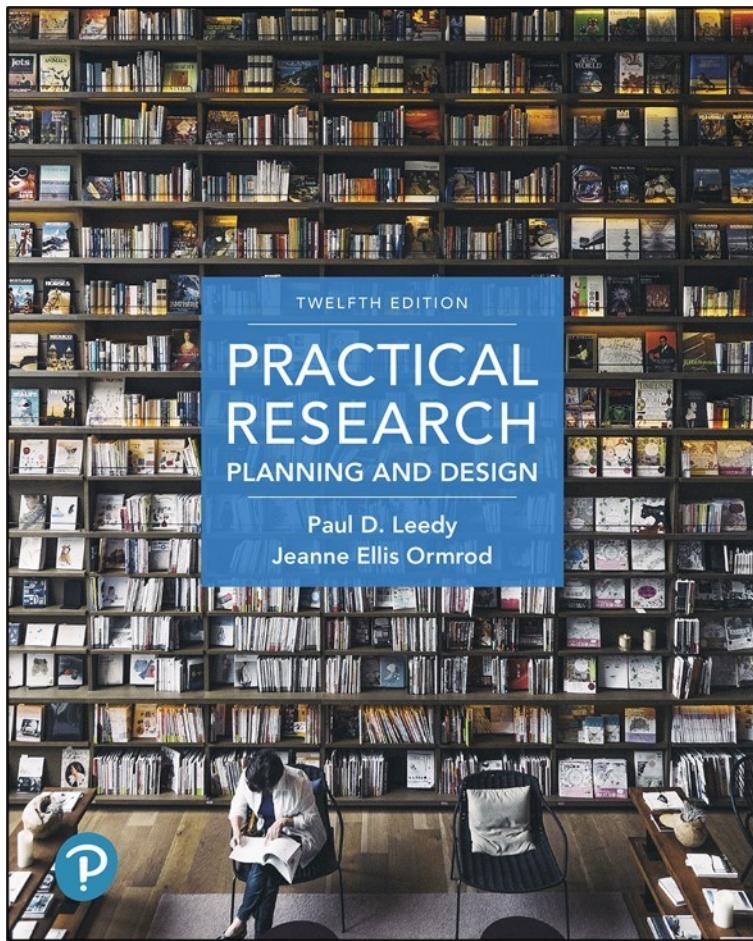


Practical Research: Planning and Design

Twelfth Edition



Chapter 3

Review of the Related Literature

Understanding the Role of the Literature Review (1 of 3)

1. Discover if someone has already answered your research question.
2. Find new ideas, perspectives, and approaches.
3. Learn about other researchers who conduct work in the same area.
4. Identify controversial issues and gaps in understanding that have not yet been resolved.

Understanding the Role of the Literature Review (2 of 3)

5. Learn how others have handled methodological and design issues in studies similar to your own.
6. Uncover sources of data that you may not have known existed.
7. Discover established measurement tools.
8. Interpret and make sense of your findings and tie your results to the work of those who have preceded you.
9. Bolster your confidence that your topic is one worth studying.

Understanding the Role of the Literature Review (3 of 3)

- Bottom line:
 - The more you know about investigations and perspectives related to your topic, the more effectively you can tackle your own research problem.

Strategies for Locating Related Literature

Identify one or more **keywords (words or short phrases summarizing your research topic)** and then:

- Use the library catalog and browse the holdings.
 - The library's collection of academic journals, popular magazines, and newspapers are collectively known as **periodicals**.
- Use indexes, abstracts, and other general references.
- A few quick rules of thumb:
 1. Try to use materials with recent copyright dates.
 2. Use sources that have credibility with experts in the field.

Using Online Databases

- Online databases are usually the preferred method to ascertain information.
 - PsycINFO
 - ERIC
 - Google ScholarTM

Consulting with Reference Librarians

- Librarians are there to support you in your work
- Consult library professionals early in your literature review process
- Don't worry! You won't look foolish asking for help! Quite the opposite!

Surfing the Internet

- Most are familiar with the process of using a search engine, however, consider these tips:
 1. Use at least two keywords to limit your search
 2. Type a plus sign (+) before any keyword you definitely want to be used in your search
 3. To search a phrase as opposed to a single word, use quotation marks around your phrase

And remember, Wikipedia is never an authoritative source!

Considering Those That Have Gone before

- Another important consideration is to make sure that you are considering the work of scholars that have gone before you.
- We suggest tracking down sources cited by three or more authors.

Identify Your Sources

- When you find a source, make sure you obtain enough information to provide an appropriate citation. This is important for two reasons:
 1. You may want to track the source down later to obtain further information.
 2. Future readers of your research may want to track your source.
- For sources found on the Internet, it is good practice to record the URL and/or the Digital Object Identifier (DOI).

Planning a Literature Search

- When planning your research:
 1. Write the problem in its entirety on the page or computer screen.
 2. Write each subproblem in its entirety.
 3. Brainstorm topics you need to learn more about.
 4. Go to the library catalog, its online databases, and the Internet to seek out resources.

Use Your Library Time Efficiently (1 of 2)

- Before beginning your work, consider these time saving tips:
 1. Before you go to the library, acquire appropriate software to create a database for the resources you are going to gather.
 2. Identify the materials you want to read and determine whether your library has them.
 3. Develop an organized plan of attack for finding the sources you have identified.
 4. Track down your sources.

Use Your Library Time Efficiently (2 of 2)

5. When you find a useful resource, record both (a) essential bibliographic details and (b) potentially helpful details about its contents.
6. Identify strategies for obtaining sources that are not immediately available.
 - Put a hold on a checked-out book.
 - Recall the book.
 - Submit a request for the source through interlibrary loan.
 - Check Google Books for older, out-of-print books.
 - Order books from a bookstore.
 - Use an online document delivery service.

Evaluate, Organize, Synthesize (1 of 2)

- Determine for yourself whether the conclusions are justified based on the data.
- Organize the ideas to address the problem.

Evaluate, Organize, Synthesize (2 of 2)

- Synthesize what you've learned
 - Identify common themes
 - Show how approaches to the topic have changed over time
 - Compare and contrast theoretical positions
 - Describe general trends
 - Identify and explain discrepant or contradictory findings

Writing a Clear and Cohesive Literature Review (1 of 2)

1. Get the proper psychological orientation.
 - Know what you want to do.
2. Develop an organizational plan or outline.
3. Emphasize relatedness.
 - how the literature is related to the problem.
4. Use logical transitions.

Writing a Clear and Cohesive Literature Review (2 of 2)

5. Know the difference between describing the literature and plagiarizing it.
6. Always give credit where credit is due.
7. Minimize your use of direct quotations from other people's writings.
8. Summarize what you have said.
9. Remember that your first draft will almost certainly NOT be your last draft.
10. Ask others for advice and feedback.

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