Diversity Works

An Exploration of the Employment Journeys of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour Who Experience Disability

A Community-based, Participatory Research Project

- -

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACRONYMS

BIPOC-D – Black, Indigenous, People of Colour Who Experience Disability

CASE – Canadian Association of Supported Employment

CCBR – Centre for Community Based Research

EDI – Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

SES – Supported Employment Services

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Ableism: "Ableism refers to attitudes in society that devalue and limit the potential of people with disabilities. Ableism may be conscious or unconscious, and may be embedded in institutions, systems, or the broader culture of a society."(CASE, n.d.)

Colonialism: "is the invasion, dispossession, and subjugation of one people to another. The long-term result of such dispossession is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized." (University of British Columbia, n.d.)

Deprofessionalization: The deprofessionalization of immigrants refers to processes that contribute to the subordination of racialized immigrants in the labour market. The most common form of deprofessionalization is the devaluing of immigrants' professional experiences, credentials and education in ways that either push them out of the labour market or force them into jobs that do not match their skills and potential. (Wilson et al, 2011)

Diversity: "Differences in the lived experiences and perspectives of people that may include race, ethnicity, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, class, and/or socio-economic situations." (University of British Columbia, n.d.)

Equity: "…the fair and respectful treatment of all people and involves the creation of opportunities and reduction of disparities in opportunities and outcomes for diverse communities. It also acknowledges that these disparities are rooted in historical and contemporary injustices and disadvantages." (University of Toronto, n.d.)

Inclusion: "…the creation of an environment where everyone feels welcome and respected, focusing on groups that remain underrepresented at U of T. It means creating the conditions in which everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in the University and everyone's talents are valued and celebrated." (University of Toronto, n.d.)

Intersectionality: seeks to understand how social categorizations, such as disability, geographic location, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, age, and mental health status intersect at the level of individual identity. Intersectional identities are shaped by multiple interlocking systems of privilege and oppression at a societal level. (Crenshaw, 1991)

Precarious Employment: Employment "that is unstable, not permanent and insecure. According to Goldring & Landolt (2009), this type of work offers limited rights, protections and benefits to works and allows workers little control over their schedules, types of work, work load, etc." (Wilson et al., 2011, p.11)

Racial Microaggression: is "a form of systemic, everyday racism used to keep those at the racial margins in their place" (Perez & Solorzan, 2015, p. 298). Microaggressions can include acts of racism that are subtle, coded and hard to detect (Saloojee & Saloogee, 2018).

Racialization: "..process by which racial categories are constructed as different and unequal in ways that leads to social, economic and political impacts." (Galabuzi, 2001, p. 10)

Systemic/Structural Racism: "…refers to the ways that whiteness and white superiority become embedded in the policies and processes of an institution, resulting in a system that advantages white people and disadvantages People of Colour". (University of British Columbia, Inclusion Office, n.d.)

1) INTRODUCTION

In any workplace, the paths that are open to workers are not charted by individual accomplishment and work ethic alone, but rather by the larger forces of racism and colonialism that shape our society. Because the identities of employers, employees, and job seekers are complex and nuanced, the impacts of the power, privilege, and historical oppression that shape our workplaces can be difficult to measure with precision. Still, there is no doubt that issues of racism, ableism, and capitalism enforce a social order that works to the disadvantage of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour who experience disability (BIPOC-D). In response to this troubling reality, the Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) collaborated with members of their network to explore the experiences of BIPOC-D job seekers, as they work to secure and maintain employment with the assistance of supported employment service providers. To this end, and with funding from Economic and Social Development Canada, CASE partnered with the Centre for Community Based Research (CCBR) to conduct a community-based research study of the experiences of BIPOC-D job seekers at all stages of the employment journey including: a) preparation (assessment, career selection and pre-employment training), b) obtaining (job application, interview, placement and orientation), and c) retention (job maintenance, skill development, and career growth. The findings outlined in this report emerged out of an exploratory research design, and as such offer a preliminary and broad picture of the current landscape that will: 1) improve our awareness of BIPOC-D job seekers' experiences with employment and related services at the intersection of racism and ableism, and 2) inspire further and more robust research into the employment journeys of BIPOC-D job seekers. Findings in this report speak to the challenge and barriers BIPOC-D job seekers face while finding and keeping work and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges and barriers. As part of our exploration of strategies, we provide a preliminary picture of the accessibility and quality of supported employment services (SES) for BIPOC-D service users. Finally, we conclude this report with a summary of the recommendations for change we collected as part of our discussions with BIPOC-D job seekers, SES providers and employers. We hope this report and these recommendations honour their generous contributions.

2) CONTEXT

Two intersecting fields of research inform this report. These two bodies knowledge are connected by their commitment to understand processes of inclusion and exclusion in the labour market, one through the lens of disability and the other race. Most studies regarding the labour market integration of people who experience disability are focused on measuring the extent to which people who experience disability find and retain employment. In Canada, the research looking at the intersection of disability and employment reveals a considerable gap in employment rates between Canadians who experience disability and Canadians who do not experience disability. According to the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability, the employment rates for people who experience disability in Canada (between the ages of 25 to 64) sat at 59% compared to the 80% employment rate for non-disabled Canadians (Morris et al., 2018). It is worth noting that the employment rates of people who experience disability in Canada differ across the diversity of experiences with disability. For example, findings from the same report suggest that "as the level of severity [of disability] increases, the likelihood of being employed decreases" (Morris et al., 2018, p. 4). Within this body of knowledge, there is a growing segment of research

dedicated to understanding the qualitative experiences of people with disability as they try to find and keep work (Darcy et al. 2016; Ellenkamp et al. 2016; El-Lahib, 2018; Prince, 2017). From these studies we learn that adults who experience disability face multiple, complex barriers related to physical inaccessibility, exclusionary work-place policies or procedures, and ableist attitudes. These labour market barriers facing job seekers who experience disability are further complicated by Canada's "welfare wall." In this context, the welfare wall refers to clawbacks and disincentives built into government-driven disability policies that essentially "trap people on social assistance" (Torjman, 2017, p.4). The culmination of these barriers is an ableist labour market through which people who experience disability are more likely to live in poverty than their nondisabled counterparts.

Labour market shifts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic have exasperated or introduced new challenges and barriers. Preliminary research on the impacts of the pandemic suggests that people who experience disabilities were more likely to experience unemployment during the pandemic (Maroto et al., 2021, Statistics Canada, 2020). Further, the shift to remote working conditions has presented new challenges for workers who experience disability while on the job (Maroto et al., 2021). For example, workers who experience disability may be regulated to low-wage, home-based work where they are less visible and less likely to receive accommodations. Overall, these studies indicate that workers experiencing disability faced a rise in the precarity of their work during the pandemic. Researchers agree that more research is required to understand how the changing nature of employment post-pandemic will affect people who experience disability (Jones et al., 2021; Maroto et al., 2021; Schall et al., 2020).

Studies on the intersection of race, Indigeneity, and employment offer an equally troubling picture of the disparity between white and BIPOC job seekers/workers. There exists an overwhelming amount of evidence affirming race and Indigeneity as reliable predictors of low income. In Canada, adults who identify as Black, Indigenous or a Person of Colour are far more likely to live in poverty than white adults (National Council of Welfare, 2013). Poverty among BIPOC communities was particularly acute during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic as "28% of Indigenous Peoples and 31% of racialized households lived in conditions of economic insecurity compared to 16% of white households" (Alook, Block & Galabuzi, 2021, p4). In their analysis of labour market data collected during the pandemic, Alook and colleagues (2021) provide evidence that racialized and Indigenous populations experienced more negative economic impacts than non-Indigenous and white populations during the pandemic. Their analysis of available labour market data tracked changes in unemployment rates across three data sets: 1) unemployment rates calculated in 2016, 2) unemployment rates calculated 12 months before the pandemic, and 3) unemployment statistics collected between July 2020 and June 2021. Findings outlined in this report point to a consistent and growing racialized gap in labour market outcomes:

▸ Between July 2020 and June 2021, the unemployment rates for racialized populations increased from 7.6% in 2016 to 9.3 % while the unemployment rates for white populations stayed at 6%.

▸ During the same period, the unemployment rates for Indigenous women increased from 8.3% in the 12-months before the pandemic to 13.5% while non-Indigenous women experienced an increase from 5.3% to 10 %.

▸ Indigenous men also experienced a significant increase in unemployment rates from 12% pre-pandemic to 16.2% during the pandemic.

Studies that draw on the qualitative experiences of racialized and Indigenous job seekers/workers point to shared experiences of racism and colonialism in the labour market, including covert & overt forms of discrimination in hiring and promotion, the de-skilling of racialized immigrants, the over-representation of racialized & Indigenous workers in precarious employment, and the misuse of police records checks by employers to exclude racialized and Indigenous applicants (Bernhardt, 2015, Gurr & Park, 2021, Legal Aid Ontario, 2017, Wilson et al., 2011)

Labour market research focused on the intersection between disability and race is relatively thin. However, research in this emerging body of work points to three noteworthy trends:

1. **Prevalence of disability in BIPOC communities**: Studies suggest that racialized and Indigenous populations experience higher rates of disability (Buettgen et al., 2018; Employment and Social Development Canada, 2020). Researchers of these studies point to the several interesting socio-economic disparities (e.g., poverty, unsafe working conditions, racial and colonial violence) experienced by racialized and Indigenous that can bring about experiences with disability, prevent diagnosis, and/or limit access to disability-related support (Annamma et al., 2018; Artiles, 2013; Ben-Moshe & Magna, 2014).

2. **Discrimination related to racism and ableism**: BIPOC-D job seekers are regularly confronted by overt and covert forms of discrimination. Drawing on theories of intersectionality, some researchers use the term "double jeopardy" to describe the challenges BIPOC-D job seekers face as they navigate a labour market that is both racist and ableist (El-Lahib, 2016; Ferri & Connor, 2014; Gupta et al, 2021; Pieper & Mohammadi, 2014). Qualitative researchers expand our understanding of this intersection between race and disability. Their explorations of the day-to-day experiences of BIPOC-D job seekers shed light on the complex, intersecting systems of oppression that come together to protect the interests of white, non-disabled workers (Berghs & Dyson, 2022; El-Lahib, 2016; Pieper & Mohammadi, 2014). For example, Ware, Ruzsa and Dias (2014) draw on research of Canada's prison industrial complex to explain how experiences of disability and racialization are constructed through this system to sustain long-term, intergenerational poverty in BIPOC communities, especially Black and Indigenous communities.

3. **Strategies to find and keep work**: The research on BIPOC-D strategies to find and keep work is limited in size and scope. There is some evidence that, in the face of limited access to formal services, BIPOC-D job seekers will turn to community-based, collective care approaches wherein the mind-body-spirit health of a member is a shared responsibility of any given group. For example, in their exploration of mutual aid practices of Trans and Queer people of color who experience disability, Arani (2020) highlights the benefits of a mutual aid, collective care approach, specifically its potential to change "political conditions" that reinforce systems of exclusion by developing "new social relations that are more survivable" (Arani, 2020, p. 654).

Gaps in this literature include experiences obtaining and retaining work as well as participatory action involving BIPOC and disabled job seekers (Kramer-Roy, 2015). Although there are multiple key terms and definitions, the literature often lacks nuance in who defines terms like "access" and "disability," and clarity around how these definitions are reached (Meekosha, 2021). More research is needed to fully understand the roles of intersectionality in the employment experiences of BIPOC job seekers who experience disability. Finally, in this context of race, disability and meaningful employment, there is very little research from which we can understand the supported employment needs and experiences of BIPOC-D job seekers (Drake, Bond & Baker, 2012). It is in these gaps that this project finds its purpose as it explores the experiences of BIPOC-D job seekers while they work to secure meaningful employment with the assistance of supported employment service providers.

An essential principle guiding this project was intersectionality. Through an intersectional lens we explored the interconnected nature of the systems of oppression that reinforce categories of race, Indigeneity, and disability (Crenshaw, 2015; 2016; Gopaldas, 2013; Hirschmann 2012; Shimmin et al., 2017). How does racism, colonialism and ableism work together in the lives of BIPOC-D Job Seekers? In 2018, the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies (CCDS) released a report in which the authors provided a preliminary assessment of the intersectional forms of discrimination impacting persons with disability (Buettgen et al., 2018). They believed that an intersectionality framework in the field of Disability Studies will enhance our understanding of the web of discrimination that ensnares people with disability. Through this enhanced understanding, we can build more effective policies, programs, and services.

3) METHODS

The implementation of this study was guided by principles of community-based research (CBR). CBR is defined as "a research approach that involves active participation of stakeholders, those whose lives are affected by the issue being studied, in all phases of research for the purpose of producing useful results to make positive changes" (Nelson, Ochocka, Griffin, & Lord, 1998, p.12). This approach is grounded in three hallmarks (Ochocka & Janzen, 2014):

Community-driven: Community-driven means that research is relevant to the stakeholders rather than simply driven by researcher interests. This research was driven by the Canadian Association of Supported Employment (CASE) and their stakeholders to ensure that the research is relevant, appropriate and helpful to all.

Participatory: Participatory means that those people who have a stake in findings share control of the research agenda by being involved in all stages of the research process (i.e., the evaluation design, implementation, and dissemination processes).

Action-oriented: Action-oriented means that the processes and results of the study are helpful to program stakeholders in making recommendations for positive changes. Knowledge dissemination and steps towards change will be facilitated by CASE and as part of their ongoing commitment to facilitate the economic well-being of BIPOC-D job seekers.

