

*Tikrit University*

*College of Nursing*

*Basic Nursing Sciences*



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**Research Methods**

**(Organizing the Research Paper)**

*by:*

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## **Research methods**

### **Organizing the Research Paper**

**The following steps should be used to complete the assignment.**

1. Select a topic.
2. Find sources.
3. Take notes on colored index cards.
4. Arrange your notes by topic.
5. Write an outline.
6. Write a first draft.
7. Revise and re-write.
8. Proofread.

### **Research Reports**

The first step in writing any research report is to identify the intended readers. This is an important decision because the organization, style, and even the mode of presentation depend on the target audience. In mass media research, there are typically two types of audiences and two types of research reports:

- Reports aimed at colleagues and intended for publication in scholarly and professional journals or for presentation at a convention.
- Reports aimed at decision makers and intended for in-house use only. The format, length, style, and organization of a published report will have to conform to the guidelines of the journal in which it appears.

Since colleagues are the target audience for such reports and papers, the writer must pay close attention to the theory underlying the research, the methods used, and the techniques of analysis. In the second instance, there is more flexibility. Some decision makers prefer to be briefed orally by the researcher. In such cases the verbal presentation might be supplemented by a written summary, hand-outs, visual aids, and, on request, a detailed report. In other circumstances, the researcher might prepare a written report with a short executive summary, confining most of the technical material to appendixes. No matter what the situation or audience, the primary goal in all research reports is accuracy.

### **The Need for Accurate Reporting Procedures**

Researchers need to report research accurately for two reasons.

- **First**, a clear explanation of the investigator's methods provides an opportunity for readers to more completely understand the project.

Researchers should keep in mind that in most cases, a reader's knowledge of a given project is based solely on the information contained in the report.

Since readers do not instinctively understand each procedure used in a study, these details must be supplied.

- **Second**, an accurate report provides the necessary information for those who wish to replicate the study. Enough information must be included or filed somewhere in public archives to enable reproduction of the study without the necessity of personal contact with the investigator. This is to ensure that a study is always respectable regardless of the decades or generations that may pass.

## **The Mechanics of Writing a Research Report**

Beginning researchers may find the writing style used for research reports awkward or anaesthetic, but there is a definite purpose behind the rules governing scientific writing: clarity. Every effort must be made to avoid ambiguity.

Given the wide variety of approaches to research, it stands to reason that the approaches to writing a research report are equally varied. Most research reports, however, include only five basic sections or chapters: introduction, literature review, methods, results, and discussion.

### **Introduction**

The introduction should alert the reader to what is to follow. Most introductions usually contain the following:

**Statement of the problem.** The first job of the report writer is to provide some information about the background and the nature of the problem under investigation. If the research topic has a long history, then a short summary is in order. This section should also discuss any relevant theoretical background that pertains to the research topic.

**Justification.** Another important area to be covered in this initial section is the rationale and justification for the project. This section should address the question of why it is important for us to spend time and energy researching this particular problem. Research can be important because it deals with a crucial theoretical issue, because it has practical value, or because it has methodological value.

**Aims of the current study.** Most introductory sections conclude with an unequivocal statement of the hypothesis or research question to be answered by the study.