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The Importance of Conducting an Effective Literature Review in Modren Research Activities

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Abstract
Literature review is a more or less methodical approach of gathering and combining prior research knowledge. A solid basis for knowledge advancement and theory building is established by a well-executed review as a research approach that can answer research questions more effectively than any one study by combining the conclusions and viewpoints of numerous empirical finding. Any research project must include a review of past, pertinent material because strong review lays the groundwork for knowledge expansion. It makes it easier to create theories, identifies places where there is a dearth of research, and closes those gaps.
A literature review is an analysis of already published content that is pertinent to a certain problem, area of study, subject, or theory. This survey will undoubtedly give readers a brief summary of the sources being examined, but it will also, and perhaps more crucially, give them a critical assessment of those sources. A literature review covers information that has been published in a specific field of study, and occasionally information that has been published within a specific time frame.
There are many justifications for conducting a literature review, including gathering data for the development of policies and evidence-based care, a phase in the research process, and as part of an academic evaluation. Focus should be placed on the review's significance and importance before writing it, because the review that is being conducted should be questioned to see if it satisfies the need to generate new or redefined concepts on a specific topic of interest, if it is being produced for an awareness of current knowledge, or if it reveals gaps for further research. Systematic literature reviews (SRs) aim to include all published evidence on the subject and evaluate the quality of this evidence while synthesizing scientific evidence to answer a specific research question in a transparent and reproducible manner. Reviews of the relevant literature are essential for dissertations and journal articles, so the researchers must show that they have a formal understanding of the literature in their discipline, intellectual independence, information fluency, and the capacity to consistently reevaluate theories and methods.

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1. Introduction

A literature review serves the straightforward goal of educating the reader about the subject and helping them comprehend the literature before developing an argument or justification. An essential part of the thesis is the literature review, which serves to explain the context and rationale of the conducted study [8]. An objective, comprehensive overview and critical analysis of the pertinent existing research and non-research literature on the subject under study is known as a literature review. Its objective is to update the reader on the most recent research on a subject and serve as the foundation for another objective, such providing support for further study in the field. An effective literature review compiles data on a certain topic from a variety of sources [9]. A competent literature review collects data from several sources on a particular issue. There are not many, if any, personal biases, and it's beautifully written. It ought to have a well-defined search and selection process.

To improve the review's flow and readability, the structure must be sound. Jargon should be avoided and vocabulary should be used correctly. All referencing needs to be precise [4]. In its most basic form, a review of literature is a summary or summary-like description of what others have published. A straightforward summary of what others have written in the form of a collection of summaries, however, is regarded as insufficient [7].

Writing a literature review comes naturally to scholars at two stages of their lives. First, those who have finished or made significant progress on a line of inquiry are in a good position to share their findings with their peers and identify areas in which the field might most effectively focus its efforts. Second, potential authors are academics who have finished a literature review before starting a project and have created some theoretical models based on this review [2]. A literature review is a survey of academic books, journals, and other sources that are pertinent to a specific topic, field of study, or theory, by summarizing, describing, and critically evaluating these works. The purpose of the literature reviews is to give researchers a summary of these sources [9].

In order to present the topic, establish its significance, give an overview of the pertinent literature, demonstrate how the current study will enhance knowledge in the field, and outline the researcher's specific questions, research papers start with an introduction that cites relevant literature. The development of the research problem and the entire research process depend heavily on the review of related literature [7].

All phases of the research process especially, the idea generation and problem description phases include literature reviews, which also have an impact on the phases of study design, implementation, and reporting. The literature or concepts that support the necessity for the study, relate to the research purpose statement, and place the study in relation to prior work must all be incorporated into empirical investigations, whether they are qualitative, quantitative, or mixed techniques [10].

2. Four Main Types of Literature Review

2.1. Traditional or Narrative Literature Review

Without a defined scientific approach, traditional or narrative literature reviews offer a comprehensive summary of a research issue. Unsystematic data collection and interpretation are combined with subjective summaries of the results. The authors' goal is to provide a theoretical or contextual description and discussion of the literature [11]. A different name for a standard literary review is a narrative review. These reviews give a summary and a discussion of what is already known about a subject. The procedure entails assessing the available content. While the search for original research may be thorough in certain cases, it is typically not intended to be exhaustive. These literature searches lack reproducibility and are imprecise [12].

