

Chapter 8

Experiments

July 31st

- You will be receiving your 5.1 assignment in class
- If you are not in class for this assignment you will need to complete the alternative assignment
- Assignment is due Aug. 7th
- **You really want to be in class for this!**

Literature Review

July 31st

Bring two copies; one for us to
read one for peer review

Peer Review

- Peer review will now be done outside of class.
- You are expected to write short paragraphs answering the following
 - Did they establish that it is important and or sociological?
 - Is the research question clear? Is it answerable?
 - Is the review of the literature clear and understandable?
 - Is there anything that is unclear or that you do not understand or is not familiar to you?
 - General comments and constructive criticism.

Peer Review

- You need to turn in two copies of your review.
 - One for us
 - One for your peer
- You may make suggestions and comments in text; but if you do you will need to copy the paper to turn in with “our version” of your review.

Literature Reviews

an explanation of how the research question grew out of that review (showing how you identified your own research focus in terms of a '**gap**' in previous research).

Literature Reviews

- Lee Cuba suggests a close relationship between the literature review and the quality of the research preparation. Literature reviews, he argues, are motivated by the desire of social scientists - whether professors or undergraduates - **'to know what others have discovered before they begin investigations of their own'** (Cuba, 1988: 25).

Why do a literature review?

- provide a context for the research
- justify the research
- ensure the research hasn't been done 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
- illustrate how the subject has been studied previously
- highlight flaws in previous research
- outline gaps in previous research

What's the point?

- Understand and clarify the relationships between your research and the discipline/s.
- Place and justify your research within the discipline/s.
- Understand the existing literature and how it relates /supports/contradicts your topic.

What not to do.

- A literature review is a piece of **discursive prose**, not a list describing or summarizing one piece of literature after another. It's usually a bad sign to see every paragraph beginning with the name of a researcher. Instead, organize the literature review into sections that present themes or identify trends, including relevant theory. You are not trying to list all the material published, but to synthesize and evaluate it according to the guiding concept of your thesis or research question.

What to do

- Proofread
- Copyedit
- Introduction (Problem statement) and Research Question should be revised for clarity and grammar
- Include a bibliography

How to start

- You must have an introductory paragraph/s that reintroduces the reader to your topic/question.
- The Introductory paragraph should also be a roadmap of the rest of the Literature Review. This is the dull theoretical/methodological section so we should give readers a guideline of what to expect.

Introductory paragraph

- The sociology of masculinity has been a growing field in the past few decades building on feminist theory and drawing attention to the social construction of masculinities. Studying masculinities is important because gender is relational: femininity and masculinity only have meaning within the context of each other; to be masculine is not to be feminine. Within gender studies a major focus has been on patriarchy: the norms, beliefs, institutions and practices that produce a masculine privilege. Notice the use of the term masculine privilege instead of men's privilege, this is to call attention to the fact that not all men are privileged in a patriarchal system.

Introductory paragraph

A central investigation of gender studies is how patriarchy is reproduced and challenged. One way of evaluating the current gender order is to examine various forms of masculinities and their relation to each other as well as to forms of femininities. The sociology of masculinity has produced great scholarship on issues concerning forms of masculinities and patriarchy, but many of these studies have focused on identity politics or the intersection of masculinities with other institutions, but have not analyzed masculine dress codes. While metrosexual might be a term for men that dress well, use many beauty products and adopt a more feminine hygiene routine; does this new aesthetic change mainstream ideas of masculinity?

Introductory paragraph

In order to provide a description of this important but missing area of study I will **first** provide an overview of the major approaches to the study of masculinity. I **will then** examine Connell's framework of hegemonic masculinity and **finally** I will describe the importance of examining masculine aesthetics.

The body

- * Group research studies and other types of literature (reviews, theoretical articles, case studies, etc.) according to common denominators such as qualitative versus quantitative approaches, conclusions of authors, specific purpose or objective, chronology, etc. With some rationale as to why this organization is important/useful.

The Body

- * Summarize individual studies or articles with as much or as little detail as each merits according to its comparative importance in the literature, remembering that space (length) denotes significance.
- * Provide the reader with strong "umbrella" sentences at beginnings of paragraphs, "signposts" throughout, and brief "so what" summary sentences at intermediate points in the review to aid in understanding comparisons and analyses.

Conclusion

- Summarize major contributions of significant studies and articles to the body of knowledge under review, maintaining the focus established in the introduction.
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Conclusion

- Evaluate the current "state of the art" for the body of knowledge reviewed, pointing out major methodological flaws or gaps in research, inconsistencies in theory and findings, and areas or issues pertinent to future study.



Conclusion

- Conclude by providing some insight into the relationship between the central topic of the literature review and a larger area of study such as a discipline, a scientific endeavor, or a profession.

Experiments

Does viewing American History X
impact students racial views?

Topics Appropriate to Experiments

- Projects with limited and well-defined concepts.
- Projects that are exploratory rather than descriptive.
- Studies of small group interaction.
- Best way to find causation
- Causal hypothesis
 - The increased use of cell phones and mp3 players have increased US citizens civil inattention and social isolation.

Experiments and Ethics

- Limits what we can study
 - Can't take two orphans and raise them gender neutral on a deserted island
- Must consider all of the ways the research could harm the subject
 - Asking relationship questions can have an impact on relationship

Components of Experiments

Three Pairs

- Independent and dependent variables
- Pretesting and posttesting
- Experimental and control groups

Experimental and Control Groups

- Must be as similar as possible.
- Control group represents what the experimental group would have been like had it not been exposed to the stimulus.

Selecting Subjects

- Probability sampling
- Randomization
- Matching

Randomization and Matching

- May not know which variables will be relevant for matching process.
- Most statistics used to analyze results assume randomization.
- Randomization only makes sense if you have a large pool of subjects.

Sources of Internal Invalidity

- Historical events may occur during the course of the experiment.
- Maturation of the subjects.
- Testing and retesting can influence behavior.
- Instrumentation

Sources of Internal Invalidity

- Statistical regression of subjects starting out in extreme positions.
- Selection biases.
- Experimental mortality - subjects drop out of the study before it's completed.
- Demoralized control group subjects.

Experimental design

- Solomon four-group design –does pretesting influence outcome?
- Two control and two experimental groups
 - Who gets post and pre tests?
 - What do we learn from our designs

Preexperimental Research Designs or Quasi-experimental

- One-shot case study - single group of subjects is measured on a variable following experimental stimulus.
- One-group pretest-posttest design - adds a pre-test for the group, but lacks a control group.
- Static-group comparison - includes experimental and control group, but no pre-test.

"Natural" Experiments

- Important social scientific experiments occur outside controlled settings and in the course of normal social events.
- Raise validity issues because researcher must take things as they occur.
- IV is not controlled

Quasi-experimental

- An experiment design that is missing one or more aspects of true experimental design
- Often random assignment

Field experiments

- An experiment done in the real world
- Has better generalizability
- Can include lab research

Web-based Experiments

- Increasingly, researchers are using the World Wide Web to conduct experiments.
- Because representative samples are not essential in most experiments, researchers use volunteers who respond to invitations online.

Experimental Method

Strengths:

- Isolation of the experimental variable over time.
- Experiments can be replicated several times using different groups of subjects.

Experimental Method

Weaknesses:

- Artificiality of laboratory setting.
- Social processes that occur in a lab might not occur in a more natural social setting.