

Mount Saint Vincent University

Department of Family Studies and Gerontology

**A Modified Institutional Ethnography of IPV Service Provision for Newcomer Women in
the Halifax Regional Municipality**

by

Manila-Vicka Pedrosa Tañafranca

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Dedication

For the women who live at the margins and suffer in silence, my work will always be for you. I will work tirelessly until your voices are heard.

Abstract

Although intimate partner violence (IPV) is a serious issue for both new immigrants and longer-residing Canadians, intersecting inequalities proliferate the disparity immigrant women face in instances of IPV. These disparities expose newcomer women to unique vulnerabilities, posing limitations to help-seeking behaviour. From the perspective of service providers, the present research identifies the barriers newcomer women face when seeking and using IPV programs and services in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Additionally, the research investigated the role that ideologies play in moderating the barriers to service access and utilization.

Five interviews were conducted with service providers from organizations across the HRM. Interviews were analyzed using grounded theory techniques. A critical framework was adopted to identify and address the pervasive practices regulating localized experiences. Guided by the critical framework, a modified institutional ethnography (IE), focusing on the experiences of service providers, directed investigation. Utilization of an (IE) was meaningful for mapping the hidden systems of power, or ruling relations, that facilitate social inequity in cases of newcomer IPV. Through examination of ruling relations, IE attempts to display the connections between daily life, professional practice, and overarching discourses—termed texts. This is known as “textually mediated social organization” (Smith, 2005).

Intersectionality arose as a recurring concept, specifically relating to the barriers newcomer women face due to their gender, immigrant status, and racialization. Core themes moderating resource access included a lack of resource awareness among immigrant women, funding and service limitations, the role of community in resource acquisition, and immigrant status. Themes of resource incongruence, men’s role in

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addressing IPV, and the criminalization of violence arose as central barriers surrounding the suitability of available resources.

Mapping of the barriers from everyday activities to extra-local settings revealed that external texts including organizational mandates, laws and policies, criminal procedures, and immigration requirements influence local service provision. Although various ideologies emerged in the analysis, neoliberalism surfaced as an ideology that coordinated the numerous issues identified. Under neoliberalism, non-economic spheres are shaped and moderated by the discourses of the free market (Foucault, 2008). Three neoliberal processes arose as core reinforcers of existing service barriers. These include the economic regulation of immigration, the practice of austerity in service provision, and the neoliberal stance on criminalization and the justice system. Additional ideologies including patriarchy, familialism, marianism and multiculturalism emerged as interconnected with neoliberalism. These processes aid in reasserting and sustaining neoliberal goals.

The implementation of neoliberal processes within localized discourses normalize and reinforce the barriers existing for newcomer women seeking IPV support. This sets the foundation for the development and implementation of policies, practices and decisions surrounding newcomer service provision. Modification to current neoliberal practices would alleviate many of the existing barriers to service. Organizational expansion, through increasing staffing and immigrant-centred program offerings is valuable for providing accessible and appropriate service for newcomer populations. Extending service access to precarious status newcomers would also reduce barriers related to accessibility. Additionally, incorporating newcomer women's voices in extra-local settings, such as government, is a valuable means of quashing existing service barriers.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Framing the Issue

“Beginning from the lives and interests of marginalized communities of women, I am able to access and make the workings of power visible—to read up the ladder of privilege ... so that we can then engage in work to transform the use and abuse of power.” (Mohanty, 2003, p.511).

