

- Results from the Systematic Literature Review on Definitions and Concepts -

Objectives

Research questions:

(a) To scope current understandings of health literacy in childhood and adolescence and

(b) To clarify to what extent available conceptualizations capture the unique needs and characteristics of children and adolescents.

Approach: Systematic review of the state-of-the-art of generic HL conceptualizations for children and adolescents, younger than 18, in the English- and German-speaking context.

Method

Database search: PubMed, CINAHL, PsycInfo, ERIC, FIS

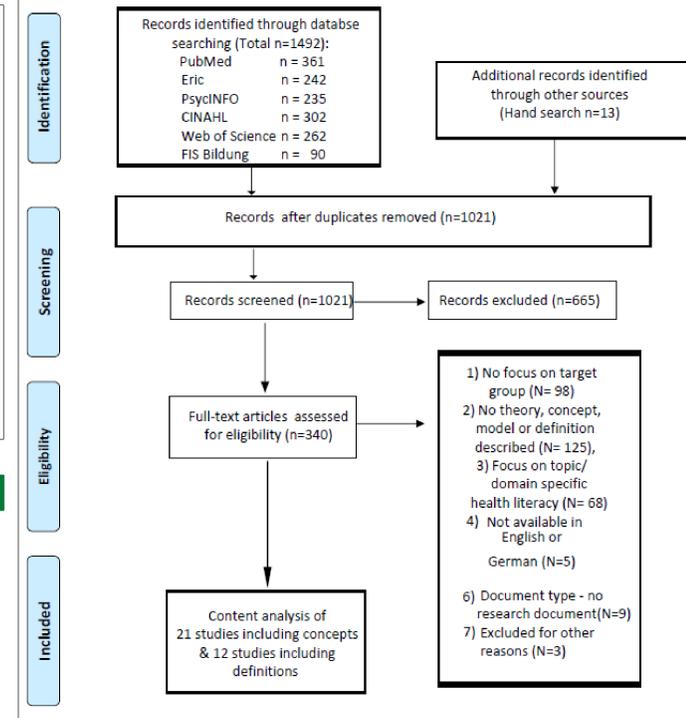
Search terms:

Topic	Target population	Sub-topic
health literacy, "health literacy", Gesundheitskomp	Child*, adolescen*, youth, teen* pupil*, student*	Skill*, competen*, concept*, theor*, model*, framework*, defin*
etenz, -mündigkeit, -bildung	Kind*, Jugend*, Teen*, Schüler*	Fähigkeit*, Kompetenz*, Konzept*, Theorie*, Model*, Rahmen*, Definition*

Eligibility criteria:

- Availability of full-text in English or German, 1980 - 2015
- **Topic:** General health literacy (excluding disease/topic-specific HL)
- **Target population:** Child or adolescent, <18 years; or considering relevance for life-course
- **Focus on Sub-topic:** Prevalence of a definition, conceptualization, model, theory, description of components, OR theoretical explorations of relevance for answering the research questions

