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
- Your opinion on the research
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

**Check out WKU Libraries’ Research Guides by Subject!**