

Detailed Guide for Writing Your Literature Review

Introduction: Building the Foundation of Your Literature Review

1. Provide the Foundation

- The foundation of your literature review is crucial because it sets the context for your research. Start by providing a brief introduction to the general topic or field of study you are working on. Make sure you convey the importance of the topic to the reader. Why does it matter? Who does it affect? Use statistics or recent developments to underline its significance and to engage the reader right from the start. Make sure this section connects directly to the research problem and presents an overarching narrative that will guide the entire review.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "In order to effectively address pressing societal issues such as climate change, social inequality, unemployment, and ecological degradation, scholars and managers can benefit from an enhanced understanding of the dynamic interactions within and across interconnected systems (Whiteman et al., 2013)." (p. 867)

2. Broad Area

- Next, introduce the broad area of your literature review. Provide a sense of the scope of your research by defining the boundaries of the subject matter. Identify the larger context that your topic fits within. It is also important to clarify what will and will not be covered to establish realistic expectations. For example, if your literature review is on sustainable management, you could discuss how sustainability has become an essential part of business practice, especially in the face of environmental challenges like climate change.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Numerous management scholars have long recognized that the complexity of highly interdependent systems necessitates a systems approach, viewing social systems nested within natural systems and recognizing the dependency of business on nature (Gladwin et al., 1995; Marcus et al., 2010; Roome, 2011; Starik and Rands, 1995; Whiteman et al., 2004)." (p. 867)

3. Key Concept

- Identify and define the key concepts central to your literature review. Explain these concepts clearly to help the reader understand the theoretical and practical lenses through which you are viewing your topic. This is where you also present the terminology, critical theories, or foundational principles in the subject area. Ensure that the reader has a

good grasp of the concepts before moving on, as it will make the subsequent sections more comprehensible.

- *Illustrative Quote:* "Gray (2010, p. 48) posits, "sustainability is a systems-based concept and, environmentally at least, only begins to make any sense at the level of ecosystems and is probably difficult to really conceptualize at anything below planetary and species levels."" (p. 867)

4. Key Paper/Study

- Highlight a key paper or study that is highly relevant to your topic and contributes significantly to the field. Describe why this particular study is important and how it has shaped your understanding of the research area. Provide context to its relevance. It could be a seminal work that everyone refers to, or it might be a recent publication that has redefined current thinking. Explain briefly how this key work relates to the themes you will explore in your literature review.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Gray (2010, p. 48) posits, 'sustainability is a systems-based concept and, environmentally at least, only begins to make any sense at the level of ecosystems and is probably difficult to really conceptualize at anything below planetary and species levels.'" (p. 867)

5. Big Picture Overview of Prior Research

- Provide an overview of the prior research that has been done in this area. This overview should help situate your research within the broader body of work, showing what has already been studied and identifying the general trends. Summarise key findings and observations from existing literature without going into too much detail. Use this as an opportunity to paint a "big picture" of what is known about the topic and show how these findings relate to each other.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Reviews on sustainability research, of course, exist. However, these tend to focus on traditional management theories, such as the resource-based view, competitive strategy or institutional theory (Bansal and Gao, 2006; Berchicci and King, 2007; Etzion, 2007; Hoffman and Georg, 2012; Russo and Minto, 2012). While valuable, the theoretical perspectives covered in these reviews do not explicitly address the interactions of firms with the social-ecological systems in which they are embedded." (p. 867)

6. Observe Their Limitations

- This section involves critically evaluating the gaps and limitations in the previous literature. It is important to discuss what prior research has not covered, the weaknesses in their methodologies, or the inconsistencies found in their conclusions. By doing this, you not only highlight the shortcomings of previous studies but also identify areas where your work will contribute. Make sure to be constructive and focus on explaining why these gaps matter for advancing the field.