Figure 1: PRISMA chart summarizing review process

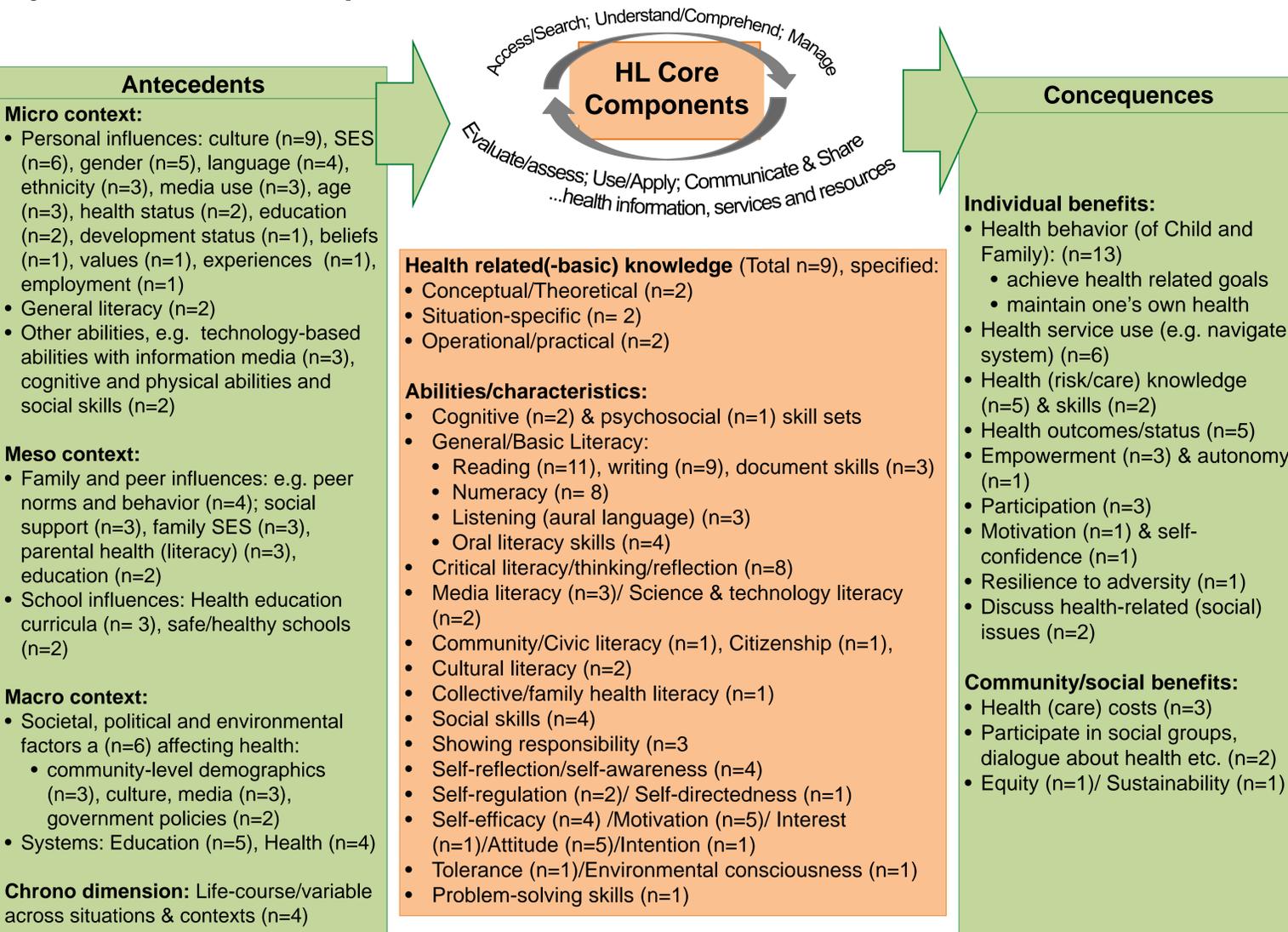


Results

Results from the inductive content analysis of 12 HL definitions for children and adolescents

Components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collection/set of skills (n=6) • competencies (n=5) • knowledge (n=3) • capacity (n=2) • motivation (n=1) • strategies (n=1) • comprehension (n=1) • communication (n=1) 	Subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (basic) health information (n=7) • health-related concepts (n=1) • health services (n=1) • health knowledge, attitudes and practice (n=1) • physical and psycho-social activities with appropriate standards (n=1)
Action/Agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to understand (n=5) • to access (n=4) • to use (n=4) • to apply (n=3) • to comprehend (n=3) • to evaluate (n=3) • to act (upon) (n=3) • to seek (out) (n=2) • to appraising (n=2) the credibility, accuracy and relevance of • to process (n=2), • to obtain (n=1) • to encompass (n=1) • to integrate (n=1) • to construct (n=1) • to interact with people (n=1) • to cope with necessary changes (n=1) • to organize (n=1) 	Purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to take/make appropriate /sound health decisions (n=3) (concerning healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion) • to manage one's health environment (n=2) • to maintain or improve quality of life (n=2) • to improve or achieve well-being (n=2) • to make judgments (n=1) • to reduce health risks (n=1) • to make informed choice (n=1) • to take more control over their health (n=1) • to understand themselves, others and the world (n=1) • to promote and maintain good health (n=1) • to change their health behaviours or living conditions (n=1) • to empower this group to be more engaged, more productive, and healthier (n=1) • to build individual and community capacity to understand the components of health (n=1) • the potential to influence individuals and society (n=1) • to understand that actions taken in youth affect health later in life (n=1)
Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from a variety of platforms (n=1) 	Conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if materials are presented in ways that are age appropriate, culturally relevant, & socially supported (n=1) • demands reasonable autonomy (n=1)
	Time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (ongoing) process (n=2) • evolves over one's lifetime (n=2) • during the life course (n=1) • starting at an early age (n=1)

Synthesis of HL concepts for children and adolescents as mentioned in 21 articles



Discussion

- HL is context and content-specific and as such varies according to the complexity of the task at hand
- Definitions & Concepts
 - Are very divers & complex;
 - Focus an individual skill sets;
 - Take on different focus (skills- vs. topic/output-focused) and perspective (individual vs. societal) taken;
 - Recognize the interrelatedness of with broader social and cultural factors;
- Broad concepts are difficult to operationalize and measure: tested ones focused on selected HL dimensions;
- Lack of evidence for children (aged <12);
- Differentiation to HL in adults is not clear;
- Target-group characteristics considered through cognitive development perspective;
- Lack of sociological approaches
- Agency and role of children and young people not clear: do/can they fulfill the actions and competencies described?
- Nature of influence of contextual factors not clear (e.g. opportunities and capabilities; right for protection vs. right for participation)