

LAYOUT OF RESEARCH REPORT

R E S E A R C H R E P O R T

Preliminary pages

- Title page
- Preface/ Foreword
- Acknowledgements
- Table of contents
- List of tables
- List of illustrations, abbreviations

Helps reader easily locate the required information in the report

Main Text

- Introduction
- Statement of findings and recommendations
- Results
- Implications of results
- Summary

End matter

- Appendices – questionnaires, sample information, mathematical derivations, detailed data etc.
- Bibliography
- Index – alphabetical listing of names, places, topics along with page numbers (at the end)

Works as a guide for the reader for contents in the report

DEVELOPING DRAFT OUTLINE

Chapter scheme of main text

Decide how you are going to divide your report into different chapters
and plan what will be written in each one

- **Develop the chapters** around significant sub-objectives or themes of your study
- Depending on the importance of a theme or sub-objective, either devote a complete chapter to it or combine it with related themes to form one chapter
- **A title** should be given to each chapter
- Title should be clear, concise, descriptive of the main theme and communicating the main thrust of the chapter

DRAFT OUTLINE – Chapter One

Exact format varies according to type of research and nature of study

First chapter more often entitled **'INTRODUCTION'** is a general introduction to the study. It covers

- ➔ Should cover most part of the research proposal
- ➔ Background and rationale to the problem
- ➔ Theoretical framework
- ➔ Hypothesis and Objectives of the study
- ➔ Introduction to study population/ study area
- ➔ Literature review
- ➔ The study design
- ➔ The sampling strategy
- ➔ Measurement procedures and analytical workflow - methodology
- ➔ Deviations from the original plan, if any; Scope of the study

DRAFT OUTLINE – Chapter Two

In quantitative research reports the second chapter should provide information about the study population

RELEVANT social, economic and demographic characteristics of the study population/ study area must be described.

Purpose of this chapter is two-fold:

- To provide readers some background information about the population/ area from which you collected the information so that they can relate the findings to it.
- It helps to identify the variance within a group

DRAFT OUTLINE

Main text - subsequent chapters

Title and contents of subsequent chapters depend on what you have attempted to describe, explore, examine, establish and prove in your study

- As content of each project is different, chapters will accordingly be different.
- Title of each chapter should reflect the main thrust of its contents
- The outline should specify sub-sections of the chapter
- Subsections should be developed around the different aspects of the theme being discussed in the chapter

DRAFT OUTLINE – Other considerations

- If you plan to correlate two or more variables, **specify the variables**
- **Plan the sequence of discussion of variables**
- Sequence should follow the linkage and logical progression between the sections
- **Outline however rough, provides a direction to your writing**
- **Proposed outline CAN BE CHANGED to significant extent when writing the final report.**

Writing about variables- example outline

- ✦ Researchers vary greatly in the way they organize their writing. There cannot be a standard outline.
- ✦ **The following outline may be helpful for beginners**
- ✦ While writing about information related to particular variable, write as if you are trying to answer the following questions:
 - ✦ Why did you think it important to study the variable?
 - ✦ What effect, in your opinion, may this variable have on the main variable you are explaining?

Writing about variables- example outline

- ✦ What relationships have other studies found between the variables you are analysing? (This is where RoL is integrated with findings of the study)
- ✦ What did you expect to find out in terms of relationship between the variables (If you have formulated a hypothesis....consider it here)
- ✦ What has your study found out ? (Provide hard data from your study here, as tables, graphs or text)
- ✦ What does the data show (Interpret the findings of your analysis)

Writing about variables- example outline

- ✦ **What conclusions you draw?**
- ✦ **How do conclusions drawn from your study compare with those from similar studies in the past?**
- ✦ **Does your study support or contradict them**
- ✦ **What explanation can you provide for the findings of your study?**

MAIN TEXT

- ✦ A detailed presentation of findings, with supporting data in the form of tables and charts together with a validation of results
- ✦ Should contain statistical **summaries and reductions of data rather than the raw data**
- ✦ All results should be presented in a **logical sequence**
- ✦ **Split** into readily identifiable sections
- ✦ All relevant results must find a place in the report
- ✦ Should be guided by the **research problem, objectives and hypotheses**

