RADAR Framework

This is a tool to help you remember the criteria used to evaluate the quality, credibility, and relevance of the information you find. This is not a yes/no test or fool proof test but allows you to consider the overall quality of the information you found.

Relevance

- How relevant is the information to your assignment?
- Does it meet your research needs?
- Does the information relate to your topic or help to answer your research question?
  - Tip: Some studies are very detailed, try reading the introduction, discussion, or conclusion sections to find valuable information.

Authority

- Who created the information and where is it published?
- Is the information published in a peer reviewed publication?
- Does the journal publisher give information on their peer review process?
- Check the credentials or qualifications of the author(s). Does the author(s) have credibility through education and/or experience to be studying and writing on the topic?
- Consider the affiliation of the author(s).
- If the author is an organization, how credible are they?
Date

- When was the information first published or last updated?
- A general rule of thumb for the health sciences is to use articles published in the last 5 years, but older articles may be appropriate when you're conducting a literature review or it’s a landmark study that should be discussed.
- Have the researchers produced any follow up studies that build upon the research in this study?

Appearance

- How does the information appear?
- How much detail are you given about how the study was conducted?
- Did they conduct a literature review?
- Check who/what the author references and evaluate the quality of the information they included.
- What study design did they use? Where does it fall on the hierarchy of evidence? What are the strengths and limitations of this study design?
- Did the researchers include information about how they chose their participants? What was their inclusion and exclusion criteria (for example, age, gender, comorbidities)?
- Did the researchers describe their data collection procedure(s)? What type of data did they collect?
- Did the researchers mention the limitations of their study (for example, population size or demographics)?
- Do you notice any unstated limitations?
• Do their conclusions or recommendations align with the results they obtained?
• Do they discuss the benefits and risks of their suggestions?
• How have their findings contributed to the body of knowledge? Their findings could present new information that was not previously known, they could confirm the findings of past studies, or they could be a combination of both.
• Do the researchers suggest areas for further research?

Reason (for creation)

• Why was the information published?
• Are there any clear biases in the information?
• To what degree is the information objective and impartial?
• Have any funding sources or conflicts of interest been disclosed? If the researchers acknowledge funding, check to see where that funding is coming from – is it a government agency, a private company, etc.? Who are the researchers employed by? Do they do consulting work outside of their primary employment?
• Was the study approved by a research ethics board?