

Intersectional Perspectives on 'Productivity' from Female Refugees with Disabilities

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Background

- Neoliberalism influences health & social services delivery¹
- Individuals increasingly made responsible for their own unemployment & are framed as 'at risk' of dependency²
- Systemic focus on individualism has a homogenizing effect that obscures the social conditions differentially shaping people's labour market opportunities³
- Female refugees with physical disabilities face intersecting systems of oppression (Figure 1) in employment preparation & participation

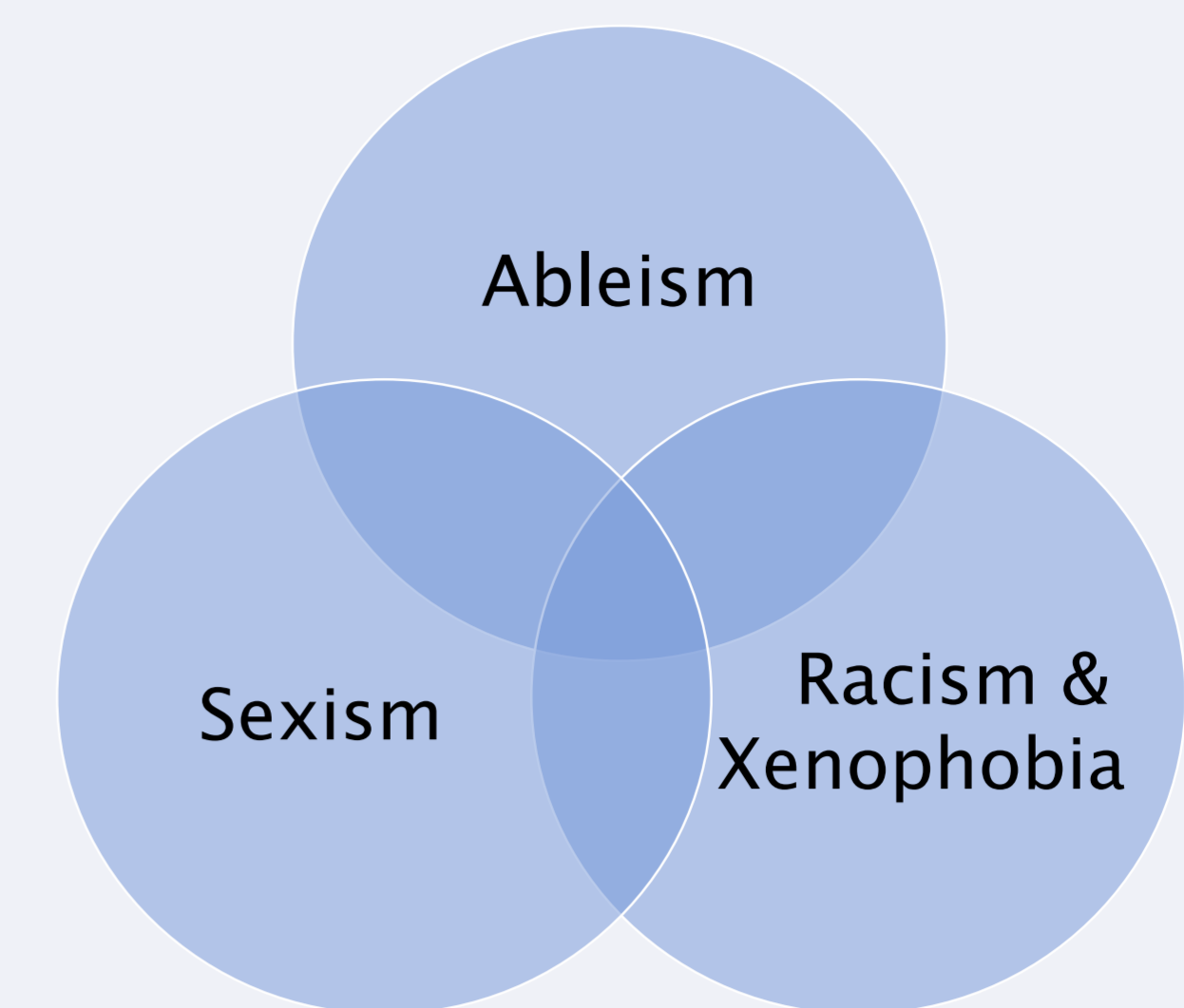


Figure 1: Intersecting systems of oppression

Research purpose

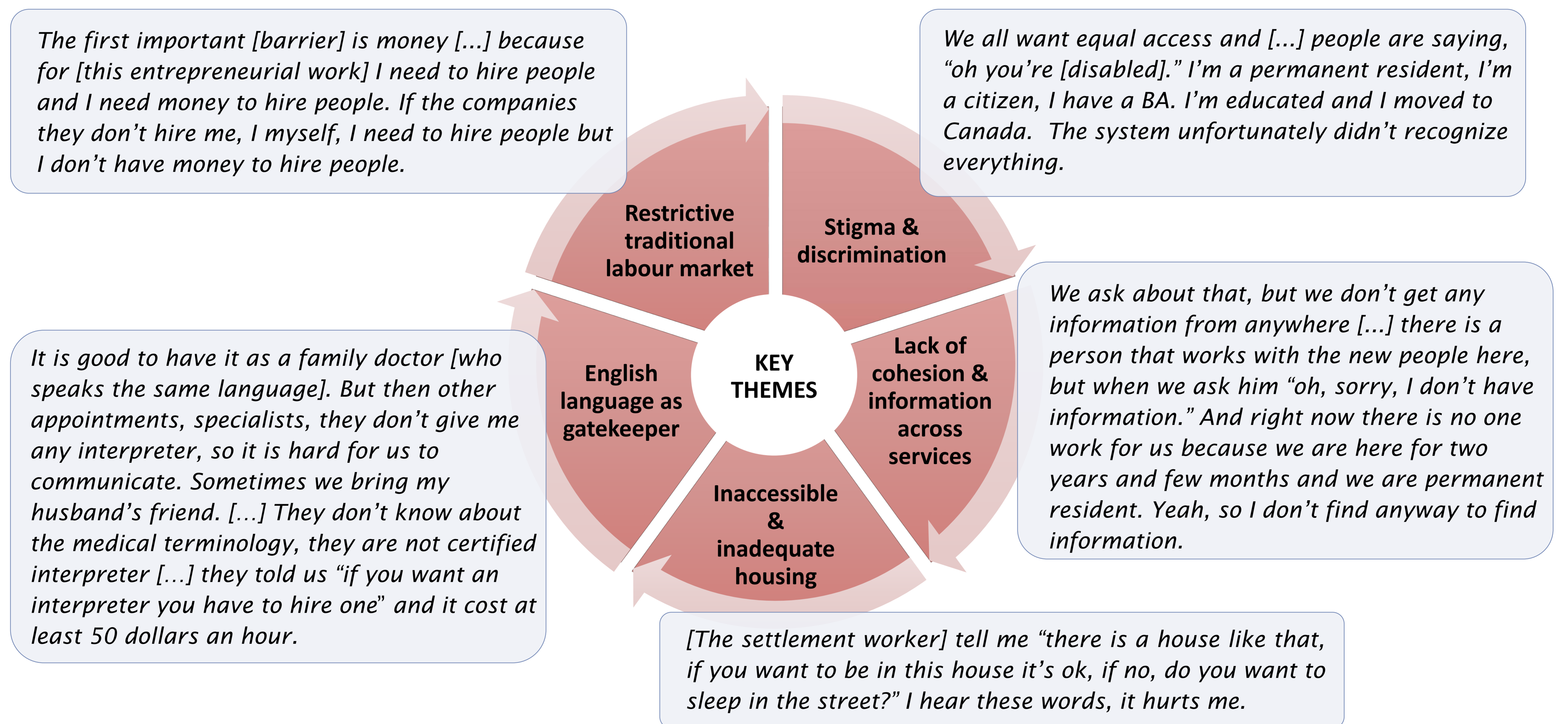
- To determine barriers to labour market participation for female refugees with physical disabilities

Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
How does the intersection of identities shape experiences of preparing for, seeking, & gaining employment?	What alternative productive occupations are meaningful to this population?	What are the barriers & facilitators to participation in productive occupations?

Methodology

- Exploratory qualitative pilot study conducted in Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- Semi-structured interviews with 9 participants
 - 5 female refugees with physical disabilities
 - 4 primary caregivers (3 female, 1 male)
- Facilitated by interpreters to conduct interviews in participants' primary language

Findings



Discussion

- Need to dismantle intersecting barriers
- From an occupational justice perspective, systems create barriers, such as providing services in silos without coordination to accommodate complex needs
- Providers lack knowledge of appropriate services & how to access them, & there are inadequate resources for newcomers with disabilities

Recommendations

- Enhance coordination of services
- Increase supports to reduce language barriers
- Provide individualized employment support
 - Provide options for employment outside of the traditional labour market
- Educate to reduce stigma & discrimination
 - Policy makers, service providers, employers