



# Community engagement in health equity-focused research published in high-impact medical journals

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Edwin S.H. Leong Centre for Healthy Children  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



- Health equity is an important focus of medical research
- Community-engaged research addresses health disparities by involving stakeholders (e.g., community members, practitioners, organizations etc.) throughout the research process

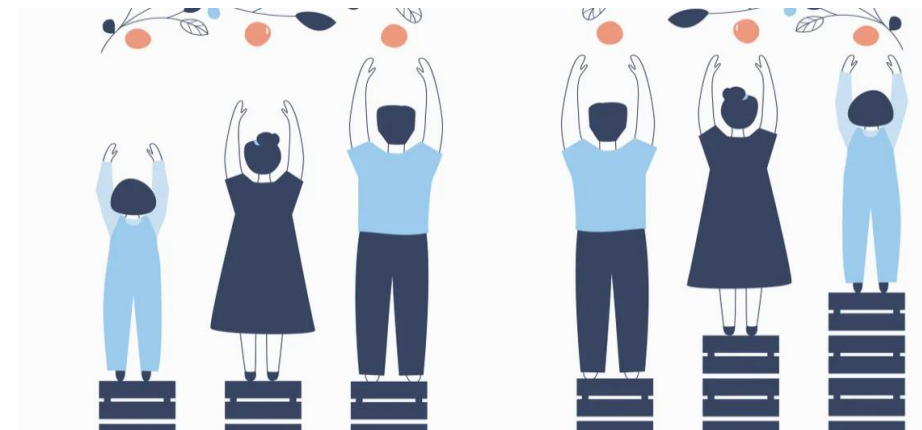
Question development



Dissemination

## Research Question

Is community engagement reported in health equity-focused publications in high-impact medical journals?





- P** Place of residence
- R** Race/Ethnicity/culture/language
- O** Occupation
- G** Gender/sex
- R** Religion
- E** Education
- S** Socioeconomic status
- S** Social capital
- PLUS** Characteristics associated with discrimination



- Incorporates community-academic partnerships with the aim of addressing health equity
- Recognized as a principle in the ethical conduct of human research
- Exists on a continuum

## Stages of the Research Process

- Study design
- Study implementation
- Data analysis
- Acknowledgement/authorship





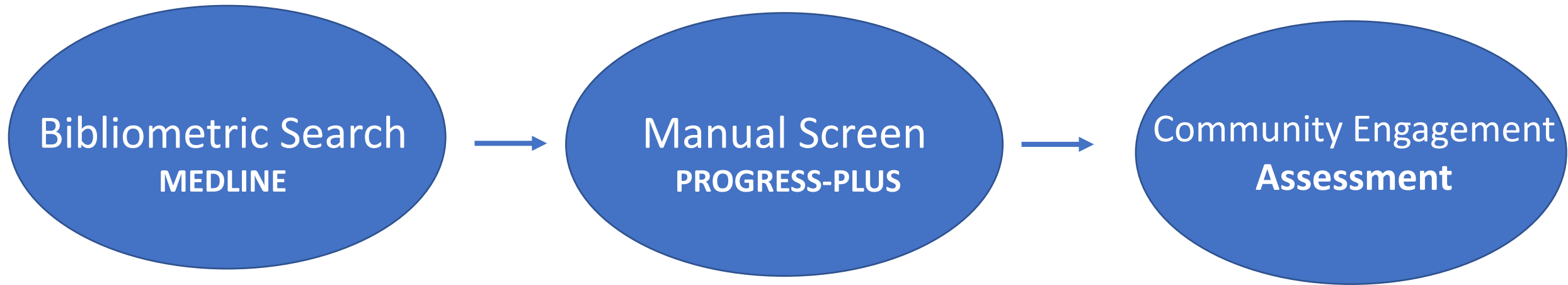
- Top 3 highest-impact general medical journals
- Also included all affiliated subspecialty journals