We implemented this approach using two main mechanisms:

Research Team: The research team included 4 researchers from CCBR, and 1 project manager employed through CASE. Our team of primarily racialized researchers actively engaged in anti-racist, decolonial and critical disability frameworks throughout the research process. To further enhance the expertise on our team and to raise the level of community participation in the process, CCBR hired two community researchers with lived experiences as BIPOC-D job seekers. Using a co-learning, capacity building approach, community researchers were hired to support the research at all stages of the process.

Steering Committee: As is typical of CCBR research, our work was conducted under the guidance of a community-based, multistakeholder steering committee. Members were recruited by CASE and collaboration with the committee was facilitated by CASE's project manager. Committed members guided the research process. Stakeholders on the committee included CASE leadership, BIPOC job seekers, supported employment service professionals, and employers. The project team consulted with members to develop data collection tools, plan recruitment, and validate preliminary findings.

3.1) Research Questions

The following research questions guided data collection in this project:

1. How do Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Colour who experience disability (BIPOC-D) experience employment at all stages of their employment journey, including:
   a. Preparation (assessment, career selection and pre-employment training);
   b. Obtaining (job application, interview, placement and orientation);
   c. Retention (job maintenance, skill development, and career growth).

2. Which supports and services do they use and which are most closely predictive of successful, and inclusive employment outcomes for BIPOC-D job seekers/workers?

3. How are service providers supporting BIPC-D job seekers/workers at the intersection of racism and ableism?

4. How are service providers supporting BIPOC-D individuals as they prepare for, obtain, and retain employment?

5. What are the experiences of employers? What strategies are they using to diversify their staff teams?

6. How can employers create an accessible and inclusive workplace for BIPOC-D individuals?

3.2) Target Populations & Recruitment

These questions were explored through the perspectives of three main stakeholder groups: 1) BIPOC-D job seekers & workers; 2) service providers in the supported employment sector, and 3) employers. The recruitment strategy for each method outlined below utilized non-probability sampling to engage study participants. The study employed four main non-probability sampling strategies: 1) recruitment materials were circulated through CASE's extensive network of service providers who, in turn, recruited participants from their current pool of clients (convenience sampling); 2) recruitment materials were broadly circulated through social media advertising and volunteers were screened using a survey monkey selection criteria form (volunteer sampling); and 3) participants in the study recruited other participants from their personal networks (snowball sampling). The selection criteria for target population included in the study is outlined in table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Population groups and inclusion criteria

Target Population	Inclusion Criteria
BIPOC-D Job Seekers (Interviews & Focus Groups)	- Must identify as BIPOC; and - Must also identify as an individual who experiences disability/disabilities; and - Must be working or seeking work in Canada - Must reside in Canada
BIPOC-D Youth (photovoice)	- Must identify as BIPOC, - Must identify as an individual who experiences one or more disabilities - Must be working or seeking work in Canada - Must reside in Canada - Must be between the ages of 18 and 25
Service Providers	- Must directly or indirectly provide employment support in their current position; and - Their organization must be located in Canada.
Employers	Must be an employer in Canada.

3.3) Methods

These research questions were explored through a sequential mixed methods research design. The data collection unfolded over six months in the following three stages:

Stage 1 – Surveys (January – March 2022): The Research Team, in consultation with Steering Committee, developed three surveys that targeted each of the selected populations (BIPOC-D job seekers, service providers and employers). All three surveys were translated into French. Each survey was uploaded to Survey Monkey. The online version of the survey included a logic structure that would ensure that participants met the inclusion criteria. Table 3.3.1 provides an of the main themes covered in each survey.

Table 3.3.1: Oveview of survey themes

Population	Key Themes (sections of the survey)
BIPOC-D Job Seekers	• Demographic information • Employment status • Experiences of racism & ableism while looking for work • Experiences of racism & ableism while on the job • Experiences of racism & ableism while accessing SES
Service Providers	• Demographic information • Supported employment role and organization characteristics • Challenges and barriers facing BIPOC-D job seekers • Accessibility and Quality of SES for BIPOC-D job seekers • State of EDI in their organization
Employers	• Demographic information • Company characteristics • The state of EDI in their company • EDI practices & strategies

Stage 2 – Focus Groups & Interviews (April – July 2022): The Research Team conducted semi-structured focus groups (1.5 hours) and interviews (1 hour) with each target population. Interview and focus group guides were developed in consultation with the Steering Committee. All focus groups and interviews were facilitated by the Research Team using CCBR's Zoom videoconferencing platform. To ensure that each target population could freely talk about their experiences, the Research Team provided participants with target population groups/dates. For example, BIPOC-D job seekers could select focus group dates/times where only other BIPOC-D job seekers would be present (i.e., without service providers or employer participants present). The Research Team provided allowed participants to engage in individual interviews if they could not attend the pre-set focus group dates/times. Table 3.3.2 provides an overview of the themes discussed with each stakeholder group.

Table 3.3.2: Oveview of interview and focus group themes

| Population	Key Themes (sections of the survey)
BIPOC-D Job Seekers	• Challenges & barriers finding work • Challenges & barriers keeping work • Experiences with SES • Recommendations for change
Service Providers	• Challenges & Barriers facing BIPOC-D job seekers in the labour market • Accessibility and quality of SES for BIPOC-D job seekers • Recommendations for change
Employers	• EDI perspectives and practices • Discrimination in the workplace

Stage 3 - Photovoice (mid-June to mid-July 2022): Arts-based research is a celebrated method/ methodology in critical disability, critical race and Indigenous-led scholarship. Broadly speaking, arts-based methods are known as highly accessible approaches to research with the potential to engage communities in ways that move beyond Eurocentric, non-disabled ways of knowing. More than this, participants who experience arts-based methods often appreciate the opportunity for creative expression and leave the project with a positive research experience. We engaged four BIPOC-D youth job seekers in photovoice methods. Photovoice combines the visual documentation powers of photography with the explanatory insights of group discussion and/or reflective writing. Photovoice participants attended one group workshop followed by an unstructured interview to review their photos. During the workshop, participants were introduced to the project, received photography training, and identified photovoice prompts related to resilience, resistance, and change. After the workshop, participants were given one week to take photos inspired by the photovoice prompts. During the interview, each participant presented their photos and reflections. The research team posed several follow-up questions to explore their perceptions of resilience and resistance to racism and ableism in the labour market.

4) OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS

The Diversity Works project team recruited 164 research participants across three key stakeholder groups: 1) BIPOC-D job seekers (N= 71), 2) service providers in the supported employment sector (N=68), and 3) employers (N=25). In this section, we provide an overview of study participants in each group by region, gender identity, and racial identity.

4.1) BIPOC-D Job Seekers

A total of 71 BIPOC-D job seekers were engaged in this study. There were 24 survey participants, 43 interviews/focus group participants and 4 photovoice participants. Figure 1.1 below offers a view of the gender identities represented in this study. 67% of job seekers in our study identified as men, 27% identified as women, 3% identified as transgender and 3% identified as nonbinary. As noted in Figure 1.2, most participants (61%) were living in Ontario at the time of the interview. The rest of the participants were living in Alberta (7%), British Columbia (11%), Manitoba (7%), Newfoundland (3%), Nova Scotia (6%), Nunavut (1%), and Saskatchewan (3%).


Figure 1.1: Gender Identity

Figure1.2: Participants by Region
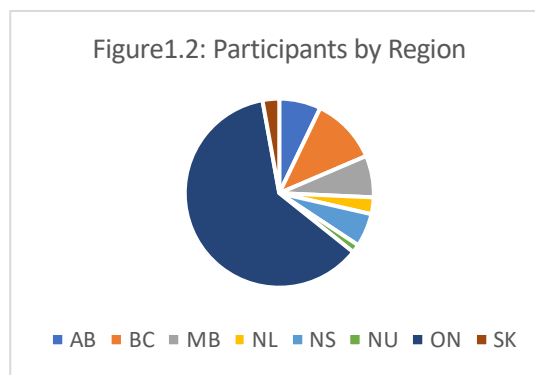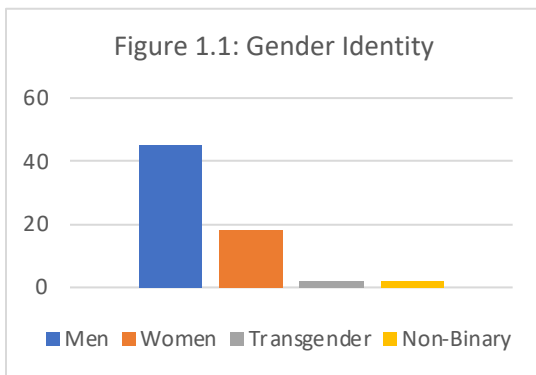
Figure 1.3: Overview of Participants by Racial Identity
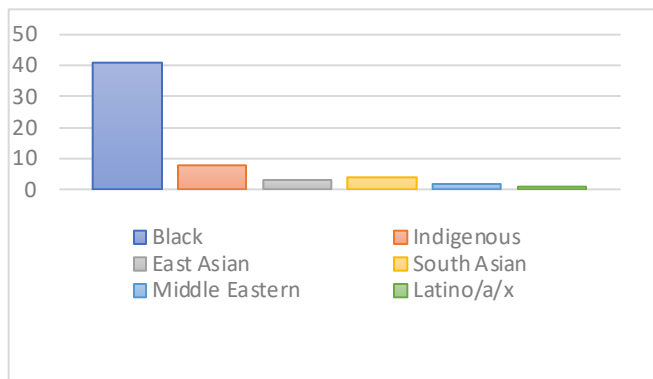
Finally, Figure 1.3 provides an overview of racial identities represented in this study. As pictured in this chart, most participants identified as Black (60%), representing numerous identities within the Black community. Specifically, participants identified as African Canadian, Northern African, Caribbean, and Caribbean Canadian. Other racial identities represented in this study were Indigenous (12%), East Asian (4%), South Asian (6%), Middle Eastern (3%), and Latino/a/x (1%).

4.2) Service Providers

A total of 68 service providers were engaged in this study. There were 52 survey participants and 16 interview or focus group participants. Participants spanned multiple regions across Canada (see figure 1.4), with most providers located in Western Canada. As noted in Figure 1.4, the majority of service providers in our study identified as women (66%) and were employed in client-facing positions (65%). Finally, 62% of service providers in our study identified as white while 38% identified as Black, Indigenous or a person of colour.

Figure 1.4 Region

4%
25%
31%
40%

□ Northern   □ Central   □ Western   ■ Atlantic

Figure 1.4: Gender Identity (Service Provider)

1%
1%
2%
31%
66%

□ Women   □ Men   ■ Transgender   □ Non-binary

Figure 1.4: Racial Idenity of Service Providers

50

0

Racial Identity

□ BIPOC   □ Non-BIPOC

Figure 1.6: Service Provider Roles

60
40
20
0

□ Client Facing   ■ Management/Leadership
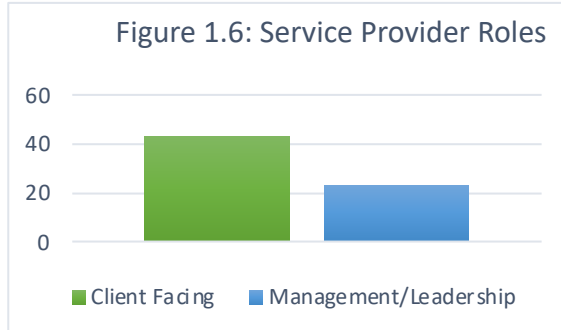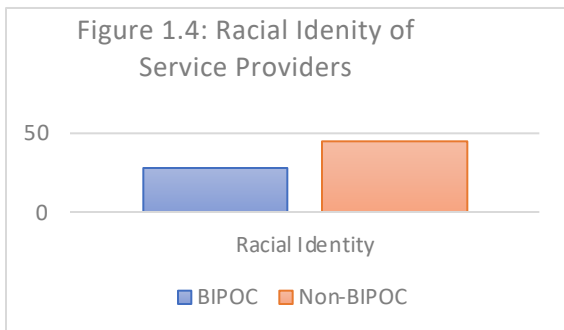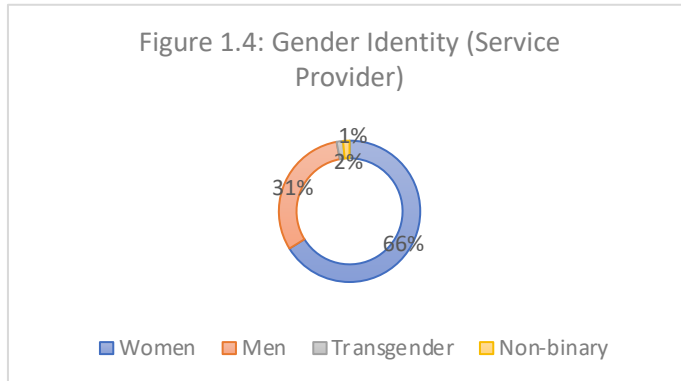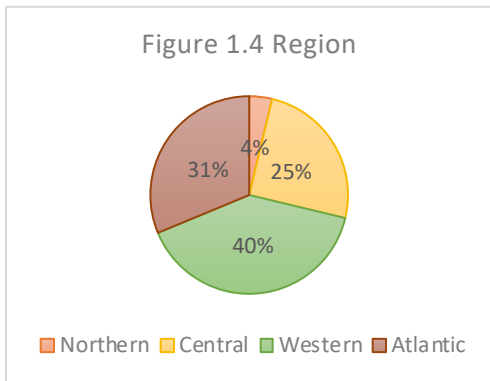
4.3) Employers

A total of 25 employers were engaged in this study. There were 19 survey participants and 6 interviews/focus group participants. Although employers from Northern Canada are underrepresented (N=1), each of the remaining regions (Western, Central and Atlantic Canada) are equally represented in the study (see Figure 1.7). Seventy-two percent of participants identified as women, and 76% were in leadership roles (owner, co-founder, executive director, manager, etc.) at the time of the study. Finally, 68% of participants identified as white while 32% identified as Black, Indigenous or a Person of Colour.

