

ENRICHING THE EVIDENCE BASE OF CO-CREATION IN PUBLIC HEALTH WITH METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF CRITICAL REALISM

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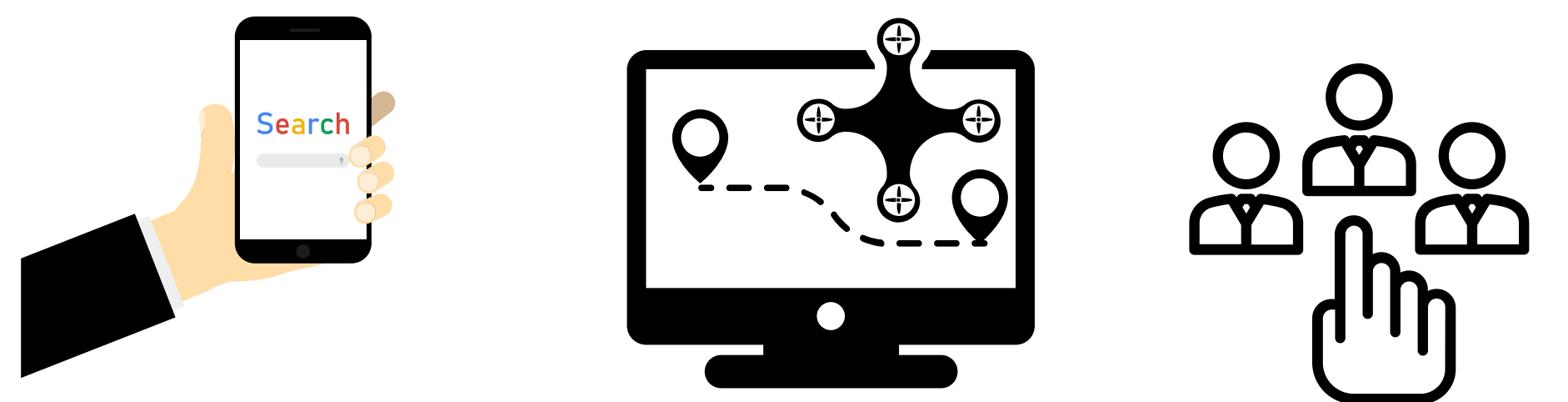
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Critical realism methodological principles seem well-suited as a meta-theoretical framework for evidence-based co-creation in public health empirical research

INTRODUCTION

Meta-theory, such as Critical Realism (CR) provides a foundation for understanding and researching phenomena. CR, originating from Bhaskar's work, distinguishes between the real and observable world and encourages exploring complex social phenomena with a focus on causal mechanisms. Co-creation research lacks explicit meta-theoretical foundations, whereas CR is a convincing proponent for hypothesised mechanisms to have the strongest explanatory power, related to empirical evidence. This study aims to explore critical realism as a promising meta-theory providing clear methodological principles [1,2] to enrich the evidence base for co-creation in public health research.

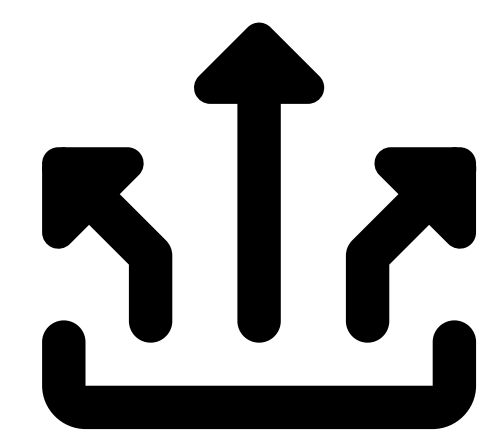
METHODS



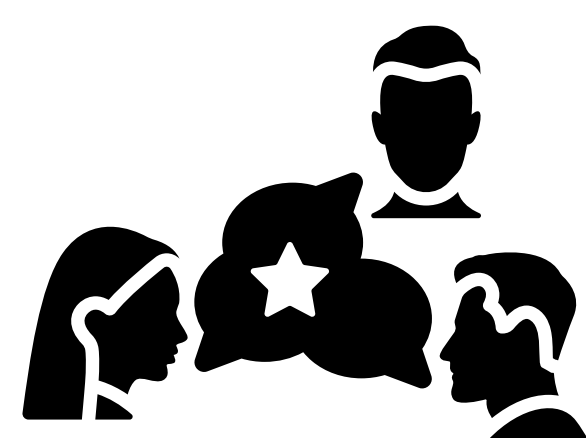
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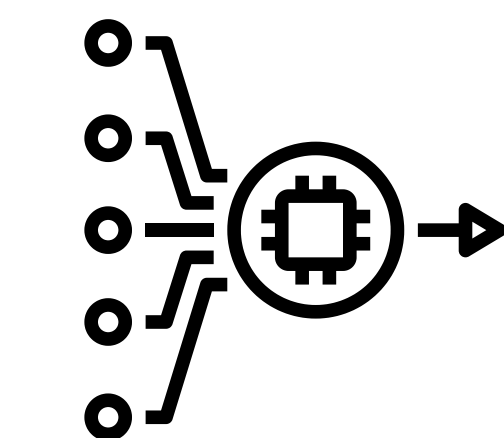
Full text screening



