

Scoping review

A scoping [review](#) is a type of [systematic review](#) designed to explore and map the extent, range, and nature of research on a given [topic](#) or [research question](#). It aims to provide an overview of the existing literature, identify gaps in knowledge, and clarify key concepts or definitions within a particular field. Unlike systematic reviews, scoping reviews are broader in scope and are often conducted when a topic is complex, emerging, or has not been comprehensively reviewed.

Key Characteristics of Scoping Reviews:

- Broad Objectives:** Focus on a wide-ranging exploration rather than narrowly defined questions.
- Mapping Evidence:** Provide a descriptive account of available research, including types of studies, methodologies, and key findings.
- No Critical Appraisal:** Typically do not involve detailed quality assessment of included studies.
- Identification of Research Gaps:** Highlight areas where evidence is lacking or inconsistent, guiding future research priorities.
- Flexibility:** Allow for refinement of questions and frameworks as the review progresses.

Common Purposes of Scoping Reviews:

- To summarize and disseminate evidence on a broad topic.
- To clarify conceptual boundaries and definitions.
- To examine research activity, such as the volume and types of studies.
- To inform research priorities and guide subsequent systematic reviews.

Methodological Framework: The scoping review methodology often follows the Arksey and O'Malley framework, which includes:

Identifying the research question. Identifying relevant studies. Study selection. Charting the data. Collating, summarizing, and reporting the results. (Optional) Consulting stakeholders to validate findings or inform interpretation. Scoping reviews are particularly valuable in emerging or interdisciplinary fields where comprehensive overviews are needed to shape further research and practice.

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