## THE LANCET



The NEW ENGLAND  
JOURNAL of MEDICINE

**JAMA**<sup>®</sup>  
The Journal of the American Medical Association



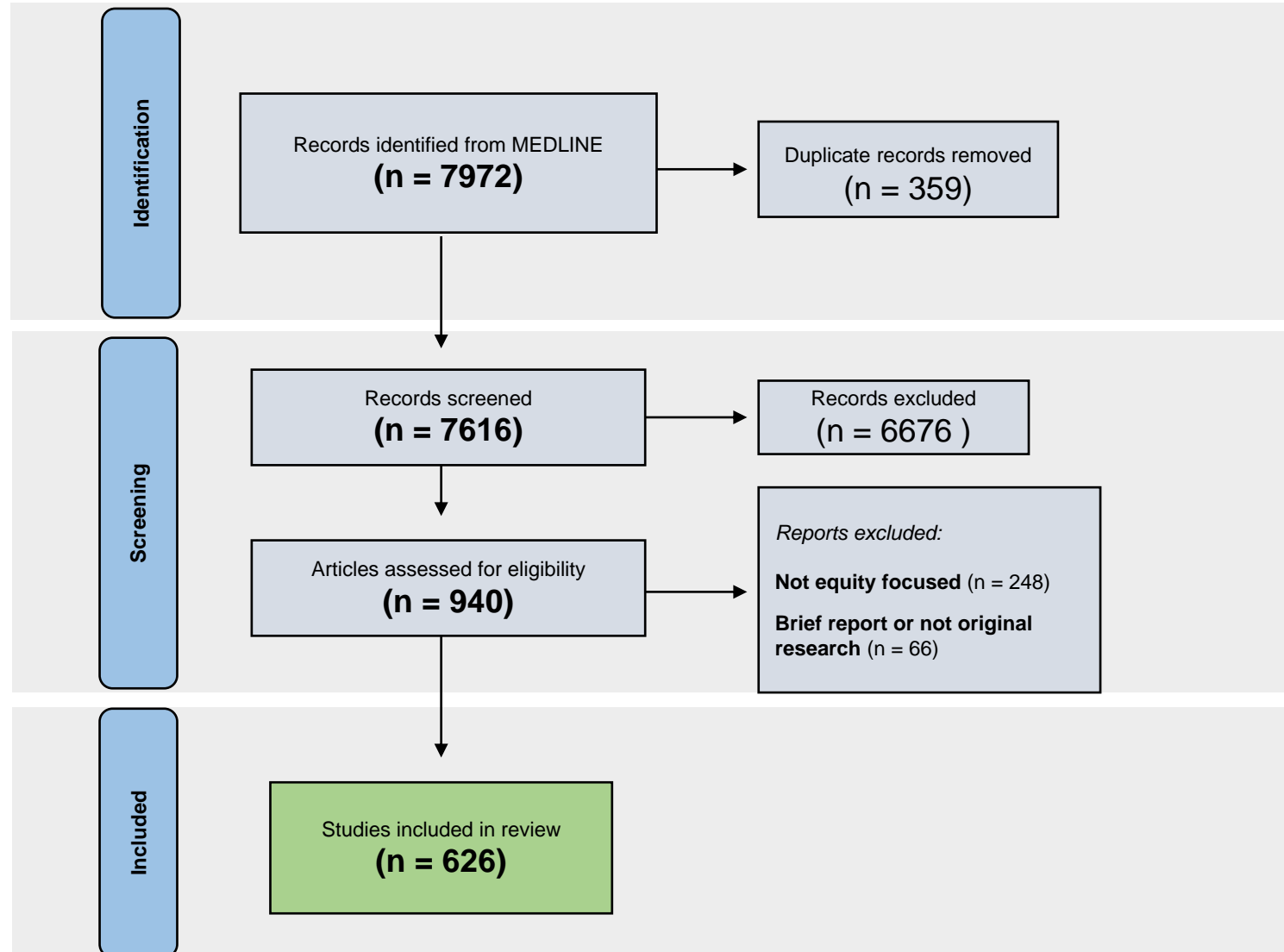
- Original research
- JAMA Network, NEJM Group, or The Lancet Group journals
- Primary objective aligned with **PROGRESS-PLUS** topic
  - Unavoidable or unjust health difference
- January 1, 2021 to September 22, 2022