Formative synthesis output



Deliberative meetings



Summative synthesis output



Assessing applicability and usability (real-life case study "KiA"* [3] + WP3-6 feedback)

*KiA did not use CR principles/ meta-theory

RESULTS + MAIN TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

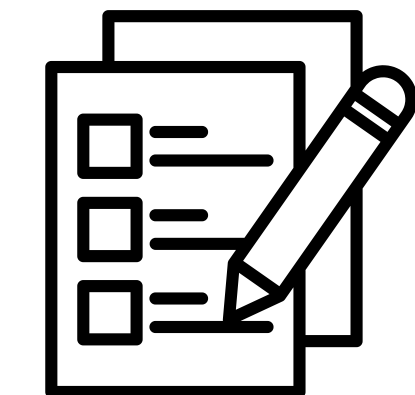


CR Principles with convincing empirical parallels to KiA...

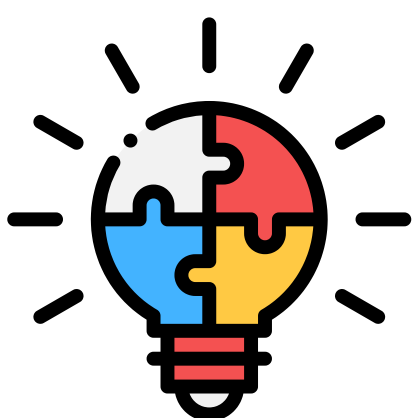


Event: Childhood overweight (outcome).
Explored literature and local data (KiA neighbourhood).
Participatory Assessment: 3-4 group meetings (children, n=20), interviews with parents (n=27), professionals (n=9).
Results: Childhood overweight identified as main issue, with insufficient physical activity and unhealthy diet as main risk factors.
Actions: Unhealthy behaviours.
Objects: School, home, neighbourhood.

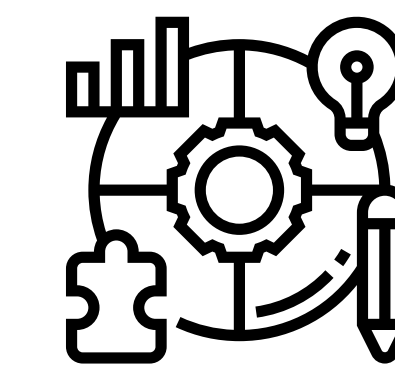
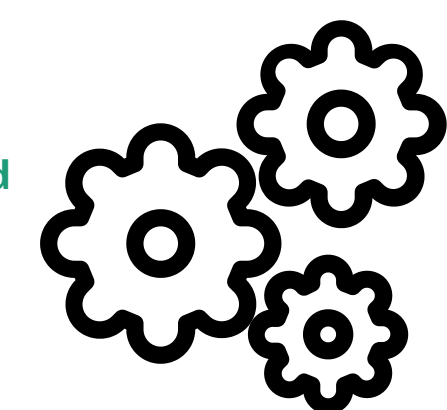
Needs assessment with children and interviews with parents and professionals identified determinants of unhealthy behaviours: neighbourhood (safety, distance), culture, habits, finances, social norms, knowledge and marketing of unhealthy foods



Academic researchers collaborated with YPAR groups and a community project group to develop a logic model of the problem based on a two-year needs assessment



Researchers developed a logic model of change from the needs assessment. YPAR groups implemented actions with controlled design for effect evaluation (3 measurements) and process evaluation through focus groups with children (n=40) and interviews with community partners (n=11)



KiA used both qualitative (focus groups, interviews) and quantitative methods (questionnaire, fitness test, accelerometers). Triangulation combined analyses of diverse data sources. Multiple investigators, including stakeholders, were involved

How could the explicit application of CR principles from the start enhance the evidence base for co-creation in KiA?

Iteratively applying these principles in public health event analysis is key for understanding and corroborating mechanisms: enhancing research depth + exploring new explanations for potentially more effective interventions.

References:
[1] Wynn Jr, D. and Williams, C.K., 2012. Principles for conducting critical realist case study research in information systems. MIS quarterly, pp.787-810.
[2] Bygstad, B., Munkvold, B.E. and Volkoff, O., 2016. Identifying generative mechanisms through affordances: a framework for critical realist data analysis. Journal of information technology, 31(1), pp.83-96.
[3] Anselma, M., Altenburg, T. and Chinapaw, M., 2019a. Kids in Action: The protocol of a Youth Participatory Action Research project to promote physical activity and dietary behaviour. BMJ open, 9(3), p.e025584.

Figure: Information flow chart of paper selection

