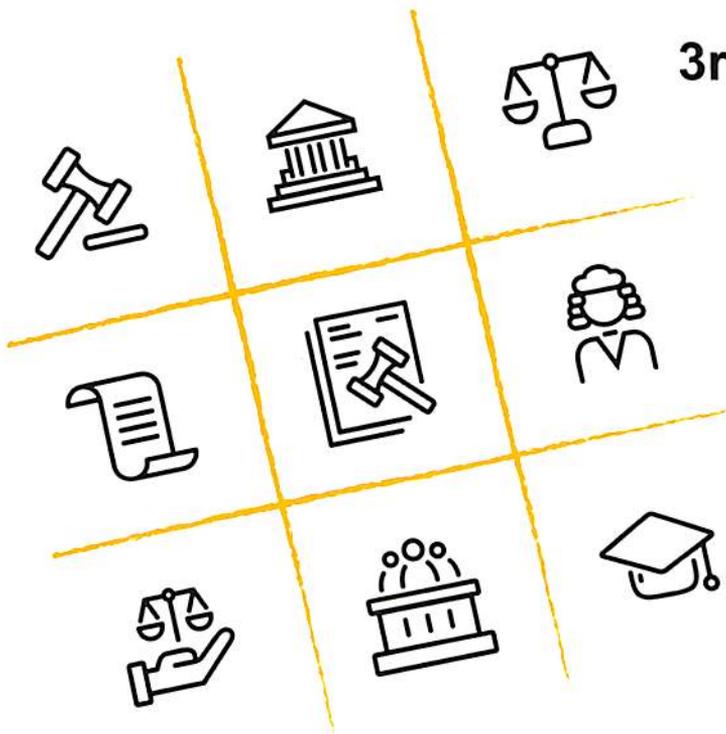


# LEGAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3rd Edition



Prof. (Dr.) Rattan Singh



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## CHAPTER 10

# REVIEW OF LITERATURE: “THE HEART” OF THESIS, DISSERTATION, ARTICLES AND RESEARCH PAPERS

*Dr Gagandeep Kaur<sup>1</sup>*

### SYNOPSIS

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### 10.1 Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be familiar with:

- Meaning, Nature, Concept and Purpose of Literature Review
- Different Sources of Literature Review
- Methods and Techniques of Review of Literature
- Difficulties in Review of Literature
- How to find out Research Gap

### 10.2 Introduction

Review of literature is at “the heart” of the research journey; which not only enlightens the researchers with the previous meticulous threads already woven by the research community, but also with the research gap where few threads are left open for future research. The literature review appraises the researcher of what is previously known about the research problem and ascertains areas where fresh improvement is essential, as well as assists in designing the road map of researchers’ study. The analysis of literature is an undertaking that has several facets and it takes thoughtful thinking to be addressed effectively/thesis/dissertation in which related outset.<sup>2</sup> The “literature review” is that part of the study/thesis/dissertation in which related

1. Assistant Professor in Law (SG) School of Law, University of Petroleum and Energy Studies (UPES), Dehradun, gdkaur17@gmail.com.  
2. M Peticrew and H Roberts, *Systematic Reviews in the Social Sciences: A Practical Guide*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2006, p 12.

research and theory in the field of the researcher are extensively referred to.<sup>3</sup> The importance lies in the fact that it is where ties are made between the source texts drawn from and where within these sources researcher positions his/her research.<sup>4</sup> It is the opportunity to engage in a written conversation with researchers in the domain of our field while at the same time demonstrating that researcher has participated, learned, understood, analysed and responded to the theoretical background underpinning his/her study.<sup>5</sup> The literature review assists to identify the theories and to illustrate that there is a gap in previous research which needs to be filled. The literature review, therefore, serves as the driving force for research investigation.<sup>6</sup>

Writing a literature review is a complex and difficult task, consisting of numerous challenging steps involved in it.<sup>7</sup> It demands the ability to define a subject and to find, evaluate, critique and integrate academic work into a meaningful and coherent whole in a systematic order so that the research gap can be identified.<sup>8</sup> In this chapter, the author offers an introduction and definitions of renowned authors on the concept of "Review of Literature". It is followed by the discussion highlighting the purposes, relevance, myths, and steps involved in literature reviews, which will assist the readers to successfully start this challenging and exciting journey of writing a literature review. In the end, the author has explained how to structure and organize the "Literature Review" with the mind map for mapping of literature.

