

The Global Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Educational Experiences of Racialized and Non-Western Children and Adolescents with Disabilities and Their Families: A Scoping Review

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Background/Rationale

Education is a basic human right, but racialized (non-white) & non-Western children & adolescents with disabilities face barriers in school, e.g., less institutional support, & financial hardship⁹. These inequities were magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted in-person learning & support¹⁴.

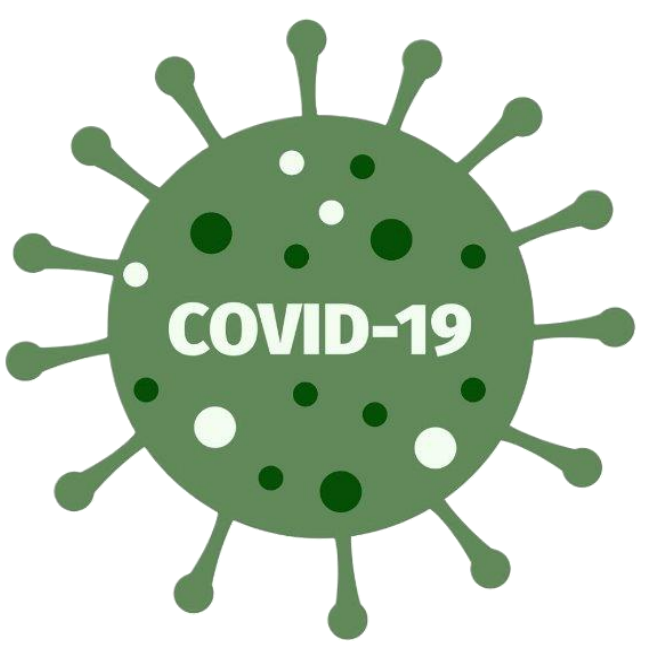
Western Regions	Non-Western Regions
North America, Western Europe	Asia, Middle East, Africa, Latin America

Gap: Limited research on how COVID-19 disruptions affected school for racialized children & adolescents with disabilities globally.

Objective: Identify key educational experiences faced by this group highlight common global experiences.

Research Question

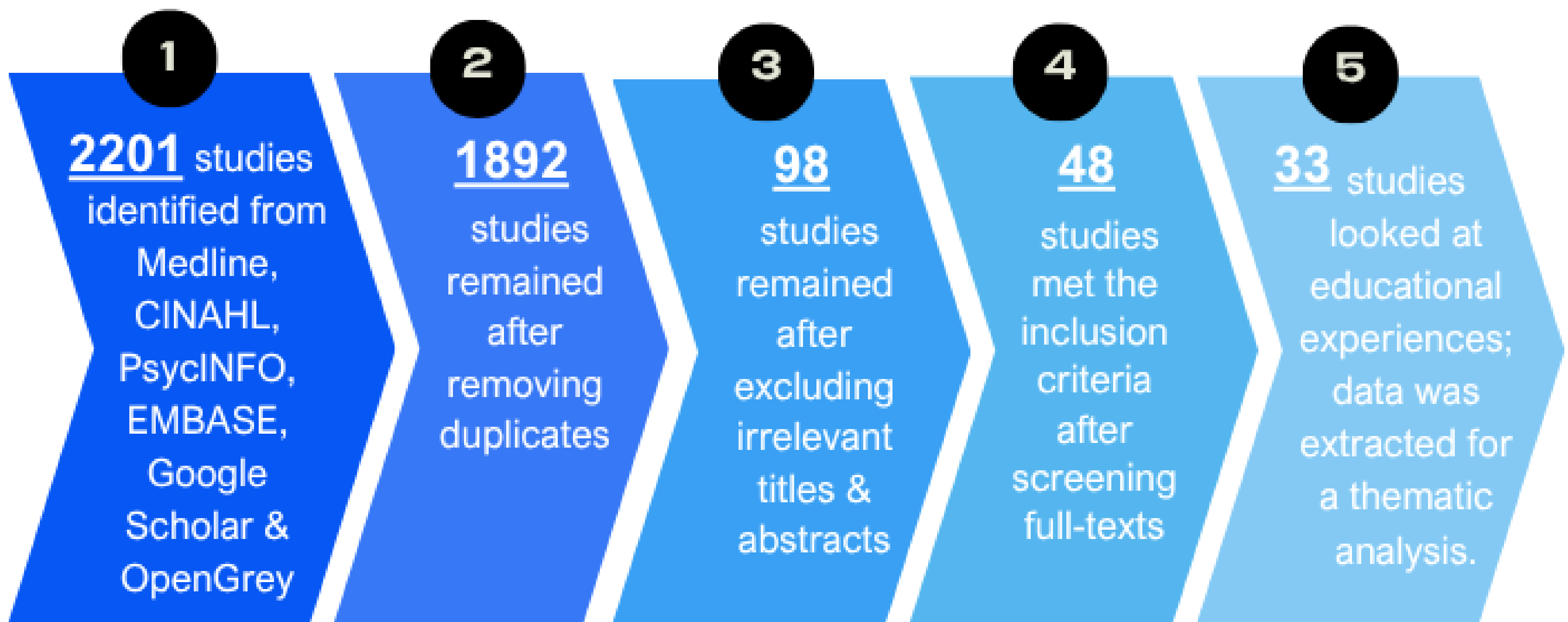
How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact the educational experiences of racialized & non-Western school-aged children & adolescents with disabilities & their families globally?



