Completing a Stakeholder-Centred Systematic Review of Systematic Reviews: A Step-by-Step Process

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Introduction

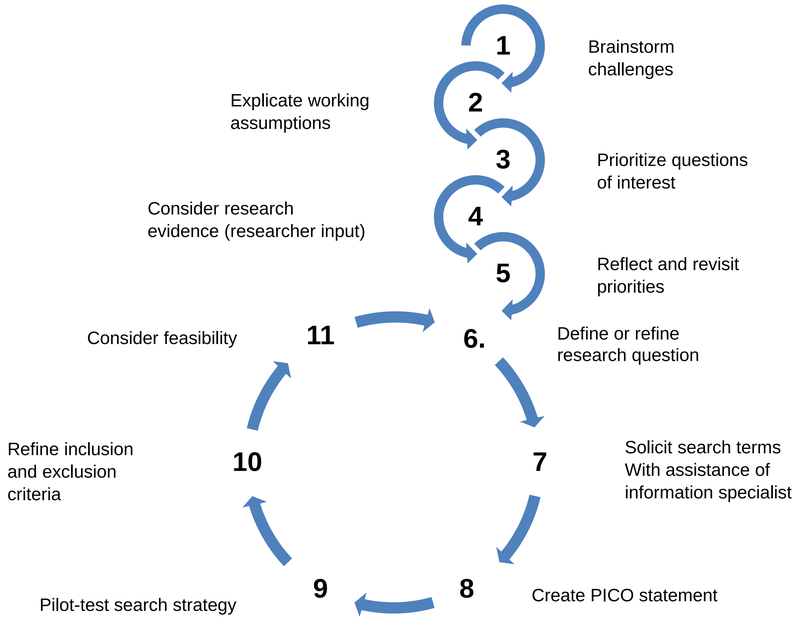
Growing interest from funders and researchers to stakeholders in research processes to enhance internal validity, research relevance, and improve the likelihood that research results will be utilized to inform decision-making.

Academic-community partnerships (ACPs) have been used with varying degrees of success as a mechanism for facilitating knowledge-to-action. A weakness noted in ACPs is the lack of clarity, understanding and agreement on roles and responsibilities.

Purpose

To describe the process, roles, responsibilities and workflows used to create a stakeholder-centered systematic review

Figure 1. ACP Process Model to Determine Research Question



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Methods

Community stakeholders (two occupational health safety organizations and one non-profit health benefit organization) were invited to participate in a proposed research project under WorkSafeBC Innovation at Work competition (convenience sample) with researchers from different faculties and universities.

Formative and summary evaluation forms developed in collaboration with stakeholders were used to inform processes and consider project successes and weaknesses.

Surveys and iterative group discussions, minute taking, continuous feedback loops, to identify and clarify high priority information needs common across different stakeholders. (see Figure 1.)

All systematic review processes were discussed to consider roles and responsibilities, pilot-tests were performed to discuss and refine procedures, and to consider changes to roles and responsibilities.

Results

Table 1. ACP Valued Stakeholder Participatory Activities	
Metrics for project success and baseline	√
Collaboration (genuine mutual interest /open reflection and willingness to change/ direct impact on project direction)	√
Purpose/ Research question / Inclusion/ Exclusion (problem identification, clarification, proposed action)	√
Search strategy development (search terms, refinement of inclusion/ exclusion criteria)	√
Review of list of article titles (initial search)	√
Instrument refinement (academic/stakeholder)	√
Read articles prior to review (based on title)	x
Highlight areas of interest within selected articles (importance, relevance, missing)	√
Abstraction table (category review/ refinement)	√
Categorization of factors	√
Model development (understandability/ usability / relevance /likelihood of its use)	√
Stakeholder Report (understandability/ usability / relevance /likelihood of its use)	√
Project evaluation	√
Presentations review	√

Creating Successful Academic Community Partnerships

Predisposing factors

- High motivation of both academic and stakeholder partners
- Effective listening skills of all players exhibiting mutual interest and reflectivity

Enabling factors

- Defining general framework of roles and responsibilities
- Openness to consider input at all levels of activity
- Demonstrable genuine interest and open transparent reflection and consensus
- Engagement in instrument development, pilot-testing instruments
- Refinement as a result of feedback

Reinforcing factors

- Reporting preliminary results
- Explicating new knowledge and understanding throughout knowledge exchange
- Reinforcing the need to translate results to best meet the organizational maker needs of stakeholders

Key Messages

- Take adequate time to clarify research question
- Pilot test using 3 or more sample articles consider research question, inclusion/ exclusion criteria
- Engage stakeholders in creation of abstraction table through highlighting categories of information of interest
- Create stakeholder-centered evidence tables based on categories relevant to stakeholders Final report must address issues relevant to decision-makers

Conclusions

- There are many roles that stakeholders' felt comfortable participating in the creation of a synthesis of systematic reviews.
- Such participation was valued by academic researchers learning more about stakeholder needs, and stakeholders learning more about the creation of research synthesis.
- A stakeholder-centered systematic review of systematic reviews can be effectively completed given a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, set of outlined action items, tasks, and deliverables required by the project.
- Completion of a synthesis of systematic reviews requires a strong, competent project leadership competent to keep the team engaged, on task and on time and motivate team members who are results oriented.

Limitations: The community stakeholders participating in this project have previously demonstrated interest and commitment to seeking research evidence to improve decision-making and may not be representative of other stakeholders.