



Intersectionality and Multiple Discrimination in Research

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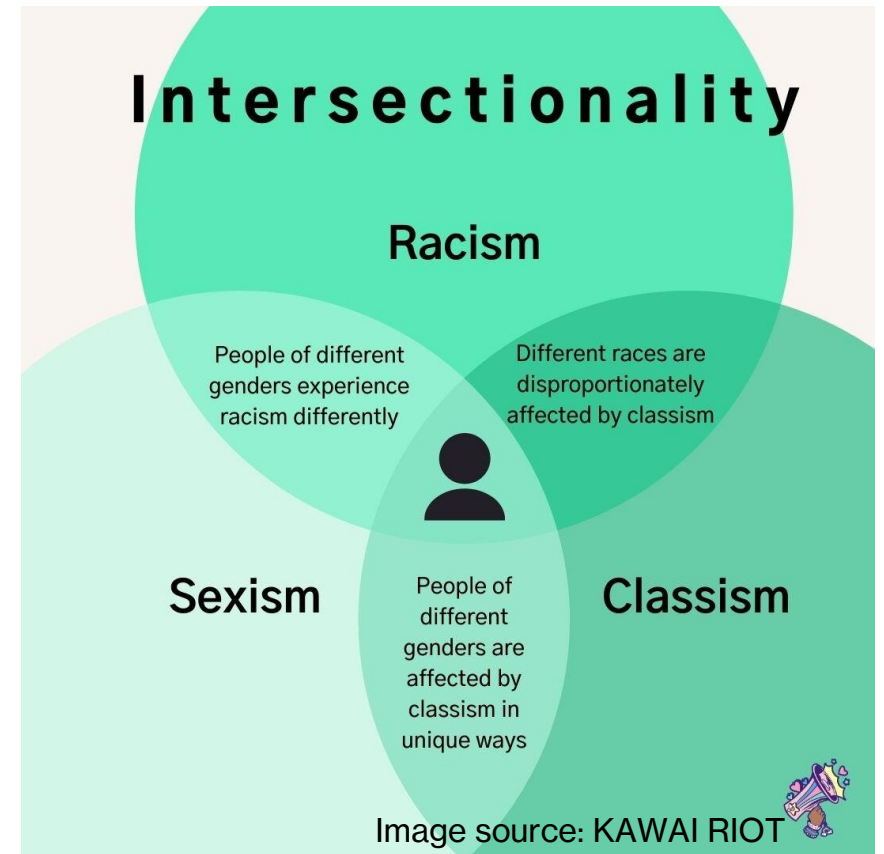
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Myth 1: Intersectionality is a useful tool to understand the disadvantage of black women only.

Reality Check

Intersectionality is an analytic tool that “gives people better access to the complexity of the world and of themselves” by rendering us able to account for the organization of power and the shaping of our lives by multiple simultaneous and mutually influencing axes of social division like race, gender, or social class (Bilge & Collins, 2016, p.2).



Myth 2: Intersectionality is about individual experience.

Reality Check

Categories cannot be fundamentally disaggregated- they do not represent individual differences but intersecting hierarchies within systems of social power.

Power distribution takes place across the intersections of those hierarchies and it is organized across four domains: structural, disciplinary, cultural and interpersonal. (Collins, 2009)

