MBA.1.2.10.C Business Research

MODULE-IV

WHAT IS A REPORT
A report is a clearly structured document that presents information about an investigation that you have undertaken. The clear structure allow specific part of that information to be easily located by the reader.

Types of research report
There are two types of research reports.
1. **Analytical report** which focus on investigation into events organizations, situations, issues and process. The purpose is often is to provide reader with information that can be used to make decision and take further action. Ex. Social science, business courses and engineering.

2. **Practical & scientific report** which give an account of what has happened in test situation, the practical section or as part of an experiment. These are commonly science based course.

Steps for Writing Analytical Report
1. Topic of the research
2. Analyze your topic carefully
3. Make an initial plan
4. Locate your information and take note
5. Prepare the 1st draft

Stages of Report Writing:
- **Stage1: Introduction**
  The purpose of the introduction is to orientate. The reader to the whole document through a report context which include a clear statement of purpose, background of the report, scope & limitation of the report, methods of the investigation.

- **Stage 2: Presentation of the finding & analysis**
  It is central to the report included the presentations and analysis. For this a preliminary plan has to be organized the ideas under headings & subheadings. Clear about the points to make to report the finding. 1st the important points followed by those of lesser important. Each of these points supported by relevance evidence, elaboration and explanation. Add diagrams i.e. graphs, levels, figures to support and present material visually. Each diagram must have title & numbered consecutively. Analyze the meaning or significance of findings. Here the findings t the expectation based on theory and the findings compared with other investigation.

- **Stage 3: Conclusion and recommendation**
  The purpose of conclusion is to restate in a certain form to most significant point from your investigation and to make a general statement about the significance of this. The purpose of recommendation is to make suggestion about the action or future direction that should be taken as a result of your conclusion.

There are some supplementary sections in research report writing. They are reference or list of bibliography, appendices, title page, table of contents and executive summary. This reference or bibliography contains list of all the source that have used or referred in the report. Appendices contains supplementary materials gathered e.g. articles, brochures, statistics, spread sheet, charts etc. Then title page of the report include title of the report, name or persons or organization to whom the report has been prepared, the name of person or group who have prepared the report, date of completion or submission & the organization, section receiving the report. In table of content, the different section of the report and page nos are given for quicker accessibility by the reader. In executive summary, reader generally overview the whole report without reading the entire document. This section includes background of the report, purpose of the report, scope & limit of the investigation, the important findings or results of the investigations and the conclusion which has been drawn from the result. Finally the recommendation and future course of action has to be summarizes.

- **6. Evaluation of the draft carefully.**
  In this it is required to evaluate word length, format, layout, presentation and referencing. You have to write in a format style using relatively short sentences with appropriate linking words and phrases. Each paragraphs deals with one main idea supported by evidence, reference where appropriate. The grammar, spelling and punctuation are important.

Additional Component in a Research Report
- **Letter Of Transmittal:** The purpose of this is to acknowledge the completion and handing over the report include who authorize the study, statement about the issues, scope and limitation, summary & conclusion of the recommendation. This letter is prepared by the person or group who conducted the investigation is part of the preliminary section.

- **Literature Review:** It is a critical review of published work related to the published work. This review is generally required for lengthy in-depth studies or investigation into an hypothesis.

- **Glossary:** The glossary is a list of specific terms and abbreviation used in a report together with their meanings.

- **Acknowledgment:** The acknowledgement lists the name given you valuable assistance in preparing the report.
Guidelines for Tables
Statistical tables are vital part of the report and deserve special attention. Every table contains number and title. The title should brief yet clearly descriptive of the information provided. The arrangements of data items in a table pertain to time arranged by time period. The basis of measurements should clearly state. Leaders, dot used to lead the eye horizontally, impart uniformity and improve readability.

Guidelines for Graph
Graphical display of information can effectively complement the text and table to enhance clarity of communication and impact. There are certain graphical aid used in a report writing

▪ **Geographic and Other Maps:** Geographic and product poisoning maps communicate relative location and other comparative information. Geographic maps pertain to countries, state, sales territories and other division. Different charts used for representation

▪ **Pie Charts:** In this chart the area of each section as a percentage of the total area of the circle reflects the percentage associated with the value of specific variables.

▪ **Line Charts:** A line charts connects a series of data points using continuous line.

▪ **Pictographs:** A pictograph use small picture or symbol to display the data.

▪ **Histograms and Bar Chart:** A bar chart display data in various bars that may be position horizontally or vertically. This can be used to present absolute and relative magnitude, differences and change. The histogram is a vertically bar chart which the height of the bars represent the relative or cumulative frequency of occurrence of a specific variables.
RESEARCH REPORT PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION

RESEARCH REPORT
A research report is:
- a written document or oral presentation based on a written document that communicates the purpose, scope, objective(s), hypotheses, methodology, findings, limitations and finally, recommendations of a research project to others.
- The last stage of a marketing research process;
- It is more than a summary of findings; rather it is a record of the research process. The researcher has to convince the client [and others who may read the report] that the research findings can be acted on for their own benefit.

