
How to Build a Literature Review

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**Have you written a
literature review
before?**

What was your experience?



General Outline

- Problem statement
 - Establish the importance of the topic
 - Number and type of people affected
 - Seriousness of the impact
 - Physical, psychological, economic, social consequences of the problem
- Introduction
 - Definitions of key terms
 - Important arguments you will make
 - Overview of the organization of the rest of the review
- Body of the review
 - Topic/Theme 1
 - Supporting evidence
 - Topic/Theme 2
 - Supporting evidence
 - Topic/Theme 3
 - Supporting evidence
- Conclusion
 - Implications
 - Specific suggestions for future research
 - How your research topic adds to the literature

Organizing your Research

As you write your review, you will work horizontally in the row belonging to each point discussed. As you combine the information presented in each row, you will begin to see each section of your paper taking shape. Remember, some of the sources may not cover all of the main ideas listed on the left, but that can be useful also. The gaps on your chart could provide clues about the gaps in the current state of knowledge on your topic.

CREATING YOUR SYNTHESIS MATRIX

It is probably best to begin your chart by labeling the columns both horizontally and vertically. The sample chart below illustrates how to do this.

Topic: _____

	Source #1	Source #2	Source #3	Source #4
Main Idea A				
Main Idea B				

Label the columns across the top of your chart with the author's last name or with a few keywords from the title of the work. Then label the sides of the chart with the main ideas that your sources discuss about your topic. As you read each source, make notes in the appropriate column about the information discussed in the work, as shown in the following chart.

Sample Matrix

Example Matrix

Research Question: How does vicarious trauma affect emergency care workers in disaster zones?

Corollary Question: How can negative effects be prevented, reduced, and treated?

	Baird 2006	Bell 2003	Campbell 2007	Devilly 2006	Horman 2005
Type of Study					
Location					
Situation					
Definition of <i>vicarious trauma</i>					
<u>Idea 2:</u> Anxiety Effect					
<u>Idea 3:</u> Fatigue Effect					
<u>Idea 4:</u> Physical Effect					
<u>Idea 5:</u> Another Effect?					
Idea 7: Prevent Effect					
Idea 8: Reduce Effect					
Idea 9: Treat Effect					

Table 1 Review of Literature

Author/ Date	Theoretical/ Conceptual Framework	Research Question(s)/ Hypotheses	Methodology	Analysis & Results	Conclusions	Implications for Future research	Implications For practice
Maisto Pollock Lynch Martin Ammerman (2001)	Coping factors in relationship to decreasing substance abuse with adolescents one year post drug treatment	What factors contribute to the variability in adolescent functioning regarding substance abuse one-year post treatment?	Quasi-experimental design involving 166 subjects in Pittsburgh adolescent research center. Initial baseline assessment and 1 year later. Pre and posttest measures included ACQ, ISE, CTI, LEQA, SCQ, and DUSI.	First set of analysis involved one-way ANOVA. Four independent t-tests conducted to determine specific group differences. The final set utilized ANOVA with repeated measures 1 year later. 36% of subjects discontinued alcohol use.	All clinical groups demonstrated improvement at one year.	Stress and coping model useful for examining clinical course of alcohol use disorders in adolescents.	Differences between participants at baseline regarding coping factors indicate significance of acquisition of such skills as part of treatment intervention.
De Anda Bradley (1997)	Stress, stressors, and coping strategies among middle school adolescents	Adolescents' perceptions of their stress use of coping strategies and the adolescents' evaluation of degree of success regarding	54 middle school students 12-14 years old completed ASCM and STAI.	A four point Likert scale was used for analysis. Internal consistency was .95. Results indicated female students report increased degree of stress.	School related stressors rated highest thus schools are a good place for intervention/prevention. Gender differences need to be considered.	Gender and developmental differences in coping need to be examined.	Adolescents might be amenable to treatment which teaches positive coping strategies, schools can help with this process

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Synthesizing Literature

Summary Table

Topical Outline

Table 4.1: Summary table

Author/ Year	Research Design	Participants or Population Studied	Comparison	Outcome
Smith/2010	Mixed methods	Undergraduates	Graduates	Improved access
King/2016	Survey	Females	Males	Increased representation
Miller/2011	Content analysis	Nurses	Doctors	New procedure

For a summary table template, see <http://blogs.monm.edu/writingatmc/files/2013/04/Synthesis-Matrix-Template.pdf>

Table 4.2 Topical outline³

s copied from an article

Topical outline: Facts organized by category

Accumulating evidence indicates that adolescents who have same-sex sexual attractions, who have had sexual or romantic relationships with persons of the same sex, or who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual are more likely than heterosexual adolescents to experience depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation, and to make suicide attempts (Remafedi et al. 1998; Russell and Joyner 2001; Safren and Heimberg 1999). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) system showed that 40% of youth who reported a minority sexual orientation indicated feeling sad or hopeless in the past 2 weeks, compared to 26% of heterosexual youth (District of Columbia Public Schools, 2007). Those data also showed that lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth were more than twice as likely as heterosexual youth to have considered attempting suicide in the past year (31% vs. 14%). This body of research demonstrates that lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth have high levels of emotional distress.

A much smaller body of research suggests that adolescents who identify as transgender or transsexual also experience increased emotional distress (Di Ceglie et al. 2002; Grossman and D'Augelli 2006, 2007). In a study based on a convenience sample of 55 transgendered youth aged to 15-21 years, the authors found that more than one fourth reported a prior suicide attempt (Grossman and D'Augelli 2007).

- LGB adolescents and suicide
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- LGB adolescents and emotional distress
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- Transgender adolescents and emotional distress
 - A much smaller body of research suggests that adolescents who identify as transgendered or transsexual also experience increased emotional distress (Di Ceglie et al. 2002; Grossman and D'Augelli 2006, 2007). In a study based on a convenience sample of 55 transgendered youth aged to 15-21 years, the authors found that more than one fourth reported a prior suicide attempt (Grossman and D'Augelli 2007).

Points to Keep in Mind

- Content- clear main idea and thesis
 - Organization- structured and easy to follow
 - Flow- logical transitions
 - Development- supporting data
 - Form- APA, grammar and terminology
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Writing an Argument

1. Claim: the thesis statement—what you are trying to prove
 2. Grounds: theoretical or empirical evidence that supports your claim
 3. Warrant: your reasoning (rule or principle) connecting the claim and its grounds
 4. Backing: further facts used to support or legitimize the warrant
 5. Qualifier: acknowledging that the argument may not be true for all cases
 6. Rebuttal: considering both sides
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Breakout Groups

Problem Statement Activity

- Providing proper sexual health education in NYC schools reduce risks of contracting STIs and unwanted pregnancy.
 - Claim?
 - Grounds?
 - Warrant?
 - Backing?
 - Qualifier?
 - Rebuttal?
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Our Example

1. Claim: Providing proper sexual health education in NYC schools reduce risk of contracting STIs/STDs and unwanted pregnancy
 2. Grounds: Comparing abstinence-only curriculum and comprehensive curriculum data
 3. Warrant: Providing students with the tools for safe-sex in order to reduce the aforementioned risks
 4. Backing: Knowledge of risks and stigma, shame-free preventative measures that are inclusive to all identities
 5. Qualifier: Religious beliefs; despite receiving comprehensive education, some students will still engage in unprotected sex resulting in cases of STIs and unwanted pregnancies
 6. Rebuttal: Not having comprehensive sex education does more damage than the small percentage of students who have conflicting beliefs and/or choose not to follow the comprehensive recommendations
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