PROMOTION OF MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY IN ADOLESCENTS: A SCOPING REVIEW PROTOCOL

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Considering the increasing and significant prevalence of mental health problems in today's society and in particular adolescents, as well as the perspectives pointed to the future by the World Health Organization, it is important to know and synthesize the evidence currently available regarding programs/interventions promoters of mental health literacy in adolescents.

Aim: The aim of this review is to map available evidence on programs/interventions to promote mental health literacy in adolescents in school context.

Inclusion criteria: Will be included published and unpublished primary and secondary studies on programs/interventions to promote mental health literacy in adolescents in school context, written in Portuguese, Spanish or English, between 2013 and 2019.

Methods: A scoping review protocol was developed according to the guidelines of the Joanna Briggs Institute and the PRISMA-ScR. From the objective and the questions of the review, the databases and repositories for the research were selected to identify the studies that meet the eligibility criteria. The selection of articles, data extraction and synthesis will be performed by two reviewers independently, using an instrument created by the reviewers based on the Joanna Briggs Institute model.

Keywords: Adolescents, Mental Health, Health Literacy; Nursing.

Introduction

In Portugal, as in the world, there is a huge prevalence of mental disorders in the general population as well as in adolescents and young people ^{1,2}.

Nowadays, it is known that mental disorders account for 12% of diseases worldwide, and in developed countries the figure rises to 23%³. According to the World Health Organization⁴, it is estimated that by 2020 about 15% of diseases will be behavioral or mental, and one in five adolescents may develop a mental disorder. Also Kelly, Jorm & Right⁵ state that 50% of people who will suffer from a mental disorder will experience their first episode before age 18, and according to WHO⁶ this may occur even before 14 years.

The literature, so far, tells us that most Portuguese people have a problematic or inadequate health literacy level⁷ and that, specifically, adolescent mental health literacy levels are modest ^{8,9}. The concept of mental health literacy is not recent, having been defined in 1997 by Jorm et al¹⁰ as the knowledge and beliefs about mental disorders that aid their recognition, management and prevention. The low level of literacy in adolescent mental health is a problem in current Portuguese society, which contributes to the lack of adolescent help seeking, affects their development and increases the risk of recurrence of psychiatric disorders¹¹.

In recent years, researchers in the field of mental health have shown growing interest in the positive dimension of mental health over the disease-centered dimension, arguing that strengthening people's mental health is a protective factor as it promotes their resilience as adaptive capacity¹², entering in the field of positive mental health. This promotion of the salutogenic dimension of mental health should start as early as possible in the life cycle, and adolescence is a vital opportunity period to promote mental health¹³, as better literacy at a young age is direct impact on adulthood, enabling adolescents to acquire knowledge and define behaviors that will accompany them in their future life¹⁴, namely the ability to positively manage their thoughts and emotions, to build social relationships and healthy family members, all based on a strong positive sense of identity.

Thus, the WHO defined in the Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020¹³ that one of the objectives worldwide is to implement strategies for the promotion and prevention of mental health, alerting to the importance of intervening not only in needs of people with mental disorders but also in the protection and promotion of the mental health of all citizens.

Given the significant prevalence of adolescent mental health problems as well as the prospects for adolescent mental health problems, it is necessary to know and summarize the evidence currently available regarding adolescent mental health literacy programs / interventions.

To this end, it was specifically decided to conduct a scoping review, as it considered the most appropriate methodology, since this type of review aims to: map existing evidence in relation to a particular area or topic; assess the reliability, relevance and potential costs of performing a systematic literature review; provide a synthesis of research results and disseminate them; and identify potential gaps in existing literature ^{15,16,17}.

A preliminary exploratory research on this subject was carried out, during September of 2019, in the JBI Database of Systematic Reviews and Implementation Reports, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, CINHAL and MEDLINE (via EBSCO), and it was found a systematic review in this area developed by Morgado & Botelho¹⁴, where articles were searched between 2008 and 2013, in the scientific databases CINHAL and MEDLINE, which resulted in 3 articles (one from 2008, one from 2009 and one from 2012). The mentioned systematic review¹⁴ found evidence that mental health literacy interventions are: the cognitive behavioral intervention in the school context, the psychoeducation intervention as well as the mental health education intervention in the school context, all aimed at adolescents without mental disease. In addition, it also found evidence that identifies the school context as a field in this area.

The scoping review proposed in this protocol will differ from the previous review because it will be more comprehensive with respect to the research and will be more up to date, so it was decided to depart from this systematic review and to conduct the research from 2013, in a broader way to include available published and unpublished evidence on this topic.

The scoping review we intend to be carried out, following the methodology proposed by the Joanna Briggs Institute¹⁷, aims to map the available and most recent evidence on programs/interventions to promote mental health literacy in adolescents in a school context.

Review questions

This review aims to answer the primary question:

RQ 1. What is known in the existing literature on programs /interventions to promote mental health literacy in adolescents in a school context?

In addition, some secondary questions were formulated that will guide the review:

RQ 2. What are the characteristics of programs/interventions to promote mental health literacy in adolescents evidenced in the literature?

RQ 3. In which environments/contexts are these programs/interventions carried out?

RQ 4. What are the barriers and facilitators for the implementation of these programs/interventions?