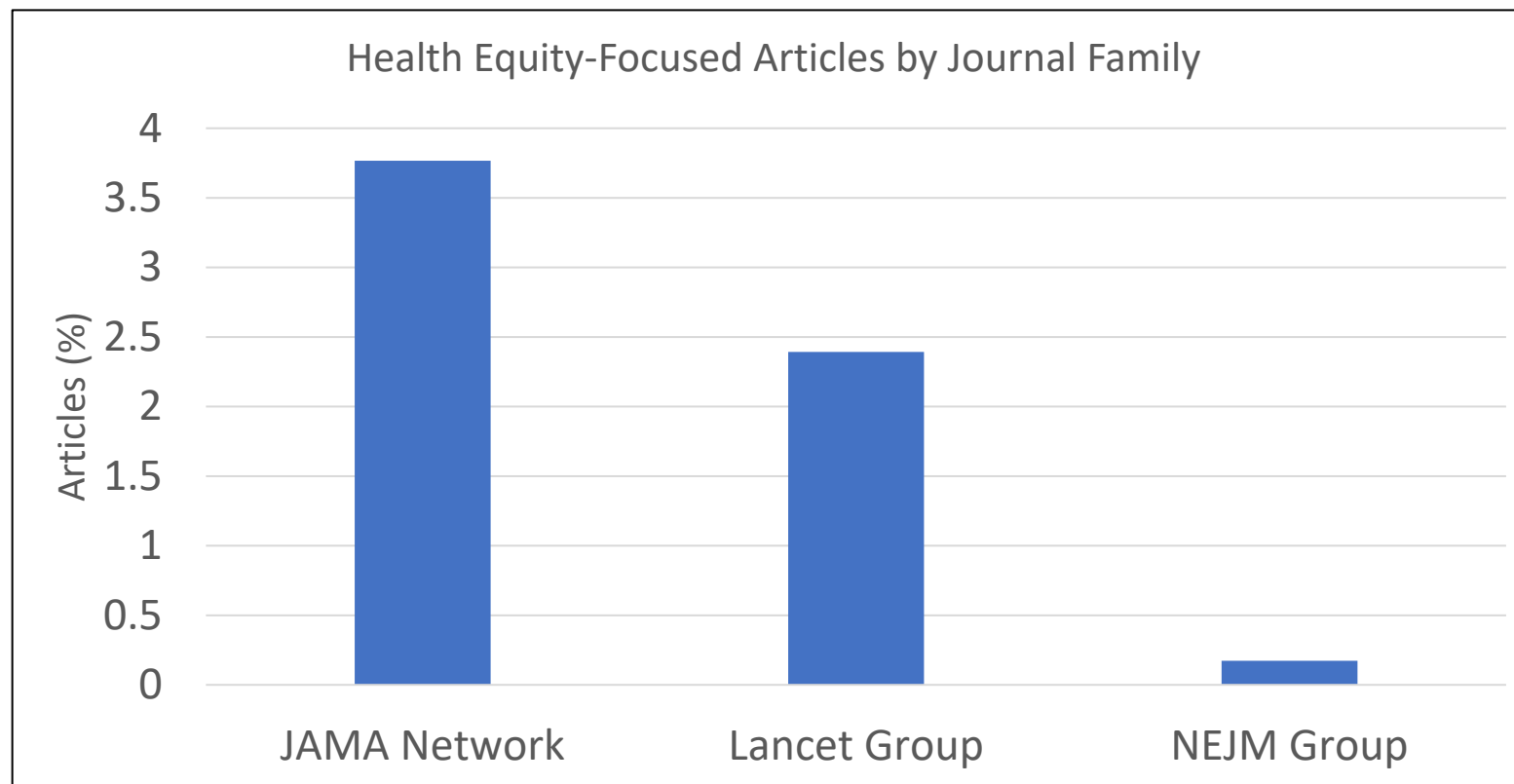


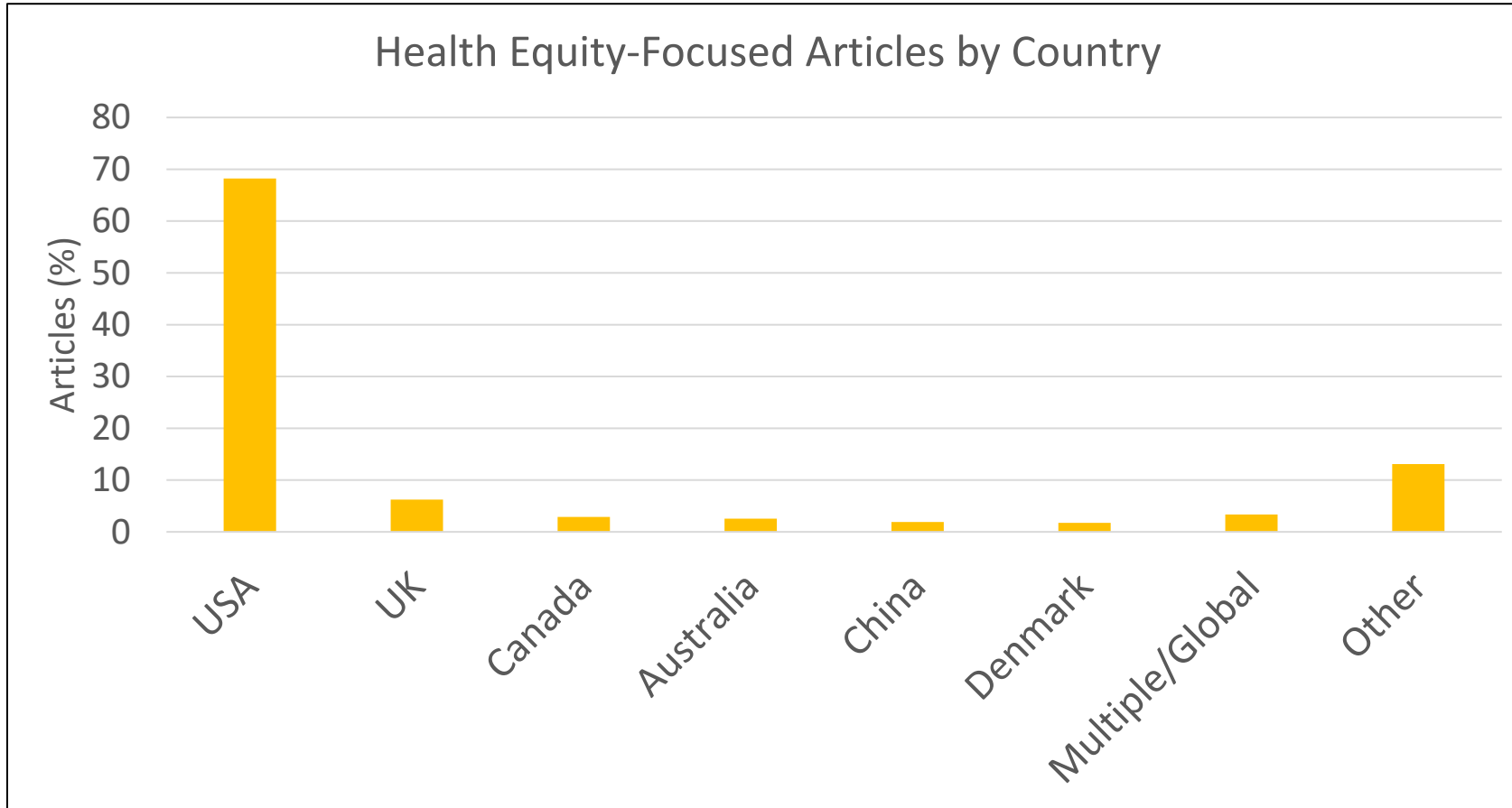
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# Results





