

Writing a literature review

A photograph of a silver laptop open on a wooden desk. The background is a blurred bookshelf filled with books. The text 'The Literature Review' is overlaid in the bottom right corner of the image.

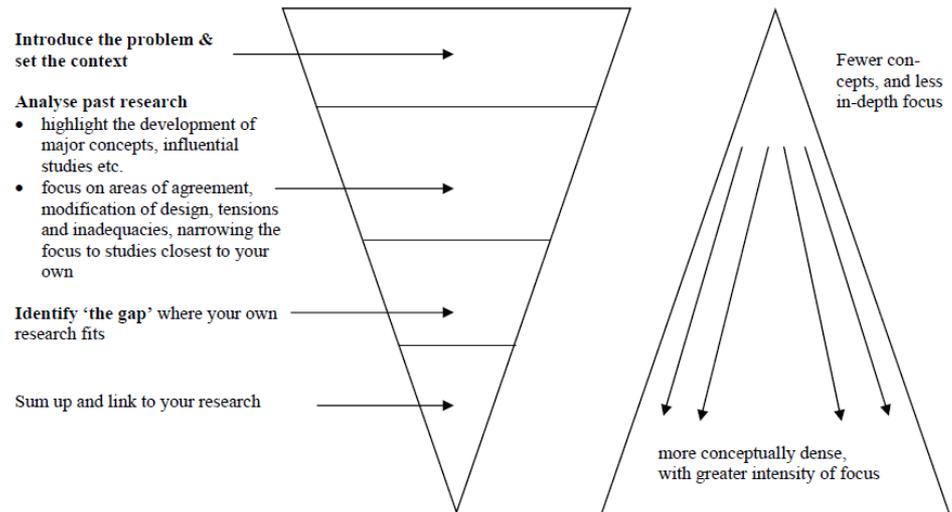
The Literature Review

Rules for writing LR

no one size fits all

most logical structure

- General to specific
- From themes / concept
- Importance or relevance
- Major findings
- Points of view
- Theoretical approaches
- Settings/ study areas
- Methods used
- chronologically



Sample of structure

Built argument on the subject

Argumentative according to chronologically

Given the rule of thumb on the affordability rate of 30% (median income), the price of housing offered under the scheme is still unaffordable for many. Partly this is caused by the increasing price of construction and raw materials resources (Chia, Skitmore, Runeson, & Bridge, 2012) and the shortage of land and increasing land prices (Berhad, 2013). However....

Argumentative according to points of view

The first problem concerns housing affordability for the young starters. Young people are at a higher risk than before when it comes to owning a house due to increasing prices (**Gelain, Lansing, & Mendicino, 2012**). With the current trend of climbing interest rates, a sizeable portion of their monthly income has to go to the monthly repayment of the housing loan (**Endut & Hua, 2009**). Nevertheless....

Argumentative according to themes / concept

A recent study reported that house buyers are no longer interested in *standard designs* produced by the housing developers (Daud, Hamzah, & Adnan, 2012). A study on existing mass housing development by Omar, Endut, and Saruwono (2012b) found that house buyers prefer *housing customization* and are looking for an alternative to current mass housing developments in terms of design and design flexibility. In most emerging countries, individuation and customization in mass housing have become popular; and the *need for individuation because of changes in lifestyle* has increased (Hentschke, Formoso, Rocha, & Echeveste, 2014; Nahmens & Bindroo, 2011; Yashiro, 2014). In spite of this....

Argumentative according to theory

Theory on industrialized building system supported by Kamarul (2009), off-site construction (Minami (2007), concurrent engineering (Anumba, 2010) and further translated into lean construction by Richard (2012). Therefore...

Construct the structure

writing in paragraphs

- Break up for easily understanding
- Provide main idea
- Provide details, examples, evidence
- Long paragraph- slow the tempo
- Short paragraph- picks up the tempo
- Use topic sentence (themes, codes, keywords)
- Linking paragraphs, add transitions e.g. similarity or dissimilarity (likewise, in the same way, on the other hand, despite, in contrast); meaningful order, often temporal (firstly, secondly, at the same time, later, finally) or causal (thus, therefore, accordingly, because); in a longer paper, remind the reader of what has earlier been argued (in short, as has been said, on the whole)

Being critical

LR has to be more than just a description, it has to be critical

- analyse individual and then combined readings, compare them with each other, summarise the comparison and analysis
- Selecting only what is relevant – don't include things that are nice to know, but not really useful to your discussion
- Identifying, describing and summarizing according to what the other readings find and its relevance to your project. Look for patterns, compare and contrast findings and methodologies
- Recombining ideas, synthesizing and evaluating information
- Avoid generalizations such as “various researchers, it is best to name and cite these researchers!!

