Resources for the Literature Review... & More

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What a Literature Review is Not...

- Annotated bibliography
- Scholarly literary review
- Summary of scholarly articles
- List or description of all the research published on a specific topic
A Literature Review Should...

• See what has and has not been investigated.
• Develop general explanation for observed variations in a behavior or phenomenon.
• Identify potential relationships between concepts and to identify researchable hypotheses.
• Learn how others have defined and measured key concepts.
• Identify data sources that other researches have used.
• Develop alternative research projects.
• Discover how a research project is related to the work of others.

A Literature Review Should… (cont’d)

- be organized around and related directly to the thesis or research question you are developing
- synthesize results into a summary of what is and is not known
- identify areas of controversy in the literature
- formulate questions that need further research

The Literature Review is a Process...

*It is a research journey with several steps:*

- Framing a research *question*
- Searching relevant bodies of literature
- Managing search results
- Synthesizing the research literature
- Writing an assessment of the literature
- The process is *iterative*—as you gain understanding, you’ll return to earlier steps to rethink, refine, and rework your literature review.

Tools to Make the Process Go More Smoothly...

- **Look** for books or articles on the literature review process
- **Identify** top journals through Web of Science indexes
- **Search** popular databases, books, dvds, and other resources
Fear not! You have an army of librarians at your back!

Check out WKU Libraries’ Research Guides by Subject!

Reference & Periodicals:
• Commons@Cravens Research Desk (Reference): 270-745-6125
• Helm Library Periodicals: 270-745-6116