

SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE & PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
M. A. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IV SEM

Method & Technique of Research methodology & statistics(403)

UNIT-IV

TOPIC NAME-REPORT WRITING

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.,

Types of Report Writing-

1. Formal or Informal Reports:

Formal reports are carefully structured; they stress objectivity and organization, contain much detail, and are written in a style that tends to eliminate such elements as personal pronouns. Informal reports are usually short messages with natural, casual use of language. The internal memorandum can generally be described as an informal report.

2. Short or Long Reports:

This is a confusing classification. A one-page memorandum is obviously short, and a twenty page report is clearly long. But where is the dividing line? Bear in mind that as a report becomes longer (or what you determine as long), it takes on more characteristics of formal reports.

3. Informational or Analytical Reports:

Informational reports (annual reports, monthly financial reports, and reports on personnel absenteeism) carry objective information from one area of an organization to another. Analytical reports (scientific research, feasibility reports, and real-estate appraisals) present attempts to solve problems.

4. Proposal Report:

The proposal is a variation of problem-solving reports. A proposal is a document prepared to describe how one organization can meet the needs of another. Most governmental agencies advertise their needs by issuing “requests for proposal” or RFPs. The RFP specifies a need and potential suppliers prepare proposal reports telling how they can meet that need.

5. Vertical or Lateral Reports:

This classification refers to the direction a report travels. Reports that move upward or downward the hierarchy are referred to as vertical reports; such reports contribute to management control. Lateral reports, on the other hand, assist in coordination in the organization. A report traveling between units of the same organization level (production and finance departments) is lateral.

6. Internal or External Reports:

Internal reports travel within the organization. External reports, such as annual reports of companies, are prepared for distribution outside the organization.

7. Periodic Reports:

Periodic reports are issued on regularly scheduled dates. They are generally upward directed and serve management control. Preprinted forms and computer-generated data contribute to uniformity of periodic reports.

8. Functional Reports:

This classification includes accounting reports, marketing reports, financial reports, and a variety of other reports that take their designation from the ultimate use of the report. Almost all reports could be included in most of these categories. And a single report could be included in several classifications.

Although authorities have not agreed on a universal report classification, these report categories are in common use and provide a nomenclature for the study (and use) of reports.

Reports are also classified on the basis of their format. As you read the classification structure described below, bear in mind that it overlaps with the classification pattern described above

i Preprinted Form:

Basically for “**fill in the blank**” reports. Most are relatively short (five or fewer pages) and deal with routine information, mainly numerical information. Use this format when it is requested by the person authorizing the report.

ii. Letter:

Common for reports of five or fewer pages that are directed to outsiders. These reports include all the normal parts of a letter, but they may also have headings, footnotes, tables, and figures. Personal pronouns are used in this type of report.

iii. Memo:

ADVERTISEMENTS:

Common for short (fewer than ten pages) informal reports distributed within an organization. The memo format of “Date,” “To,” “From,” and “Subject” is used. Like longer reports, they often have internal headings and sometimes have visual aids. Memos exceeding ten pages are sometimes referred to as memo reports to distinguish them from shorter ones.

iv. Manuscript:

Common for reports that run from a few pages to several hundred pages and require a formal approach. As their length increases, reports in manuscript format require more elements before and after the text of the report. Now that we have surveyed the different types of reports and become familiar with the nomenclature, let us move on to the actual process of writing the report.

Significance of Report writing

significance of Research report is considered a major component of the research study for the research task remains incomplete till the report has been presented and/or written. As a matter of fact even the most brilliant hypothesis, highly well designed and conducted research study, and the most striking generalizations and findings are of little value unless they are effectively communicated to others. The purpose of research is not well served unless the findings are made known to others. Research results must invariably enter the general store of knowledge. All this explains the significance of writing research report. There are people

who do not consider writing of report as an integral part of the research process. But the general opinion is in favour of treating the presentation of research results or the writing of report as part and parcel of the research project. Writing of report is the last step in a research study and requires a set of skills somewhat different from those called for in respect of the earlier stages of research. This task should be accomplished by the researcher with utmost care; he may seek the assistance and guidance of experts for the purpose.