

**About the Assignment**

You and a partner are required to write a 4-page (double spaced) literature review (plus a works cited/bibliography) going into some topic pertaining to the case study you have been given. Due: Thursday, September 22.

You are required to review literature on what is known about the topic that you selected through your reading of the Nissan Case Study. In a real literature review, this can be a daunting task, with thousands of sources. However, you will be restricted in the number of sources that you are to use in order to make this assignment feasible. For our purposes you should restrict yourself to a total of seven cited sources. Here is a breakdown of what I recommend (by source type):

Primary research papers (peer reviewed): 2-3

Books: 0-2

Business Reports/White Papers: 0-2

Web sources: 2-3 (web sites not including .pdf files of published papers)

**NOTE: If you use Wikipedia as a source for this assignment, you will receive a ZERO.**

Because of these restrictions in numbers of sources, you should select the sources you use wisely, so that you can paint an effective picture about the things known pertaining to your question. In other words, do not select sources almost all of which concentrate on one sub-area of your topic, leaving other areas unexplored.

Your ultimate goal in reviewing the literature is to produce a summary and a synthesis of what you have found. Your main purpose is to basically answer, "What is known about my chosen question?" and "Does the Nissan case study have the right information?" This purpose and your end product should be kept in mind when reading the literature and selecting from it. Take effective notes so that they will facilitate the development of your final product.

**Submission:**

1. **Cover Page** - Include your name, course number and academic term, assignment title, observation, question
2. **Synthesis** - You should attach a 4-page (double-spaced, 12-pt font, 1" margins) synthesis of the literature you have reviewed **specifically as to how it pertains to your original observation and question**. You should strive to answer the question of what is known about your question in a synthetic and meaningful way. This section should contain critical analysis of the literature and studies reviewed. However, be sure that your analysis is focused very directly on the connection between the literature and the question. For example, it would not be appropriate to include criticism of small sample sizes in some study unless you bring out how this study design limitation restricts your ability to extrapolate from those results to your question. In your synthesis you may write in AP style, but you must cite your sources in APA format.
3. **Work Cited** - Include a work cited of the seven sources in APA format. A simple APA format can be found here:  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>  
<http://www.apastyle.org/>

**About Literature Reviews**

Not to be confused with a book review, a literature review surveys scholarly articles, books and other sources (e.g. dissertations, conference proceedings) relevant to a particular issue, area of research, or theory, providing a description, summary and critical evaluation of each work. The purpose is to offer an overview of significant literature published on a topic.

Similar to primary research, development of the literature review requires four stages:

- Problem formulation—which topic or field is being examined and what are its component issues?
- Literature search—finding materials relevant to the subject being explored
- Data evaluation—determining which literature makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the topic.
- Analysis and Interpretation—discussing the findings and conclusion of pertinent literature

Literature reviews should comprise the following elements:

- An overview of the subject, issue or theory under construction, along with the objectives of the literature review
- Division of works under review into categories (e.g. those in support of a particular position, those against and those offering alternative concepts entirely)
- Explanation of how each is similar to and how it varies from the others
- Conclusions as to which pieces are best considered in their argument, are most convincing of their opinions, and make the greatest contribution to the understanding and development of their area of research.

In assessing each piece, consideration should be given to:

- Provenance—What are the author's credentials? Are the author's arguments supported by evidence?
- Objectivity – Is the author's perspective even-handed or prejudicial? Is contrary data considered or is certain pertinent information ignored to prove the author's point?
- Persuasiveness—Which of the author's theses are most/least convincing?
- Value—Are the author's arguments and conclusions convincing? Does the work ultimately contribute in any significant way to an understanding of the subject?

A literature review may constitute an essential chapter of a thesis or dissertation, or may be a self-contained review of writings on a subject. In either case, its purpose is to:

- Place each work in the context of its contribution to the understanding of the subject under review.
- Describe the relationship of each work to the others under consideration
- Identify new ways to interpret, and shed light on any gaps in previous research
- Resolve conflicts amongst seemingly contradictory previous studies
- Identify areas of prior scholarship to prevent duplication of effort
- Point the way to forward further research
- Place one's original work and thoughts in the context of the existing literature

**If you have any questions regarding this assignment, feel free to ask.**

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