- *Illustrative Quote:* "In contrast to insights from other disciplines, the current body of literature on corporate sustainability is 'linearly focused on firm and industry effects' (Whiteman et al., 2013, p. 310) and lacks radical new insights (Bansal and Gao, 2006). Yet, an understanding of corporate actions in isolation from social-ecological systems is unlikely to address interconnected sustainability challenges." (p. 867)

7. Identify/Construct Gap

- Once you have provided the big picture and the limitations, clearly identify the research gap that your review aims to fill. This gap can be a question that remains unanswered, a population that has been understudied, or an emerging trend that has not yet been explored. Articulate why addressing this gap is important and how it aligns with the future needs of the research community or stakeholders. This helps to justify the relevance and originality of your study.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Despite these early and regular acknowledgments of the systemic character of sustainability, to date, a literature review of systems thinking as a theoretical lens to better understand sustainability management has not been conducted." (p. 867)

8. Ways to Resolve the Gap

- Introduce the specific approach you are using to address the gap in the literature. Describe the method or perspective you are taking and explain why it is suitable. This is where you indicate your research objectives, outlining what you aim to achieve through your study. This section provides an idea of how your work will make a unique contribution, positioning your research as a solution to the gap identified.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "In this article, we present a systematic literature review addressing sustainability management from a systems thinking perspective to make sense of what is already known and provide directions for future research." (p. 867)

Methods

Guidelines for Writing the Methods Section of a Literature Review

1. Describe the Review Type and Purpose

- **Detailed Instruction:** Begin by clearly defining the type of literature review you are conducting, such as systematic, scoping, or narrative. Describe why this particular review type is suitable for your research objectives. For example, if it is a systematic review, explain that the purpose is to consolidate and critically analyse fragmented knowledge in a structured manner. Highlight any frameworks or methodologies that influenced your approach, such as using guidelines from Tranfield et al. (2003) for systematic reviews.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "We designed our methodological approach based on insights from the stages of a systematic review suggested by Tranfield et

al. (2003) and from literature reviews published in peer-reviewed journals." (p. 868)

2. Detail the Search Process

- **Detailed Instruction:** Describe the search strategy comprehensively, beginning with a list of the databases used (e.g., Web of Science, Google Scholar, SSCI). Justify your choice of databases, ensuring the reader understands their relevance to your field. Provide a detailed list of the keywords and search terms used, and specify any Boolean operators (e.g., AND, OR) applied to refine the search. Discuss the inclusion of time frames, language filters, or types of literature (e.g., only peer-reviewed articles) to define the boundaries of your search.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "We conducted an extensive search using Google Scholar and the Web of Science, Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)." (p. 868)
- **Detailed Instruction (continued):** If applicable, mention how the search strategy evolved—e.g., iteratively refined keywords based on initial search results to focus more precisely on relevant studies. Provide an estimate of the number of articles retrieved initially and how they were filtered to reach a final set of articles for full-text screening.

3. Specify Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

- **Detailed Instruction:** Provide a detailed explanation of the criteria used to include or exclude studies. Mention specific parameters, such as research method, sample characteristics, relevance to the research question, publication date, and quality indicators (e.g., peer-review status). Be clear about why these criteria were selected—highlighting how each ensures that the articles are both relevant and of high quality. Explain how the inclusion and exclusion process aligns with the purpose of your review and ensures a balanced representation of the research field.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Inclusion and exclusion criteria to decide which articles would be accepted in the review were also developed in this step in discussion between the authors." (p. 869)
- **Specific Guidelines for Article Types:**
 - **Quantitative Research Articles:**
 - **Research Type, Design, and Methods:** Describe the quantitative research articles included. Compare the types of research (e.g., experimental, survey-based) and their designs. Justify why you selected these articles, focusing on the strengths of the research designs in contributing reliable, valid findings. For example, discuss the rigor of randomized control trials or the robustness of longitudinal studies.

