

The Benefits of Literature Review

Name

Institution



### The Benefits of a Rigorous Literature Review

Conducting a scrupulous review of all existing literature earlier than writing your research proposal is of paramount importance to both the researcher and the target group. For that reason, every researcher is required to include the literature review section in the research proposal to convince the readers that the topic requires further research. While there may be various benefits of conducting a literature review, this paper focuses on three key benefits.

Firstly, the literature review allows the researcher to assess other studies on the same topic to avoid unintentional and incidental plagiarism (Ridley, 2011). Ridley (2011) argues that a rigorous and thorough literature review assures the researcher that nobody has published an identical research paper in the past. Imagine that you have compiled a lengthy research paper and you are about to publish it, without conducting a literature review conscientiously. On the day of publishing the research paper, you learn from your peers that someone already published the same research paper about two years ago. Although your research paper might not be plagiarized, the readers might perceive your work as a duplicate of previously researched papers. In such cases, the supervisor is also likely to reject your research proposal because it lacks originality. However, the supervisor might advise the researcher to perform a deeper literature review to learn the gaps left in the previous research on the same topic and identify the areas that need improvement. As such, the researcher might use previous studies on the topic chosen to develop new ideas instead of merely rehashing somebody's ideas.

Secondly, a thorough literature review assists the researcher to identify and develop some research questions about the topic that requires further research (Ridley, 2011). According to Ridley (2011), the researcher must have all the research questions in place before writing the research proposal. Where does the researcher get the research questions? Most research

questions come from the review of different literature that talks about the topic (Ridley, 2011). Proper selection of the research questions is the backbone of writing a convincing research proposal. Fundamentally, the relevant research questions that are derived from the literature review aids the researcher to sharpen the research focus.

Lastly, literature review plays a significant role in helping the researcher to determine the most appropriate research methodologies for use in the same or similar topics (Bui, 2009). Bui states that the information obtained from the literature review is useful in the determination of research methodologies that are required in the research proposal. By looking at various research methodologies contained in the previous studies, the researcher learns the best means to approach the research topic. Hence, the researcher spends less time to compile not only a subtle methodology section but also a comprehensive research proposal.

In conclusion, performing a thorough literature review before writing the research proposal is a momentous step that is rewarding in the later stages of the research. This paper revealed that the literature review helps the researcher to avoid incidental plagiarism, identify and create relevant research questions, and determine the most suitable research methodologies that are congruous with the research questions.

References

Bui, Y. N. (2009). *How to write a master's thesis*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Ridley, D. (2011). *The literature review: A step-by-step guide for students*. Los Angeles: Sage.

