
UNIT 19 REPORT WRITING

STRUCTURE

- 19.0 Objectives
- 19.1 Introduction
- 19.2 Purpose of a Report
- 19.3 Meaning
- 19.4 Types of Reports
- 19.5 Stages in Preparation of a Report
- 19.6 Characteristics of a Good Report
- 19.7 Structure of the Research Report
 - 19.7.1 Prefactory Items
 - 19.7.2 The Text/Body of the Report
 - 19.7.3 Terminal Items
- 19.8 Check List for the Report
- 19.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 19.10 Key Words
- 19.11 Answers to Self Assessment Exercises
- 19.12 Terminal Questions
- 19.13 Further Reading

19.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to :

- 1 define a Report,
- 1 explain the need for reporting,
- 1 discuss the subject matter of various types of reports,
- 1 identify the stages in preparation of a report,
- 1 explain the characteristics of a good report,
- 1 explain different parts of a report, and
- 1 distinguish between a good and bad report.

19.1 INTRODUCTION

The last and final phase of the journey in research is writing of the report. After the collected data has been analyzed and interpreted and generalizations have been drawn the report has to be prepared. The task of research is incomplete till the report is presented.

Writing of a report is the last step in a research study and requires a set of skills some what different from those called for in respect of the earlier stages of research. This task should be accomplished by the researcher with utmost care.

19.2 PURPOSE OF A REPORT

The report may be meant for the people in general, when the investigation has not been carried out at the instance of any third party. Research is essentially a cooperative venture and it is essential that every investigator should know what others have found about the phenomena under study. The purpose of a report is thus the dissipation of knowledge, broadcasting of generalizations so as to ensure their widest use.

A report of research has only one function, “it must inform”. It has to propagate knowledge. Thus, the purpose of a report is to convey to the interested persons the results and findings of the study in sufficient detail, and so arranged as to enable each reader to comprehend the data, and to determine for himself the validity of conclusions. Research results must invariably enter the general store of knowledge. A research report is always an addition to knowledge. All this explains the significance of writing a report.

In a broader sense, report writing is common to both academics and organizations. However, the purpose may be different. In academics, reports are used for comprehensive and application-oriented learning. Whereas in organizations, reports form the basis for decision making.

19.3 MEANING

Reporting simply means communicating or informing through reports. The researcher has collected some facts and figures, analyzed the same and arrived at certain conclusions. He has to inform or report the same to the parties interested. Therefore “reporting is communicating the facts, data and information through reports to the persons for whom such facts and data are collected and compiled”.

A report is not a complete description of what has been done during the period of survey/research. It is only a statement of the most significant facts that are necessary for understanding the conclusions drawn by the investigator. Thus, “a report by definition, is simply an account”. The report thus is an account describing the procedure adopted, the findings arrived at and the conclusions drawn by the investigator of a problem.

19.4 TYPES OF REPORTS

Broadly speaking reporting can be done in two ways :

- a) **Oral or Verbal Report** : reporting verbally in person, for example; Presenting the findings in a conference or seminar or reporting orally to the superiors.
- b) **Written Report** : Written reports are more formal, authentic and popular.

Written reports can be presented in different ways as follows.

- i) Sentence form reports : Communicating in sentence form
- ii) Tabular reports : Communicating through figures in tables
- iii) Graphic reports : Communicating through graphs and diagrams
- iv) Combined reports : Communicating using all the three of the above. Generally, this is the most popular

Research reports vary greatly in length and type. In each individual case, both the length and the form are largely dictated by the purpose of the study and problems at hand. For example, business organizations generally prefer reports in letter form, that too short in length. Banks, insurance and other financial institutions generally prefer figure form in tables. The reports prepared by government bureaus, enquiry commissions etc., are generally very comprehensive on the issues involved. Similarly research theses/dissertations usually prepared by students for Ph.D. degree are also elaborate and methodical.

It is, thus, clear that the results of a research enquiry can be presented in a number of ways. They may be termed as a technical report, a popular report, an article, or a monograph.

