

Literature Review

Definition: A literature review is a survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic. It provides a critical overview of current knowledge, allowing you to identify relevant theories, methods, and gaps in existing research.

A literature review generally consists of the following parts:

I. Introduction

- The introduction should clearly establish the focus and purpose of the literature review, defining your topic and setting your scope. If there's anything you aren't planning to include in your analysis, mention it here.

Example: *Struggles with body image and appearance have been widely associated with media consumption, particularly in young women. While this topic has been widely studied, extant research has not quite caught up with emerging technologies, such as TikTok, and has mainly focused on mass media effects. This paper will examine the effects of newer technology, specifically in regards to instant sharing of images, and its effect on mental health of adolescents.*

II. Body

- The body should contain a summary and critical evaluation of each source, focusing on the research design and conclusion. You can structure your body in different ways:
 - **Chronological:** traces the development of your topic over time
 - **Thematic:** organizes discussion of your topic around central themes
 - **Methodological:** analyzes the different takes various methodological approaches have had on your topic
 - **Theoretical:** discusses how different theoretical perspectives come together in support of or against your research

- Click [here](#) for example sentences
- Click [here](#) for examples of connecting words
- Click [here](#) for a template to summarize and evaluate your sources.

III. Conclusion

- In your conclusion, you should summarize the key findings you have taken from the literature and emphasize their significance to your topic, along with your overarching conclusions and avenues for future research. Be sure to clearly restate your topic and scope, so it's clear to your reader why the literature you reviewed is relevant to your research.

Example: *Extant research has mainly focused on mass media consumption in its analysis of the effects of the relationship between media consumption and body image issues. While it has shown that a relationship certainly exists, it has not robustly shown how the advent of instant-sharing technologies like Instagram Stories and TikTok have affected the situation.*

IV. Reference list

- The reference list contains a correct, full citation for each source that has been mentioned in the text.

Overview of example structure and sentences

Aspect	Example
Topic sentence Expresses the topic and central point of your paragraph	<i>Many studies have focused on the relationship between media consumption and body image issues.</i>
Pivotal study Influential study that influences the traditional research landscape for your topic	<i>The relationship between media depictions and body image concerns is well-established. Analysis by Grabe, Ward and Hyde (2008) concluded that exposure to mass media is linked to body image dissatisfaction among women.</i>
Critical evaluation Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of that study	<i>However, in an era of rapidly evolving digital technologies, the mass media paradigm is no longer sufficient for understanding how adolescents engage with images. The findings of older studies like this one likely do not apply to younger generations.</i>
Theory Introduce a new theory that offers a different perspective to the pivotal study	<i>In light of this, researchers have become increasingly interested in the specific effects of social media. Perloff (2014) theorizes that the interactive aspects of social media may influence its impact on body image, and mentions that young women are among the most active social media users.</i>
Synthesis Combine findings from research that supports the theory you've introduced	<i>Several empirical studies have focused on Facebook usage in adolescent girls (Tiggemann & Slater, 2013; Meier & Gray, 2014) and in young adult women (Smith, Hames, & Joiner, 2013; Fardouly et al., 2015; Cohen, Newton-John & Slater, 2017.) Indeed, a systematic review by Holland and Timmerman (2016) confirmed a relationship between social networking and body image for both women and men. Across these studies, there is consistent evidence to suggest that body image issues are influenced not by social media usage in general, but by engagement with the visual and interactive aspects of these platforms.</i>
Gap Show where opportunities for further research exist, and how your research would fill those gaps	<i>Unfortunately, there is a lack of research on more visual-focused social media, such as Instagram and TikTok, which are more popular among younger generations. This paper will analyze the effects of instant photo and video sharing on these platforms on the perceptions of body image amongst adolescents.</i>

Examples of connecting words

It's often helpful to use a "point/counterpoint" structure, where you combine different points of view using connecting words to make your analysis flow better.

Here are a few examples:

- However
- In light of
- Nonetheless
- Contrary to
- On the other hand
- In addition to
- Additionally
- Of equal importance
- Further/Furthermore