

# **4. Literature review**

# Objectives

- At the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:
  - ⦿ Analyze the importance of literature review
  - ⦿ Describe approaches to literature review
  - ⦿ List the steps in literature review
  - ⦿ Describe the different ways of acknowledging scientific papers and referencing
  - ⦿ Identify the commonly used electronic data bases
  - ⦿ Design conceptual frame work of a study

# Literature review

- The term '**review**' means to organize the knowledge of the specific area of research to evolve an edifice of knowledge to show that his study would be an addition to this field.
- A research **literature review** is a written summary of the state of existing knowledge on a research problem.
- The literature review is the '*intellectual ancestor*' of the research project.

# Importance of literature review

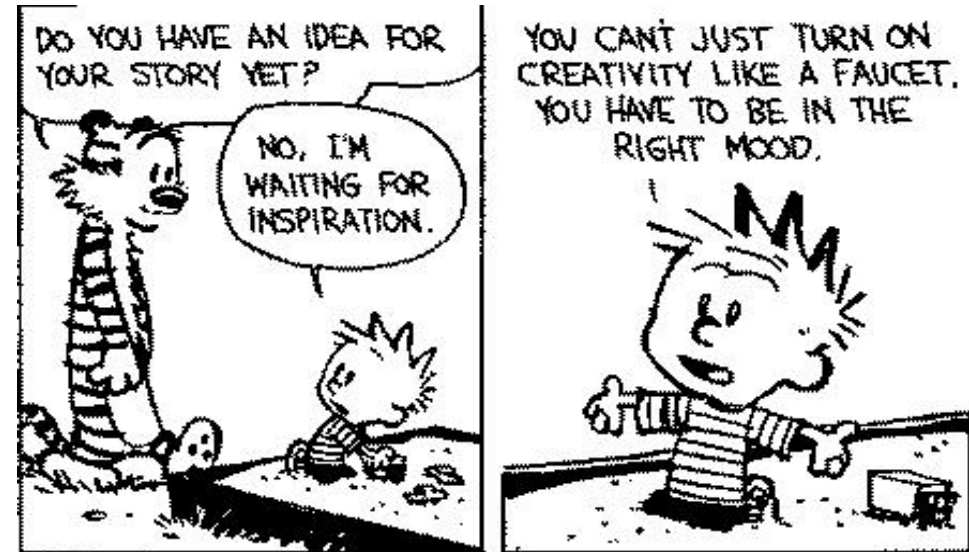
- It helps further your understanding of the problem you plan to research, and may lead to refining of the “Statement of the problem”.
- It helps you find out what others have learned and reported on your topic, and take account of this in the design of your study.
- It gives you a familiarity with the various types of methodology that might be used in your study.
- It prevents you from “reinventing the wheel”
- It provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study
- It serves as a benchmark for comparing the results with other findings

# Sources of Literature Review

1. Individuals, groups, and organization
  - ⊙ Opinion, observation, experience, routine reports, etc
2. Unpublished information
  - ⊙ Raw data, annual reports, documentation
  - ⊙ Local surveys, etc
3. Published information
  - Books, Journals, abstracts, indexes
4. Computer-based searches
  - Internet, MEDLINE, PUBMED

# Steps for Writing a Literature Review

1. Planning
2. Searching
3. Analyzing
4. Drafting
5. Revising



# 1. Planning

## □ Focus

- ⦿ What is the specific thesis, problem, or research question that my literature review helps to define?
- ⦿ Identifying a focus that allows you to:
  - Sort & categorize information
  - Eliminate irrelevant information

## □ Type

- ⦿ What type of literature review am I conducting?
- ⦿ Theory; Methodology; Policy; Quantitative; Qualitative

# Planning ...

## □ Scope

- ⦿ What is the scope of my literature review?
- ⦿ What types of sources am I using?

## □ Academic Discipline

- ⦿ What field(s) am I working in?



## 2. Reading and Researching

- Collect and read material.
- Summarize sources.
  - ⊙ Who is the author?
  - ⊙ What is the author's main purpose?
  - ⊙ What is the author's theoretical perspective? Research methodology?
  - ⊙ Who is the intended audience?
  - ⊙ What is the principal point, conclusion, thesis, contention, or question?
  - ⊙ How is the author's position supported?
  - ⊙ How does this study relate to other studies of the problem or topic?
  - ⊙ What does this study add to your project?
- Select only relevant books and articles.

# 3. Analyzing Sources

- A literature review is never just a list of studies—it always offers an argument about a body of research
- Analysis occurs on two levels:
  - ⦿ Individual sources
  - ⦿ Body of research