### 10.3 Definition of Review of Literature

Some definitions of the literature review are given below to show the varying emphases that different authors put on its role and purpose.<sup>9</sup>

According to J Bell, Literature reviews should be succinct and ... give a picture of the state of knowledge and major questions in your topic area. (Bell, 2010:112)<sup>10</sup>

According to Hart, A literature review can be defined as the selection of available documents both (published and unpublished) on the topic, which contains information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular stand point to fulfil certain aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated, and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed. (Hart, 1998:13)<sup>11</sup>

According to Bruce, Typically, the literature review forms an important chapter in the thesis, where its purpose is to provide the background to and justification for the research undertaken. (Bruce, 1994:218)<sup>12</sup>

3. LA Machiand BT Mc Evoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*, Thousand Oaks, CA, Corwin Press, 2009, p 5.
4. G Hull, and M Rose, *Rethinking Remediation: Toward a Social-Cognitive Understanding of Problematic Reading and Writing*, Written Communication, 6(2), 1989, pp 139-154.
5. JK Jesson, L Matheson and FM Lacey, *Doing Your Literature Review: Traditional and Systematic Techniques*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2011, p 25.
6. D Ridley, *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2nd Edn, 2012, p 16.
7. SK Boell and D Ccecz-Kecmanovic, "A Hermeneutic Approach for Conducting Literature Reviews and Literature Searches", Communications of the Association for Information Systems, vol 34. Available at: <http://aisel.aisnet.org/ais/vol34/iss1/12> (last accessed in April 2021).
8. S EE fron and R Ravid, *Writing the Literature Review: A Practical Guide*, The Guilford Press, A Division of Guilford Publications, Inc., New York, 2019, p 1.
9. D Ridley, *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2nd edition, 2012, pp 17-18.
10. J Bell, *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*, Maidenhead, Open University Press, 5th Edn, 2010, p 112.
11. C Hart, *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*, SAGE Publications, London, 1998, p 13.
12. CS Bruce, "Research Students Early Experiences of the Dissertation Literature Review", *Studies in Higher Education*, 19 (2), pp 217-29 (1994).

According to H M Cooper, A literature review uses as its database reports of primary or original scholarship, and does not report new primary scholarship itself. The primary reports used in the literature may be verbal, but in the vast majority of cases reports are written documents. The types of scholarship may be empirical, theoretical, critical/analytic or methodological in nature. Second, a literature review seeks to describe, summarise, evaluate, clarify and/or integrate the content of primary reports. (Cooper, H M, 1989)<sup>13</sup>

According to Blaxter & others, The purpose of the literature review is to locate the research project, to form its context or background, and to provide insights into previous work. (Blaxter et al., 2010:124)<sup>14</sup>

According to Phillips and Pugh, A literature review should demonstrate a fully professional grasp of the background theory to your subject. (Phillips and Pugh, 2010:64)

According to Nunan, In a literature review a writer extracts and synthesises the main points, issues, findings and research methods which emerge from a critical review of the readings. (Nunan, 1992:217)<sup>15</sup>

According to Rudestam and Newton, The literature review should be a coherent argument which leads to the description of a proposed study. (Rudestam and Newton, 2007:63)<sup>16</sup>

It is observed from these definitions that the literature review serves several different purposes and includes a wide range of operations. It is, therefore, not surprising that—particularly at the beginning—it can seem a daunting challenge. A carefully studied and well-written analysis, however, can be both an exciting and a satisfying experience.<sup>17</sup> Thus, it can be said that a literature review consists of an overview, a summary, and an evaluation (“critique”) of the current state of knowledge about a specific area of research.<sup>18</sup>

