The role of health in Impact Assessment and related initiatives: a literature review

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Summary

• 1 Introduction: HIA and related types of assessment

• 2 Purpose of this research

• 3 Methodology

• 4 Results

• 5 Discussion and conclusions: plurality of health meaning
1 Introduction: HIA and related types of assessment

• Human health and wellbeing are recognized as the ultimate reason of every impact assessment for balance of ecological, social and economic conditions (Cole et al., 2004).

• HIA is widely used in Europe, Canada and Australia to evaluate the social, economic and environmental impacts of plans, projects and programs for the purpose of promoting population health.
1 Introduction: HIA and related types of assessment

• HIA is getting relevance in several types of assessment as EIA, Risk Assessment and other

• However, HIA is not well structured and lacks regulamentation in several countries
2 Purpose of this research

• This paper investigates the role of health in EIA and in other variety of assessment in which human health is directly or indirectly related

• Main problem: What is the role of health in EIA and related Impact Assessment studies?
3 Methodology

- Qualitative approach (Creswell, 1994) due the opened question posed and few research concerning the issue
  - Bibliographic review
- Four systematic searches in Web of Knowledge regarding EIA and health
  - First search:
    - “Health Impact Assessment” for the title and “Environmental Impact Assessment” for the topic
3 Methodology

• Second search
  • “Health Impact Assessment”, “Environmental Impact Assessment” and “Integration”, all for topic

• Third search
  • “Health Impact Assessment” and “Environmental Impact Assessment” both for topic
3 Methodology

• Fourth search

• “Social determinants” (title), “Health” (title), and “Environmental Impact Assessment” (topic)
4 Results

- The set of the four searches delivered **46 valid results**. Repeated, inconsistent, and incomplete references were disregarded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEARCH</th>
<th>VALID RECOVERED STUDIES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
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</table>
# 4 Results

- Results grouped according to their main subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF STUDY</th>
<th>RESULTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EIA focused</td>
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<td>EIA framework focused</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated EIA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIA + health focused on risk and safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human health in EIA</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIA itself</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health assessment framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIA in EIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health in project assessment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk and health</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
5 Discussion and conclusions

• Looking at this classification, it can be highlighted a plural meaning for health, depending on the main subject of assessment

• When the main subject are EIA studies, health is closely linked to the physical aspects of the environment, and social ones are almost always disregarded
5 Discussion and conclusions

• When the main subject is an EIA framework, health assumes as individual as collective perspective, therefore presenting changing meaning

• In integrated EIA studies, health is represented in a multiperspective level, and it can be understood as both scientific and lay knowledge performing together
5 Discussion and conclusions

- When EIA and health assessment studies are addressed to risk issues, health is conceived under a negative view, as health loss.
- In HIA studies by excellence, health is the result of intersectorial collaboration between institutions and professionals.
- HIA framework studies bring a plural definition for health, as a transdisciplinary view.
5 Discussion and conclusions

• When HIA goes inside EIA, health concept follows the EIA scheme, and then physical determinants of health back to scenery

• In the case of health in project assessment studies, the concept of health lies between individual and communitary scopes

• In risk and health studies, health means safety, and quantitative methods take a special place
References can be found in the manuscript

Thank you!

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