

# **Analyzing Literature**

**EDP 612 Week 6**

**Dr. Abhik Roy**



# Reference Text



Please download

Machi, L.A., & McEvoy, B.T. (2021). *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

# Part I: Basic Overview



# Guideline 1



- Scan the articles to get an overview of each one
  - Read the first few paragraphs
  - Read the entire Methods section
  - Scan rest of article

# Guideline 2

- Based on your overview, group the articles by category
  - By topics and then subtopics
  - By chronological order within subtopic



# Guideline 3



- Organize yourself before reading the articles
  - Computer
  - Pack of note cards to write your comments on
  - Self-adhesive flags that you can use to identify noteworthy comments (or word processing program to highlight)

# Guideline 4



- Use a consistent format in your notes
  - Example
    - Author(s)' Last Name(s), Initial(s)
    - Title of Article
    - Publication Year
    - Name of Journal, Volume, Edition, Page Numbers
    - Notes



# Guideline 5

- Look for explicit definitions of key terms in the literature



# Guideline 6

- Look for methodological strengths



# Guideline 7

- Look for methodological weaknesses



# Guideline 8

- Distinguish between assertion and evidence
  - Assertion = author's opinion
  - Evidence = results of study



# Guideline 9

- Identify the major trends or patterns in the results of previous studies
- Generalization based on sources included in literature review



# Guideline 10

- Identify gaps in the literature



# Guideline 11

- Identify relationships among studies



# Guideline 12

- Note how each reviewed article relates to your topic





# Guideline 13

- Evaluate your reference list for relevancy and coverage
  - Should demonstrate latest work done in subject area



# Part II: Analyzing Literature from the Viewpoint of a Researcher

Introduction  
to Research

# Guideline 1

- State whether the study is quantitative or qualitative
  - Research is neither quantitative or qualitative
  - So please do not say *the research was...*



# Guideline 2



- Determine whether a study is experimental or nonexperimental
  - *Experimental*. Treatments are administered to participants for the purposes of the study and their effects are assessed
  - *Nonexperimental*. Participants' traits are measured without attempting to change them

# Guideline 3



- In an experiment, note whether the participants were assigned at random to treatment conditions
  - *True experiment.* Participants randomly assigned to treatment and control groups

# Guideline 4



- Note attempts to examine cause-and-effect issues in nonexperimental studies
  - *Causal-comparative*. Uncover relationships between independent and dependent variables after an action or event has already occurred

aka *retroactive*

aka *ex post facto*

# Guideline 5

- Note how the major variables were measured
  - *Valid*. Measure what they claim to measure
  - *Reliable*. Yield consistent results



# Guideline 6



- Note the characteristics of the samples of participants, such as
  - Demographics
  - Geographic location
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Ethnicity
  - Age
  - SES



# Guideline 7

- Note how large a difference is – not just whether it is statistically significant
- So don't just report the  $p$ -value which by itself is nonsense



# Guideline 8

- It is safe to presume that all empirical studies are flawed
- Never ever ever ever use the word "prove" when discussing results



# Guideline 9



| Make note of the limitations within each study

These **are not** limits placed on your own study due to another study!

These **are** constraints placed on the ability to generalize from the results

| Given enough of a pattern, this provides you with justification to conduct a study of your own without infringing on another

| Found by summarizing and synthesizing

| Ultimate purpose of the literature review!

# That's it!

Any questions?