#### 10.4 The Relevance of Review of Literature

First, a researcher cannot conduct the right analysis of the research issue without having a deep understanding of the research topic and learning from the work of other scholars and current researchers in the area. Without being mindful of what is already known, in experienced researchers may explore a research theme that has formerly been thoroughly discovered, replicate previous studies unintentionally, or repeat past methodological inaccuracies.<sup>19</sup> Besides, writing a strong literature review enables researchers to reveal the intellectual depth<sup>20</sup> and scholarship needed for making independent choices that are part and parcel of conducting any research project.<sup>21</sup>

As a researcher begins, ask, “Am I trying to present a position, a thesis, that defines the current state of knowledge about a topic, or am I using the current knowledge about a topic as the basis

13. H M Cooper, *Integrating Research: A Guide for Literature Reviews*, SAGE Publications, Newbury Park, California, 2nd Edn, 1989.

14. L Blaxter, C Hughes, and M Tight, *How to Research*, Open University Press, Buckingham, 4th Edn, 2010).

15. D Nunan, *Research Methods in Language Learning*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, p 31.

16. KE Rudestam and RR Newton, *Surviving Your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process*, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, California, 3rd Edn, 2007).

17. D Ridley, *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2nd Edn, 2012, pp 17–18.

18. A Brief Guide to Writing a Literature Review, retrieved from: <https://www.smu.ca/webfiles/guidelitreviewbrief.pdf> (last accessed in April 2021).

19. LR Gay, GE Mills & PW Airasian, *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*, Upper Saddle River, NJ, Merrill Prentice Hall, 8th Edn, 2006, pp 29–44.

20. JW Creswell & VL Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, SAGE Publications Ltd, Thousand Oaks, California, 2nd Edn, 2011, p 53.

21. H Cooper, *Synthesizing Research: A Guide for Literature Reviews*, SAGE Publications Ltd, Thousand Oaks, California, 3rd Edn, 1998, p 11.

for arguing a thesis that defines a research problem for further study?"<sup>22</sup> Depending on the scope of the investigation, literature reviews have distinct objectives. If the object of the inquiry is to argue a position on a subject about the current state of knowledge, then a simple literature review is performed by the researcher.<sup>23</sup> When the object of the investigation is to review the literature, then the researcher conducts a complicated literature review to classify a research issue for further analysis.<sup>24</sup> The authors Lawrence A Machi & Brenda T Mc Evoy have explained the objective of the literature review in the following figures in a very simpler manner:<sup>25</sup>

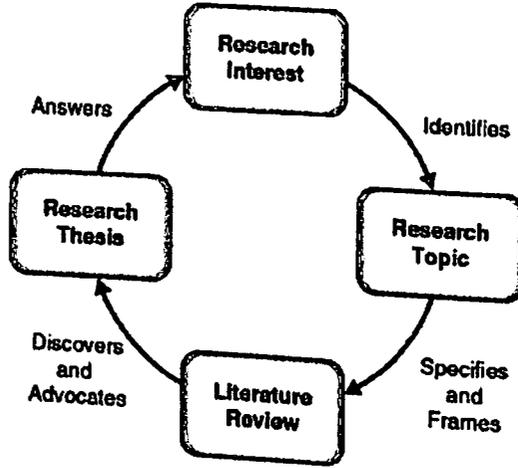


Figure 1.1 The Simple Literature Review<sup>26</sup>

The basic analysis of literature starts by selecting and describing a study for inquiry. This is the issue for the preliminary report. He/she will narrow and refine this interest in a research subject as researchers continue, based on an initial literature review. The subject of the study must be a clear and succinct declaration, specifying and explaining what would be studied. Its meaning defines the literature's scope and frames its domain. The literature review canvasses the literature, documenting and cataloguing pertinent knowledge. From this information, it presents an evidence-based analysis of the present understanding of the topic. The product of the simple literature review is the development of a case that argues what is known about the topic. The case's conclusion is a thesis statement that answers the question posed by the research interest. Many class research assignments and master's degree thesis projects require a simple literature review.<sup>27</sup>

22. LA Machi & B T Mc Evoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*, Corwin, A SAGE Company, California, 3rd Edn, 2016, p 25.

