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DoMyPaper.com Writer on How to Write a Literature Review

Our Friends · Wednesday, September 11th, 2024

You might think that the prospect of writing a literature review fills you with dread. Maybe you're a student or a researcher new to academic writing, and you have no idea where to start, let alone how to write a good literature review to support your own work. Not to worry! When writing a literature review, organizing your sources and analyzing their contributions can be challenging, so many students find that using a **do my paper for me** service can provide valuable support. DoMyPaper.com is a service that offers professional help with academic writing, making it an excellent resource for those needing assistance with their literature reviews. This guide will take you progressively through the task of writing a literature review, from what it is and why it matters to how to complete it.

The Purpose of a Literature Review

But before we get to the writing of it, it might be helpful to get clear about the why behind the literature review. A literature review has several important functions in academic research:

For one thing, it allows you to build a bridge to your reader, setting your own work in the context of what is already known: by reviewing and integrating prior knowledge, you are signaling where your own contribution fits within the broader scholarly conversation.

Second, a literature review identifies gaps in what we already know. As you review the research, you should notice gaps: areas that have not been studied at all or that have not been studied adequately, questions that still remain unanswered. Such gaps can help to justify your own research.

Third, it shows that you know the field. A good literature review demonstrates to your reader that you have read enough in this area, and know what the important issues, concepts and debates are.

After that, developing a literature review can actually help you refine your research question. You'll notice gaps in the literature, or points already addressed, and whether or not your research fits in.

Planning Your Literature Review

To write an insightful literature review, seeking out the **best services for lit reviews** can provide expert guidance and enhance the quality of your work. Now that we are clear on purpose, it is time to touch upon planning. Good planning is the hallmark of a sound literature review. Formulate your research question (or topic) as precisely as possible. This will provide a

focus for your search for the literature, as well as for the subsequent course of your efforts.

Next, determine the scope of the review: should it address an entire field (or subfield) spanning centuries, or perhaps just a single decade or issue? Should it include journal articles, books or conference proceedings? Should it be limited geographically or to a certain language?

Consider, too, the angle you want to take: chronological, thematic or methodological, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. The right approach depends on your topic and the scope of the research you're building on.

Conducting Your Literature Search

Now that you have a solid plan, it's time to start searching for sources in the literature. Start with mega-databases for academic articles in your field (eg, JSTOR, Google Scholar, or specific databases for a given academic field). Over time, you will get savvy about which relevant resources are available on your discipline's main databases. Enter keywords that relate back to your research question and see what comes up.

Don't forget that you can often see the reference lists on the actual papers, so if you come across one that catches your eye, it can lead you to some other key sources that you might not otherwise have found.

As you search, keep note of what you find. I use Zotero, but there are other reference management tools, like EndNote, that can help.

Reading and Analyzing the Literature

When you have your sources together, begin by reading through them. Thinking all the time about what you're reading as you're reading it, ask yourself: what is the author's methodology here? What are their main findings? How does this work relate to my research question?

Keep writing notes as you read – key points, quotes, questions and comments for later. These will make it much easier to begin writing the review.

Look for patterns of similarity or difference across the literature, or evidence of trends over time. Are there recurring themes or debates? Do different researchers approach the same topic in different ways? How these questions can help you write a persuasive review, and get your research published, will be dealt with at the end.

Organizing Your Findings

Before you start drafting, you may wish to organize your materials by comparing them, which can be done using a synthesis matrix, a table that allows comparison across themes or variables for different sources.

Here's an example of what a synthesis matrix might look like:

| Author | Year | Main Argument | Methodology | Key Findings | Relevance to Your Research |
|--------|------|---------------|-------------|--------------|----------------------------|
|--------|------|---------------|-------------|--------------|----------------------------|

| | | | | | |
|-------|------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Smith | 2020 | Climate change impacts urban planning | Quantitative analysis | Cities need adaptive strategies | Provides framework for assessing urban resilience |
| Jones | 2018 | Urban planning neglects climate risks | Case study | Current policies inadequate | Highlights gap in policy implementation |
| Brown | 2021 | Integrating climate models in urban design | Mixed methods | Integrated approach improves outcomes | Offers practical tools for planners |

Writing Your Literature Review

Time to start writing. Begin with an introduction that lays out your aims for the review and summarizes the literature you will be drawing on. This is the place where you can state your research question and why it's important.

In the body of your review, present your findings in a clear and logical order. If you have chosen a chronological approach, discuss the literature in the order it was published, from earliest to most recent. If you have chosen a thematic approach, discuss it based on the key themes or debates in the field.

When talking about each source, don't just summarize. Rather, analyze and evaluate the research. How does the study contribute to our knowledge in the field? What are its strengths and weaknesses? How does it relate to the other studies you've discussed?

But just because you're critically refraining from making your own judgments, it doesn't mean you cannot be critical. You can still be accurate and fair to what others are saying, yet still highlight their inconsistencies, gaps or areas where you disagree with the existing work.

Developing Your Argument

A good literature review is also doing something more than summarizing previous scholarship; it is also making an argument, forming a kind of thesis. That might sound daunting. But your thesis doesn't have to be a big new theory or argument. In fact, it might very well be about the existing state of the field itself.

You might make a policy argument that there is a lack of focus on certain areas in the research, or that the current approach to the topic is not adequate for some reason. Your argument is going to flow from your analysis of the literature.

Be sure to use evidence from the literature you have reviewed to support your argument, and try to use quotes from the literature to support points you are making, rather than just paraphrasing text. Use paraphrasing as a means to support information you already present, rather than relying on it as a crutch to fill space. Make sure that your own analysis and synthesis takes center stage, rather than other researchers' words.

Structuring Your Literature Review

A literature review that is well-structured will be much easier to read and follow. Open with an introduction that articulates your goals and scope. Next, use section subheadings to organize

the main body of your review. Perhaps these will reflect different themes, time periods or methodological approaches according to how you have chosen to structure your review.

Within each of these sections, your ideas should flow logically. Paragraphs should be linked by a topic sentence that relates back to your argument. Transition sentences are crucial in moving the reader's attention from one paragraph to the next, and from one section to another.

Finish with a conclusion that restates your main finding(s) and returns to your thesis statement. It is also a good place to consider implications for further study or intervention in the field.

Revising and Refining

If you can, leave it for a day or two, and then reread it with fresh eyes. Read through your review and edit it to make some of the prose more readable, or make it easier to follow, or improve the strength of your argument.

Pay attention to your word choice. Are you using the exact same word for the exact same thing? Did you explain a specialized vocabulary at the beginning? Remember, presenting sophisticated thoughts in simple ways is not about being a stylish writer but about being objective and clear.

Oh, and don't forget to check your citations! Make sure you have quoted all your ideas and quotes accurately and included the right authors, dates and page references. Finally, double-check your reference list. Have you included all the works you cited? Are they correctly formatted in the style guide required by your professor?

Finalizing Your Literature Review

Do your best to submit the literature review for feedback prior to its final draft. Have a colleague or mentor read your review. Their gaze is the most likely to reveal holes in your argument or explanation where you could improve.

Lastly, ensure that you edit your review thoroughly. By catching typos, grammatical errors and formatting issues, your formal report will carry a much stronger impact.

Writing a literature review is never easy, but it is also a way of genuinely starting to learn about your field and to contribute to scholarly debate. If you take a systematic approach to it and follow these steps, you'll end up with something that's not just academically acceptable, but actually helpful for your research project.

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