This kind of review analyses, condenses, and makes recommendations for the subject matter based on a body of literature. The research and information that are pertinent to the subject and address it make up the body of literature. Although the reader may not always be able to discern the criteria used to choose particular sources for evaluation, it usually uses only well-chosen sources. This kind of review is helpful for compiling, summarizing, and synthesizing a large body of literature in a particular topic area [4].

To introduce the issue, explain its significance, give a summary of the pertinent literature, demonstrate how the current study will enhance knowledge in the field, and describe the researcher's specific concerns, research papers begin with an introduction that cites relevant literature. The development of the research problem and the entire research process depend greatly on the review of relevant literature. It is frequently suggested that research questions lacking a foundation in recent literature are poor [7].

2.2. Systematic Literature Review

Systematic literature reviews aim to incorporate all published information on the subject and evaluate the quality of that evidence while synthesizing scientific data to address a specific research question in a transparent and reproducible manner. By using explicit, systematic methods to reduce bias in the selection and inclusion of studies, to evaluate the quality of the included studies, and to objectively summarize them, these reviews aim to reduce the risk of bias and increase transparency at every stage of the review process [6]. Systematic reviews employ a stricter and better-defined methodology than traditional or narrative reviews when evaluating the literature in a particular field. To address specific inquiries concerning clinical practice, systematic reviews are used [4].

Before starting the Systematic Literature Review, the first stage is to define an "Initial Idea" or interest in a topic to be investigated. If the issue is too wide to cover in the allotted time, it may be necessary to reduce the focus. This can be ascertained by doing an early search of the pertinent literature. Setting the course for a formal review can be aided by reading a few publications, and this process can be made even easier by coming up with a possible research question [13].

One presumption made in this study is that the literature review sources employed are a good indication of the caliber of the paper being assessed. To record and interpret the information that has been published over the years on any given topic, literature reviews combine primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. While literature reviews rely on secondary sources, academic research relies on primary sources [7].

One of the most popular review formats is the systematic review. This involves a methodical strategy to finding, combining, and placing the body of existing literature in context. The National Health Service (NHS) Centre for Reviews and Dissemination and the Cochrane Collaboration's recommendations serve as the foundation for systematic reviews [5]. Systematic reviews, as opposed to narrative reviews, focus on a single research question. This entails gathering all primary research relevant to the predetermined review topic, analyzing it critically, and synthesizing the findings [14].

According to Parahoo (2006), a systematic review should specify the time period during which the literature was chosen as well as the procedures utilized to assess and combine the results of the relevant studies. In contrast to traditional reviews, a systematic review's goal is to provide the most comprehensive list of all published and unpublished works pertaining to a particular subject area [4].

2.3. Meta-Analysis

Using statistical techniques, meta-analysis is a research procedure that systematically synthesizes or combines the results of individual, independent investigations to determine an overall or absolute effect. To get a bigger sample size, meta-analysis does more than just combine data from smaller studies [15]. The practice of performing statistical analysis on a substantial body of quantitative findings in order to integrate them and advance understanding is known as meta-analysis. The systematic review method known as meta-analysis is primarily a statistical tool. It entails taking the conclusions from various researches that have been conducted on the same topic and utilizing standardized statistical techniques to analyze them. This aids in drawing conclusions and seeing trends and connections between findings [4].

By giving the pooled estimate more power than individual studies reported in their individual estimates, meta-analysis aids in increasing precision. Additionally, it makes it easier to assess how an effect holds up across many researches. In order to achieve a thorough identification of potential research; meta-analysis is utilized in conjunction with a systematic review. A meta-analysis must include comparable factors, such as population characteristics, interventions utilized, and comparison techniques, for it to be considered legitimate and of high quality [5].

2.4. Meta-Synthesis

Meta-synthesis is a non-statistical method for combining, analyzing, and interpreting the results of many qualitative research projects, and entails assessing and synthesizing crucial parts in each study with the goal of translating individual findings into new conceptualizations and interpretations, as opposed to meta-analysis, where the end goal is to decrease findings [4]. Meta-synthesis is an increasingly common way of synthesizing qualitative research findings, with the purpose of generating insights of larger scope, generalizability, conceptual development or practical value than can be reached in any given primary study [16].

A rigorously scientific method to data analysis, an objective framework, and the essential input of the researcher's subjectivity in the creation of the final product are all appropriately balanced by meta-synthesis [17]. While a meta-analysis of qualitative data seeks to ascertain the impact of numerical findings with mathematical precision, a meta-synthesis seeks to identify, characterize, interpret, and transform data that explain a specific phenomenon. A good meta-synthesis should include detailed explanations of each step of its methodology [5].

