

YORKWAC Infobase

Organizing a Data-driven Research Paper

Many papers in the natural sciences and the social sciences are based on data that the student has gathered and analyzed personally. We may call such papers *data-driven* research papers, meaning they are based on gathering, analyzing and reporting on data from experiments or interviews. Such papers follow a very specific format. Here are the basics of organizing a data-driven research paper.

What sections should your paper include?

A research paper that reports on your own data includes the following sections:

- a) *Introduction* – Here the researcher states his/her topic or research question and follows up with discussion on how it fits into existing literature on that particular topic.
- b) *Research Design and Methods* – Here the researcher states the exact methodology that will be employed in his/her research: how and where data will be collected, from whom, in what manner.
- c) *Findings* – Also called *Results* section, this is where the researcher identifies his/hers major findings (what was found, any surprising findings, any findings that support or dispute the research question) and organizes them around the original research question.
- d) *Discussion* – Here the researcher compares/contrasts their research findings with literature findings on the topic and suggests areas for further research.

The **YORKWAC Infobase** includes many other Infosheets that can help you with your writing assignment.

If you want more information on organizing your data-driven research paper, you might want to try:

Infosheet #8, Data-driven Research Papers: The Introduction

Infosheet #9, Data-driven Research Papers: Research Design and Methods

Infosheet #10, Data-driven Research Papers: Reporting Your Findings

Infosheet #11, Data-driven Research Papers: Writing Your Discussion