

Writing Literature Reviews

- مطالعات کتابخانه ای سیستماتیک برای انجام هر تحقیقی.
- هر مقاله یا پایان نامه ای که نوشته می شود باید مطالعات کتابخانه ای داشته باشد که این مطالعات در قسمت introduction هر مقاله دیده میشود.
- **Literature Reviews** یعنی نقد کردن تمام کارهای انجام شده در گذشته، برای یک موضوع تحقیق. بنابر این **Literature Reviews** باید شامل تاریخچه و پیشرفت و متدولوژیهای گذشته باشد.
- مطالعات کتابخانه ای باید روی یک موضوع خاص متمرکز شده و این مطالعات به سوالات مهم ذیل پاسخ دهد.
- در گذشته چه کسانی ابتدا روی این موضوع کار کرده اند و نتایج مهم کار آنها چه بوده است؟
- مهمترین روشهای تحقیق و متدولوژی موضوع مورد تحقیق که در دنیا معمول هست چه بوده **I identified the methods used**
- برتری و محدودیت هر کدام چیست؟ **the main limitations to the research**
- آینده موضوع به چه سمتی پیش خواهد رفت **further research**
- مشخص کردن سوالات اصلی تحقیق و رفرنس آنها **research question**
- بسیاری سوالات دیگر که جزئیات هستند

فایل ذیل را بدقت مطالعه کنید.

Writing *Literature Reviews*

Part 1: Questions about Literature Reviews:

1. What is a literature review?

"A literature review is a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and interpreting the existing body of recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners" (Fink 1998: 3)

2. What is a literature review NOT?

- *Simply a summary of the work that has been done in your chosen field.*
- *A description of a number of articles - it should demonstrate that you recognise the links between different people's work and how that work relates to yours.*

3. Why do I have to do a literature review?

3 major functions:

- o *bring clarity and focus to your research problem*
- o *improve your own methodology*
- o *broaden your knowledge base in your research area*

Other questions:

4. How do I get started ?

The first stage of selection and initial review

5. What do I do if there is too much literature?

Prioritise the work and ensure documents are well focused

6. What do I do if there is too little literature?

Broaden

7. What next?

The second stage of questioning your findings and developing a theoretical framework?

8. *How do I criticise the literature I'm reading?*

9. How many references should I include?

You should use references to:

- o Justify and support your arguments
- o Express matters better than you could have done
- o Allow you to make comparisons with other research
- o Demonstrate your familiarity and opinion with your field of research.

You should NOT use references to:

- o Litter your writing with names and quotations
- o Replace the need for you to express your own thoughts
- o Misrepresent the work of others

10. How do I conclude? Placing your own findings?

Example of constructing a simple Literature review

Part 2: An Introduction to searching for material to use in Literature reviews

With advice from subject librarian for geography

Learning to search for material to do with your research area, or just as a follow up to your lectures is a fundamental skill. Today we can only introduce some general ideas but there will be a follow up practical session next week, where you can try it for yourself and get some expert advice.

If you have not done so, then look at the **Subject Information** on the Library web-page. Under Geography become familiar with the Data-bases under “**How to find periodicals**” (eg, Web of Knowledge, GEOBASE, GeoRef), and the Geographical Gateways which can be found on the “**Useful websites page**”. Of particular use is the Scirus site.

The key to a successful search is to use the correct terminology – if your terms are too broad, you will get thousands of hits, but too narrow you may get nothing. You will need to experiment – beware of different spellings and use BOOLEAN operators as necessary. Always go to Advanced Search, to save time and get suitably focused results.

For more advice on this and other study skills make sure that you visit the Southampton University Study skills site on www.studyskills.soton.ac.uk. Begin by clicking on the topics under “Getting Started” and look at the relevant sections.



BEING CRITICAL!!!

THINK - READ - WRITE CRITICALLY (not an easy skill, but keep at it!)