This brief preliminary passage excerpted from Chandra Mohanty’s work in feminist social justice provides the perfect starting point for introducing the research. Although Mohanty does not speak directly to issues surrounding violence or immigration within her work, these words perfectly capture the notion of power as structured and hierarchical in nature, and intimately connected to the disparities existing between privileged and marginalized people. Within the realm of violence research, the exploration of power dynamics concerning intimate partner violence (IPV) is an area that has invited wide discussion and investigation over many decades (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Barrett & St Pierre, 2011; Omorodion, 2020). However, in situating research within the critical framework, dissecting these relations involves a specific recognition of power as an utterly present, yet invisible force that assumes control and moderates the lives of individual people (Friesen, 2008). The critical framework centres on questioning common assumptions and taken-for-granted norms to understand and expose the structural systems and institutions that establish and perpetuate inequalities (Prince & Levy, 2017). A significant component of this framework is its change-oriented approach, moving beyond theoretical examination to facilitate positive social change and equity (Levinson, 2011). Through the critical paradigm, the notion of “reading up the ladder of

privilege” is highly relevant, as it showcases the necessity to consider the pervasive structural factors that contribute to inequality within day-to-day experiences of marginalized populations, in order to bring positive change to the existing systems.

Within the existing body of contemporary research surrounding immigrant women’s experiences of violence in Halifax, explorations of power relations from a critical lens are few, calling for greater attention to this noteworthy area of examination. Although IPV is a serious issue for both new immigrants and women who have lived in Canada for an extended length of time, intersecting inequalities facilitated by ideological forces compound the disparity newcomer women face in instances of IPV. From a critical perspective, ideologies consist of the various systems of ideas, beliefs and principles that shape and guide the social organization and functioning of a society (Stoddart, 2007). These ideologies operate in the interests of the dominant class, creating and sustaining asymmetrical relations of power (Shelby, 2003). According to intersectional theorists (Carbado, Crenshaw, Mays, & Tomlinson, 2013), this experience of asymmetrical power disproportionately impacts marginalized populations. The network of oppressive structures shaping marginalized realities compound to create challenges and obstacles unique to these populations. Consequently, for newcomer women who live at the intersections of gender, racialization, and immigrant status, the experience of IPV is starkly different from that of longer-residing Canadian residents. As the ethnic mosaic of Canadian society continues to evolve and diversify, with the foreign-born population currently representing over one-fifth of the country’s population (Statistics Canada, 2017a), examining the experiences of new immigrants is of significant value in the promotion of social justice and equity in Canada.

As a traditionally marginalized population, immigrant women often enter Canada bearing the identities of woman, immigrant, and racialized individual (Ahmad, Driver, McNally, & Stewart, 2009; Alaggia, Regehr, & Rishchynski, 2009). Newcomers to Halifax enter a unique environment further contextualized by a longstanding history of race relations through the marginalization of racialized Black and Indigenous populations, spanning over four hundred years (Dobowolsky, 2011; Rutland, 2018; Waldron, 2018). Coupling this complex history with the relegation of many immigrant matters from the federal to the provincial levels of government, and the addition of cuts to immigrant programming across the country (Dobowolsky, 2011) leads to complexities in service navigation for newcomers. These challenges exacerbate the challenges new residents of Halifax experience when seeking aid in cases of violence. Consequently, these structural disparities expose newcomer women to obstacles that potentially pose limitations to help-seeking behaviour (Ahmad, et al., 2009; Alaggia, et al., 2009; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011), enhancing the need for greater attention to the specific needs of this population.

A vast majority of the existing research has fallen short in acknowledging diversity within the lived experiences of immigrants to Canada. Rather, a large portion of contemporary research surrounding IPV within newcomer populations has stripped context and culture from immigrant experiences, presenting data that lacks acknowledgement of the heterogeneity existing between and among individual Canadian newcomer women (Du Mont et al., 2012; Hyman, Forte, Du Mont, Romans, & Cohen, 2009; Barrett & St Pierre, 2011). Furthermore, a significant proportion of current Canadian-based research focuses on large cities with high rates of immigration, limiting representation to a narrow cohort of newcomers. Although these articles offer a rich depiction of the experiences of many

newcomers to Canada, they do not necessarily reflect the history of Nova Scotian migration, nor do they represent the physical, cultural, and political environment that new migrants enter upon arrival to Halifax.

