

## PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

### ARTICLE DETAILS

<b>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</b>	Promoting psychosocial environments in Norwegian primary schools: a scoping review protocol exploring the roles and responsibilities of school social workers
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Singstad, Marianne; Røkenes, Fredrik Mørk; Ekornes, Stine

### VERSION 1 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Ashcroft, Rachelle University of Toronto
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	20-May-2022

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to review this scoping review protocol paper. The focus of the scoping review is unique in that it examines social workers in primary schools. Although it is well-written, below are some comments for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Change keyword of “multidisciplinary cooperation” to “interdisciplinary collaboration”</li><li>-It is not clear why the scoping review is limited to Norwegian primary schools given that the inclusion of content from other jurisdictions may provide important knowledge to inform development of guidelines. If authors anticipate that there is only a small sample of existing literature in the Norwegian context, and the aim is to conduct a scoping review to inform development of guidelines, it is not clear why the scoping review is not inclusive of other geographical jurisdictions which may have produced meaningful articles on school social workers. Given the anticipated small sample of Norwegian literature, will the scoping review actually achieve what the authors intend? Wouldn't school social workers in other geographical locations have some attributes that could inform the intended guidelines?</li><li>-Has a preliminary test search been done to determine how many manuscripts would meet the current search criteria? If there are few, that might further suggest the need to broaden the search strategy.</li><li>-The second limitation indicates that limiting the actual research to the Norwegian context faces the risk of having a high percentage of non-peer reviewed grey literature. This is confusing since the search strategy can restrict inclusion to peer-reviewed literature if that is intended by the aims of the scoping review.</li><li>-page 4, line 21: “circle” should be changed to “cycle” otherwise it is confusing</li><li>-Study objective(s) could be even more directly stated, and the study objectives section needs to be revised for clarity. Revise this section to Study rationale and objectives. Presently, it is a bit confusing for the reader because this section describes the overarching umbrella project that the scoping review is one</li></ul>
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	<p>component of. More clarity is needed on content specific to the scoping review, and the rationale of how this informs the larger project. This can be achieved with minor editing and some organization of this section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Change 'multidisciplinary' to interdisciplinary.</li> <li>-On Page 5, line 53 indicates that the literature search will be completed by May 6, 2022. If all phases of the scoping review are completed by May 6, 2022 then is it too late to publish a protocol? It is not clear if this statement that is made on page 5, line 53 also includes completion of data analysis.</li> <li>-Stage 1: Identifying the research question: No research question is stated.</li> <li>-Unclear why the restriction on the publication years. A rationale is needed.</li> <li>-Stage 5 process of analysis needs more description. The six steps of thematic analysis are listed but not explained. These six steps need elaboration.</li> <li>-Consultation exercise: More explanation is needed in terms of the identification of key stakeholders who will participate, how they are invited, how many, and if there are honorariums for participation. Is there a methodology that is being used to guide the consultation exercise? Is ethics approval needed for the consultation process?</li> </ul>
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Lazar, Florin University of Bucharest
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	19-Jun-2022

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>The scoping review protocol is generally well designed, so I will focus on what I think might be improved.</p> <p>I understand authors' fear of scarcity of studies which lead them to include more gray literature (e.g. Master theses, reports), but I suggest to still have a minimum quality assessment of the identified studies.</p> <p>I think the scoping review may benefit from a more focused approach by operationalizing some of the concepts used. For instance, how will the impact be measured?</p> <p>Among the keywords used for the search in the second step we can only find collaboration and various types. I suggest to use also collaboration as a standalone term, but also consider other roles which are not necessarily related to other professionals, but to family, or students/pupils and use other terms/words such as referrals, counselling, vocational, skills, support, assessment, evaluation, etc. The list of words can be supplemented by exploring school social workers' roles and responsibilities in other cultural contexts than the Norwegian one.</p> <p>The references could be more recent and more focused on school social workers' roles and responsibilities. I understand the need to focus on the Norwegian context, but information from other countries could still be relevant.</p> <p>Regarding the overall study, authors have suggested an additional/optional consultation at the end of the scoping review (as suggested also by Arksey and O'Malley). My suggestion, if time allows, is to use a Delphi study for this consultation process in order to determine the most important roles and responsibilities of school social workers in Norwegian primary schools.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to review the protocol and good luck with the overall research!</p>
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**VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE**