Types of Research Report
- Any research report contains:
  - descriptions on methodology,
  - results obtained,
  - and recommendations made.
- The basic orientation of a research report depends on its audience. Before writing the report
  - the researcher must know his or her audience;
  - he/she may have to make assumptions about the composition, background and interests of the target readers.
- Two types of reports:-
  - Technical Report: suitable for a target audience of researchers, research managers or other people familiar with and interested in the technicalities such as research design, sampling methods, statistical details etc.,
  - Popular Report: suitable for:
    - a more general audience, interested mainly in the research findings as it is non-technical in nature.
    - The writing style is designed to facilitate easy and rapid reading and understanding of the research findings and recommendations

The first step in the process involves:
- the interpretation of the results of data analysis in light of:
  - the marketing research problem investigated,
  - and the research design and methodology followed.
- The research report is a means of communication that can be understood, believed, trusted by everyone who are likely to be affected by the research, and acted upon by the decision maker.
Before writing the report...
- the researcher should discuss: the major findings, conclusions, and recommendations with the key decision makers.
  - necessary to ensure that the report meets the client's needs and is ultimately accepted.
- The entire marketing research project:
  - should be summarized in a single written report or in several reports addressed to different readers.
  - should present the findings in such a way that they can be used directly as input into decision making.
Oral Presentation
- Generally, an oral presentation supplements the written report.
- The client should be given adequate time to read the report.
  - If necessary, the researcher should assist the client in understanding the report, implementing the findings, undertaking further research, and evaluating the research process in retrospect.
Report Format
- No universally accepted standard format or style for research writing. Different researchers may prepare their reports differently.
  - The personality, background, expertise, and responsibility of the researcher and those of the decision maker for whom the report is written interact to give each report a unique character.
  - Report formats are likely to vary with the nature of the project itself. However, the research report closely resembles the steps of the marketing research process.
Most research reports include the following elements:

I. Title page
II. Letter of transmittal
III. Table of contents
IV. List of tables
V. List of graphs
VI. List of appendices
VII. List of exhibits
VIII. Executive summary
   a. Major findings
   b. Conclusions
   c. Recommendations
IX. Introduction
   a. Background to the problem
   b. Statement of the problem
X. Approach to the problem
XI. Research design
   a. Type of research design
   b. Information needs
   c. Data collection from secondary sources
   d. Data collection from primary sources
   e. Scaling techniques
   f. Questionnaire development and pretesting
   g. Sampling techniques
   h. Field work
XII. Data analysis
   a. Methodology
   b. Plan of data analysis
XIII. Results
XIV. Limitations and caveats
XV. Conclusions and recommendations
XVI. Appendix
   a. Questionnaires and forms
   b. Statistical output
   c. Lists

The results...
- may be presented in several chapters of the report.
- For example, a Malaysian researcher conducting a national survey, may perform the data analysis in two stages.
- First, he or she may analyze the overall national sample followed by nine separate analyses for each of the states.
- The results may then be presented in ten chapters [one overall plus nine state based] instead of one.

Report Writing
- Effective report writing is an art.
- Some basic points to note in writing a report.

- Adherence to study objectives: A research report must show that the research objectives have been accomplished.
- Easy to follow: The most basic characteristic of a good report is that it is easy to follow.
  - It should be well organized, logically structured, and clearly and lucidly written. Headings and sub-headings should be used for different topics and subtopics respectively.
- Objective: Report writing should always be guided by objectivity.
  - Should accurately present the methodology, results, and conclusions of the project, without slanting the findings to conform to the expectations of management.
- Selectivity: A researcher must use his or her discretion in deciding what should be included in the report.
  - Concise: A report should be concise. Yet brevity should not be achieved at the expense of completeness.
- Presentation: The report should be professionally done with quality paper, good typing, and attractive binding.
  - Visual aids: Key information presented in the text of a research report should be reinforced with tables, graphs, pictures, maps, and other visual devices.
- Guidelines for Tables: Statistical tables are a vital part of the report and deserve special attention.
  - Every table should have a number and brief but clear title.
  - Basis or unit of measurement should be clearly stated to facilitate understanding.
  - The arrangement of the data item should emphasize the most important aspect of the data being presented.
  - If necessary, explanations, comments etc. should be provided as footnotes.
  - If the table presents secondary data, the source(s) must be cited clearly

Oral Presentation
- Should be carefully prepared keeping the audience in mind.
- A good presentation does not mean a lengthy presentation.
- Carefully selected visual aids such as graphs, tables, charts, maps etc. help presentation.
  - However, Too many visual aids, particularly statistical tables, could often be boring and may not serve any purpose.
  - During oral presentation, people may seek clarification.
  - The speaker must be patient and should not show signs of anger or frustration. He or she should be natural, establish eye contact with the audience, and interact with them.
  - Body language and descriptive gestures are also quite useful.

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