Highlighting an overarching issue, the limitations within the current body of existing literature illustrate the tendency for immigrant populations to be characterized as a homogenous, one-dimensional group. Commonly, this generalization is showcased in the failure to distinguish and differentiate the unique needs of specific newcomer populations in research (Yick, 2001; Yoshihama et al., 2012; Barrett & St Pierre, 2011). Assuming a stance of homogeneity carries substantial detriment, as the underlying issues plaguing particular populations may be overlooked and untreated.

The current study expands on some of the shortcomings within the current body of existing research, through acknowledgement and exploration of the needs of immigrant women in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Through meaningful discussions with service providers working closely with the population, the research seeks to address these gaps and lend additional depth to current understandings of violence within immigrant partnerships, exposing barriers to accessing support.

Purpose and Focus

As Nova Scotia currently experiences a population surge due to increasing immigration (Government of Nova Scotia, 2020b), it is an essential time for the province to evaluate immigration practices to encourage continued population growth and simultaneously create a safe and prosperous environment for newcomers. The current research contributes to the existing literature on newcomer women's experiences of help-seeking and service use in Halifax, from the perspectives of those who provide IPV

services. As immigrant women face numerous barriers exclusive to the population, acknowledgement of their distinctive needs is at the forefront of the research.

This research acknowledges the unique social realities of immigrant women experiencing violence, through discussion with those who work intimately with them in their day-to-day lives. Seeking information from service providers bridges the overarching structural issues prevalent in the laws, policies and practices surrounding immigration and the individual experiences of immigrant women seeking support. As a network versed in both policy and practice, this population possesses a wealth of information concerning the institutional practices that may foster barriers to help-seeking. Through interviews with service providers, the research unveils the ideologies present at the structural level that moderate the ability for service providers to effectively support immigrant women within localized, daily interactions.

To unpack the barriers experienced by immigrant women, a critical lens was adopted to explore the constraints that power places on help-seeking behaviour. This orientation of thought concerns the regulatory nature of power, operating to develop a climate of inequality (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002). From this perspective, regulation of power does not exist in isolation, but through its ability to be maintained through active participation in perpetuating ideologies (Friesen, 2008). As such, exploration of these ideologies involved an examination of the relations between trans-local and local systems of organization (Campbell & Gregor, 2002) to evaluate the relationship between the pervasive systems of power and the daily experiences that moderate barriers for immigrant women seeking support. Using a modified institutional ethnography, the various policies

and practices prevalent within the services available for newcomer women pursuing aid were investigated through the work of service providers.

Correspondingly, in examining the distinct needs of this traditionally marginalized population, meaningful methods for addressing the disparities in current services was a central focus of the research. Aligning with the critical framework, a goal of the research is to be transformative in its purpose. As such, evaluation of the factors that limit help-seeking led to the development of suggestions for reconciling unequal power relations in the existing systems of inequality. Since the focus of the research concerns the barriers existing within current systems of help-seeking, the suggestions for change are comprised of modifications to existing programs and policies that facilitate service provision for IPV at the individual level.

Research Questions

In examining the personal accounts of service providers, the research aimed to develop a more in depth evaluation of the unique and varied issues newcomer women may face through evaluation of three key research questions: 1) What is the availability and accessibility of resources for immigrant women experiencing IPV in Halifax?; 2) According to service providers, are the available resources meaningful and useful for immigrant women within the context of geographical placement and cultural demographics?; 3) According to service providers, what are the structural barriers immigrant women face in seeking help for IPV, and how are these mediated by the texts that inform them?

Researcher Positioning and Assumptions

Power Differentials in Research.