- 1) **Technical Report:** A technical report is used whenever a full written report (ex: Ph.D. thesis) of the study is required either for evaluation or for record keeping or for public dissemination. The main emphasis in a technical report is on :
 - a) the methodology employed.
 - b) the objectives of the study.
 - c) the assumptions made / hypotheses formulated in the course of the study.
 - d) how and from what sources the data are collected and how have the data been analyzed.
 - e) the detailed presentation of the findings with evidence, and their limitations.
- 2) **Popular Report:** A popular report is one which gives emphasis on simplicity and attractiveness. Its aim is to make the general public understand the findings and implications. Generally, it is simple. Simplicity is sought to be achieved through clear language and minimization of technical details. Attention of the readers is sought to be achieved through attractive layout, liberal use of graphs, charts, diagrams and pictures. In a popular report emphasis is given on practical aspects and policy implications.
- 3) **Research Article:** Some times the findings of a research study can be published in the form of a short paper called an article. This is one form of dissemination. The research papers are generally prepared either to present in seminars and conferences or to publish in research journals. Since one of the objectives of doing research is to make a positive contribution to knowledge, in the field, publication (publicity) of the work serves the purpose.
- 4) **Monograph:** A monograph is a treatise or a long essay on a single subject. For the sake of convenience, reports may also be classified either on the basis of approach or on the basis of the nature of presentation such as:
 - i) Journalistic Report
 - ii) Business Report
 - iii) Project Report
 - iv) Dissertation
 - v) Enquiry Report (Commission Report), and
 - vi) Thesis

Reports prepared by journalists for publication in the media may be **journalistic reports**. These reports have news and information value. A **business report** may be defined as report for business communication from one departmental head to another, one functional area to another, or even from top to bottom in the organizational structure on any specific aspect of business activity. These are observational reports which facilitate business decisions.

A **project report** is the report on a project undertaken by an individual or a group of individuals relating to any functional area or any segment of a functional area or any aspect of business, industry or society. A **dissertation**, on the other hand, is a detailed discourse or report on the subject of study.

Dissertations are generally used as documents to be submitted for the acquisition of higher research degrees from a university or an academic institution. The thesis is an example in point.

An **enquiry report** or a commission of enquiry report is a detailed report prepared by a commission appointed for the specific purpose of conducting a detailed study of any matter of dispute or of a subject requiring greater insight. These reports facilitate action, since they contain expert opinions.

Self Assessment Exercise A

- 1) What do you mean by a report?
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- 2) What is the purpose of a report?
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- 3) What is a popular report?
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- 4) What is meant by an article?
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- 5) What do you mean by verbal reporting?
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19.5 STAGES IN PREPARATION OF A REPORT

Research reports are the product of slow and painstaking and accurate work. Therefore, the preparation of the report may be viewed in the following major stages.

- 1) The logical understanding and analysis of the subject matter.
- 2) Planning/designing the final outline of the report.
- 3) Write up/preparation of rough draft.
- 4) Polishing/finalization of the Report.

Logical Understanding of the Subject Matter: It is the first stage which is primarily concerned with the development of a subject. There are two ways to develop a subject viz. a. logically and b. chronologically. The logical development is done on the basis of mental connections and associations

between one aspect and another by means of logical analysis. Logical treatment often consists of developing material from the simple to the most complex.

Chronological development is based on a connection or sequence in time or happening of the events. The directions for doing something usually follow the chronological order.

Designing the Final Outline of the Report: It is the second stage in writing the report. Having understood the subject matter, the next stage is structuring the report and ordering the parts and sketching them. This stage can also be called as planning and organization stage. Ideas may pass through the author's mind. Unless he first makes his plan/sketch/design he will be unable to achieve a harmonious succession and will not even know where to begin and how to end. Better communication of research results is partly a matter of language but mostly a matter of planning and organizing the report.

Preparation of the Rough Draft: The third stage is the write up/drafting of the report. This is the most crucial stage to the researcher, as he/she now sits to write down what he/she has done in his/her research study and what and how he/she wants to communicate the same. Here the clarity in communicating/reporting is influenced by some factors such as who the readers are, how technical the problem is, the researcher's hold over the facts and techniques, the researcher's command over language (his communication skills), the data and completeness of his notes and documentation and the availability of analyzed results. Depending on the above factors some authors may be able to write the report with one or two drafts. Some people who have less command over language, no clarity about the problem and subject matter may take more time for drafting the report and have to prepare more drafts (first draft, second draft, third draft, fourth draft etc.,)

Finalization of the Report: This is the last stage, perhaps the most difficult stage of all formal writing. It is easy to build the structure, but it takes more time for polishing and giving finishing touches. Take for example the construction of a house. Up to roofing (structure) stage the work is very quick but by the time the building is ready, it takes up a lot of time.