- **Sampling Methods and Participants:** Compare the sampling methods used in the quantitative studies (e.g., random sampling, stratified sampling). Mention why the articles were selected based on the reliability of their sampling strategies and the generalizability of their findings. Highlight strengths, such as large sample sizes or representative populations, which contribute to the reliability and validity of the findings.
- **Data Analysis Methods:** Compare the data analysis techniques used, such as regression analysis or ANOVA. Discuss why these analysis methods add credibility to the findings. Address how statistical rigor (e.g., use of multiple regression models) impacts the reliability of results and why that influenced your selection.
- **Qualitative Research Articles:**
 - **Research Type, Design, and Methods:** Explain why you included specific qualitative studies. Compare research types (e.g., case study, ethnography) and justify the selection by evaluating the trustworthiness of the methods used. Highlight why these articles were chosen based on their depth of exploration and contribution to understanding complex social phenomena.
 - **Sampling Methods and Participants:** Compare the sampling methods used (e.g., purposive sampling, theoretical sampling). Justify why articles were selected based on the depth and richness of the data obtained through these methods. Address the strategies employed to ensure data trustworthiness, such as selecting participants with deep insights into the topic.
 - **Data Analysis Methods:** Evaluate the qualitative data analysis methods (e.g., thematic analysis, content analysis). Discuss how the methods used contribute to the depth and rigor of the research findings. Justify article selection based on the transparency of the coding process and efforts to maintain consistency (e.g., using multiple coders).
- **Mixed-Methods Research Articles:**
 - **Qualitative Part:** For mixed-methods studies, discuss the qualitative components, such as interviews or focus groups. Mention the reasons for including these studies, such as the use of semi-structured interviews to provide detailed contextual understanding. Explain how the qualitative methods contribute to the trustworthiness of the findings.

- **Quantitative Part:** Similarly, discuss the quantitative components of the mixed-methods studies, such as surveys or experiments. Justify your selection based on the reliability and validity of these quantitative measures. Address how these findings complement the qualitative insights to create a holistic perspective.

4. Describe the Screening and Selection Process

- **Detailed Instruction:** Describe in detail how articles were screened to ensure only the most relevant and high-quality studies were included. Explain each stage of screening, starting with title and abstract screening, followed by a full-text review. Discuss how reviewers collaborated—mention any blinding processes used to avoid bias. Mention any tools used for managing references, such as EndNote or Covidence. Clearly indicate how discrepancies between reviewers were resolved (e.g., through discussion or consensus meetings).
- *Illustrative Quote:* "To ensure reliability of the review, 3 co-authors were involved in the screening of the articles. Two authors reviewed the title and abstract of each article coding either 'accept,' 'reject,' or 'further review' based on the inclusion criteria." (p. 869)
- **Detailed Instruction (continued):** Provide a flow diagram that visually represents the screening process, detailing the number of articles at each stage (e.g., number of articles after initial search, number after exclusion, and final number included). This provides transparency and allows others to understand the narrowing process of your literature base.

5. Explain the Data Extraction and Analysis Process

- **Detailed Instruction:** Clearly explain how data was extracted from the selected articles. Describe how you used a standardized form to collect essential information, including the research aim, methods, sample size, findings, and limitations. Mention who was involved in the data extraction process and how consistency was maintained. Then, explain how you analysed this data. If you used qualitative approaches (e.g., thematic analysis), describe how themes emerged and were validated. If quantitative synthesis was used (e.g., meta-analysis), explain the statistical techniques employed and the rationale behind them.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Our analysis included identifying key themes that emerged from the literature and categorizing articles according to their contribution to the understanding of systems thinking in sustainability." (p. 869)

6. State Limitations of the Methodology

- **Detailed Instruction:** Conclude the methods section by stating the limitations of the methodology used. Be transparent about the constraints and potential biases that may affect the comprehensiveness and reliability of your findings. Examples include language restrictions,

limited database access, or the potential bias in article selection due to reviewer judgments. Suggest ways in which future research could address these limitations to strengthen the methodology.