One of the acknowledgements I must make, and with great emphasis, is my positioning within the research. Within all realms of research, a significant degree of accountability and responsibility is necessary to ensure ethical practice. In cases surrounding marginalized populations, representation is a key obligation that requires cautious and thorough consideration. As researchers typically enter the investigation from a position of privilege, their credibility and appropriateness to speak on behalf of a group from which they do not belong is highly speculated (Solokoff & Dupont, 2011; hooks, 1989). Particularly from a critical perspective, carrying an outsider viewpoint raises concern surrounding the power relations involved in adopting a role as a researcher with inherent power. hooks (1989) states that even when well-intentioned, existence of this dynamic can serve to perpetuate a hierarchy of domination, and further dismiss the voices that the researcher seeks to represent.

While the purpose of the research is to bring recognition to the skewed social practices that operate to maintain inequality for immigrant women, it was essential to recognize the potential problematic nature and ethics of such action. As the relationship between the researcher and researched is often deemed as a dichotomous and asymmetrical relationship with unequal power distribution in favour of the researcher (Ben-Ari & Enosh, 2012), ensuring the protection and empowerment of participants was vital to the critical nature of the research. As such, throughout the research process I was obligated to be transparent about my position and perspective as an academic, a non-practitioner, and a woman whose reality is not aligned with new immigrants or those experiencing violence.

Taking the steps to acknowledge my positioning within the research aimed to emphasize my responsibility toward the research population and centre the research to appropriately reflect their needs. As suggested by Ben-Ari and Enosh (2012), recognizing the value of participant contributions in the transfer of knowledge aimed to empower participants and reduce power gaps. Finally, ensuring that the production of knowledge was perceived as a joint endeavour between each participant and myself was also necessary to bolster respect and participant empowerment.

Additionally, the research investigated issues from the perspective of service providers who work closely with immigrant women, rather than seeking information specifically from immigrant women. Although the decision to utilize the voices of service providers was appropriate for unpacking the role of structural inequalities on the practices and policies directing services at the individual level, its implications on those who are already severely disadvantaged was a significant point of deliberation. In developing and executing the study, it was essential to acknowledge the impact of this decision on the women who directly experience the barriers to services and face marginalization within their daily existence. Particularly, as the theoretical framework follows a critical model, the research required attentive consideration of the needs of the newcomer women that the service providers speak for. It was necessary to constantly reflect on the importance of situating the research within a larger schema of social change, with the immigrant population as central to the narrative. This served to ensure that the population is not further isolated or neglected from the discourse.

Furthermore, as emancipation is an essential component of the critical framework, the goal of enacting social change for the betterment of this population was consistently

positioned at the forefront of the research. It was valuable to continuously acknowledge this goal to ensure that the needs of newcomer women were prioritized and represented to the best of my abilities. This involved recognizing the responsibility as a researcher to make use of the data to explore possibilities along the lines of social justice and education (Ben-Ari & Enosh, 2012). It was valuable to shape the investigation to reflect the needs of the population, identifying practices that demonstrate auspicious results when applying the research into practice, and exploring ways to improve services to meaningfully enhance the experience of immigrant women.

Reflexivity

It is generally accepted in qualitative research that transparency on the part of the researcher is essential to ensuring the quality of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Through reflexive practices, researchers must evaluate and acknowledge how their own characteristics and positionality inform the research processes and outcomes (Berger, 2015). Researchers are required to orient themselves within the research to “acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences” (Creswell, 2003, p. 8), ultimately guiding the construction and transmission of knowledge. Through continuous internal dialogue and self-monitoring, it was necessary to assess the role of my own biases and positioning as they directed the research. Additionally, this self-evaluation involved a careful assessment of the personal presumptions that informed the development and direction of the interviews and correspondingly may have impacted the outcome of the research.

Reflexivity was particularly necessary in my positioning as an outsider, working within an unfamiliar realm of investigation. Practicing reflexivity helped to maintain the

ethics of the relationship with the research population by exercising what Berger (2015) deems as the “decolonizing [of] the discourse”, a recognition that although the orientation and perspectives illustrated through the research are fundamentally my own, the effects and outcomes of the work have potential impact on others. Although my personal proximity to immigration as a first generation Canadian greatly facilitated recruitment and increased levels of comfort and rapport with participants, it was essential to understand how my social location and positionality affected the process of data collection and analysis. Through processes including member checking, journaling, and self-monitoring, I was able to better grasp how my personal worldview filtered the ways that information was gathered, how meaning was established, and how the information gathered was ultimately disseminated.

