

LITERATURE REVIEW TABULATION: A CONCEPT (LR-TAB)

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ABSTRACT

Most students tend to pick insufficient input and later find it difficult to organize their literature writing. Therefore, they face difficulty in synthesizing, critiquing, and explaining the literature review. Till today, there is little to no studies proving that there is a certain standard to adhere to when writing a literature review. Thus, for students who are still new in the research field, they will face challenges in finding the key points required to be placed in the chapter. Based on a preliminary survey conducted among the postgraduate students of the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, 93.6% of them felt that they need a system that can help them to identify the main points required to be put in the literature review section. This is in parallel with the characteristics of the system to be applied in LR-TAB that suits the need of new researchers especially postgraduate students who require a system to facilitate and ease the searching and writing of literature reviews. Due to those reasons, the aim of having LR-TAB is expected to guide new researchers to enhance their searching and reading skills for literature review. The novelty of LR-TAB is that it is very easy to be implemented since it has a friendly search feature and does not require tedious training. The specialty of the LR-TAB is it contains a process of picking the right information to be put in the chapter of literature review within a short time. The impacts of LR-TAB include its ability to assist non-native speakers in writing and understanding the literature review, enhance students' motivation in writing a literature review, and familiarize the students with the skill in identifying the significant points of the literature. Therefore, it is anticipated that the innovation created will not just act as a guideline but also boost the confidence level of new researchers, specifically postgraduate students in writing their dissertations or thesis.

Keywords: literature review, LR-Tab, new researcher, innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing a relevant literature review is very important in all research disciplines. The value of a literature review is measured based on what has been implemented, what is found as well as a clear report on an issue (Snyder, 2019). However, searching for information to write a literature review is also a huge responsibility in thesis writing (Claudius, 2016). The main focus in writing a literature review is related to the reliability of the sources as well as the findings that can be obtained from the research. However, writing a systematic literature review is often cumbersome, complicated, and tedious for the students, especially those who lack experience in doing research. Till today, there are very few studies conducted that prove that there is a certain standard to adhere to when writing a literature review. Thus, for students who are still new in the research field, they will face challenges in finding the key points that are required to be placed in the chapter. A thesis or dissertation is a requirement for students to complete in order to obtain their master by coursework and research or PhD degree in Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA. However, based on the early observations and responses gained from the students, it was found that they have issues with submitting their work on time due to a lack of experience in writing. Some of them have left the study world for quite a while to enter the employment field and after a few years, they came back to the university to further their studies. This time around, most of them need to restart the formal cycle of how they should begin their

research. This innovation attempts to cater to the challenges faced by new researchers in discovering the right information to be placed in their writing. Due to that reason, the aim of having the LR-TAB is to guide new researchers to enhance their searching and reading skills for literature.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This preliminary survey was conducted to obtain the views of postgraduate students in writing a literature review which many claim that it requires a lot of time and skills. This is to ensure that relevant literature can be gathered with accurate information and the required research gap can be produced. From this feedback, it will help to observe whether creating the LR-TAB can help students on how the important information in an article can be picked to be put in their literature review section. Hence, this survey has used quantitative methods and was analysed with descriptive analysis. In the survey, 78 questionnaires have been distributed online to the postgraduate students, specifically students of the Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Shah Alam to gain their opinion on the challenges in writing a literature review. The questionnaires were divided into 2 parts. In the first section, there were five questions related to the respondents' demographic information and in the second section, there were five questions on the challenges of writing a literature review including questions on whether or not they need a helpful and friendly system that can guide them to write the literature review.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1: Descriptive Analysis

