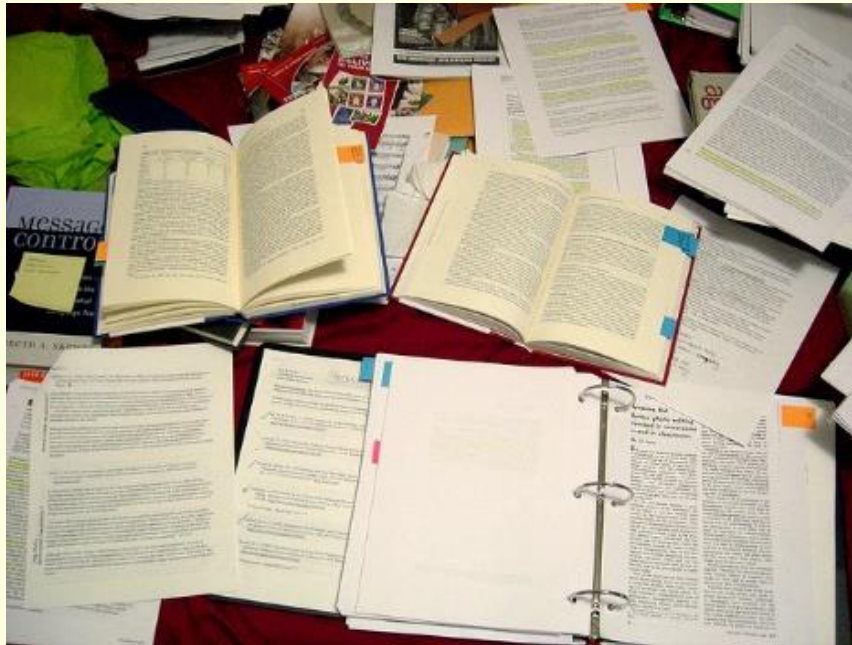


EDRS5450 - Teacher as Reflective Practitioner

The literature review



Shahiba Ali and Dr Rowena Kalloo

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shahiba.ali@sta.uwi.edu

Rowena.kaloo@sta.uwi.edu

Objectives-

At the end of the session you should be able to:

- Understand the purpose of a literature review
- Distinguish between types of sources for the review
- Locate and record sources of published material of relevance
- Sort and analyse the literature
- Write a critical review
- Understand the conventions for good academic writing

1. The literature review

- A “re” view or “look again” at what has already been written about the topic by recognized scholars and researchers, i.e. is a summary of previous research on a topic (Johnson, 1991)
- Is defined by a guiding concept (e.g. your research objective, the problem or issue you are discussing or your argumentative thesis).
- Is **not** a descriptive list of the material available, or a set of summaries.

2. Purpose of the literature review

- Helps select research relevant to your study
- Can highlight exemplary studies in the area.
- Provides context for the problem and/or puts the problem into historical perspective
- Allows you to examine strengths and weaknesses of the studies selected
- Discovers important variables relevant to the topic
- Identifies research methods appropriate to your study
- Helps develop your research design