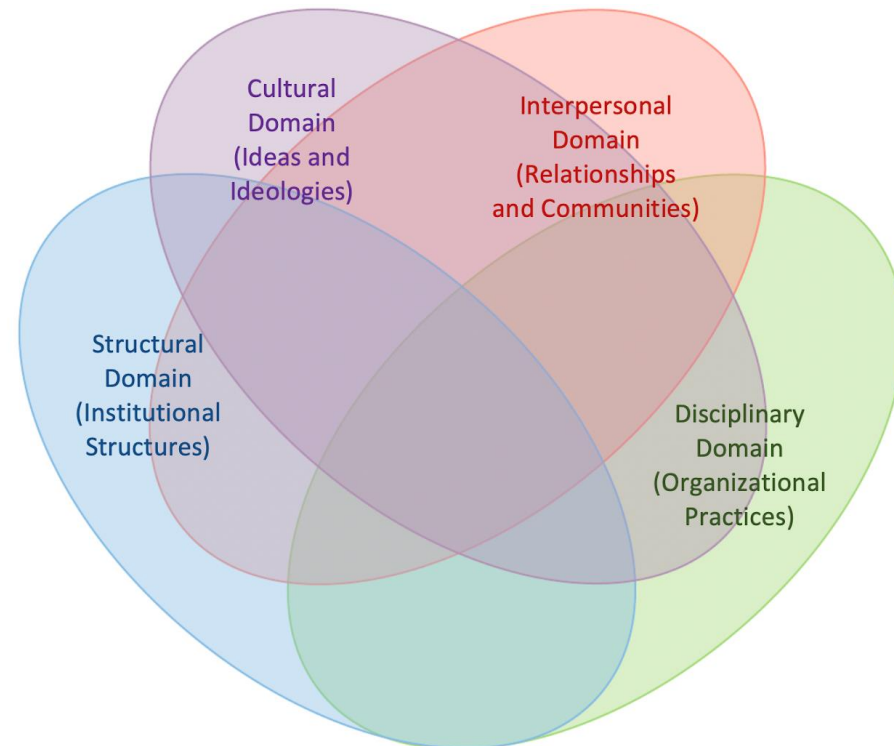
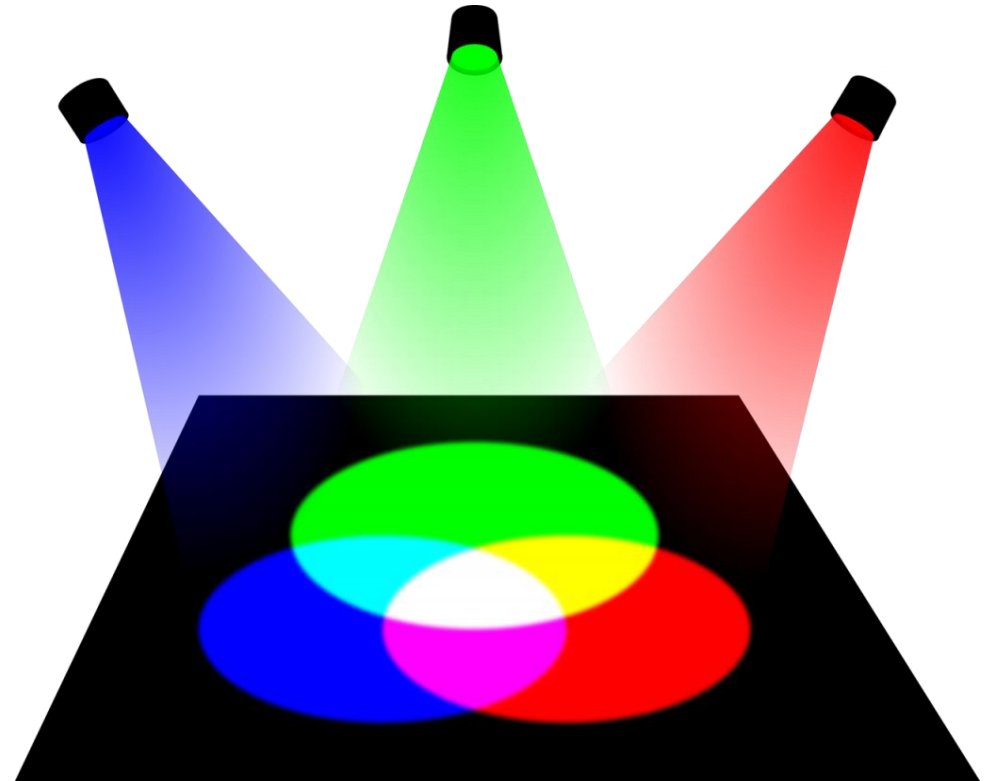


Diagram source: A3ims Antiracist tool

Myth 3: We can't address **all the intersecting categories.**

Reality Check

Situated approach (Yuval-Davis) intersectionality contemplates the multiple mutually constituted social divisions in effect in any organization system of power, and second, it acknowledges that the social, political, historic and economic context determine the salience and the effects of those social divisions.



Myth 4: You can't use intersectionality with quantitative methods.

Reality Check

- Wide range of intersections (data allowing).
- Disadvantage and privilege at the same time.
- Relationships of inequalities differ across contexts; this differences highlights the constructed character of social categories.
- Quantitative designs require a change in perspective rather than extremely sophisticated statistical methods.



