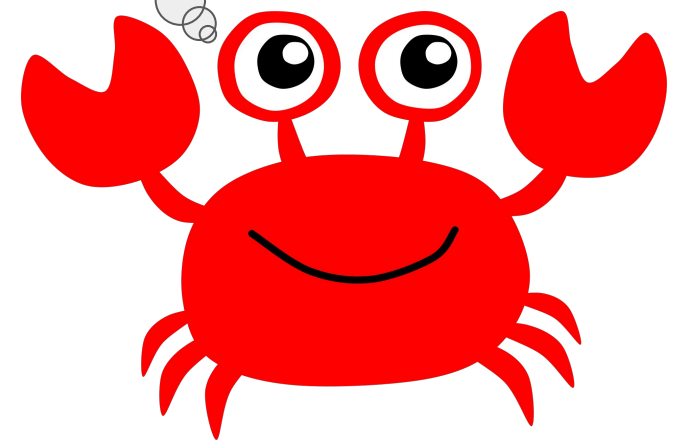


“Available Upon Reasonable Request”:

Search strategy sharing statements and practices in published systematic reviews

Spoiler: We need to do better!



Author: This review is reported according to the PRISMA guidelines
The search strategies are available upon request

PRISMA (2020) item 7 requires authors to present the full search strategies for all databases
We are interested in your search strategies. Could you share them with us?

Author: ...

What we did

Search



- Published between 2018-2022
- Example of search (EBSCO Medline):
TX (("search strategy" OR "search strategies") N5 ("upon request" OR "on request" OR "by request" OR "first author*" OR "corresponding author*")) AND TX (("systematic review" OR "systematic literature review"))

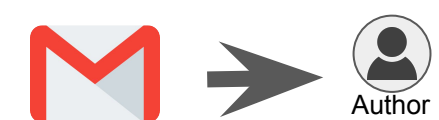
Screen

- Screened 816 records
- Eligibility criteria:
 - Systematic reviews, systematic literature reviews or meta-analysis
 - English language
 - Included a search strategy availability statement
- 155 reviews included

Data extraction

- Data extracted by single reviewer:
 - Discipline
 - Does the review cite PRISMA?
 - Does the journal endorse PRISMA?
 - Is a search strategy included?
 - How many searches are included?
 - Where were the searches located?

