

A PRACTICAL GUIDE
TO LITERATURE
REVIEW IN

**EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH**

By

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DEDICATION

Warmly dedicated

To

Success, Rex, Great, Platinum and Emperor

PREFACE

Educational research continues to evolve in both scope and complexity, demanding from researchers not only curiosity but also methodological rigor. At the heart of every meaningful research project lies a well-conducted literature review – an essential process that situates new studies within existing knowledge, identifies gaps, and sharpens research direction. A strong literature review is more than a requirement – it is a foundation for meaningful and impactful research. Yet, for many students and early - career researchers, the literature review remains one of the most challenging aspects of the research journey. A practical guide to literature review in educational research was written to bridge this gap.

This book is designed to provide clear, accessible, and actionable guidance for conducting effective literature reviews, particularly within the field of education. It moves beyond abstract explanations and offers practical strategies that readers can immediately apply in their academic work. The motivation for this book stems from years of observing students struggle with questions such as: Where do I begin? How do I critically analyze what I read? And how do I synthesize ideas into a coherent narrative? This guide responds directly to these concerns by breaking down the literature review process into manageable steps – from defining a research problem to organizing, analyzing, and presenting scholarly work.

While the book is primarily intended for undergraduate and postgraduate students in education, it will also be valuable to educators, supervisors, and researchers seeking to strengthen their understanding of literature review practices. The book is

divided into four clusters. Each cluster is structured to combine theory with practice, featuring examples, tips, and common pitfalls to avoid. The compiler's hope is that this book will not only demystify the literature review process but also empower leaders to approach it with confidence and critical insight.

Nneji, Samuel Onyinyechi, *Ph.D, FSTAN, LMAN*

FOREWORD

In the ever-expanding field of educational research, the ability to engage critically with existing knowledge is not merely a scholarly expectation, rather it is a foundational skill. The literature review stands at the core of this engagement, serving as both a map of what is known as well as a compass pointing toward what remains to be explored. Yet, despite its central importance, many students and emerging researchers find the process daunting, often unsure of how to move from reading texts to constructing meaningful academic arguments. A practical guide to literature review in educational research arrives as a timely and much-needed resource. This book addresses one of the most persistent challenges in academic research with clarity, structure and practical insight. It recognizes that conducting a literature review is not simply about summarizing previous studies, but about analyzing, synthesizing, and situating ideas within a broader intellectual context. What distinguishes this guide is its accessibility and relevance. It thoughtfully breaks down complex processes into manageable steps, guiding readers through the intricacies of sourcing credible materials, evaluating evidence, identifying gaps, and presenting a coherent narrative. The emphasis on practical application ensures that readers are not only informed but also equipped to implement what they learn. This book will be of immense value to undergraduate and post graduate students in education, as well as researchers seeking to strengthen their academic writing and research skills. It also serves as a useful reference for educators and supervisors who support students through the research process. By demystifying the literature review and presenting it as an achievable and intellectually rewarding task, this guide

contributes meaningfully to the development of rigorous and reflective educational research. Researchers will find in these pages both guidance and encouragement as they navigate their own research journeys.

Prof Onyemaechi Benjamin Oti

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