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Report writing and Presentation of Business Research

Mr. Kalamkar Rajendra Parvati

(Assistant Professor)

C.D. Jain College of Commerce, Shirampur

E-mail: kalamkarrajendra@gmail.com

Contact No. 9422226279

- **Introduction:**

In accordance with the problem of investigation, a researcher collects the necessary facts and figures, analysis the data, using appropriate statistical techniques and interprets his finds and draws conclusions. A researcher has to submit his entire research work in a printed form to the sponsoring authorities.

- **Objectives of the study**

1. To know about the various types of research reports.
2. Acquire information on how to prepare a research report.
3. To know the various components of research reports
4. To know how to present a research report.

- **Terms associated with Business Research**

Business Research – Business research means a systematic enquiry or an objective process of gathering, recording and analyzing data for the purpose of making business decisions.

Research Report – A research report is a systematic, scientific and consistent presentation of the entire process of research carried out by a researcher.

- **Data Collection:**

There are two methods of Data collection namely primary and secondary method but only secondary method is used for this study.

- **Types of Research Reports**

The type of research reports are depending upon the purpose of research. Although the fundamental aspects of report writing remain the same, they all vary in terms of intensity and extensiveness. Following are the various types of research reports.

1. **Short Reports :**

Short research reports usually are of four-five pages and are prepared for researches which have a well-defined problem and limited scope and which employ a clear-cut methodology. The basic purpose or objective of this type of report is to make information available to all those concerned in an easy-to-read format.

2. **Long Reports :**

Long reports, unlike short reports, provide detailed information regarding the project. They can be further subdivided in to technical and management reports based on the objectives of the researchers and the end users.

c. Acknowledgement:

An acknowledgement letter consists of a salutation of the person who commissioned the report, the objectivity of the letter and a brief synopsis of the report. The researcher takes up the opportunity to thank all the individuals and organizations who provided their support during the research.

d. Executive summary:

The key findings are very concisely presented in the executive summary running into 100-200 words or a maximum of two pages. The major thrust of the executive summary should be on highlighting the objective, salient features and analysis of the results, including the recommendations. Conclusions should be supported with facts and graphics should be used, if necessary.

e. Table of Contents:

This table lists the topics and sub-topics of the report with appropriate serial numbers and page numbers. Shorter reports can suffice with the main headings only. The list of tables, charts and graphs and sometimes even annexure or appendices follow the table of contents.

2. Introduction

Introduction to a report provides an overview of the research project. It highlights parts of the project, such as problem definition, research objectives, background material and the findings.

a. Problem Statement:

This denotes the basic problem of the research which was addressed during the entire research. The statement explains the reasons as to why the research is being conducted and is usually followed by a set of objectives.

b. Research Objectives:

Research objectives are an essential part of any research study and report. They address the purpose for which research is carried out. Every research follows a set of well-planned objectives. The objectives of research can take the form of questions and statements.

c. Background:

Background information may include a review of literature which is mainly reviewing of the earlier research. References from secondary data definitions of various concepts and terminologies used and assumptions are included in this section.

3. Methodology

This particular section varies with the type of report which has to be submitted. This can be included in the introduction section and details can be accommodated in the appendix.

6. Findings

Major portion of the report is devoted to this section. It presents the entire analysis which is done as a part of the project, such as frequencies, trends, coverage, statistical test outcome etc. Charts, graphs and tables are generally used to present quantitative data. It is better to report one finding per page and support it with quantitative data. These findings should be in tune with the research objectives.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions should be directly related to the research objectives or hypotheses. They are inference drawn from the findings. The researcher should always present the conclusions as he has first hand knowledge of the research study. Recommendations, on the other hand, are a few corrective actions presented by the researcher. They highlight the actions the report calls for. They may even contain plans of how future research for the same can proceed.

8. Appendices

Appendices are not mandatory. They should be used to present details that were part of the research but were not necessary to the presentation of the findings or conclusions. Appendices include raw data, calculations, graphs, copies of forms and questionnaires, complex tables, instructions to field workers and other quantitative material that would look inappropriate in the main text.

9. Bibliography

A list of citations or references to books, periodicals, magazines etc. is known as a bibliography. It contains all the works consulted in the preparation of the report, not just those referred to in the text. A consistent reference format should be used all through the section. The most popular method of providing bibliography is : surname, first name, year, title, source and publisher.

10. Presentation

A business researcher can present the findings of his research either in an electronic format or as a printout. Irrespective for the medium the researcher chooses to present his report, he should ensure that the findings are presented in a professional manner to the end-user. Some of the important aspects should be considered for presenting a report.

- Report should be in printed form.
- The report should have a uniform font.
- The findings of the research study should be placed under appropriate headings and sub-headings.
- Ample space should be left between the lines and on all sides for better reading.
- Large texts should be split into paragraphs.
- It should be ensured that appropriate labels are assigned to every table, figure, and graph that appear in the report.