

## Introduction

2SLGBTQIA+ older adults face a multifaceted risk of social isolation and loneliness<sup>18</sup>. Distinct lifetime and current experiences of stigma continue to influence this cohort's social network dynamics, connections to biological family, and overall social well-being. **This literature review aims to examine the root causes of social isolation and loneliness for community-dwelling 2SLGBTQIA+ older adults.**



## Key Terms

**Social Isolation**: The quantitative lack of social networks and connection

**Loneliness**: The feeling that accompanies real or perceived lack of quantity or quality of social relationships

**2SLGBTQIA+**: Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual

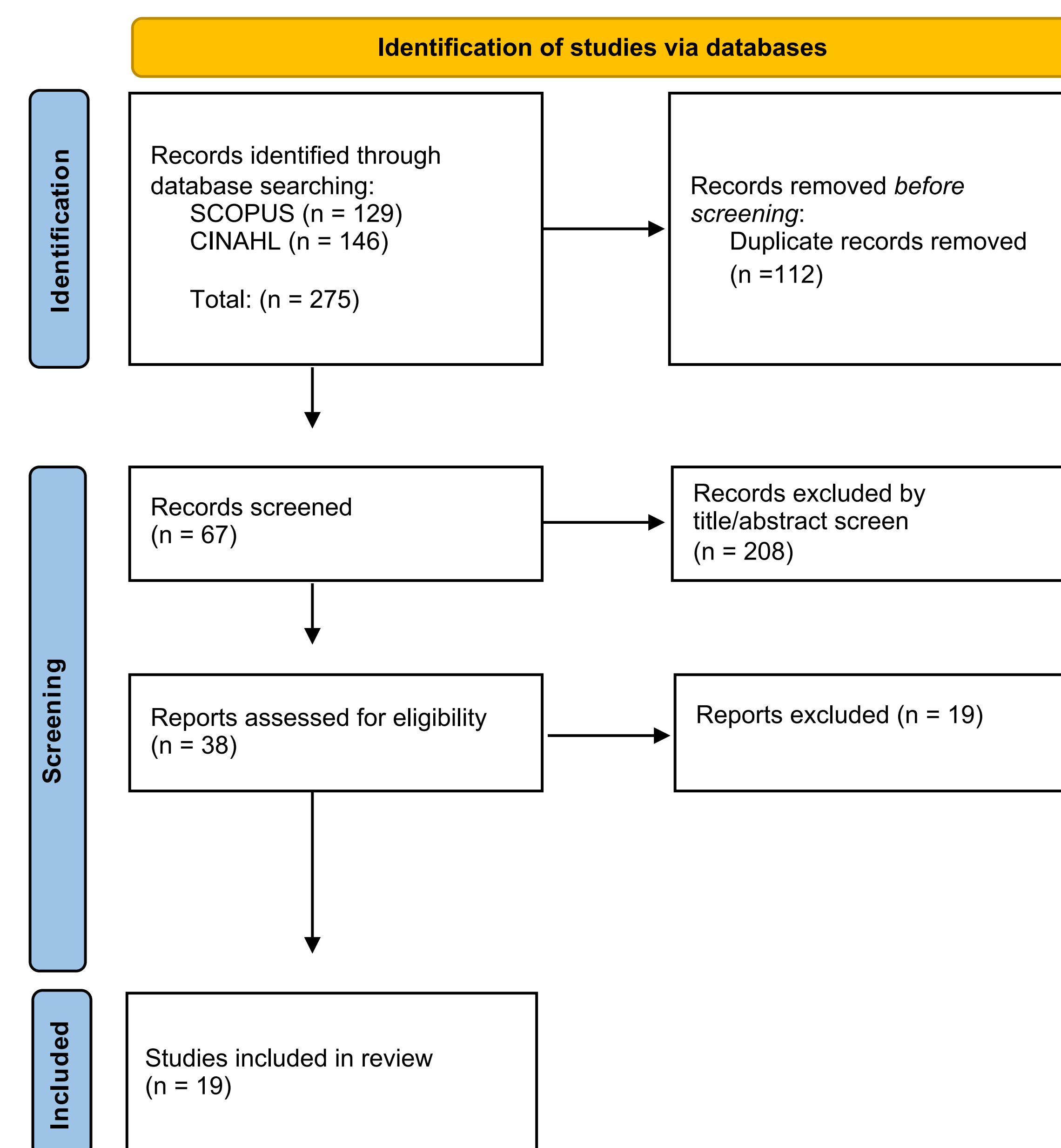
**Community-dwelling**: Individuals who are aging at home and in their community

## Methods

The Minority Stress Model<sup>16</sup> and the Life Course Perspective<sup>8</sup> were used as guiding frameworks throughout the literature review.

