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LITERATURE REVIEW 101

August 24, 2017

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Purpose of a Lit Review



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- Figure out a research question
- Find an argument to support the need for this research
- Provide a landscape or background of the situation you're writing about
 - Current knowledge
 - Gaps
 - Disparities, what are we not studying
- Replicating results of research (redoing a meta analysis)

Sample Research Question



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What are the barriers to smoking cessation in the LGBT population in Los Angeles?

What search terms to use



- Do a search and start reading some articles, see what terms they use
- What are the barriers to smoking cessation in the LGBT population in Los Angeles?
 - (smoking cessation barriers lgbt) 1 result
 - (smoking cessation) AND (lgbt) 1 result
 - ((smoking cessation) AND (lesbians OR gay OR bisexual OR transgender)) more but many related to alcohol
 - ((smoking cessation) AND (lesbians OR gay OR bisexual OR transgender)) NOT (Alcohol) 80 results

How to identify good research



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- What kind of manuscript is it?
- What kind of study is it?
- Is it generalizable?
- When was it published?
- Who is doing the research?
- Has it been relied on by others?
- Do you have questions about the research?



What kind of manuscript is it

- Is it peer reviewed? This is the gold standard
- Is it a manuscript (self-published)?
- What kind of journal released it?
 - on Google you can find out what rank the journal is
 - for example, in public health some top journals are:
 - Clinical Microbiology Reviews
 - Annual Review of Public Health
 - Environmental Health Perspectives
 - American Journal of Public Health
 - Preventive Medicine
 - Journal of Health and Social Behavior



What kind of study is it?

- Original data collection
 - Random control trials RCTs
 - Cohort studies
 - Case control studies
 - Cross-sectional studies
 - Observational studies
 - Case reports (no control group)
- Secondary data analysis
- Meta analysis
- Ideas, editorials, and opinions

Is it generalizable?



- Is the study population similar to your population?
 - Search for research on your exact study population
 - Then expand the study population if you need to
 - Los Angeles research >> need to look at other urban populations with a racial/ethnic population that is similar to ours
- Is the sample pool big enough?
 - Is N=1 or N=10 generalizable? Likely not
- Is the sample pool representative of the community?



When was it published?

- The study may be very applicable to your research
- But if it was done in the 80's...
 - A gap might be that the last research they have done on this was in the 80's
 - May signal that it is not relevant
 - Question why this research has not been replicated or built upon

Who is doing the research?



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- What institution is the author associated with?
- Has their work been cited by notable sources?
 - If so, it means that people are reading their research and thinking this research benefits the field so I'm going to cite it in my paper
 - Google Scholar allows you to see how often an author is cited
 - ex Ian Holloway is cited by 991 papers
- How many articles have they written?



Has it been relied on by others?

- The more often an article has been cited, the better
 - It means that people are reading this article and thinking this research benefits the field so I'm going to cite it in my paper
 - Google Scholar allows you to see how often an article is cited

If you have questions



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- Contact the researcher if you have a question
 - It's part of the research field that you can contact researchers and ask them questions
 - You can also contact researchers to ask them for their inventories
 - What is their survey and survey design?



The policy landscape

- Find a recent law or bill that relates to your issue
 - <https://www.congress.gov/>
 - <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml>
- Look at the evidence used to support their argument
 - Fact Sheets
 - can be accessed by contacting the author's office
 - can usually be found via Google
 - Bill Analysis (usually done by Committee Consultants)
 - look up their references "according to the CDC..."
- Look up related bills

Best practices



- Cite the actual article that conducted the original research
 - Always dig back to the original instance
 - Ex 48% of gay identified people smoke
 - cite the article that actually came up with that number
 - do not cite an article that referenced that number
- Citations
 - APA, MLA, etc
 - Look up the requirements for your lit review
 - When in doubt choose one that is used in the studies you find
 - Endnote is a great tool

How to organize what you find



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- Complete a summary of each relevant article you read

Literature Review STUDY SUMMARIES									
Author/title	Purpose	Framework	Sample	Design	Variables/ instruments	Results	Controversies, disagreements with other authors	Limitations	Implications for practice, research, theory

- Consider using this as a quick way to compare studies by variables

Author (s), title	Year	Variable 1	Variable 2	Variable 3	Variable 4
		X	X		X
		X	X	X	
		X	X		X
		X	X	X	X



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Questions?