

Salutogenesis in Mexico and Latin America: protocol Scoping Review

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Abstract

Background: Salutogenesis offers an alternative perspective to the traditional pathogenetic paradigm by focusing on factors that promote and sustain health. Although studied worldwide, the literature on salutogenesis in the Latin American context remains insufficiently mapped.

Objective: To present a protocol for conducting a scoping review of scientific publications on salutogenesis in Mexico and Latin America from 2010 to 2024.

Methods: We will follow the Arksey and O'Malley (2005) framework, complemented by the Joanna Briggs Institute guidelines. Searches will be conducted in databases such as MEDLINE, Scopus, SciELO, and others using MeSH and DeCS terms.

Results: Identification of theoretical frameworks, objectives, and key findings from selected studies on salutogenesis to inform future research directions and strengthen the foundations for designing salutogenic health-promotion programs at the Latinamerican region.

Conclusions: This review will provide an organized synthesis of the salutogenic model's application in the region, serving as a basis for future interventions and public policy proposals.

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Original Manuscript

Salutogenesis in Mexico and Latin America: protocol Scoping Review

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Keywords

Salutogenesis; Mexico; Latin America; Scoping Review

Background:

Salutogenesis studies the development of health while pathogenesis studies the development of disease (1). Current medical teaching and practice are based on the pathogenetic perspective, therefore, efforts are focused on preventing disease, analyzing its risk factors, as well as treating its symptoms and complications. Disease prevention, suggests pathogenesis, results in the maintenance of health. In contrast, Aaron Antonovsky introduced the concept of salutogenesis more than 40 years ago and since then its study has become widespread throughout the world with its innovative

perspective to analyze health and disease (2).

This vision emphasizes that health professionals must work to promote and improve health, with the consequence that this will prevent or delay the onset of diseases. Salutogenesis has been a subject of study worldwide ever since. In Latin America, health and disease have also been studied from this perspective. Though several documents show reflexive work and empirical results, to date, very few systematic reviews of the scientific literature on the subject have been conducted in this region of the world.

To analyze this subject we planned to perform a Scoping Review (SR) based on Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) method. It is usual that before carrying out a SR, a formal protocol should be prepared and, at an international level, it is increasingly common for these protocols to be published in scientific journals to evidence the methods and scope of each review, hence the reason for this document.

Theoretical bases and evidence

Joseph Leonard, Nobel Prize winner in medicine and physiology in 1985, once said: "Humans spend the first half of their lives ruining their health and the other half trying to restore it." Health promotion is the basis of an enormous work carried out by the World Health Organization, which considers that the concept of health has been approached in a negative way, that is, health is analyzed and treated as a loss: health is lost when a disease appears or due to the risk factors to which the individual is exposed.

On the contrary, health promotion focuses its efforts with a positive perspective, that is, focusing efforts on maintaining and protecting health. These efforts are concentrated in four strategic lines: 1) strengthening healthy environments, 2) facilitating community participation and empowerment, 3) strengthening governance and intersectoral action, and addressing the social determinants of health, and 4) strengthening health systems and services in countries (3). All of them somehow coincide with the salutogenic theory to promote and protect the health of people and the communities in which they live.

There are currently few publications worldwide on protocols to carry out a SR about salutogenesis (4) or its relation to the promotion of mental health (5), studies in specific population groups (6) or

studies of specific problems such as cardiovascular diseases (7). However, there is no reference in Mexico or Latin America to a SR on salutogenesis or any of its related topics. Therefore, this protocol is presented to carry out a SR of scientific publications that identify the theoretical-epistemic foundations, objectives and results of scientific publications on Salutogenesis in Mexico and Latin America, in order to evaluate the scope and transcend of this health perspective in this region of the world, and to establish a base point for a research project on the effective application of this model in health promotion programs and eventually generate public policy proposals for Mexico. In Mexico, no formal systematic review protocols on salutogenesis have been identified in international repositories under the term “salutogenesis” or its synonyms. This gap underscores the urgent need for Mexican and Latin America researchers to develop and register systematic review protocols aligned with PRISMA-P guidelines, in order to consolidate local evidence and strengthen the relevance of salutogenic model-based interventions.

Objective

This document presents the protocol for the execution of a Scoping Review on the aforementioned topic, according to the methodology of Arksey and O'Malley (2005), as well as the plan for its implementation.

Methods and design

This protocol was developed using as a guide the methodological framework of Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and that of the Joanna Briggs Institute (8). A systematic search will be carried out in the main electronic databases available internationally and that can be consulted in full text through the Digital Library of the University of Guadalajara (9). The databases that will be used are Cochrane and SciELO in Spanish, while in English they will be MEDLINE (PubMed), MEDLINE (EbscoHost), CINAHL (EbscoHost) and Academic Search Complete (EbscoHost) among others. The search time interval for scientific publications will be from 2010 to 2025 and will be developed in accordance with the five stages established in the methodological framework previously indicated, as described below:

Stage 1: Identifying research questions.

An iterative process was carried out to generate one or more questions to guide the SR on salutogenesis. This process allowed us to identify the parameters to structure the questions and the search terms in the databases. The work resulted in the questions for this SR as well as the

operational definitions of the search (see Table 1).

Table 1. Research questions and their operational definitions.

