

Research Report Writing: Introduction, Definition and Report Format

“Research report is a research document that contains basic aspects of the research project”.

Introduction:

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.

Definitions:

1. In simple words:

Research report is the systematic, articulate, and orderly presentation of research work in a written form.

2. We can also define the term as:

Research report is a research document that contains basic aspects of the research project.

3. In the same way, we can say:

Research report involves relevant information on the research work carried out. It may be in form of hand-written, typed, or computerized.

Report Format:

There is no one best format for all reports. Format depends on several relevant variables. One must employ a suitable format to create desirable impression with clarity. Report must be attractive. It should be written systematically and bound carefully. A report must use the format (often called structure) that best fit the needs and wants of its readers. Normally, following format is suggested as a basic outline, which has sufficient flexibility to meet the most situations.

Research report is divided into three parts as:

I. First Part (Formality Part):

- (i) Cover page
- (ii) Title page
- (iii) Certificate or statement
- (iv) Index (brief contents)
- (v) Table of contents (detailed index)
- (vi) Acknowledgement
- (vii) List of tables and figures used

(viii) Preface/forwarding/introduction

(ix) Summary report

II. Main Report (Central Part of Report):

(i) Statement of objectives

(ii) Methodology and research design

(iii) Types of data and its sources

(iv) Sampling decisions

(v) Data collection methods

(vi) Data collection tools

(vii) Fieldwork

(viii) Analysis and interpretation (including tables, charts, figures, etc.)

(ix) Findings

(x) Limitations

(xi) Conclusions and recommendations

(xii) Any other relevant detail

III. Appendix (Additional Details):

(i) Copies of forms used

- (ii) Tables not included in findings
- (iii) A copy of questionnaire
- (iv) Detail of sampling and rate of response
- (v) Statement of expenses
- (vi) Bibliography – list of books, magazines, journals, and other reports
- (vii) Any other relevant information

Key Considerations/Factors:

While preparing research report, following issues must be considered:

- (i) Objectives
- (ii) Type of problem/subject
- (iii) Nature and type of research
- (iv) Audience or users of research work
- (v) Size of report
- (vi) Form of writing – handwritten, typed, or computerized.
- (vii) Time and cost
- (viii) Language
- (ix) Contents of report

(x) Order of contents

(xi) Number of copies

(xii) Format – type and size of paper; lengths width, and depth of report; and pattern of writing including paragraph, indent, numbering, font size and type, colouring, etc.

(xiii) Binding (for soft, and, particularly, for hard copy) – type, quality of material, colour, etc., related issues.