Clarifying the Review Conundrum: Literature, Integrative, Systematic, Scoping

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Session Objectives

Following participation in this presentation, the learner will be able to:

› Differentiate the author decisions in a literature review;
› Compare/Contrast the approaches to literature search;
› Design a literature search strategy based on outcome objective.
An Ongoing Nursing Evolution

“Show Me the Evidence” The Influence of EBP

› EBP evolution continues:
  – Cochrane (1979)
  – Cochrane Collaboration (1992)
  – Sackett (1996)

› Publications out pace readers

› Definition of systematic review

› Bias: A dirty word
The Review reflects the purpose.

Review Terms used:
- Scoping (Rapid Review), Mappin, Integrated/Narrative, Systematic, Meta-analysis.

No clear consensus for characteristics.

The Review should reflect the purpose.

Terminology: Search, Appraisal Reproducible, Rigor.
A Note on Literature Searches

- Exhaustive, comprehensive.
- Multiple databases.
- Gray literature.
- Dissertation abstracts.
- Reproducible.
- A Research Librarian is your best friend!

http://prisma-statement.org/prismastatement/flowdiagram.aspx
Components of the Literature Search

› Decisions made by the author fit the purpose:

› The search parameters:
  – Rigor of search: Replication
  – Database(s) used
  – Selection process

› Appraisal of literature

› Review product:
  – Description of results
  – Synthesis of results
  – Translation of results
The Literature Review

**Description:** “Published materials which provide an examination of recent or current literature.” Grant et al, 2009, p. 97.

**Positive Aspects**
- Reviews published literature.
- Provides a process for the inclusion of relevant sources.
- Consolidates/summates published findings for identification of omission/gaps.

**Limitations**
- Lacks explicit attempt to maximize scope.
- Lacks appraisal of identified sources & quality ranking.
- Conclusions open to omission bias; literature selection may support author worldview.
The Scoping Review [A.K.A Rapid Review*]

**Description:** “…preliminary assessment of potential size and scope of available research literature.” Grant et al, 2009, p. 101.  
*p. 100

- **Positive Aspects**
  - Identifies nature & extent of research evidence.
  - Inform evidence availability for SR.
  - Search is systematic, transparent & replicable.

- **Limitations**
  - Lack appraisal or quality assessment.
  - Reduced rigor & duration; focus on number.
  - Potential bias.
  - Findings cannot be used for policy.practice.
The Mapping Review

**Description:** “…to map out & categorize existing literature on a particular topic.” Grant et al, 2009, p. 97.

› **Positive Aspects**
   - Explicit & transparent picture of SLR for evidence gap identification.
   - Explicit, transparent & Flexible categorization.
   - Informed decision of subset or total synthesis.
   - Address review question.

› **Limitations**
   - Time constraint.
   - Lack analysis & synthesis.
   - Descriptive approach may mask results.
   - Research design-based assessment.
Integrated/Narrative Review

**Description:** Integrated has SR characteristics (Im et al, 2014)

**Narrative** NS tracks development of principle/concept (Ferrari, 2015)

- **Positive Aspects**
  - **SR:** Query focused, clarity of review, objective synthesis, evidence-based inferences.
  - **NS:** Less explicit query allows flexibility in questions.

- **Limitations**
  - **SR:** Outdate 3-5 yrs; bias of single study, heterogeneity, publication bias.
  - **NS:** Subjectivity may introduce bias, but necessary for narrative thread.
The Systematic Review (SR; SLR)

**Description:** “… seeks to systematically search for, appraise & synthesize research evidence... Grant et al, 2009, p. 102.

› **Positive Aspects**
  - Draws together all known literature about a subject.
  - Adheres to an established conduct of the review.
  - Generally ranked as the highest level of evidence.
  - Transparency facilitated replication.

› **Limitations**
  - Adherence to experimental design & effectiveness limits more complex search questions.
The SR with Meta-Analysis

**Description:** “…statistically combines results of quantitative studies to provide a more precise effect of the results.” Grant et al, 2009, p. 98.

- **Positive Aspects**
  - Combines individual studies into a composite empirical basis.
  - Summarizes global findings to provide direction for recommendation(s).

- **Limitations**
  - Compares “apples & oranges” as an inappropriate use of the Meta-analysis.
  - Is not better than the sum of the results.
Take Home Messages

› Read with understanding:
  – Use the “appraiser-eye”.
  – Find congruence between the Review & Purpose.
  – Seek out the intrusion of bias.

› Don’t Wait; Disseminate:
  – Choose the best Review strategy.
  – Celebrate Excellence in Nursing Education!
References