- *Illustrative Quote:* "This review is limited to English-language articles, which may have excluded relevant studies published in other languages, potentially affecting the comprehensiveness of the review." (p. 869)

Body: Organising and Synthesising the Literature

9. Choose a Structure

- The structure of your literature review is crucial for presenting a coherent story of your field. Decide whether to use a thematic, methodological, or chronological structure. A thematic structure is often effective because it allows for the clustering of related studies and provides an in-depth exploration of the major themes or concepts in your topic. Clearly indicate your chosen structure in your introduction and make sure to maintain consistency throughout.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "First, we present the systematic review methodology. Second, we provide a descriptive analysis of the articles found in the review. Third, we give an overview of the core concepts and research themes. Fourth, we present an integrated framework of systems thinking and sustainability management. Finally, we discuss the implications for management research and provide directions for future research." (p. 867)

10. Create an Outline

- Develop a clear outline of the main sections that your literature review will cover. Outlining helps guide your writing and ensures that each section of your review is logically connected to the next. The outline should be presented early in the review, providing a roadmap for readers. For instance, you may outline sections such as a background review, critical analysis, and future research directions.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "First, we present the systematic review methodology. Second, we provide a descriptive analysis of the articles found in the review. Third, we give an overview of the core concepts and research themes. Fourth, we present an integrated framework of systems thinking and sustainability management. Finally, we discuss the implications for management research and provide directions for future research." (p. 874)

11. Identify Patterns and Trends

- Identifying patterns and trends within the literature helps you highlight the major themes or recurring ideas. This involves grouping similar studies or contrasting differing results across the field. Summarizing these patterns helps readers understand where the consensus lies and what areas are more contentious or under-researched. This approach builds a clear picture of the current state of knowledge.

- *Illustrative Quote:* "From a systems perspective, sustainability is the ability of systems to persist, adapt, transform or transition in the face of constantly changing conditions." (p. 871)

12. Compare and Contrast

- In this section, compare different studies to reveal similarities and differences. Discuss how various authors approach similar topics, and highlight discrepancies or opposing views. A strong literature review should not just present studies in isolation but should actively engage with their points of agreement or disagreement, thus providing a more nuanced understanding of the field.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "While research has focused on considering the impact of social-ecological system changes on organizational resilience, few studies explore the impact of firms on ecological systems and the services they provide." (p. 875)

13. Evaluate Methodologies

- Evaluating the methodologies of reviewed studies is key to understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the existing body of work. This involves assessing the research methods used, discussing why specific methods were chosen, and considering their appropriateness for the research questions. Highlight any potential biases or limitations that might have influenced the results.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "The empirical articles used a variety of methods. Notably, 47 percent of the empirical articles used case study methodology, and some combined case study research with other approaches such as action research, cross-case comparison, survey research, and grounded theory." (p. 875)

14. Assess the Validity of Findings

- Assessing the validity of the findings helps to determine the reliability of conclusions drawn by previous researchers. Discuss potential biases, methodological issues, and whether the results are consistent across different contexts. Pointing out discrepancies or methodological weaknesses can also help justify your own research approach.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Direct and indirect impacts of climate change create an uncertain environment for managers. Organizations may apply resilience thinking to help manage the impacts of climate change by identifying climate risks and opportunities." (p. 875)

15. Point Out Unexplored Areas

- Identifying gaps in the literature is an essential component of any good literature review. Pointing out what has not been thoroughly explored can help justify your own research and demonstrate the originality of your approach. This involves highlighting areas that have received limited attention or problems that remain unsolved.

- *Illustrative Quote*: "Few studies explore the impact of firms on ecological systems and the services they provide, which presents an area for further investigation." (p. 875)

16. Suggest Future Research Directions

- Based on the gaps identified, suggest directions for future research. This should focus on how future work can address the limitations of the existing studies or explore under-researched areas. Proposing specific methodologies or frameworks for future research can add value and provide other researchers with a clear path forward.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Future studies could explore how organizations influence ecological systems and contribute to the resilience of these systems." (p. 875)

Writing Each Research Theme

4.2.1. Behavioural Change

1. Define the Core Idea

- Behavioural change refers to shifts in individual or collective mindsets that are crucial for driving systemic transformation towards sustainability. Scholars argue that behavioural change is vital for transforming business and society into more sustainable systems.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Scholars argue behavioural change and a revolution of mindsets is crucial to transforming business and society, taking concrete action and driving systemic change" (Marcus et al., 2010; Raivio, 2011). (p. 873)