3.1.1. Demographic Profiles

Table 1. Demographic Profiles

| No | Item | Categories | Frequencies | Percentage |
|----|--------------------|----------------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 | Program | Master by Coursework | 44 | 56.4% |
| | | Master by Research | 13 | 16.7% |
| | | PhD | 21 | 26.9% |
| | | | | |
| 2 | Year of studies | First Year | 51 | 65.4% |
| | | Second Year | 22 | 28.2% |
| | | Third Year | 2 | 2.5% |
| | | Fourth Year | 3 | 3.8% |
| 3 | Gender | Male | 17 | 21.8% |
| | | Female | 61 | 78.2% |
| 4 | Working Experience | 0 | 15 | 19.2% |
| | | Less than 1 year | 27 | 34.6% |
| | | 2-4- years | 10 | 12.8% |
| | | More than 5 years | 26 | 33.3% |

The Demographic Profile of the respondents as shown in Table 1 shows a total of 78 respondents which consists of 21.8% male and 78.2% female respondents. Most of the respondents enrolled in the master by coursework program in the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies (56.4%). That is then followed by those in the PhD program (26.9%) and Master by research program (16.7%). In terms of years of studies, most of the respondents came from the first-year students' group which was 65.4%, followed by the second-year students (28.2%) and the third as well as fourth-year students each showed 2.5% and 3.8% respectively. It had been identified that 19.2% of the respondents do not have any working experience when they enrolled in the program, 34.6% have less than one year of working experience, 12.8% have 2 until 4 years working experience and 33.3% of the research respondents have more than 5 years working experience. The survey also had shown that 47.4% of the respondents, specifically those who are part-time students, agreed that most of their work is associated with research and the new system would help them to ease their daily assignments.

3.1.2. The Challenges of Literature Review Writing

Table 2. The Challenges Faced by The Respondents

| No | Items | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|----|--|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | I found that writing Literature Review is very challenging | Strongly disagree | 0 | 0 |
| | | Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| | | Neutral | 10 | 12.8 |
| | | Agreed | 31 | 39.7 |
| | | Strongly Agreed | 37 | 47.4 |
| 2 | My current knowledge helps me to develop the Literature Review writing | Strongly disagree | 1 | 1.3 |
| | | Disagree | 2 | 2.6 |
| | | Neutral | 18 | 23.1 |
| | | Agreed | 37 | 47.4 |
| | | Strongly Agreed | 20 | 25.6 |
| 3 | Reading literature materials manually take most of my time | Strongly disagree | 0 | 0 |
| | | Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| | | Neutral | 3 | 3.8 |
| | | Agreed | 29 | 37.2 |
| | | Strongly Agreed | 46 | 59 |
| 4 | I have a problem picking the most important point to be considered in my writing | Strongly disagree | 0 | 0 |
| | | Disagree | 5 | 6.4 |
| | | Neutral | 9 | 11.5 |
| | | Agreed | 28 | 35.9 |
| | | Strongly Agreed | 36 | 46.2 |

By referring to Table 2, it can be seen that there is a group of students who found that writing a literature review is very challenging. This can be proven when 37 out of 78 respondents (47.4%) mentioned they faced challenges while writing a literature review. The feedback received from the respondents on whether or not their current knowledge helps them to develop the literature writing shows that most of the respondents (73%) strongly agreed and agreed with the statement. However, a total of 75 out of 78 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that reading the literature materials manually takes most of their time while a small number of 3 respondents are deemed to disagree. Based on the findings, many students find it challenging to get sufficient and important information. The survey had shown that 64 out of 78 respondents agreed that they have a problem in picking the most important points to be considered in their writing.

3.1.3. Shifting From Traditional to Technology Assistance

Table 3. Respondents Feedback on Literature Friendly System

| No | Items | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|----|--|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | It will be great if there is a friendly system that would help me to identify the main point required in the Literature Review | Strongly disagree | 0 | 0 |
| | | Disagree | 0 | 0 |
| | | Neutral | 5 | 6.4 |
| | | Agreed | 13 | 16.7 |
| | | Strongly Agreed | 60 | 76.9 |

Based on Table 3, it can be inferred that 93.6% of the respondents had agreed to the statement that it will be great if there were a friendly system that would help them to identify the main points required in the Literature. For this reason, the LR-TAB that is equipped with technology is believed to suit the best options for early assistance to guide the students on how the important information in an article can be picked to be put in a literature review section. This innovation is expected to be able to drive the students towards getting the basic idea of how literature writing can be implemented especially for those who do not have any experience in research.