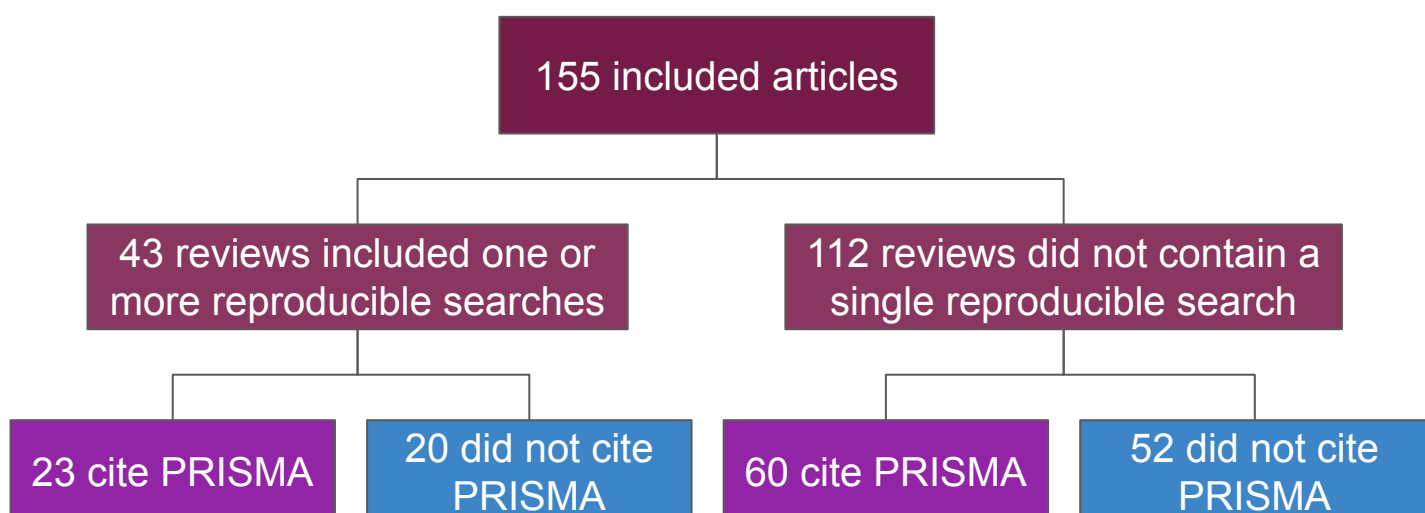
Requesting searches



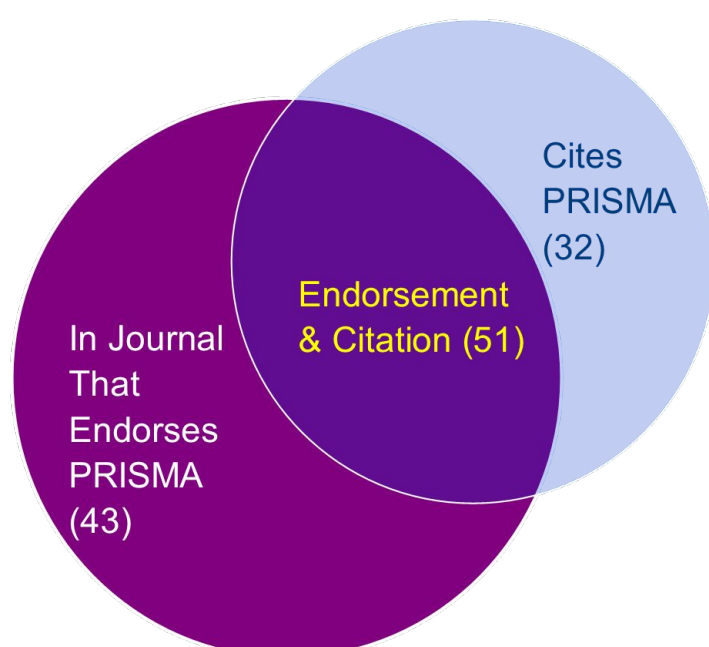
- First email: Jan 30-Feb 2nd, 2023
- Follow-up email: Feb 13-20th, 2023
- Deadline to send searches: Feb 28th, 2023

What we saw

Even though **PRISMA** requires a strategy to be included, **71%** of articles citing PRISMA did not provide any reproducible search strategies in the manuscript



46% of articles that did NOT cite PRISMA were published in journals that endorse PRISMA

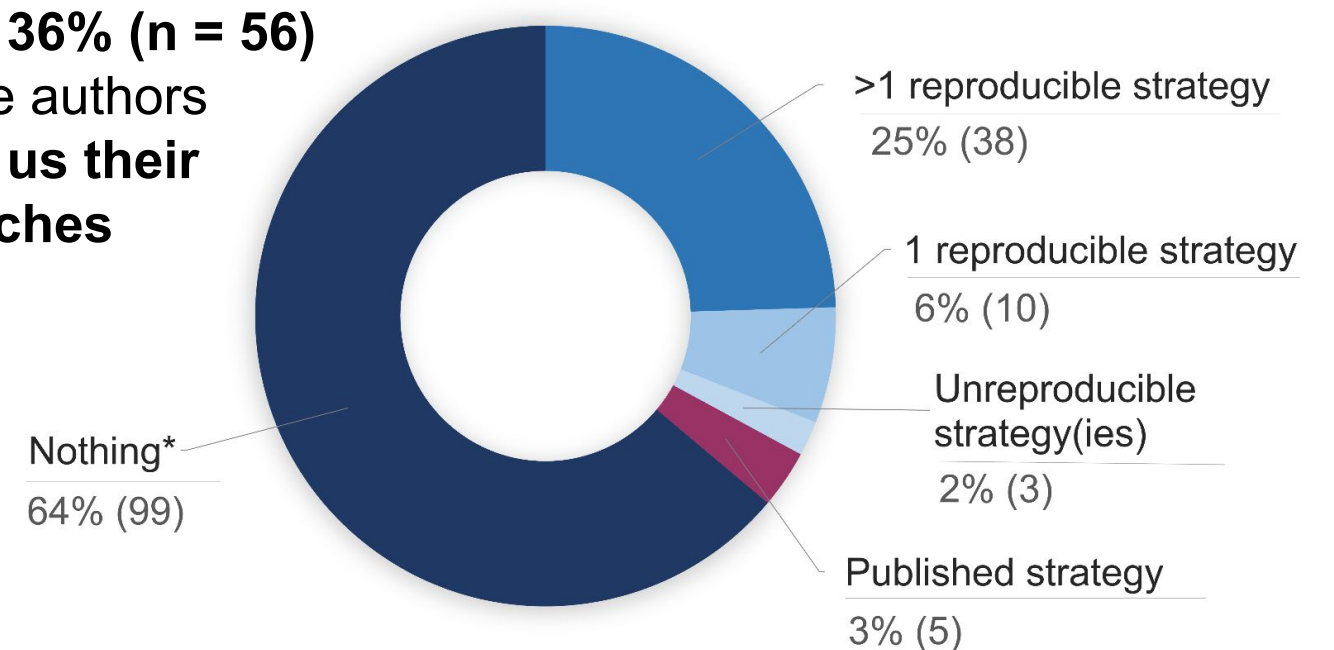


What we got

46% (n = 72) of the authors replied to our email

Bounced - Email Undeliverable	17 (11%)
Auto-replies (no longer @ organization)	3 (2%)
No response from author	63 (41%)
Received a response from author	72 (46%)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65 replied within 2 weeks 56 sent search strategies

Only 36% (n = 56) of the authors sent us their searches



* Includes a small number of invalid email addresses, and authors who wanted to know why we wanted it before they would share their strategy.

Only 1 in 3 requests for search strategies were filled.

Relying on personal communication to obtain search histories is unrealistic. Journal endorsement of PRISMA is meaningless if adherence to the requirements is not enforced.

What about you?
Let us know at the following link:
lib.uvic.ca/chla23



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