Figure 1.7: Region

Figure 1.10 Racial Identity (Employer)

Figure 1.9: Employer Roles/Positions

Figure 1.8: Gender Identity (Employer)
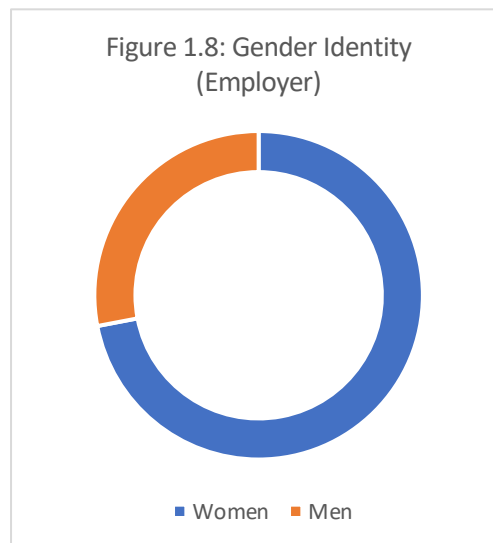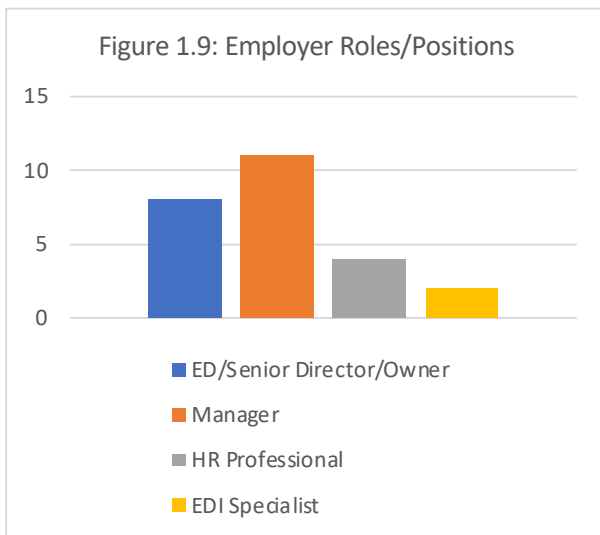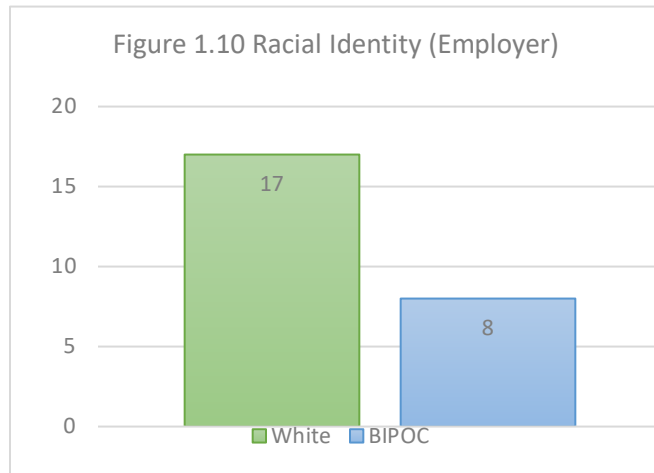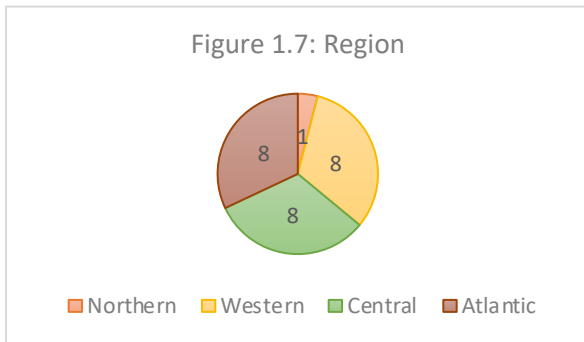
4.4) Limitations

This research is intended to be an exploratory study of BIPOC-D experiences with employment and supported employment services in Canada. Findings from this study should be contextualized in the limitations outlined in Table 1 below. These limitations are outcomes of the non-probability sampling approach to recruitment and the condensed data collection timeline (3 methods with 3 stakeholder groups over a period of 6 months). Overall, it is important to note that participants in this study are not representative of the broader population of services providers, BIPOC-D job seekers and employers in Canada. As such, findings in this study should not be generalized to the population at large.

Table 4.4: Limitations for each participant group

Service Providers	Service provider participants were recruited through CASE's networks. In this network of service providers, supported employment organizations with a focus on disability are the main stakeholder group. As a result, perspectives from service providers who support BIPOC-D job seekers outside of the supported employment sector are not adequately represented in our data (e.g., immigrant support organizations).
BIPOC-D Job Seekers	BIPOC-D job seeker participants are not representative of the broader population of BIPOC-D job seekers. Job seekers who were recruited by service providers may not have felt comfortable discussing their experiences with services. Most BIPOC-D job seekers were recruited by other job seekers who discovered the study through social media advertising. As a result, all but four BIPOC-D individuals who participated in the focus groups and interviews indicated that they had never used SES or were not aware of SES. Job seekers with experience using SES are underrepresented in this study. Further, many participants were referred to the study from other participants in this study. Specifically, our African immigrant participants circulated our recruitment materials in their personal networks. As a result our qualitative findings are skewed towards the experiences of male, African immigrants living in Ontario.
Employers	Employers were recruited through CASE's network of employers. The employer perspectives captured in this study are skewed towards employers motivated to build a diverse workforce. The employers included in this study do not represent the broader population of employers described by BIPOC-D participants.

5) FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Our analysis of the data (across methods) examined the employment journeys of BIPOC-D job seekers from three key vantage points: 1) the challenges and barriers BIPOC-D job seekers face while finding and keeping work; 2) the strategies BIPOC-D job seekers use to overcome racism and ableism; and 3) the accessibility and quality of supported employment services (SES). Though our initial analysis was structured around these three vantages points, the findings that emerged from this analysis did not fall neatly into these three areas. Specifically, our analysis of qualitative data from BIPOC-D job seekers followed the most salient themes. The summary of findings offered in this section is organized around the following nine core themes:

▶ Defining disability: An exploration of how BIPOC-D understand disability.

▶ Juggling precarious work: A summary of the precarious employment experiences of BIPOC-D research participants.

▶ Managing microaggressions: Several, interrelated storylines emerged from our analysis of the challenges and barriers facing BIPOC-D job seekers. Experiences of microaggressions emerged as a challenge experienced by all BIPOC-D job seekers.

▶ The employment journeys of racialized immigrants who experience disability: An exploration of the specific challenges and structural barriers facing racialized immigrants.

▶ The impacts of anti-Black racism on Black job seekers who experience disability: An exploration of the manifestations of anti-Black racism in the employment journeys of Black job seekers who experience disability.

▶ The Inuit employment journey: A rather preliminary exploration of the ways colonialism, racism and socio-spatial disparities influence the Inuit employment journey.

▶ Strategies to address racism and ableism: A summary of strategies BIPOC-D job seekers use to address racism and ableism in their employment journeys. Strategies are organized into three categories: 1) coding switching & performative compliance strategies; 2) disclosure strategies, and 3) micro-resistance strategies.

▶ Supported employment services (SES) at the intersection of racism and ableism: An exploration of SES from three vantage points: 1) the extent to which BIPOC-D job seekers access supported employment services, 2) the quality of their experience once they have access to services, and 3) the strategies service providers are using to improve services for BIPOC-D job seekers.

▶ EDI insights from Employer: A presentation of the EDI strategies employers are using to engage and support BIPOC-D job seekers

5.1) Defining Disability

Interview and focus group participants who entered the study all self-identified as someone who experiences disability. The project team did not provide a definition for participants to explore the ways in which BIPOC communities perceive and define disability. Table 5.1 provides an overview of the range of disability experiences represented in this study. It is important to note that many participants were experiencing multiple disabilities at the time of this study. This table organizes participants' experiences around mainstream categories of disability. However, there is some resistance from BIPOC-D job seekers to definitions disability that focus on a person's functional limitations. When asked about the nature of their disability, most participants described their experiences as journeys instead of categories. They understood disability as an experience that can be celebrated, reclaimed, rejected, acquired, inherited, visible, invisible, chronic, temporary, empowering and disempowering. Collectively, their responses point to an understanding of disability that is inclusive, flexible, and evolving, and in this way, is in keeping with the emancipatory and developing discourse of most critical disability movements.

Table 5.1: Overview of job seekers' experiences with disability

Type of disability	Participants' experiences with disability.
Physical disability	Chronic pain, spinal cord injury, limb amputations, chronic illness
Visual disability	Low vision, progressive vision loss
Hearing disability	Progressive hearing loss
Mental health disability	Substance use, trauma-related, anxiety, depression
Developmental disability	Autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit disorders, motor speech dysfluency, non-verbal learning disability

A few service providers in our study hoped this movement towards a more expansive understanding of disability would improve the accessibility of disability services. For example, they talked about the value of opening up mainstream discussions about disability to include mental health and substance use, and the growing need to support job seekers experiencing mental health related challenges at work. BIPOC-D job seekers experiencing challenges related to mental health stressed the importance of educating employers on this expansive definition of disability. In their experience, employers tend to structure accommodation policies around outdated concepts of disability. As one photovoice participant put it:

"Some people consider mental illness as a disability and other people don't consider it. I consider it a disability because it affects my day-to-day life. And even though I'm still able to complete my tasks, mental illness is something that I have to combat on a day-to-day basis... I find it invalidating when people don't consider mental illness as a disability, because it is something that you have to work with or work against on a daily basis. And it does impact your quality of life and your personal relationships and your work opportunities and just everything in general. And I know that mental illness can be very prevalent in certain communities. And

so to label it as something that is not considered a disability just makes it harder for people who are struggling with mental illness to get help…But I guess I would mostly want to work with people who already do acknowledge it and recognize it as a disability. That way they'd be more understanding because it's already hard enough to convince people that you do have a mental illness, unless it's very overt, unless the symptoms are shown very strongly. I wouldn't want to work with someone or collaborate with someone or really talk to someone who doesn't consider it a disability or doesn't think that it exists because it does feel invalidating it…" (BIPOC-D Photovoice Participant, Ontario)

It is important to note that some BIPOC communities consider disability to be a colonial concept (Garland-Thomas, 2002). A few scholars working in the critical disability field point to the fact that many Indigenous communities do not have the language to describe disability (Ineese-Nash, 2020; Meekosha, 2011). Specifically, the introduction of disability as an individual deficit that needs to be managed, tolerated, or fixed does not align with many Indigenous worldviews (Ineese-Nash, 2020). Our discussions with service providers and one Inuit job seeker residing in Nunavut underline the significance of honouring Inuit approaches to disability. These participants were proponents of a community-centred, social approach; one in which mental health and substance use are included in disability discourse for BIPOC communities. Specifically, participants pointed to the deep and lasting mental health impacts of colonial violence (past and present) and racism on the Inuit community, and explained how these impacts create disability-related barriers to finding and keeping work:

"You know, I find that there's a lot more… employers who want to hire, but they don't know how to provide support in our unique landscape… At <remove organization name>, we have a very inclusive definition of disability. Our definition is very broad in scope and includes addictions and trauma. And with that definition we estimate that 90% of the population have a disability so you have somebody who has an addiction and is trying to get a job to work, they want to provide for their family, but their addiction often takes over right… and then they get fired… so it's a lot of these bigger systemic barriers that are preventing people from entering the labor market." (Service Provider, Nunavut)

Finally, both BIPOC-D job seekers and service providers discussed diverse and at times conflicting understandings of disability that exist across BIPOC communities. While participants did not cite specific differences between perceptions of disability adopted by mainstream institutions and those of BIPOC communities, they alluded to these differences as reasons why many BIPOC-D job seekers do not use supported employment services. The potential for incongruent understandings of disability between Canadian institutions and BIPOC communities is a critical reminder of the overall whiteness of disability politics. In her research titled, "Racing Critical Disability Discourse", Murray-Ormandy (2008) examines the ways in which disability is continuously represented as "if it were a non-raced universal identity category" (p.1). Her work joins the growing body of knowledge dedicated to understanding the intersecting experiences of racism, colonialism and ableism (Artiles, 2013; Clutterbuck, 2015; Giancarlo et al., 2016; Meekosha, 2011). The exclusion of BIPOC voices in the development of disability discourse has led to the invisibility of BIPOC realities in the development of policies and services.

5.2) Juggling Precarious Work

The over-representation of BIPOC workers in precarious forms of employment in Canada is well documented in academic research (Bernhardt, 2015; Lewchuck et al., 2011; Premji et al., 2014; Wilson et al., 2011). This vast body of research provides overwhelming evidence that racialized workers, particularly racialized immigrants, are systematically pushed into low-paying, low-skilled, temporary survival jobs (Wilson et al., 2011). These jobs are often short-term contracts, unpredictable and unsafe. In their study of the health impacts of precarious employment, Wilson et al. (2011) describe the precarious employment journeys of racialized workers that often end in long-term or chronic health conditions. Their research suggests that the immense physical and mental health strains of precarious work overtime are contributing to the growing number of BIPOC job seekers experiencing disability. The literature on disability and precarious employment is much smaller in size (Tompa et al., 2006; Jetha et al., 2021; Vick, 2014). This burgeoning body of research documents the complexity of working precariously while experiencing disability. On a whole, the research suggest that people experience disability are more likely to work precariously than their non-disable counter parts (Tompa et al.; 2006). In a recent study conducted for the Canadian Disability Participation Project, Jetha and colleagues (2021) found that older workers (55 years or older) experiencing disability and new job seekers (people entering the labour market for the first time) experiencing disability face high levels of precarious employment. Researchers of this study recommend that disability-related services build programs and policies that will help older workers and new workers (e.g., newcomers and youth) avoid pathways to precarious employment.

