

# IV Odense Workshop on International Entrepreneurship Workshop 8 - May 20, 2021, 3:15-5:15pm

---

## ***Literature Reviews in IE: Types, Approaches and Best Practices***

“A subject advances when studies are designed in a way that builds logically based on the findings of prior studies” (J. Paul)

**Workshop host: Dr Alex Rialp Criado**  
Full Professor in Business Organization  
Dep. of Business (B Building)  
Universidad Autònoma de Barcelona  
08193 Bellaterra (Barcelona), España (Spain)  
Tfn: +34 93 581 22 68  
E-mail: [Alex.Rialp@uab.cat](mailto:Alex.Rialp@uab.cat)

# WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES:

---

- To outline different types and approaches for conducting a thorough literature review in a given topic/field (theories, constructs, and methods).
- To emphasize the application of this research strategy in the IE discipline by providing insightful viewpoints from experienced experts in this research field.
- To discuss about and stimulate more contribution-focused and potentially publishable literature reviews in IE.



## GUEST PRESENTERS

---

- Nicole Coviello, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada
- Rubina Romanello, University of Udine, Italy
- Tuija Mainela, University of Oulu, Finland

# INTRODUCTION – What is a LR?

---

“A **literature review** is a written document that presents a logically argued case founded on a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge about a topic of study. This case establishes a convincing thesis to answer the study’s question.” (Machi & McEvoy, 2016)

A more or less ‘systematic’ way of collecting and synthesizing previous research (findings) in an accurate, precise and trustworthy manner within a given field, domain and/or discipline (Snyder, 2019)

# Review Papers In General Aim to:

---

- Resolve definitional ambiguities and outline the scope of the topic.
- Provide an integrated, synthesized overview of the current state of knowledge.
- Identify inconsistencies in prior results and potential explanations.
- Evaluate existing theoretical and methodological approaches and unique insights.
- Develop conceptual frameworks to reconcile and extend past research.
- Describe research insights, existing gaps, new research questions and future research directions.

# The Process of Conducting (and assessing the quality) of a Literature Review

(Liberati et al., 2009; Tranfield et al., 2003; Torraco, 2005; Wong et al., 2013, in Snyder, 2019)

<b>Phase 1: design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is this review needed and what is the contribution of conducting this review?</li><li>• What is the potential audience of this review?</li><li>• What is the specific purpose (objective/s) and research question(s) this review will be addressing?</li><li>• What is an appropriate method or review approach to use of this review's specific purpose?</li><li>• What is the search strategy of relevant literature for this specific review? (including search terms, databases, inclusion and exclusion criteria etc.)</li></ul>
<b>Phase 2: conduct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does the search plan developed in phase 1 work to produce an appropriate and trustful final sample or does it need adjustment?</li><li>• What is the practical plan for selecting sources and articles?</li><li>• How will the search process and selection be documented?</li><li>• How will the quality of the search process and selection be assessed?</li></ul>
<b>Phase 3: analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What type of information needs to be abstracted from the data to fulfill the purpose of the specific review?</li><li>• What type of information and data analysis technique/s is needed to conduct the specific analysis?</li><li>• How will authors ensure the quality of this review process?</li><li>• How will analysis be documented and reported?</li></ul>
<b>Phase 4: structuring and writing the review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are the motivation and the need for this review clearly communicated?</li><li>• What standards of reporting are appropriate for this specific review?</li><li>• What information needs to be included and synthesized in the review?</li><li>• Is the level of information provided enough and appropriate to allow for transparency and replicability so readers can judge the quality of the review?</li><li>• Are the review results clearly shown together with directions for further research?</li><li>• Is the contribution of the review useable and clearly communicated?</li></ul>

# General Types of Review Papers

(Palmatier et al., 2018; Paul and Rialp, 2020)

---

**Domain-based reviews:** Review, synthesize, and extend a body of literature in a given substantive domain/topic.

- Structured / Framework-based review (e.g. TCCM, 5Ws, A-P/D-O)
- Bibliometric review
- Hybrid review (SLR/narrative; structured/bibliometric)
- Review aiming for theory development

○ **Theory-based reviews:** Review, synthesize, and extend a body of literature that uses a given underlying theory/ies.

○ **Method-based reviews:** Review, synthesize, and extend a body of literature that uses a given underlying method/s.

