Narrative reviews

Sometimes called 'traditional' reviews, narratives are summaries of the literature based around stories or hypotheses.

In these pieces, you'll be building and reviewing a body of previous work around a particular hypothesis, leading the reader to your point of view.

Do you agree with a previous data interpretation or hypothesis?

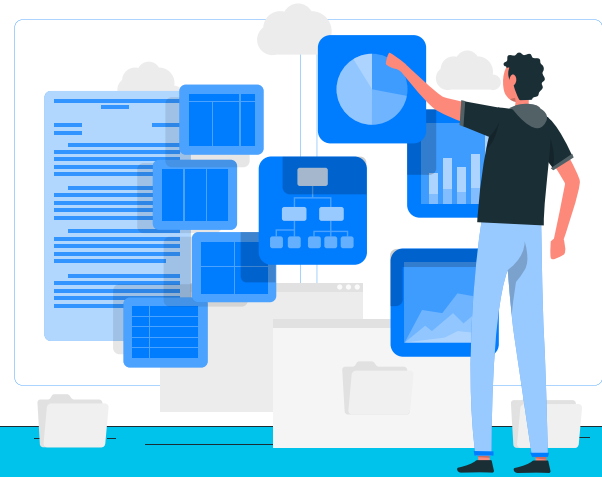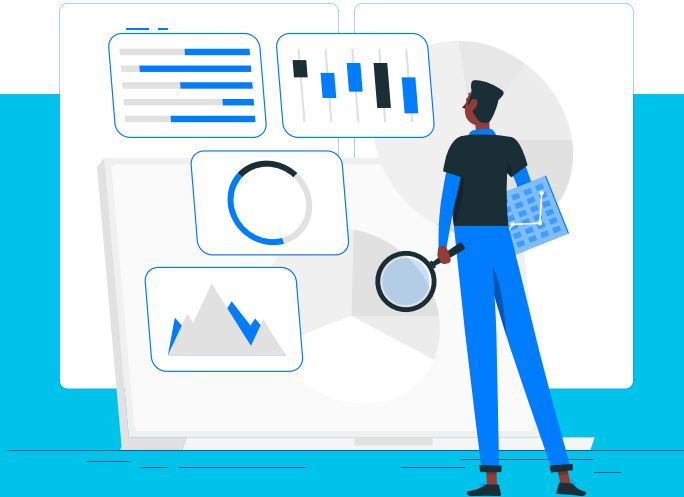**Is this supported by current work in the field?**

The aim of a narrative review is to summarize available data, resources, and previous interpretations in order to build support for a particular point-of-view, usually your own.

A narrative literature review is therefore a comprehensive, critical, and objective analysis of the current knowledge on a topic. They are an essential part of the research process and help to establish a theoretical framework and focus or context for your research.

Systematic reviews

Systematic reviews use repeatable analytical methods to collect secondary data for further analysis.

These are therefore highly structured and follow a distinct process to identify, appraise, and synthesize all evidence, often following checklists like **PRISMA**.

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Scoping reviews

These are speculative review articles, assessing new or potentially important questions of interest across a field. These are speculative review articles, assessing new or potentially important questions of interest across a field.

In this kind, formal methods of literature identification are used (as in a systematic literature review) but without manual processing.

These reviews are preliminary assessments of the potential size and scope of available research literature. Thus, the aim of a scoping review is to identify the nature and extent of research evidence on a specific topic, including ongoing research.

Argumentative reviews

Is there an issue in your field, a hypothesis, or data interpretation you disagree with?

Or

Have data that could be used to potentially refute, or argue a position?

An argumentative review might be the best choice. As the name suggests, these kinds of reviews are used to support or refute an argument or problem.

This kind of review therefore examines literature selectively in order to support or refute an argument, deeply imbedded assumption, or philosophical problem already established in the literature. The purpose is to develop a body of literature that establishes a contrarian viewpoint.

An integrative review is one of the hardest to write; this kind of article critically appraises and synthesizes secondary data to generate new frameworks or perspectives on a topic. These are useful to determine new and fruitful areas for future research.

Work is needed to put one of these together; data has to be collected from existing literature or extracted from other papers, work you might not have the time to do.

Theoretical reviews focus on existing theories of concepts and their relationships so as to develop and text new hypotheses.

In other words, these kinds of reviews help establish what theories already exist, the relationships between them, to what degree existing theories have been investigated, and develop new hypotheses to be tested.

Targeted reviews

Targeted reviews, also called focused reviews, involve the non-systematic synthesis of both qualitative and quantitative data.

In one format, these often strive to be readable 'user-friendly' scholarly pieces and are therefore often very good to publish for career development. These kinds of reviews give you a real chance to show you are a 'thought leader' in your field.

State-of-the-art reviews

These are used to summarize the current state of a particular field as well as to identify emerging trends and new directions of research.

A state-of-the-art review therefore considers the most current research in a given area or concerning a given topic, summarizes current and emerging educational trends, research priorities and standardizations within a particular field of interest.

These reviews are broad-brush and bring the reader up-to-date with research in a particular field. Again, useful career-wise to show you are a leader in your field. These kinds of reviews are very often picked up, used, and cited in textbooks.