2. Explore Key Influencing Factors

- Discuss the factors that contribute to behavioural change, such as cognitive framing, personal values, and social norms. This section should explore the temporal and spatial dimensions of sustainability.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Scholars have used a cognitive framing lens to explore an integrative perspective of managerial processes that accounts for temporal and spatial dimensions of sustainability across multiple scales" (Bansal and DesJardine, 2014; Hahn et al., 2015). (p. 873)

3. Present an Example

- Provide concrete examples of how behavioural changes have been implemented in different contexts. Highlight examples from community-level engagement or the role of incentives in promoting sustainable consumption.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Studies at the local community level give insight into how individuals can be collectively engaged and how their behavior can be influenced based on their personal connection to local conditions" (Nevens et al., 2013). (p. 873)

4. Highlight Challenges and Opportunities

- Address the challenges of promoting behavioural change, such as the complexities involved in shifting consumption patterns. Suggest opportunities for future exploration.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Sustainable consumption patterns are dependent on the values and decisions of individual citizens, but current attempts are failing, and behavioural incentives that may drive sustainable consumption remain fuzzy" (Vinkhuyzen and Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, 2014). (p. 873)

4.2.2. Leadership

1. Define Leadership in Sustainability

- Define what constitutes leadership within sustainability management and how it differs from traditional leadership models. Include holistic perspectives and the complexities involved.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Research suggests sustainability leadership presupposes extraordinary capabilities and a holistic perspective on the complexities of embedded organizations" (Lozano, 2012; Metcalf and Benn, 2012, 2013). (p. 873)

2. Examine Leadership Characteristics

- Explore the characteristics that define sustainability leaders, such as ethical behaviour, decentralised decision-making, and long-term focus.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "The ability of a leader to maintain a long-term focus, incorporate different viewpoints and allow for decentralized decision making were also found to be important" (Wong et al., 2011). (p. 873)

3. Provide a Case Study

- Give an example of a sustainability leader or initiative that transformed a business or society. Highlight how leadership can facilitate transformational change.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Leadership that promotes ethical behavior may drive transformational change of sustainable production and consumption systems" (Vinkhuyzen and Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, 2014). (p. 873)

4. Discuss the Impact of Leadership

- Describe the broader impact that effective leadership can have on an organisation's sustainability efforts and its implications for future research.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Leadership initiatives influence company systems such as operations, strategy and communication and therefore the sustainability dimensions of the firm" (Boiral et al., 2014). (p. 873)

4.2.3. Innovation

1. Define Innovation for Sustainability

- Define what innovation means in the context of sustainability management, including radical innovation in products, services, and business models.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "To address systemic challenges and enable transformative change, scholars of this research theme posit that radical innovation in education, products, services, production systems, logistic systems, and business models is needed" (Boons et al., 2013). (p. 874)

2. Identify Types of Innovation

- Discuss different types of innovation, such as product, process, and organisational innovation, and how they relate to improving business performance.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Extant literature shows managers must understand the relationship between sustainable process, product and organizational innovation to manage business performance" (Cheng et al., 2014). (p. 874).

3. Provide an Example of Innovation

- Present a specific example of sustainability-oriented innovation, such as industrial symbiosis or closed-loop processes.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Knowledge and resources for innovation can be dispersed among industry actors, and their success depends on prior efforts of technical advancement and unlocking changes in the marketplace" (Dougherty and Dunne, 2011). (p. 874)

4. Highlight Challenges and Opportunities

- Address challenges, such as uncertainties associated with innovation, and opportunities for developing a systems understanding of supply chains.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Developing a systems understanding of supply chains can also provide great opportunity for sustainability oriented innovations and enhance business performance" (Isaksson et al., 2010). (p. 874)

4.2.4 Industrial Ecology

1. Define Industrial Ecology

- Define industrial ecology as it applies to sustainability management. This includes understanding the flow of materials and energy within industrial systems and their relationship to ecological systems.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "A more holistic approach to industrial ecology can expand the field from a set of tools to understand material and energy flows to address more profound challenges in social-technical landscapes." (p. 874)

2. Explore Interconnections

- Discuss the interconnections between human and natural systems and how they influence the analysis of industrial ecosystems.

