

NVIVO & LITERATURE REVIEWS

Using Nvivo to enhance and manage the literature review process

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Overview - This document gives basic insights, tips, and overview of how Nvivo can enhance and assist with managing literature review process. The document first highlights the importance of literature review, then this document presents a summary of the types of literature reviews. The main section of the document is Nvivo and literature reviews, discussed in a simple pragmatic and reflective way, followed by useful list both theoretical and practical to build the knowledge even further regarding qualitative data analysis.

The importance of literature review

Literature review is an important element of a research project, particularly for management and social sciences, as it serves a key purpose for answering the overall research questions. For example, a good literature review can:

- Identifies the gap in the research and body of knowledge
- Shows conflicts in previous studies
- Highlights open questions left from other research (normally under future work and limitations sections)
- Justifies the research project by highlighting the need for additional research in particular area
- Identifies relationships and contributions of the topic with other topics/fields

Types of literature reviews

Narrative or Traditional literature reviews

Traditional review critique and summarise a body of literature about the thesis topic. The literature is researched from the relevant databases and is generally very selective in the material used. The criteria for literature selection for a narrative review is not always made open to the reader. These reviews are very useful in gathering and synthesising the literature located. The principal purpose of a narrative review is to give the author and reader a comprehensive overview of the topic and to highlight significant areas of research, narrative reviews can help to identify gaps in the research and help to refine and define research questions. Where a narrative approach differs from a systematic approach is in the notation of search methods criteria for selection, this can leave narrative reviews open to suggestions of bias.

Scoping Reviews

A scoping review is quite like a Systematic literature review. The key difference being that there are no restrictions on the materials resourced. The purpose of the scoping review is to find ALL the materials on the topic. When undertaking a scoping review, it is important to systematise your search strategies to ensure you can replicate your searches and to attend to any gaps that appear in results.

When reading and sorting the results, again apply some of the measures used in a systematic review so that your search results are sorted by key themes and well organised.

Systematic Literature Review

Catherine Pickering, academic staff member of Griffith University has been instrumental in developing and promoting the Systematic Quantitative Literature Review.

The Pickering method web page is a thorough guide to the systematic literature review process and contains links to videos and examples of:

- How to set up a systematic quantitative literature review
- How to develop review criteria categories
- How to record criteria data with spreadsheets
- How to undertake analysis of the literature

A systematic review offers a comprehensive methodology for evaluating current body of knowledge using a multi-stage review strategy, therefore a structured literature review differs from a more narrative review because of its methodical approach, implying a detailed description of the steps taken to select, scan and analyse the literature, aiming at reducing biases and increasing transparency (Tranfield *et al.*, 2003; Pittaway *et al.*, 2004; Booth *et al.*, 2016).

In order to assess the quality of the systematic literature review, the review follows four key phases: first the design, second the conduct, third the analysis, and fourth structuring and writing the review (Snyder, 2019). The design phase consists of the overall research field, and how literature review contributes to the field by setting the incentive, the purpose, and the

research question. In addition, the approach/methodology for the literature review is clearly stated as well as, the methodology and the search strategy clearly and transparently described by including search terms, databases used, and explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria. The conducting phase looks at the search plan and practical plan for search process and selecting the relevant articles. The analysis phase includes the information that needed to be abstracted to fulfil the purpose of the systematic literature review, in addition to look at how this process is documented and reported. The last phase is structuring and writing the literature review, this reflects the overall review by ensuring that motivation and the need for the review is clearly communicated as well as the results are clearly presented and explained

Database, search, and the process of selecting criteria

Google Scholar is a good starting point. However, a more advance database is recommended such as Scopus database permit and create and re-use highly controllable searches and to limit search to subject areas and even journal titles. These indexes have years of development behind them and are well-indexed and professional tools. Using Scopus to apply key phrases and Boolean logics, (e.g., AND, OR) as well as wild cards (using the function*). The search comprised five steps: First, apply the search key phrases, terms and Boolean logics using Scopus data base. Second, limit the search to look within Title, or Abstract/Author-Supplied Abstract, or Author Supplied Keywords. Third, selects only the required field (e.g., Business, Management and Accounting as subject area). Fourth, selects only the publication stage as final, language as English, and source type as Journal. Fifth, to ensure the quality, manually you can select a particularly rated journals using a ranking list by such as Chartered Association of Business Schools CABS.

