

Introduction

Immigrants:

- Defined as anyone who was not a U.S. citizen at birth.
- Is comprised of 13.9% of US population
- Most (86%) are from historically marginalized groups
- Are more likely to live and work in disaster-prone areas
- Approximately 5.9 million (1st among all MSAs) in the The New York- Newark-Jersey City, NY- NJ-PA region.
- Are disproportionately impacted during disasters, yet have different concerns and challenges
- Current literature suggests immigrants are under-studied.
- Largest sub pop are temporary migrants.

Purpose

- To understand the experiences of immigrants during disasters by identifying:
 - What are the unique concerns among immigrants during disasters?
 - What are the variations in disaster experiences and impacts across the subgroups of immigrants?

Hypotheses

- Immigrants have distinct experiences and disaster impacts compared to the broader combined category of racial and ethnic minorities
- There is variation in disaster experiences and impacts across different types of immigrant subgroups beyond just refugees

Methods

- Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA).
- Search terms:** Immigrants; Refugees; Disasters; United States

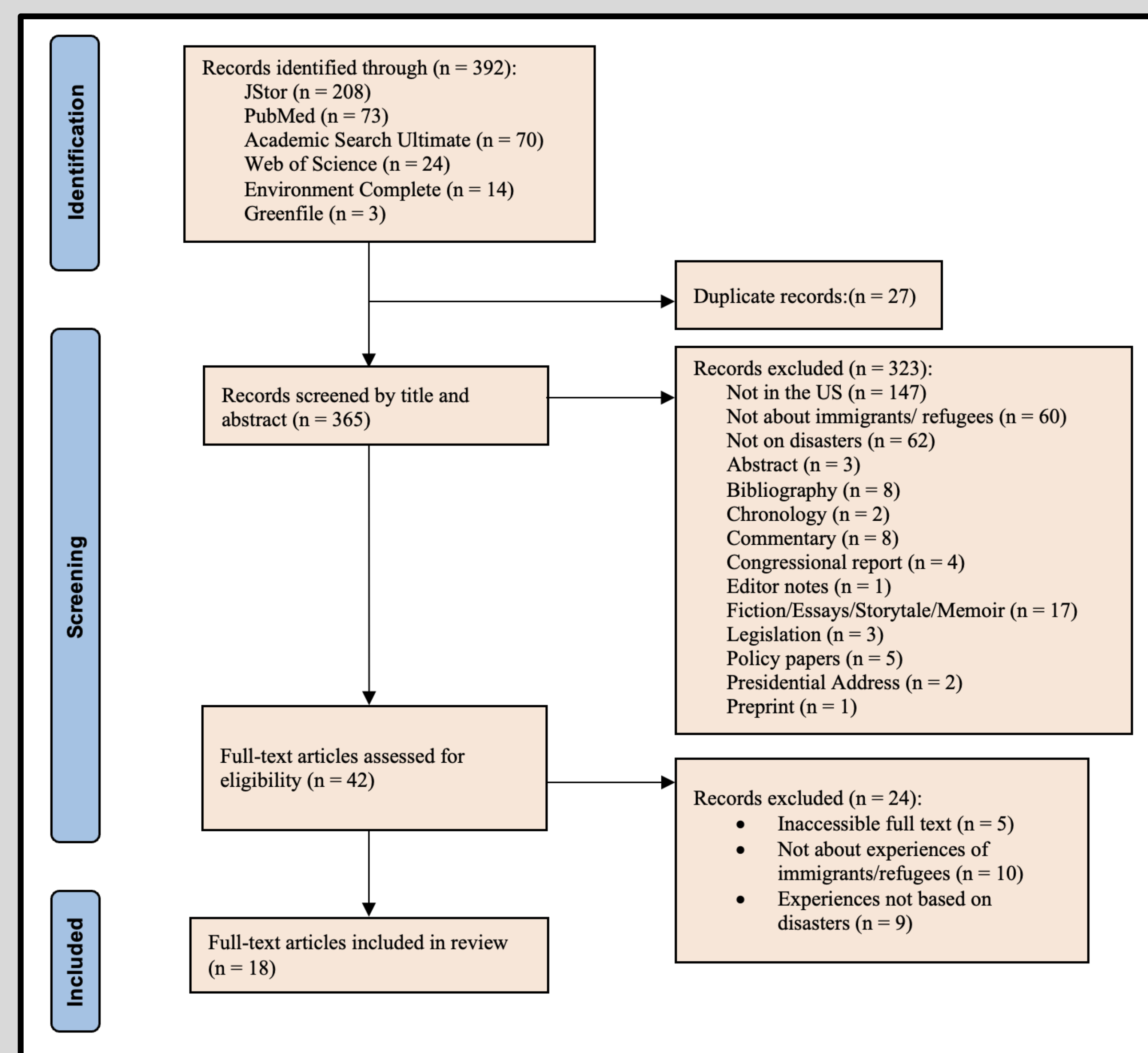
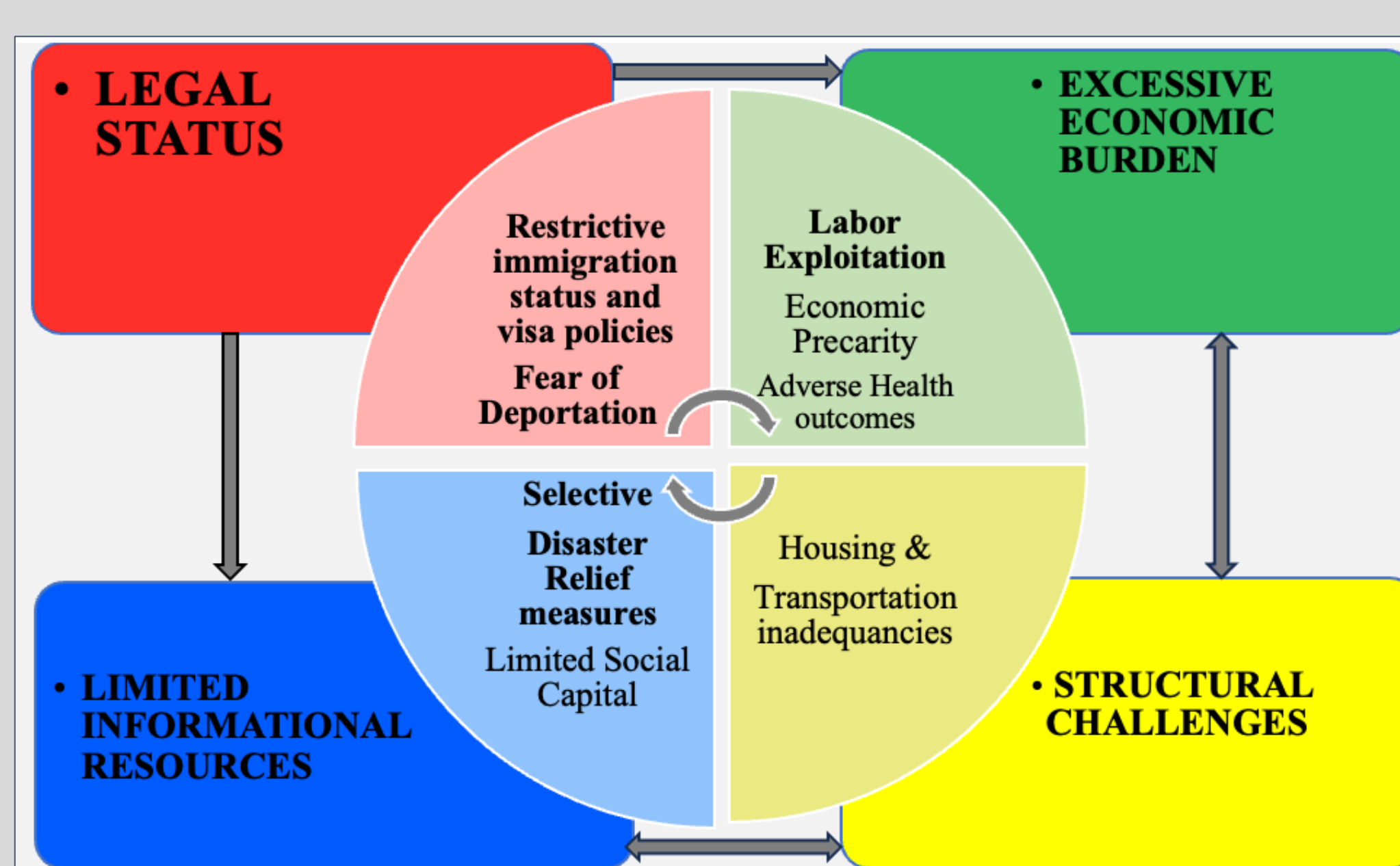


