



Building Collaborative Networks for Innovation

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Systematic Reviews: Their Emerging Role in Co-Creating Strategic Links for Innovation

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Background

- The exponential decline in economic growth and competitiveness, coupled with a growing number of social problems, such as obesity and global warming, are creating challenging times for Irish policy makers
- It is quite apparent that the complex multifaceted issues facing Irish society cannot be solved by government alone (Australian Public Service Commission, 2007)
- In the drive towards a smart economy, systematic reviews efficiently integrate existing information and provide data for rational decision making by researchers and policy makers (VanTeijlingen and Bruce, 1999)
- Systematic reviews can actively facilitate ongoing collaborative partnerships between social marketers, practitioners, researchers and policy makers, at both macro and micro environmental levels through a strategic co-created networked approach.

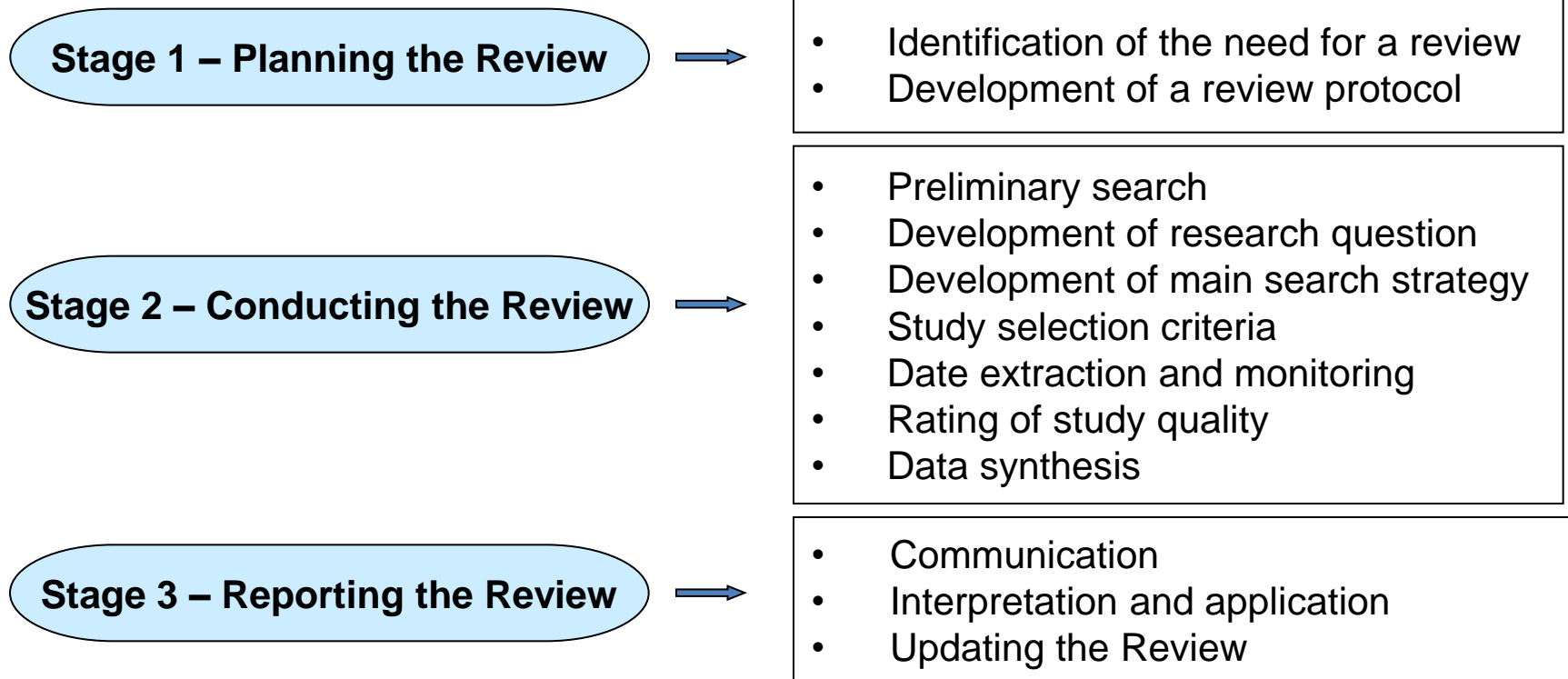
Historical Evolution of Systematic Reviews

- Systematic reviews are not a new phenomenon
- Systematic reviews were conceived as early as the 17th Century
- Systematic reviews have grown out of the 19th and 20th century efforts in the social sciences, particularly psychology and education
- Definitions of Systematic Reviews
 - A means of identifying, evaluating and interpreting all available research relevant to a particular research question, or topic area, or phenomenon of interest (Kitchenham, 2004)
 - Systematic reviews aim to identify, evaluate and summarise findings of all relevant individual studies, thereby making the available evidence more accessible to decision makers (Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, 2008)

Systematic Review Methods

- Systematic reviews follow rigorous methodologies and are comprehensive in nature
- Systematic reviews incorporate several discrete activities

The Review Process



Adapted from Kitchenham (2004); EPPI Centre (2007) and Safefood (2008)

