



## Comprehensive versus context-specific evidence syntheses: combining the best of both



### Search strategy:

Major databases, local databases with keywords 'EBP', 'Belgian/Belgium (Flanders, Walloon)' & methodological filter, reference search, consultation of Belgian experts in qualitative research or EBP.

### Critical appraisal:

No systematic assessment of study quality. Instead: Assessment on the level of findings reported in each study using 3 labels: 'unequivocal', 'credible' or 'unsupported' evidence.

### Synthesis approach:

Meta-aggregation: Assembling the findings of studies and pooling them through further aggregation based on similarity in meaning to arrive at a set of statements presented as lines of action for practice and policy using QARI software (Joanna Briggs Institute).

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8 primary studies addressing local Belgian context included

A context-specific qualitative evidence synthesis on barriers to implementing Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) in Belgium (health care context)

### What we learned in matching the findings with existing international literature

- It identified obstacles that were universal and had been mentioned by practitioners in other countries as well.
- It highlighted pitfalls in the Belgian health care system that local policy makers should focus on to bridge the obstacles perceived by practitioners.
- It enabled us to look at solutions proposed by other countries to solve particular problems.

We doubt that these context-specific pitfalls would have surfaced when summarizing all available international literature on the topic.

### Comprehensive Qualitative Evidence Syntheses

- May downplay differences between countries by focussing on commonalities.
- May risk omitting important insights by not having access to local databases /experts.

Serve everybody! ...but nobody in particular

### A variety of social, cultural, political, historical, health care, educational, economic,... contexts

### Context-specific Qualitative Evidence Syntheses

Only serve local stakeholders... However, with more relevant information!



### Combining the best of both approaches



- Umbrella reviews
- Trans-cultural modification & Trans-contextual adaptation

Because stripping the context from a qualitative evidence synthesis to make it more generally applicable to different settings would not aid decision making