Though precarious employment was not the focus of this study, our findings provide a glimpse into the precarious employment journeys of BIPOC-D job seekers and workers. Our data on job seekers' employment status, employment history and education/professional credentials suggest that most participants in this study were precariously employed at the time of the study. Signs of precarity among participants include:

▶ 48% of survey respondents were working part-time and/or multiple jobs, while only one-third were employed full-time.

▶ 42% of employed survey respondents indicated that they were working in jobs that did not reflect their education and training, and 88% (N =38) of qualitative participants were working survival jobs1 that did not match their education and skills.

▶ A number of qualitative participants described their employment journey as moving between bursts of short-term employment contracts and prolonged periods of unemployment.

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1   Survival jobs is a term used to describe "insecure, poorly paid employment, often with poor working conditions, that migrants take to meet the costs of living in the immediate period after arrival" (Reid et al., 2014, p. 383).

Through our interviews and focus groups with BIPOC-D job seekers, we were able to get a better sense of the gap between participants' professional training and their current employment. For example, we talked with a mechanical engineer who was delivering food, an administrative assistant with two graduate degrees, a real estate agent & entrepreneur working in a bakery, a software developer driving trucks, and an accountant waiting tables in a restaurant. Our qualitative data also provides a clearer picture of the struggles associated with juggling precarity over long periods of time. One participant who identified as an immigrant described her experiences working a series of intense "labour jobs" when she first arrived in Canada, followed by a 10-year period of unemployment. Similarly, after giving up hope of finding a job in his field, one job seeker described working close to seven different survival jobs in a period of three months. Finally, participants working outside their field perceived their current job as a temporary solution in their long-term plan to find decent work, many of whom have worked in this precarious space between 4 and 10 years..

Interview participants located in Nunavut add to our understanding of precarity - this time through the lens of the Inuit employment journey. The limited availability of decent work in Nunavut can be attributed, in part, to the cycles of employment associated with the major industries located in the region, specifically mining, fishing, hunting, trapping and construction. A large portion of jobs in these industries are seasonal and reliant upon a set of ideal conditions in their environment. Further, the intensive labour associated with these industries require workers to take prolonged breaks and are often structured around capacity of young, male, non-disabled workers. Participants recognized the Government of Nunavut as the largest employer in the region and a source of decent work. However, government positions are still out of reach for many Inuit job seekers despite the Governments's public commitment to inclusive hires and stipulations in the Land Claims Agreement that prioritize Inuit workers in the labor market.

> *"The biggest employer in Nunavut is the Government of Nunavut, which is challenging. Breaking into the government can be challenging because you are never really talking to any one specific when you go to the HR… We know that the government claim to make inclusive hires but whether that occurs or not is not necessarily true. A lot of times there's barriers around accommodations and what that looks like… Nunavut has what is called the land claims agreement, and it stipulates that there's a high priority for Inuit people. Right now, I think the labor market sits at maybe 55% Inuit but the goal for them, for the government is 85%. Now, I should note that there is no mention of disability." (Service Provider Quote, Nunavut)*

In section 5.6, we explore how forces of colonialism complicate Inuit job seekers' ability to navigate this precarity.

5.3) Managing Microaggressions

Overall, job seekers recognized racism as an indisputable reality in Canada. When asked to describe some of the challenges they faced in their journey, job seekers unequivocally pointed to racism and ableism as key reasons for their inability to find work. The structural manifestations of racism and ableism noted in this study differ across the diverse experiences represented under the BIPOC umbrella. The unique challenges facing racialized immigrant, Black and Inuit job seekers are described in later sections of the report. In this section, we explore the interpersonal, day-to-day experiences with microaggressions common to all job seekers in this study. In their descriptions of the barriers and challenges they face, participants offered a menu of racist and ableist assumptions or stereotypes that shape the way they are treated at work or in an interview. To name a few, BIPOC-D job seekers are assumed to be incapable, slow, unmotivated, entitled, and unable to manage their time. Our findings also document a myriad of microaggressions that fall out of these assumptions. Common among them were coded comments about job seekers' accents, "backhanded compliments" about their ability to speak English, changes in interviewers' facial expressions when they realized they were meeting a person of colour, the use of derogatory language to describe their credentials, and questioning their ability to fit in with other employees at their company.

Oftentimes, microaggressions towards BIPOC applicants/workers are subtle, unintentional, and entrenched in the workplace culture. The underhanded nature of these interactions makes it difficult to recognize the racism that fuel these microaggressions in the moment that they happen. Most participants in this study were able to recognize these microaggressions as acts of racism and ableism. However, our service provider data suggest that some BIPOC-D job seekers struggle to detect racism in the workplace. In their experience, a job seeker's disability can complicate how BIPOC-D understand the racial dynamics at work. In the quote below, a service provider provides one explanation for why the BIPOC-D job seekers she works with do not talk about racism:

> "I think sometimes… especially when somebody has either a developmental disability or autism and they've had these experiences. I think .. they might not understand the whole meaning of the situation. And that's why when racist things happen at work, they're not able to distinguish it and communicate it directly. But also for my part it's probably because I'm lacking in how I ask the questions and I'm not intentional". (Service Provider, Western Canada)

Another service provider recalls an incident of recognizing racist behaviours that went unnoticed by the BIPOC job seeker:

> "We've actually seen it…. The person (job seeker) hasn't seen it. Just not so open racism, but kind of ignoring the person and not including them or speaking down to them… but they (job seeker) don't see that. The person that we're coaching doesn't see that, and yet we see it…" (Service Provider, Atlantic Canada)

Again, these suggestions from service providers that BIPOC-D job seekers struggle to recognize racism conflict with findings from job seekers in the study, most of whom were able to offer clear articulations of racism in the workplace.

5.4) The Employment Journeys of Racialized Immigrants Who Experience Disability

Existing literature on the settlement and integration of racialized immigrants is massive. In this expansive body of research, employment stands out as one of the most pressing concerns for immigrants (Wilson, Sakamoto & Chin, 2017). The successes and struggles that immigrants experience in the labour market are well-documented. However, there is limited research from which we can thoughtfully characterize the employment journeys of racialized migrants who experience disability. Findings from this study offer an exploratory look into the challenges and barriers racialized immigrants face at the intersection of racism and ableism. In previous sections, we learned that most research participants in this study are working precarious jobs that did not reflect their credentials and employment potential. This disconnection between participants' professional identity and current employment status is the outcome of a labour market structured to de-professionalize2 newcomers (Bernhardt, 2015). The precarious employment journeys of immigrants in our study reflect those of de-professionalized immigrants in Canada more broadly. Many participants attributed their inability to work in their field to a system that devalued the education and skills they obtained outside of Canada. While denied access to their profession, participants were forced into short-term, survival jobs obtained through temporary and immigrant-focused employment agencies. This process of de-professionalization is described in the job seeker's story below:

> "Okay. I've been working for several years in my home country. I'm basically a double graduate, a graduate in commerce and a graduate in law. But when I came over here, it was very tough for me for the last 10 years, even to get a proper job… Yes, because when I applied, they were offering me jobs. I went through these temporary agencies, also the immigrant agencies and what they did was just send me jobs pertaining to labor, which I don't think I can do I've never done and I will not do. Yeah. Because the reason is very simple. I want to put my brains at work. The body will automatically come into work, but I can't put aside my brains and use only my body, which I'm not able to do." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

This job seeker's description of temporary and/or immigrant-focused employment agencies as ableist spaces was confirmed by both job seekers and service providers in our study. In their view, employment counselors in these agencies not only lack the training to support immigrants who experience disability, they perpetuate the exclusion of workers with disability in their efforts to provide short-term fixes that privilege non-disable workers. This concern about temporary and immigrant-focused employment agencies is captured in the job seeker quote below:

> "When I came out to Canada, I knew it was a little tough to know how to go about to get a job. So I went to a well known employment agency and the immigrant agencies to get help get a job. So I registered with them. And when you register with one agency, you cannot register with another because that's employment Ontario's rule. … So after that, they send me, what do you call it? Links of offers where I can apply, but all of them are all labor oriented. So when I talked to them

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2   The deprofessionalization of immigrants refers to processes that contribute to the subordination of racialized immigrants in the labour market. The most common form of deprofessionalization is the devaluing of immigrants' professional experiences, credentials and education in ways that either push them out of the labour market or force them into jobs that do not match their skills and potential. (Kelly et al, 2009; Wilson et al, 2011)

over the phone, what they told me was you must be glad you're getting it because you're not a white person, number one. Number two, you have some disability. So all this is coming in your path… So I don't know exactly, but both these came in my path, not being a white person and not being a stronger person. I asked them one thing: "When you know that, why do you send me these jobs links?" They said: "It's better. You work at something than not to work at all." So I asked them: "If I'm not able to work, then am I kicked out?" I'm not used to all that. It's very humiliating. They had no answer. So I just deregistered and I kept quiet." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

Despite their racist and ableist practices, our findings suggest that BIPOC-D job seekers are more likely to seek services from these agencies before engaging with supported employment services that focus on disability. Findings from our study provide two possible explanations. First, according to some job seekers and service providers, some BIPOC communities do not have a pre-migration history of seeking formal support for their disability outside of their family and community. Second, BIPOC-D job seekers explained that their decision to go to temporary and/or immigrant-focus employment agencies is linked to their desire to connect with racialized, immigrant employment counsellors who can provide cross-cultural support.

Interestingly, for one employer (quoted below), the government's deskilling tactics make it difficult for employers to engage newcomers.

"The only unfortunate thing I will say about hiring folks who are new to Canada is that oftentimes, and not always, but oftentimes when you have a candidate who is highly educated, which is wonderful, that's not the downside, the downside is those qualifications don't always bridge over. … Sometimes the schools and governments don't allow that bridging to happen either. Even though they probably have enough education and experience to be an engineer it, it {degrees & credentials} doesn't work here." (Employer, Atlantic Canada)

A separate employer in the same focus group agreed that it is hard for employers to diversify their staff if they are limited to hiring employees who are educated in North America. It was her view that the government made it unnecessarily difficult for newcomers and called for better systems for newcomers to "fast track" the recognition of their credentials.

A lack of proficiency in either English or French is one of the most oft-cited reasons why immigrants struggle to find and keep decent work in existing research on the economic integration of immigrants in Canada (Wilson, Sakamoto & Chin, 2017). In contrast to this research, language barriers were not a concern for BIPOC-D job seekers in our study. This departure from existing research can be attributed to the relatively high proficiency in English required to participate in our study. Though English proficiency was not a barrier for our job seeker participants, many faced the challenge of confronting assumptions about their capacity to speak English. One job seeker shared her experience in the quote below:

"Yeah. He (interviewer) told me that straight. He said… 'I didn't know people from India talk English so well <laugh> I just laughed. I had nothing more to say. I think he failed to understand that India was once colonized by the British." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario).

While it was not a core issue for the BIPOC-D participants in our study, findings from our survey and focus groups/interviews with service providers recognize language as a significant challenge facing BIPOC-D job seekers. Over half of participants in the service provider survey (56%) listed "language barriers" as one of the top three barriers to employment for the BIPOC-D job seekers in their regions. This assessment of barriers is confirmed in the qualitative data. Several service providers described job seekers' struggle to interview, engage co-workers and advocate for themselves in English. A few service providers explained that barriers associated with language are much more acute for job seekers who experience disability. For example, one service provider noted the limited support and resources available to immigrants who rely on sign language but are not fluent in American Sign Language.

5.5) The impacts of anti-Black racism on Black job seekers who experience disability

Most participants in our study identified as Black, representing several identities within this incredibly diverse community (African Canadian, African Nova Scotian, Black Canadian, Caribbean, Caribbean Canadian, North African). In this section, we explore manifestations of anti-Black racism in the employment journeys of Black job seekers who experience disability. Findings in this section must be read with a shared understanding that "policies and practices rooted in Canadian institutions such as, education, health care, and justice mirror and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination towards people of Black-African descent" (Black Health Alliance, n.d). This understanding of the deep roots of anti-Black racism in our institutions highlight the distinct processes of systemic racism that affect Black communities. The pervasiveness of anti-Black racism in the labour market is well documented (James & Jean-Pierre, 2020; King et al., 2022). Research at this intersection documents both the extent to which Black workers are excluded from the labour market and how anti-Black racism negatively affects their work relationships, employer expectations, and their careers (King et al., 2022).