23. C Hart, *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, UK, 2001, p 41.

24. LA Machi & BT Mc Evoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*, Corwin, A SAGE Company, California, 3rd Edn, 2016, p 25.

25. LA Machi & BT Mc Evoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*, Corwin, A SAGE Company, California, 3rd Edn, 2016, pp 24–25.

26. LA Machi & BT Mc Evoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*, Corwin, A SAGE Company, California, 3rd Edn, 2016, pp 25–26.

27. LA Machi & BT Mc Evoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*, Corwin, A SAGE Company, California, 3rd Edn, 2016), pp 25–26.

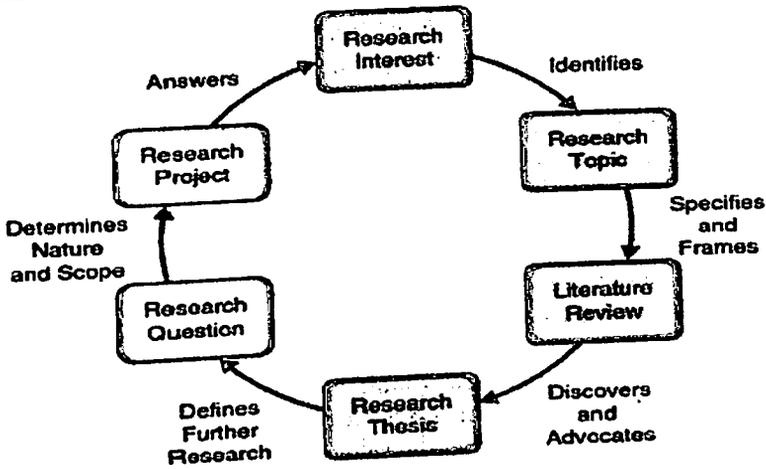


Figure 1.2 The Complex Literature Review<sup>28</sup>

There are different aims and purposes of the complex literature review for additional requirements. Not only do they present the existing state of information on a topic but also argue how this information leads logically to an issue or to a query that needs original research. The researcher first discusses the existing state of awareness about the topic of research in the complex literature review. The researcher then proposes a thesis based on these results, identifying a problem for further development. This thesis becomes the problem or question of a new research study.<sup>29</sup> The conclusions were drawn not only to define the research question but also to frame the appropriate methods to be used for conducting the research. Advanced master's theses and doctoral dissertations use the complex literature review as the basis for providing the background statements and the argument for the research study.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, it is dependent on the objective of the research assignment.

In short, the prominent points on the relevance/benefits of it are: (i) for analysis, it provides a historical background; (ii) it offers an overview of the current context in which research is situated by referring to current controversies, problems and issues in the field;<sup>31</sup> (iii) a discussion of related theories and principles that underpin research is included; (iv) it includes sufficient terminology and definitions to explain how words are used in the sense of work; (v) it identifies relevant field research and demonstrates how this is expanded or questioned by your work, or discusses a gap in fieldwork; and (vi) it offers supporting evidence for a practical issue or problem addressed by your study, underlining its importance.<sup>32</sup>

28. LA Machi & BT Mc Evoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*, Corwin, A SAGE Company, California, 3rd Edn, 2016), pp 25–26.
29. "Introduction to literature reviews", retrieved from: <https://www.monash.edu/ulr/ol/graduate-research-writing/write-the-thesis/introduction-literature-reviews> (last accessed in April 2021).
30. LA Machi & B T Mc Evoy, *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*, Corwin, A SAGE Company, California, 3rd Edn, 2016, p 25.
31. A Boaz, D Ashby, D Denyer, M Egan, A Harden, DR Jones, R Pawson, and D Tranfield, "A multitude of syntheses: A comparison of five approaches from diverse policy fields", *Evidence and Policy*, 2(4), 2006, pp 479–502.
32. D Ridley, *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2nd edition, 2012, p 37.

