

Figure 1-2. The four major general organizational units of educational research reports and a statement and description of the major components within each unit.

1. Purpose of the Research Study (The Research Problem)	
Purpose	A statement of the purpose of the research, which may take the form of a question or hypothesis.
Background	No research problem or hypothesis is context free. The background of the research problem places that problem within the context of prior research, theory, or logical analyses of observations.
Significance	Statements as to why this research problem is significant: i.e., why it is necessary to have the answer to the research question or problem.
Need	Assurance that the researcher is familiar with the extant literature on this topic and knows that this research problem cannot be answered on the basis of other studies.
2. Design and Methodology	
Design	A description of the general design to be followed to collect observations or data.
Cases	A description of the persons, objects or actions to whom the experimental treatments will be applied or that will be observed or measured.
Specification of Procedures	An almost step-by-step specification of how the persons, objects or actions will be observed or measured or how the experimental treatments will be applied.
Outcome Measures	A precise statement of what data will be recorded from the observations, measurements or experimental treatments (sometimes included as a first component of the results section).
3. Results	
Summary Data	A listing, tabulation, description, or some other form of presenting a reduced form of the data obtained from the observations, measurements or experimental treatments.
Data Analysis Techniques	The general quantitative or qualitative data-analysis techniques that will be used to analyze the data derived from the observations, measurements or experimental treatments.
Findings	The specific results of the data analyses.
4. Discussion/Conclusions	
Conclusions	Statements of the specific conclusions, inferences, applications or generalizations drawn from the findings within a context of previous research and logic that clearly demonstrates and supports the researcher's derivation of these conclusion.
Limitations	The qualifications or limitations on the findings and conclusions that indicate clearly the parameters of the conclusions and to whom these conclusions apply and do not apply.
Alternative Hypotheses	A critical analysis of the research problem, design, procedures, cases and findings that indicates possible alternative interpretations of the findings.
Future Research	New, further or refined lines of research that are required to address the research problem more fully.