

# MY410 Week 5 Seminar

Chao-Yo Cheng

# What we have done so far

- ▶ How to formulate research question(s).
- ▶ How theory and data (both quantitative and qualitative) speak to each other.
- ▶ How to ensure rigor in research: Question-theory-empirics alignment and bias management (etc).

## Aims for this week

- ▶ Develop your ideas for your topic, literature and research question for your formative assignment (and eventually your summative assignments perhaps) through discussion and feedback from your peers.
- ▶ Develop your skills in articulating a good literature review and research question by providing feedback on your peers' plans.
- ▶ Develop your skills in identifying and articulating methodological critiques (identifying limitations) of different research designs.

# The formative assignment

- ▶ Main task: Building a research question from a literature review.
- ▶ Format: 1 page (max 500 words), incorporating:
  - References for 3 related, **empirical** articles
  - 1 paragraph introducing the topic
  - 1 paragraph outlining and critiquing the research designs, setting the background for:
  - A research question
- ▶ Due: 4pm Thursday 4 November 2021 (MT week 6)
- ▶ Full instructions on Moodle (<https://moodle.lse.ac.uk/>)

## Feedback will be provided based on

- ▶ The scope of the topic – is it too broad, or just about right?
- ▶ The selection of articles – are they appropriate for the annotated bibliography?
- ▶ Your preliminary assessment/critique of the pieces and their research designs
- ▶ Your research question
- ▶ General style, prose

# From articles to question(s)

As you scope the literature, you may notice that a particular research design may have one or more of the following elements:

- ▶ Tensions or contradictions between the papers;
- ▶ Extension to new context (e.g., different region, time period);
- ▶ Different theoretical perspective;
- ▶ Different methodological approach (e.g., build on more inductive work to propose some hypothesis-testing deductive approach);
- ▶ Something left unexplored (e.g., critical element not engaged with, need to consider other conditions);
- ▶ Something left untested.

# Peer feedback activity

- ▶ Phase 1: Discuss your drafts in pairs
  - Exchange your written plans with your neighbor(s).
  - Read over your peers' plans, note questions/ constructive feedback.
  - Verbally explain your plan to your peer; peer asks questions and gives feedback.
  - Switch!
- ▶ Phase 2: Present in groups
  - Join up into groups.
  - Building on the feedback you've received, present your plan.
  - Select a plan for plenary discussion.
- ▶ Phase 3: Plenary discussion – discuss the topic, the research question, the most useful feedback, and remaining uncertainties, etc.

# Peer feedback activity

- ▶ The topic
  - Is it clear what common topic is being addressed?
  - Is there a specific focus – or is the topic very broad or vaguely defined?
- ▶ Research design(s)
  - Are the research designs identified?
  - Are limitations of the approach appropriately identified?
  - Is there methodological diversity or not? (and what are the implications?)
- ▶ Research question(s)
  - Does the question identify a specific setting/case/location/group?
  - Does the question speak to a social science concern?
  - Is the question sufficiently clear to be feasible and tractable?