

Reviewing the Research Literature

Dr. Hanan A. Ezzat

Literature Review



Process of *reviewing the current knowledge* about the research problem, and the *required information* necessary for the fulfillment of the research study

When to review literature

???

CONTINUOUSLY THROUGHOUT RESEARCH PROCESS

- ***Early:*** for research topic, to narrow the research problem & for writing the research statement.
- ***Later:*** for the "*state-of-the-art*" on the research problem. It is a summary of the relevant literature in the introductory section of any research.

Purpose of reviewing literature

- Establishing the *significance of the research problem*.
- Identifying *sample characteristics* to help identify relevant demographic variables.
- Identifying *gaps in knowledge* about the problem.
- Identifying *limitations of previous studies* that may lead to a new study design.

Purpose of reviewing literature

- Identifying areas where there seems to be *consensus* among researchers.
- Noting where there are *inconsistencies in research findings*.
- Identifying *variables* that others have found to be *relevant* to the problem at hand.
- Identifying areas lead to important *new understandings of the phenomenon* under examination.

Purpose of reviewing literature

- Identifying *theoretical frameworks* that others have used to study the phenomenon.
- Identifying what *other researchers* consider to be *important to study*.
- Identifying how other researchers have *measure variables* and *analyzed data*.
- Exploring the *methods* other investigators have used to *study the research question*.

Sources of literature review

Manual sources:

- ***Catalogue:*** It tells what is available in the library. include catalogue, cards, books, or microfilms.
- ***Indexes:*** It assists in identifying journal articles and other publications relevant to topics of interest.
- ***Abstracts:*** Includes the same biographical as indexes, with an additional brief objective summary of the content covered in the publication.
- ***Bibliography:*** A list of publications for a specific topic. The list contains variety of sources including books, articles, conferences, documents, researches...etc.

Sources of literature review

Computer sources:

- ***Medline:*** (Medical Literature On-Line)
Contains references to biomedical journal's articles.
- ***CINAHL:*** (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature).
- ***HealthSTAR:*** (Health Services, Technology, Administration, and Research).
- ***CHID:*** (Combined Health Information Database).

How to conduct the literature review?

- Identifying the literature sources.
- Evaluating the research studies.
- Writing an integrative review of the findings.

"Where do I start?"

- Ask *professors* who work on the area or topic of research from where to get information.
- Check with a *reference librarian* for sources that may lead you to research done on your topic.
- Check *textbooks* for leads.
- Check the appropriate discipline's *abstracts*

"Where do I start?"

- Check *journals*, starting from the most recent issues back to the old ones.
- In summarizing the research studies, try to *answer the questions "who? What? Where? And when?" for each study* you include in your review.
- The research question may indicate that it would be appropriate to check various *non-print sources* for inclusion in the literature review. include *digitized data, photographs, audiotapes, and videotapes.*

Mechanics of writing the literature review

- ***A detailed outline.***
- Write ***each item*** on the outline independently and comprehensively.
- ***Connect*** all items together appropriately in order to form a whole.
- Often the L.R. will be ***written and re-written*** during the research process, based on the development of other sections.

Mechanics of writing the literature review

- Literature content are *paraphrased and/or summarized* in the researcher's words.
- Relevant studies/researches are presented in relation to each other to *show similarities and differences*.
- *Ethical issues* should be considered in presenting information; the content should be presented honestly and not distorted to support the selected problem.

An aerial photograph of a tropical island. The island is covered in dense green vegetation and palm trees. A small sandy beach is visible on the right side of the island. The surrounding water is a vibrant blue, with a shallow lagoon area showing lighter turquoise colors. In the bottom right corner, a small boat with several people on board is visible. The sky is clear and bright.

ANY QUESTIONS

???