## 10.5 Myths Related to Review of Literature

It is equally necessary to stress what a literature review is not, before addressing the steps involved in the literature review. A literature review is not an annotated bibliography;<sup>33</sup> however, it synthesises the sources that relate to basic themes and guiding ideas. The distinction between an annotated bibliography and a study of literature is, according to Axelrod and Cooper,<sup>34</sup> similar to the difference between still pictures and a movie. A movie contains still pictures, but it connects them into a meaningful story line.<sup>35</sup> A literature review is not a presentation of one's ideas, arguments, and assumptions.<sup>36</sup> Rather, the claims should be based on scholarships accompanied by researchers or theories put forth by authoritative scholars. A literature review is not a position paper. At the time of the analysis of the present literature, sources that support our point of view and ignore references that reflect alternative views should not be cherry-picked.<sup>37</sup> The researcher may share his/her position and provide the rationale for embracing it, but at the same time, he/she should be open to acknowledging the value of different approaches and perspectives, compare and contrast different positions, and present the pros and cons of each.<sup>38</sup> A literature review should not simply mirror the current literature in the field.<sup>39</sup> Instead, it should aim to present the current knowledge through a fresh and creative perspective that contributes to new thinking and understanding of the topic being investigated.<sup>40</sup>

In the context of research, it clarifies and describes words and key concepts used. It assists to situate the topic in the study area's historical context and sets up a theoretical structure for analysis and contrast views, definitions, approaches. It recognises significant scientists and scholars in the field of research. Review of literature narrows the dilemma of research to make it realistic and achievable in its scope along with the constraints involved. It refines the target of research or even changes the subject of our research after studying methodologies and tools that assist to design, categorise and criticise methodological assumptions and methods of study.

## 10.6 Sources of Literature Review

When conducting academic research, the researcher is not restricted to one particular type of publication or information source; however, it includes the full range of relevant materials. The most common sources are summarised below:<sup>41</sup>

33. A Bandura, *Social Learning Theory*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall, 1977, p 41.
34. SE Efron and R Ravid, *Writing the Literature Review: A Practical Guide*, The Guilford Press, A Division of Guilford Publications, Inc., New York, 2019, p 3.
35. RB Axelrod & CR Cooper, *Axelrod & Cooper's Concise Guide to Writing*, Belford/St. Martin, Boston, 6th Edn, 2012, p 65.
36. H Tsoukas & R Chia (Eds), *Philosophy and Organization Theory: Vol. 32, 181–213 Research in the Sociology of Organizations*, Emerald Publishing Ltd, Bingley, UK, 2011.
37. WC Booth, GG Colomb & JM Williams, *The Craft of Research*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 3rd Edn, 2008, p 54.
38. A Booth, A Sutton & D Papaioannou, *Systematic Approaches to a Successful Literature Review*, SAGE Publications Ltd, Thousand Oaks, California, 2nd Edn, 2016, p 11.
39. DN Boote & P Beile, "Scholars Before Researchers: On the Centrality of Literature Review in Dissertation Preparation", *Educational Researchers*, 34(6), pp 3–15(2005).
40. B Blumberg, D R Cooper & PS Schindler, *Business Research Methods*, McGraw-Hill Higher Education, Berkshire, UK, 2ndEdn, 2008, p 63.
41. D Ridley, *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2nd edition, 2012, pp 57–59.

Sr. No.	Sources	Relevance of Sources
1.	Books: e-Book, Audio Books, Text Books, Special Books and Reference Books	As a way to start the exploratory journey in and around the field, the first point of call for all researchers is likely to start with books. University library bookshelves are lined with printed books, and it is a practice to access many of them online as e-books. Many books, such as the Kindle, the computer created by the multinational online retailer, Amazon, can be read on a portable eBook reader. Audio books have also revolutionised the literature world. Textbooks include the underlying principles, concepts and hypotheses of a field that provide material that is widely recognised as commonly accepted knowledge in that field of science. <sup>42</sup> Specialised books are for a specific theoretical area of a field of research. <sup>43</sup> They can include a series of chapters written by various writers with an overall editor or editorial board on a specific specialist subject that compiled and checked the contributions to the book together. Reference books are used to locate basic details or meanings, such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and databases. These are likely to be available in electronic and/or printed format. Both online and on CD ROM, electronic versions are also available. <sup>44</sup>
2.	Articles in the Journal	Journal papers comprise of a series of peer-reviewed scholarly articles written in a specific field by various scholars or practitioners. <sup>45</sup> Each journal has a particular set of purposes and an audience that is intended, both of which are typically expressed in each published issue. The process of peer review implies that other academics or experts in the field have reviewed and made recommendations on each published paper, thus ensuring its accuracy. The ideas in circulation in a discipline are included in journals and the rest are available online. <sup>46</sup>
3.	Reports	Corporations or government agencies may write reports and may report, for instance, on an inquiry into an incident or circumstance, its conclusions and recommendations. These reports are a rich source of information for writing in the assignments, theses and dissertations.