- *Illustrative Quote:* "The recognition of interconnections between human and natural systems introduces new institutional variables to the analysis of industrial ecosystems." (p. 874)

3. Present an Example

- Provide a concrete example of how industrial ecology principles have been applied to address sustainability challenges.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "A combination of insights from industrial ecology and complexity science can help managers make decisions and address complex sustainability problems." (p. 874)

4. Highlight Challenges and Opportunities

- Address the challenges of using industrial ecology, such as its complexity, and suggest opportunities for better integration into sustainability practices.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Integrative research and interdisciplinary learning are also needed to develop frameworks of interconnected industrial-social-ecological systems." (p. 874)

4.2.5 Social-Ecological Systems

1. Define Social-Ecological Systems

- Define social-ecological systems and their role in sustainability. Explain how businesses and society are nested within natural systems.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "The social-ecological systems perspective recognizes the interconnections between business and society, which are both nested in natural systems defined by biospheric limits." (p. 874)

2. Examine Organizational Dependency

- Discuss how organizations are dependent on social-ecological systems and how understanding this dependency can lead to better management.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Studies within this research theme seek to deepen understanding of organizational dependency on social-ecological foundations." (p. 875)

3. Provide an Example

- Present an example of how organizations adapt to changes in social-ecological systems, such as climate change.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Organizations adapt to changes in social-ecological systems, such as environmental crises driven by climate change." (p. 875)

4. Highlight Challenges and Opportunities

- Address the challenges of managing social-ecological systems, such as the uncertainties introduced by climate change, and explore resilience approaches.

- *Illustrative Quote*: "Direct and indirect impacts of climate change create an uncertain environment for managers. Organizations may apply resilience thinking to help manage the impacts of climate change." (p. 875)

4.2.6 Transitions Management

1. Define Transitions Management

- Define transitions management as it relates to sustainability, focusing on systemic changes from path-dependent systems to sustainable practices.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "When systems fail or become path dependent, different actors may choose to intervene to initiate systems change towards sustainability." (p. 875)

2. Explore Long-term System Change

- Discuss how long-term system changes occur, and the role of different actors and policies in initiating these changes.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Research on transitions management seeks to understand long-term systems change processes of niche sub-systems and societal systems." (p. 875)

3. Provide an Example

- Provide an example of transitions management, such as urban transitions towards sustainability.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Cities, when viewed as complex adaptive systems, can undergo urban transitions towards sustainability stimulated by entrepreneurial change agents." (p. 875)

4. Discuss Implications for Management

- Describe the implications of transitions management for sustainability, including the role of policy and governance in supporting sustainable transitions.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Policy interventions are shaped by the dynamics of social-technical systems and can help facilitate transitions to low-carbon energy economies." (p. 875)

4.2.7 Paradigm Shifts

1. Define Paradigm Shifts

- Define paradigm shifts and their role in sustainability, focusing on the need for changes in worldview to achieve sustainable outcomes.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Scholars posit that a change in worldview is essential to sustainability." (p. 875)

2. Explore Current Worldviews

- Discuss the current dominant worldviews and how they hinder or promote sustainability efforts.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "A shift from an economic-centric worldview to one that values ecological and social well-being is necessary for true sustainability." (p. 875)

3. Present an Example

- Provide an example of a paradigm shift in practice, such as shifts towards circular economy models.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "The circular economy concept represents a shift in thinking about resource use, emphasizing regeneration and reducing waste." (p. 875)

4. Highlight Challenges and Opportunities

- Address the challenges of achieving paradigm shifts, such as resistance to change, and highlight opportunities for fostering a new mindset.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Resistance to changing established ways of thinking presents a significant barrier to paradigm shifts, but fostering educational initiatives can create new opportunities." (p. 875)