#	Reviewers Comments	Answer to reviewers	Pages
<b>Reviewer 1</b>			
1.1	Change keyword of “multidisciplinary cooperation” to “interdisciplinary collaboration”	The keyword is now changed as proposed by the reviewer, by using the word “interprofessional” throughout the manuscript, instead of multidisciplinary or multi-professional.	1
1.2	It is not clear why the scoping review is limited to Norwegian primary schools given that the inclusion of content from other jurisdictions may provide important knowledge to inform development of guidelines. If authors anticipate that there is only a small sample of existing literature in the Norwegian context, and the aim is to conduct a scoping review to inform development of guidelines, it is not clear why the scoping review is not inclusive of other geographical jurisdictions which may have produced meaningful articles on school social workers. Given the anticipated small sample of Norwegian literature, will the scoping review actually achieve what the authors intend? Wouldn't school social workers in other geographical locations have some attributes that could inform the intended guidelines?	Thank you for this valuable comment. We recognize that data from other geographical locations may have been useful to inform our research and extend our knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of school social workers. However, the main purpose of this scoping review is to map the current status of school social work in Norway. This will in turn, enable us to compare national and international research in the field, as part of the larger project.	4
1.3	Has a preliminary test search been done to determine how many manuscripts would meet the current search criteria? If there are few, that might further suggest the need to broaden the search strategy.	We thank the reviewer for making us aware of this unclarity, and we recognize a need of re-writing the information concerning the literature search. The initial literature search was finished by 6 <sup>th</sup> of May 2022, and we find that our search comprises of a rich data material, and we therefore choose not to broaden the search strategy. The manuscript is updated with information concerning the initial/preliminary test search.	5
1.4	The second limitation indicates that limiting the actual research	Thank you for raising this question and making us aware of this unclarity. Since the	-

	to the Norwegian context faces the risk of having a high percentage of non-peer reviewed grey literature. This is confusing since the search strategy can restrict inclusion to peer-reviewed literature if that is intended by the aims of the scoping review.	scope of the current article is a Norwegian context, at least in the first phase, the inclusion of grey literature will be of significance to map the existing knowledge and governmental documents in the chosen field. Peer-reviewed manuscripts from other contexts will be included if relevant in a later phase of the larger project (Please also see our answer for comment 1.2.).	
1.5	page 4, line 21: “circle” should be changed to “cycle” otherwise it is confusing.	“Circle” is now changes to “cycle” as proposed by the reviewer.	3
1.6	Study objective(s) could be even more directly stated, and the study objectives section needs to be revised for clarity. Revise this section to Study rationale and objectives. Presently, it is a bit confusing for the reader because this section describes the overarching umbrella project that the scoping review is one component of. More clarity is needed on content specific to the scoping review, and the rationale of how this informs the larger project. This can be achieved with minor editing and some organization of this section.	“Review objectives” has been changed to “Study rationale and objectives” as proposed by the reviewer. We have also tried to accommodate the reviewer by re-organizing the paragraph and clarifying some descriptions in this section. In addition, we have changed the previous aims to research questions.	4, 5
1.7	Change ‘multidisciplinary’ to interdisciplinary.	Due to the reviewer’s comment, we have chosen to change “multidisciplinary” to “interprofessional” throughout the manuscript.	Several
1.8	On Page 5, line 53 indicates that the literature search will be completed by May 6, 2022. If all phases of the scoping review are completed by May 6, 2022, then is it too late to publish a protocol? It is not clear if this statement that is made on page 5, line 53 also includes completion of data analysis.	Please see our answer on comment 1.3 and Editor comment no. 8. We have now revised our description of the literature search and included information of both the ending date for the preliminary search (6 <sup>th</sup> of May 2022) and for the main search (31 <sup>st</sup> of October 2022).	5
1.9	Stage 1: Identifying the research question: No research question is stated.	The research question is now explicitly stated in “Stage 1”.	6
1.10	Unclear why the restriction on the publication years. A rationale is needed.	Please see our answer on the Editors comment no. 8 ii.	6
1.11	Stage 5 process of analysis needs more description. The	We have elaborated on the six steps of the thematic analysis and added another	9