Findings from this study explore the unique challenges facing Black job seekers who experience disability. As noted by participants in earlier sections, employers often assume BIPOC-D job seekers are unmotivated or unable to perform and produce at the same levels as white, non-disabled workers. Our analysis of responses from Black participants in the study suggest that Black job seekers are confronted by an additional set of racist assumptions. Many Black participants believed employers perceive them as angry, untrustworthy, and threatening. Examples of these racist assumptions are noted in the job seeker quotes below:

> "No, its terrible because I don't understand why you discriminate [against] anyone because of their race. It's really never fair. First, they don't even have trust in you. They have this notion about Black people... I was looking for a job in a farm, and there was not even a single Black person working in the farm. So, when I just arrived at the place, I knew I was definitely not going to get a job… But I think with disability, it is even more difficult." (BIPOC-D job seeker, Manitoba)

"For some time, I've been looking for a job, mainly difficult to get a job because of racial profiling. You find that employers here assume I'm not able to be employable because it'll not work out well with the customers. Being Black, working in a white environment, it's like any simple mistake you are supposed to be blamed because you are Black. It's like you're guilty until proven innocent. So it's kind of difficult being Black and working in an environment with the white people." (BIPOC-D job seeker, Ontario)

The relentless perpetuation of these racist assumptions can culminate into a fear of Black job seekers that unjustly excludes them from the labour market and can devastate their professional dreams. In the next quote, a Black job seeker describes how anti-Black racism in her organization affected her relationship with co-workers. This job seeker's success at work was constantly devalued by coworkers and her work was criticized for being too focused on the Black experience:

"There was maybe me and two other Black people. The rest were white. Now this was supposed to be like a community {organization} and in that space at first I thought there was a sense of inclusion at first, right? You just walk in and you're all interns, everyone's friendly… So I knew where to get all the community stories, the people that were interning didn't. And so that inclusion space, it started to separate us because they started feeling almost intimidated by the fact that I knew more…. because of that the bosses would be happy like, oh great, you got the stories. But the interns would be complaining about me constantly. Like she's taking up too much space, she's doing this. And they (the bosses) never really stepped into like protect me in that sense. And then it got worse where I was told that I'm telling too many Black stories by an intern and then the bosses agreed. And I'm like I'm just telling stories. They're not Black stories. They just happen to be Black people in them." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

This participant goes on to recall that this ongoing questioning and push back associated with her success negatively affected her emotional well-being and almost led her to give up the position. Two employers talk about witnessing anti-Black racism among staff in their organizations. One employer described his shock at the very different staff reactions to two employees (one Black woman and one white woman) who had experienced similar life situations that affected their work:

"It was just so jarring to see the difference in how these two women were treated, the white woman was treated with the utmost respect and compassion. The Black woman was judged… They were accusatory, they were judgemental. And my management team used to come to me and say, she (the Black woman) hasn't done anything wrong". (Employer, Central Canada)

Many participants described themselves as either the only or one of a few Black employees in most work environments. This isolation from Black colleagues left some participants longing for opportunities to work with or be mentored by Black managers, and these feelings of isolation were only intensified by the underrepresentation of people who experience disability in the workplace. One participant described her struggle to find a work environment that valued both her race and her disability. It was her experience that disability-friendly spaces were white spaces and Black-led organisations "don't consider Black people with disabilities" (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario).

A few Black participants compared their experiences of exclusion to more positive experiences they had working with other Black workers, specifically Black employers/managers. The job seeker quoted below offers a powerful explanation of the value, ease, and benefits of working with another Black woman:

"I think being around people who are Black, specifically as a Black woman is huge. And I don't see that much. I'm mainly with white people all the time. And so it made a difference culturally. I didn't have to explain my Blackness to her {referencing her manager who was also a Black woman}. She understood so now I could just be myself… But with her, she actually would say to me, if you're not doing okay, it's okay. If you miss a class reschedule, it's okay. She's asking me, how do I help you succeed? No one's ever asked me that in other workplaces, how do I help you succeed? It's always me like, how can I help? So you can see me. How can you help? So you hear me, it's a different energy in how they care for you." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

More than one Black participant remarked that anti-Black racism is as prominent in racially diverse workplaces as it is in predominantly white workplaces. A few non-Black participants made similar observations, including the following Inuit employer:

"…it was harder for my staff members who are Black to sit down with somebody and say: "Hey, we want to do this programming. Let's do it. Would you be able to support us?" They had a harder time getting their foot in the door. Whereas I would've had an easier time being Inuk to get through to somebody and say, hey this is what we want do… We want do this programming. It was harder for my executive staff members who are Black to have that rapport, even though we've been in the field for a long time between the three of us..." (Employer, Nunavut)

A few participants described the impacts of anti-Black racism and ableism on their lives. For example, one participant talked about the trauma associated with both her experiences with anti-Black racism and her ongoing battles for accommodation. Like other participants, she had to give up her professional dreams, and is currently working contract to contract in positions that do not reflect her skills and potential.

5.6) The Inuit Employment Journey

In this section, we bring together findings from our interviews and focus groups with one Inuit jobseeker, one Inuit employer and two service providers in Nunavut. This rather preliminary exploration of the Inuit employment journey should be contextualized in the ongoing colonial violence facing Indigenous communities. The challenges and barriers they face while finding and keeping employment have evolved out of a deeply troubling history of genocide. This colonial history is the foundation of settler-colonial relations today. The accessibility of decent work in Nunavut is complicated by intersecting systems of colonialism and racism. One Inuit job seeker in our study wanted to make it clear that the employment challenges they face should be contextualized in Nunavut's mental health crisis, the housing crisis, the rising cost of food, the lack of services, a broken education system and the over incarceration of Inuit adults and youth. In his words:

> "I think it's very important to know that Nunavut was created 20 years ago. Everything we needed was here before that. So it is important we get the services back just like what we had before, because it creates a huge bond… We were left with nothing…. So again, there was a mental health breakdown because family services and education services are not connected together anymore. And that created a huge, significant mental health problem. People are being evicted. People are being sent south. People are being incarcerated, but we try to avoid that and then bang all of a sudden, you know, everybody's in jail. No one's listening. They're trying to create an English sector up here. I mean, I'm being honest here… in business, if you want to make a profit, at least have an understanding of what is happening here or at least join the crowd to achieve our daily tasks in order to experience the mountain we climb daily." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Nunavut).

In this context, participants from Nunavut noted that Inuit job seekers who experience disability are obtaining "just enough" work to survive, and employers struggle to support them in ways that will allow them to grow in their jobs. Service providers in Nunavut agreed that most local employers "want to hire {Inuit job seekers} but they don't know how to provide support in (Nunavut's) unique landscape" (Service Provider, Nunavut). This service provider goes on to suggest that both job seekers and employers in Nunavut would benefit from on-site job coaching support that could: 1) help job seekers hold on to work while navigating the challenges of day-to-day survival, and 2) help employers build in "motivational pieces that will make people stay in a job".

All four participants from Nunavut criticized the uneven distribution of disability resources across regions in Canada, with residents of Nunavut receiving both less funding and less access to government programs. In the quote below, an Inuit job seeker talks about the unequal distribution of resources and the lack of connectivity in Northern Canada that allows this uneven distribution of resource to continue:

> "We are Nunavut. We are Canada, too. There's the Northwest Territories. They are also Canada. So how can we understand more of each other up here in the north? Here the connectivity and services are more expensive than the rest of Canada. How can we get that better?.. That means we're creating a connectivity towards one another. And right now, at this moment, the Government of Nunavut incorporated the services under the care of government and this money [for service] is spread out equally or not equally or most are given in one side or the other…. In order to have better equality in policy making or in other services there needs to be an individual who's working within the sector of disability services to have a better understanding about what the business man can achieve…" (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Nunavut)

This Inuit job seeker later explains that this unequal distribution of disability resources is only amplified by other socio-spatial inequities around food distribution, employment opportunities and education/training resources. Further, for the service providers in this study, the uneven funding of disability services has led to a lack of core funding in their organization. In the absence of core funding, service providers are limited in their capacity to explore innovative or adaptive delivery models that will address Nunavut's unique employment and disability landscape.

> "…we do have a bit of core funding, I think we only have about $100,000 which sounds like a lot but in Nunavut it is not a lot. Our rent every year is $40,000 alone for a small one-bedroom, tiny little place. So we do have a bit of core funding, but definitely not enough to even pay a salary, like it's not enough to pay all of our bills. For the last two years, we've been trying to seek increased core funding that will allow us to provide those services and address some of those bigger gaps which is good but because you're seeing a need for this in the community…But you know, we go where the funding is so a lot of times we're bound by whatever funding call is available at that moment." (Service Provider, Nunavut)

Lastly, and perhaps most important, the Inuit job seeker represented in this study advocated for a return to more community-based responses to disability support; one that is more in-line with Inuit values. He believed that the pathway back to reclaiming communities of care in Nunavut will require an investment in decolonializing systems of support, including the revitalization of Inuit languages and approaches to education.

5.7) Strategies to Address Racism and Ableism

Participants in this study are acutely aware that they must survive in a labour market that privileges young white, non-disabled, and cis-gender workers. Findings in this study document the everyday strategies BIPOC-D job seekers use to navigate this intensely exclusionary landscape. Findings about strategies are organized into three core areas: 1) code-switching strategies; 2) disclosure strategies, and 3) acts of micro-resistance.

5.7.1 Code-switching strategies

The concept of code-switching initially emerged in the field of linguistics to describe the act of switching between languages and/or blending languages in a single interaction (McCluney et al., 2021; Young, 2009). The use of this concept has expanded to include acts of racial code-switching. This is defined as an impression management strategy used by racialized groups to "adjust their self-presentation to receive desirable outcomes (e.g., perceived professionalism) through mirroring the norms, behaviors, and attributes of the dominant group (i.e., white people) in specific contexts" (McCluney et al., 2021, p.1). Findings from our study suggest that BIPCO-D job seekers will engage in code-switching to convince employers that they can "fit in" at the workplace; this includes changing their accents, keeping up with Canadian culture, anglicizing (or white washing) their names, and masking or camouflaging behaviors to conceal their disability. The job seeker's quote below is just one of many examples of the strategies job seekers use to "fit in":

> "…For me, I can say, you can try to keep up with the culture, maybe try to act how, or keep up with the life of the people of Canada. Like how they have that kind of party life, at least you can fit in. Maybe I've gone somewhere like to party. Like you want to at least be able to act like them when you're at the job. So I just want to be able to act like them and carry out my duties just like them so that I can at least fit in so that someone cannot at some point discriminate me at all, because I'll be just the same as their Canadians also. Yeah. And also as my colleague here said... you know, your facial, look, you just want change that some somehow. Yeah. I can say that one too." (BIPOC-D job seeker, Alberta)

The most common reaction to macro and microaggressions noted by job seekers is no reaction. Some job seekers in our study talked about concealing their emotions to offer a performance of themselves that suggests they are impervious to racism and ableism. The quotes below provide are examples of this:

> "..I remain quiet. I don't like to talk to people that much, so that I cannot expose myself too much." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

> "For me, I just try and keep calm if somebody's says something (about their disability), I just don't say anything, I just keep calm… because when somebody usually abuses me or does something stupid to me I used to have a short temper… I just keep calm or act kind to them instead, they will realize and wake up and see, like they're not doing something good." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

Our data suggest that service providers play a role in supporting job seekers' code-switching strategies. When asked to describe their capacity to support job seekers who experience racism, service providers are clear that most BIPOC-D job seekers do not want to engage in any formal action or advocacy. Without consent to file a formal report or speak with a manager/supervisor, service providers will work with their clients to manage their emotions and react in calm, non-threatening ways, including tips on how to "fit in" with their coworkers.

Finally, many job seekers felt pressure to overperform in their roles in ways they hope would disrupt the biases of their employers and co-workers. To disrupt these biases, BIPOC-D job seekers try to change the narrative by over performing in their duties and responsibilities. Examples include working longer hours, increasing their productivity, making themselves approachable, and investing more time and energy into building friendships at work. In his description of one BIPOC-D employee, the employer quoted below expressed concern that this employee would not have the "soft skills" to succeed in the workplace but later praised him as one of his best employees:

> *"This {BIPOC-D Employee} became my best employee. So it was obvious. He came early to work. Didn't want to take a break, couldn't get him to go home at the end of his shift, the job meant that much to him. And so I realized that, wow, we've got great employee here. And his work was as good, if not better than anybody else's." (Employer, Central Canada)*

It is important to note that these code-switching strategies are the insidious outcome of an intensely exclusionary labour market in which BIPOC-D job seekers are forced to engage in survival strategies that ultimately reinforce the racist and ableist processes that promote their own exclusion. In their study of Black and white perceptions of racial codeswitching in the workplace, McCluney and colleagues (2021) take note of the social and psychological costs of this strategy on Black employees, specifically the exhaustion, trauma and pain of suppressing their identity while forced into a position of reinforcing the dominance of white professional standards.

5.7.2 Disclosure Strategies

Disclosure surfaced as a prominent theme in our analysis of job seeker strategies to overcome barriers associated with racism and ableism. For BIPOC-D job seekers, the decision to disclose disability is a complicated one. In general, individual job seekers moved strategically between hiding and full disclosure. What to disclose, when to disclose, how to disclose, and to whom to disclose changes from job to job according to a myriad of factors that influence the value of disclosure in relation to their employment journey. Findings from this study suggest that the intersection between disability and race significantly complicates job seekers' decision to disclose. For example, job seekers must think through several questions before responding to diversity-focused job postings. Is it safe and strategic to disclose both their race and their disability in the application? Are they too diverse if they disclose both? Or are employers hoping to check two diversity boxes with one hire? Are employers more likely to hire non-disabled, racialized workers or white workers who experience disability? Participants' responses to this last question are mixed. According to the job seeker quote below, diversity hiring strategies prioritize BIPOC workers over workers who experience a physical disability:

"… when you're finding work, the application asks you many questions about your ethnicity and also about your disability. If I mentioned the disability, I may not get it…. but ethnicity, you know, it's a 50/50 game… but disability has always been, what do you call it? A real problem. They don't want to see a person who walks slowly." (BIPOC Job Seeker, Ontario)

This job seeker with two graduate degrees suggests that employers actively recruiting workers who experience disability are not recruiting BIPOC workers who experience disability.