Methods & Analysis

4 independent reviewers screened studies using the following **criteria**:

- ✓ Published between 2019–present
- ✓ Participants were children or adolescents (ages 0–19)
- ✓ Individuals with any disability
- ✓ Racialized groups in Western countries or non-white populations in non-Western countries
- ✓ Explored experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic



Urgent improvements in accessibility & inclusion are essential to achieving equity in education globally. These changes are crucial to helping racialized children & adolescents with disabilities - & their families - overcome barriers to quality learning.



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References

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Bloorview RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Results

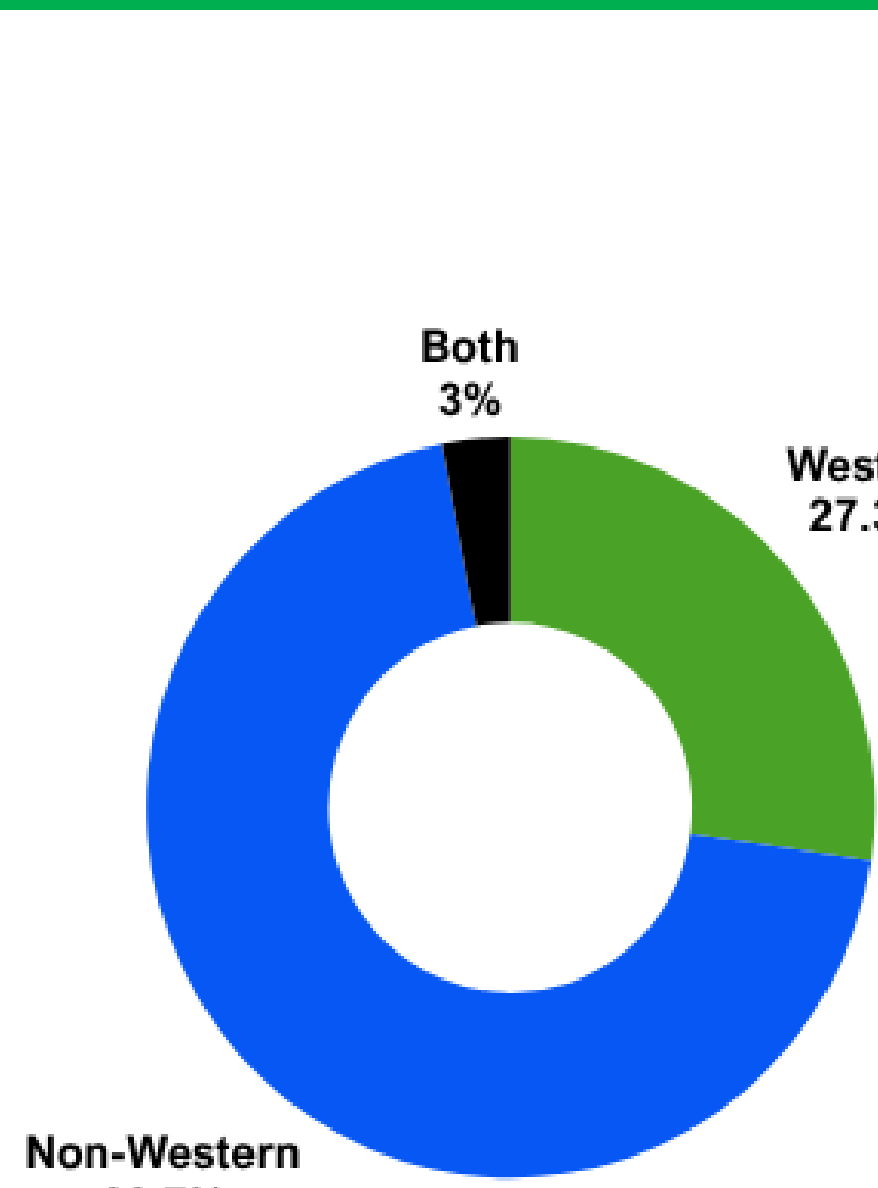


Figure 1. Proportion of Studies by Region.

