

SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE & PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

MBA HRD 203

SUBJECT NAME: - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 203

TOPIC: INTERPRETATION AND REPORT WRITING

(MEANING, TECHNIQUES & COMPONENTS)

RESEARCH REPORTS: DEFINITION

Research reports are recorded data prepared by researchers or statisticians after analyzing information gathered by conducting organized research, typically in the form of surveys or qualitative methods.

Reports usually are spread across a vast horizon of topics but are focused on communicating information about a particular topic and a very niche target market.

The primary motive of research reports is to convey integral details about a study for marketers to consider while designing new strategies. Certain events, facts and other information based on incidents need to be relayed on to the people in charge and creating research reports is the most effective communication tool. Ideal research reports are extremely accurate in the offered information with a clear objective and conclusion. There should be a clean and structured format for these reports to be effective in relaying information.

A research report is a reliable source to recount details about a conducted research and is most often considered to be a true testimony of all the work done to garner specificities of research.

The various sections of a research report are:

1. Summary
2. Background/Introduction
3. Implemented Methods
4. Results based on Analysis
5. Deliberation
6. Conclusion

After collecting and analyzing the data, the researcher has to accomplish the task of drawing inferences followed by report writing. This has to be done very carefully, otherwise misleading conclusions may be drawn and the whole purpose of doing research may get vitiated. It is only through interpretation that the researcher can expose relations and processes that underlie his findings. In case of hypotheses testing studies, if hypotheses are tested and upheld several times, the researcher may arrive at generalizations. But in case the researcher had no hypothesis to start with, he would try to explain his findings on the basis of some theory. This may at times result in new questions, leading to further researches. All

this analytical information and consequential inference(s) may well be communicated, preferably through research report, to the consumers of research results who may be either an individual or a group of individuals or some public/private organization.

MEANING OF INTERPRETATION

Interpretation refers to the task of drawing inferences from the collected facts after an analytical and/or experimental study. In fact, it is a search for broader meaning of research findings. The task of interpretation has two major aspects viz.,

- (i) the effort to establish continuity in research through linking the results of a given study with those of another, and
- (ii) The establishment of some explanatory concepts. “In one sense, interpretation is concerned with relationships within the collected data, partially overlapping analysis. Interpretation also extends beyond the data of the study to include the results of other research, theory and hypotheses.”
- (iii) Thus, interpretation is the device through which the factors that seem to explain what has been observed by researcher in the course of the study can be better understood and it also provides a theoretical conception which can serve as a guide for further researches.

Interpretation is essential for the simple reason that the usefulness and utility of research findings lie in proper interpretation. It is being considered a basic component of research process because of the following reasons:

- (i) It is through interpretation that the researcher can well understand the abstract principle that works beneath his findings. Through this he can link up his findings with those of other studies, having the same abstract principle, and thereby can predict about the concrete world of events. Fresh inquiries can test these predictions later on. This way the continuity in research can be maintained.
- (ii) Interpretation leads to the establishment of explanatory concepts that can serve as a guide for future research studies; it opens new avenues of intellectual adventure and stimulates the quest for more knowledge.
- (iii) Researcher can better appreciate only through interpretation why his findings are what they are and can make others to understand the real significance of his research findings.
- (iv) The interpretation of the findings of exploratory research study often results into hypotheses for experimental research and as such interpretation is involved in the transition from exploratory to experimental research. Since an exploratory study does not have a hypothesis to start with, the findings of such a study have to be

interpreted on a post-factum basis in which case the interpretation is technically described as 'post factum' interpretation.

TECHNIQUES OF INTERPRETATION

The task of interpretation is not an easy job; rather it requires a great skill and dexterity on the part of researcher. Interpretation is an art that one learns through practice and experience. The researcher may, at times, seek the guidance from experts for accomplishing the task of interpretation. The technique of interpretation often involves the following steps:

- (i) Researcher must give reasonable explanations of the relations which he has found and he must interpret the lines of relationship in terms of the underlying processes and must try to find out the thread of uniformity that lies under the surface layer of his diversified research findings. In fact, this is the technique of how generalization should be done and concepts be formulated.
- (ii) Extraneous information, if collected during the study, must be considered while interpreting the final results of research study, for it may prove to be a key factor in understanding the problem under consideration.
- (iii) It is advisable, before embarking upon final interpretation, to consult someone having insight into the study and who is frank and honest and

will not hesitate to point out omissions and errors in logical argumentation. Such a consultation will result in correct interpretation and, thus, will enhance the utility of research results.

- (iv) Researcher must accomplish the task of interpretation only after considering all relevant factors affecting the problem to avoid false generalization. He must be in no hurry while interpreting results, for quite often the conclusions, which appear to be all right at the beginning, may not at all be accurate.

COMPONENTS OF INTERPRETATION AND REPORT WRITING

The details of a research report may change with the purpose of research but the main components of a report will remain constant. The research approach of the market researcher also influences the style of writing reports. Here are seven main components of a productive research report:

- **Research Report Summary:** The entire objective along with the overview of research is to be included in a summary which is a couple of paragraphs in length. All the multiple components of the research are explained in brief under the report summary. It should be interesting enough to capture all the key elements of the report.

- **Research Introduction:** There always is a primary goal that the researcher is trying to achieve through a report. In the introduction section, he/she can cover answers related to this goal and establish a thesis which will be included to strive and answer it in detail. This section should answer an integral question: “What is the current situation of the goal?”. After the research was conducted, did the organization conclude the goal successfully or they are still a work in progress – provide such details in the introduction part of the research report.
- **Research Methodology:** This is the most important section of the report where all the important information lies. The readers can gain data for the topic along with analyzing the quality of provided content and the research can also be approved by other market researchers. Thus, this section needs to be highly informative with each aspect of research discussed in detail. Information needs to be expressed in chronological order according to its priority and importance. Researchers should include references in case they gained information from existing techniques.
- **Research Results:** A short description of the results along with calculations conducted to achieve the goal will form this section of results. Usually, the exposition after data analysis is carried out in the discussion part of the report.

- **Research Discussion:** The results are discussed in extreme detail in this section along with a comparative analysis of reports that could probably exist in the same domain. Any abnormality uncovered during research will be deliberated in the discussion section. While writing research reports, the researcher will have to connect the dots on how the results will be applicable in the real world.
- **Research References and Conclusion:** Conclude all the research findings along with mentioning each and every author, article or any content piece from where references were taken.