"But I got rejected by another bank though. They had opened up [a position] for people with disabilities… and I do not know the reason why, but I presume the reason must be because of my colour…" (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

In general, BIPOC-D job seekers avoided disclosing both their race and disability for as long as possible. Online application processes and virtual interview formats have made it possible for many job seekers to avoid disclosure of both, allowing them to move further along in the hiring process. For most job seekers, the disclosure of their racial identity is inevitable. However, they are careful not to disclose their disability until after they are hired. For the job seeker below, nondisclosure was a strategy she learned from a service provider:

"…he (service provider) told me, do not mention that you have a disability at all. If they ask, then you tell them, do not mention it on your own, because once you are into the company, they have to honor your request for assistance. So this one, no one told me… Anyway, I went through the interview and this interview was pretty tough. Like in a sense, it was originally only online with nobody seeing me, and then someone seeing me, but I don't see them. And then it was online face to face. But somehow here they did not reject me due race or colour, but I'm sure if I had told them I have a disability, I would have been rejected." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

For participants who experience invisible disabilities, the timing of disclosure varied. A few job seekers were quick to disclose both their disability and their requests for accommodations early in the hiring process to avoid the pain and trauma of fighting for accommodation after they are hired. This experience is captured in the quote below:

"I want to make sure that accommodations are at the forefront or else I don't want to do it. Even then then too, they'll say yes, like everyone's going to tell you yes, I'm going to accommodate. Right. But I've been in experiences where okay, they say yes and when it's time to give it, it's a problem .. I'm looked at as if I'm an issue. So for me, I've just told myself that I'm going to lay it out, but if I feel you're not accommodating, I'm going to let you know. And if you're not willing to fix it, I'm going. There's a difference now. Before I would've stayed but now I'm not doing that to myself anymore." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

Most job seekers with invisible disabilities wait to disclose until they are hired and settled into the job. Some job seekers did not disclose at all. The service provider quote below introduces two new factors that influence disclosure. In her experience, cultural norms around disability can influence a job seeker's disclosure decision. Further, a decision to disclose or not to disclose may reflect the job seeker's commitment to stay with an organization.

"... the whole piece about disclosure is that many people…they're not disclosing because they're of another culture and they don't talk about disability or whatever... they don't disclose because they're going to leave. They don't disclose because maybe they want to start a family or maybe they are waiting to get accepted to school and so they don't want to disclose if they're just going to be on that job for a short amount of time. They're not disclosing right now because they're going to leave. People with disabilities that check the box are disclosing because they want to stay. And so, by disclosing something about a disability or about a diversity it's like [they are saying] work with me, so I can stay here. And so, how do you get that message across. To employers that they're checking the box and that's great because now, you're kind of checking your box right, because now you're diversifying your workforce, but it doesn't end there. How do you work together to help that person thrive in that job and to stay rather than trying to prevent someone from leaving by trying to offer more money, better work hours or career advancement…   yeah, then help them thrive to stay." (Service Provider, Western Canada)

Towards the end of this quote, this service provider is critical of the check-box approach to diversity hiring. In her view, diversity hiring strategies need to extend to retention, including the support BIPOC-D job seekers need to thrive and the incentives they require to stay. The employers we spoke with did not refer to the check-box approach in the same way as job seekers and service providers. One employer (quoted below) talked about not ticking boxes and in fact refraining from asking about diversity so that their hiring processes are in line with human rights legislation.

"In terms of when we're interviewing candidates, we don't have a tick in the box type of thing to disclose if you are racially diverse, or if you fit in these group. We may someday, but we don't. And because of human rights legislation, it's not really a question you can ask. You can ask about accommodation, but you can't really ask the other questions. So it does make it a little difficult on the employer because it is up to the employee to disclose and also their responsibility to do that." (Employer, Ontario)

This quote introduces a new dynamic worth exploring in future research. According to this employer, disclosure is the responsibility of job seekers and any prompts to invite disclosure places employers at risk of violating human rights legislation. However, this silence or hesitation around disclosure leaves many job seekers struggling to understand whether disclosure will work for or against them.

5.7.3 Acts of Micro-Resistance: A Photovoice Interlude

This section brings together photos of micro-resistance captured by BIPOC-D youth photovoice participants. Micro-resistances are "incremental daily efforts" to challenge forms of privilege (e.g., white privilege), and cope with micro-aggressions in the workplace (Irey, 2013). Examples of micro-resistances include self care, positive self-talk, building supportive networks, and processing micro-aggressions through art. Each photovoice piece featured in this section

captures relatively small and incremental moments of resistance to white privilege and non-disabled spaces and worldviews. The first mini exhibit featured below offers a glimpse into the workday of one young, BIPOC job seeker. Through the lens of her camera, we experience the additional, and in this case invisible labour required to move through an eight-hour shift of remote work. In her words:

> "I think for me the way that I would explain this piece is that I think that for the most part folks only see that center photo, the deepest layer, this focused person. In that photo, I'm just the same as anyone else…But the reality is, especially for BIPOC, for disabled folks, or any intersection of marginalization, it often takes way more labor before and after that time to get to that spot in a way than for someone who experiences more privilege, they might not have to deal with that pre-labor and post-labor of what it takes to get to that to that center spot." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

In our discussion of these photos and reflections, the artist talked about small acts of microresistance that help her get through the workday. For example, she checks in with herself, she acknowledges the power it takes to start and end each day, and she builds dreams that are not tied to her productivity at work. Finally, she talked about her daily efforts to connect BIPOC-D folks in her network to interesting employment opportunities and, most importantly, to each other for care and support.

What It Really Takes: A Triptych

Rising in the Morning

The waking hours before sitting at one's desk can blur together: from minute to minute, hour to hour, and even day to day. There are no clear or distinct moments, often no real time to one's self. This rise from one's slumber is depicted by the artist's body rising from the east, mimicking the sun.

Focus

Though the pictures are crisper, there is a sort of physical manifestation of tunnel vision depicted in this photograph. At the widest points, there are images on the "day" and "night" ends of the artist. However, in the center of it all, is the focused artist, awake at one's desk. How might we see how small of space this focus takes up, in the grand scheme of the photo? How might this small center section of the photograph be the only thing employers believe is required to do the work?

Falling in the night.

Much like during the early hours of the day, the same symmetrical feeling motivated the symmetrical photographic approach of this last photograph. Going from the focused persona to resting often feels like a similar kind of blur, without any real time to wind down before resting. This fall to one's slumber is depicted by the artist's body falling to the west, mimicking the sun.

In the next series of photos, another young photovoice participant took pictures of what it means for her to "take space", find peace and "mentally check-out". Finding peace outside of the confines of white privilege and non-disabled environments is a common practice for most BIPOC-D job seekers in this study. In both this collection of photos and the collection before it, the artists attempt to make visible the invisible experiences of their disability.

Dear Clouded Mind, Release Your Thoughts to a Clear Sky

I have a lot of mental checkouts on a day-to-day basis and that means finding something beautiful in nature or in architecture and just trying to get out of the convoluted thoughts that are in my head.

Papaya

I get completely lost in my thoughts... To pull myself out of that, I try and pay attention to my surroundings. But I am someone who gets really overwhelmed by too much stimulation. So I find myself looking at the sky a lot.

Garden Behind Tattered Bars

All these photos reflect finding some peace in a space where you don't feel comfortable... it may not be the most welcoming space for you... They see the tattered stuff on the outside but don't actually take the time to look at the pretty flowers. You judge someone based on this really worn down bar and you don't realize that there's a lot of nice stuff going on behind the bars.

In this next mini exhibit, a photovoice participant uses props to build a metaphor around their big picture plan to eventually reject the all-consuming game of capitalism; a game deeply entrenched in racist and ableist worldviews. Their photos depict their movement from incremental, day-to-day acts of micro-resistance to letting go and eventually burning it down. The end game is real social change.

Chess and the Long Game of Micro-Resistance

"I wanted to get more of the close up with the chessboard being thrown out and this idea that maybe there's some kind of strategy that involves some kind of incremental type of... incremental moves and feeling that maybe it's like a play you can read in different ways. One could be like I see this board with these incremental moves for making change. And the other could be like I see myself playing this game of capitalism, trying to make these subtle moves and trying to get somewhere. And really, it can be both because I feel that you can get so engrossed in this little game of if '*I do this, will I get this and if I do this, then I'll get this*'. Eventually, I'll be able to use my platform maybe to say something of value. What I'm doing with the garbage bag and the chess board is just kind of giving up on that. The idea is to just burn it down. The fire extinguisher is there to essentially extinguish my fire. It's kind of like looking at me like there's a target on me. And this idea that I should put all of my energy into into a job opportunity that I would probably be qualified for but don't get. I feel like this is extinguishing my fire"

This participant's transition from playing the game to letting go is a recurring resistance strategy in the BIPOC-D job seeker data as whole. For many job seekers, letting go or walking away when faced with relentless macro and microaggressions are powerful acts of self-preservation and rejection of white, ableist spaces.

In the final two photos, a photovoice participant pairs two dramatically different photos under one beautiful celebration of hope and resilience. The journey depicted in these photos begins at the start of her experience with disability and takes us through the transformative experience of hope and completion when she receives her first wheelchair. In the second photo, she takes us into her quiet reflection on change while surrounded by the restorative gifts in nature. Both photos, the wheelchair and the waterfall, are examples of resources of resilience. Job seekers use these resources to face, manage, or move through adversity. Other resources of resilience noted in our data include community, family, social media, supportive managers, and dedicated service providers.

Resources of Resilience

This was my very first wheelchair that I used and it was manual... When I see this photo, I see hope because for a while I had struggled I did not know what to do or how to go about my disability. And so when I first got it, I just felt complete.. I just felt confident. And I was hopeful.. I know it's not perfect, but it just brings life to me. I used to be afraid of people's judgment...today I'm sitting on a wheelchair, but you don't know tomorrow, maybe something can happen... whether on feet or in a wheelchair, I'm still moving and I'm breathing. And I'm grateful that I have life at the end of the day and at the beginning of the day.

There's so much issues going on and you just need to maybe go and meditate or reflect, or maybe run away from some issues for a few minutes. I think it's a great way for stress and crisis management. I always believe that for change to happen it has to start from within... I think no matter how much institutions or social policy, or places like churches and schools change.. no matter how much all that is preached, I believe that it'll take people to change their mentality and just change the idea that ou, disability is l the end of someone's life... So I just think that change has to be sensitized to actually come from the people themselves.

5.8) Supported Employment Services at the Intersection of Racism and Ableism

One of the key goals of this research was to understand how BIPOC-D job seekers experience supported employment services (SES). Findings about supported employment services organized into two areas: 1) the extent to which BIPOC-D job seekers access supported employment services, and 2) the quality of their experience once they have access to these services. Taken together, findings in these two areas point to one simple, overarching message. An intersectional approach to SES will improve the accessibility and quality of services, and in turn deepen their impact on the lives of BIPOC-D job seekers.

5.8.1 Accessibility of Services

In our analysis, we explored the accessibility of services from several vantage points, and at first glance, the data seems to provide mixed messages. Results from our service provider survey suggest that BIPOC-D job seekers have regular3 access to SES. The majority (aprox 65%) of service providers indicated that they provide support to BIPOC-D job seekers somewhat to very regularly. Interestingly, BIPOC service providers are more likely to support BIPOC-D job seekers than their white counterparts. Finally, 86% of service providers "agree" (42%) or "strongly agree" (44%) that their organization is accessible to BIPOC-D job seekers.

5.8.1.1 BIPOC-D Job Seeker Perspectives on Accessibility

Findings from our qualitative data complicate this promising picture of accessibility in SES. Overall, this project struggled to engage BIPOC-D job seekers who had experience with supported employment services. Through CASE's national network of SES providers, we could only locate 20 BIPOC-D job seekers willing to participate in a survey. For this reason, our recruitment efforts for focus groups and interviews combined outreach through service providers with broader advertising methods that would not limit us to BIPOC-D job seekers already engaged in the SES. In our sample of 47 focus groups/interview participants, 43 BIPOC-D job seekers had never used SES. Most of these job seekers were unaware that these services existed, as noted in this job seeker quote:

> *"They (SES organizations) should have more outreach teams, specific outreach teams because a lot of racialized people are unaware. They're just simply unaware. I would say that a lot of them are simply unaware that these agencies exist. There should be a lot more outreach, especially to a lot of immigrant centers and stuff like that here at <region and settlement organization name removed>. Even though they're newcomers, a lot of them identify as people with disabilities." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, British Columbia)*

A few job seekers struggled to distinguish disability-focused SES organizations from other types of employment organizations (e.g. temp agencies or immigrant-focused employment agencies). For the job seeker quoted below, this struggle to navigate different kinds of employment services coupled with the exploitation she experienced through temporary employment agencies prevented her from reaching out for support.

> *"No (have not used supported employment services) because of my experience. They remind me of temporary agency abuse… There's a strong aversion in me to never, ever reach out to any employment agency, because I don't know which one is a non-for-profit and is genuinely trying to help you get a job and which one is going to take 15% of my cheque." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)*

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3   Service providers were asked how often they work with BIPOC-D job seekers and then given five options: Very Regularly, Somewhat Regularly, Not Regularly, Rare. When we write "regular" we are referring to service providers who selected very regularly or somewhat regularly.

Another job seeker added to this comment with a suggestion that BIPOC-D job seekers, particularly racialized immigrants, "are more comfortable going to the regular employment agencies {referring to employment organizations that do not focus on disability} rather than the ones that are narrow to the disability community" (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, British Columbia). Other participants explained that the decision not to pursue disability-focused employment supports is influenced by ableist attitudes in their community, the lack of visibility of these services in their neighbourhood, recommendations from settlement workers, and the diversity of the staff and job seekers that access these services.