The rough draft (whether it is second draft or 'n' th draft) has to be rewritten, polished in terms of requirements. The careful revision of the rough draft makes the difference between a mediocre and a good piece of writing. While polishing and finalizing one should check the report for its weaknesses in logical development of the subject and presentation cohesion. He/she should also check the mechanics of writing — language, usage, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

19.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD REPORT

Research report is a channel of communicating the research findings to the readers of the report. A good report is one which does this task efficiently and effectively. As such it should have the following characteristics/qualities.

- i) It must be clear in informing the what, why, who, whom, when, where and how of the research study.
- ii) It should be neither too short nor too long. One should keep in mind the fact that it should be long enough to cover the subject matter but short enough to sustain the reader's interest.

Interpretation and Reporting

- iii) It should be written in an objective style and simple language, correctness, precision and clarity should be the watchwords of the scholar. Wordiness, indirection and pompous language are barriers to communication.
- iv) A good report must combine clear thinking, logical organization and sound interpretation.
- v) It should not be dull. It should be such as to sustain the reader’s interest.
- vi) It must be accurate. Accuracy is one of the requirements of a report. It should be factual with objective presentation. Exaggerations and superlatives should be avoided.
- vii) Clarity is another requirement of presentation. It is achieved by using familiar words and unambiguous statements, explicitly defining new concepts and unusual terms.
- viii) Coherence is an essential part of clarity. There should be logical flow of ideas (i.e. continuity of thought), sequence of sentences. Each sentence must be so linked with other sentences so as to move the thoughts smoothly.
- ix) Readability is an important requirement of good communication. Even a technical report should be easily understandable. Technicalities should be translated into language understandable by the readers.
- x) A research report should be prepared according to the best composition practices. Ensure readability through proper paragraphing, short sentences, illustrations, examples, section headings, use of charts, graphs and diagrams.
- xi) Draw sound inferences/conclusions from the statistical tables. But don’t repeat the tables in text (verbal) form.
- xii) Footnote references should be in proper form. The bibliography should be reasonably complete and in proper form.
- xiii) The report must be attractive in appearance, neat and clean whether typed or printed.
- xiv) The report should be free from mistakes of all types viz. language mistakes, factual mistakes, spelling mistakes, calculation mistakes etc.,

The researcher should try to achieve these qualities in his report as far as possible.

Self Assessment Exercise B

- 1) List the stages involved in the preparation of a report.
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- 2) What are the ways of developing a subject?
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- 3) What is meant by outlining the report?
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4) Enumerate the characteristics of a good report.

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5) What is meant by coherence?

