

Variable Science Mapping as Literature Review Booster – Systematic Literature Review and Empirical Evidence

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Abstract

With this research, we investigate a new type of mapping science, called variable science mapping (VSM). Beyond classical science mapping (CSM), VSM synthesizes variables and relationships, not only keywords, citations, or authorship. To determine whether VSM is superior to CSM, we systematically analyzed 63 top-tier articles that use CSM, looking at 12 steps for systematic literature review. We then asked hand-picked experts whether each CSM and VSM is useful based on the same stages. For most of the stages, we found consistency between the results of the systematic literature review and the expert interviews with respect to CSM. Moreover, the results from the expert interviews show that VSM is rated as superior in eight of 12 stages. For one stage, the experts rate CSM and VSM equally. In three stages CSM is considered more useful. We conclude with several scientific and managerial implications.

Keywords: *Systematic literature review; science mapping; variable mapping*