5.8.1.2 Service Provider Perspectives on Accessibility

Findings from our interview and focus group discussion with service providers offer new insights into our exploration of accessibility. Service providers were asked to describe the diversity of the clients they serve in relation to the diversity of job seekers in their region. Most service providers believed that the number of BIPOC-D service users are rising but in general they were still serving predominantly white job seekers in their organizations, including organizations located in highly diverse regions in Canada. The quotes below speak to the lack of racial diversity among service users in three different SES organizations located in three different regions:

> "We are located in the capital of the province, so we definitely have the most diversity in the province. I feel like our province is becoming a lot more diverse. We've had mostly increases in new Canadians - that demographic seems to be increasing. And there's a lot of Indigenous people from the province that are here in the city center. We have a high urban Indigenous population located around our organization. But I feel like our {service user} demographics don't really reflect that of the province. I feel like we definitely don't have a lot of BIPOC job seekers." (Service Provider, Western Canada)

> "And when you go out around our population is very diverse, but within the disability sector for where we located, it's very different, very white. Now, there are a number of organizations that do similar work to us. I don't know what theirs is. Like their ratios could be much different." (Service Provider, Central Canada)

> "I don't know what the exact numbers are, that [information] would be collected by people who are in a different role than me. But I do know that our organization and {and other locations in the province} at large have indicated that the BIPOC population is extremely underrepresented in our centers. And I know even within like {other similar organizations}, that is also true. I think on my caseload, and I have maybe a handful. Out of I would say over 80 people maybe like between 5 to 10 at the most would identify themselves as Black, Indigenous or a Person of Color with a disability. So yeah, I would say they are very underrepresented." (Service Provider, Atlantic Canada)

When asked to account for this lack of diversity, service providers offered a number of structural explanations. Most participants believed their struggles to engage BIPOC-D job seekers were the unintended consequences of a centralized referral system. For organizations attached to this system, job seekers could not access SES without a referral from a central access system located within the provincial government. The service provider quoted below offers her explanation the impacts of this referral system on outreach:

> *"It's a little bit harder now because we are referral based as opposed to like when anybody can just walk in. They (service users) have to go through the referral system, meet a facilitator, have their needs assessed. And so I don't see us actually openly, marketing our organization … even when people call or walk in, we have to refer them back to the government and then they have to get all that paperwork done before they could get services from us. Unless you know the steps or unless you're actively looking for those resources and that support, it's probably a little bit harder for you to know how to get the help that you need." (Service Provider, Central Canada)*

The consequences of this model are three-fold. First, organizations are no longer expected to dedicate resources to outreach and recruitment, and this lack of outreach to communities has made them less visible in communities. Second, BIPOC job seekers hesitate to approach government institutions for disability-related support. Specifically, service providers were concerned that:

- immigrant job seekers believe disclosing their disability to government body will affect their migration status,

- some BIPOC-D job seekers are not able to produce a social insurance number (SIN) or proof of diagnosis,

- the history of racism and colonialism in Canada has created a relationship of mistrust between government and many BIPOC communities.

Some of these concerns are summarized in the service provider quote below:

> *"I think what {refers to another focus group participant} was saying about the reluctance to access services that is referred from a government, or is connected to a government is a real barrier. For us, you can't enter in our service and access all our services. You could go into our resource room and that's about it. You've got to have a SIN number.. and that automatically makes some people ask: Why do we need to do that? And what does that mean? And blah, blah, blah, blah… So that immediately creates a bit of a barrier there. I think that part of what you said about doing the work in the community, that is a hundred percent true." (Service Provider, Western Canada)*

Finally, most job seekers can not obtain a referral without proof of diagnosis. A few service providers pointed to race-based disparities in diagnosis that prevent BIPOC-D job seekers from getting the support they need. The quote below speaks to this concern and highlights one organization's efforts to address this barrier to SES.

"Well, I think there is racism on top of discrimination around a disability. These are two difficult barriers that they deal with right away… I think the lack of access to education, the lack of access to services, to education services, the lack of access to accommodations, I think it is a big thing. And one of the programs we're attempting to get off the ground is to work with the{BIPOC} communities to provide psychoeducational assessments because we have a lot of adults that come in and say, I think I have a learning disability, but in school they just told me I was a bad kid so we help them get a psyched assessment and suddenly they have pretty severe learning challenge at 30 or 40 years old. I think our role is to help mitigate all that, and provide services to those communities so they can address those barriers and to also work with employers to provide them with the training, the background, the understanding that they need to support the job seeker so that they can become an employee." (Service Provider, Atlantic Canada)

One or two service providers suggested that the lack of diversity among service users reflects the lack of diversity among SES staff. But findings suggest high diversity levels among front-line staff in SES organizations. Seventy-seven percent of service providers agreed that their organization employs a diverse group of service providers. Most focus groups/interview participants confirm this assessment of staff diversity.

5.8.2 Quality of Services

Similar to the data on accessibility, our exploration of BIPOC-D service user experiences produced conflicting results on the quality of these services. With so few job seekers in our study using these services, the summary of findings in this section privileges the perspectives of service providers and is one of the limitations of this study. It is worth noting that job seekers who had used SES offered rather positive assessments of the support they received. The quotes below are assessments of SES from BIPOC-D job seekers:

"I think when you use employment services, you are likely to get a job easily because they offer <inaudible> support to people… They consider how people are discriminated against and work it out with the employer {Interviewer: So have they been successful in finding you a job?} Yes, the job I'm doing now currently, they helped me." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Manitoba)

"Yeah, I can say it was helpful simply because {SES organization name removed} can directly connect you to some of the industries. And they connect you to very good people, who can maybe understand your situation. They made it very, very, very easy to find a job." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Ontario)

"I think since I got my job the challenges have been few. I think the people {co-workers} started accepting the way I work. Some of the challenges that I had previously, they're all gone. I'm satisfied now…The reason I think that this place {current place of employment} is different is because I use the employment service provider to look for a job. They help me and they have some rules about how you deal with the people and they know how to deal with the challenges. I think that's the only solution that I had that worked, the use of the employment service provider." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Manitoba)

As noted above, the few BIPOC-D job seekers using SES in this study were both able to find work and received the support they needed to feel comfortable in their identity while on the job.

5.8.2.1 Ableism and Racism in the SES Experience

In both our survey and qualitative discussions with BIPOC-D job seekers, we asked participants if they've had experiences of racism or ableism while using supported employment services. Ten out of 18 survey respondents indicated that they had experienced racism while using SES, and 9 survey participants felt that they were treated differently while using SES because of their race and/or Indigenous identity. Eleven survey respondents indicated they had experienced discrimination related to their disability while using SES, and 11 respondents felt they were treated differently because of their disability. Two survey participants offered a description of the ableism they experienced while using SES. The job seeker quoted below believed that a service provider misread his experience with disability as a lack of motivation:

"I have a hard time following what people are saying and navigating computer systems. The supported employment agency I contacted expected me to attend motivational workshops and seemed to assume I was lazy." (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Survey Participant)

Another job seeker was disappointed to discover that autism supports did not reflect the diversity of needs represented in the autism spectrum:

"I am a retired professional who is looking at changing directions in my career and almost all of the current "supports for autism" are geared towards young, extremely non-functioning adults who have never left home. These supports do not work for me and are completely inappropriate and patronizing to be "inserted into" without consideration for my 20+ years of work experience and expertise in my field". (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Survey Participant)

We had another interview participant describe SES as ableist. The BIPOC job seeker quoted below experiences multiple developmental disabilities. It was his experience that some SES organizations did not have the capacity to provide support that adequately addressed his needs. In his words:

"Well the supported employment services, the ones that I worked with in the past, I found they were quite a bit ableist in such a way. I did all the work myself. But the thing was I almost felt like they put it all on you. Because the thing is, my expectation of them was that they advocate on my behalf. Like I was almost kind of hoping that they do a kind of onsite type placement. But the thing was, I ended up just doing the resumes and the interviews and everything on my own and so forth.

And while they were just more in the background. That's why I'm very careful with who I go with in terms of the employment agencies for people with disabilities, like ,<removed name of supported employment organization>, when I researched them, I thought this is the one because they actually do advocacy work where they build impressions with potential employers and kind of sell me to them and that's already half the battle." (BIPOC-D job seeker, Alberta)

It is interesting to note that all three incidences of ableism were experienced by BIPOC job seekers experiencing developmental disabilities, suggesting that supports in this area do not currently address the range of complex experiences that constitute developmental disability.

The majority of organizations represented in our study are disability-focused organizations. As part of our exploration of the quality of services, we asked BIPOC-D services users and service providers to talk about the nature of services available for BIPOC-D job seekers who experience racism while finding and keeping work. To start, BIPOC-D survey participants were asked if they felt comfortable talking to service providers about racism. Responses from survey participants were split; 50% of respondents indicated that they were comfortable talking to SES providers about racism, 22% were not comfortable, and 28% were neither comfortable nor uncomfortable. None of the BIPOC-D services users in our qualitative sample talked about racism with their SES provider. When asked why not, one service provider responded:

"Sometimes you are really embarrassed. <Laugh> embarrassed and yeah, I feel sometimes embarrassed… and stressful and psychologically not fit". (BIPOC-D Job Seeker, Manitoba)

Several service providers confirmed that most BIPOC-D service users do not talk about racism with them, and the few that do talk about it, do so in subtle, indirect ways:

"They (BIPOC-D service users) do experience racism, and in their way, they complain a lot about that, especially after meeting their colleagues at work, they feel intimidated, sometimes… they make comments, like some of their colleagues are stressing them out, they put them down." (Service Provider, Northern Canada)

"I haven't had that experience {addressing racism with a service user} well maybe, one time this client, was talking about how co-workers were asking her questions about her ethnicity, and she felt offended by it." (Service Provider, Western Canada)

Service providers are clear that they do not address racism with the employer without consent from BIPOC-D service users. Without permission to pursue formal action, service providers engage in informal, covert strategies to support them. The most common strategy is to help BIPOC-D job seekers regulate their emotions so that BIPOC-D service users do not "overreact" or create conflict. Examples of this strategy are described in the service provider quotes noted below:

"All you have to do is to be strong, find us to talk about it but be strong, do not overreact in a negative way to such a situation…. I always make them aware that they are better than the person who is doing something racially against them. So, they have to be the better person, not to overreact. We are humans, we are all

human, we all have emotions, but not to let your emotions, the emotions take the better side of them… We prepare them to be strong, to have tough skin, so they can keep going." (Service Provider, Western Canada)

"…when that kind of situation happens, I try to just talk them through it, you know, reason with them, because my approach is that I never want them to be in conflict with anyone. So I try to make them understand and give the other person, you know, the benefit of the doubt and always try to give somebody a second chance. So I remember telling {job seeker} at that time that they probably didn't mean anything but if it happens again, then you can, you can talk to the manager." (Service Provider, Atlantic Canada)

To address exclusion and microaggressions from coworkers, some service providers will offer BIPOC-D strategies to build relationships:

"I think we're serving one {BIPOC-D identity removed} and she has a developmental disability and I think she navigates some pretty tough circumstances… She talks about a lot of exclusion in the workplace… {her} employment specialist asked for permission {from employer} to come on site and support her to see if there were some efficiencies that they could build in about her speed and navigation. And at that time, she was able to assess that interaction between workmates and determined … it wasn't the warmest of co-worker relationships. And so, they worked on doing something outside of the workplace that connected her socially with other people." (Service Provider, Western Canada)

A few service providers with similar stories decided to resolve the issue by moving the BIPOC-D job seeker into a different environment where they are more likely to connect to their coworkers. Though well-intentioned, the implications of these strategies need consideration. Specifically, strategies that focus on regulating the behaviors of BIPOC-D workers or removing them altogether can unintentionally reinforce racist structures in the workplace.

Our findings documented some formal service provision strategies to address racism in the workplace. A few service providers talked about supporting BIPOC-D service users through the human rights complaint process. With job seekers' consent, service providers were prepared to address racism with managers and employers or "take them to task" when necessary. A few service providers discussed leading staff and managers through diversity training and/or mediation. There were very few preventative strategies noted in the data. The most common strategy to prevent experiences of racism was to build in considerations of race and racism in their assessment of fit. For example, service providers, like the one quoted below, will prioritize BIPOC-D job seekers for employment opportunities in racially diverse organizations.

"I look for working environments where others of culture are working right, like the warehouses. I have a lot of clients as taxi drivers or in Uber jobs. You sort of see professions where you think, oh this employer seems open to hiring people of other cultures." (Service Provider, Western Canada)

Again, implications of this strategy need careful consideration when applied in a labour market in which racialized workers are overrepresented in low-wage, precarious jobs.

Several service providers identified employer relationships as their biggest threat to service quality. The relationship between service providers and employers is often described as fragile. Part of the service provider's role is to manage this delicate relationship to keep the employment pathway open for service users. A few service providers did identify "good employers" who were genuinely invested in building a diverse and equitable organization. In fact, some employers will approach service providers for support around building a welcoming workplace for BIPOC-D employees. A few employers explained that their hesitation to introduce anti-racism training or BIPOC-focused advancement initiatives is rooted in their fear that these initiatives may create conflict between BIPOC and white workers.

5.8.2.2 Perspectives of Organizational and Service Provider Capacity

In this final assessment of the quality of SES for BIPOC-D job seekers, we explore service providers' capacity to support job seekers at this intersection of racism and ableism. Findings from our survey of service providers paint a promising picture around capacity:

▸ 85% of service providers perceived their organization as a safe and supportive place for BIPOC-D job seekers.

