

Research Methods

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Research Reports



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What We Will Cover in This Section

- What is a research report.
- Anatomy of a research report.
- Kinds of research reports.
- Sources.



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What is a Research Report?

A formal document that presents the results of some empirical study.

- Usually peer reviewed.
- Usually published.
- Usually presents original research.
- Has a highly structured format.

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Research Paper Format



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Abstract

- Summarizes the research report in 100-150 words.
- Lets the reader decide if the study is of interest.
- Generally summarizes
 - Introduction
 - Method
 - Results
 - Discussion.
- May over simplify.

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Introduction

- Describes the specific problem being studied.
- Summarizes previous research.
- Describes the basic research strategy.
- Describes the research hypothesis.

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Method

- Describes in detail how the study was conducted.
 - Participants.
 - Apparatus.
 - Manipulations.
 - Measurement tools.
 - Procedure.
- Should be so detailed that the reader could replicate the study.

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Results

- Describes the data collected, any statistical analyses, and the conclusions drawn from the statistical analyses.
- The most difficult section to understand.

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Discussion

- Summarizes the results, presents the implications of the data and may include a critique of the study.
 - Includes alternative interpretations of the data.
 - Describes the limitations of the study.
 - May suggest further research.

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Types of Research Reports

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Primary Research

- **This report summarizes the research done by the authors.**
 - Typically summarizes a single research project.
 - Usually the only report; it is unethical to report the same study in several publications.
 - Successful replications are rarely published.

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Literature Review

- **This report summarizes all of the research done on a particular topic.**
 - Typically focus on a specific area.
 - Review what is known and what is not known in the area.
 - Very good source of information on a specific topic area.

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Theoretical Paper

- This is a publication that develops a theoretical explanation for a some particular area.
 - Typically the authors support their theory with data from primary research.
 - Typically authors describe why their theory is better than other theories.

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Meta Analysis

- A research report that summarizes a set of statistical procedures for combining the results of a number of studies.
 - Provides a general assessment of the relationship between similar variables.
 - The focus is on statistical data, not conceptual information.

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Assignment

Be prepared to discuss and hand in pages 8-10 of the study guide. These are questions about the article, *Teachers in Bars: From Professional to Personal Self*. It is on electronic reserve.

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