	six steps of thematic analysis are listed but not explained. These six steps need elaboration.	reference [23] to the list of references that further supports the analysis process.	
1.12	Consultation exercise: More explanation is needed in terms of the identification of key stakeholders who will participate, how they are invited, how many, and if there are honorariums for participation. Is there a methodology that is being used to guide the consultation exercise? Is ethics approval needed for the consultation process?	We recognize the reviewers' need of more information on the consultation exercise, and have included the following text in the manuscript: "A reference group is already established for the main project, consisting of 7 participants, including students, school social workers, a school principal, a school social worker coordinator, a representant from the practical-pedagogical service in primary schools, and the leader of a national group working for a national legislation ensuring school social workers at all schools in Norway. The reference group will be participating in the current consultation exercise, together with two researchers in the field. The manuscript will be sent to the consultants for feedback and evaluation."	9
Reviewer 2			
2.1	I understand authors' fear of scarcity of studies which lead them to include more gray literature (e.g. Master theses, reports), but I suggest to still have a minimum quality assessment of the identified studies.	We recognize the reviewer's suggestion of a quality assessment of the identified studies. However, as stated in the methodological guidelines for conducting a scoping review, the standard is not to do a formal quality assessment. In addition to the need of expanded resources to do so, we have chosen to exclude such an assessment for the current scoping review.	-
2.2	I think the scoping review may benefit from a more focused approach by operationalizing some of the concepts used. For instance, how will the impact be measured?	We recognize the reviewers concern of our lack of clarity in the approach and have previously clarified the scope of this manuscript to map the existing research on the roles and responsibilities of social workers in Norwegian primary schools and learn more about the national political priorities related to social work in schools, rather than focusing on impact of specific work tasks. This is now specified in the manuscript. We also kindly ask the reviewer to see our comments and following changes in the manuscript in point 1.6 and hope these changes also accommodate the current stated unclarity.	4, 5
2.3	Among the keywords used for the search in the second step we can only find collaboration and various types. I suggest to use also collaboration as a standalone term, but also consider other roles which are	We recognize the reviewer's suggestion to include "collaboration" as a standalone term, however this will make the search to comprehensive according to the aim of the current scoping review. Moreover, all relevant articles including collaboration as a standalone term will be covered from the first	-

	not necessarily related to other professionals, but to family, or students/pupils and use other terms/words such as referrals, counselling, vocational, skills, support, assessment, evaluation, etc. The list of words can be supplemented by exploring school social workers' roles and responsibilities in other cultural contexts than the Norwegian one.	search, if the articles meet the criteria for the chosen context and population.  Regarding the suggestion of including other cultural contexts than the Norwegian one, we kindly ask the reviewer to see our answer on comment 1.2.	
2.4	The references could be more recent and more focused on school social workers' roles and responsibilities. I understand the need to focus on the Norwegian context, but information from other countries could still be relevant.	We have now tried to accommodate the reviewer by including some research from other Nordic countries in the Introduction part, that have localized some of the same challenges that we have revealed in Norway.	4
2.5	Regarding the overall study, authors have suggested an additional/optional consultation at the end of the scoping review (as suggested also by Arksey and O'Malley). My suggestion, if time allows, is to use a Delphi study for this consultation process in order to determine the most important roles and responsibilities of school social workers in Norwegian primary schools.	Thank you for the suggestion to conduct a Delphi study as a part of the consultation exercise. Unfortunately, such a study would be beyond the scope of the review. However, we will keep the suggestion in mind and implement a Delphi study as a part of the overall project that the scoping review is a part of. In the consultation exercise for the scoping review, we will utilize the reference group that is connected to the main project (please see our answer to comment 1.11).	

#### VERSION 2 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Lazar, Florin University of Bucharest
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	18-Jul-2022
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	The authors fully responded to the required adjustments.