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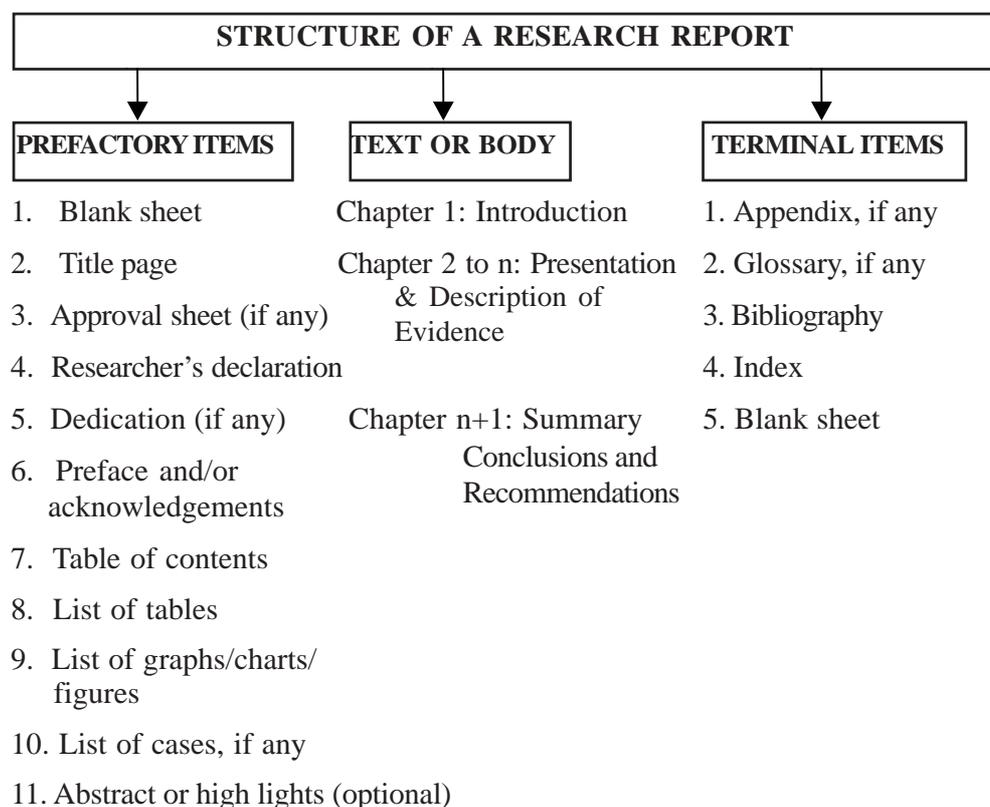
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19.7 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

Under this head, the format/outline/sketch of a comprehensive technical report or research report is discussed below. A technical report has a number of clearly defined sections. The headings of the sections and their order may differ from one situation to another. The contents of a report can broadly be divided into three parts as :

- 1) The front matter or prefactory items.
- 2) The body or text of the report.
- 3) The back matter or terminal items.

The following chart summarizes the broad sequence of the contents of a research report.



Let us discuss these items one by one in detail.

19.7.1 Prefactory Items

The various preliminaries to be included in the front pages of the report are briefly narrated hereunder:

- 1) **Title Page:** The first page of the report is the title page. The title page should carry a concise and adequately descriptive title of the research study, the name of the author, the name of the institution to whom it is submitted, the date of presentation.
- 2) **Approval Sheet:** If a certificate of approval is required either from the research supervisor or from the institution which provided the research facilities, it must be given.
- 3) **Researcher's Declaration:** Generally the researcher has to declare/certify that it is his/her bonafide and original work done by him/her.
- 4) **Dedication:** If the author wants to dedicate the work to whom soever he/she likes, he/she may do so.
- 5) **Preface or Acknowledgements:** A preface includes the background and reasons for the study. This is an appropriate place for him/her to make acknowledgements also. But if the researcher has opted to discuss the significance, reasons of the study else where in the report he/she may not write 'preface'. But he/she may use the page for only acknowledgements. In acknowledgements the researcher acknowledges the assistance and support received from individuals and organizations in conducting the research. It is intended to express his/her gratitude to them.
- 6) **Table of Contents:** A table of contents gives an outline of the contents of the report. It contains a list of the chapters and their titles with page numbers. It facilitates easy location of topics in the report. The chapter headings may be typed with capital letters.
- 7) **List of Tables:** The researcher must have collected lot of data and analyzed the same and presented in the form of tables. These tables may be listed chapter wise and the list be presented with page numbers for easy location and reference.
- 8) **List of Graphs/Charts/Figures:** If there are many graphs and charts they should also be listed with page numbers, after the list of tables separately.
- 9) **List of Cases/Exhibits:** If there are many cases/exhibits they should also be listed.
- 10) **Abstract:** An abstract is a synopsis. It should be as brief as possible and run about one or two pages. It is placed at the prefactory part of the report so that a reader can get a quick over view of the report. It contains a brief and precise statement of the purpose and a bare summary of the findings or the results of the study.

19.7.2 The Text/Body of the Report

After the preliminary items, the body of the report is presented. It is the major and main part of the report. It consists of the text and context chapters of the study. Normally the body may be divided into 3 (three) parts.

- i) The introduction
- ii) The description and discussion of evidence and findings
- iii) The summary, conclusions and recommendations

i) **Introduction**

Generally this is the first chapter in the body of the report. It is devoted introducing the theoretical background of the problem and the methodology adopted for attacking the problem.

