Chapter 8
Writing a Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

A literature review is a summary of existing literature on topics of interest to the study. It provides proof of a gap in the literature that must be filled by the current study. Having a thorough literature review is the first step in planning a new research project. There are several critical reasons for writing a literature review. First, it is to identify the practical problem. Second, it is to identify the theoretical problem. The researcher should examine the literature about the problem area; both the theoretical literature and research literature. This helps to identify specific research purposes, questions, or testable hypotheses. Published research often makes specific suggestions for future research in the last section of their articles. This chapter on the literature review will provide a step-by-step method to write an effective literature review.

INTRODUCTION

Writing an Abstract

An abstract is an overall summary of the whole document. It stands as a briefing section of the whole document providing the essential information regarding the

content of the document. Abstracts are a required part of submissions to all journals. It is written immediately after the title. While the abstract is written at the beginning of the document, it is in practice written last after all information is known about the study at the study's conclusion. The information in the abstract must be reflective of the information in the document. Information not in the document itself must not be included in the abstract.

It is important to remember that not everyone that reads the abstract will read the entire document, instead most will only get the essential information of the study from the abstract. The abstract should not be more than 250 words in most types of academic writing such as scientific journal articles. It should be written concisely, in a clear manner so that the reader is not confused and doubtless about the topic, findings, and conclusions of the document they would read in detail if they wished. The population of interest and the sample provide in the abstract will highlight the information regarding the individuals the study belongs to. The goals which may be stated in the abstract for the study will clearly inform the reader about the direction of the investigation. The implications will allow the reader to understand the contribution the study has made to the scientific body of literature and the practical implications of the study. Overall, the abstract will convey the direction, significance, and contribution of a study to the reader. Thereafter, the reader can decide the relevance of the study for in depth reading of the entire document.

Important Parts of an Abstract

1. introduction or background
2. research questions or hypotheses
3. methodology including the population of interest
4. sampling strategy
5. analytical strategy
6. results and conclusions
7. briefly on implications of the study.

Objective of Writing an Abstract

The objective of writing an abstract is to summarize the major aspects of the proposal or paper. It helps the reader decide whether they want to read the rest of the paper. A writer must first catch the reader's attention with an intriguing title, then further lure them in with an abstract that interests them. The establishment of those two things will increase the chances that a person will read the entire paper/proposal.

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