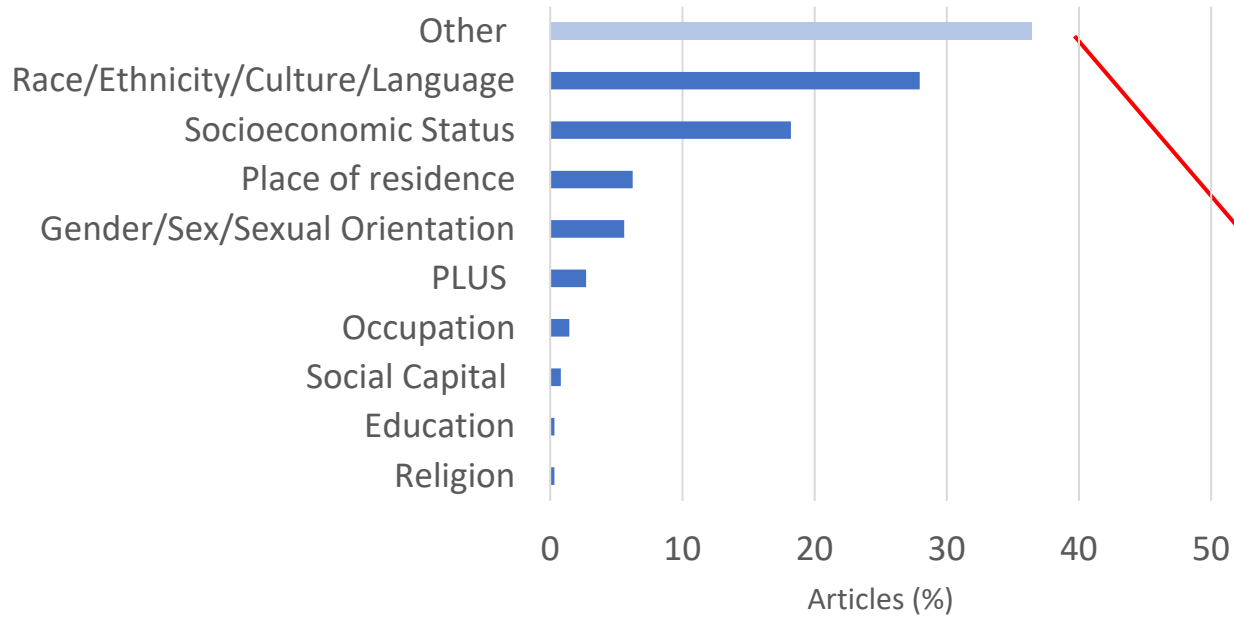




n= 626

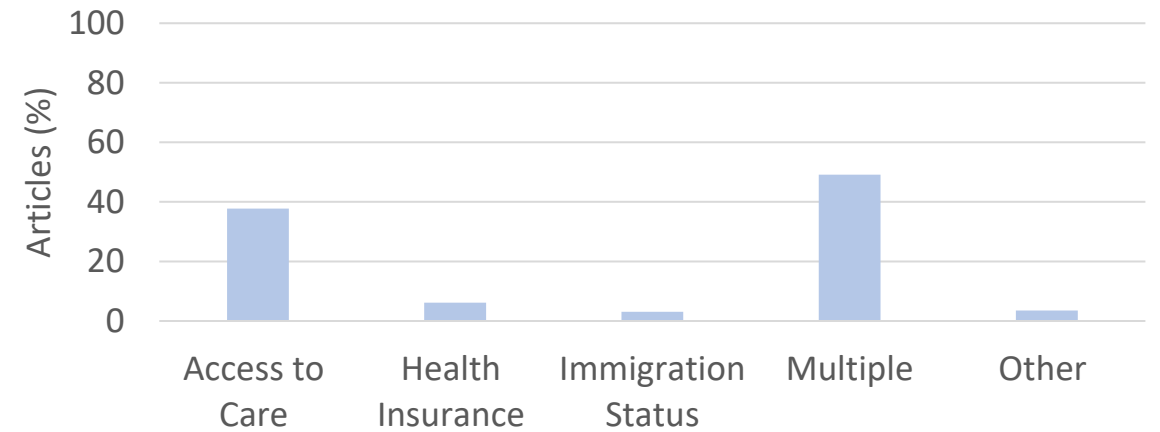


### Health Equity-Focused