It may consist of the following aspects:

- Significance and justification of the topic.
- Theoretical background of the topic.
- Statement of the problem.
- Review of literature.
- Objectives of the study.
- Hypotheses to be tested.
- Definition of special terms, concepts and units of study.
- Scope of the study – geographical scope i.e. area/places to be covered, content, scope i.e., aspects to be included/excluded.
- Period of study i.e., reference period.
- Sources of data i.e., primary or secondary or both.
- Methods of data collection i.e., sample or census.
- Sampling design.
- Data collection instruments .
- Field work.
- Data processing and analysis plan.
- Limitations of the study, if any.
- An over view of the report i.e., chapter plan.

ii) **Description and Discussion of Evidence**

This is the major and main part of the report. It is divided into several chapters depending upon the number of objectives of the study, each being devoted to presenting the results pertaining to some aspect. The chapters should be well balanced, mutually related and arranged in logical sequence. The results should be reported as accurately and completely as possible explaining as to their bearing on the research questions and hypotheses.

Each chapter should be given an appropriate heading. Depending upon the need, a chapter may also be divided into sections. The entire verbal presentation should run in an independent stream and must be written according to best composition rules. Each chapter should end with a summary and lead into the next chapter with a smooth transition sentence.

While dealing with the subject matter of text the following aspects should be taken care of. They are :

- 1) Headings
- 2) Quotations

3) Foot notes

4) Exhibits

1) **Headings.** The following types of headings are commonly used.

- CENTRE HEAD (All capitals, without underlining)
- Centre Subhead (Capital and lower case, with underlining)
- SIDE HEAD (All capitals without underlining)
- Side Sub Head (Capital and lower case letters with underlining)
- Paragraph Head followed by a colon (Capital and lower case underline)

Which combinations of headings to use depends on the number of classifications or divisions that a chapter has. The headings are illustrated below:

Centre Head. A Centre head is typed in all capital letters. If the title is long, the inverted pyramid style (i.e., the second line shorter than the first, the third line shorter than the second) is used. All caps headings are not underlined. Underlining is unnecessary because capital letters are enough to attract the reader's attention.

Example

CHALKING OUT A PROGRAMME FOR
IMPORT SUBSTITUTION AND
EXPORT PROMOTION

Centre Subhead. The first letter of the first and the last word and all nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs in the title are capitalized. Articles, prepositions and conjunctions are not capitalized.

Example

Chalking out a Programme for
Import Substitution and
Export Promotion

Side Heads. Words in the side head are either written in all capitals or capitalized as in the centre sub head and underlined.

Example: Import Substitution and Export Promotion

Paragraph Head. Words in a paragraph head are capitalized as in the centre sub head and underlined. At the end, a colon appears, and then the paragraph starts.

Example: Import Substitution and Export Promotion: The Seventh Five-Year Plan of India has attempted

2) **Quotations**

Quotation Marks: Double quotation marks (“ ”) are used. A quotation within a quotation is put in single quotation marks (‘ ’). Example: He said, “To the selfish, ‘freedom’ is synonymous with license”.

When to Use Quotation Marks: Quotation marks are used for

- 1) a directly quoted passage or word.
- 2) a word or phrase to be emphasized, and
- 3) Titles of articles, chapters, sections of a book, reports, and unpublished works.

How to Quote: a) All quotations should correspond exactly to the original in *wording, spelling, and punctuation.*

- b) Quotations up to three typewritten lines are run into the text.
- c) Direct quotations over three typewritten lines are set in indented paragraphs.
- d) Quotation marks are not used for indented paragraphs.

Five ways of introducing a Quotation: These are given below.

- a) **Introduction:** He/she said, “The primary test of success in a negotiation is the presence of goodwill on both sides”.
- b) **Interpolation:** “The primary test of success in a negotiation”, he/she said, “is the presence of goodwill on both sides”.
- c) **End Reference:** “The primary test of success in a negotiation is the presence of goodwill on both sides”, he/she said.
- d) **Indented Paragraph:** He/she said: For the workers no real advance in their standard of living is possible without steady increase in productivity because any increase in wages generally, beyond certain narrow units, would otherwise be nullified by a rise in prices.
- e) **Running into a Sentence:** He/she recommended that “joint management councils be set up in all establishments in the public as well as private sector in which conditions favourable to the success of the scheme exist”.