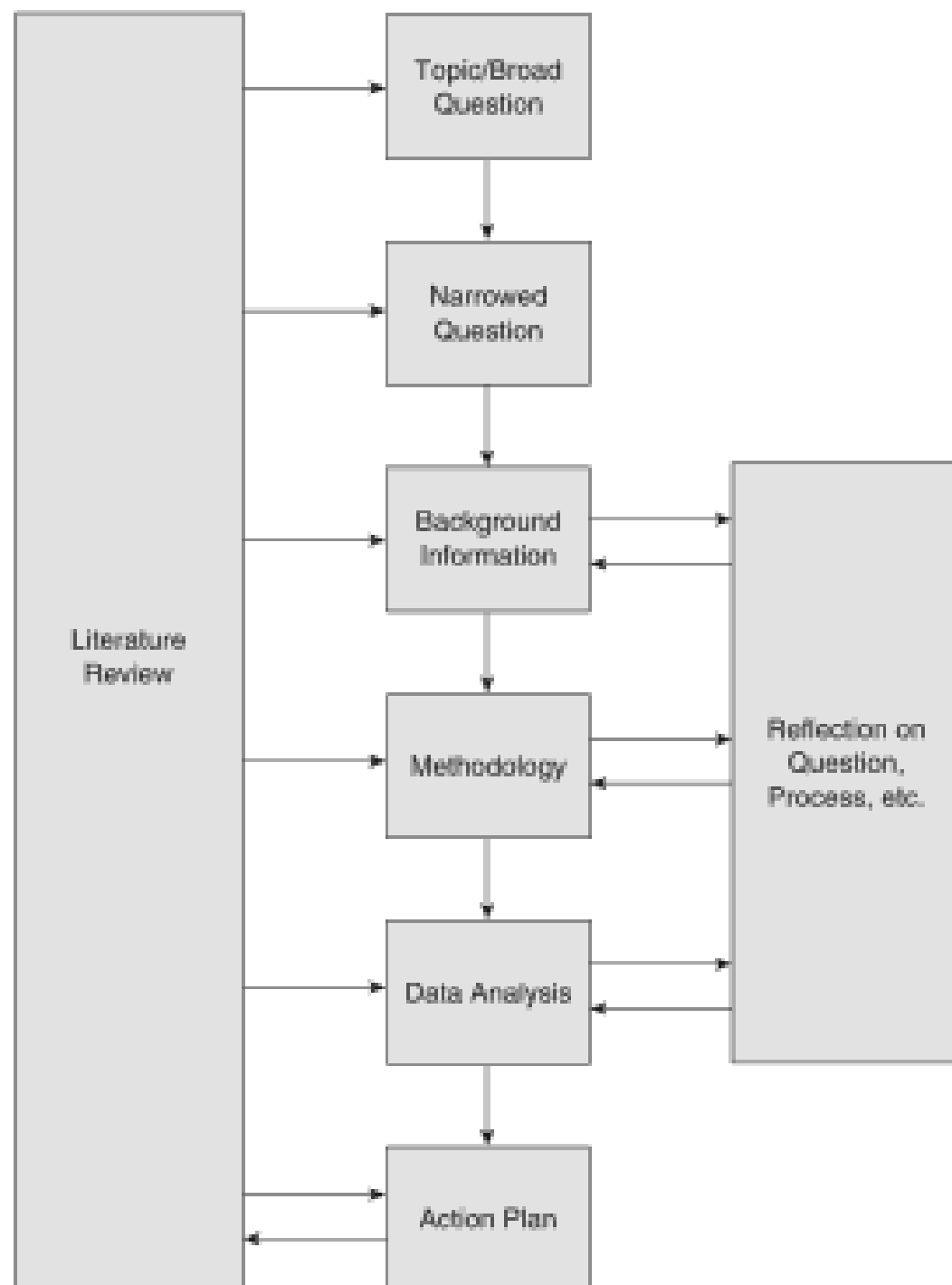
Purpose of the literature review.

- May help you to redefine your research questions
- Helps you find examples of classroom applications, methods of data collection, and data analysis techniques.
- Helps you to become more of an expert in the area of proposed study and more knowledgeable.

Integrating the literature review into the action research process

(Adapted from Schwalbach, 2003)

The literature review informs every aspect of the research process.



Stages of a Literature review

- 1. Sources for the literature**
- 2. Choosing studies with relevant problems/issues**
- 3. Analysing and interpreting the findings of the studies**
- 4. Organising and writing the review**

Sources: There are many places to start

- Look at books, articles, dissertations, and other sources.
- Use your up-to-date subject textbooks' bibliographies.
- Ask your lecturers/tutors/librarian for key, seminal works for this topic /research question / problem.
- Use bibliographies from most recent relevant articles.

3. Sources for the literature review

1. Primary source

Usually a report by the original researchers of a study found as:

- Journal articles
- Monographs
- Books
- Papers presented at professional conferences.

