

GB6013

# LITERATURE REVIEW

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# LITERATURE REVIEW



- A select analysis of existing research which is relevant to your topic, showing how it relates to your investigation.
- It explains and justifies how your investigation may help answer some of the questions or gaps in this area Of research.

# LITERATURE REVIEW



- situates your research focus within the context of the wider academic community in your field;
- reports your critical review of the relevant literature; and
- identifies a gap within that literature that your research will attempt to address.

# WHY LITERATURE REVIEW?



- To have up-to-date awareness of the relevant work of others
- To make sure the relevance of your research question
- To 'address a gap'

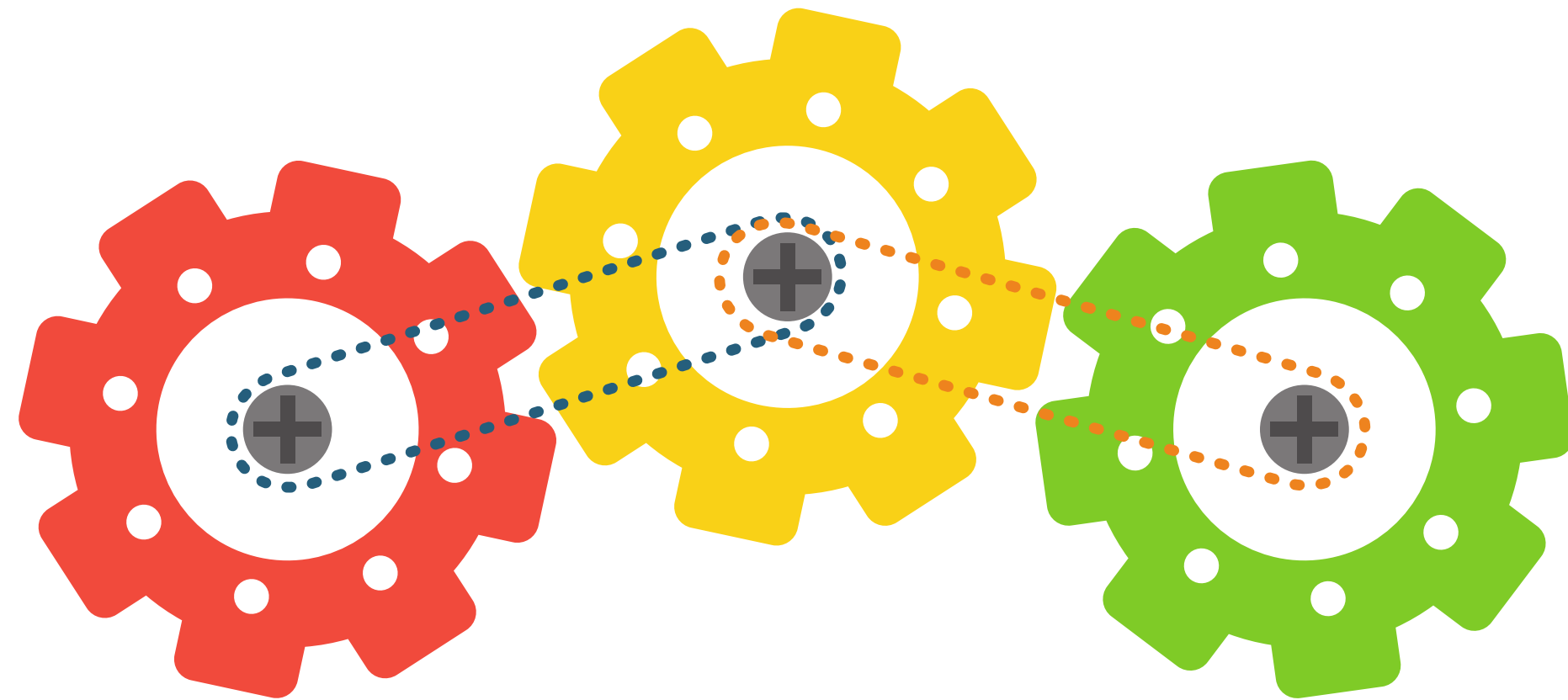
# WHY LITERATURE REVIEW?



- To understand and critically analyse the background research
- To select and source the information that is necessary to develop
- a context for your research

# LR PROCESS

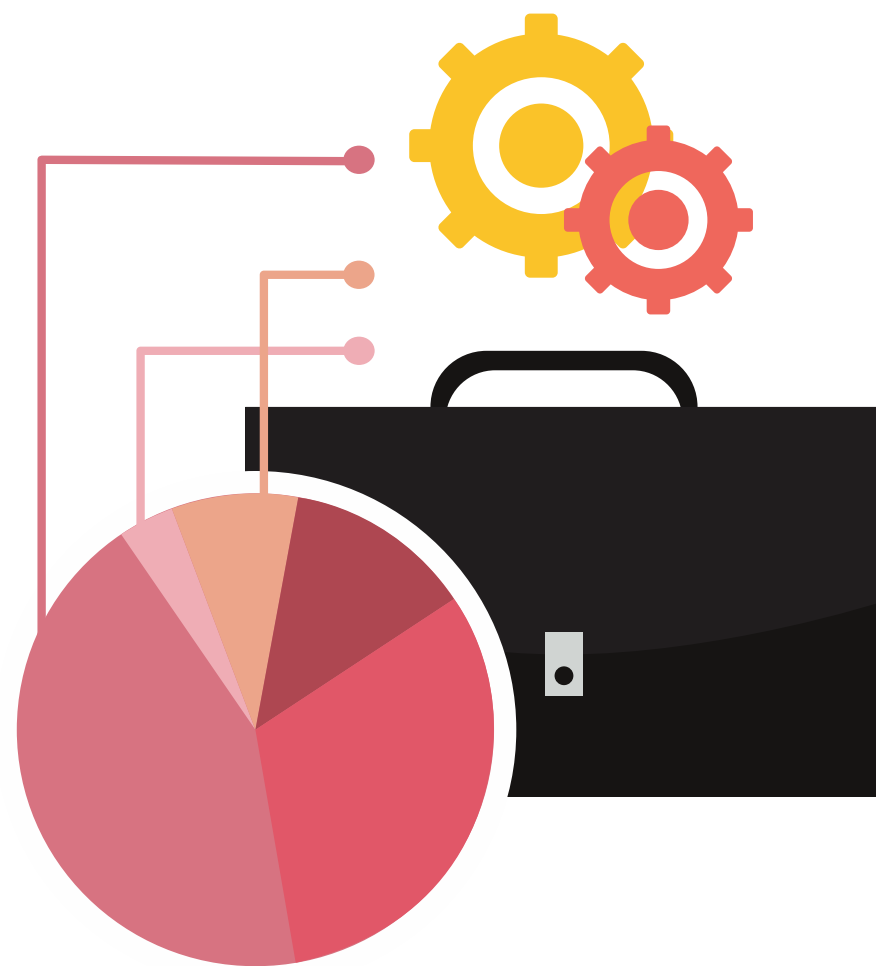
DURING



PRIOR

AT THE END

# PRIOR



- An early view to establish the context and rationale for your study and to confirm your choice of research focus/question

# DURING



- Make sure that you keep in touch with current, relevant research in your field, which is published during the period of your research

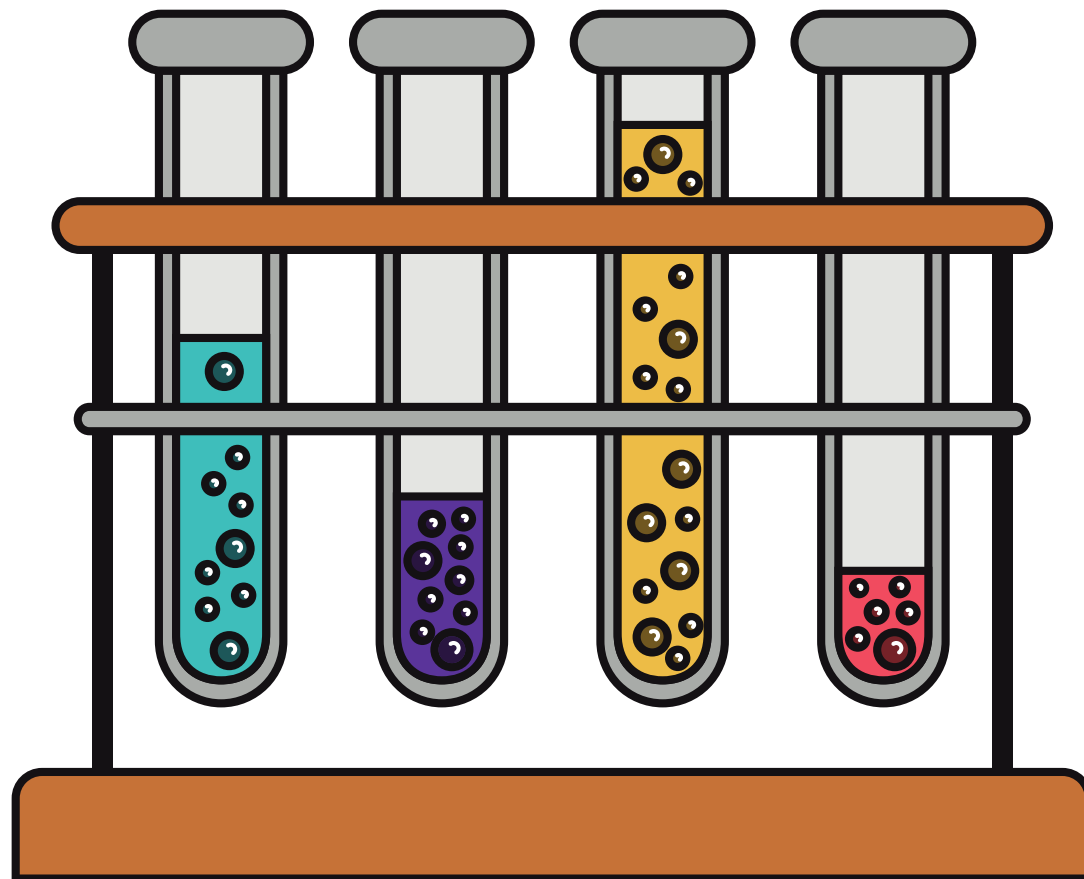


# WHEN YOU READ, THINK ABOUT:

- What were the research aims of the paper/book?
- Is the research aim achieved? If so, how did they do it?
- Are there any problems with their methodology?
- Was it a strong or a weak research model?
- How will this research help with your own research?
- What can you take from it?
- What needs to be avoided?
- What are you doing differently?



# AT THE END



- Relate your findings to the findings of others, and to identify their implications for theory, practice, and research.

# Ways of finding relevant material



Electronic  
sources



References of  
references



Hand searching of  
journals

# THINK ABOUT YOUR OWN LITERATURE



- Who are the key players in my field?
- What are the main ideas/debates in my field?
- How have these ideas changed over time?
- What are some of the problems with these ideas/debates?
- Is there a problem with the methodology?
- What are you going to do differently?

# First stage of the literature review is to identify the key people in your field



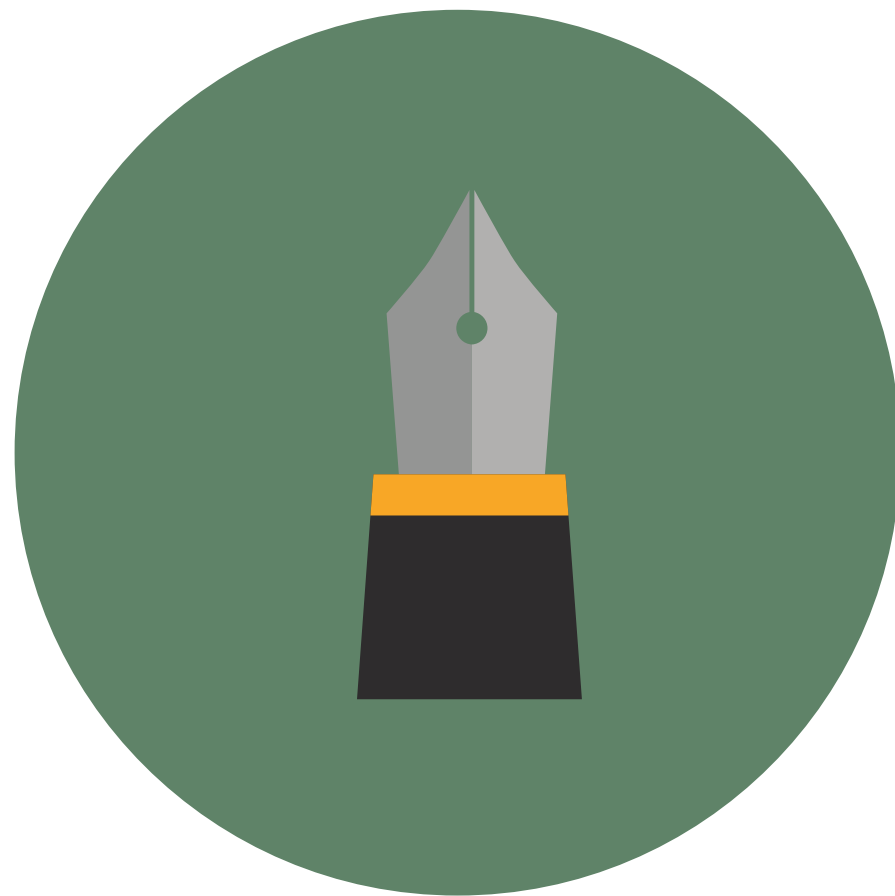
- What research and theory is there on my topic?
- What are the key sources (books, articles) on my topic?
- Who are the main theorists and researchers in this area?
- How has the topic/problem been investigated over time?

# Identify a 'gap' in the literature



- What are the strengths and weaknesses of these debates?
- What evidence is lacking, inconclusive or limited?
- What will you add to the topic? What will you do differently?

# WRITING IT UP



- It should be framed by your research questions.
- It must relate to your study
- Be in control, not totally deferent to or 'tossed about by previous literature'.
- Be selective. Ask 'why am I including this?'
- Engage in a dialogue with the literature, you are not just providing a summary

## **A 'good' literature review.....**

- ..... is a synthesis of available research
- ..... is a critical evaluation
- ..... has appropriate breadth and depth
- ..... has clarity and conciseness
- ..... uses rigorous and consistent methods

## **A 'poor' literature review is.....**

- .....an annotated bibliography
- ..... confined to description
- ..... narrow and shallow
- ..... confusing and longwinded
- ..... constructed in an arbitrary way