3) Foot Notes

Types of Footnotes: A foot note either indicates the source of the reference or provides an explanation which is not important enough to include in the text.

In the traditional system, both kinds of footnotes are treated in the same form and are included either at the bottom of the page or at the end of the chapter or book.

In the modern system, explanatory footnotes are put at the bottom of the page and are linked with the text with a footnote number. But source references are incorporated within the text and are supplemented by a bibliographical note at the end of the chapter or book.

Rationale of Footnotes: Footnotes help the readers to check the accuracy of the interpretation of the source by going to the source if they want to. They are also an acknowledgement of the author’s indebtedness to the sources. They lend authority to the work and help the readers to distinguish between the author’s own contribution and that of others.

Where to put the Footnote: Footnotes appear at the bottom of the page or at the end of the chapter (before the appendices section).

Numbering of Footnotes: a) For any editorial comment on the chapter or title, an asterisk is used.

- b) In the text Arabic numerals are used for footnoting. Each new chapter begins with number 1.
- c) The number is typed half a space above the line or within parentheses. No space is given between the number and the word. No punctuation mark is used after the number.

- d) The number is placed at the end of a sentence or, if necessary to clarify the meaning, at the end of the relevant word or phrase. Commonly, the number appears after the last quotation mark. In an indented paragraph, the number appears at the end of the last sentence in the quotation.

4) Exhibits

Tables:

Reference and Interpretation: Before a table is introduced, it is referred to in the text (e.g., see Table 1.1; refer to Table 1.1; as in Table 1.1; Table 1.1 indicates). A table is meant only to expand, clarify, or give visual explanation rather than stand by itself. The text should highlight the table's focus and conclusions.

Identification: a) Each table is given a number, title, and, if needed, a subtitle. All identifications are centred.

- b) Arabic numerals, instead of Roman numerals or capital letters, are recommended for numbering the tables. Usually technical monographs and books contain many tables. As the number increases, Roman numerals become unfamiliar to the reader. Roman numerals also occupy more space than Arabic numerals. If there are more than 26 tables, capital letters will not be sufficient to identify them.

Tables can be numbered consecutively throughout the chapter as 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, ... wherein the first number refers to the chapter and the second number to the table.

- b) For the title and sub title, all capital letter are used.
- c) Abbreviations and symbols are not used in the title or sub title.

Checklist: Relevance, accuracy, and clarity are of utmost importance in tables. When entering the table, check the following:

- 1) Have the explanation and reference to the table been given in the text?
- 2) Is it essential to have the table for clarity and extra information?
- 3) Is the representation of the data comprehensive and understandable?
- 4) Is the table number correct?
- 5) Are the title and subtitle clear and concise?
- 6) Are the column headings clearly classified?
- 7) Are the row captions clearly classified?
- 8) Are the data accurately entered and represented?
- 9) Are the totals and other computations correct?
- 10) Has the source been given?
- 11) Have all the uncommon abbreviations been spelt out?
- 12) Have all footnote entries been made?
- 13) If column rules are used, have all rules been properly drawn?

Illustrations: Illustrations cover charts, graphs, diagrams, and maps. Most of the instructions given for tables hold good for illustrations.

Identification: Illustrations are identified as FIGURE, CHART, MAP or DIAGRAM. The identification marks (i.e. number, title, and, if any, sub title) are put at the bottom, because an illustration, unlike a table, is studied from bottom upwards.

19.7.3 Terminal Items

This section follows the text. First comes the appendices section, then the bibliography and glossary. Each section is separated by a divider page on which only the words APPENDICES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, or GLOSSARY all in capital letters appear.

All reference section pages are numbered in Arabic numerals in continuation with the page numbers of the text.

1) Appendices

What goes into an Appendix: a) Supplementary or secondary references are put in the appendices section. But all primary reference material of immediate importance to the reader is incorporated in the text. The appendices help the author to authenticate the thesis and help the reader to check the data.

b) The material that is usually put in the appendices is indicated below:

- 1) Original data
- 2) Long tables
- 3) Long quotations
- 4) Supportive legal decisions, laws and documents
- 5) Illustrative material
- 6) Extensive computations
- 7) Questionnaires and letters
- 8) Schedules or forms used in collecting data
- 9) Case studies / histories
- 10) Transcripts of interviews

Numbering of Appendices: The appendices can be serialized with capital letters (Appendix A, Appendix B) to differentiate from the chapter or table numbers.