○ **Meta-analytic (or effect focused) reviews:** Pooling the results from various (quantitative) empirical studies in order to estimate the overall effect size of a particular variable by correcting the various methodological errors of individual studies.

# Main Approaches of Review Papers (Palmatier, 2018; Snyder, 2019)

---

## **Systematic reviews and meta-analysis**

Aimed to comprehensively identify and synthesize research that bears on a particular question, using organized, transparent, and replicable procedures at each step in the process. Positivist, quantity-based, theory-driven

## **Traditional, narrative reviews**

Discuss current knowledge about a research domain in a narrative manner usually without an explicit and exhaustive methodology for selecting and evaluating included literature. Interpretivist, quality-based, discourse-oriented

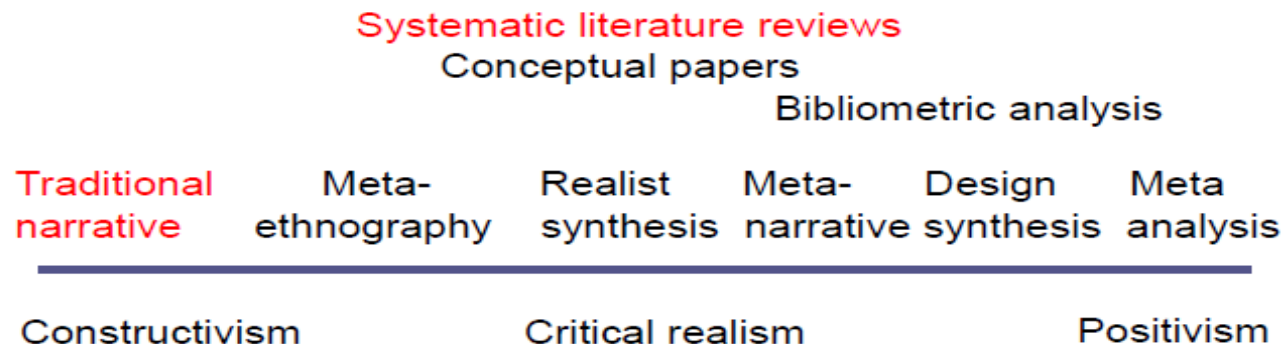
## **Integrative/critical reviews**

The aim is to assess, critique, synthesize and/or integrate the literature on a research topic in a way that enables new theoretical frameworks and perspectives to emerge.



# International Journal of Management Reviews (IJMR)

## Reviewing the literature?



- IJMR papers dominated by traditional narrative and SLRs
- More innovatory approaches to literature reviews in business & management

# Systematic Literature Review (SLR) (Palmatier, 2018)

---

## **Process**

1. Topic formulation
2. Study design
3. Sampling
4. Data collection
5. Data analysis
6. Reporting

## **Structural components**

- Depth and rigor (reliability)
- Replicability
- Usability
- Helpful format

# SLR execution (Williams et al., 2020)

---

**(1) Planning the Review: Its Protocol**



**(2) Identifying the Universe of  
Potentially Relevant Studies**



**(3) Conducting the Review: Determining which Articles  
from the Search to Include and Gathering Knowledge**



**(4) Analyzing and Synthesizing Information**



**(5) Reporting the Process,  
Findings, and Knowledge Discerned**

# What makes a review article potentially contributive (checklist)?

---

- Is field/sub-field mature to warrant an extensive review?
- Is the review coherently bounded?
  - What has been included/excluded?
- A synthesis & evaluation of existing state of knowledge?
- An adequate categorisation of themes and sub-themes?
- A complete analysis of the literature?
  - Contrasting theories, methods/methodologies
  - Strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and risks
  - Agreement and disagreements on findings
- Authoritative conclusions about the current state of literature?
- Does the review identify gaps & future research directions?
- Clear about contributions to theory, practice & policy?

