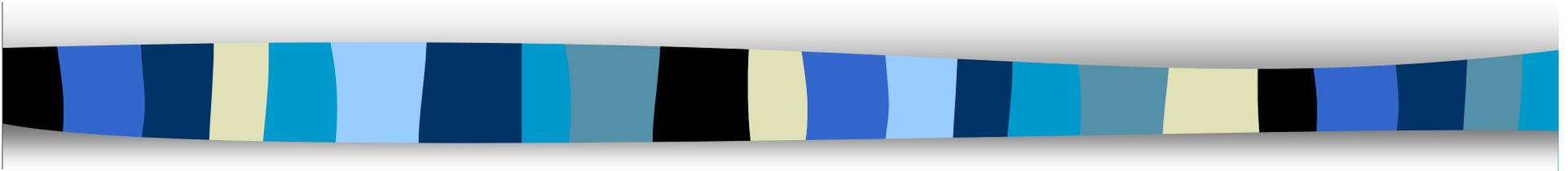


SEN-SRN Conversion Course
Research Module



Literature Review

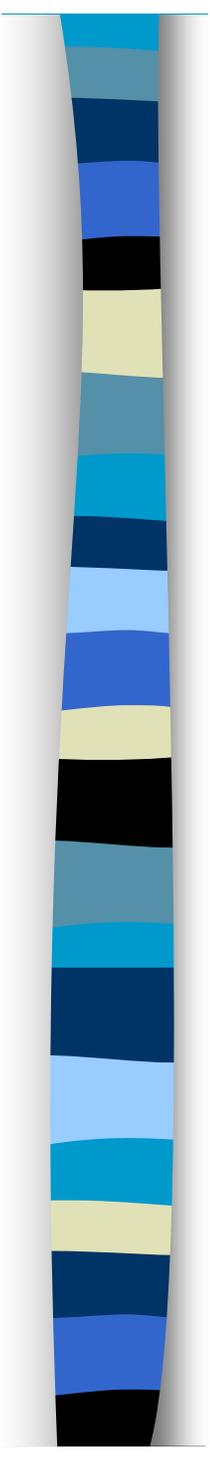
Presented By:

Emmanuel Bezzina, SRN
PQ Dip, MSc (HSM)



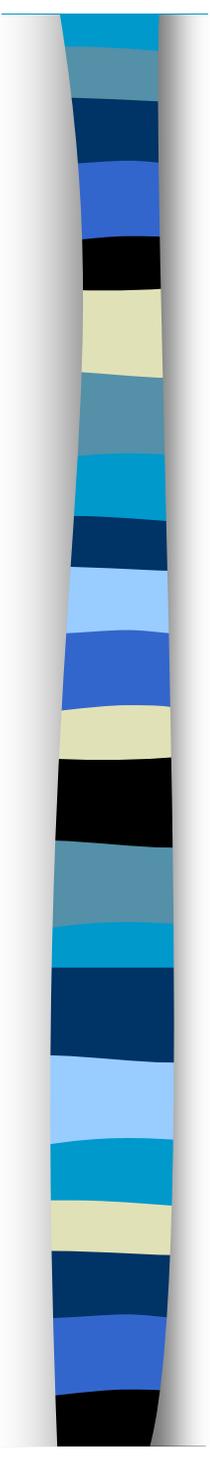
Lecture Overview

- What is a review of the literature?
- Purposes of the literature review
- Use of the library
- Primary and secondary sources
- Locating literature sources
- Abstracts
- How to write an abstract
- Writing a good literature review



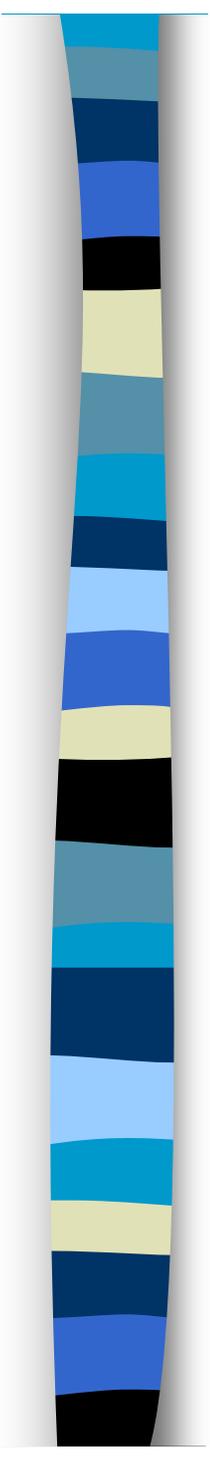
What is a Review of the Literature?

