Literature Reviews

FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS & INDUSTRIES
POST GRADUATE DANCE STUDIES

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Literature Reviews

A literature review is an evaluation of literature on a specified subject or topic area. It allows you to develop your information seeking and critical appraisal skills.

General structure

Introduction (1-2 paragraphs)

- Background/context
- focus/boundaries
- overview

Body

- Sections logically arranged
- Each section contains brief critical overview of literature
- Sources cited to support points
- Avoid grouping sources with similar findings, too list -like

Conclusion (1 paragraph)

- Reiterates assessment of literature
- Should discuss shortcomings and/or gaps

Three defining parts to a good literature review

1. Extensive reference to related research
2. Connections made between sources
3. Position of your research within context of existing

Purpose of a Literature review

- Introduce **relevant terminology and definitions**

- Identify **areas of prior scholarship** to prevent duplication of effort

- Identify the **need for additional research**

- Describe the **relationship of each work to others**

- Identify **new ways to interpret** prior research

- **Reveal any gaps** that exist in the literature

- **Resolve conflicts** amongst seemingly contradictory results

- Locate **your own research within context** of existing literature

Common errors

- Exclusion of key studies/authors

- Inclusion of irrelevant materials

- Out-of-date material

- Poor organizational structure

- Lack of synthesis (listing studies, authors)

- Lack of critical appraisal

Organise and manage your literature

Ways to organise

- Topic/thematic
- Method
- Chronologically
- Authors perspective "school of thought"

Ways to manage

- File naming convention
- Reference management tools e.g. RefWorks, Endnote
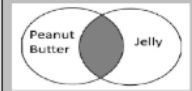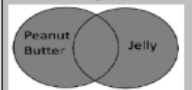- Secure storage/back-ups
- Literature as data

Finding information

Start by defining your research query so you can develop the keywords/phrases in search strategies for your topic.

Mind maps can be a useful tool in organising your questions and ideas:

Coggle mind maps https://coggle.it   Wise maps http://www.wisemapping.com/

1. Write out your research question
2. Underline keywords, concepts or phrases
3. Identify questions that flow from the keywords and research question as a whole
4. Look for follow up questions and links
5. Think sequencing/ordering of these ideas/questions

Tips for Searching

Concept table Example:

First Nation	Repatriation	Head's
Indigenous	Reinstatement	Moko Mōkai
Maori	Return	Taonga

Your research topic, or, research question will affect your research strategy. This will drive the types of resources that you will need to use in your review. Does your topic require more current published materials from databases? Or, does your topic require a more in-depth analysis from monographs or books? Be aware of your topic and research question needs, and, how this will affect your search strategy(ies).

Building on your research

Use a literature-searching strategy that builds on information you already have. Start with a relevant book or article and try some of the following:

- Look at the reference list or bibliography for more material.

- Take note of the words used in the text of your book or article. They may provide useful new search terms to use when searching for more literature.

- Find your book or article in the library Catalogue or databases. Use the subject headings listed in the details section of Catalogue or database records to find similar material.

- Look up other works by the author(s).

- Search for your book or article on Google Scholar to find other researchers who have cited the author in their research.

Example Search logs:

Make sure that you are taking note of the resources that you are accessing, the limiters that you have used in your searches (such as years etc), the search terms and strategies utilized within your searches (please refer to slide 15), the amount of results you get from your searches and any notes that will help you with future searches.

Resource/ Database	Years	Search Terms or Strategies used	# of Hits/ Results	Notes

Evaluating literature

Key considerations

1. **Abstract** appears on the first page of an article and gives a brief summary of the articles content
2. **8 pages** or more is usually a good indication of depth and breadth
3. **Extensive citing** and referencing shows that the article has authority and credibility
4. Articles usually include **brief biographies** of the authors, relevant qualifications and affiliations
5. An academic article will have a **defined structure** with an introduction and a conclusion along with other sections. They may also include tables and other diagrams
6. The articles should contain **topic specific terminology** and assume prior knowledge of the subject matter
7. The **peer review process** ensures an article is suitable to be used for research. Check the **Ulrich database** to see if the journal is peer reviewed

In Summary

The Article	The Author
Does it have an abstract? Is it of substantial length? Is there extensive citing and referencing? Is there a clear structure and format? Was it published in a peer-review journal? Reputable publisher?	Are they a topic expert? Do they use appropriate language and voice? Have they been recommended? Do they have a good reputation?