Express your voice

LR is a critical summary of what is being said about a certain topic

- Avoid:

Hymes (2004) defined communicative competence as the degree to which a speaker is successful in communicating. He also views communicative competence as the overall underlying linguistic knowledge and ability to use language. In addition, Owens, Jr. (1996) supports the view that the success of communication is able to be measured by appropriateness and effectiveness of conveying messages within a specific context. Samovar, Porter, and McDaniel (2000) explained that nonverbal communication is important because it has a strong link to culture. In other words, it can reflect the values, beliefs and attitudes of cultures to others. To sum up, nonverbal communication is concerned with variously unspoken symbols and behaviours that individual people used within communication settings. It occurs constantly every time a person interacts with another, and intentionally or unintentionally.

- Use:

This study adopts a qualitative approach to highlight some of the views expressed by postgraduates and staff. Evaluations of international and Asian students' learning experiences carried out by Christison & Krahnke (1986), Chapman et al. (1988), Noble (1989), Nesdale & Todd (1993), Felix & Lawson (1994) are quantitative and raise issues selected by the researchers. These studies are illuminating but they do not include participants' views....

Indicate a position

Vocabulary that useful to indicate a position

Advise: suggest, recommend, encourage

Argue: reason, discuss, debate

Believe: hold, profess

Claim: assert, allege, affirm, contend, maintain (connotation of all these tends to mean disagreement)

Disagree: dispute, refute, contradict, differ, object, dissent

Emphasize: stress, underscore, accentuate

Evaluate: assess, appraise

Examine: explore, investigate, scrutinize

Hypothesize: speculate, postulate

Persuade: assure, convince, satisfy

Propose: advance, propound, suggest

Reject: refute, repudiate, discard, dismiss, disclaim

Show: demonstrate, reveal

State: express, comment, remark, declare, articulate, report

Support: uphold, advocate

Using verb tenses

How to use tenses

- Use the *PRESENT TENSES* when making general statements or claim
- Use the *PAST TENSES* when referring to something that was done or found in a specific study
- Use the *PRESENT PERFECT TENSES* to show that a process or research is still continuing, a finding still has relevance e.g. the study has shown that the use of toxics in
- *VERB TENSES* can be useful to show your position as generalizing. Putting it in the present tense is a way of endorsing an idea.

Avoid plagiarism

copy, paraphrase, rewrite

- Make sure you understand what it is
- Scrupulously note what you copy is from other texts and what has been paraphrased
- Understand paraphrasing
- Use plagiarism detection software

Table 1: Literature reviews vs systematic reviews.

Literature review	Methodological stage	Systematic review
Introduces context and current thinking, often without a specific question, is general and covers several aspects of a topic.	Focus of review	Uses a precise question to produce evidence to underpin a piece of research. A stand-alone piece of research, it should be conducted prior to undertaking further research, particularly in higher degree theses.
Finds papers through a fairly random process, usually searching only a few databases. Use of grey literature common, but not usually systematic.	Methods for data collection	Searches of several specified databases using precise search terms; a similar systematic search of grey literature sometimes included, depending on the question.
Papers are read, 'take home' messages used in the review.	Methods for data extraction	Data extraction tool used to identify precise pieces of information; two or more researchers undertake data extraction.
Anything up to 150 papers or more.	Number of papers included in review	Usually less than 50 papers; often fewer than 10.
Writer interprets the meaning of the results.	Methods for data analysis	Recognised, referenced, methods for data analysis; includes analysis of methods, rigour of conduct of research, strength of evidence, and so on.
Prose paper, occasionally supported with diagrams.	Methods for data presentation	PRISMA/CONSORT or similar chart/table of included papers.
Not suitable for Journal publication.	Publication	Might be suitable for Journal publication.
Actions/directions informed by evidence of various kinds drawn from included papers.	Outcome	Actions/directions are based on evidence from reviewed papers.