References to Appendices: a) In the text, the reader's attention is drawn to the appendices as in the case of tables.

b) All appendices are listed in the table of contents.

2) Bibliographies

Positioning of the Bibliography: The bibliography comes after the appendices section and is separated from it by a division sheet written BIBLIOGRAPHY. It is listed as a major section in all capital letters in the table of contents.

A bibliography contains the source of every reference cited in the footnote and any other relevant works that the author has consulted. It gives the reader an idea of the literature available on the subject that has influenced or aided the author.

Bibliographical Information: The following information must be given for each bibliographical reference.

Books

- 1) Author(s)
- 2) Title (underlined)
- 3) Place of publication
- 4) Publisher
- 5) Date of publication

Magazines and Newspapers

- 1) Author(s)
- 2) Title of the article (Within quotation marks)
- 3) Title of the magazine (underlined)
- 4) Volume number (Roman numerals)
- 5) Serial number (Arabic numerals)
- 6) Date of issue

3) **Glossary**

What is a Glossary: A glossary is a short dictionary giving definitions and examples of terms and phrases which are technical, used in a special connotation by the author, unfamiliar to the reader, or foreign to the language in which the book is written. It is listed as a major section in capital letters in the table of contents.

Positioning of a Glossary: The glossary appears after the bibliography. It may also appear in the introductory pages of a book after the lists of tables and illustrations.

Order of Listing: Items are listed in alphabetical order.

Example:

Centre Heading is listed under C and not under H.

4) **Index**

Index may be either subject index or author index. Author index consists of important names of persons discussed in the report, arranged in alphabetical order. Subject index includes a detailed reference to all important matters discussed in the report such as places, events, definitions, concepts etc., and presented in alphabetical order. Index is not generally included in graduate / post graduate students research reports. However, if the report is prepared for publication or intended as a work of reference, an index is desirable.

Self Assessment Exercise C

Fill in the blanks with appropriate word (s).

- 1) A report has only one function to perform. It must _____.
- 2) Broadly speaking reporting is of two types a) _____ reporting
b) _____ reporting.
- 3) A treatise on a single subject is called a _____.
- 4) The contents of a report can broadly be classified into _____ parts.
- 5) An abstract is a _____.
- 6) An Index may be either _____ index or _____ index.
- 7) A _____ contains the sources of references cited and other relevant works consulted.
- 8) The list of special terms and phrases used is given in the form a _____.

19.8 CHECK LIST FOR THE REPORT

When the final drafting of the report is completed and the author is satisfied about the draft, format and all other relevant aspects and ready for going to final typing or printing, it is always better to check various things to satisfy yourself that every thing is satisfactory. Here we are providing a list of questions for which a positive answer is expected.

Check List of Question

- i) Is the 'title' of the report accurately describing the content?
- ii) Is the scope of the study limited?
- iii) Is the research problem properly defined or specified?
- iv) Are the objectives of the study conceived well? Have they been achieved?
- v) Are hypotheses made explicit?
- vi) Has the plan of research been presented in detail?
- vii) Were appropriate methods and techniques chosen to test the hypotheses?
- viii) Whether all the pertinent data has been collected?
- ix) Have the data been classified logically and analyzed intelligently?
- x) Is the presentation of arguments clear and logical?
- xi) Has an objective and open-minded attitude been maintained through out the study?
- xii) Have the limitations of data, methods, results been spelt out?
- xiii) Are the previous works on this problem reviewed in the report?
- xiv) Is the chapterization logical? Were the rules of composition properly followed?
- xv) Are the forms of presentation — textual, tabular, graphic, properly used?
- xvi) Does the summary really summarize?
- xvii) Are the quotations and other references relevant?
- xviii) Is the bibliography complete and correct?
- xix) Are you able to convey what you mean?
- xx) Can't the report be further improved? No. That means, it is the best.

Finally, it should be remembered that report writing is an art which is learnt by practice and experience, rather than by mere doctrination. The researcher, therefore, should go through some of the research reports submitted/published in his field and familiarize himself/herself with the basics of report writing.

