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MIGRANT FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND: THE STATE OF RESEARCH ON SOCIAL SUPPORT

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Introduction

- Population of Migrant: There is an increase net migration with a total in NI with a total of +2,300. This is due to international migration as well as migration from the UK and rest of the world (NISRA 2022).
- A 2021 study titled "Experiences of education among minority ethnic groups in Northern Ireland" indicated that approximately 20% of the minority ethnic parents interviewed reported that one or more of their children had a disability.
- Dearth of empirical research focused on this minority group within the larger minority ethnic (Piérart, G., et al. 2020).



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Study General Aim and Objective

- **Overall aim**

- This study is aimed at examining the provision of social support for migrant parents of children with disabilities in Northern Ireland.

- **Study objectives**

- 1. To investigate the social support needs of migrant parents of children with disabilities.
- 2. To explore the forms and use of social support among migrant parents of children with disabilities.
- 3. To examine the effectiveness of social support in the lives of migrant parents of children with disabilities, from the perspective of parents and key service providers.



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Objective of the systematic literature review approach

The systematic literature review approach was undertaken to;

- Examine the existing **available** research on social support for migrant parents of children with disabilities.
- Pay particular attention to the **breadth** of existing empirical research on this topic;
- **Analyse** the findings of previous research;
- **Identify** knowledge gaps that may inform the current study's approach.

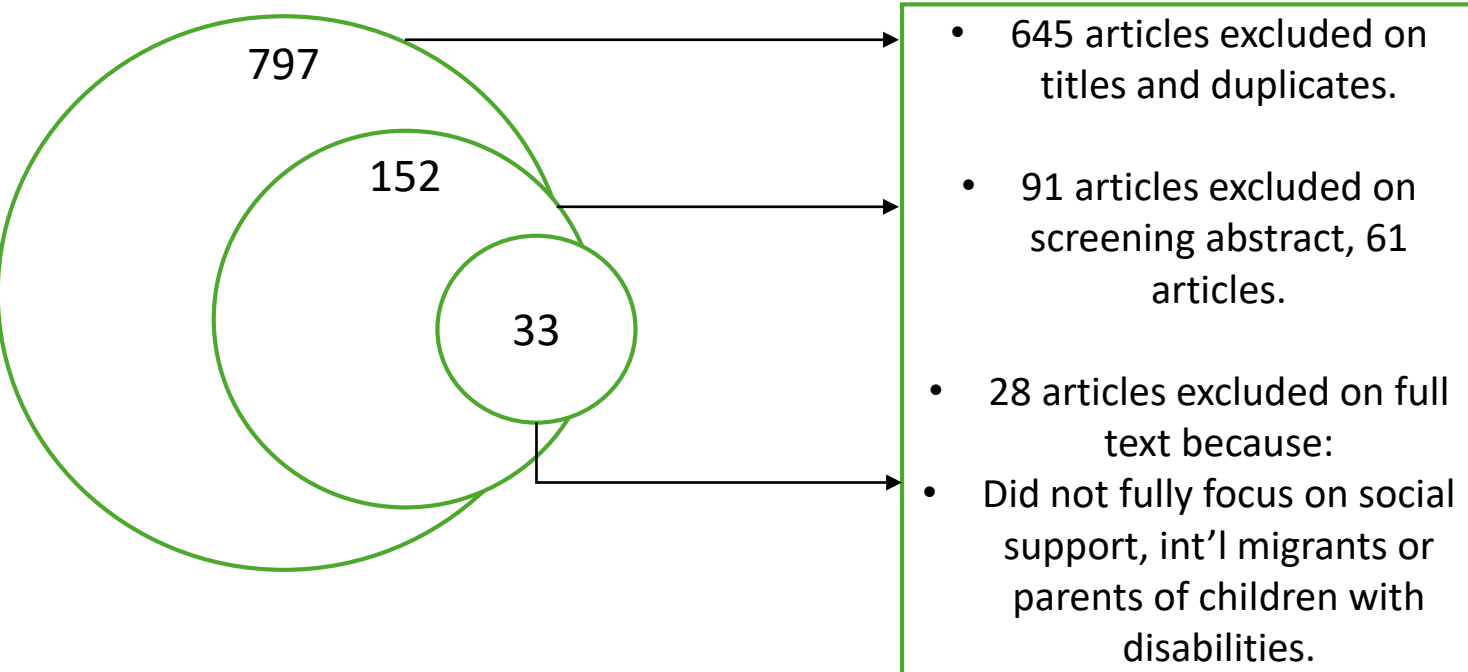


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Systematic review approach

The systematic literature review approach was employed.



OVERVIEW

- Of the 33 papers identified for review, 24 papers reported on original research studies, 9 were papers based on reviews of literature, and 2 articles were published from the same original studies of the 24.
- 19 studies (which include 16 original studies and 3 reviews) focused on migrant parents of children with autism as opposed to other disability types.
- Canada (13) and the USA (11) presented with majority of the studies.
- Australia, the UK, Norway, New Zealand, and other European countries were scarcely represented.
- **NONE in NI.**

Result

- Four themes were identified across the review.
1. Challenges relating to social support for migrant parents of children with disabilities.
 2. Informal social support as a buffer for migrant parents of children with disabilities.
 3. Influence of cultural understandings of disability on social support for migrant parents of children with disabilities.
 4. Coping strategies of migrant parents of children with disabilities.



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What next?

- Data collection ongoing (10 interviews collected so far).
- Still expecting to get some more.

Commonalities in the interviews

Lack of information.

Discrimination

Lack of specialists

Lack of access to schools for their children.

Mental health problems,

Extensive waiting times (healthcare) and

Tick-boxing approach and lots more.

Spousal support.

Community support

faith-based support.



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Relevance of the study to social work/social care practice in NI.

1. Better understanding of the unique needs of migrant parents raising children with disabilities.
2. Improved access to support services in NI.
3. Strengthened community awareness and integration.
4. A new niche of research for NISCC.
5. Avenue for discussion around potential funding projects to smoothen the experience of migrant parents of children with disabilities.
6. Provide an evidence base for law, policy and practice relating to migrant parents of children with disabilities in NI.



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