Articles by PROGRESS PLUS Topic



n= 626

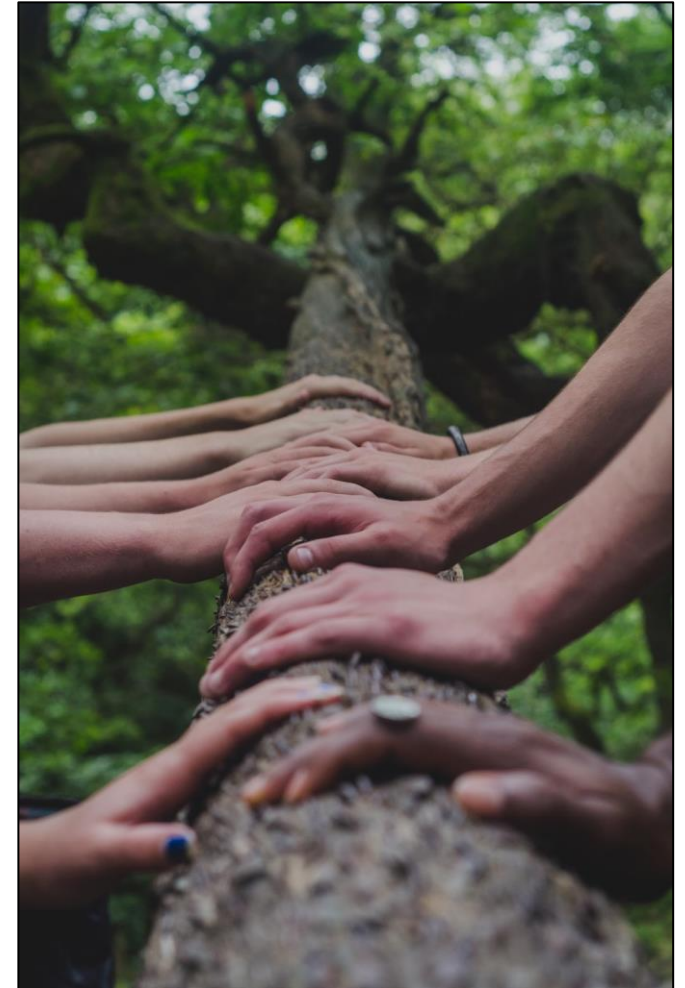
### Health Equity Topics- "Other"

