



A Systematic Review of Community Engagement in Health Equity Research Published in High Impact Medical Journals

Janavi Shetty¹, Priscilla Medeiros¹, Luiza Lamaj², Jessie Cunningham³, Susitha Wanigaratne^{1,4,5}, Astrid Guttman^{1,4,6,8}, and Eyal Cohen^{1,5,6,7,8}

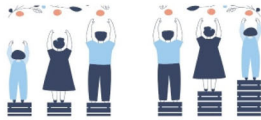
¹Edwin S.H. Leong Centre for Healthy Children, University of Toronto, ² Faculty of Science, Toronto Metropolitan University, ³ Health Sciences Library, The Hospital for Sick Children, ⁴ ICES, ⁵ Child Health Evaluative Sciences, Hospital for Sick Children Research Institute, ⁶ Department of Pediatrics, University of Toronto, ⁷ Institute of Health Policy, Management, and Evaluation, University of Toronto, ⁸ Division of Pediatric Medicine, The Hospital for Sick Children

Objective

To determine if community engagement is being reported in health equity focused publications in high-impact medical journals.

Background

- Health equity is defined as the absence of unfair, avoidable or remedial differences among groups of people defined by social, economic, demographic, or geographic factors¹
- Community-engaged research aims to achieve health equity by involving stakeholders (e.g., community members, practitioners, organizations) throughout the research process
 - Study design
 - Study implementation
 - Data analysis
 - Acknowledgement
- Enables community members who experience inequities to inform decisions about research and influence health systems²

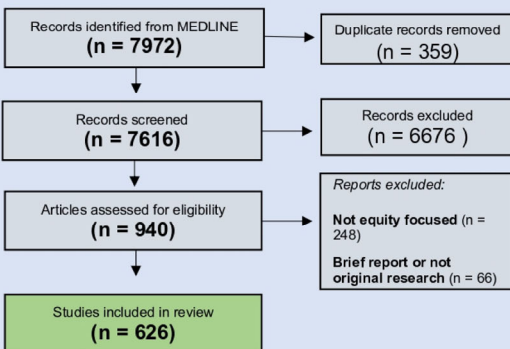


Methods



- Three highest-ranked journals from the “Medicine—General and Internal” category³
 - JAMA Network**
 - The New England Journal of Medicine Group**
 - The Lancet Group**
- Searched MEDLINE/PubMed using an adapted health equity filter⁴: January 1, 2021, to September 22, 2022
- The PROGRESS-Plus (Place of residence, Religion, Occupation, Gender/sex, Race/ethnicity/culture/language, Education, Social Capital, Socioeconomic Status, and Plus/other) framework⁵ was used to identify health equity focused articles
- Assessed all health equity focused articles for reported community engagement at each stage of the research process

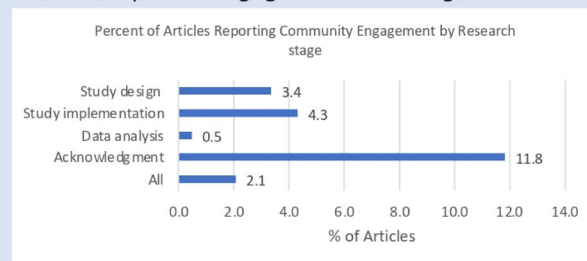
Results



Health Equity Focused Article Characteristics

- JAMA Network (n= 457, 3.8%); The Lancet Group (n=167, 2.4%), NEJM Group (n= 2, 0.2%)
- 68.4% were from the USA
- 57.7% were focused on adult populations
- PROGRESS-Plus
 - Race/ethnicity/culture/language: 28.1%
 - Socioeconomic status: 18.2%
 - Multiple: 17.7%

- 97 (15.5%) articles reported community engagement at any stage, and 13 (2.1%) reported engagement at all stages



- Among articles reporting engagement, 87.6% engaged with members of the community directly
- Articles described community engagement primarily in the methods and acknowledgement sections, but often did not provide details about contributions

Conclusion

- The reporting of community engagement approaches in health equity focused research published in high impact medical journals is lacking
- There is a need for standardized reporting guidelines