

Literature Reviews

A "Review of the Literature" involves specific research that is, by its very nature, a secondary source. A scholar provides an evaluative overview of existing literature on a topic. Several of the library's online databases enable search capabilities for literature reviews.

One methodology to conduct a literature review is to use Boolean and adjacency operators. Let's look at a literature review search using EBSCO's Academic Search Complete.

We will do a search for literature reviews concerning politics and partnerships. Please note the search structure:

- the first word is the subject of the search, "politics"
- we want to limit our search to "partnerships" in politics. To limit searches, use the Boolean search operator "AND" (first red underlined word)
- as a result, we have "politics AND partnerships"
- we also want to limit this search to literature reviews, so we include "review" after a second Boolean "AND" search operator
- because we want to search for "literature reviews" and the synonym phrase "review of the literature", we will conduct the search using an adjacency operation. "w2" (third red underline) means "within 2 words." It will look for the words "review" and "literature" within two words of each other, no matter the order of the words.
- lastly, we will type in the word "literature"

Therefore, this search will be executed as:

find all of the articles inclusive of the words "politics" and "partnerships." The retrieved articles must also include the words "review" and "literature" within two words of each other.



Searching: **Academic Search Complete** | [Choose Databases >](#)

politics AND partnerships AND review w2 literature

Search

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Execute the Search

The retrieved results are displayed in this screen shot. Six articles were retrieved (red rectangle).

Note that the result is entitled "Partnerships for Sustainable Development." Because of our search strategy, this article should include a literature review. Click on the article's title to review the abstract.

Searching: **Academic Search Complete** | Choose Databases » [Mildred F. Sawyer](#)

politics AND partnerships AND review w2 literature

[Search](#) [Clear](#) ?

[Advanced Search](#) | [Visual Search](#) | [Search History/Alerts](#) | [Preferences](#) »

All Results: 1-6 of 6 Page: 1 Sort by: [Add \(1-6\)](#)

Results for: politics AND partnerships AND review w2 literature [Alert / Save / Share](#) »

1. [Partnerships for Sustainable Development. An Appraisal Framework.](#)

By: Biermann, Frank; Chan, Man-san Sander; Mert, Aysem; Pattberg, Philipp. Conference Papers -- International Studies Association, 2007 Annual Meeting, p1-19, 0p; (AN 26959336)

Abstract Only

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Review the Abstract

Bibliographic information concerning the article is displayed. Note that the abstract indicates that the article will “review the available literature” (red underline) concerning partnerships in politics.

Abstract:

Many transnational multi-stakeholder initiatives (also known as *partnerships*) have emerged in global sustainability *politics*. Most research has so far been conducted in the form of single-or small-n case studies. Although many of these studies address the pressing questions of effectiveness (or influence), the accumulated case studies do not provide convincing knowledge on the role and relevance of *partnerships* in local and global *politics*. They suffer from a lack of consensus on a definition and therefore they are difficult to compare. Hence, we argue for a large-n evaluation of the influence of *partnerships* in global sustainability *politics*, to assess whether and how *partnerships* matter. To facilitate such analysis, we are developing a Global Sustainability *Partnership* Database (GSPD). In the GSPD data is collected on two types of variables: measures of the influence of transnational public policy *partnerships*, and possible explanatory factors. This paper presents an appraisal framework for the relevance and influence of *partnerships*, in particular by means of the GSPD that we are developing. To this end, we first review the available literature (section 2) and outline then our general approach and especially our database project (section 3). Its key elements we describe in the two subsequent sections: our measurement concept for the influence of *partnerships* (section 4), and a set of hypotheses that we will test in a larger research effort based on this database (section 5). ..PAT.-Unpublished Manuscript

There are many other strategies to conduct literature reviews. Many databases enable users to execute a search for literature reviews in the advanced search options. Please review each database's help menus, or consult with a reference librarian, if you have questions concerning literature review research.