

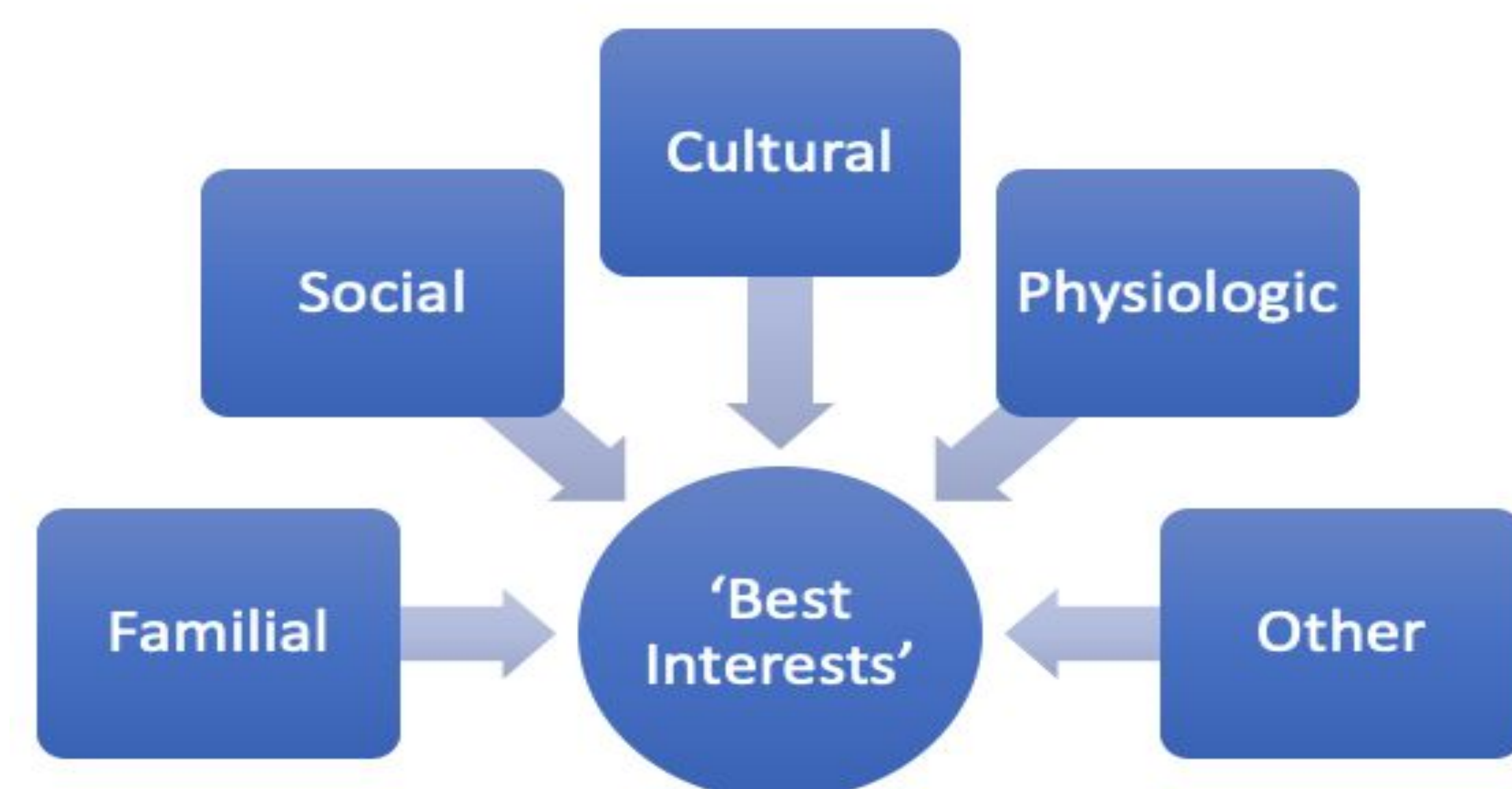
'Best Interest' in Clinical Medicine: A Critical Scoping Review

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INTRODUCTION

The Best Interest Standard (BIS) has been a much-debated guidance principle in clinical ethics with ambiguous definition and application. In this study we focus on the conceptions of best interests that differ according to which kinds of interests are included. While there is wide agreement that 'best interests' include the physiological welfare of a patient, there is still substantial disagreement about which *other* interests are included in wider accounts of welfare, the balancing of those other interests, and whether interests are objective or subjective.

