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Differences between a research paper and a review paper



RESEARCH PAPER



REVIEW PAPER

1. What is its purpose?

- Its purpose is to conduct and report a detailed, original research study. It presents the authors' unique investigation of a specific research question.

- Its purpose is to critically analyse previously published literature on a specific topic.

2. What is it based on?

- It is based on original research that has been conducted by the paper's authors. This is known as primary literature.

- It is based on existing published articles; it does not report any original research. This is known as secondary literature.

3. How is it written?

- The authors formulate a research question, collect raw data and conduct an original study.
- The research paper is then written based on an analysis and interpretation of this data.

- The authors select a specific topic and then summarize existing literature on that topic.
- This is done in an attempt to present an overview of the topic's current state of understanding.

4. What does it report?

- It reports each step of the study in detail. This includes an abstract, the hypothesis, background study, methodology, results and an interpretation of the findings.
- It also includes a discussion of the possible implications of the results, of how the study contributes to existing literature and suggestions for further research.

- It identifies & reports commonalities between the results of the chosen studies. If there are discrepancies then the authors try to provide reasons for conflicting results.
- With a balanced perspective, the authors analyse available information from published work and report any problems with or gaps within the existing literature.

5. How long should it be?

- It depends on the word count specified by the journal but word limit usually ranges between 3000 to 6000 words. For some journals the word limit might even go up to 12,000.

- The word limit usually ranges between 3000 and 5000 words. In some cases, a longer or relatively short review paper might also be published, depending upon the journal.

For more useful advice and tips on academic writing and publishing, visit www.editage.com/insights

