



**KING SAUD UNIVERSITY
COLLAGE OF NURSING**

NURSING ADMINISTRATION & EDUCATION DEPT.

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NURSING RESEARCH

(NUR 412)

MODULE 4

Reviewing Research-Related Literature

Course Coordinator

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1437 – 1438

Learning Outcomes:

By completing this module, the student is expected to:

1. Determine The Purposes For The Literature Review
2. Recognize The Need For Becoming Familiar With The Library's Services
3. Distinguish Between Primary And Secondary Sources In Research Literature
4. Recognize The Importance Of Grey Literature.
5. Discuss Print Resources That May Be Used In Locating Literature References
6. Discuss Electronic Sources That May Be Used In Locating Literature References
7. Compare Electronic Sources That Are Useful For Nurses When Conducting A Literature Re-view
8. Obtain References From Online Journals
9. Conduct A Literature Search On A Given Topic
10. Extract Pertinent Information From Literature Sources

Reviewing the Research Literature

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A literature review is a critical step in focusing the research problem and statement of purpose. It is a 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:

- After statement of the problem, the researcher has to review the literature again in order to develop the study question (or hypothesis).

- In fact, literature review is performed continuously yet, it is concentrated on:
 - a. *Early:* during the searching and identification of information about a research topic as well as to narrow the research problem and for writing the research statement.

 - b. *Later:* after the statement of the problem, the researcher has to review the available literature to write a summary of 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:

The review of literature should tell us what is known about the research topic and problem and what we need to find out.

The goals of a literature review include:

1. Establishing the significance of the research problem.

2. Identifying sample characteristics to help identify relevant demographic variables.

3. Identifying gaps in knowledge about the problem.
4. Identifying limitations of previous studies that may lead to a new study design.
5. Identifying areas where there seems to be consensus among researchers.
6. Noting where there are inconsistencies in research findings.
7. Identifying variables that others have found to be relevant to the problem at hand.
8. Identifying areas that, if explored, could lead to important new understandings of the phenomenon under examination.
9. Identifying theoretical frameworks that others have used to study the phenomenon.
10. Identifying how other researchers have made connections to theory.
11. Identifying what other researchers consider to be important to study.
12. Identifying how other researchers have measure variables and analyzed their data.

13.Exploring the methods other investigators have used to study the research question.

Sources of literature review:

Before looking for sources of literature review, the researcher should first clarify his research topic and put down subheadings, synonymous terms, and pinpoints. Then, look for sources either manually or through computers (using the key words). These sources can be either primary, secondary or tertiary sources.

I. Primary Sources:

- These are the most preferred sources.
- Written by original investigator or researcher.
- Journal articles.
- Start by reading abstract or summary.
- Include reference citations.

II. Secondary Sources:

- Not written by original study researcher.
- Usually these are summaries written by scientific writers.
- It's risk comes from the writer's misinterpretation or omission.
- It is better to be used in conjunction with primary sources.

III. Grey (Also Called Gray) Literature:

- Not commercially published
- Not indexed or available in major databases
- Examples:

- a. *Conference proceedings*
- b. *Dissertations*
- c. *Theses*
- d. *Technical reports*
- e. *Unpublished research reports*

1. Types of print sources:

- a. ***Catalogue:*** It tells the researcher what is available in the library. Information may be kept in a catalogue, cards, books, or microfilms.
- b. ***Indexes:*** It provides assistance in identifying journal articles and other publications relevant to topics of interest.
- c. ***Abstracts:*** Includes the same biographical as indexes, with an additional brief objective summary of the content covered in the publication. It helps in determining whether the source is relevant or not.
- d. ***Bibliography:*** A list of publications for a specific topic. The list contains variety of sources including books, articles, conferences, documents, researches...etc.

2. Computer sources:

- a. ***Medline:*** (Medical Literature On-Line) Contains references to biomedical journal's articles.

b. CINAHL: (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature).

c. HealthSTAR: (Health Services, Technology, Administration, and Research).

d. CHID: (Combined Health Information Database).

- Once resources are identified either manually or by computer, the researcher must proceed to locate the actual references.
- After the location of the references and obtaining a photocopy for the relevant ones, the researcher has to systematically record references on the article and to organize them under the relevant subheadings.

How to conduct the literature review (i.e., Methodology):

Review of literature process can be subdivided into *three stages*:

1. Identifying the literature sources.
2. Evaluating the research studies.
3. Writing an integrative review of the findings.

Usually the first question posed is, "*Where do I start?*"

The following *steps* are useful:

1. Ask professors who work on the area or topic of research from where to get information.
2. Check with a reference librarian for sources that may lead you to research done on your topic.
3. Check textbooks for leads, (for example, a chapter references).
4. Check the appropriate discipline's abstracts because they provide brief descriptions of published papers dealing with a variety of topics (for example, web sites, indexes, and internet resources).
5. Check journals that are likely to publish work in the area, starting from the most recent issues back to the old ones.
6. In summarizing the research studies, try to answer the questions "who?, what?, where?, and when?" for each study you include in your review.
7. The research question may indicate that it would be appropriate to check various non-print sources for inclusion in the literature review. These sources include digitized data, photographs, audiotapes, and videotapes.

Mechanics of writing the literature review:

1. A detailed outline.
2. Write each item on the outline independently and comprehensively.
3. Connect all items together appropriately in order to form a whole.
4. Often the L.R. will be written and re-written during the research process, based on the development of other sections.
5. Present it in a concise accurate manner. The 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 and never presented randomly without correlation between them.
6. Ethical issues should be considered in presenting information; the content should be presented honestly and not distorted to support the selected problem.

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