How Does the Literature Review Differ From Doing Desk Research?

There is an overlap between doing a literature review and doing original research. When you use the same methods as a literature review, but are looking at the materials as part of your main research, this is referred to as desk research. You may well be working largely with grey literature, which can be both part of your secondary source material and at the same time be a primary resource as evidence.

You can find materials for your desk research in much the same way as you would for a literature review.

Traditionally, conducting primary research with documents involved finding the physical documents in a library and reading them there. You may still have to do this with older, local, documents but a very great deal of material is now available online. Much material will have been originally created in web form. For example, all UK government documents and most documents produced by local government are available in web form and the same is true for almost all national governments, most local governments, and international organizations. Older material has now often been digitized and will be available to you online.

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Search for resources about literature reviews

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