) sign may be used to prevent confusions and supplement note related to particular word should be mentioned below at that page.

5) Documentation style:

Regarding documentation any given work should give essential facts about the edition used.

The common order may be described as under:

Regarding reference:

- (1) Author's name in normal order;
- (2) Title of work, underlined to indicate italics;
- (3) Place and date of publication;
- (4) Page number.

Example

John Gassner, *Masters of drama*, New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1954,p. 315.

6) Abbreviations:

Following is the list of Most common abbreviations frequently used in report writing:

bk.,	book
art.,	Article
ch.,	Chapter
ed.,	Editor
ex.,	Example
ill.,	Illustration
MS.,	Manuscripts
pp	page

7)Use of statistics, charts and graphs:

- Statistics are usually presented in the form of tables, charts bars and line-graphs and pictograms.
- Presentation should be self explanatory and complete it in itself.

8) The final draft:

Revising and rewriting the rough draft of the report should be done with great care before writing the final draft. For the purpose, the researcher should put to himself questions like:

- a) Are the sentences written in the report clear ?
- b) Are they grammatically correct ?
- c) Do they say what is meant ?
- d) Do the various points incorporated in report fit logically ?

On these questions we do final drafting.

9) Bibliography: It is list of writings with time and place of publication.

10) Preparation of Index: At the end of the report, an index should be always prepared. It acts good guide, to the reader. Index may be prepared of 3 types:

- a) Author Index
- b) Subject Index
- c) Content Index

Adam, Andrew K. M. · 89, 90, 136
 Adam, Ian 27
 Africa 70, 135, 146–147, 149–153, 165–166, 190, 226–227
 Ahern, Emily M. 181
 Ahn, Byung-Mu 117
 Alexander the Great 84
 Alexander, Donald 177
 Alexander, Philip S. 209
 Allison, Dale C. 190
 Amaladass, Anand 108–111
 Ambivalence 15, 188
 Amore, Roy 102
Analects 137, 177, 179–180

Confucianism 177
 Confucius 137, 169, 177–180
 Constructive; Construction;
 Constructing 7, 10–11, 13–15, 19
 34–36, 40, 50, 52, 57, 68–73, 78, 83
 87–89, 107, 109, 113, 121, 123, 128
 129–130, 132, 144, 152, 157–158,
 166–167, 183, 186, 193, 225, 227, 2
 232–233
 Context; postcolonial 4, 37, 58, 75,
 122–123, 144
 Context; theoretical 7
 Contextual 3, 32, 43, 61–62, 86, 90–
 107, 121, 129

TYPES OF REPORTS

(A) Technical Report

The main emphasis is on

- (i) the **methods** employed
- (ii) **assumptions** made in the course of the study
- (iii) the detailed presentation of the **findings** including their limitations and supporting data.

Outline of a technical report :

1. **Summary of results:** A brief review of the main findings just in two or three pages.
2. **Nature of the study:** Description of the general objectives of study, formulation of the problem in operational terms, the working hypothesis, the type of analysis and data required, etc.
3. **Methods employed:** Specific methods used in the study and their limitations. For instance, in sampling studies we should give details of sample design viz., sample size, sample selection, etc.

4. **Data:** Discussion of data collected, their sources, characteristics and limitations. If secondary data are used, their suitability to the problem at hand be fully assessed. In case of a survey, the manner in which data were collected should be fully described.

5. **Analysis of data and presentation of findings:** The analysis of data and presentation of the findings of the study with supporting data in the form of tables and charts be fully narrated. This, in fact, happens to be the main body of the report usually extending over several chapters.

6. **Conclusions:** A detailed summary of the findings and the policy implications drawn from the results be explained.

7. **Bibliography:** Bibliography of various sources consulted be prepared and attached.

8. **Technical appendices:** Appendices be given for all technical matters relating to questionnaire, mathematical derivations, elaboration on particular technique of analysis and the like ones.

9. **Index:** Index must be prepared and be given invariably in the report at the end.

(B) Popular Report

- Give emphasis on simplicity and attractiveness.
- Clear writing, minimization of technical, particularly mathematical, details and liberal use of charts and diagrams.
- Attractive layout along with large print, many subheadings,
- even an occasional cartoon

General outline of a popular report.

1. The **findings and their implications**: Emphasis in the report is given on the findings of most practical interest and on the implications of these findings.
2. **Recommendations for action**: Recommendations for action on the basis of the findings of the study is made in this section of the report.
3. **Objective of the study**: A general review of how the problem arise is presented along with the specific objectives of the project under study.