3. Steps in Tie Literature Review Process

Choosing a topic for the literature review is the first stage, that may have previously been determined by the researcher conducting the quantitative investigation, however, this will be the initial stage for someone conducting a non-research-based literature review [4]. However, four phases will be used to suggest and analyze the fundamental steps and crucial decisions involved in performing a literature review, i.e. designing the review, conducting the review, analyzing the review, and, writing up the review. This procedure was created based on real-world experience and is a combination of several standards and recommendations for literature reviews [1].

3.1. Selecting a Review Topic

For students and new researchers, choosing a topic for a review might be challenging. Although this might be a good first technique for estimating the amount of literature, issues like these produce a lot of data, making a review impractical [4]. A preliminary review of the pertinent literature can assist in determining whether the issue is too wide to cover in the allotted time and whether a focus narrowing is required [13]. While literature reviews are based on secondary sources, academic research is focused on primary sources. After developing a comprehensive understanding of the topic using tertiary sources, a researcher should ideally review secondary sources to see what has already been written about that topic [7].

3.2. Searching the Literature

After choosing a topic, the following stage is to systematically find pertinent and related material. The review that will most likely be useful in guiding practice will be produced through a systematic manner. Reviewers should take comprehensiveness and relevancy into account, according to Newell and Burnard (2006), who also point out that the more exact the topic or query being searched for, the more focused the results will be [4].

In modern times, computers and electronic databases are used most frequently for literature searches. A manual search cannot compare to the ease and speed with which information may be acquired through computer databases [7]. There are several electronic databases, many of which focus on particular informational fields. Determining which databases are pertinent to the subject is crucial. Student or staff passwords can be used to access the databases that university and hospital libraries frequently subscribed [4].

3.3. Analyzing and Synthesizing the Literature

The literature that has been decided to be pertinent will have been gathered by this stage of the procedure. Several helpful tactics for the analysis and synthesis stages will aid in the development and drafting of the review, even if the literature's primary focus may change depending on the overall objective [4]. In order to avoid being outdated before they are published, evaluations of the literature today must consider not just the general direction and accomplishments of a field of study but also the most recent research, given the increasing speed at which scientific publications are being published [18]. A summary table that summarizes the articles covered in the review and their main conclusions is often included in reviews. The author will try to compile the information that has been provided by synthesizing the evidence [19].

3.4. Writing the Review

After the literature has been evaluated, thought must be given to the format and content of the review. The ability to present the data in a way that clearly and consistently demonstrates your knowledge is essential for writing an excellent academic paper. Avoid using words that are too complicated or long, and use as little jargon as possible [4]. Any knowledge gaps found in a review, which is a component of a study, should logically relate to the goal

of the planned investigation. In certain situations, it might also be feasible to build a conceptual framework that will guide the research using the produced themes. Every review should offer some suggestions or implications for research, practice, and education [20]. In scientific writing, literature reviews are an essential component of communication. Every scientist would therefore come across it in their writing. Nevertheless, a lot of literature evaluations do not meet the necessary criteria, which leads to their drawing biased and inaccurate findings [21]. As suggested by Burns and Grove (2007), the written report should first and foremost have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion [4].

4. Conclusion

Reviews of the relevant literature serve as the fundamental building block of research in all fields, but especially in the social sciences. Graduate students' research must be theoretically informed and built upon earlier results in the field. A literature review must be thorough, but it must not be written as a summary or a "thinly disguised annotated bibliography" [22]. A review of the literature, which is essential to the research process, can help clarify a research issue by pointing out any discrepancies in a body of information. In a similar vein, it can contribute to new research innovations and ideas while fostering improved comprehension of a subject. It might give a beginning researcher insight into appropriate study designs and knowledge on tools for data gathering and analysis. When and how something is done will frequently depend on whether the approach is qualitative or quantitative. Depending on the goals and objectives of the research as a whole as well as the reasons for conducting the review, many types of literature reviews may be used. Learning how to write a review of the literature is a necessary ability [4]. In a sense, a literature review continues even after a study is finished, and it is important to keep an eye out for new, relevant studies when they are published. The easiest approach to think of the review is as an organic system that is evolving as the study progresses. Additional study may be needed in response to changes in methodology, the addition of new constructs, and contradictory literature. As a result, the literature review process as a whole shouldn't be considered finished until all the research related to the study has been finished [23].

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