

Examine the information provided in each aspect of Johnston et al.'s (2015) integrative review and answer the following questions:

- Are the aims and objectives of the review clear?
- Are the inclusion and exclusion criteria appropriate?
- Is the search strategy clearly outlined?
- Do the search terms used help achieve the aims and objectives of the review?
- Have the authors outlined how they evaluated the literature?
- Do the authors outline how they arrived at the themes for the subsequent presentation of findings?
- How do you think this example differs from Day and Higgins (2015), as cited in Box 2.6?

Scoping Review

Although they have been used for a number of years across a range of academic disciplines, the scoping review is a relatively new phenomenon in healthcare. In the literature you will also find them described variously as 'scoping studies', 'scoping method', 'mapping of research', 'rapid scoping reviews' and/or 'scoping projects' (Davis et al., 2009; Colquhoun et al., 2014). These authors also suggest that scoping reviews/studies are poorly defined and they vary considerably in terms of their aims, the process by which the review is conducted and their methodological rigour. Usually, however, they consist of one or more discrete components, the most common of which is that they are not driven by a predetermined protocol (Armstrong et al., 2011). They can also involve consultations with stakeholders and literature mapping, conceptual mapping and/or policy mapping (Anderson et al., 2008). Again, it is a good idea to have some idea of what these reviews entail as it is likely you will come across them in your reading.

According to Arksey and O'Malley (2005: 21), there are at least four common reasons why a scoping study might be undertaken and these have been incorporated into key criteria for the commissioning of a scoping study by the NIHR Service Delivery and Organisation Research and Development programme (SDO Programme) (see Box 2.8).

Box 2.8 Reasons for Undertaking a Scoping Review/Study

- To 'map' the extent, range and nature of research activity in an area of study. In this type of scoping, the research may not be described in detail but might include mapping of concepts, policies, evidence and/or user views (separately or in combination).
- To determine the feasibility of undertaking a full systematic review or further empirical research. Feasibility is about determining if there is sufficient literature to undertake a systematic review or even if they have already been conducted.

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KNIHOVNA SPOLEČENSKÝCH VĚD (Continued)

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- To summarise and disseminate research findings to policy-makers, practitioners and consumers.
- To identify gaps in the current research literature. In this type of scoping study, conclusions are drawn regarding the overall state of research activity in a particular area of study.
- To develop methodological ideas and/or theoretical approaches best suited to future research studies of a particular topic.
- To clarify conceptual understanding of a topic where definitions are unclear or where there is lack of agreement.
- To advise on and justify further research studies.

(Arksey and O'Malley, 2005; Anderson et al., 2008)

As is evident from Box 2.8, the reasons for undertaking a scoping review are diverse and there is considerable variety in terms of both the breadth and depth of literature extracted. It is also worth noting that scoping can be part of a preliminary investigation into an area or may be a stand-alone project. In healthcare, their ultimate aim is to facilitate asking the right questions in the context of health service organisation and management, healthcare practice and policy, and determining the research agenda in particular areas. They have been found to be particularly useful in identifying services that are available for discrete groups in the population (Anderson et al., 2008). However, it is important to emphasise that scoping reviews are not appropriate for answering clinical questions (CRD, 2009).

Given the wide range of functions that come under the umbrella term of scoping review/study it is difficult to outline in any definitive way the steps that should be followed. However, Arksey and O'Malley (2005) proposed a methodological framework for conducting a scoping study with the intention of assuring a rigorous and transparent process. More recently Levac et al. (2010) suggested enhancements to this process while retaining Arksey and O'Malley's essential framework (see Box 2.9).

Box 2.9 Methodological Framework for Conducting a Scoping Review

- Identify the research question.
- Identify the relevant studies.
- Select the studies.
- Chart the data.
- Collate, summarise and report the results.
- Optional stage: consultation exercise.

(Arksey and O'Malley, 2005: 22)

Identifying the research question or focus of the review is the first step that enables the reviewers to define which aspects of the research are deemed most important. These subsequently guide the choice of search strategies. The CRD (2009) assert that the search strategy in a scoping review should be as extensive as possible with the purpose of identifying all relevant literature. Because of the complexity of the processes, it is recommended that a scoping review is undertaken by a multidisciplinary team rather than an individual. Searches should include a range of relevant databases, handsearching and efforts to seek unpublished literature by, for example, contacting established organisations and via networks and conference materials. Initial search terms and strategies may be revisited as the reviewers become familiar with the literature.

As with all types of review, parameters for searching are decided at the outset, particularly in terms of time limits and language. Other aspects, such as budget and time constraints, may also limit the comprehensiveness of the review. In selecting studies, inclusion and exclusion criteria are developed but this may be after the initial search of the literature has taken place.