Research Questions	Operational Definitions
What are the theoretical and epistemic basis of the studies on Salutogenesis published in scientific journals for Mexico and Latin America between 2010 and 2024?	- Theories and/or explanatory models used or referred to in the scientific studies on Salutogenesis for Mexico and Latin America, published in scientific journals between 2010 and 2024. - Epistemic perspective to which the scientific studies on Salutogenesis for Mexico and Latin America, published in scientific journals between 2010 and 2024, adhere.
What are the objectives of the studies on Salutogenesis published in scientific journals for Mexico and Latin America between 2010 and 2024?	General and/or specific objectives of scientific studies on Salutogenesis for Mexico and Latin America, published in scientific journals between 2010 and 2024.
What are the main results of the studies on Salutogenesis published in scientific journals for Mexico and Latin America between 2010 and 2024?	Reported results of scientific studies on Salutogenesis for Mexico and Latin America, published in scientific journals between 2010 and 2024.

Stage 2: Identify relevant studies

The following inclusion criteria were established for the eligibility of documents, the databases to be used and the keywords or key terms for the queries.

Eligibility criteria

The documents to be selected for this study must meet the following inclusion criteria:

1. Scientific articles on the topic of salutogenesis published between January 2010 and August 2025.
2. Documents published preferably in English and Spanish.
3. Works on salutogenesis applicable to Mexico and/or Latin America.
4. Documents that aim to carry out systematic reviews, meta-analysis, meta-synthesis and scoping reviews.

In turn, the following exclusion criteria will be applied:

1. Advertising documents.
2. Documents for profit.
3. Documents that are not complete at the time of download.
4. Unreadable documents.

Databases

The databases used for this search will be: PubMed, MEDLINE (EbscoHost), CINAHL (EbscoHost), Academic Search Complete (EbscoHost), ISI Web of Science (Science Citation Index) and Scopus for English documents, and SciELO, Cochrane and MEDES-MEDicina for Spanish documents.

Search strategy

In the indicated electronic databases, an initial search will be carried out. This initial search will be filtered by: Mexico and/or Latin America, in Spanish and English. The search terms will be obtained from the initial queries to the databases, these words will include the terms of the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) for the databases in English and the terms of the Health Sciences Descriptors (DeCS) of the Virtual Health Library (VHL) of the Pan American Health Organization for the databases in Spanish. Search terms will include the words “salutogenesis” or any derivation of the term such as “salutogenic model,” “salutogenic strategy,” or any other. A specific search will also be performed using the terms “sense of coherence,” “health promotion,” and “healthy lifestyle promotion” in the same languages.

A different search will be performed using the Google search engine for documents that have not been located in the electronic databases. A search for relevant literature will also be done through sites such as the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization, the Ministries of Health of Mexico and other Latin American countries, Google Scholar, and databases on conference proceedings and specialized meetings in Mexico. All references will be managed through bibliographic citation management software for better organization and elimination of duplicates.

Stage 3: Selection of studies

Theoretical or empirical documents on salutogenesis are of interest for this review. Therefore, documents on salutogenesis related to health promotion and promotion of healthy lifestyles will be included as part of this analysis. To do this, once the results of the previous stage are available, the titles, abstracts and executive summaries will be reviewed to identify the literature relevant to the topic, which will be exposed to the inclusion and exclusion criteria to verify its eligibility. Those

documents that adhere to the inclusion criteria will be considered for this review. To do this, we will work with two separate research assistants, they will select the documents separately in a first round, then they will submit them to the consideration of the other assistant; in case of any discrepancy between them, the first author of this protocol will be consulted to resolve the differences in criteria. There will be a constant supervision of the work to maintain the guidelines and objective of the review.

Stage 4: Data Representation

The selected documents and reports will be subject to data extraction through specially prepared forms. The resulting data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, and later through a qualitative thematic analysis, ensuring that they appropriately reflect the key themes of this search.

The data extracted from the documents will include the following: author(s), year of publication, source of the document (public or private), type of document (theoretical or empirical), target population, general objective, specific objectives, underlying theories and results of the document.

Stage 5: Classification, synthesis and reporting of results

Finally, the documents will be organized according to the main questions of this SR so that they can be categorized according to Table 1 and the information previously considered can be clearly identified. Since data will not be obtained from primary sources, approval by an ethics and research committee is not necessary. The data will be presented through descriptive statistics and with analysis matrices. The results of this review will be presented at an event and/or conference and will be sent for publication to an indexed journal.

Results

The report of this scoping review will be verified using the PRISMA-ScR Checklist for scoping review reports (10). The intention is to perform this review during 2010 and 2025. Results will also be sent for publication to an indexed journal. The final aim is to present the results of this review to local and national health authorities, as well as present them in different scientific events and national conferences and meetings.

Discussion

As stated here, a protocol for a Scoping Review is presented, based on the methodology of Arksey and O'Malley (2005) during the year 2025. According to this five-stage methodology, we will seek to identify those scientific publications that present or analyze the topic of salutogenesis in Mexico and

Latin America. The results of this review will be used to define the bases of a research project aimed at generating a proposal that incorporates the study of salutogenesis in educational institutions that train human resources in health, while identifying those elements of the salutogenic model that have not been explored to date in the Latin American context to promote their incorporation into health promotion programs generated specifically by the health system in Mexico in order to improve the quality of health of the population and consequently reduce the burden of disease.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors contributed to the study design and reviewed and edited the content. All authors are responsible for the final content of the manuscript. No artificial intelligence tools were used for this protocol.

Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

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