The Emerging Roles of Systematic Reviews

- Current policy co-ordination processes adopt a top-down approach, whereby policies are devised by formal bodies at upstream macro-environmental levels and implemented downstream
- This unilateral and didactic approach to policy formulation will no longer suffice in areas such as obesity, tobacco control, climate change
- The classic 'linear' or 'vertical' model of policy formulation needs to be replaced by a systemic, multi-directional and multi-dimensional model of interactive collaborative partnerships
- Systematic reviews offer an evidence-base to close the gap between theory and policy in the form of synergistic partnerships, particularly in the area of public health intervention

- Public health has become an area of urgent priority for many nations
- Public health is a “broadly defined set of activities that aim to protect, promote and restore the health of all people”
- Health interventions are often complex as they aim to address behaviour change at individual, group and society levels
- The recent advocacy for more stringent health policies necessitates a review of the effectiveness of past interventions and strategies, thus, illustrating the need for systematic research
- Systematic reviews provide a rigorous evidence base in analysing large quantities of information published in the public health domain

Systematic Review of the Effectiveness of Social Marketing Nutrition and Food Safety Interventions (2004-2005)

Systematic Review of the Extent, Nature and Effect of Food Promotion to Children: A Review of the Evidence to December 2008

Reflection on the Systematic Reviews commissioned by Safefood Ireland and the World Health Organisation

- Both reviews fulfil the hallmarks of good quality systematic research
- Both reviews employed rigorous and explicit methodologies in order to eliminate bias and subjectivity
- Both reviews set clear, concise and achievable objectives in the planning stages of the review process
- Both reviews demonstrated transparency allowing for credible, replicable and revisable reviews
- Both reviews have acted as catalysts to policy debate on the importance of public health interventions on national and global scales

Systematic reviews facilitate the co-creation of strategic links for innovation in 3 ways

- Knowledge Transfer across and between all relevant stakeholders
- Value Co-Creation
- Knowledge Co-Creation
 - Inter-system learning
 - Meaningful engagement through a strategic network approach
 - A co-creational process of long lasting change for the betterment of society

Knowledge Transfer

- Systematic reviews have the ability to transfer knowledge across and between all relevant stakeholders
- This total market or collaborative networked approach embraces openness
- Openness allows the review group to move away from the goods dominant logic of value-in-exchange to the service dominant logic of value-in-use
- Process of integration
 - The sharing and transfer of complex knowledge, alongside the creation of value are dependent on the formation of interactive relationships
 - Establishment of linkages between upstream policy makers and downstream resource integrators
 - Interactivity necessitates meaningful exchange and dialogical interaction
- Knowledge transfer eliminates the confinements of a hierarchical system, allowing stakeholders from macro, meso and micro environmental levels to co-operate simultaneously through democratic processes

Value Co-Creation

- The strategic configuration of collective hubs of knowledge is dependant on value co-creation
- Win-Win situation for all the exchange actors
- Changes the roles of the stakeholders from being isolated, passive and unaware to strategically connected, active and informed
- Systematic reviews absorb high levels of knowledge intensity which compels macro, meso and micro level stakeholders to co-define, co-create and co-deliver value within and across the whole system, to ensure social change
- The collaborative empowerment of stakeholders from macro, meso and micro levels results in the integrative process of co-intelligence and co-learning for systematic reviews
- The facilitation of inter-system connectedness, trust and learning in knowledge transfer and value co-creation emanate into the critical building blocks for knowledge co-creation

Knowledge Co-Creation

- Occurs at downstream micro-environmental where the focus is individual behaviour change, or at an upstream macro-environmental levels between the public, the media and policy makers
- The co-creation of knowledge from macro, meso and micro level stakeholders is a valuable asset to the systematic process
- Knowledge co-creation facilitates
 - Co-integration
 - Co-intelligence
 - Inter-system learning
 - Inter-institutional trust
 - Interdisciplinary linkages
 - A collaborative networked approach
 - Multi-level or multi-component interventions
 - Long lasting change

Implications and Limitations of Systematic Reviews for Research and Policy

Implications

- Offers an evidence base to close the strategic gap between theory and policy in the drive towards a smart economy
- The framework provides a bridging mechanism in creating synergistic partnerships between stakeholders
 - Facilitates inter-system learning and the co-creation of credible, evidence-based intervention strategies
- Aids researchers, practitioners and policy makers in creating lasting behavioural change for the betterment of society through a collaborative networked approach

Limitations

- Requires substantial financial resources
- Issues relating to the objectivity of researchers
 - The dissemination of review outcomes
 - Implementation and Evaluation

Conclusion

- Systematic reviews have a distinguished record
- Systematic reviews synthesise existing research in a manner which is fair and evidence based
- Systematic reviews have the capacity to integrate up, mid and downstream stakeholders from macro, meso and micro environmental levels, in a collaborative networked approach to ensure social change
- If the Irish government wishes to achieve the wider goals of society in the drive to becoming a smart economy, then the strategic role of systematic reviews in co-creating valued linkages between research and policy must be adopted for the stabilisation, progression and advancement of the Irish economy



Thank You

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