

# Review of Literature in Research Methodology: Its Importance & Guidelines for researchers

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses review of literature as a methodology for conducting research and offers a direction about its objectives, purpose, relevance and importance. It also gives guidelines on how to write Review of Literature.

**Keywords:** Review of Literature, Research Methodology

## INTRODUCTION

Review of literature in Research is a specific review of particular literature on a certain topic. It focuses on a particular context. It is many times misnamed as Literature review which is generally not defined, not related to a particular topic. Review of Literature is important in Research. It is a summary of all the reviews from various research literatures related to current study carried by researchers. It helps to discover what is already known about the research problem and what more has to be done. It indicates current research in the schema of a particular field.

Research Methodology is defined as a systematic way to solve a research problem by collecting data and drawing conclusions about the research data. Difference between method and methodology is that method are specific techniques or tools used to gather and analyze the data while Methodology is analysis of all the methods and procedures of the investigation

The Aim of Review of literature:

The aim of Review of Literature is to summarize and synthesize the arguments and ideas of existing knowledge in a particular field without adding any new contributions. Being built on existing knowledge they help the researcher to even turn the wheels of the topic of research. It is possible only with profound knowledge of what is wrong in the existing findings in

detail to overpower them. For other researches, it gives the direction to be headed for its success. Consideration of prior, relevant literature is essential for all research disciplines and all research projects. When reading an article, independent of discipline, the author begins by describing previous research to map and assess the research area to motivate the aim of the study and justify the research question and hypotheses

Objectives of study of Review of Literature:

A researcher gains an understanding of the existing research relevant to a particular topic under study. It helps to interpret prior research and present that knowledge in the form of a written report. It reveals gaps in the literature. It resolves the conflicts amongst seemingly contradictory previous studies. It identifies areas of prior study to avoid duplication.

Scope of Review of Literature:

It provides information and interpretation of existing literature. It brings about the dialects of contradiction between various thoughts. It helps in calculating the impact of latest information. Research gaps are identified and scrutinized.

Purpose of a Review of Literature:

Researcher can analyze critically a segment of a published body of knowledge through summary, classification, and comparison of prior research studies, various reviews of literature, and theoretical articles.

Precautions while writing Review of Literature:

Researcher should keep in mind it is not a List of books written by Authors after judging his expertise in the field, nor it is description of work in subject area. He should avoid Language like I believe, I think. Researcher prepares list of citations as References and

includes all References in Bibliography. Software like ZOTERO, MENDELEY, ENDNOTE are citation tools that keep the track of references of citations.

How to write Review of Literature:

Steps of Review of Literature: Research question helps to identify the primary search concepts. Researcher can write 20 pages on Review of Literature in his dissertation. It is written under 3 headings as 1.

Introduction, 2. Body and 3. Conclusion.

1. Introduction of ROL, Researcher points out overall trends in what has been published about the topic; or conflicts in theory, methodology, evidence, and conclusions; or gaps in research and scholarship; or a single problem or new perspective of immediate interest. He refers to major databases recommended by his Guide. He identifies academic contributions of authors and judges the source of publications as trusted, published, documented in government or NGO bodies. He prepares the list of journals to refer to and gives reason (point of view) for reviewing the literature; explains the criteria to be used in analyzing and compares the literature and the organization of the review (sequence). Keywords are searched by researchers. Chronological order needs to be maintained by researcher.

2. While Writing the Body Of ROL: The body of the review contains review of the literature relevant to research question or aim. Researchers should structure the body of literature review in a logical and coherent way. He selects well cited articles and peer reviewed articles. He judges the credibility of articles and considers sub-topics or sections to be in order to answer research questions thoroughly and coherently.

3. While writing the conclusion: He summarizes major contributions of significant studies and articles to the body of knowledge under review, maintaining the focus established in the introduction. Current state of the topic under study is done for the body of knowledge reviewed, pointing out major methodological flaws or gaps in research, inconsistencies in theory and findings, and areas or issues pertinent to future study.

Guidelines of writing skills:

Descriptive method / Reporting method: Researcher can mention 'what happened', 'what author has discussed and found'.

Interpretive/Critical analysis method: Researcher analyses, explains and interprets the reading to synthesize the information to develop a point of view.

Language of Narratives in writing: Researchers can include sentences like 'this shows that...', 'this is significant because', 'this calls attention to'. This makes the writing more interpretative than descriptive. This gives Researcher stronger voice in his narration in the thesis.

Responding with critique: Researcher can write the lacunas in this way, 'the study was limited in its application', 'it could have been more illustrative', 'it could have been more solution oriented'.

Methods of writing narration: Researcher can write his narration in Heading - subheading way, Color coding way for grouping, Cross references, Essential quotations, Footnotes, comments and lastly bibliography.

Conclusion: Review of literature is an account of previous efforts and achievements of a Researcher on a phenomena. It helps to compare with other previous study. A Good Review of Literature is the foundation of good research.

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