



Racial Diversity in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Interventions for Chronic Pain: A Systematic Research Synthesis

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Background

- ❖ An estimated 20% of the population is currently dealing with chronic pain (Dahlhamer et al., 2018).
- ❖ While white, non-Hispanic individuals and Black, non-Hispanic individuals in the U.S. report experiencing pain at comparable rates (Nahin, 2015), current research in chronic pain treatment is overwhelmingly centered around white samples.
- ❖ The purpose of this study is to review the research linking ACT interventions and chronic pain and to assess the racial diversity and inclusivity of these studies.

Methods

- ❖ A literature search was conducted using the keywords *acceptance and commitment therapy, ACT, and chronic pain*.
- ❖ The inclusion criteria confirmed that each article covered a (a) non-pilot intervention study (b) addressing the use of an ACT approach as treatment for (c) an original sample of participants with chronic pain that was (d) published in an English-language (e) peer-reviewed journal (f) between the years 2010 and 2020.

Main Results

- ❖ Of the articles included, one article provided subgroup analyses that included race. No other articles acknowledged racial demographic information outside of listing basic sample demographics and seven did not include any racial demographic information.
- ❖ Of those six articles that presented some racial demographic information, four only reported the proportion of white participants in their sample.
- ❖ One of the thirteen studies did not support the use of ACT for individuals with chronic pain. This was also the only study that did not report a predominantly white sample.

Discussion

- ❖ Conclusions are limited by incomplete reporting of demographics.
- ❖ Some patterns of reporting and not reporting demographic information highlight concerns of white normativity in research.
- ❖ A key finding of this synthesis is the need for increased effort to improve the racial diversity of study samples.
- ❖ Clinicians may consider this review as they utilize ACT in culturally diverse settings.

References

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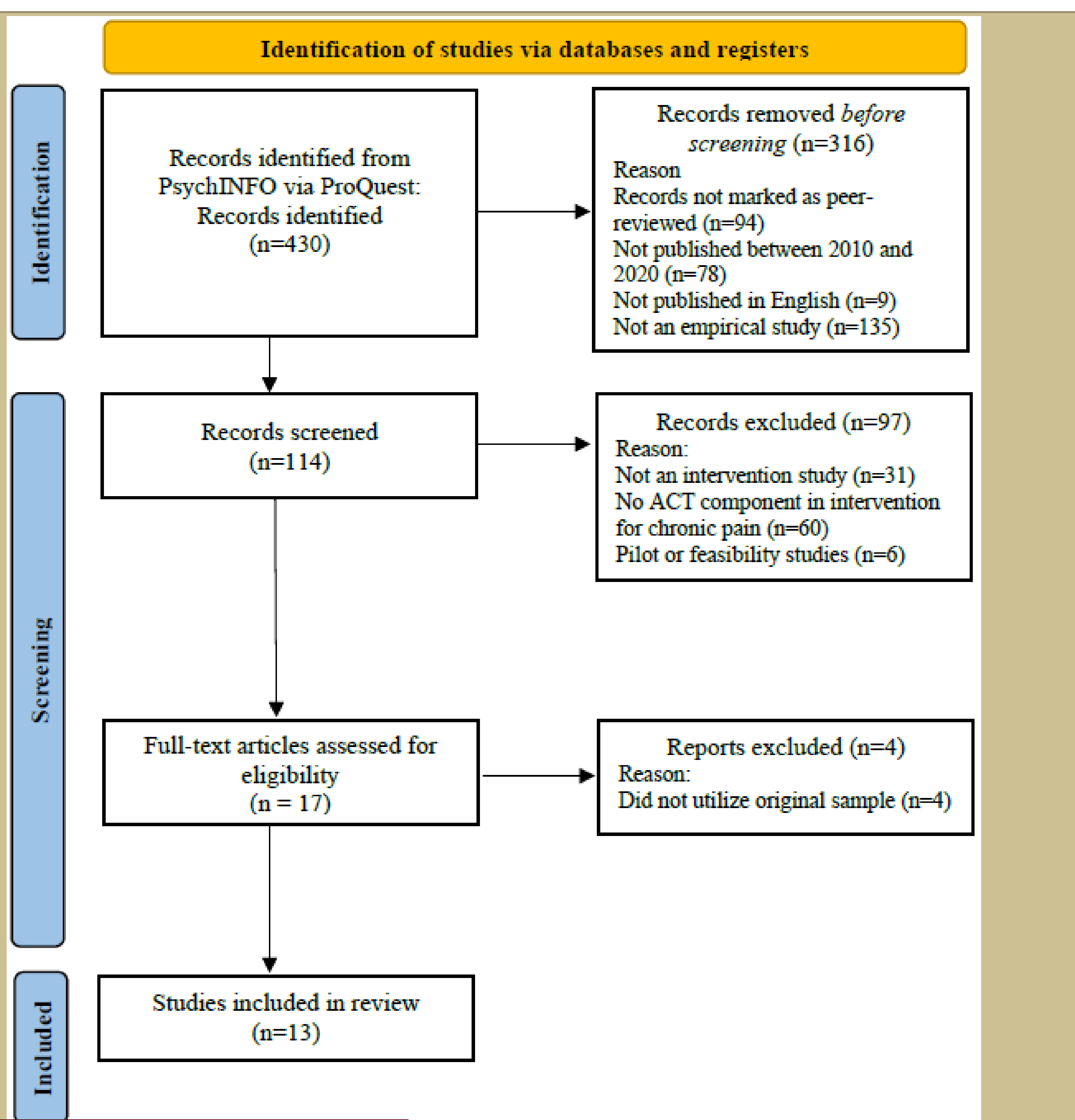


Figure 1. PRISMA flow chart