

Ethical considerations

Conducting a literature review involves synthesizing existing research and knowledge on a particular topic. Maintaining ethical standards during this process is crucial. Here are some basic ethical considerations to keep in mind when undertaking a literature review:

- **Transparency and Accountability:**
 - Clearly outline your research objectives and the scope of your literature review to provide transparency about your intentions.
 - Document your search and review process, including databases used, search terms, and inclusion/exclusion criteria.
- **Plagiarism:**
 - Avoid plagiarism by properly citing all sources in the appropriate citation style (Harvard).
 - Use quotation marks when directly quoting text and paraphrase responsibly, giving credit to the original authors.
- **Authorship and Acknowledgment:**
 - Clearly attribute ideas and findings to their original authors. Acknowledge their contributions to the field.
 - If you use a specific concept, theory, or model extensively, make sure to credit the original author and provide proper citations.
- **Objectivity and Bias:**
 - Strive for objectivity and avoid bias in your literature review. Present a balanced view of existing research.
 - Be aware of your own biases and preconceptions and make efforts to minimize their impact on your review.
- **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:**
 - Clearly define and justify your inclusion and exclusion criteria for selecting studies to ensure a fair and unbiased representation of the literature.
 - Avoid intentionally excluding studies based on personal biases.
- **Respect for Intellectual Property:**
 - Respect copyright laws and licensing agreements when accessing, using, and reproducing materials from published sources.
 - Seek appropriate permissions for the use of copyrighted material, if necessary.
- **Data Management and Security:**
 - Handle all data, including literature sources and personal information, with care and ensure confidentiality.
 - Use secure methods to store and manage your data, especially if you are working with sensitive or confidential information.
- **Reviewer and Editor Integrity:**
 - If you are conducting a peer-reviewed literature review for publication, maintain integrity in the review process. Avoid conflicts of interest.

- Declare any potential conflicts of interest to the editor and adhere to the journal's guidelines.
- **Critical Appraisal:**
 - Critically evaluate the quality of the studies you include in your review and clearly communicate any limitations or biases present in the literature.
- **Ethical Considerations of the Field:**
 - Be aware of the specific ethical considerations within the field of study you are reviewing. Different disciplines may have unique ethical standards and expectations.

Remember that adherence to ethical guidelines enhances the credibility and reliability of your literature review, contributing to the overall integrity of academic research.