

Literature Review –Concept and Importance

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Concept

A literature review is a comprehensive summary of previous research on a topic. ...

The review should enumerate, describe, summarize, objectively evaluate and clarify this previous research. It should give a theoretical base for the research and help you (the author) determine the nature of your research.

A literature review discusses published information in a particular subject area, and sometimes information in a particular subject area within a certain time period. A literature review can be just a simple summary of the sources, but it usually has an organizational pattern and combines both summary and synthesis.

The literature review is a written overview of major writings and other sources on a selected topic. Sources covered in the review may include scholarly journal articles, books, government reports, Web sites, etc. The literature review provides a description, summary and evaluation of each source.

The purpose of a literature review is to:

- Provide foundation of knowledge on topic
- Identify areas of prior scholarship to prevent duplication and give credit to other researchers
- Identify inconsistencies: gaps in research, conflicts in previous studies, open questions left from other research
- Identify need for additional research (justifying your research)
- Identify the relationship of works in context of its contribution to the topic and to other works
- Place your own research within the context of existing literature making a case for why further study is needed.

Categories:

1. Simple - A simple literature review is a brief overview of the topic not necessarily purely academic in scope and often uses popular sources (although popular sources are noted so their weight and value can be judged) this review is often just the start of the research process.
2. Applied - Used mostly in business, government and other professional environments applied literature reviews are more fact finding exercises. Used to look at

marketability and profitability they look at change and value objectivity and accuracy in similar projects and programs.

3. Academic - Whether stand alone or part of a paper, study, or project the Academic Literature Review requires accuracy, quality resources, objectivity thoroughness and quality analysis but unlike the other two styles the Academic Review requires a depth the others do not. Academic sources not popular should be used and a summary and synthesis of sources usually within a conceptual framework.

Importance of literature review in research:

The importance of literature review in scientific manuscripts can be condensed into an analytical feature to enable the multifold reach of its significance. It adds value to the legitimacy of the research in many ways:

1. Provides the interpretation of existing literature in light of updated developments in the field to help in establishing the consistency in knowledge and relevancy of existing materials.
2. It helps in calculating the impact of the latest information in the field by mapping their progress of knowledge.
3. It brings out the dialects of contradictions between various thoughts within the field to establish facts.
4. The research gaps scrutinized initially are further explored to establish the latest facts of theories to add value to the field.
5. Indicates the current research place in the schema of a particular field.
6. Provides information for relevancy and coherency to check the research.
7. Apart from elucidating the continuance of knowledge, it also points out areas that require further investigation and thus aid as a starting point of any future research.
8. Justifies the research and sets up the research question.
9. Sets up a theoretical framework comprising the concepts and theories of the research upon which its success can be judged

10. Helps to adopt a more appropriate methodology for the research by examining the strengths and weaknesses of existing research in the same field
11. Increases the significance of the results by comparing it with the existing literature
12. Provides a point of reference by writing the findings in the scientific manuscript
13. Helps to get the due credit from the audience for having done the fact-finding and fact-checking mission in the scientific manuscripts
14. The more the reference of relevant sources of it could increase more of its trustworthiness with the readers
15. Helps to prevent plagiarism by tailoring and uniquely tweaking the scientific manuscript not to repeat other's original idea
16. By preventing plagiarism, it saves the scientific manuscript from rejection and thus also saves a lot of time and money
17. Helps to evaluate, condense and synthesize gist in the author's own words to sharpen the research focus
18. Helps to compare and contrast to show the originality and uniqueness of the research than that of the existing other researches
19. Rationalizes the need for conducting the particular research in a specified field
20. Helps to collect data accurately for allowing any new methodology of research than the existing ones.

References :

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2. Kothari, C.R.(2004) *Research Methodology : Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi.
3. Mishra, R.P.(2002) *Research Methodology*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.