3.1.4 The Product Concept



Figure 1. LR-Tab

4. CONTRIBUTION AND USEFULNESS

This section highlights the contributions and effectiveness of the LR-Tab in providing insights on utilizing technology in students' learning process:

4.1: To assist non-native speakers in writing and understanding the literature review

For the past few years, Malaysia had received a significant jump in the number of international students which indirectly placed the country in 9th place from the 12th place since 2014 (Mohammad, Rashid and Yunus, 2018). However, most of the students were facing difficulties adapting themselves to the English language in both communication and the education system since they have a lack of exposure and practice in their homeland. The scholars had also identified that almost 84.4% of the international students admitted that they have difficulties searching for suitable sources for their academic writing aside from experiencing challenges in formatting and idea organization. Hence, with the LR-TAB, it is expected that it will assist not only domestic students but also non-native speakers to ease their understanding in reading works of literature from multiple sources because language is one of their biggest challenges.

4.2: To enhance students' motivation in writing literature review

Literature review can be considered as the heart of any academic writing as it provides in-depth support and evidence to the study. It is also important to note that conducting a literature review could be tricky as there are specific information required to help in contributing to the research idea and thus, should not be underestimated. However, most of the students would find it difficult to identify the key facts that would enlighten their study which would eventually affect the outcome in their writing as literature review will be applied in the preliminary stage as well as in the discussion part of the final stage. This could be the reason why the students would feel demotivated to progressively write their research and thus, a less formal approach would be a help in this case to scan the literature needed (Winchester and Salji, 2016). In parallel to this, LR-TAB will be a fit tool to ease the process of literature scanning which will indirectly save up most of their time while driving their motivation upwards to provide quality writing in the future.

4.3: To familiarize the students with the skill in identifying the significant point of the literature

Mohammed and Ahmed (2018) in their study had mentioned how writing a literature review could be associated with arts and sciences to come out with a quality study. They had also emphasized on the special skills that need to be learned gradually accompanied by writing experiences and practices to produce an insightful literature review. That is the reason why the LR-TAB is believed to acquaint the students with the skill of identifying the significant points of the literature instead of choosing a random statement without proper direction. The tool will diagnose the literature of their choice to identify and track down the key points for the student's easy reference. In the future, the students will most probably be able to extract the main information without having to rely on the tool.

5. COMMERCIALITY OF THE PRODUCT

LR Tab has a big potential to be commercialized through education and research institutions or even search engine companies to bring the system closer to the potential users i.e., students and researchers. It is a very convincing product that could function to solve a new researcher problem and has a strong market demand. Through the collaboration that will be made with the relevant industry, it is hoped that LR-Tab can further highlight the abilities of new researchers and students in producing high-quality of writing.

6. CONCLUSION

The creation of innovations on the LR-Tab is expected to assist postgraduate students in getting the rhythm to start their research and academic writing. In line with the university's objective to ensure the students graduate on time, the system is expected to provide the best returns to the university and greater opportunities to the students. Challenges in writing among students certainly require support and creativity to create a perfect learning situation. In light of the survey done, it shows that the students who lacked research experiences agreed that they need to have a system that can assist them to ease their writing journey. This portrays the acceptance of the students to learn but in an attractive and friendlier way. Hence, it is hoped that the innovation can motivate the students to upgrade their skills in doing research and writing despite being demotivated when they fail to complete their writing on time. In favour of the recommendations, perhaps, the faculty can consider adopting the technology so that the academic goals can be easily achieved. Even though the faculty might have to spend more on the system, but it would definitely pay off in terms of ensuring that the students will be able to complete their thesis or dissertation as required by the university.

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