Found in research databases

2. Secondary source

- Not first hand accounts
- Does not consist of original research
- Can be summaries, compilations, analyses, or interpretations of primary information made by other individuals
- Found as:
 - o Handbooks of research
 - o Reviews of research
 - o Scholarly books (e.g. textbooks)
 - o Perhaps magazine and newspaper articles
- Found in reference section of library; located by a search on the library catalogue

Summary of information required in the literature review (Cronin, *et al.*,2008).

Primary sources	Secondary sources – reviews
Title	Title
Author and year	Author and year
Journal (full reference)	Journal (full reference); Book
Purpose of study	Review questions/Purpose of study
Type of study	Key definitions
Setting	Review boundaries
Data collection method(s)	Appraisal criteria
Major findings	Synthesis of studies
Recommendations	Summary/conclusions
Key thoughts/comments	Key thoughts/comments
e.g. strengths/weaknesses	e.g. strengths/weaknesses

Sources: Tips for searching

- Use the catalogue keyword search.
- Ensure you take care with recording your references.
- Keep systematic and accurate records.
- Use software such as Endnote.
- Be careful to record page numbers where you found quotes.



Sources: Tips for searching



- Practise good time-management skills!
- Aim to find the most important relevant material early.
- Read as you go and make critical and evaluative notes as you read.
- Try to think in terms of themes rather than writing a summary of the article.
- Do not rely solely on electronic full-text material which is more easily available.

Tips for searching: Compiling a list of keywords

- Develop a **search** strategy that will most effectively locate relevant information.
- Break down research question using:
keywords or phrases;
- Enter your search
- Evaluate your results to determine whether you need to employ various strategies to modify your search.



- Search bibliographic databases with careful keyword searches.
-

- Search for additional publications of key authors .

Tips

- *start with a narrow and focused topic*
- *broaden the scope of the review, if necessary*
- *More difficult to cut content successfully, especially if time is short.*


Online Sources

- The WWW (Worldwide web) is an important source of material but should be used in conjunction with other sources.
- Be aware of the importance of evaluating information.
 - Is the journal refereed/peer reviewed?
 - Is the source authoritative?

Learn to use the library for e-journals and past Dip. Ed. studies.

Start with *Caribbean Curriculum*, a journal that comes out of the School of Education, St Augustine campus!




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1. Choosing studies with relevant problems

- Can be a daunting task
- Determine which literature makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the topic.
- Choose relevant studies based on your topic by reading the titles and the abstracts
- Organise the studies under categories
- Create a visual summary of relevant categories of the topic



2. Analysing and interpreting the Literature



1. Read the abstract

Decide whether or not to read the entire article.

- What is the main idea being put forward? *Can get this from the abstract and introduction of the article?*

2. Read the introduction and background of the study to find out

- why the study is important
- To obtain a review and evaluation of relevant literature