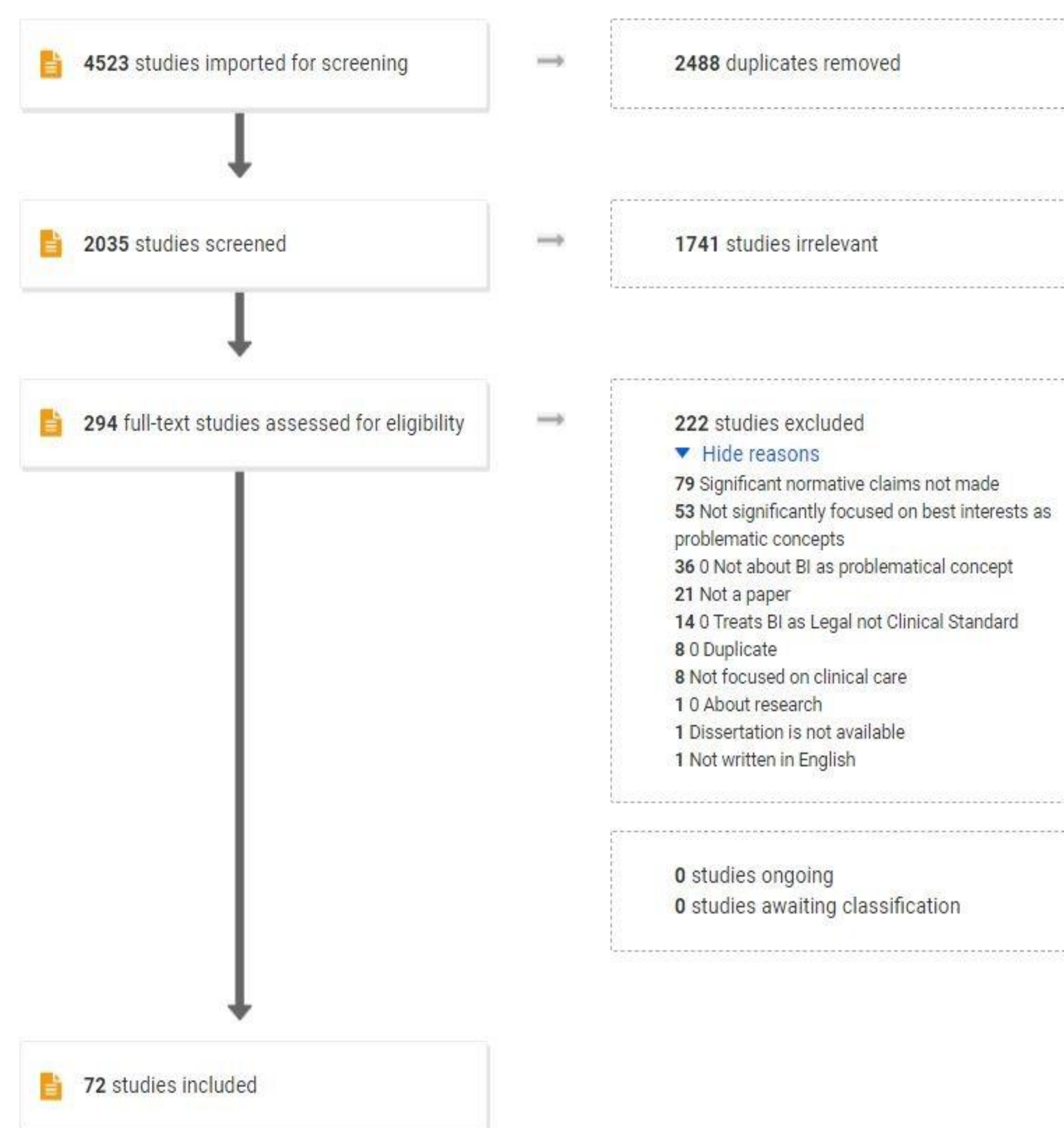


AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- Aim I: Develop search strategy in conjunction with mentors and search strategist
- Aim II: Conduct search, import into COVIDENCE, and conduct inclusion/exclusion review of search results.
- Aim III: Develop Coding strategy and then code articles
Coding will include orientation of author (clinical versus academic), construct used, and core clinical issue.
- Aim IV: Determine if there is a sizable consensus on the best interest of pediatric patients.
- Aim V: Determine how best interest is operationalized depending on the context of family.

METHODS

This study followed a systematic, scoping review framework. Searches were conducted on 11 databases that generated an initial 4,523 publications. Abstracts were included if they; (1) used the term "best interest," "beneficence" or "benefits" in the title or abstract, (2) focused on the best interests of patients, (3) focus on clinical care, and (4) contain significant discussion of normative claims. 72 publications were included for full article review and stratified by normative themes based on objective and subjective definitions of best interests and definitions that accepted more than the physiologic well-being of the patient.



RESULTS

Almost all authors of the studied articles assert that 'best interests' is about the wider welfare of the patient in that it includes more than mere physiological goods, but also interests that are psychological/emotional, relational, familial, or cultural, among others. Indeed, there is a consensus among authors of study articles that 'best interests' involves a balancing of different considerations and that these 'Best interests' are often thought to include both objective and subjective elements.



CONCLUSION

This paper's findings suggest there is significant consensus and dissensus in the bioethics literature about the meaning of 'best interests.' Further conceptual development of 'best interests' is especially needed in the subjective balancing of other interests beyond those pertaining physiologically to the patient.