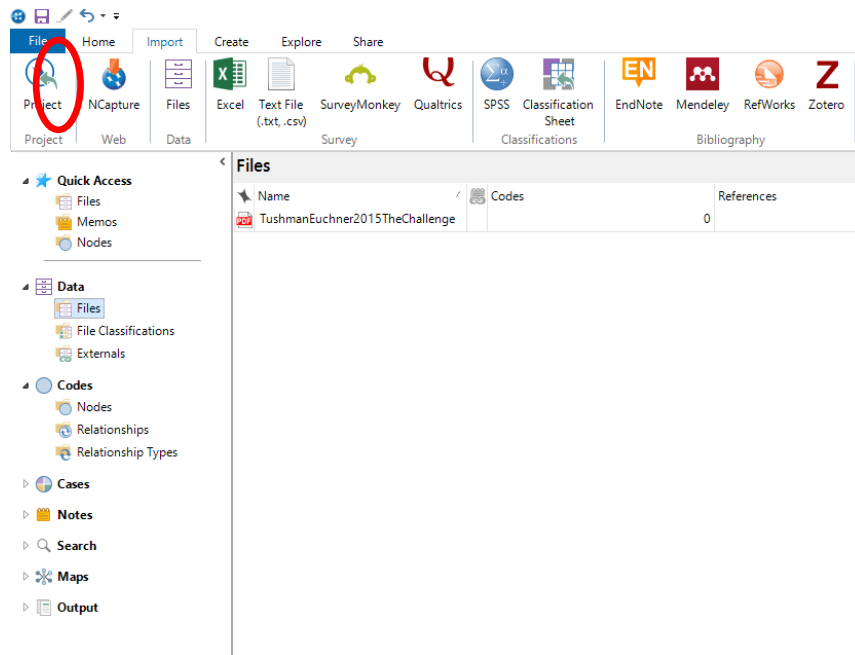
Nvivo and Literature review

Previously we have discussed the types of literature reviews and the importance of conducting a literature review in a research project. This section explores some ideas of how to utilise and use Nvivo to assist with the process of literature review. Regardless to the type of the literature review, they all have similar purposes; to identify the gap in the research and the body of knowledge, and to show conflicts in previous studies, as well as to foreground the unanswered questions - normally within the limitations and future work sections, which is typically toward the end of the research article. The mindset here is to treat each academic article and resource of the literature review as a qualitative data, because essentially these articles and resources are dominantly text-based documents.

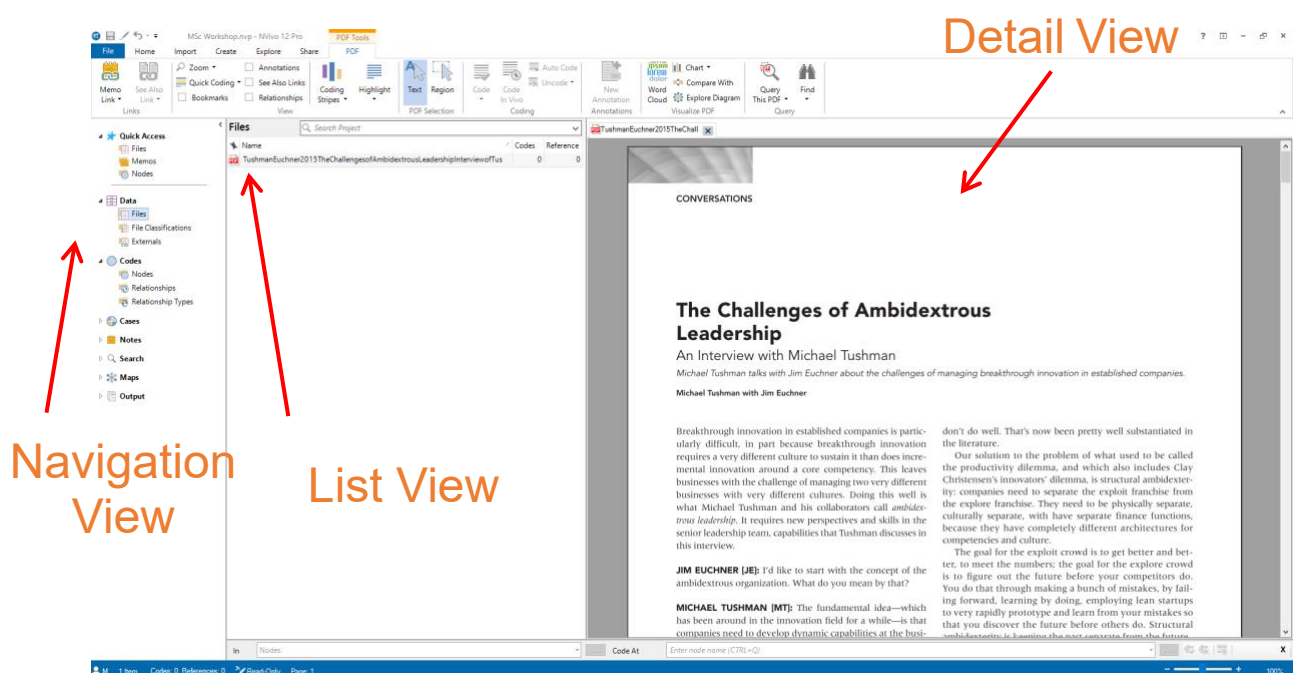
“Regardless to the type of the literature review, they all have similar purposes; to identify the gap in the research and the body of knowledge, and to show conflicts in previous studies as well as to foreground the unanswered questions - normally within the limitations and future work sections... the mindset here is to treat each academic article and resource for the literature review as a qualitative data, because essentially these articles and resources are dominantly a text-based document”

