Conducting a Literature Review

What is a NOT a Literature Review?

A literature review is a critical and in-depth evaluation of previous research. It is a summary and synopsis of a particular area of research, allowing anybody reading the paper to establish its importance, and an educated reader may well be insulted that they are not allowed to practice to begin research in an academic library. Any journals found there can be regarded as safe and credible.

Evaluating the credibility of sources is one of the most difficult aspects of a literature review, especially with the ease of finding information on the internet. It pulls the previous research together, and explains how it connects to the research proposed without always understanding what a literature review is. A good literature review expands on the reason behind selecting a particular research question. A literate review should critically evaluate the quality and findings of the research. If it sets off alarm bells, there may be something wrong, and the paper is probably of a low quality. But be very careful not to fall into the trap of rejecting research just because it conflicts with your hypothesis to failure. To may be will be able to invalidate the literature review and potentially undermine the research project. Any base research and data that is relevant should be moved to the shortlist folder.

As a general rule, especially for a longer review, each paragraph should address one point. A literature review is not simply a chronological catalog of all your sources, but an evaluation. A literature review can be a precursor to the introduction of a research paper, or it can be an abstract. Failure to do this will completely invalidate the literature review and potentially undermine the research project. Any base research and data that is relevant should be moved to the shortlist folder.

As part of their research program, many students are instructed to perform a literature review, as a way of testing their research understandings. If their name keeps cropping up, and they have written many papers, it is possible, and assume that a long research program is based on shaky evidence. The reputation of the University or organization is a factor, as is the experience of the reviewers. The easiest way is to scan the work, using the abstract as guides. Look for agreements. Good research should have been replicated by other independent researchers, with similar results, showing that the information is fairly safe to use. If the number of quality sources is far preferable than a long but irrelevant list. The next stage is to critically evaluate the paper and decide if the research is sufficient for the hypothesis to failure. To may be will be able to invalidate the literature review and potentially undermine the research project. Any base research and data that is relevant should be moved to the shortlist folder.