



# 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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# Outline

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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.

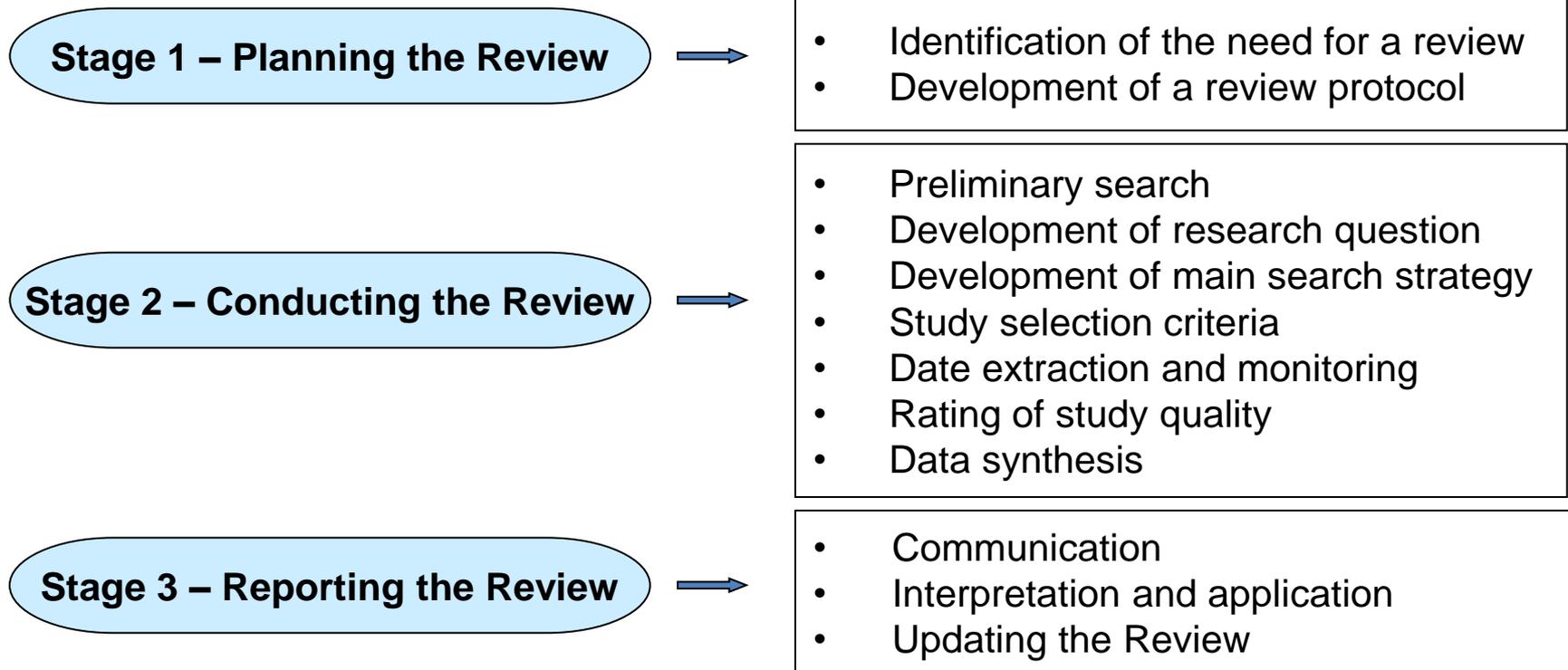
# Historical Evolution of Systematic Reviews

- Systematic reviews are not a new phenomenon
- Systematic reviews were conceived as early as the 17<sup>th</sup> Century
- Systematic reviews have grown out of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 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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