What is a literature review?

A literature review is an integrated analysis-- not just a summary-- of scholarly writings that are related directly to your research question. That is, it represents the literature that provides background information on your topic and shows a correspondence between those writings and your research question.

Takeaways:

- NOT a summary of individual sources
- Provides background on a topic
- Demonstrates why a topic is important
- Shows how articles relate to one another as well as the research question
- Discusses further research questions/draws logical conclusions
Misconceptions on the Literature Review

The picture on the right is how you DO NOT write a literature review.

Literature reviews DO NOT summarize each source within the paper.

Literature reviews DO explain how the sources related to one another.
  - Do multiple sources talk about the same thing?
  - Do multiple sources agree?
  - Do multiple sources disagree?

Organizing the Lit Review

Most papers organize a literature review by themes.

As you read the literature, pay attention to certain themes that emerge.

Imagine that each theme is a bucket and every author/source can be put into a bucket.

Organizing your buckets: McGuire’s

Great place to eat! Awesome atmosphere! The service was very good a girl named Holly served us and was very responsive and helpful.

It's like a giant meat popsicle smothered with gravy goodness.

Outlining Your Lit Review

Your lit review is theme based, not author based.

RQ: Do restaurant customers who receive high quality service give a positive review even if they find the restaurant’s food is poor?

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How to Compare & Contrast Original Research

Research Question
- How are their fundamental research questions alike or different?

Theories
- Are any studies grounded in similar theories?

Methods
- If research questions are similar, how do their methods differ?
  - Populations
  - Sample size
  - Quantitative / Qualitative

Results
- What did they find?
- How are they similar/different?

Limitations
- What are the known shortcomings of the study? What ones do you see?

Gaps / implications for further research
- What could still be studied? What have none quite addressed or how could a study address it more thoroughly?
Organizing Relationships: The Synthesis Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>Purpose, rationale, research question</th>
<th>Theory, framework</th>
<th>Research methods, sample, variables</th>
<th>Major findings, contributions</th>
<th>Study limitations, gaps that remain</th>
<th>Study implications for research, practice, policy</th>
<th>Make note of how this research is linked to other studies reviewed</th>
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## Example of Synthesis Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Looked for what?</th>
<th>Why? / Outcome</th>
<th>Syllabi Studied</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Similarities to ours</th>
<th>Differences from ours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sayles</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>course improvement</td>
<td>collection development, library</td>
<td>across all depts/courses</td>
<td>random sample of 162</td>
<td>showed library use (at Aurora—the mixed institution); at Houghton, 51%. In general, social science courses prescribed the most; humanities were mixed; and science, art and music were near the bottom. Most: social sciences and nursing at Aurora and religion &amp; philosophy at Houghton. “Disciplines representing institutional strengths tend to place greater demands on the library than those deemphasized by the college or university.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rambler</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>library use, much, none</td>
<td>library instruction</td>
<td>compared 2 private</td>
<td>institutions for a fall</td>
<td>Studied all courses in a semester to identify a trend; Low-use among studio/lab courses</td>
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<td>Lauer, Mert,</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>counted if a category of library use was mentioned in a syllabus</td>
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<td>just identified trends, don’t say what they are doing with the results</td>
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<td>(Categories: research paper/report/project, Other, AV equipment, AV materials; Oral</td>
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<td>Presentation; Periodical Assignment/Readings; Group Project; Bibliography or</td>
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<td>Literature search; Bibliographic Instruction; Reserve</td>
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<td>Bean and Kleck</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Material</td>
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Sample Methods Comparison

Survey scale:

Self-disclosure. The general tendency to self-disclose to others was assessed by using the 10-item Self-Disclosure Index.\(^5\) Willingness to self-disclose was assessed on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Extremely). Items were preceded by the stem “In general, I tend to disclose to others” followed by a range of topic areas, including “What I like and dislike about myself” and “Things I have done which I feel guilty about.” Higher scores indicate a greater tendency to self-disclose personal information. The scale has strong psychometric properties.\(^32^{-34}\) A Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.84 was obtained for the current study.

Survey scale:

2006). Items that did not hang together reliably with the rest of the scale were dropped from the survey based on analysis of pilot data. The final survey consisted of four self-disclosure items. When the scale was validated, two items that were reverse-coded did not hang together reliably with the other two, so they were dropped. The final measure (Cronbach’s \(\alpha = .75, M = 2.90, SD = .90\)) consisted of the following two items: (1) “I usually communicate about myself for fairly long periods at a time with those I meet online”, and (2) “I often discuss my feelings about myself with those I meet online.”

Sample:

Approx. 30 20-22 year olds in the Psychology Department at the researchers university

Sample:

562 users of 3 online dating sites, ages 18-62 with a median income from 50k-75k/year.
Sample Results Comparison

Finding: online communication is not used for deeply intimate conversations but to connect F2F partners throughout the day.

Finding: more people disclose private thoughts and feelings to someone else online after they “check them out.”

In general, new daters tend to self-disclose more in face-to-face interactions than online interactions (Boyle & Sullivan, 2016). However, in absence of face-to-face interactions, disclosure of personal feelings does happen online so long as the online dater has verified their partner’s identity (Gibbs, Ellison, and Lai, 2011).
Information-seeking strategies play a key role in influencing impression formation processes and relationship development (Ramirez, Walther, Burgoon, & Sunnafrank, 2002). When initiating a relationship, individuals inevitably consider various risks involved, some of which are directly related to self-disclosure. For example, one may fear one’s partner is withholding information or question whether their self-disclosure is honest (Boon & Pasveer, 1999; Derlega, Winstead, & Greene, 2008). Reciprocity norms encourage individuals to disclose in response to others’ disclosures (Gouldner, 1960; Jourard, 1960), but individuals can put themselves at risk if they reveal information in response to deceptive communication from others. In online dating, these risks are especially salient due to the goals shared by many members of meeting face-to-face and forming romantic relationships, which necessitate making themselves vulnerable by revealing intimate personal information.

Notes: Don’t use/cite another article’s literature review
Do: use it as a place to discover other articles that may be missing from your review.
Final Thoughts

A Literature Review IS NOT:

A Literature Review IS:

OR:
Questions? Need help?

Contact Me!

Britt McGowan
bmcgowan@uwf.edu

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