

Abstract Submission Template

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Abstract Information

Title: A Hermeneutic Approach to Implementation Science: Undertaking a Hermeneutics-Informed Scoping Review

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this hermeneutically-informed scoping review was to map the peer reviewed literature on philosophical hermeneutic approaches to implementation in health care.

Methods: Searches of eight electronic databases were conducted to identify empirical studies. Eligible studies explored hermeneutics and implementation in health care or health related contexts. In pairs, reviewers independently screened titles and abstracts, followed by full-text articles. A final screening to verify eligibility was completed by three reviewers with significant experience in hermeneutics and implementation. Study data were extracted through an iterative process and a hermeneutic approach was taken to synthesizing and mapping the literature.

Results: Of 2,071 records, 261 full text studies were reviewed. The 25 articles retained for extraction after the final review stage addressed health, implementation (implementation, informing implementation or decision-making) and hermeneutics (context, temporality, dialogue, expanding understanding, interpretation and connecting differing perspectives on the topic of study). A modified extraction process was created that maintained the iterative, open, and dialogic approach of hermeneutics.

Conclusions: A scoping review approach is appropriate to map the field, but modifications of the approach are necessary when exploring a hermeneutic approach to implementation. Keeping the search terms as broad as possible, clarifying the central aspects of implementing, and continually returning to the tenets of philosophical hermeneutics made it possible to discern and encompass different philosophical approaches to hermeneutic inquiry, while maintaining the central tenets of the approach related to relational, historical, and contextual ways of understanding.