- An account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers
- An evaluative report of information found in the literature related to your selected area of study
- It is not just a descriptive list of material available, but it should convey to the reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic
- It should identify the strengths and weaknesses of the article



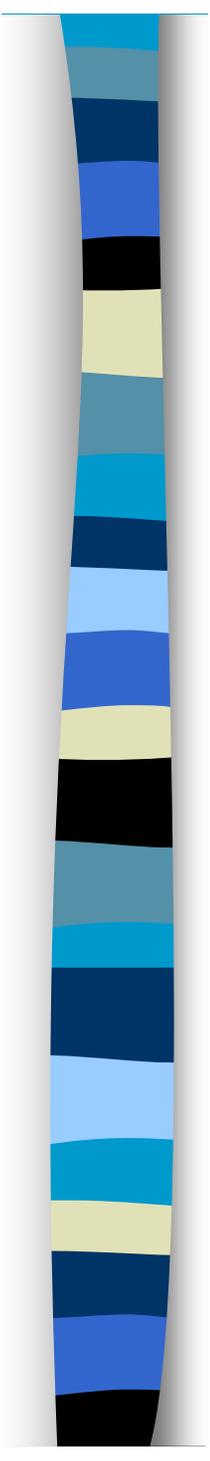
Purposes of the Literature Review (1)

- Provide a background for the research
- Justify the research
- Ensure the research has not been carried out before (or if it is repeated, that it is marked as a “replication study”)
- Show where the research fits into the existing body of knowledge
- Enable the researcher to learn from previous theory on the subject



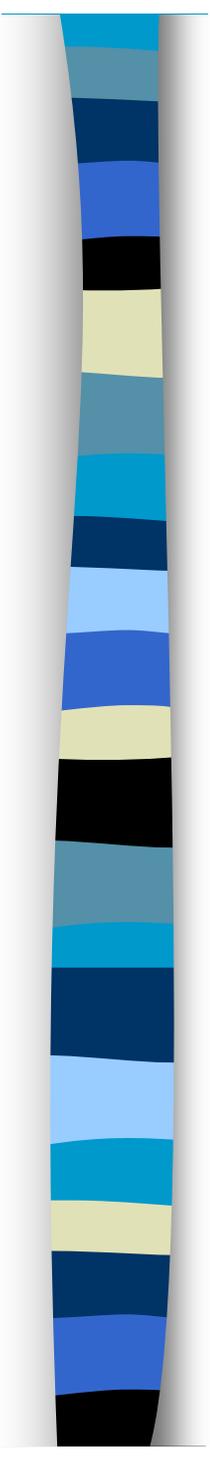
Purposes of the Literature Review (2)

- Illustrate how the subject has been studied previously
- Highlight errors in previous research
- Outline gaps in previous research
- Show that the work is adding to the understanding and knowledge of the field
- Help refine, refocus or even change the topic



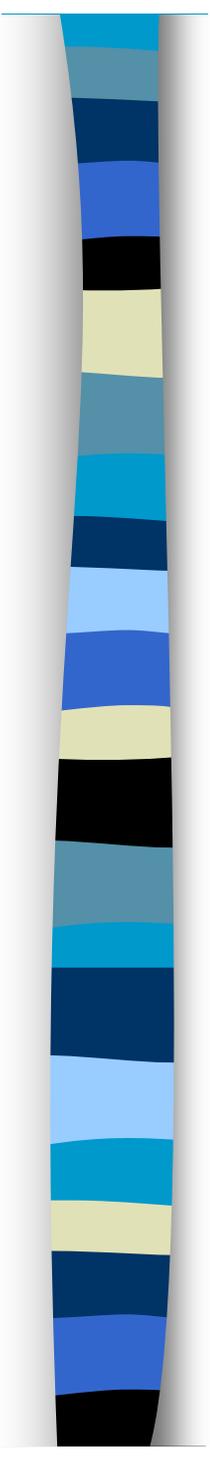
Use of the Library

- Libraries contain a wealth of information.
- Acquainting yourself with the library's facilities and holdings will save you valuable time.
- Librarians are usually delighted to familiarise you around the library.
- Concentrate your efforts on identifying information on one specific topic.
- Keep in mind your original purpose, or you may spend a lot of time in the library.
- Many of us now do our literature searches from our own homes through the Internet.



Primary and Secondary Sources (1)

- **A primary source** is a description of a research study that was written by the original investigator(s).
- **A secondary source** is a summary or description of a research study that was written by someone other than the study investigator(s).



Primary and Secondary Sources (2)

- Secondary sources may provide valuable insight into the material.
- The original or primary source should be read, when possible, to check study findings and to draw conclusions about a research study.
- There is a danger that the author of a secondary source may misinterpret information or leave out important information that might be valuable to the reader.