Fig.1: Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) systematic literature review

Findings



Specific challenges immigrants:

- Restrictive immigration status
- Fear of deportation
- Selective disaster relief measures
- Labor exploitation

Community Engagement Process

Big Institutional Non-profit Engagement:

- Included a highly bureaucratic process
- Cautious perceptions of outsiders
- Building personal connections was difficult
- Allocation of resources was challenging

Small Grassroots Organization:

- Have limited resources
- Lack formal engagement structure
- Depend on personal networks
- Scaling up activities is difficult

Preliminary Findings of Interview Process

- Limited understanding of climate change. Some early quotes include:
 - “Climate change is God’s work”.*
 - “Do you mean flooding of people?”*
 - “I don’t believe in Climate change. There are only four seasons!”*
- Getting asylum status and employment are the most crucial need for the West African migrants.

Early Recommendations

Cultural and Linguistic Adaptation:

Infographics on climate change and the impacts on marginalized communities.

Flexibility in Interview Format:

Adjusting the interview structure or questions based on participants' needs and feedback

Holistic Support and Resources:

Acknowledge the multiple challenges faced by asylum seekers beyond coastal hazards.

Acknowledgements

- This work is supported by the National Science Foundation as part of the Megalopolitan Coastal Transformation Hub (MACH) under NSF award ICER-2103754. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.
- The work presented is part of the Human Systems Dynamics team of the MACH project including Dr. Manasa Bollempalli and Nuzhat Fatema.

References

- Batalova, J. B. J. (2022, September 14). *Temporary Visa Holders in the United States*. Migrationpolicy.Org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/temporary-visa-holders-united-states>
- Baugh, R. (2022). *Refugees and Asylees: 2021*. Department of Homeland Security.
- Camarota, S. A., & Zeigler, K. (2022, March 29). *Estimating the Illegal Immigrant Population*. CIS.Org. <https://cis.org/Report/Estimating-Illegal-Immigrant-Population-Using-Current-Population-Survey>
- US Citizen and Immigration Services. (2022, September 21). *Naturalization Statistics* | USCIS. <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship-resource-center/naturalization-statistics>
- Ward, N., & Batalova, J. (2023, March 13). *Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States*. Migrationpolicy.Org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states>
- Chu, H., & Yang, J. Z. (2020). Building disaster resilience using social messaging networks: The WeChat community in Houston, Texas, during Hurricane Harvey. *Disasters*, 44(4), 726–752. <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12388>
- Cross, F. L., & Gonzalez Benson, O. (2021). The Coronavirus Pandemic and Immigrant Communities: A Crisis That Demands More of the Social Work Profession. *Affilia*, 36(1), 113–119. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109920960832>