Remember using academic sources is crucial to showing your understanding of your topic, and, the library's books and databases are the best source of information for your assignment.

Reviewing resources:

C	**Currency**	
	The timeliness of the information	
R	**Relevance**	
	The importance of the information to your needs	
A	**Authority**	
	The source of the information	
A	**Accuracy**	
	The reliability, truthfulness & correctness of the content	
P	**Purpose**	
	The reason the information exists	

Writing – Key elements

Descriptive/Reporting	Interpretive/Critical
What happened	Ask & answer questions
What discussed	Analyse, explain & interpret
	Synthesize information to deliver your point of view

Analysis of literature

- Familiarize yourself with your data so you can describe and explain the content
- Search for patterns/themes across literature
- Interpret key findings

Interpretive writing = *Language that highlights IMPORTANCE*

- This shows that…
- This calls attention to…
- This is important because…
- This can be illustrated by….

Synthesis of literature

- Accurately reports information from the sources using a wide range of varying phrases and sentences
- Organised in such a way that audience can immediately see where information from sources overlaps
- Allows your research argument and critique to be understood within context of research area

Critique

Deficit critique	Positive critique
Highlights weaknesses and limitations	Highlights research strengths – viewed as pivotal/important/successful research

Language of critique: http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/being-critical/

A *layered approach*: **Description**> **Critique**>**Solution** - Allows you to **_use your own voice_**

Reporting Verbs

A well written review contains many verbs that are used to introduce references. These are called reporting verbs. Reporting verbs can indicate either the authors personal viewpoint, your viewpoint regarding what the author says, and/or the author's viewpoint regarding other literature.
Try to vary your use of these verbs (feel free to find or think of others), using the same ones can often be boring for the reader and your audience. Doing so demonstrates academic rigour.

The following are just <u>some examples</u> of reporting verbs that can assist you in your literature review.

Suggest (that)	Recent studies outlined by Leonard et al (1999) suggest that personality and disposition play an equally important role in motivation.
Argue (that)	Leonard et al (1999) argue that there are three elements of self-perception.
Contend(s)	Mullens (1994) contends that motivation to work well is usually related to job satisfaction.
Outline	Recent studies outlined by Mullins (1994) suggest that personality and disposition play an equally important role in motivation.
Focus on	The early theories of Maslow and McGregor (Robbins et al, 1998) focused on personal needs and wants as the basis for motivation.
Define(s)	Eunson (1987, p. 67) defines motivation as 'what is important to you'.
Conclude(s) (that)	Reviewing the results of the case study, Taylor (1980) concludes that the theories of job enrichment and employee motivation do work.
State	He further states that there is an increasing importance on the role of autonomy and self-regulation of tasks in increasing motivation.
Maintains (that)	Mullins (1994) maintains that job enrichment came from Herzber's two factor theory.
Found (that)	Mullins (1994) found that there is an increasing importance on the role of autonomy and self-regulation of tasks in improving motivation.
Promote(s)	This promotes the idea that tension and stress are important external sources of motivation, which can be eliminated by completing certain tasks.
Establish(ed) (by)	As established by Csikszentmihalyi (Yair 2000, p. 2) 'the more students feel in command of their learning, the more they fulfil their learning potential'.
Asserts (that)	Locke's Goal Setting Theory asserts that setting specific goals tends to encourage work motivation (Robbins et al, 1998).
Show(s)	Various theories of motivation show employers that there are many factors that influence employees work performance.

Adapted from RMIT University Study and Learning Centre Literature review.

Examples of Synthesis throughout a Literature Review:

Please read through these colour coded examples to recognize the synthesis in the various examples.

Look at how the introduction has been broken up into its parts.

Many theories have been proposed to explain what motivates human behaviour.

Although the literature covers a wide variety of such theories, this review will focus on five major themes which emerge repeatedly throughout the literature reviewed.

Topic sentence: Identifies five major themes as the scope of this review.

These themes are: incorporation of the self-concept into traditional theories of motivation, the influence of rewards on motivation, the increasing importance of internal forces of motivation, autonomy and self-control as sources of motivation, and narcissism as an essential component of motivation.

Five major themes identified.

Although the literature represents these themes in a variety of contexts, this paper will primarily focus on their application to self motivation.

Concluding sentence: specific focus.

This is a good example of a body paragraph because it starts with a topic sentence that introduces the main idea of the paragraph (which hopefully flows logically from the preceeding paragraph). It then presents arguments gathered from the literature that is supportive and contrasting. Finally ending with a concluding statement.