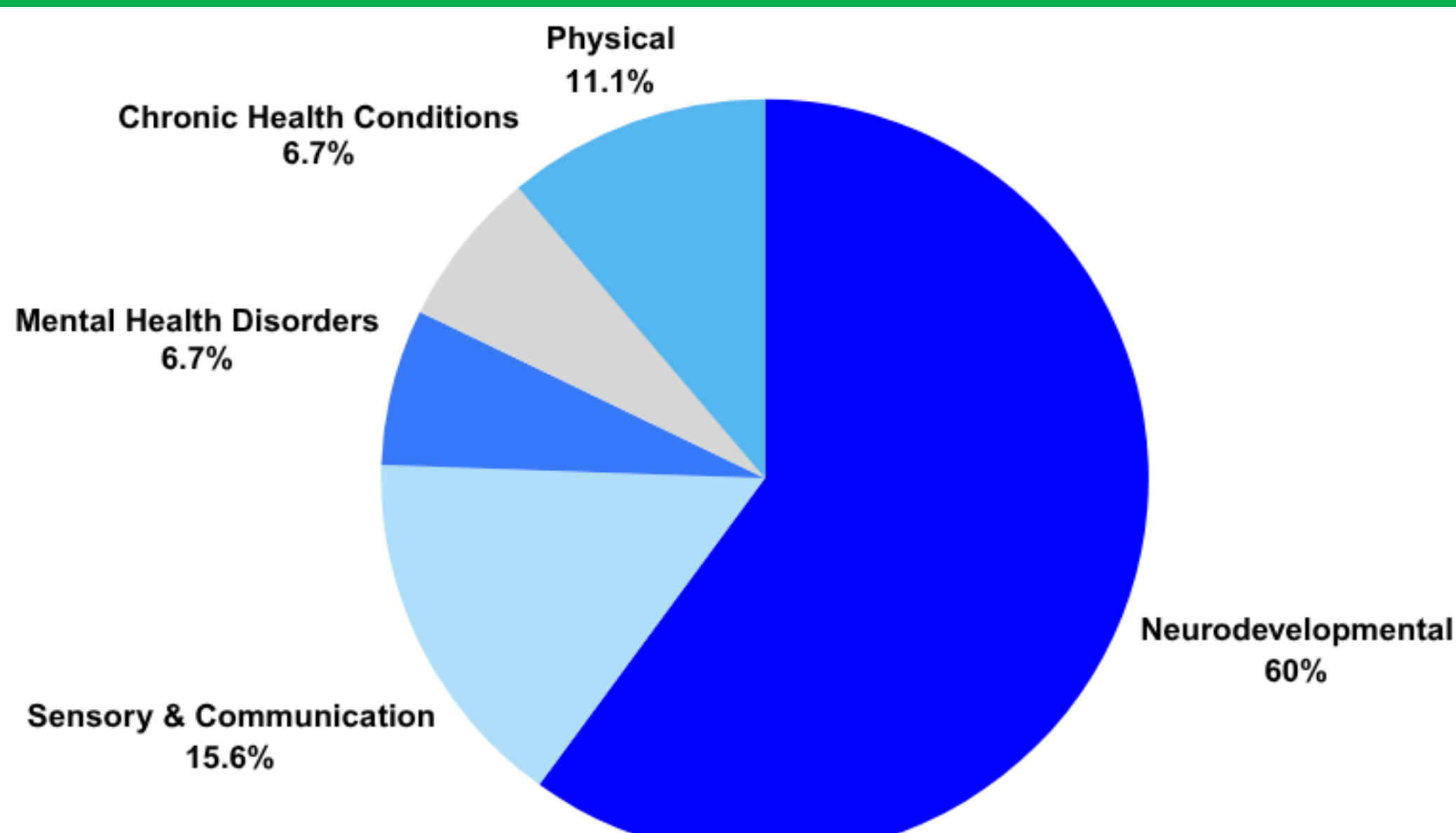


Figure 2. Disability types represented across 33 studies.