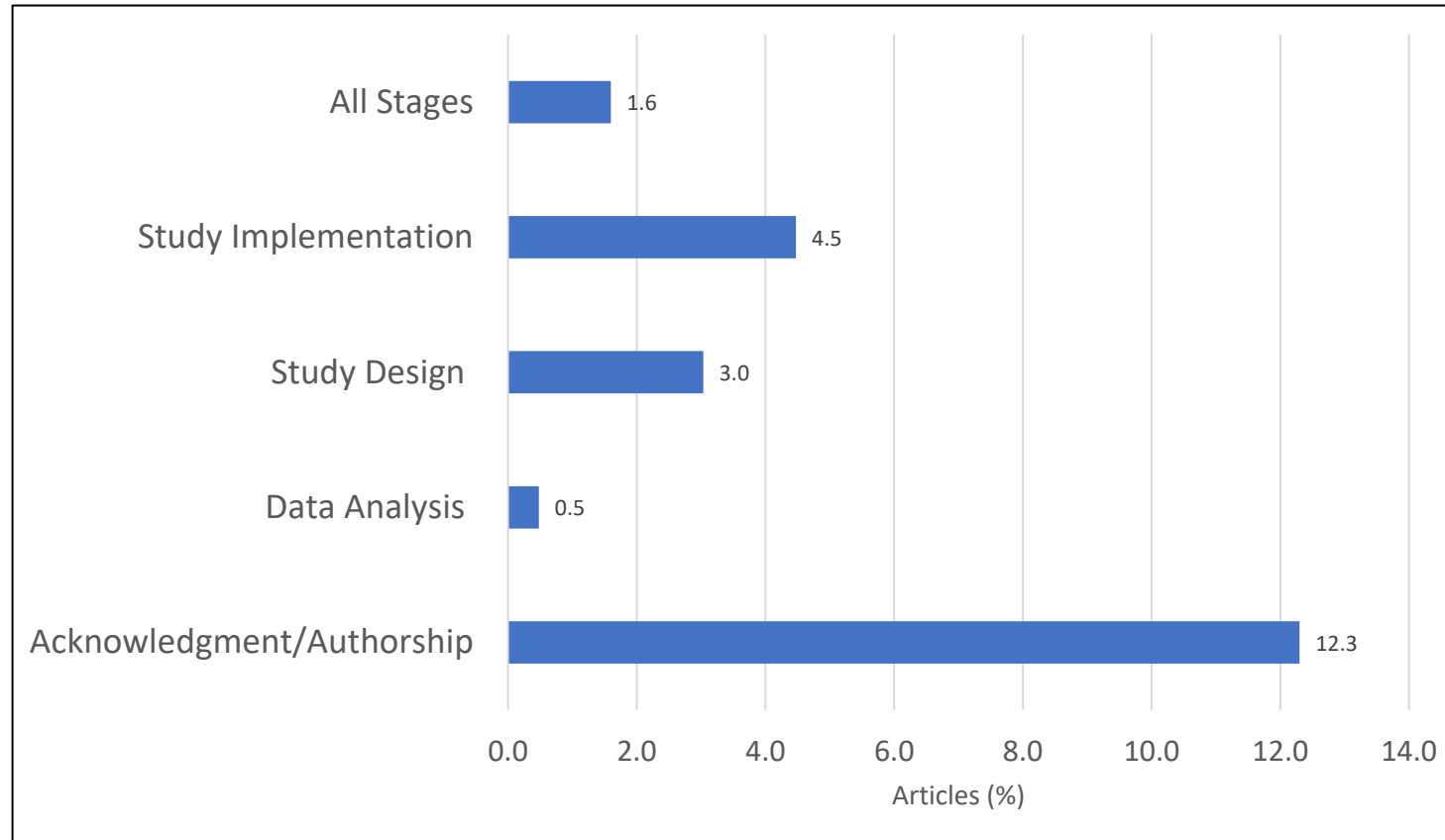


n= 228

## Is community engagement being used in equity-focused research?

- 15.8% (n=99) articles reported community engagement at any stage
- 1.6% (n=10) reported at all stages





n= 626



**Additional Contributions:** We thank all the participants involved in this study, collaborators, and research teams at Impact Research and Development Organization.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the Youth2000 survey participants, particularly the rangatahi Māori participants and their whānau who trusted us with this information. We would also like to acknowledge the Māori health providers and Youth Services who often work outside of their scope to innovatively address inequities for rangatahi Māori.

## Indigenous adolescent health in Aotearoa New Zealand: Trends, policy and advancing equity for rangatahi Maori, 2001–2019

Terryann C. Clark (Ngāpuhi) <sup>1</sup> • Jude Ball (Pākehā) <sup>2</sup> • John Fenaughty (Pākehā) <sup>2</sup> •  
Bradley Drayton (Kāi Tahu, Pākehā) <sup>2</sup> • Theresa (Terry) Fleming (Pākehā) <sup>2</sup> • Claudia Rivera-Rodriguez (Colombian) •  
Jade Le Grice (Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa) • Roshini Peiris-John (Sri Lankan) • Lynda-Maree Bavin (Pākehā) <sup>2</sup> •  
Ariel Schwencke (Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa) • Kylie Sutcliffe (Pākehā) <sup>2</sup> • Sonia Lewycka (Ukrainian, Pākehā) <sup>2</sup> •  
Mathijs Lucassen (Dutch, Pākehā) <sup>2</sup> • Anaru Waa (Ngāti Hine, Ngāpuhi) • Lara M. Greaves (Ngāpuhi, Pākehā, Tararā) <sup>2</sup> •  
Sue Crengle (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe, Waitaha) • [Show less](#) • [Show footnotes](#)

analysis was also gained from the Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee (approval number 156/20). In Victoria, a coordinated approach to Indigenous health research and Indigenous data governance is needed. In 2021, the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (also known as VACCHO) commenced development of a Victorian Aboriginal Research Accord. In the absence of such an accord, two Indigenous researchers (LB and JO'B) and members of the Victorian Aboriginal community were engaged across all phases of the research project. Knowledge arising from the Victorian Aboriginal Research Accord Project will be used to guide the research team on how to best create value from Indigenous data in ways that are grounded in Victorian Aboriginal worldviews.

