



**UTM**  
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA



**Online  
Learning**

# Reviewing Literature & Writing Literature Review

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## Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to know:

- Details of reviewing literature
- Steps involved in writing literature review

# Defining Review of Related Literature

- The review of related literature involves systematic identification, location, and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem.
- It May include documents such as articles, books, dissertations, reviews, etc.

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## Purpose of Literature Review

In a broader context Hart (1998) lists the following purposes of a review:

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Distinguishing what has been done from what needs to be done;

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Discovering important variables relevant to the topic;

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Synthesizing and gaining a new perspective;

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Identifying relationships between ideas and practice;

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Establishing the context of the topic or problem;

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## **What need to be consider before writing the literature review?**

Find models/Examples

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Look for various source of literature reviews in your area of interest or in the discipline

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You can simply put the word "review" in your search engine along with your other topic terms

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The reference section of sources which you already have read are also excellent entry points into your own research

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**Continue.**  
**What need  
to be  
consider  
before  
writing the  
literature  
review?**

Narrow your topic

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The narrower your topic, the easier it will be to limit the number of sources you need to read in order to get a good survey of the material.

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You first limit your scope.

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Consider whether your sources are current

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**Continue.**  
**What need  
to be  
consider  
before  
writing the  
literature  
review?**

Some disciplines require current information

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In the medical sciences, for instance, treatments for medical problems are constantly changing according to the latest studies.

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Information even two years old could be obsolete.

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**Continue.**  
**What need  
to be  
consider  
before  
writing the  
literature  
review?**

For writing a review in the humanities, history, or social sciences, perspectives changed through the years or within a certain time period.

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Sorting bibliographies or literature reviews in the field to get a sense of what your discipline expects.

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You can also use this method to consider what is "hot" and what is not.

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**Continue.**  
**What need  
to be  
consider  
before  
writing the  
literature  
review?**

Consider organization

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What are the most important topics and subtopics, that your review needs to include?

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And in what order should you present them?

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**Continue.**  
**What need  
to be  
consider  
before  
writing the  
literature  
review?**

Develop an organization for your review at both a global and local level

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Your literature reviews must reflect global studies and local studies pertaining to your research topic.

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# Purposes of Review of Related Literature

**To determine what has already been done on your topic.**

**Provides information so you don't unintentionally duplicate existing research.**

**Provides information to help you adequately frame your study in what has been conducted before your work.**

**Helps you to identify research strategies and data collection mechanisms that have and have not worked in previous studies.**

**Facilitates your ability to interpret your findings.**

## Purposes of Review of Related Literature

The purpose of a literature review is for you to take a critical look at the literature (facts and views) that already exists in the area you are researching.

A literature review is not a shopping list of everything that exists, but a critical analysis that shows an evaluation of the existing literature and a relationship between the different works.

It demonstrates the relevance of the research.

## Scope of Review of Related Literature

Determining scope is challenging for beginning researchers. It is difficult to determine what to include and what not to include in the literature review.

### Suggestions For Adequate Scope

When there is a large existing database, review only those directly related to your problem.

When there are few existing studies, divert your search in related variables and include previous work related in a meaningful way to your problem.

## Why We Need Literature Review

- For professionals, they are useful reports that keep them up to date with what is current in the field.
- For scholars, the depth and breadth of the literature review emphasizes the credibility of the writer in his or her field

# Qualitative vs Quantitative Research Literature Review

- Qualitative researchers may not review the literature in-depth before they begin a research study.
- Quantitative researchers review the literature in-depth before they begin a research study.

## What Literature Review Demonstrate

Shows that the researcher is knowledgeable about related research

Helps researcher identify gaps in the body of literature and may provide rationale for further investigation

Assists in refining research questions and guides working hypotheses



# Steps for Conducting a Review

Identify and make a list of keywords to guide your literature search.

Using your keywords, locate many sources.

Abstract your sources.

Analyze and organize your sources using a literature matrix.

Write the literature review which is most related to the problem.

## Locating Sources

- Use the library catalogs
- Library materials can be online and offline for reviewing literature a
- Select database for Online Literature
- e.g., ERIC, Education Index, PsycINFO, Dissertation abstracts

## Evaluating Sources

A series of questions to ask yourself to determine if the source is appropriate for your purposes:

1. What was the problem statement of the study?

Is this source related to your research problem?

2. To Whom we are studying

Examine the sample.

# Analyzing, Organizing, and Reporting the Literature

- Provide a meaningful review of previous research.
- By Include contradictory studies.
- Review least connected references first and then move to most relevant.
- Conclude the review with a brief summary of the literature and its implications.

## Continue

# Analyzing, Organizing, and Reporting the Literature

- Some students are intimidated to start writing a literature review largely due to a lack of experience.
- Provide referential support for your statements.
- Consistently define your terms.
- Make an outline.
- Fit sources within your outline.

## Continue

# Analyzing, Organizing, and Reporting the Literature

- Meta-analysis is a statistical approach for summarizing the effects found in many quantitative studies that have investigated the same or a similar problem.
  - Decreases subjectivity
  - Sometimes more efficient than traditional reviews
- Meta-analysis uses a measure of relation called an effect size.
  - Effect sizes range from small (e.g., .25) to large (e.g., .80).

# Referencing

Provide full details of all sources cited

Include published books, articles, book chapters, technical reports, web sources, etc.

List alphabetically by author name

Make sure understand university regulations on plagiarism

Consult university guidelines for more on referencing style

## Language focus

Create a balance between direct quotation (citation) and paraphrasing. Avoid too much direct quoting.

When you are citing a specific author's findings, use the past tense:

When you are writing about an accepted fact, use the present tense

When you are citing several authors or making a general statement, use the present perfect tense:



## Final Checklist

- Have I fulfilled the purpose of the literature review?
- Is it written at a level appropriate to its audience?
- Are its facts correct?
- Is all the information included relevant?
- Are the layout and presentation easy on the eye?
- Is the language clear, concise and academic?
- Does the introduction adequately introduce the topic?
- Is the body organised logically?
- Does the conclusion interpret, analyse and evaluate?
- Have I acknowledged all sources of information through correct referencing?
- Have I checked spelling, grammar and punctuation?
- Have I carefully proof-read the final draft?

## Activity 1

Identify 2 - 3 key terms relevant to your thesis or dissertation (e.g. social capital, human values) and use these to search the library catalogues for relevant resources.

## Activity 2

Identify any difficulties that you have encountered during electronic literature review (Like article not able to view full), and write it in 100 words.

**GOOD LUCK!!**

Thank you for Your Attention!