Race Relations in Nova Scotia

Before delving into the literature surrounding help-seeking for intimate partner violence within Nova Scotia, it is important to contextualize historical and contemporary race relations within the province, to set the stage for better understanding the unique backdrop Nova Scotia provides for current immigration. Although the province carries a long history of migration and settlement, particularly between European settlers and Indigenous and Black Nova Scotian populations, experiences of discrimination and racism continue to persist for racialized individuals in Nova Scotia (Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, 2013; Waldron, 2018; Rutland, 2018). Numerous articles allude to hidden or covert racism continuing to permeate various facets of society, including the education system, housing, employment, the justice system, and law enforcement (Nelson, 2008; Waldron, 2018). These less explicit, systemic modes of discrimination aid in

normalizing minoritization and create an environment that continues to “Other” and oppress the Indigenous and Black Nova Scotian communities that already face pre-existing vulnerabilities (Waldron, 2018; Agnew, 2009; Nelson, 2008).

Examining contemporary issues of service provision cannot be done without acknowledging the history of colonialism and racism that precede current immigration. As a consequence of European colonialism, Nova Scotia is socially anchored on a white, Eurocentric legacy. Although efforts continue to be made to address historical and contemporary wrongs, institutional forms of racism continue to pervade society. Nova Scotia’s colonial history has guided the development of the policies and institutions that operate today, often working to empower the suppressors while subjugating the already-oppressed (Rutland, 2018; Waldron, 2018). Subsequently, these practices continue to moderate the ways through which long-residing racialized populations of Indigenous and Black Nova Scotians navigate society.

The city’s colonial legacy ultimately impacts the development and utilization of current services and resources, shaping the environment that new immigrant populations enter. Extending from this, the differential and unequal treatment of racialized people impacts the ways in which newcomer populations are received within the province. It is essential to recognize the influence of historical settlement in Nova Scotia and the corresponding ongoing treatment of racialized individuals to unpack how this history may contribute to contemporary structures of support and service delivery and establish suggestions for bettering support for immigrant women and other racialized and marginalized populations.

Organization of the Thesis

This research explores the systemic barriers in place that limit help-seeking for immigrant women seeking aid in cases of IPV. The present chapter outlined the purpose and focus of the study, to introduce the research. The following section, Chapter Two, presents a review of the relevant literature surrounding Canadian immigration, intimate partner violence, and help-seeking in Halifax to help frame the current study and bring attention to current gaps within the current body of literature. Chapter Three outlines the theoretical framework selected for the research, positioning its suitability for both developing and producing the research. In Chapter Four an outline of the methodological choices utilized is provided, as well as ethical considerations, and details surrounding the process of data analysis. Next, the results are presented in Chapter Five, highlighting noteworthy participant dialogue and the key themes that emerged from the data. Subsequently, in Chapter Six a discussion of the results follows, in its relation to the current literature and the implications of the findings on IPV service provision and future research. This chapter further explores potential means for bringing positive change to service provision. Finally, directions for future research are proposed to expand on this study and develop a deeper understanding of service provision for IPV violence in the Halifax community. A goal within this final chapter is to emphasize the need for greater connections within research and practice, to respond to these issues in a more collaborative manner.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