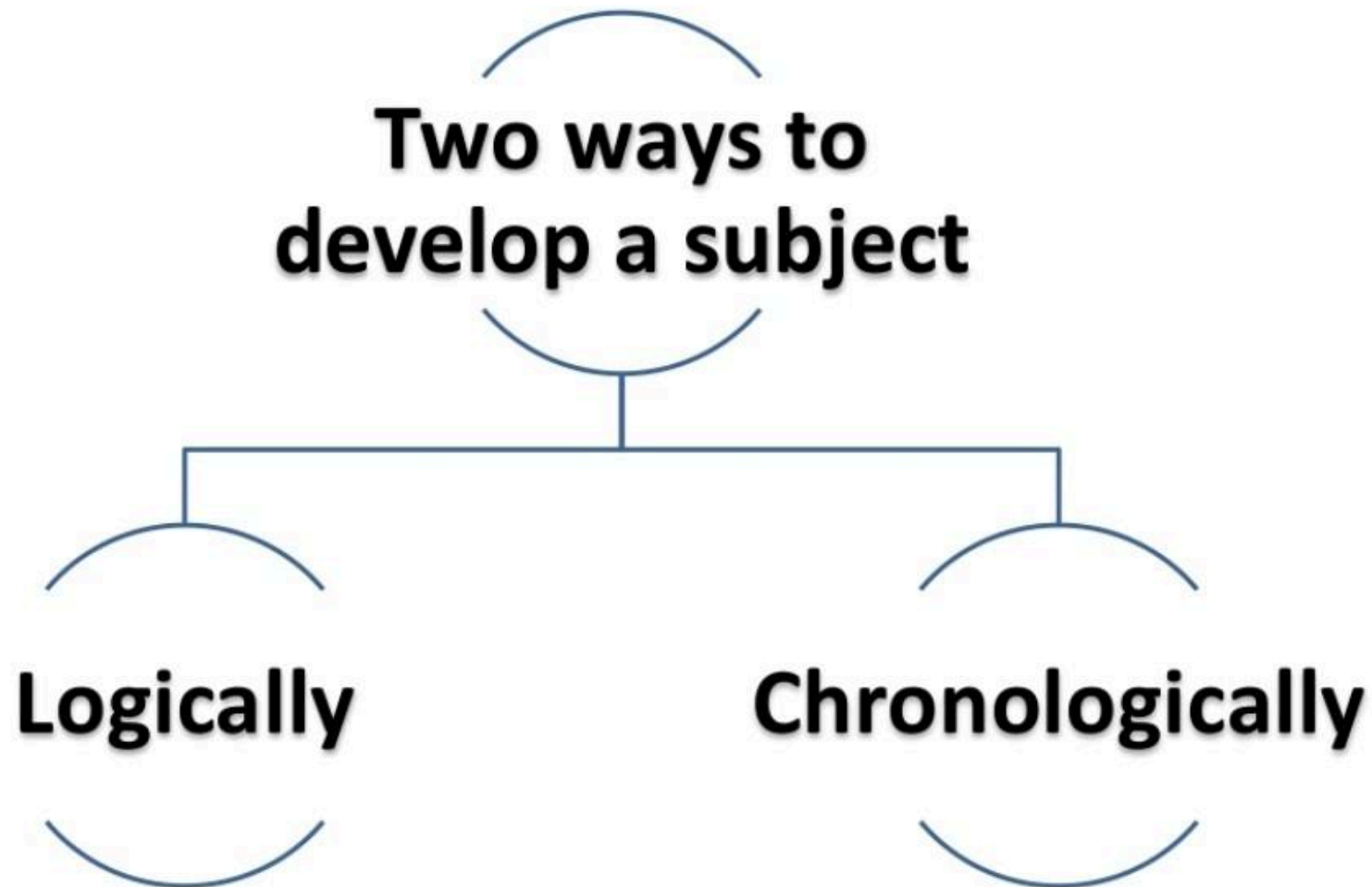
4. **Methods employed:** A brief and non-technical description of the methods and techniques used, including a short review of the data on which the study is based, is given in this part of the report.
5. **Results:** This section constitutes the main body of the report wherein the results of the study are presented in clear and non-technical terms with liberal use of all sorts of illustrations such as charts, diagrams and the like ones.
6. **Technical appendices:** More detailed information on methods used, forms, etc. is presented in the form of appendices. But the appendices are often not detailed if the report is entirely meant for general public.