42. J Webster and RT Watson, "Analyzing the Pastto Prepare for the Future: Writing a Literature Review", MIS Quarterly, 26(2), 2002, pp 13–23.
43. G Thomas, "What's the Use of Theory?", Harvard Educational Review, 67(1), 1997, pp 75–104.
44. E W T Ngai & F K T Wat, "A Literature Review and Classification of Electronic Commerce Research", Information & Management, 39(5), 2002, pp 415–429.
45. K Peffers & TYa, "Identifying and Evaluating the Universe of Outlets for Information Systems Research: Ranking the Journals", JITTA: Journal of Information Technology Theory and Application, 5(1), 2003, pp 63–84.
46. DN Boote & P Beile, "Scholars Before Researchers: On the Centrality of the Dissertation Literature Review in Research Preparation", Educational Researcher, 34(6), 2005, pp 3–15.

4.	Theses and Dissertations	The availability of theses and dissertations is helpful to access the research of other masters and doctoral students by reading their theses and dissertations. Electronic versions are becoming more widely available; for example, KOHA, EthOS is the Library's Electronic Thesis Online Service, through which an increasing number of PhD theses can be accessed. Otherwise, hard copies of theses and dissertations need to be requested from the library where they are held or from a country's central library in printed form or as a CD/DVD. Some theses and dissertations may have been published in a more concise form as either a book or a selection of journal articles. <sup>47</sup>
5.	Conference Proceedings, Monographs and Print Media	Conference proceedings produce collections of printed abstracts and often published proceedings. <sup>48</sup> The proceedings consist of a collection of documents submitted to the conference. For certain research subjects, popular media journals, specialist trade journals and magazines may be important so that a researcher can find out about contemporary events and interpretations and responses from the general public. <sup>49</sup> Monographs/work-in-progress papers also provide immense knowledge. Some research centres may make specialist papers available which are produced for other researchers and professionals. In some specialist fields, the literature may also include maps, music, diaries, letters, manuscripts of poems and novels, patents and other legal documents. <sup>50</sup>
6.	Websites	Websites are soaked with the information. One can find a variety of different types of information through websites. Judgements have to be taken on an individual basis about the content of the information accessed. <sup>51</sup> Before inclusion in the academic writing, all sources of knowledge should be carefully analysed and this is particularly the case for online tools. <sup>52</sup> This is because information can be placed on the Internet by anyone and the content is not usually subject to quality tests by peer review. <sup>53</sup>

47. D Ridley, *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2nd Edn, 2012, p 58.
48. JD Couger, "Preparing IS Students to Deal with Ethical Issues", *MIS Quarterly*, 13(2), 1989, pp 211-220.
49. DN Laband & MJ Piette, "Perceived Conduct and Professional Ethics Among College Economics Faculty", *American Economist*, 44(1), 2000, pp 24-34.
50. U Sekaran, *Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY, 4th Edn, 2003, p 4.
51. For a list of references in the academic writing, one should be able to include both the author and date for every source; if either is not traceable, it is important to consider carefully whether the reference should be used. As a website does not always display this information clearly, the points that follow should be addressed to assess its suitability as a source to cite in your work. Analyse the URL (Uniform Resource Locator) address to assess the site's credibility. The examples below are home pages of a selection of websites from different organisation types: [.ac and .edu =educational institutions; .org =non governmental and non-profit making organisation; .gov= government organisation; .co and .com= commercial organisation]. Y Levy and TJ Ellis, "A Systems Approach to Conduct an Effective Literature Review in Support of Information Systems Research", *Informing Science Journal*, vol 9, 2000, pp 1-32, retrieved from <http://inform.nu/Articles/Vol9/V9p181-212Levy99.pdf> (last accessed in April 2021).
52. D Robey, M-C Boudreau & GM Rose, "Information Technology and Organizational Learning: A Review and Assessment of Research", *Accounting, Management and Information Technologies*, 10(2), 2000, pp 125-155.
53. D Ridley, *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2nd Edn, 2012, p 59.

