

- ❖ A wide range of theoretical approaches is being used to inform process evaluations of complex healthcare interventions.
- ❖ Application of theoretical approaches is heterogenous with regard to how and when they were applied. (based on preliminary analysis)

Theoretical approaches to process evaluations of complex interventions in health care: a scoping review

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Background:

Several theoretical approaches that can inform process evaluations of complex health care interventions exist, but a comprehensive overview of these is missing. The FRAME-SR review aimed to give an overview of theoretical approaches (theories, models, frameworks) that have been applied in such process evaluations and to describe, analyze and compare these approaches.

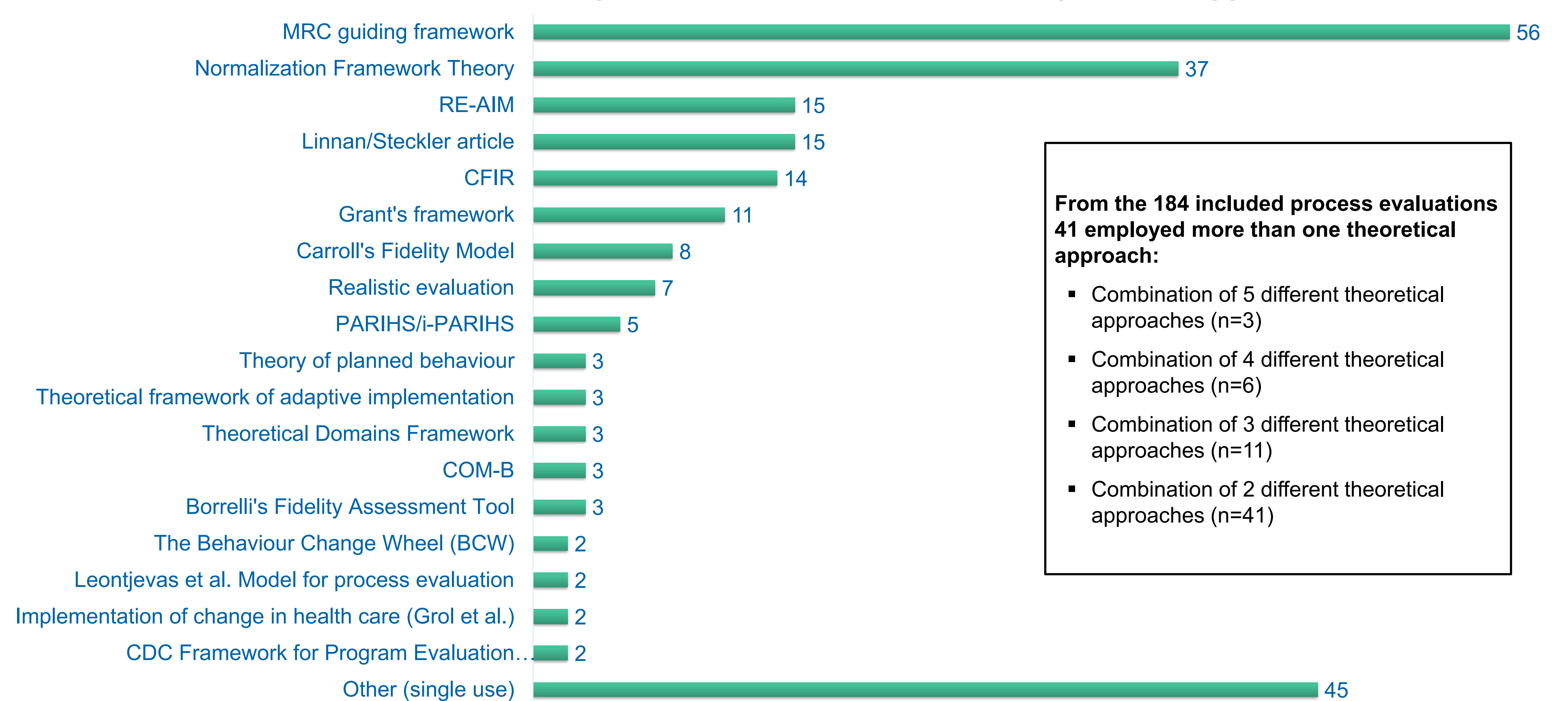
Design & Methods:

- ❖ Scoping review of theoretical approaches to process evaluation
- ❖ Following the PRISMA-ScR
- ❖ systematic search of the Medline (via PubMed), CINAHL (via EBSCO) and PsycInfo (via EBSCO) electronic databases
- ❖ Study selection, data extraction, and data analysis by tandems of two researchers

Results:

184 included process evaluations employed 63 different theoretical approaches; 30,4% (n=56) employed the MRC guiding framework.

Overview of employed theoretical approaches (frequency)



From the 184 included process evaluations 41 employed more than one theoretical approach:

- Combination of 5 different theoretical approaches (n=3)
- Combination of 4 different theoretical approaches (n=6)
- Combination of 3 different theoretical approaches (n=11)
- Combination of 2 different theoretical approaches (n=41)

Key messages:

- ❖ Apart from the MRC guiding framework, the most frequently employed theoretical approaches included:
 - Normalization Process Theory (n=37)
 - Linnan & Steckler's article on process evaluations for public health interventions & research (n=15)
 - RE-AIM framework (n=15)
 - Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (n=14), and
 - Grant's framework for process evaluations for cRCTs of complex interventions (n=11)
- ❖ Of these the MRC guidance, Linnan and Steckler's article, and the Grant framework provide recommendations on how to conduct process evaluations of complex interventions, as opposed to classic theoretical approaches.
- ❖ Many of the cited theoretical approaches (n=43) were used in single studies.
- ❖ In 19 studies, theoretical approaches were cited, but we were unable to determine how these informed the research process.

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