# Up-to-date developments in LRs

---

- Conducting SLRs and bibliometric analyses in Business and Management
  - (Linnenluecke et al., 2020; Williams et al., 2020)
- Conducting SLRs in Entrepreneurship
  - (Kraus et al., 2020)
- Theory-building review articles
  - (Post et al., 2020)
- Methodological reviews and meta-analysis
  - (Arguiris et al., 2020; Steel et al., 2021)

# Food for thought – Open discussion

---

- Is there room for more novel, thorough, contributive and distinctive LRs in IE (versus parent disciplines IB/IM/E)?
  - Acknowledging previous LRs in IE (strengths/weaknesses)
  - Broader/narrower review purpose/RQ?
  - Focus on cross-disciplinarity: international AND entrepreneurial behavior (theories, constructs, contexts, methods) and multi-level frameworks (i.e. A-P-O)
  - Single author or multiple, complementary reviewer team?
- Which type/approach to use (some blurred boundaries)?
  - Single: structured or SLR vs. NR; bibliometric review; meta-analysis
  - Hybrid/combinative: SLR+bibliometric/meta-analytic review, integrative-critical SLR, Qualitative (narrative)+SLR...
- Reliable and replicable procedures: key challenges?
- How to build a more creative, well-grounded and substantial future research agenda in IE?

# Further Readings

---

Aguinis, H., Ramani, R. S., & Alabduljader, N. (2020). Best-Practice Recommendations for Producers, Evaluators, and Users of Methodological Literature Reviews. *Organizational Research Methods* (forthcoming)

Aria, M., & Cuccurullo, C. (2017). Bibliometrix: An R-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis. *Journal of Informetrics*, 11(4), 959-975.

Cronin, P., Ryan, F., & Coughlan, M. (2008). Undertaking a literature review: a step-by-step approach. *British Journal of Nursing*, 17(1), 38-43.

- Fisch, C., & Block, J. (2018). Six tips for your (systematic) literature review in business and management research. *Management Review Quarterly*, 68, : 103-106.
- Hulland, J., & Houston, M. B. (2020). Why systematic review papers and meta-analyses matter: an introduction to the special issue on generalizations in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48, 351-359.
- Kraus, S., Breier, M., & Dasí-Rodríguez, S. (2020). The art of crafting a systematic literature review in entrepreneurship research. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal* , 16(3), 1023-1042.
- Linnenluecke, M. K., Marrone, M., & Singh, A. K. (2020). Conducting systematic literature reviews and bibliometric analyses. *Australian Journal of Management*, 45(2), 175-194.
- Palmatier, R. W., Houston, M. B., & Hulland, J. (2018). Review articles: Purpose, process, and structure. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing of Science*, 46, 1-5.
- Paul, J., & Rialp-Criado, A. (2020). The art of writing literature review: What do we know and what do we need to know?. *International Business Review*, 101717.
- Post, C., Sarala, R., Gatrell, C., & Prescott, J. E. (2020). Advancing theory with review articles. *Journal of Management Studies*, 57(2), 351-376.
- Reuber, A.R. (2010). Strengthening Your Literature Review. *Family Business Review*, 23(2), 105-198.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333-339.
- Steel, P., Beugelsdijk S., & Aguinis, H. 2021. The anatomy of an award-winning meta-analysis: Recommendations for authors, reviewers, and users of meta-analytic reviews. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 52(1), 23-44
- Torraco, R. J. (2016). Writing integrative literature reviews: Using the past and present to explore the future. *Human Resource Development Review*, 15(4), 404-428.
- Torraco, R. J. (2005). Writing integrative literature reviews: Guidelines and examples. *Human Resource Development Review*, 4(3), 356-367.
- Tranfield, D., Denyer, D., & Smart, P. (2003). Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British Journal of Management*, 14, 207-222
- Webster, J & Watson, R.T. (2002). Analysing the Past to Prepare for the Future: Writing a Literature Review. *MIS Quarterly*, 26(2), 13-23.
- Williams, R. I., Clark, L. A., Clark, W. R., & Raffo, D. M. (2020). Re-examining systematic literature review in management research: Additional benefits and execution protocols. *European Management Journal* (forthcoming).

# (Some) Guiding Books

---

- Bryman, A, (2008). *Social Research Methods* 3rd ed., Oxford University Press (Chapter 4).
- Greener, S. (2008). *Business Research Methods*. Ventus Publishing ApS. (Chapter 2)
- Littell, J. H., Corcoran, J., & Pillai, V. (2008). *Systematic reviews and meta-analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Machi, L. A., & McEvoy, B. T. (2016). *The literature review: Six steps to success*. 3rd Edition. London: Corwin Press.
- Pettigrew, M. & Roberts, H. (2006). *Systematic Reviews in the Social Sciences*. Oxford: Blackwell.