Typing Instructions: For typing a report, the following points should be kept in mind.

Paper: Quarter - size (A4 size) white thick, unruled paper is used.

Typing: Typing is done on only one side of the paper in double space.

Margins: Left side 1.5 inches, right side 0.5 inch, top and bottom 1.0 inch. But on the first page of every major division, for example, at the beginning of a chapter give 3 inches space at the top.

19.9 LET US SUM UP

The final stage of research investigation is reporting. The research results, findings and conclusions drawn etc., have to be communicated. This can be done in two ways i.e. orally or in writing. Written reports are more popular and authentic even though oral reporting also has its place. Based on requirement reports can be of two types viz., Technical reports and popular reports.

Report writing has to pass through a number of stages such as understanding the subject matter and its logical analysis, preparation of the final outline / sketch, preparation of the rough drafts and polishing and finalization. A report should have certain qualities such as accuracy, coherence, clarity conciseness, and readability. It must be prepared according to best composition rules.

The total structure of a report can be divided into three main parts.

- a) The preliminary part
- b) The Text or body part and
- c) The Terminal part.

The preliminary part consists of title page, certification, preface, acknowledgements, table of contents, list of tables, charts, figures etc., The Text part is the main body of the report which consists of the various chapters of the subject matter. The last part consists of Appendices, bibliography, glossary and Index. Having prepared the report it must be thoroughly checked to satisfy that every thing is satisfactory. Then only it should be given for final typing.

19.10 KEY WORDS

Abstract : An abstract is a short summary of the report.

Article : A short paper prepared for publication in a journal/for presentation in a seminar/conference.

Bibliography : It is the list of all published and unpublished references used in the report arranged in alphabetical order.

Dissertation : A formal and lengthy discourse.

Foot note : It is an explanatory note/material source, given at the bottom of the page.

Glossary : A list of words.

Lay out : Sketch, design, structure.

Monograph : A treatise on a single subject.

Report : A report is an account of the research study.

Reporting : Reporting means communicating through report.

Thesis : A formal and lengthy research paper presented as part of the requirements for a degree.

19.11 ANSWERS TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Self Assessment Exercise C

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1) Inform | 2) Oral, Written | 3) Monograph |
| 4) Three | 5) Synopsis | 6) Subject, author |
| 7) Bibliography | 8) Glossary | |

19.12 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions

- 1) Define research report and explain its purpose.
- 2) Distinguish between oral reporting and written reporting.
- 3) Differentiate between a technical report and a popular report.
- 4) Distinguish between an article and a monograph.
- 5) What is a bibliography? What is its purpose?
- 6) Why are quotations used in a research report?
- 7) Distinguish between bibliography and footnotes.
- 8) What are the items that can be included in Appendix?
- 9) What is an abstract?
- 10) What is meant by glossary?

B) Essay Type Questions

- 1) What is reporting? What are the different stages in the preparation of a report?
- 2) What is a report? What are the characteristics/qualities of a good report?
- 3) Briefly describe the structure of a report.
- 4) What are the various aspects that have to be checked before going to final typing?
- 5) What are the points to be kept in mind in revising the draft report?
- 6) Give a brief note on the prefatory items.
- 7) What are the various items that will find a place in the text / body of the report?
- 8) Describe briefly how a research report should be presented.
- 9) Describe the considerations and steps involved in planning a report writing work.
- 10) Write short notes on:
 - a) Characteristics of a good report.
 - b) Research article
 - c) Sources of data
 - d) Chapter plan

Note: These questions/exercises will help you to understand the unit better. Try to write answers for them. But do not submit your answers to the university for assessment. These are for your practice only.

19.13 FURTHER READING

The following text books may be used for more indepth study on the topics dealt with in this unit.

- 1) V.P. Michael, *Research Methodology in Management*, Himalaya Publishing House, Bombay.
- 2) O.R. Krishna Swamy, *Methodology of Research in Social Sciences*, Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai.
- 3) C.R. Kothari, *Research Methodology*, Wiley Eastern, New Delhi
- 4) Berenson, Conrad and Raymond Cotton, *Research and Report Writing for Business and Economics*, Random House, New York.