7.	Search Tools	Some tools can be used to initiate the searches and it is important to spend some time becoming aware of and familiar with the search options available for the efficient use of these tools as an essential part of the research process. <sup>54</sup> Broadly speaking, the search tools available can be divided into the following categories: catalogues; bibliographical databases; Internet search engines; open-access databases; professional organisation web sites; and Google search engines. <sup>55</sup>
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### 10.7 An Overview of the Literature Review Development Process: Six Stages

There are six main stages of designing and conducting a literature review.<sup>56</sup> The development of the literature review is not necessarily a linear technique. Rather, as various parts of the analysis are interconnected and inform each other, the process is continuous, complex, and interrelated. Nevertheless, the authors Sara Efrat Efron and Ruth Ravid have established an easy-to-follow systematic outline of the method that proceeds step-by-step for clarification and practical reasons. The following section highlights briefly the six steps involved in it.<sup>57</sup>

1. **Selecting a topic for the literature review:** The growth of the literature review commences by selecting a topic of investigation that is meaningful, relevant and latest. The topic is further narrowed down or broadened by considering the purpose, audience, and constraints such as time and access. The focus of research should be stated as a well-defined question to create a researchable and manageable topic.
2. **Discovering literature review sources:** After selecting a topic, the next step is to locate sources that will make available updated knowledge and information about it. By identifying appropriate terms and keywords, developing search strategies, and searching records, a researcher can search appropriate databases in his/her field of study. Moreover, the maximum benefit can be from tracing references in reviews, research papers, and books, or by asking colleagues or subject-matter experts for recommendations. This step also requires careful recording and organisation of the identified sources and creating a bibliography.
3. **Analysing and evaluating the literature review sources:** The next step after identifying sources is to begin by reading each source to decide its importance for analysis and whether it should be included in the examination. The researchers will then record the topics and problems addressed in the literature that are important to the research questions and will analyse their contents and summarise them. The consistency of the study will be measured in the manner in which it is delivered in compliance with standards of excellence. This evaluation process allows a researcher to become a critical reader and assess the credibility of the research sources and the extent to which the information offered is trustworthy, valid, and logical.

54. P Lowry, D Romans & A Curtis, "Global Journal Prestige and Supporting Disciplines: A Scientometric Study of Information Systems Journals", *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, 5(2), 2004, pp 29-75.

55. RM Davison, GJ de Vreede & RO Briggs, "On Peer Review Standards for the Information Systems Literature", *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, 16(4), 2005, pp 967-980.

56. SE Efron and R Ravid, *Writing the Literature Review: A Practical Guide*, The Guilford Press, A Division of Guilford Publications, Inc., New York, 2019, p 6.

57. The authors have named the six steps described below as "the CLAS-WE approach" that guides the full process of writing a literature review. See S E Efron and R Ravid, *Writing the Literature Review: A Practical Guide*, The Guilford Press, A Division of Guilford Publications, Inc., New York, 2019, pp 6-7.

4. Organising and synthesising the literature and building an argument: In this step, the study of the individual sources is assembled into a well-structured, convincing, and holistic narrative by the researcher. Starting with a summary of strategies that helps researchers to organise the literature review around topics and to understand how they relate and build on each other is critical. It is based on the creation of a rational argument in a convincing way that expresses our point of view.<sup>58</sup> This is accompanied by a description of the synchronisation process and the process of synthesising the literature for bringing it together into a coherent whole.
5. Developing a writer's voice and following writing conventions: At this point, a researcher is aware of his/her voice as a writer. Ethics require to properly reference and acknowledge all the sources and avoid intentional and unintentional plagiarism. Additionally, more attention should be paid to writing style and language usage, as well as appropriate citation and referencing style.
6. Writing, editing, and refining the literature review: In the last step, the researcher is prepared to write a literature review that will show the ability to combine theory and analysis and reveal a detailed understanding of existing expertise in the field and its implications for research issues. Editing, revising, and refining the work are needed for the completion of the literature review.