Note: not all paragraphs need to have contrasting arguments, by including some, you are demonstrating that you have read widely.

Look at how the example paragraph has been broken up into its parts.

Most early theories of motivation were concerned with need satisfaction.

Topic sentence: outlining your main claim or key point for that paragraph.

Robbins, Millett, Cacioppe and Waters-Marsh (1998) argued that motivation relies on what a person needs and wants. Similarly the early theories of Maslow and McGregor (cited in Robbins et al., 1998) focused on personal needs and satisfaction as the basis for motivational behaviour.

Supporting evidence from the readings.

However, recent studies outlined by leonard, Beauvais, and Scholl (1999) suggest that personality and disposition play an equally important role in motivation.

Contrasting theories from research.

Current thinking does not discount these theories, but builds on them to include a self-concept.

Concluding sentence: linking to next paragraph.

As well as presenting the information from the literature you also need to ensure that you are including your own analysis and interpretation of it. Read the following paragraph and see how the arguments have been intergrated and synthesised into the paragraph along with the students analysis.

Analysis is NOT just an opinion, it needs to be supported by the literature.

Look at how the example sentence is broken down into its parts.

By its very nature, motivation requires a degree of individual satisfaction or narcissism.

Topic sentence: outlining your main claim or key point for that paragraph.

Robbins et al. (1998) suggest that motivation has as its basis the need to focus on, and please the self.

First statement of evidence from the literature

This is supported by Shaw, Shapard and Waugaman (2000) who contend that this narcissistic drive is based upon the human effort to find personal significance in life.

Second statement of evidence from the literature.

It can be argued that the desire to improve one's status is a highly motivating force, and is central to the idea of narcissistic motivation. The narcissistic motivational strategies put forward by Shaw et al. (2000) are concerned with motivation for life in general, but may also have applications in the context of work.

Student analysis

These strategies, with their focus on personal needs, demonstrate that narcissism is an essential component of motivation.

Concluding statement

Note: Not all paragraphs need to contain an analysis of the information, but to include some when appropriate shows that you have been thinking critically about what you have read.

Remember, just like an essay you need to include a paragraph or two (do not limit yourself to this amount, some reviews will need more) that sums up the main points that has emerged throughout the body of your literature review.

Useful Library Contacts

Research Services

Research Services Advisers provide workshops, online resources and one-to-one research consults for post-graduates.

To request a consult state faculty/ level of study & topic (if possible)

https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/contact-us/

Learning & Teaching Development

Provides resources and advice for students to develop academic skills

https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/about-us/student-learning-services

English Language Enrichment

Provides English language development for improving academic writing skills

https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/about-us/ele

Inclusive Learning

Provides learning assessments, recommendations and academic development opportunities for students with learning/invisible disabilities (e.g. dyslexia)

https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/services/student-learning/learning-disabilities-students

Te Fale Pouāwhina

Provides student-centred service based on kaupapa Māori and Pacific principles. Focus is on academic skills development at both undergraduate & postgraduate levels

https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/services/student-learning/tfp

Ask Us

Queries, contact point concerning library services & resources

https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/contact-us/

Resources

Literature Review guides
Academic Writing, Writing the Literature Review, University of Melbourne.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70n2-gAp7J0

Guide to master's research, Literature review, University of Auckland.
https://flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/masters-research/6_1.html

HEDC, Writing a Literature Review, University of Otago.
https://www.otago.ac.nz/hedc/otago615355.pdf

Reviewing the literature: A short research study guide for students. Queensland University
https://my.uq.edu.au/files/11020/guide-literature-review-research-students.pdf

Ridley, Diana. The Literature Review: A Step-by-step Guide for Students. 2nd ed. London: SAGE, 2012. Print. Sage Study Skills.
https://catalogue.library.auckland.ac.nz/permalink/f/1ilac6l/uoa_alma21190313470002091

Search strategy
Creative Arts & Industries Subject Guides
https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/guides/creative

Developing a search strategy from a research question. Charles Stuart University
https://libguides.csu.edu.au/c.php?g=476545&p=4949988

Researching for your literature review. Monash University
https://guides.lib.monash.edu/researching-for-your-literature-review/2

Data management & Referencing
https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/study-skills/referencing#referencing

Evaluation
Ulrich database – to check peer review status of a journal
https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/databases/record/?record=ulrichs

Writing
Command words. Massey University
http://owll.massey.ac.nz/academic-writing/command-words.php

Phrasebank – University of Manchester:
http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk