



How to Analyze Literature

1. Keep the following questions in mind as you read the research necessary for your literature review.

Think about:

- a. What drew you to this topic (initially)?
- b. What thoughts do you have about this topic?
- c. What is your goal in exploring this topic?

This will be the lens through which you will evaluate each article. You will keep revisiting these questions as your ideas about what in particular interests you and why you want to explore it may shift the more you research your topic.

2. Complete [this table](#) for each article in your literature review.
3. After each table you complete, ask yourself:
What did you learn about your topic from reading this article?
4. Put this article *in the context* of other studies, the literature in general, and your research topic.

Here are two ways to do this:

Option 1:

Compare this article to other studies that you have read. Does this study article remind you of anything you have read thus far?

- a. What does this article **have in common** with those other articles? Is there a **common theme**?

Think about the study's:

1. theoretical framework
2. conceptual framework
3. method
4. participants
5. conclusions

- b. How does this study **differ** from other articles you have read?

Think about the study's:

1. theoretical framework
2. conceptual framework
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5. conclusions

Option 2:

Identify how this study added to your original thoughts about your topic.

- a. Did the study provide certain details about your topic that you had not thought about?
- b. Did the study provide evidence or have suggestions that changed your mind about your original idea?

5. Start differentiating among theories and identify one that you can use to frame your study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018):

- a. After reading 50-100 resources, make note of various theories that authors use in their own studies. Choose the theory that makes the most sense regarding your understanding of your topic.. Then ask yourself, “What explains why the independent variable(s) would influence the dependent variables?” Script out the theory section by following these lead sentences:

“The theory that I will use is ____ (name the theory). It was developed by ____ (identify the origin, source, or developer of the theory), and it was used to study ____ (identify the topics where one finds the theory to be applied). This theory indicates that ____ (identify propositions or hypotheses in the theory). As applied to my study, this theory holds that I would expect my independent variable (s) ____ (state independent variables) to influence or explain the dependent variable(s) ____ (state dependent variables) because ____ (provide rationale based on the logic of the theory).”



Complete the following table for each article as you begin your literature search. *A sample completed table can be found [here](#).*

	Read	Connect	Analyze
Introduction	What is the intent/objective of the authors? What questions were the authors trying to answer?	How does the theory bring them closer to answering their questions or to their objective? How will their study test the theory? How will their study advance theory?	What is your opinion of the story that the authors are telling in the introduction? Are they missing anything?
	What theory, if any, did the authors draw from?	How does the conceptual framework bring them closer to answering their questions or to their objective?	
	What was their conceptual framework?		
Method	What is the target population of the research?	How do the author's choices in	Do you think they are using the appropriate

		population, method, and measures help them to answer their questions?	population, measures, and method? Is there anything that you would add or change based on the authors' objectives?
	What method are the authors using (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, correlational, experimental, descriptive)?		
	What measures are the authors using (e.g., surveys/questionnaires, observations, interviews)?		
Results	What were the study's findings?		
Discussion	What conclusions did <i>the authors</i> say can and cannot be drawn from this article?	Considering the study method and study results, how did the authors reach their conclusions?	Which conclusions <i>do you</i> think can and cannot be drawn from this article? Why? Considering the literature review and research questions, did the authors find what they were looking for? Why or why not?