## Characteristics of articles that included Community Engagement at all stages:

- Study Design
  - Qualitative: 50.0% (n= 5)
  - Cross-sectional: 2.0%% (n= 2)
- Health Equity Topic
  - Race/ethnicity/culture/language: 50.0% (n= 5)
  - Other: 3.0% (n= 3)
- 60.0% (n=6) focused on **adult** populations





- There is a lack of community engagement being reported in health equity-focused research
- Among articles that did report community engagement, quality of the engagement varied significantly
- Need for standardized reporting of community engagement in equity-focused research



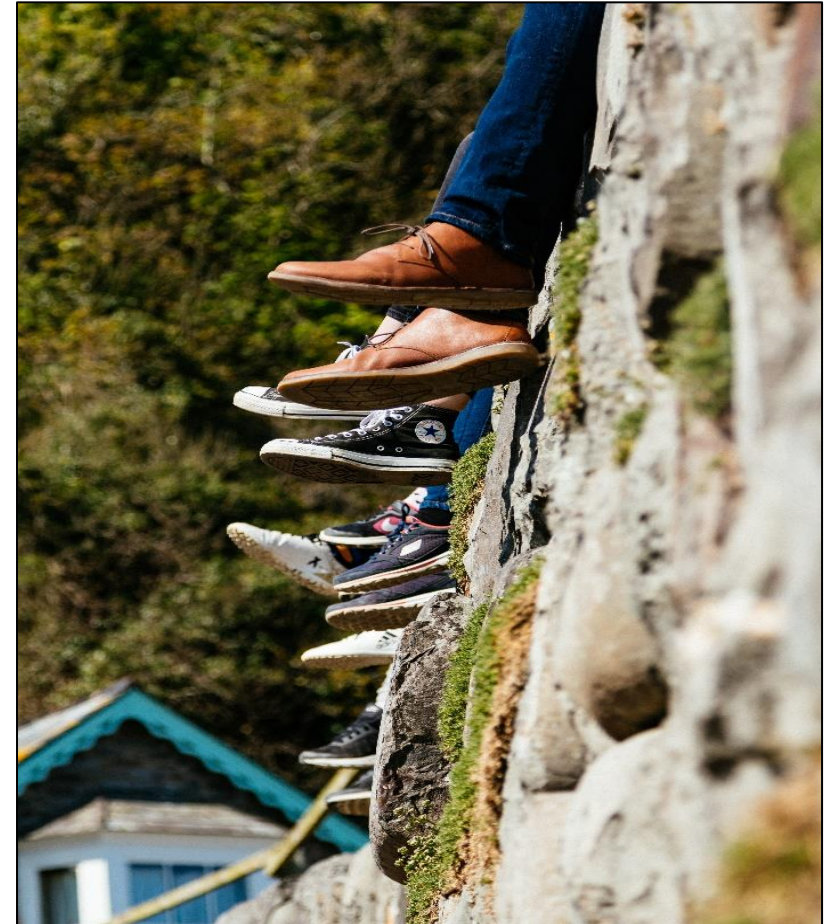


## Barriers to Community Engagement

- Ethics
- Cost/Funding
- Guidance
- Time



- Dedicated to catalyzing research that advances health equity for children and their families
- **Community Engagement Series:** presenters focus on innovative community-engaged research projects and methods
- **Drop-in consultations:** support for our members in their community-engaged and knowledge mobilization needs
- **Trainee Hub:** a new initiative to learn about the foundations, ethical dimensions, and planning for community-engaged research
- **Online resource library**
- **Community advisory committee** in progress



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