3. Read Methods section critically

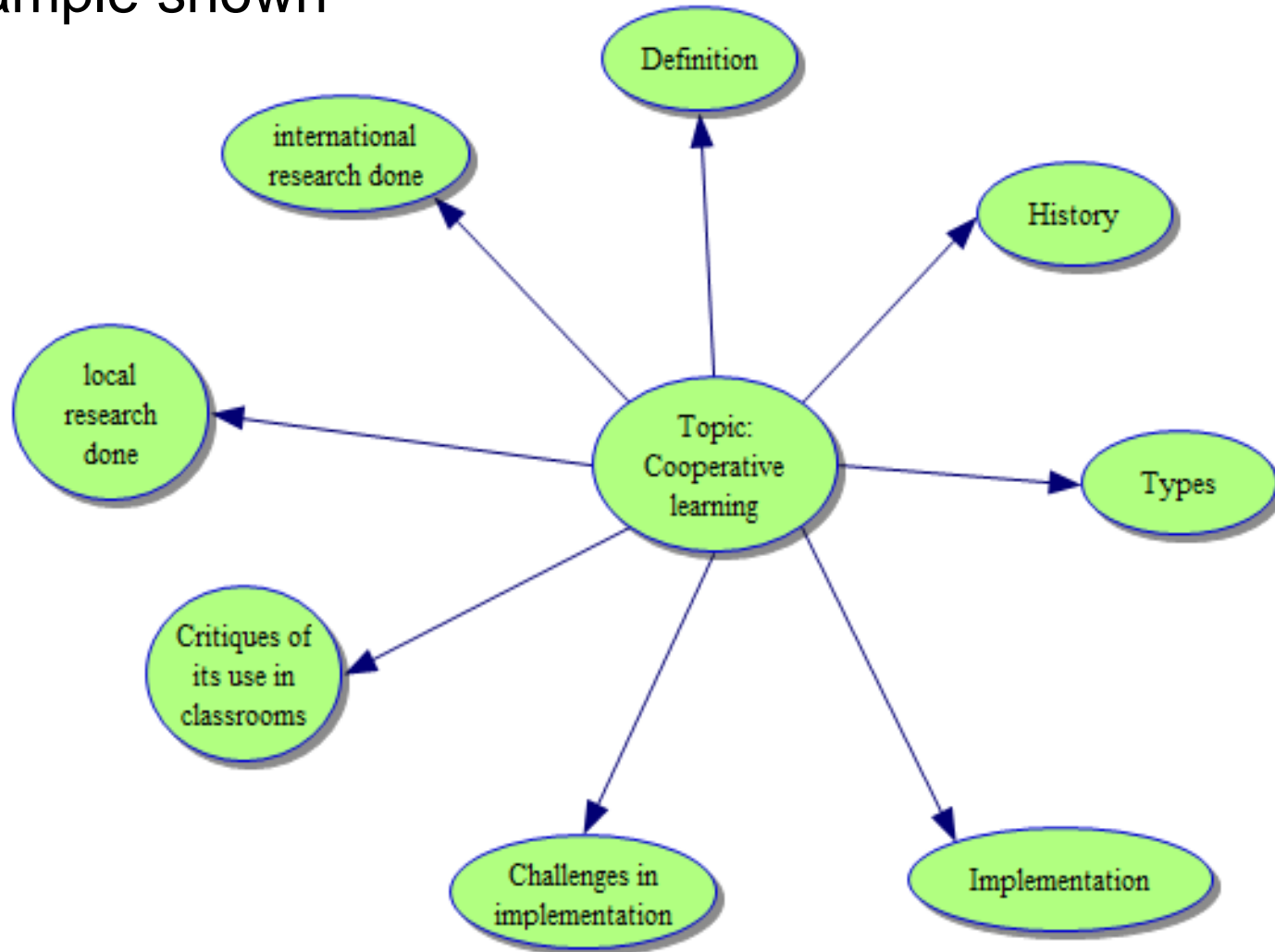
- Focus on **participants and methodology**;
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the methodology in relation to your research?

4. Evaluate results

- Are the conclusions logical?
- What is the quality of evidence provided to support the results?
- Is there evidence of bias?
- What are the limitations of the study in relation to your research?

3. Organising and writing the review

Create a visual summary (graphic organizer) of sub-categories in your topic to be researched as in the example shown



3. Organising and writing the review

- Establish your research questions
- Organise your literature into logical categories (topics and themes). Use headings to identify categories and sub-categories
- Begin literature review with an introduction to the topic. State the significance and importance of the literature review
- Provide an overview of the contents of the review.
- Describe the literature under the headings developed

3. Organising and writing the review

- Ensure that you synthesize the readings to make connections from sources
- Your conclusion should draw together the important points and briefly explain how the information answers your original research question (s).
- **Do not write the review as an annotated list but as a cohesive flow of ideas.**

Tips for good writing

- Citations must be made where relevant and must appear in the reference list.
- Include page numbers for direct quotes from a source
- Avoid plagiarism- acknowledge the source of ideas and quotations of other researchers.
- This adds authority and credibility to your work.

Tips for good writing

- Quotations, Paraphrasing and Summarizing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssTKVakPvwQ>

- Integrating source material effectively to address credibility and relevance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fROpluH2mbc>

- In-text citations made easy (APA):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbyJdMz-Ato>

Summary

- Review the problem for your action research
- Gather preliminary literature about the topic
- Develop a schema (graphic organiser to guide your writing)
- Analyse and evaluate the literature
- Present the literature under relevant headings
- Synthesize and draw conclusions
- Do a draft and re-read after a few days.
- Keep in mind the word limits imposed.