Inclusion criteria

- **Types of participants** - The review will include studies whose participants are adolescents aged 10-19 years, as we adopt the WHO (2012)⁶ definition of adolescents. Note that adolescents included in the studies cannot have diagnosed mental illness.
- **Concept** - Regarding the concept, will be included studies on programs/interventions to promote mental health literacy, which meets the objective defined for this review.
- **Context** - Regarding the context, this review will accept studies that include adolescents in the school context (2nd and 3rd cycles of primary education and secondary education).
- **Types of studies** - This review will include published and unpublished primary and secondary studies to gain access to a wider range of available information; in terms of language, studies that are written in Portuguese, Spanish or English, as they are the languages that the reviewers domain; and in temporal terms, studies published between 2013 and 2019, so that only articles with the most recent evidence are included.

Methods

The study is intended to be a scoping review, which will methodologically follow Joanna Briggs Institute guidelines¹⁷ and will also follow the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews checklist (PRISMA-ScR)¹⁸ for the presentation of the review report.

- **Search strategy** - Comprehensive research will be carried out on the MEDLINE with Full Text, CINHAL Plus with Full Text, SciELO and SCOPUS scientific databases, as well as the OpenGrey (European Repository) and RCAAP (Open Access Scientific Repository of Portugal) scientific repositories.

The descriptors selected for the search in these databases are MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) terms and DeCS (Health Science Descriptors) terms: adolescent*, mental health, literacy, health literacy, program*, nursing.

Will be used the research strategy recommended by the Joanna Briggs Institute¹⁷, which consists of three stages: 1) a limited initial search will be performed on two databases (MEDLINE with Full Text e CINHAL Plus with Full Text) with the Boolean phrase 'adolescent*' AND 'mental health' AND 'literacy' AND 'health literacy' AND 'program*' AND 'nursing', followed by an analysis of the terms used in the titles and abstracts of the articles found in order to identify all relevant relevant terms and to determine the final Boolean phrase; 2) in the second step, the search will be performed in all selected databases and repositories, using all relevant terms and keywords identified in the previous step, according to the final Boolean phrase also defined in the previous step; 3) and, finally, in the third step, the reference lists of all included articles will be analyzed, in order to identify possible additional relevant studies.

It is intended to use as bibliographic reference management software Mendeley Desktop® version 1.19.4., to which the articles obtained in the research will be imported.

If necessary, contact will be made with the authors of the primary or secondary studies for further information or clarification.

- **Study selection** - The review process will consist of two levels of screening of the studies obtained: (1) a review of the title and abstract and (2) a review of the full text.

This selection process will be carried out independently by two researchers, where initially they will make the first selection of articles by reading the title and abstract, verifying that they meet the defined eligibility criteria. Any articles that are considered relevant by one or both researchers will be included in the full text review.

In the second screening phase, the two researchers will independently evaluate the full-text articles to determine if they meet the inclusion / exclusion criteria, thereby determining their inclusion in the review.

When disagreement occurs between the two researchers, full text articles will be reviewed again and further discussion will be conducted to ensure consistency between the researchers, and validation by a third researcher may be sought until consensus is reached.

If necessary, contact will be made with the authors of the primary studies to obtain further information or clarification on the data or even to obtain the article in full text format.

As for reference list studies, these will be identified, then the title and abstract will be analyzed, and then the full text will be analyzed. All who meet the eligibility criteria will be included in the review.

- **Data extraction** - Data will be extracted from full-text articles that meet the inclusion criteria, using an instrument created by the reviewers (Appendix I), following the model proposed by the Joanna Briggs Institute¹⁷ and aligned with the objective and the questions of the review. Data to be extracted from the studies include author(s), year of publication, country, study objective(s), study design, participants, characteristics of the programs/interventions implemented, data collection instruments used, main results and barriers/facilitators.

This process of extracting data from full text articles will be carried out by two independent researchers using the instrument created for this purpose (Appendix I). Discrepancies in this process of data extraction will be discussed between the two researchers until consensus is reached and /or with the use of a third researcher if necessary.

- **Presentation of the results** - The *scoping review* we pretend to carried out It aims to aggregate and summarize the results of the literature on programs/interventions to promote mental health literacy in

adolescents in the school context, as well as to present an overview of the research developed in this area, so that the quality analysis of the articles individually is not an objective at this time and as such this assessment will not be made in this review.

The data obtained in the previous step will be compiled into a single table using Microsoft Excel® software for validation and coding.

It is intended to use a PRISMA flowchart to report the final numbers of the study selection process, as well as tables and graphs to present the main results of this review in a more visual way, as appropriate.

The main results of this scoping review will be summarized through a narrative description of the themes that emerge from the extracted data. Data will be discussed in the light of relevant theories, possible gaps found in the literature will be addressed and, consequently, suggestions will be made for future nursing research studies in the areas that require further investigation.

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APPENDIX I: Instrument for Extracting Data from Review Articles

Scoping Review Details	
Title	
Goal(s)	
Review questions	
Inclusion criteria	
Participants	
Concept	
Context	
Types of Studies	
Study and Program/Intervention Details	
Detailed citation of the study (author/s, date, title, journal, volume, issue, pages)	
Country	
Goal(s) of the study	
Types of Study	
Program/intervention name	
Goal(s) of the program/intervention	
Participants of the program/intervention	
Implementation context	
Duration and frequency of the program/intervention	
Description of the program/intervention	
Evaluation instruments used	
Main Outcomes	
Barriers and Facilitators	
Reference List	
Other studies of interest for review indicated in study reference list	