

The experiences of minority language users in health and social care research: A systematic review

Llinos Haf Spencer¹, Beryl Ann Cooledge¹, and Zoe Hoare¹

¹Bangor University

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Abstract

Background: The planning and management of health policy is directly linked to evidence-based research. To obtain the most rigorous results in research it is important to have a representative sample. However, ethnic minorities are often not accounted for in research. Migration, equality, and diversity issues are important priorities which need to be considered by researchers. The aim of this systematic review (SR) is to explore the literature examining the experiences of minority language users in Health and Social Care Research (HSCR). **Method:** A SR of the literature was conducted. SPIDER framework and Cochrane principles were utilized to conduct the review. Five databases were searched, yielding 5311 papers initially. A SR protocol was developed and published in PROSPERO: https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/prospero/display_record.php?ID=CRD42020225114analysis. **Results:** Following the title and abstract review by two reviewers, 74 papers were included, and a narrative account was provided. Six themes were identified: 1. Disparities in healthcare; 2. Maternal health; 3. Mental health; 4. Methodology in health research; 5. Migrant and minority healthcare; 6. Racial and ethnic gaps in healthcare. Results showed that language barriers (including language proficiency) and cultural barriers still exist in terms of recruitment, possibly effecting the validity of the results. Several papers acknowledged language barriers but did not act to reduce them. **Conclusion:** Despite research highlighting cultures over the past 40 years, there is a need for this to be acknowledged and embedded in the research process. We propose that future research should include details of languages spoken so readers can understand the sample composition to be able to interpret the results in the best way, recognising the significance of culture and language. If language is not considered as a significant aspect of research, the findings of the research cannot be rigorous and therefore the validity is compromised.

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Figure 1 - Identification of studies via databases.docx available at <https://authorea.com/users/566657/articles/613260-the-experiences-of-minority-language-users-in-health-and-social-care-research-a-systematic-review>

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Table 1 - List of papers by author country date and domain of interest.docx available at <https://authorea.com/users/566657/articles/613260-the-experiences-of-minority-language-users-in-health-and-social-care-research-a-systematic-review>

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Table 2 - Themes and sub-themes for minority language speakers in health research.docx
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