Summary

Tips for Citations:

- **Cite the relevant literature (make notes of page numbers for quotations)**
- **Place citations in Reference Section as you proceed so that you do not waste time trying to find it.**
- **Double-check that only what you have cited must be in the references.**
- **Adhere to the APA style 6th edition for citation and reference.**

■ Q: *How many references are needed? And how much review of the related literature is enough?*

■ A: *Don't know!!! But if you keep seeing the same articles and authors being cited then you have read enough! That is, you have read the big names in the field.*

■ *You have to be comfortable with the level of review you have done! Action research references can be between 2-15 (Mertler, 2008).*

Where does the Literature review come into the study? In Ch 2- Literature review rubric

Use of literature

- • *Provide a **critical analysis** of the **relevant literature pertinent to answering** your research questions/hypotheses, that relates to your issue/problem from the **perspective of different writers**, which should include:*
 - *Key concepts*
 - *Key arguments, debates, issues, questions*
 - *Identifying themes/topics*
 - *Seminal and/or historical works*

Where does the Literature review come into the study? In Ch 2- Literature review rubric

Use of literature

- • Discuss what the literature says about your *proposed intervention*, and effectively *use the literature to justify* the appropriateness of the use of the intervention in the given context (classroom, department, school, district and so on).
- • Indicate the *potential challenges* in using the intervention and explain how these would be *overcome in the study*.
- • *Cite at least 3 examples of findings of studies similar to the one being conducted*

Where does the Literature review come into the study? In Ch 4- Presentation and Discussion of Findings rubric

*In terms of the literature reviewed for the study **confirming and/or refuting** hypotheses where applicable.*



Activity

Choose ONE journal article provided that can relate to your action research study and :

- Copy the reference to the article (in APA style). (This would be placed in the list of references at the end of a study)
- Read the abstract. Identify the elements of a good abstract. (Include the problem being investigated. See the TRP rubric.)
- Critique the extent to which the research questions aligned to the purpose and background of the study .
- Identify the following elements in the study– location of study; type of study; nature of the task; research design; methodology used (data collection and analysis methods used; sample size; characteristics of participants).
- How have key terms or concepts been used?
- Summarise the findings- what issues were highlighted? Were differences and similarities found in relation to the author's review of the literature?
- How do the findings relate to your study?
- Do they help justify your study?

Useful articles for writing the literature review

- Carnwell, R., & Daly, W. (2001). Strategies for the construction of a critical review of the literature. *Nurse Educ Pract* **1**: 57–63
- Colling, J. (2003). Demystifying the clinical nursing research process: the literature review. *Urol Nurs* **23**(4): 297–9
- Cronin, P., Ryan, F., & Coughlan, M. (2008). Undertaking a literature review: a step-by-step approach. *British Journal of Nursing*, 2008, Vol. 17, No 1, pp 38-43.
- Gerstenfeld, S. V. (2003). Literature Review. Retrieved from <http://www.wpi.edu/Academics/Depts/IGSD/IQPHbook/ch6.html>
- Hart, C. (1998). *Doing a Literature Review*. London: Sage Publications.

References

- Johnson, J. (1991). Political science research methods. Washington, DC: C.Q Press.
- Mertler, C. A. (2008). Action research: teachers as researchers in the classroom. London: Sage Publications.
- Mohanty, S. (2003). How Do I Conduct a Literature Review? Retrieved from http://www.lib.unc.edu/house/how_do_i/conduct_a_literature_review.html.
- Procter, D. M. (2002). The Literature Review: A Few Tips On Conducting It. Retrieved from <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/litrev.html>

Useful websites

- <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/ReviewofLiterature.html>
- <http://library.ucsc.edu/ref/howto/literaturereview.html>
- <http://www.statisticssolutions.com/literature-review>
- <http://www.library.ncat.edu/ref/guides/literaturereview03.htm>
- <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au>