Evaluate the evidence in work that you are reviewing:

- § check the date of the research (is the data or paper dated)
- § check the source of your information (reviewed journal vs newspaper)
- § check for bias in your sources (eg. Who funded the research)
- § look for general terms such as most, many (vague, suggest lack of good data)
- § beware of percentages that make small amounts of data seem significant (60 % vs 40% - sounds good, but not if only 10 people asked)
- § check sample size, structure - assess "significance of results"
- § was the sample used truly representative (a good mix)
- § assess the conditions of data collection (eg. Suggestive questionnaires; people saying what they think the interviewer wants to hear)
- § assess the structure of the writing and progression of the argument
- § beware of emotive language and persuader words (eg.cruel, sensational, unfair, extreme and surely, obviously, of course....)
- § look for hidden false assumptions: eg.
 - The swimming champion is a man (fact)
 - My father is a man (fact)
 - My father is a man, therefore he is a swimming champion (false conclusion)

Be clear in your writing:

- § Keep evaluating your own writing in draft phases
- § Be clear about your conclusions
- § Show a clear line of reasoning
- § Use evidence to support your reasoning
- § Take multiple perspectives - consider others arguments both good and bad, both strengths and weaknesses
- § Be critical of the work, but avoid personal criticism of authors

One of the easiest ways to check the effectiveness of your critical evaluation is to recognise some of the key differences descriptive and critical analytical writing:



LITERATURE REVIEW CHECKLIST

(10 key points to assess and review):

Once you have a draft Literature Review, you might mark it yourself with respect to the following key points

Make sure that you have:

1. Recorded the full references and cited them correctly within the text and in the reference list.
2. Introduced your review by describing in your own words what the research area is and identifying the key areas that the review concentrates upon.
3. Identified the methods used in the literature – including means of data gathering, sampling techniques and noted any acknowledged limitations.
4. Noted and reported what you consider to be the key concepts and arguments, giving relevant page references (eg.p.6). Have you rephrased these arguments in your own words and tried to avoid too many direct quotes.
5. Identified as many key findings from the research as you can.
6. Identified what indications there are there for further research (assessed how this offers further justification for your own work?)
7. Identified what you considered to be the main limitations to the research. Stated what alternative methods might have been used to conduct research on this topic, or what other data sources might have been investigated. Been as specific as possible.
8. Perhaps constructed a research question that could be addressed using this published research as a starting point.
9. Drawn a summary conclusion in the form of a balanced assessment of the research's strengths and weaknesses.
10. Done a spell check and checked references again.

How might you construct a Literature Review on the subject :

The relationship between the Nature of Ice and Glacial erosional Landforms?

1. Nature of Ice: warm vs cold ice, area and depth of ice body, debris type and load within ice
2. Glacial erosion: processes of abrasion, plucking, melt-water
3. Erosional landforms: range of features from striations to areas of glacial scouring, including identification of key case-studies to use
4. Relationship between nature of ice and glacial erosional landform; theories that have been put forward to explain this relationship eg. Hallet vs Boulton on impact of ice type on erosion

Out of this initial review of literature you would then develop a theoretical framework. Primarily this will revolve around the theories and ideas that have been put forward to explain how ice does its erosional work, and your own assessments of the relevant links.

Your literature might therefore be written under the following headings with most of the review examining the relationship between ice type and erosional process, through the interpretation of landforms.

- o Types and forms of ice
- o Erosional processes and relevant theory
- o Factors affecting erosional process and efficiency
- o Interpreting landforms eg. direction with respect to ice flow, size, succession and age of landforms, dominant process
- o Case-studies of specific locations of each feature considered individually and within the wider context of the glaciated landscape
- o Methods used in interpreting landforms and dating them
- o Assumptions and problems associated with interpreting glacial landforms and understanding processes of erosion
- o Complexity of the relationship between ice and landforms from the simple to complex

And anything else?

Remember *critical*, *analytical reading*, *thinking* and *writing*!