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESULTS

- Placed towards the end of the main text
- Put down the results again clearly and precisely
- State the implications that flow from the results of the study
- Implications may have **three aspects**:
 1. A statement of **inferences drawn** from the present study which may be expected to apply in similar circumstances
 2. **The conditions of the present study** which may limit the extent of legitimate generalization of the inferences drawn from the study
 3. The **relevant questions that still remain unanswered** or **new questions** raised by the study along with suggestions for the kind of research that would provide answers for them

FINAL CONCLUSION

- Finish the report with a short conclusion which summarises and recapitulates the main points of the study
- The conclusion drawn from the study should be clearly related to the hypotheses that were stated in the introductory section
- Include a forecast on the probable future of the subject
- Give an indication of the kind of research that needs to be done in that particular field is useful and desirable


SUMMARY

- Conclude the research report with a brief summary
- State in brief
 - 🖥 The research problem
 - 🖥 The methodology
 - 🖥 Major findings
 - 🖥 Major conclusions drawn from the research results

TYPES OF REPORTS

- Vary greatly in length and type largely dictated by the problems at hand

-  **Business reports** – letter form, one or two pages in length

-  **Financial reports** (Banks, insurance organizations and financial institutions) - short balance sheet type of tabulation for their annual reports

-  **Mathematician's reports** – in form of algebraic notations

-  **Literature reports** – Long reports presenting the critical analysis regarding subject in hand

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Education and Psychology – Present result of experimentation accompanied by the detailed statistical tabulations




Clinical Psychologists – Case history form



Media reports – First hand on-the –scene accounts of the events described or compilations of interviews with persons who were on the scene – First paragraph contains the most important information in detail with lesser important information in succeeding paragraphs

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 **Book Reviews**– Analyse the contents of the book and report on author's intentions, his success and failure in achieving his aims, his language, his style, scholarship, bias or his point of view

 **Reports prepared by Government Bureaus, special commissions and similar other organizations**– Comprehensive reports on the issues involved

 **Ph.D Theses and Dissertations**

TYPES OF REPORTS

- Summarily the results of a research investigation can be presented in form of

-  Technical report
-  Popular report
-  An article
-  A monograph
-  Oral presentation



Choice of form of presentation depends on the nature of study and results

TECHNICAL REPORTS

- Used whenever a full written report of the study is required for record keeping or for public dissemination

Main emphasis is on

- The methods employed
 - Assumptions made in the course of the study
 - Detailed presentation of the findings including their limitations and supporting data
- Simple presentation and ready availability of findings is most important consideration
 - Liberal use of charts and diagrams is considered desirable

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Outline

1. Summary of results
2. Nature of the Study
3. Methods employed
4. Data
5. Analysis of data and presentation of findings
6. Conclusions
7. Bibliography
8. Technical appendices
9. Index

Outline may vary in different reports; different sections may not always be the same ; nor will all sections appear in any particular report

Research reports of academic institutions, governmental reports or on behalf of some public or private organizations are Technical Reports

POPULAR REPORTS

- Prepared for problems having policy implications
- Gives emphasis on simplicity and attractiveness
- Clear writing, minimization of technical – particularly mathematical details – liberal use of charts and diagrams
- Attractive layout along with large print, many sub headings, occasional cartoon now and then
- Emphasis on practical aspects and policy implications

Outline (May vary)

1. The findings and their implications
2. Recommendations for action
3. Objectives of the study
4. Methods employed
5. Results
6. Technical appendices

Emphasis only on simplicity and policy implications from operational point of view, avoiding technical details of all sorts to the extent possible

ORAL PRESENTATION

Merits

- Provides an opportunity for give-and-take decisions which generally lead to a better understanding of the findings and their implications

Limitations

- Lack of any permanent record concerning research details
- Listeners may lose focus during presentation
- Findings may fade from peoples' memories even before an action is taken

May be made effective by supplementing it with various visual devices

- Slides
- Wall charts
- White boards
- Distributing a broad outline

Common in academic institutions – seminars, group discussions