Locating Literature Sources (1)

- ***Journal articles:***

- Relatively concise
- Up to date format for research
- All reputable journals are referred.

- ***Books:***

- Good starting point from which to find more detailed information but less up to date; takes longer to publish

- ***Conference proceedings.***

- Provide the latest research, or research that has not been published.

- ***Government/corporate reports.***

- Many government departments and corporations commission or carry out research.
- Their published findings can provide a useful source of information, depending on your field of study.



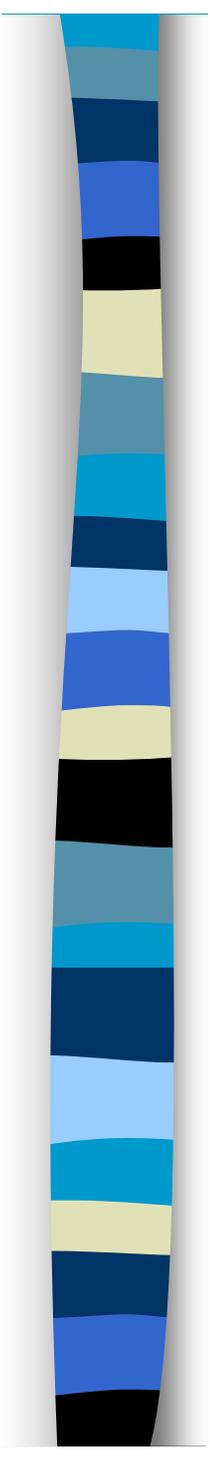
Locating Literature Sources (2)

■ ***Newspapers.***

- the information they provide will be of very limited use for your literature review.
- provide information about recent trends, discoveries or changes,
- search for more detailed information in other sources.

■ ***Theses and dissertations.***

- can be useful sources of information.
- Disadvantages:
 - they are difficult to obtain since they are not published;
 - the student who carried out the research may not be an experienced researcher. ***Treat findings with caution***



Locating Literature Sources (3)

Internet.

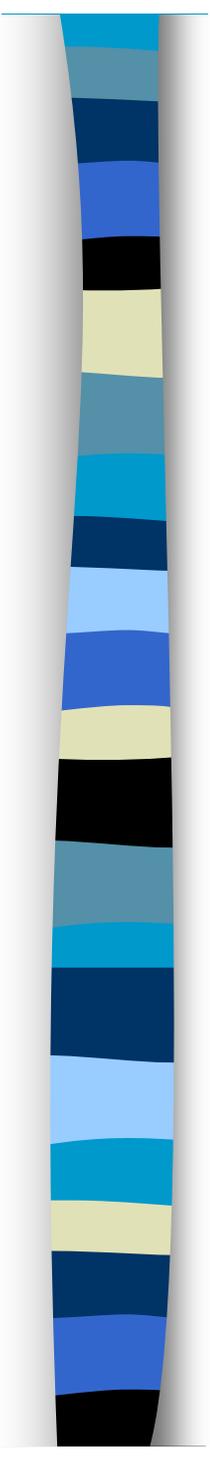
- The fastest growing source of information is on the Internet.
- Anyone can post information on the Internet so the quality may not be reliable.

■ ***CD-ROMS.***

- These can be a very valuable tool in searching for the information needed.

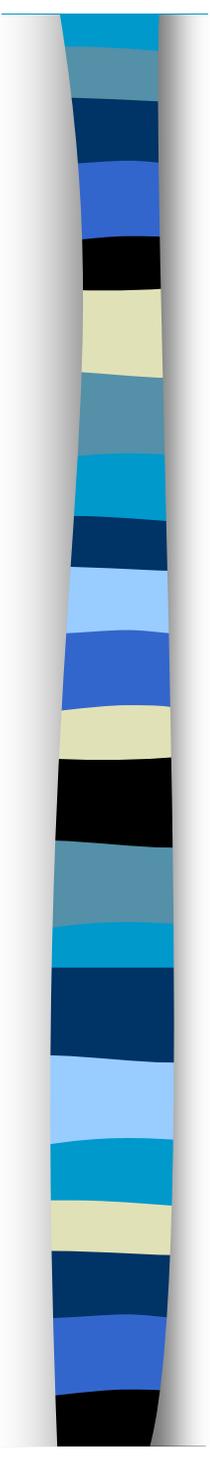
■ ***Magazines.***

- Specialised magazines may be more useful.
- Can provide you with news or general information about new discoveries, policies, etc. that you can further research in more specialised sources.



