REASONS FOR REVIEWING THE LITERATURE

- To conduct a ‘preliminary’ search of existing material
- To organise valuable ideas and findings
- To identify other research that may be in progress
- To generate research ideas
- To develop a critical perspective

THE LITERATURE REVIEW PROCESS

Source: Saunders et al. (2003)

THE CRITICAL REVIEW (1)

Approaches used

**Deductive** -
Develops a conceptual framework from the literature which is then tested using the data

**Inductive** -
Explores the data to develop theories which are then tested against the literature
**THE CRITICAL REVIEW (2)**

**Key purposes**
- To further refine research questions and objectives
- To discover recommendations for further research
- To avoid repeating work already undertaken
- To provide insights into strategies and techniques appropriate to your research objectives

Based on Gall et al. (2006)

**ADOPTING A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE (1)**

**Skills for effective reading**
- Previewing
- Annotating
- Summarising
- Comparing and contrasting

Harvard College Library (2006)

**ADOPTING A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE (2)**

**The most important skills are**
- The capacity to **evaluate** what you read
- The capacity to **relate** what you read to other information

Wallace and Wray (2006)

**ADOPTING A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE (3)**

**Questions to ask yourself**
- Why am I reading this?
- What is the author trying to do in writing this?
- How convincing is this?
- What use can I make of this reading?

Adapted from Wallace and Wray (2006)
CONTENT OF THE CRITICAL REVIEW

You will need to

- Include key academic theories
- Demonstrate current knowledge of the area
- Use clear referencing for the reader to find the original cited publications
- Acknowledge the research of others

IS YOUR LITERATURE REVIEW CRITICAL?

Checklists Box 3.2 and Box 3.3

Complete the checklists to evaluate your literature review

The KEY TO A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

- Demonstrate that you have read, understood and evaluated your material
- Link the different ideas to form an argument
- Make clear connections to your research objectives and the subsequent empirical material

CATEGORIES OF LITERATURE SOURCES

- Primary (published and unpublished)
- Secondary
- Tertiary

Detailed in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 Saunders et al. (2009)
**Literature sources available**

Saunders et al. (2009)

**The literature search strategy (1)**

- Write down
  - parameters of your search
  - key words and search terms to be used
  - databases and search engines to be used
  - criteria for selection of relevant and useful studies

  And

  Discuss these with a tutor (if possible)

**The literature search strategy (2)**

- Define the research parameters
- Generate key words
- Discuss your research
- Brainstorm ideas
- Construct Relevance trees - use computer software

**Conducting a literature search (1)**

- Approaches can include
  - Searching tertiary literature sources
  - Obtaining relevant literature
  - Scanning and browsing secondary literature
  - Searching using the Internet
CONDUCTING A LITERATURE SEARCH (2)

Searching using tertiary literature

- Ensure key words match controlled index language
- Search appropriate printed and database sources
- Note precise details used – including search strings
- Note the FULL reference of each search found

CONDUCTING A LITERATURE SEARCH (3)

- Printed sources
- Databases – use of Boolean logic and free text searching (Table 3.3)
- Scanning and browsing
- Searching the Internet (Tables 3.4 and 3.5)

Saunders et al. (2009)
**Evaluating the Literature**

- Define the scope of your review
- Assess relevance and value
- Assess sufficiency

**Recording the Literature**

**Make notes for each item you read**

Record –

- Biographic details
- Brief summary of content
- Supplementary information

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**Recording the Literature**

- Bibliographic details (Table 3.6)
- Brief summary
- Supplementary information (Table 3.7)

Saunders et al. (2009)

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**Plagiarism**

**Four common forms**

- Stealing material from another source
- Submitting material written by another
- Copying material without quotation marks
- Paraphrasing material without documentation

Adapted from Park (2003), cited in Easterby-Smith et al. (2008)