The inter-categorical approach (McCall, 2005)

“...The inter-categorical approach (also referred to as the *categorical approach*) begins with the observation that there are relationships of inequality among already constituted social groups, as imperfect and ever changing as they are, and takes those relationships as the centre of analysis...”

“...The categorical approach focuses on the complexity of relationships among multiple social groups within and across analytical categories and not on complexities within single social groups, single categories, or both. The subject is multigroup, and the method is systematically comparative.” *aka Quantitative*


An intersectionality informed research agenda for social justice

- Inequalities beyond socio-economic position: relevant categories (e.g., gender, race, migration, sexuality) subject to context
- New Research Questions: situation of social groups at specific intersections; impact of institutions and processes on inequalities; range of inequalities within and between groups
- Multiple and mixed methodologies including quantitative methods & applied research.



Considerations

- Focus on the impact of constructed social categories.
- Address categories that are relevant to the context.
- Reflect on the operationalization of your variables.
- Discuss relationships of inequality rather than variable effects.
- Be explicit about generalizability and who's missing from your study.



Examples of research

Health at the Border: An intersectional analysis of the health-related response to refugees and migrants at Greek borders during 2015-2018 (Gkiouleka, PhD Thesis)



Aim

To interrogate the processes through which the intersections between border crossing, humanitarian aid and asylum policy at the Greek borderlands were associated with the production of an unevenly distributed health disadvantage among migrants and refugees.

Document analysis

- UNHCR and seven partnering humanitarian organizations (including MSF, MDM etc).
- Dual role of documents: a) factual sources b) discursive materials
- Situated, open-ended intersectionality approach (Yuval-Davis, 2015):



Main findings

- Health disadvantage for everyone BUT there are qualitative differences among groups.
- Migration, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, age, marital status and socio-economic status hierarchies are operating in the context.
- Intersections: single men and unaccompanied teenage boys from Central or North African countries dealing with increased exposure to health risk, violence and discrimination.
- Intersections: women harmed by their disempowered position within the camps and increased dependency to men in combination with discriminatory, culturally inappropriate and non-gender sensitive services; those from African countries exposed to more SGBV, language barriers and discriminatory treatment
- Inequality in visibility of vulnerability across groups but also across types of vulnerability
- Vulnerability emerging as a stratification tool (a new category) and intersecting with refugee category.

Intersectional migration related health inequalities in Europe: Exploring the role of migrant generation, occupational status and gender

Gkiouleka & Huijts, 2020

- Pooled ESS data (N=166,734; 27 countries; ages 25-75)
- ML models separately for non-migrants, 1st generation and 2nd generation migrants.
- Random slopes for gender & occupational status
- Interactions for *gender X occupational status*
- Saved the predicted probabilities of reporting poor or very poor health.
- Post-estimation Wald tests (with Bonferroni adjustment to allow for multiple comparisons) in order to examine differences in mean predicted probabilities across the examined groups.

Table 3

Estimated mean predicted probabilities of reporting poor or very poor health across groups.

	Mean	SE	95% Wald Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
Nonmigrants				
Men Services	0.044	0.001	0.043	0.045
Women Services	0.053	0.001	0.052	0.054
Men Intermediate	0.056	0.001	0.055	0.058
Women Intermediate	0.071	0.001	0.070	0.072
Men Manual	0.103	0.000	0.102	0.103
Women Manual	0.147	0.001	0.146	0.148
Men Inactive	0.124	0.002	0.121	0.127
Women Inactive	0.156	0.001	0.154	0.158
Migrants: 1st generation				
Men Services	0.045	0.002	0.042	0.048
Women Services	0.071	0.002	0.068	0.074
Men Intermediate	0.071	0.002	0.067	0.075
Women Intermediate	0.074	0.002	0.071	0.077
Men Manual	0.086	0.001	0.084	0.088
Women Manual	0.130	0.001	0.128	0.133
Men Inactive	0.144	0.005	0.134	0.154
Women Inactive	0.134	0.003	0.128	0.139
Migrants: 2nd generation				
Men Services	0.044	0.002	0.041	0.048
Women Services	0.057	0.002	0.054	0.060
Men Intermediate	0.057	0.002	0.053	0.062
Women Intermediate	0.082	0.002	0.079	0.085
Men Manual	0.110	0.002	0.107	0.113
Women Manual	0.163	0.002	0.160	0.167
Men Inactive	0.111	0.006	0.100	0.123
Women Inactive	0.143	0.004	0.136	0.152