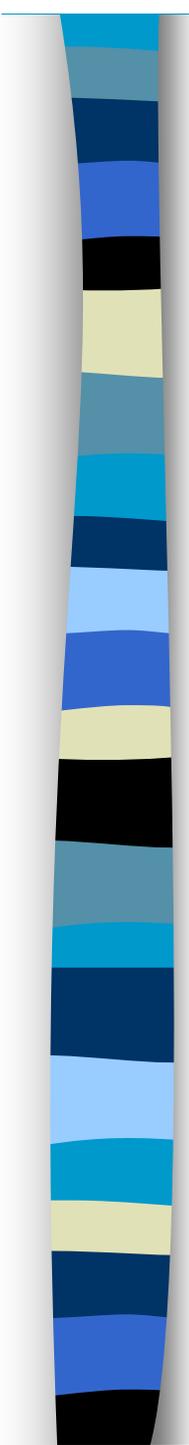
Abstracts

- An abstract is a stand-alone statement that briefly conveys the essential information of a paper, article, document or book.
- It presents the objective, methods, results, and conclusions of a research project
- Although an abstract appears as the first section of a paper, it should be written last.
- You need to have completed all other sections before you can select and summarise the essential information from those sections.
- An abstract might serve as the only means by which a researcher determines what information a paper contains.
- A researcher might make a decision whether to read the paper or not based on the abstract alone.
- Because of this need for self-contained compactness, an abstract must convey the essential results of a paper.



How to write an abstract

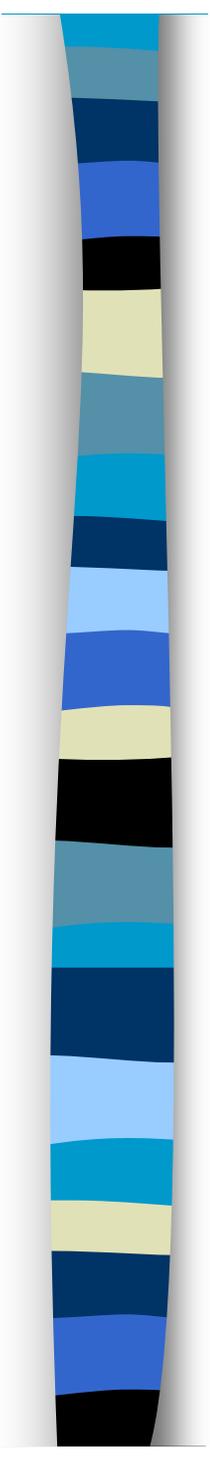
- **Writing an abstract involves boiling down the essence of a whole paper into a single paragraph that conveys as much new information as possible**
 - Highlight the objective and the conclusions that are in the paper's introduction and the discussion.
 - Group information in the methods section of the paper that contains keyword information.
 - Highlight the results from the discussion or results section of the paper.
 - Compile the above highlighted and grouped information into a single paragraph.
 - Delete extra words and phrases.
 - Delete any background information.
 - Revise the paragraphs so that the abstract conveys the essential information.



Writing a Good Literature Review (1)

■ ***Remember the purpose***

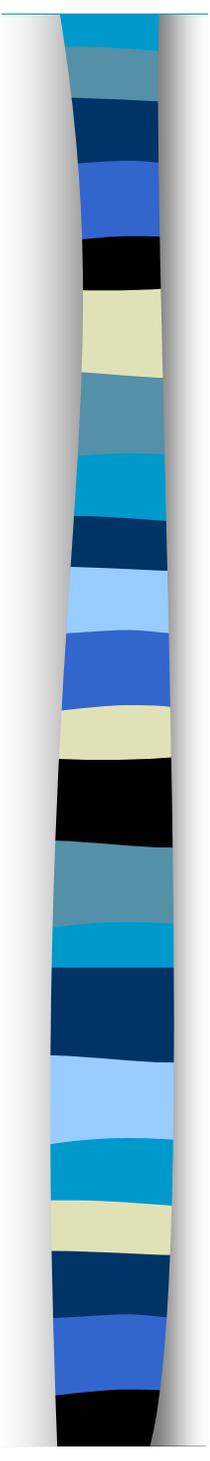
- You should use the literature review to explain your research – after all, you are not writing a literature review just to tell your reader what other researchers have done.
- Your aim should be to show why your research needs to be carried out, how you came to choose certain methodologies or theories to work with, how your work adds to the research already carried out.



Writing a Good Literature Review (2)

■ *Read with a purpose*

- You need to summarize the work you read but you must also decide which ideas or information are important to your research, and which are less important and can be covered briefly or left out of your review.
- You should also look for the major concepts, conclusions, theories, arguments etc. that underlie the work, and look for similarities and differences with closely related work. This is difficult when you first start reading, but should become easier the more you read in your area.
- **Keep complete and accurate records of everything read.**



Writing a Good Literature Review (3)

- ***Write with a purpose***

- Your aim should be to evaluate and show relationships between the work already done (by others) and your own.