Data are usually charted according to an analytical framework that facilitates sorting the material into relevant themes. Collecting standard information such as authors, year of publication, aim, methods, study populations, intervention type, outcome measures and results is an example of one such framework. Following charting of the data, collating, summarising and reporting of the results are undertaken. These are often configured around the themes that have emerged from the review. This stage of the process is complex, time consuming and laborious given the breadth of literature sourced and the likelihood that the reviewer will still have a large amount of material to present.

An important factor is that scoping studies provide a descriptive account of the available research. They do not attempt to formally appraise the quality of the evidence in primary research reports. Neither do they make recommendations from the evidence about what is the most effective type of intervention. However, Arksey and O'Malley (2005) caution against assuming a scoping study is an easy alternative. There is the potential to generate a large number of studies that include a disparate number of designs and methodologies, and reviewers have to have the ability to analyse and present them in a coherent way.

A final optional step in a scoping review is consultation. Many contemporary scoping studies that are concerned with the identification of research priorities include consultation with stakeholders. Stakeholder consultation is an important element in contributing to service development and promoting user involvement in research (Anderson et al., 2008). See Box 2.10 for an example of a scoping review.

Box 2.10 A Scoping Review

'Social media use among patients and caregivers: a scoping review' (Hamm et al., 2013a) (conducted in parallel with a review of the use of social media among health care professionals and trainees, Hamm et al., 2013b).

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Research Question

- What social media tools are being used to improve health outcomes in patient populations?
- For what purposes are social media tools being used in patient populations?
- For what patient populations and disease conditions are social media tools being used?
- What types of evidence and research designs have been used to examine social media tools?

Objectives

- To map the existing literature examining the use of social media in patient and caregiver populations.
- To determine the extent and type of evidence available to inform more focused knowledge synthesis.
- To identify gaps for future research.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

- Included primary research on healthcare issues related to patients or caregivers and examining the use of a social media tool (social media defined as collaborative projects, blogs or microblogs, content communities, social networking sites and virtual worlds) since 2000 (corresponding to the development of Web 2.0).
- Included studies that focused on electronic discussion forums and bulletin boards.
- Excluded studies that examined mobile health (e.g. tracking or medical reference applications), one-way transmission of content (e.g. podcasts) and real-time exchanges mediated by technology (e.g. Skype, chat rooms).

Search Strategy

Electronic databases: MEDLINE, CENTRAL, ERIC, PubMed, CINAHL Plus Full Text, Academic Search Complete, Alt Health Watch, Health Source, Communication and Mass Media Complete, Web of Knowledge and Proquest.

Search Terms

A plethora of MeSH terms and keywords associated with 'social media' in combination with health care education/promotion terms and various 'research designs'.

Literature Located

Included 284 studies in the final review.

Analysis

Descriptive synthesis to map aspects of the literature identified in the key review questions. Studies were grouped according to tool used, audience and study design. Descriptive statistics were calculated using Stata1C.

Findings

- Most common intended use of social media was for self-care.
- A wide range of (disease) conditions were covered in the included studies.
- Most studies were descriptive but included a range of designs.
- 65.5 per cent of included studies demonstrated there was evidence of utility of social media while 5.3 per cent said there was not.

Concept Analysis

There has been a considerable amount of concept analysis work undertaken in healthcare in the last decade, particularly in the disciplines of nursing and midwifery. Concepts are mental images of phenomena (things), and it is through language that we give labels to these mental images in order that we can communicate with each other. For example, when we say the word 'horse', each of us has an image of what a horse looks like. It is through our experiences, perceptions and learning that we come to equate the mental image with the label 'horse'. However, language is complex and contextual and the meaning of a word can change over time, from one group to another or from one geographic area to another. Whilst the image of a horse may be reasonably universal there are many other concepts that are not as concrete, and meaning is only understood by the context in which the word is used. Many of the concepts in use in healthcare are what are known as behavioural concepts which are concerned with understanding health and illness experiences (Cronin et al., 2010). Examples include phenomena such as coping, self-care, suffering, hope, reassurance, anxiety, adherence, compliance and concordance. Imagine that a patient is about to have surgery and you determine from their behaviour and responses that they are anxious. As a result, you perceive that they need reassurance. Your mental image of both anxiety and reassurance will ultimately determine how you respond to the patient in question. It may well be an appropriate response on your part, but difficulties may arise when another person responds in another way because their understanding of the meaning of anxiety and reassurance is different, which can result in a lack of consistency in the standard and quality of care being delivered.

Make a list of concepts that are used in practice where you think there may be a lack of clarity.

Outline your reasons why you think such a lack of clarity may pose problems.

This lack of consistent understanding of a concept and its use in practice or research are the main reasons for undertaking a concept analysis. Simply stated, concept analysis is a method by which concepts that are of interest to any discipline are examined in order to clarify their characteristics, thereby achieving a better understanding of its meaning (Cronin et al., 2010).