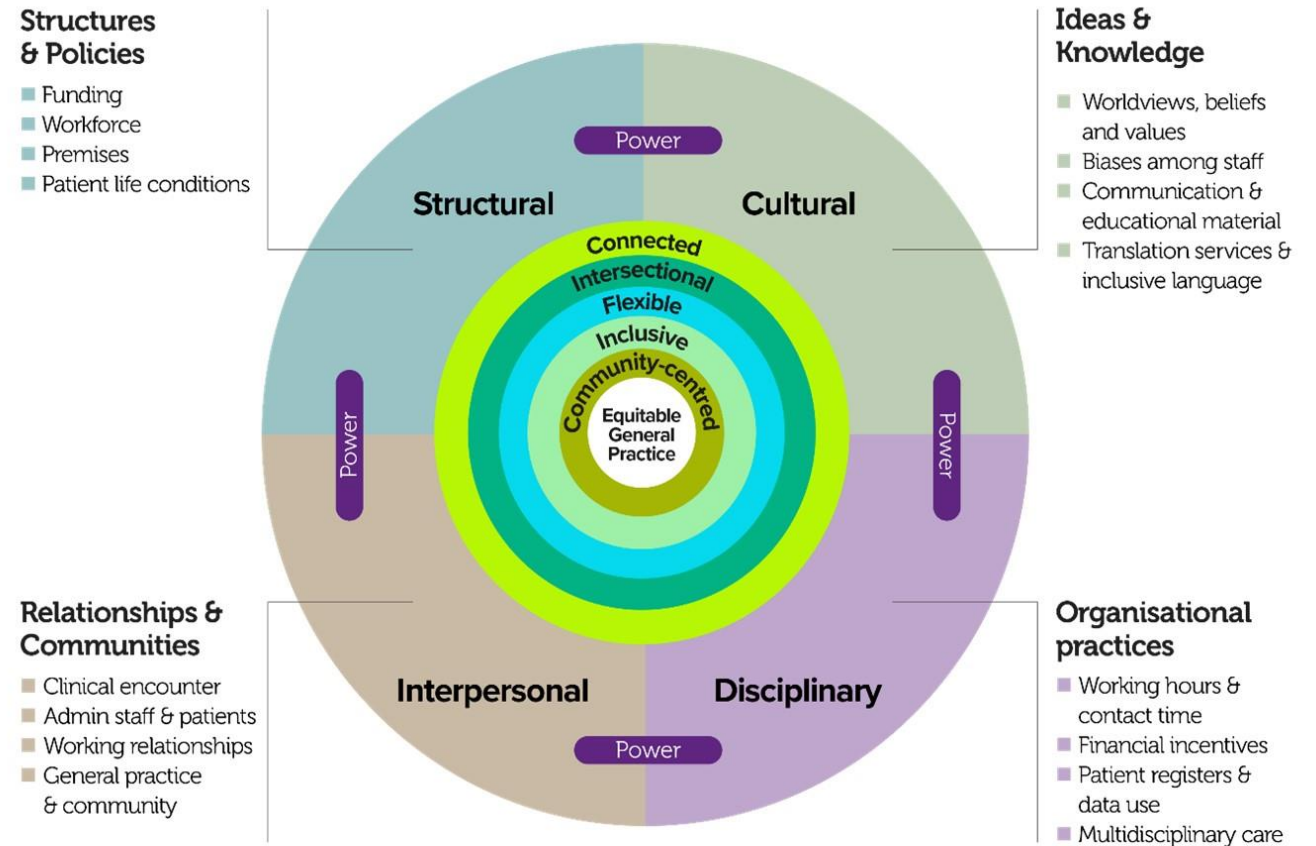
Data source: ESS (2004–2014).

Note: Predicted probabilities were produced by the ML logistic regression models, where we controlled for subjects' educational levels and age as well as study wave.

Interaction matrix of (migration X occupational status)

Reducing inequalities through general practice (Gkiouleka et al., 2023)

- Aim: key principles to guide the design of general practice services which address and decrease inequalities.
- Realist review: context – mechanisms - outcomes
- Map processes of inequalities across 4 domains of power & identify intervention areas.





Conclusions

- We can do intersectionality informed research.
- Quantitative & applied research does reveal understudied relationships of inequality & processes of exclusion.
- We need to work on research culture/language/preconceptions.
- The aim is justice – intersectionality is a tool.

Thank you!

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