There are five key steps that can be useful and replicated in Nvivo in a systematic way to enhance the process and quality of the literature review.

1. **Import academic articles and relevant literature:** the relevant literature based on the type of the literature review, some using a highly controllable data base, other based on each article field and research question.



Articles and resources once uploaded to will be listed in the 'list view' and clicking on each of the resources will expand into the 'detail view'



2. **Apply some functions in Nvivo such as word clouds:** Word clouds can be useful to determine the most frequent used word in the article (s), it can also be useful to see how a topic is shaped or compared with other articles or later can be compared with empirical data.



3. **Creating nodes suitable for the literature review:** One way of utilizing Nvivo for literature reviews is that you can create nodes for research questions, limitations, future work, and maybe even methodologies. This might sound basic, but very effective, if you can just compare research questions of each article in the literature review as well as limitation and future work suggestions, you can draw a map of trends, gaps, and contradictions in the body of knowledge and can enhance the foundation of your research. All of this is supported argument from the literature and gives a richer view and more manageable way of conducting literature review.
4. **Coding and themes (A) – predetermined:** first you can build and code big sections of each article (methodology sections even broadly to see if it is qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods, another section is abstract, future work and limitations are also a good possible sections). These nodes a lot can give a bigger and clearer picture if the research and the topic.
5. **Coding and themes (B) – emerging :** reading through articles will give some interesting observations: perhaps the research been presented always in static view, and a dynamic view is under looked, maybe the research always look at a particular level of analysis and a multiple-level of analysis is absent from the debate... there are many possibilities the key here is that you start having a structured and more organised way to present a literature review with the support from Nvivo software package.

References

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- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333-339.
- Tranfield, D., Denyer, D. and Smart, P. (2003). Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British journal of management*, 14(3), 207-222.

Useful resources

Useful Nvivo Videos on YouTube

- Formatting for MS Word to import into Nvivo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltBqSbg3Zio>
- Coding: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4crQbeHKhtk>
- Text Search Queries: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkRXmwqjATk>

CONTACT AND SUPPORT

- Twitter: @NVivobyQSR and @NVivoSup for support queries
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/nvivobyqsr
- Linked In: NVivo Users Group
- YouTube: QSR International
- Email: support@qsrinternational.com

WEBSITES

- CAQDAS Primer (Loughborough University) www.restore.ac.uk/lboro/research/software/caqdas_primer.php
- Overview of Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis.
- Online QDA (University of Huddersfield)
- Issues and methodologies in qualitative data analysis - www.onlineqda.hud.ac.uk

Literature on Qualitative Data Analysis and Nvivo

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