4.2.8 Education

1. Define Education for Sustainability

- Define the role of education in promoting sustainability, emphasizing its role in equipping future leaders and decision-makers.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Education is essential for equipping future generations with the knowledge and skills needed to address complex sustainability challenges." (p. 875)

2. Explore Approaches to Sustainability Education

- Discuss different approaches to integrating sustainability into education, such as experiential learning and transdisciplinary curricula.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Experiential learning approaches, including real-world problem-solving, help students develop a deeper understanding of sustainability." (p. 875)

3. Provide an Example

- Provide an example of sustainability education initiatives, such as university programs focused on systems thinking.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Universities have begun integrating systems thinking into sustainability programs to better prepare students for complex problem-solving." (p. 875)

4. Highlight Challenges and Opportunities

- Address the challenges of incorporating sustainability into education, such as curriculum constraints, and explore opportunities for broader integration.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Curriculum constraints limit the integration of sustainability topics, but partnerships between academia and industry can enhance learning opportunities." (p. 875)

4.2.9 Summary of Research Themes

1. Summarize Key Findings

- Summarize the key findings from each of the research themes discussed, providing an overview of the central concepts.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "The research themes explored in this paper highlight the interconnectedness of industrial, ecological, and social systems in promoting sustainability." (p. 875)

2. Identify Common Threads

- Discuss the common threads that link the different themes, such as the need for systemic thinking and collaboration.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "A common thread across all themes is the emphasis on systems thinking as a crucial tool for addressing complex sustainability challenges." (p. 875)

3. Discuss Implications for Future Research

- Highlight implications for future research that can build on the insights gained from the literature review.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "Future research should focus on developing integrated frameworks that connect social, ecological, and industrial systems." (p. 875)

4. Conclude with a Call to Action

- End with a call to action, encouraging scholars and practitioners to apply the insights gained to advance sustainability efforts.
- *Illustrative Quote:* "The authors encourage both scholars and practitioners to adopt systems thinking to foster sustainable transformations across sectors." (p. 875)

Conclusion: Bringing Your Review to a Close

17. Summarise Key Insights

- Begin your conclusion by summarising the key insights gained from your literature review. Highlight the major themes, trends, and concepts discussed in the body. This should be a brief synthesis of the key points without introducing new information. The goal here is to reiterate the critical findings in a concise manner.

- *Illustrative Quote*: "Systems thinking provides a valuable framework for understanding the complex interconnections between corporate practices and socio-ecological systems." (p. 878)

18. Highlight Limitations of Current Research

- Clearly articulate the limitations present in the current body of literature. Re-emphasise where the research falls short and what significant gaps still remain. This helps the reader to understand the constraints within which the current knowledge base operates.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Extant research is largely fragmented and marginal to the mainstream management journals." (p. 878)

19. Emphasise Future Research Directions

- Revisit the future research directions you suggested in the body of the literature review. Emphasise the importance of addressing the gaps you identified and propose specific ways in which future researchers could tackle these issues. This part aims to keep the conversation going and provide inspiration for new studies.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Future studies should explicitly recognize social-ecological embeddedness beyond the boundaries of the firm, industry, and product/process level, as well as the interconnections across multi-level, nested social-ecological systems." (p. 878)

20. State the Broader Implications

- Describe the broader implications of the literature review for the field of study. Explain how addressing the research gaps could benefit practitioners, scholars, or policy makers. By discussing the larger significance of your findings, you help to underscore the importance of the work and its relevance to real-world problems.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "Considering the interconnectedness of social-ecological systems and determining meaningful transition pathways requires multi-disciplinary work based on systems thinking originating in both management studies and ecology." (p. 879)

21. Conclude with a Call to Action

- Finally, end with a call to action that encourages further study or collaboration. Invite researchers, stakeholders, or practitioners to engage with the topic and contribute to the ongoing discourse. This is a powerful way to leave the reader with a sense of purpose and urgency regarding the topic you have covered.
- *Illustrative Quote*: "We hope that the conceptual foundations identified in this review will encourage more scholars in the field of management to understand the complexities of sustainability with systems thinking." (p. 878)