### 10.8 Mind Map: A Graphics Device for Organising Review of Literature

A mind map is a useful graphic device for organising thinking around individual major themes and defining their boundaries and subdivisions. It is simple to create, and complex drawings or advanced graphic skills are not needed. The strength of this visual organisation strategy lies in its simplicity. Mapping is a technique that uses a diagram to present the concepts and ideas included in the literature review. "Mapping out the ideas," claims Hart (1998),<sup>59</sup> "is about setting out, on a paper, the geography of research and thinking that has been done on a topic". Organizing this "geography" visually helps to recognise the similarities and relationships between study and theoretical conceptualisations and to recognise trends that may otherwise be less evident. The pictorial presentation is useful for categorising the various research sources, remembering the historical creation of ideas and noting schools of thought or other categories. Such pictorial presentations may also be useful for illustrating to the reader the connections among the theoretical ideas and the research that are discussed in the literature review.<sup>60</sup> Few steps are involved in mind mapping such as:

1. Draw a circle and in its centre and write a main concept or theme from the literature;
2. Draw spoke lines leading from the circle outward;
3. Jot down at the end of each line the subtheme that is the subsidiary or supporting idea to the major theme in the circle; and
4. Break down (when needed) the subthemes by extending spokes from them and recording additional narrower subconcepts. While mind mapping can be easily performed without electronic methods, however few mapping software, such as

58. E Garfield, "Reviewing Review Literature—The Place of Reviews in the Scientific Literature", *Current Contents*, 19(11), 1987, pp 3–8.

59. C Hart, *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination* SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, 1998, p 144.

60. SE Efron and R Ravid, *Writing the Literature Review: A Practical Guide*, The Guilford Press, A Division of Guilford Publications, Inc., New York, 2019, p 136.

Free Mind,<sup>61</sup> Lucid Chart,<sup>62</sup> Mind Meister, and Mind Mup,<sup>63</sup> assist to link the mind mapping with information the researcher has summarised from the literature on each of the concepts.<sup>64</sup>

## 10.9 Conclusion

A researcher's mental and emotional state plays a vital role in the outcome of the work undertaken.<sup>65</sup> If this state is negative, a successful outcome is doubtful. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the procedure for doing a literature review is an application of a critical-thinking process.<sup>66</sup> Critical thinking, however, is not just a recipe for thinking, it is also a specific mindset—a particular mental and emotional state. This mindset or disposition defines how a researcher chooses to be and to act when working on an analytical task such as a literature review.<sup>67</sup> The critical thinker's mindset can be divided into three types of dispositions: intellect, action, and decision making. Each disposition identifies its traits and behaviours.<sup>68</sup> Doing a literature review is a matter of procedure, disposition, and reflection. Each of these concepts is an essential element of the applied critical-thinking process used to complete the work.<sup>69</sup> Thus, it can be concluded that a research literature review is a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesising the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners.<sup>70</sup> The scholarship and research that is the basis of analysis come from multiple dimensions of our life, including news, current affairs, government policies, international issues, fitness, education, psychology, company, finance, law, and services to society.<sup>71</sup> A research study bases its findings on a research review on the original work of researchers and scholars.<sup>72</sup> Concentrating on high-quality original research rather than interpretations of the performance only ensure that the results of the analysis are accurate.<sup>73</sup> The golden rule for writing a review of literature is "Coherence of thinking & writing" and it is one of the most important factors that contribute to the quality of the literature review and the understanding of the argument. This means that narrative of the researcher is held together effectively, the different sections and paragraphs are clearly connected, and the ideas flow smoothly, logically, and purposefully. As a writer, it is our responsibility to make the literature review as crisply as clear as possible for the readers.

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