### Inclusion criteria

- Peer-reviewed journal articles available through University of Victoria's libraries
- Published between January 2015 and January 2024
- Addressed 2SLGBTQIA+ participants aged 50+ experiencing or at risk of social isolation or loneliness



Created with PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram

## Results and Discussion

### Root Causes of Social Isolation – Themes from the Literature Review

#### Lifetime discrimination

Lifetime sanctioned discrimination from family, friends, and broader society<sup>11-12</sup> created long-lasting effects on self-esteem<sup>2,14,15</sup> and ability to maintain and build social connections<sup>2,11</sup>.

#### Current Experiences of Rejection

Compounding forms of discrimination<sup>18,19</sup> continue to hinder social connection and increases the development of protective measures<sup>14,16</sup>.

#### Social Network Dynamics

2SLGBTQIA+ older adults are more likely to report living alone<sup>2,11,13</sup>, not having an intimate partner<sup>5,9,11</sup>, and less frequent or no contact with biological family<sup>1,2,6</sup>.

#### Lack of Inclusive Support

The 2SLGBTQIA+ community lives in a heteronormative landscape<sup>14,20</sup> with few inclusive and/or accessible supports to foster social well-being and connection<sup>2,9,14</sup>.

#### COVID-19

Pre-existing barriers to social connection are exacerbated by public health crises<sup>19,20</sup>.

## Conclusions

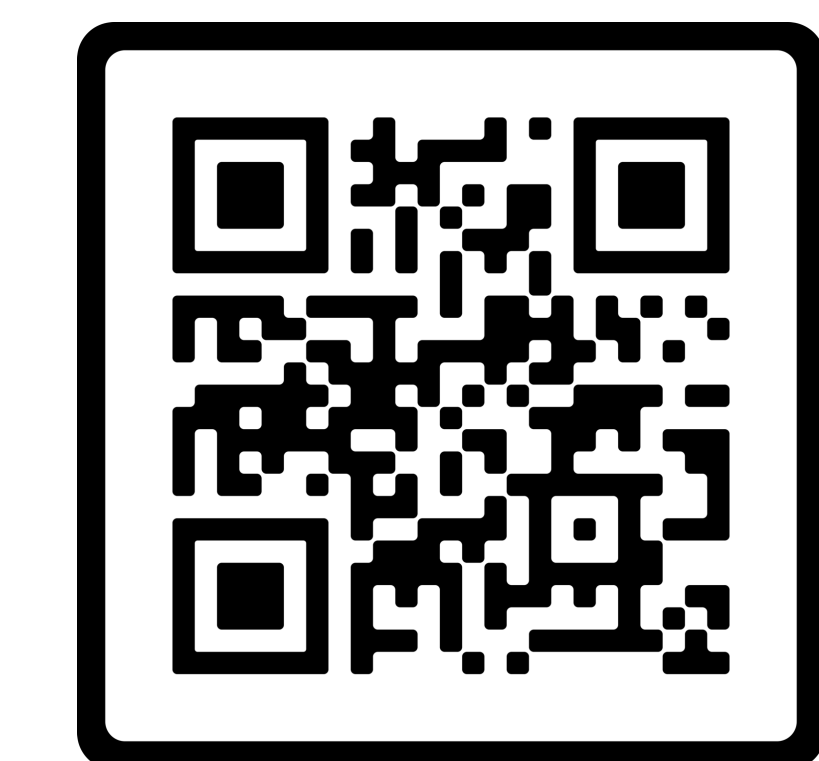
2SLGBTQIA+ older adults frequently report experiencing greater loneliness and social isolation in comparison to their heterosexual counterparts<sup>2,9,13</sup>. **Five main root causes in the development and risk of loneliness and social isolation were identified.**



## Future Considerations

Future research must consider equity and strive for greater inclusivity of vulnerable populations and all identities within the 2SLGBTQIA+ acronym.

## References



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