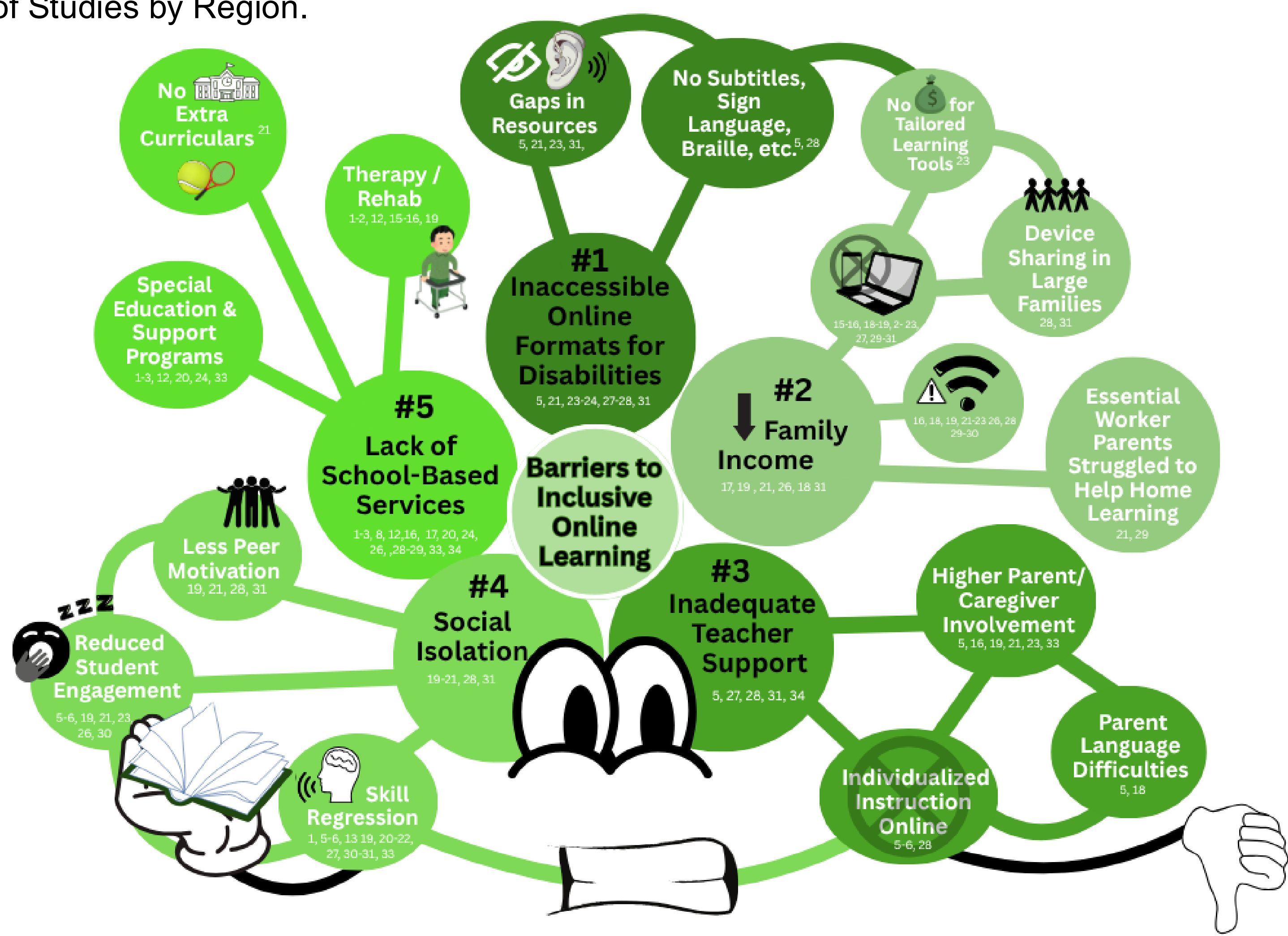


Figure 3. A mind map depicting universal key themes and subthemes on experiences with online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Themes

1. Online formats didn't accommodate disability needs, limiting access.
2. Low-income families lacked internet, devices, & resources to support online learning.
3. Without teacher support, parents had to step in — regardless of education or work demands.
4. Peer isolation reduced motivation & hindered academic growth.
5. Key school services couldn't shift online, cutting off programs & therapies students relied on.

Conclusion & Next Steps

Despite regional differences, racialized children with disabilities face universally similar challenges—highlighting a global need for educational improvements.

Every child deserves quality education - regardless of race, disability, or income.

- 1 Conduct more client-centered research in Western countries
- 2 Develop long-term strategies for inclusive, equitable, & accessible education in both online & in-person settings to reduce pandemic-related impacts.
- 3 Test the feasibility of the proposed recommendations

Relevance to Holland Bloorview Clients & Families

By listening to lived experiences, we can better support racialized clients & recent migrants with disabilities in recovering from pandemic impacts & preventing future learning barriers for all.