▸ 73% of service providers thought that their programs and services adequately address the needs of BIPOC-D job seekers.

▸ 63% of service providers believed the services at their organization were improving in the direction of EDI

Survey participants were also asked to reflect on their individual capacity to support BIPOC-D job seekers. From this data, we learn that 60% of respondents thought their education and/or professional training adequately prepared them to understand and address challenges facing BIPOC-D job seekers. Cross-tabulations of this data suggest that BIPOC service providers felt more prepared by their education than their white counterparts. Education and training aside, 77% of service providers felt confident in their ability to support BIPOC-D job seekers/workers. There was no significant difference in responses to this question between BIPOC and white service providers. Though assessments of SES organizations and service providers were positive overall, qualitative data, including qualitative data captured by our surveys, suggest there is still room for improvement. The BIPOC-D survey participant quoted below offered a more critical assessment of service providers capacity to support their employment journey:

> *"Counsellors who provide services for individuals like me fail because they are not trained to support people with disabilities as part of their education beyond a chapter in their introductory courses. The same goes for taking into account Indigenous identity or other cultural identities and how we are affected by the very employers and workers they are supposed to know about... Too many organizations use outdated, biased workshops as busy work instead of changing to a more individual focused support model that connects job seekers with employers*

properly instead of having them sit in a class learning how to rewrite their resume again. Or take a personality test that doesn't reflect the reality of the employer's actual environment or social culture." (BIPOC-D job seeker, Survey Participant)

This BIPOC-D job seeker's assessment of SES is echoed in similar comments written by services providers who participated in the survey. These service providers felt that a lot of work needed to be done in the SES sector to improve services for BIPOC-D job seekers/workers. One service provider believed that "unconscious bias" affected their work and there was "a lot of learning and unlearning that needs to be done" in their organization. Finally, the following comment written by a service provider captures the perspective of most service providers from our interviews and focus groups. Most of these service providers agreed that organizations are well-prepared to address discrimination related to disability but unprepared to address racism.

"My organization is very good at supporting job seekers with disabilities… supporting BIPOC population needs to be improved upon." (Service Provider, Survey Participant)

Findings from this study suggest that the challenge to address racism with BIPOC-D job seekers may reflect services providers' inability to see race, and in turn their inability to recognize racism. A few well-intentioned, white service providers talked about being "colour blind" or "not seeing colour" as a way of explaining that they provide services to all service users in the same way. This is approach is captured in the service provider quote below:

"I feel like I'm not the best person to talk to this because I don't look at colour…I just treat everybody as equal and that's what you should do… So for me, I don't see color, do you know what I mean? I feel ignorant to say that, but I think everybody's just beautiful, and everybody has a story to share and I don't see color. I know it's terrible but it's good in some ways, but it's not good because I'm trying to learn through people what they experienced… and to share their stories with me so I can get an idea. I see it in the news and so I really like to hear everybody's experience and what they went through so I can learn from them." (Service Provider, Western Canada)

For many critical race theorists, colorblindness is a counterproductive ideology (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, Perez, 2017). In the context of service provision, the refusal to see race or the suggestion that race doesn't matter creates blind spots, even tensions in the supportive relationship that can make it difficult for BIPOC-D job seekers to talk about racism with service providers. Towards the end of the quote, this service provider's worry that her colourblindness might be read as "ignorant" or "terrible" suggests that she sees value in critically seeing race and racism, and this questioning of her own colourblindness seems to be influenced by the increasing visibility of anti-racism discourse in the news.

5.8.3 Strategies to improve services for BIPOC-D job seekers

Overall, data about the strategies SES organizations are using to improve services for BIPOC-D job seekers is relatively thin. Results from our survey with service providers indicate that 77% of respondents believe that leadership staff at their organization are motivated to improve services for BIPOC-D job seekers, and 64% believe their organization has taken concrete steps towards improvement. However, only 50% of service providers believe their organization provides adequate EDI or anti-racism training. Most client-facing (or front-line) service providers in our focus groups and interviews were not aware of any organizational strategies to improve services for BIPOC-D job seekers. Managers and Directors included in the study were more prepared to describe programs or initiatives that take on an intersectional approach. Strategic partnerships with BIPOC-led organizations stood out as the most common strategy to improve services. The purpose of these partnerships are to build innovative, intersectional programming. Examples include partnerships with local settlement agencies to increase newcomer awareness and access to the central referral system, working with Indigenous-led organizations to develop "culturally safe" and trauma-informed services, and joining BIPOC-led advocacy campaigns. The service provider quoted below stresses the importance of developing a supportive presence in BIPOC communities over time to ensure that strategic partnerships are built on a strong foundation:

> *"What I'd like to see in the future is more work in the community. I think that's my biggest thing. We need to get out there and it's kind of like what {reference to another FG participant} was saying, we need to be more informed with our staff and to actually have a presence in the community and go to learn, develop, have a system of relations, right. Relationships and not just go in. We had this session earlier this week, a panel discussion with three people from the African community who have disabilities on their experiences in services. And one of the individuals said, you need to go out. You need to talk to people like go to the store, have a conversation, talk to people as you go in. I think that's the work we need to do. Not a transactional relationship, right? Something that is more relational right. That you're actually sitting down and having fun. You're learning about the community, you're going for coffee. You're becoming part of the community. So I think that's for us, that's the direction we're trying to move in." (Service Provider, Atlantic Canada)*

Other strategies to improve services for BIPOC-D job seekers include:

▸ diversifying staff, specifically hiring BIPOC, multilingual service providers

▸ intersectional programs that target issues facing BIPOC communities
(e.g. programs for job seekers affected by the criminal justice system)

▸ re-designing their space and resources to reflect BIPOC communities in their region

▸ anti-racism or EDI training, Anti-Black racism healing session.

One participant described his organization's anti-racism journey, including eight anti-Black racism healing sessions with a facilitator. He noted that the purpose of this journey was to improve their organization for both BIPOC staff and service users. He described the journey as tough but important. In his words:

"We're proud of the work that we're doing to become a stronger anti-racism organization… There have been really rough times to be honest... so as an organization you got to be prepared to handle it, and it's not going to go as smooth as you think... but it's important work." (Service Provider, Atlantic Canada)

Most Directors and Managers in our study believe there is motivation in the SES sector to formally adopt a intersectional approach to service delivery:

".. that intersectionality of disability and the BIPOC community has been a growing interest within our organization over the last few years so I'm really excited to jump into this work…. So, there's a real push here in {my region} anyway to do more work in those communities and to look at those intersections." (Service Provider, Atlantic Canada)

In response to our question about recommendations for change, one service provider agreed that it was time to "broaden the tent" and think about services through an intersectional lens:

"So, I think that moving forward, and I think it was {reference to another focus group participants} who talked about intersectionality, that we need to broaden the tent so we're not just talking about diverse workplaces in terms of people with disabilities, but we're talking about diverse workplaces generally, that includes both disability and Black, Indigenous, People of Color. Because that's the demographic that our community is becoming, we probably need more support from our leaders and community to understand the new demographic in our community because lots of folks are not dialed into it." (Service Provider, Western Canada)

He went on to suggest that this movement towards an intersectional model of service delivery should be informed by research and evaluation in the sector.

5.9) EDI insights from Employers

The employers who participated in this study were recruited through CASE's network of supported employment service providers. Given this pathway into the study, employers were invested in improving EDI at their organization. The summary of findings below should be considered in this context. Responses from our survey participants (N=19) suggest that employers are succeeding in their efforts to build diverse, inclusive, and equitable work environments:

▸ 79% of employers believe that their organization encourages EDI in the workplace

▸ 74% believe their organization has policies that promote EDI

▸ 68% believe they foster a work environment in which BIPOC and people who experience can be themselves at work

- 79% believe employees at their organization can safely report experiences of discrimination

- 81% of employers felt comfortable talking about racism and 73% felt comfortable talk about disability-related discrimination with their staff

- 63% of employers indicated that their organization provided EDI training to staff

Interestingly, in this rather small sample of employers, respondents were more likely to actively recruit BIPOC job seekers than those who experience a disability. Similarly, employers were more likely to encourage the promotion of BIPOC employees than those who experience disability.

In our focus groups and interviews, employers were keen to share their strategies to integrate principles of EDI in their organizations. The most talked about strategy was the notion of diversity itself. One employer viewed diversity as the action and equity and inclusion as the outcomes. There were no common strategies among all 4 participants. Our data can not speak to trends or patterns in the data. In Table 5.8, we provide a list of the ranged of strategies mentioned by participants.

Table 5.8: EDI Strategies

Recruitment Strategies	Social media; posting physical job adds in different local communities; partnerships with inclusion networks; circulate through people with similar values; work with human resource acquisition teams; engage with supported employment organizations; create EDI specialist positions
Retention & Promotion strategies:	Mental health support; find the right accommodation; resilience training; flexible& diverse solutions; EDI training; collaborate with Unions; diversify leadership staff and governing boards

Overall, employers were more prepared to talk about recruitment than retention and promotion. One participant acknowledged that their organization was successful in building diversity among staff at the ground-level but struggled to build diversity among their leadership staff. In her view, the struggle to diversify leadership was linked to 1) the disconnection between the organization's EDI strategies and Union regulations, and 2) the lack of commitment and diversity on the board of their organization. Finally, all participants agreed that their organization did not have enough resources to accommodate the complex and diverse disability-related needs of staff.

6) RECCOMENDATIONS

At the end of each focus group and interview, we asked participants across stakeholder groups to offer their recommendation for change. Below is a synthesis of the most popular and thoughtful recommendations.

6.1) Recommendations from Service Providers

6.1.1   Services providers want more training, resources & dialogue

Training areas:

▸ Addressing white fragility in an already fragile relationship with employers

▸ Anti-racism training to address unconscious bias and colorblind racism in service provision

▸ Facilitated dialogues about racism and colonialism that are region-specific

▸ Facilitated dialogues leading to truth-telling and healing in the sector

▸ Job coaching strategies to address racism, colonial and ableism in the workplace

6.1.2   Managers and Directors want to see more research & evaluation:

Areas of research/evaluation:

▸ Community-specific conceptualizations of and approaches to disability

▸ The state of EDI in the SES sector

▸ The intersectional experiences of BIPOC-D job seekers in their region

▸ The quality and accessibility of services for BIPOC-D job seekers

▸ The experiences of BIPOC service providers

6.1.3 Service Providers want to forge stronger, meaningful relationships with BIPOC communities

Next Steps:

▸ Build strategic and mutually supportive partnerships with BIPOC-led organizations and advocacy groups

▸ Build strong SES presence and critical disability frameworks in advocacy campaigns with a focus on anti-racism and decolonization

▸ Create space for stronger BIPOC presence and engagement with critical race and decolonization frameworks in campaigns with a disability focus

6.1.4 Service providers want to see an intersectional framework for service delivery in SES

The framework should:

▸ Be community-based and developmental in its approach

▸ Broaden the scope of service delivery

▸ Include stronger commitment to advocacy and economic justice in the labour marker

6.2) Recommendations from BIPOC-D Job Seekers

6.2.1 BIPOC-D job seekers want stable, well-paid employment (decent jobs)

Next steps:

▸ Advocacy in support of the recognition of "foreign" credentials and experience

▸ Job training and coaching focused career advancement

▸ Dismantle the welfare wall for persons who experience disability

▸ Employment programs focus on building pathways to decent work (e.g. "job trials")

6.2.2 BIPOC job seekers want to see an increased access to disability resources in their communities

Next steps:

▸ Resources to develop community-based, community-specific education initiatives

▸ Knowledge exchange initiatives to understand community-specific approaches to care and support

▸ BIPOC-led resources, services, and programs

▸ Pathways to SES through existing BIPOC-led organizations

6.2.3 BIPOC job seekers want to see a cultural revolution that will change hearts & minds

Next steps:

▸ Real incentives for employers to hire BIPOC-D job seekers

▸ Stronger policies and consequences to address racism and ableism in the workplace

▸ Strategic connections between disability and anti-racism advocacy campaigns

▸ A community-based "watchdog" to oversee progress

▸ More BIPOC-D representation in mainstream media

6.3) Recommendations from Employers

6.3.1 Employers want ongoing, onsite SES coaches

The SES coach would:

- ▶ help set-up an inclusive environment
- ▶ support BIPOC-D job seekers with disclosure
- ▶ provide customized retention support

6.3.2 Employers want access to better accommodation tools, systems and financial resources

Resources are need to:

- ▶ customize accessibility supports to the specific needs of each worker who experiences a disability
- ▶ create forms and trainings in multiple languages that can be delivered in multiple formats
- ▶ a centralized system to harmonize EDI practices within specific sectors of the labour market

7) CONCLUSION

The picture that is presented by these findings is a preliminary one. In broad strokes, it attempts to chronicle and depict the experiences of BIPOC-D job seekers with employment and related services as they navigate the complex and powerful barriers erected by the forces of racism, colonialism, and ableism in Canada. In no way can it be described as a culmination; rather, the results it proffers, we hope, will point the way for future research. It is meant to inspire dialogue about where more details in our understanding of these issues are required, so that the gaps in services can be even more equitably addressed. That said, we do hope and believe that in gathering these stories, in offering these perspectives, and in situating them in context, that we have established a clearer picture of the challenges facing BIPOC-D job seekers, as well as uncovered the ways in which service providers can and do address them. We hope that the report will form the basis for future research and future action. Most of all, we look forward to witnessing change that will nourish the dreams, potential and well-being of Black, Indigenous, People of Colour who experience disability.

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