

A presentation on Literature review
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Insurance training College Research Workshop
15th October, 2022

Outline

1. What we mean by literature review
2. The general areas of interest when reviewing the literature
3. The specific areas of interest when reviewing a particular writing (e.g., a journal article)
4. What literature review is generally not
5. Some of the interesting outputs that we expect from a very good literature review
6. Illustration on google how to search for the right literature
7. Q &A

What do we mean by literature review?

Important points to give a context to my working definition:

- Literature review is a critical building block in a scientific investigation.
- When we seek to do research, we need to take time to understand (or gather knowledge) on what you are going to investigate so that we can carry out an investigation from an informed point of view.

What we mean by literature review cont..

Literature review can thus be regarded as a systematic presentation of your “findings” from existing major writings regarding the specific phenomenon that you intend to investigate.

Essentially:

- Literature review should help us to see how well you are informed in relation to what is known about the problem you want to investigate and,
- Whether or not you are well informed about the critical areas that are likely to be related to the probable answers that we need to address a particular problem.

What we would be interested in when reviewing the literature

- **What has already been done in the area of our investigation,**
- **What factors or variables are usually considered in the previous studies related to our own investigation,**
- **What perspectives are usually utilized when considering the variables or factors and explanations given.**

Take an example: if it is do with micro-insurance uptake what would we be looking for as we review the literature?

The specific content we are interested in while reviewing a particular writing, e.g., a journal article

1. Theories that you can use to have logical and coherent explanation that is guided by clear assumptions.

- The assumptions here we are referring to are beliefs/expectations about the reality we are seeking to investigate.

In the case of micro-insurance, it could be that the study I review or most studies I review use economic and marketing theories and as such some have used the marketing mix framework or demand theory to analyze the question (challenge) of the uptake of microinsurance products in the different study contexts.

The specific content we are interested in while reviewing a particular source cont...

2. Concepts and variables to use—Here you will be looking at the right acceptable terms or “words” for issues that you seek to capture in your investigation.

For stance, from the economic perspective the concepts (variables) to consider may include affordability, availability and adaptability, among others.

From the relational theories that advance trust—the key relevant concepts (variables) may include Trust in products, Trust in insurance company and/or trust in agents.

The specific content we are interested in while reviewing a particular source cont...

3. Information about the relationships you want to focus on in your investigation

4. The language used and how to present your arguments

A key highlight of what literature review is not

Literature review is not simply:

- About reading anything. The right sources can **majorly** be obtained from Professional journals and Academic journal writings and publications that meet a certain rigor (peer reviewed or by experts).
- A summary or simply describing what you find in the major existing works that you review. That is to say, literature review goes beyond a summary of what you find--and entails synthesizing and analyzing the information gathered to come up with good ideas that you will work with so as to deliver a thorough investigation (that is based on an informed point view).

Some of the interesting outputs from your literature review

1. A clear theoretical focus of your study.

When you do a good job in your literature review you will be able to capture in your literature review:

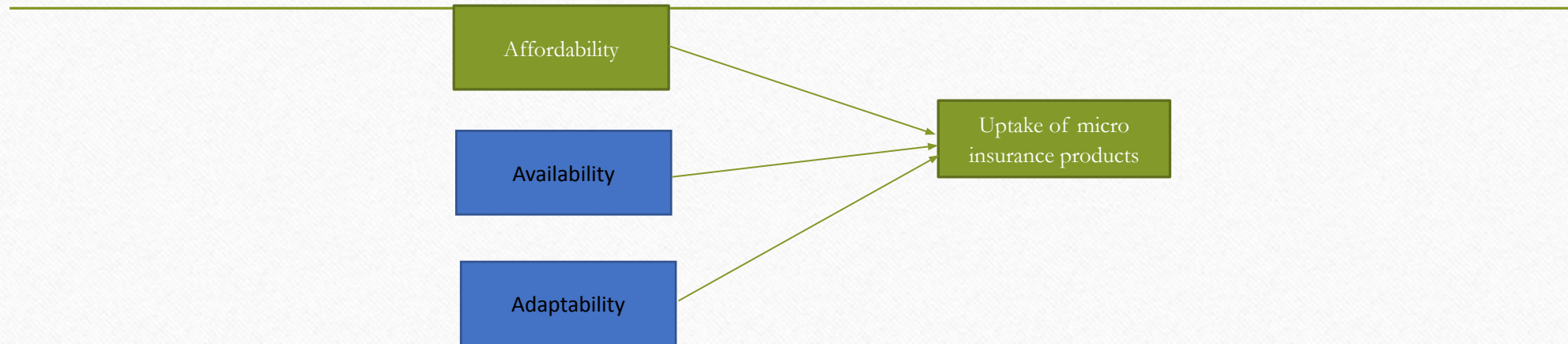
The theoretical focus of your study (theoretical framework). This is a **logic (perspective)** that you utilize to indicate the particular issues that you will focus on; and clarifies the logic underlying the claims that you make regarding the relationships you seek to examine in your investigation.

Some of the interesting outputs from your literature review

2. Conceptual framework.

This is a clear focused representation of what your investigation will focus on that is a result of a comprehensive literature review—with the selection of those issues done taking into consideration the unique context of your investigation.

An illustration from microinsurance



A possible structure for my literature review section

- Introduction—where I generally indicate the major areas addressed in the extant literature on what I want to investigate
- Theoretical lens considered in my investigation
- Conceptual framework to follow
- The arguments in the existing literature linking the issues that are at the core in influencing the problem (This is where possible answers are analyzed)
- Conclusion where the specific gaps and contributions of my research are presented

Thank you so much for Listening

Q&A