

Differences between a “Good” and a “Bad” Literature Review

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- A Good Literature Review is organized around a coherent set of questions.
- A Bad Literature Review rambles from topic to topic without a clear focus.
- A Good Literature Review includes the major landmark or classic studies related to the questions guiding the study.
- A Bad Literature Review omits landmark or classic studies or mixes them with trivial studies without making distinctions about quality or relevance.
- A Good Literature Review acknowledges the author’s biases as well as the limitations of the review process.
- A Bad Literature Review assumes an omniscient voice without acknowledging biases and limitations.
- A Good Literature Review critically evaluates the quality of the research according to clear criteria.
- A Bad Literature Review simply summarizes research findings without critical evaluation.
- A Good Literature Review uses quotes, illustrations, graphs, and/or tables to present and justify the critical analysis of the literature.
- A Bad Literature Review simply lists studies without presenting any critical evidence in the form of quotes, illustrations, graphs, and/or tables.
- A Good Literature Review takes the form of a logical argument that concludes with a clear rationale for additional research.
- A Bad Literature Review does not present a logical argument and fails to build a clear rationale for additional research.
- A Good Literature Review is interesting to read because it is clear, coherent, and systematic in its organization and presentation.
- A Bad Literature Review is boring or obtuse because of the overuse of jargon and pretentious language and the lack of organization.
- A Good Literature Review presents research evidence in a meaningful chronological order.
- A Bad Literature Review mixes studies from different decades without acknowledging chronological developments.
- A Good Literature Review has an accurate and up-to-date bibliography that adheres to APA Guidelines.
- A Bad Literature Review has inaccurate or missing references that are poorly formatted.
- A Good Literature Review is eminently publishable.
- A Bad Literature Review will never see the light of day in a respectable publication.