DIFFERENT STEPS IN REPORT WRITING

The usual steps involved

- Logical analysis of the subject-matter
- Preparation of the final outline
- Preparation of the rough draft
- Rewriting and polishing
- Preparation of the final bibliography
- Writing the final draft.

Logical analysis of the subject matter



Logically

- Made on the basis of mental connections and associations between the one thing and another by means of analysis.
- Logical treatment often consists in developing the material from the simple possible to the most complex structures

Chronologically

- Chronological development is based on a connection or sequence in time or occurrence.
- The directions for doing or making something usually follow the chronological order.

Preparation of the final outline

- Outlines are the framework upon which long written works are constructed.
- Aid to the logical organization of the material and a reminder of the points to be stressed in the report.

Preparation of the rough draft

- The researcher write down what he has done in the
 - Context of his research study
 - Procedure adopted by him in collecting the material
 - Various limitations faced
 - The technique of analysis
 - The broad findings and generalizations
 - The various suggestions he wants to offer

Rewriting and polishing of the rough draft

- More time than the writing of the rough draft
- Should check the report for weaknesses in logical development or presentation
- Researcher should give due attention to the fact that in his rough draft he has been consistent or not.
- Should check the mechanics of writing—grammar, spelling and usage.

Preparation of the final bibliography:

- The bibliography, generally appended to the research report,
 - Is a list of books
 - Should contain all those works which the researcher has consulted.
- The bibliography should be arranged alphabetically.

- Divided into two parts;
 - Names of books and pamphlets,
 - Names of magazine and newspaper articles.

-
- *For books and pamphlets the order may be as :*

1. Name of author, last name first.
2. Title, underlined to indicate italics.
3. Place, publisher, and date of publication.
4. Number of volumes.

- *Example :*

“ Kothari, *Quantitative Techniques*, New
Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1978 ”

- *For magazines and newspapers the order may be as under:*

1. Name of the author, last name first.
2. Title of article, in quotation marks.
3. Name of periodical, underlined to indicate italics.
4. The volume or volume and number.
5. The date of the issue.
6. The pagination.

Writing the final draft:

- Should be written in a concise and objective style and in simple language.
- Avoiding vague expressions such as “it seems”, “there may be”, and the like ones.
- Should not be dull, but must enthuse people and maintain interest and must show originality.

ORAL PRESENTATION

ORAL PRESENTATION

- Oral presentation of the results are important and effective, especially where policy recommendations are indicated by project results.
- It provides an opportunity for give-and-take decisions which generally lead to a better understanding of the findings and their implications.

ORAL PRESENTATION

Demerits

- The lack of any permanent record concerning the research details
- It may be just possible that the findings may fade away from people's memory even before an action is taken.
- a written report may be circulated before the oral presentation and referred to during the discussion.

ORAL PRESENTATION

- Oral presentation is effective when supplemented by various visual devices.
- Use of slides, wall charts and blackboards is quite helpful in contributing to clarity and in reducing the boredom
- Outline of the presentation can be given to the intended audience before the presentation.

PRECAUTIONS FOR WRITING RESEARCH REPORTS

- Length of the report: We should keep in view the fact that it should be long enough to cover the subject but short enough to maintain interest.
- A research report should **not**, if this can be avoided, **be dull**; it should be such as to **sustain reader's interest**
- Abstract terminology and technical jargon should be avoided in a research report.

PRECAUTIONS FOR WRITING RESEARCH REPORTS

- Various constraints experienced in conducting the research study may also be stated in the report.
- Objective of the study, the nature of the problem, the methods employed and the analysis techniques adopted must all be clearly stated in the beginning of the report in the form of introduction.

PRECAUTIONS FOR WRITING RESEARCH REPORTS

- A research report should show originality and should necessarily be an attempt to solve some intellectual problem.
- It is usually considered desirable if the report makes a forecast of the probable future of the subject concerned.
- Report must be attractive in appearance, neat and clean

PRECAUTIONS FOR WRITING RESEARCH REPORTS

Appendices, Bibliography, Index

- Appendices should be enlisted in respect of all the technical data in the report.
- Bibliography of sources consulted is a must for a good report and must necessarily be given.
- Index is also considered an essential part of a good report and as such must be prepared and appended at the end.