To introduce the topic of study, a description of immigration trends in Canada will first be provided. This begins with an overview of historical migration to Canada and its ideological implications on contemporary immigration, followed by a summary of contemporary migratory patterns across the nation and to the province of Nova Scotia. This section serves to highlight the necessity for evaluating newcomer experiences within the Halifax region, as the city continues to grow and diversity with new immigrant intake. Next, an overview of the routes of immigrant intake is presented, to outline the intersections of privilege newcomer populations obtain upon entry, relative to their status. Subsequently, the ideological structure of IPV and help-seeking behaviour are examined, to offer a foundation for the current research's focus on IPV-specific support seeking. Dissection and evaluation of the existing body of research is incorporated throughout the literature review, to highlight the current gaps existing in IPV research concerning help-seeking behaviour among immigrant populations. This opportunity to display the areas less explored within earlier research aids in framing the current study. The gaps presented highlight the need to evaluate the accessibility of the resources available to newcomer women in Halifax. Furthermore, the following literature review hones in on the necessity to further address the adequacy of existing resources in accordance to Halifax's unique immigrant populations, and the social environment that women enter when migrating to the city.

Immigration Trends in Canada

Immigration to a new country constitutes major life changes and decisions that can drastically alter the trajectory of an individual's life. Despite the potential obstacles and

risks associated with relocation, Canada continues to draw a considerable number of newcomers each year from across the globe. Often rated as one of the most appealing countries to live, based on many factors such as the economy, education, healthcare, and welfare, Canada succeeds in providing a rich and rewarding home for many newcomers (Hensley, 2019; Belmont, 2020). According to the most recent census data, over one fifth (21.9%) of the Canadian population consists of foreign-born individuals (Statistics Canada, 2020a), with projections of this fast-growing segment to increase to approximately one-third of the population by 2036 (Statistics Canada, 2017b). In 2019 alone, Canada welcomed 341 203 permanent residents and 195 629 non-permanent residents to the country, one of the highest levels of immigration in the country's history (Statistics Canada, 2020b).

Both nationally and on the provincial scale, immigration has played an essential role in contributing to population growth, strengthening the economy, and dispensing skills, knowledge, and rich cultural diversity to communities. Although the Atlantic provinces receive lower rates of admission in comparison to provinces with greater metropolitan areas, Nova Scotia has been experiencing record breaking newcomer intake in recent years. In 2019 the province received an unprecedented number of new immigrants, accepting 7 580 newcomers, surpassing the previous record of 5 970 arriving in 2018 (Government of Nova Scotia, 2020b). The growth in newcomer intake to the province has steadily increased over recent years, stimulated by the implementation of various immigration programs designed to offset the depleting youth population, stimulate the economy, and revitalize local communities (Government of Nova Scotia, 2019).

As the newcomer population continues to grow, it is necessary to recognize and accommodate for the diversity of needs existing within this cohort, to facilitate and support settlement processes and integration. From a critical perspective, it is valuable to understand the various ideologies shaping the environment that newcomers enter when migrating to Nova Scotia, and the consequential intersections of inequality women may experience in settlement support processes. The following section attempts to briefly sketch the patterns of migration that have shaped immigration to both the country and the province. This intends to highlight the hegemonic nature of settler ideologies, facilitating immigration to the country and establishing the intersectional environment that newcomers encounter when migrating to Canada. This is followed by a section exploring current trends in immigration, to both Canada and Nova Scotia. This sets the stage for the current research's focus on the local HRM newcomer population. Finally, the various immigration statuses are outlined, to explore the degree of advantage newcomers are afforded, in accordance to their immigration pathway. Unpacking the ideologies surrounding immigration and the processes surrounding intake is necessary for beginning to understand the cumulative role of social categorizations such as racialization, educational status, and gender on the experiences that newcomer women face when navigating IPV services in the Halifax region. The following sections will aid in exploring how overlapping identities are inherently interconnected to the potential obstacles and prejudices newcomer women may face when seeking aid for IPV.

Canada's Colonial Past

The experience of uprooting and resettling in another country is often fraught with many challenges and adjustments. Numerous obstacles encountered in settlement and

integration into a new country are dictated by existing immigration parameters and guidelines that are rooted in historical motivations of migration. To preface the current research with a critical lens, it is necessary to acknowledge historical migration to Canada, to recognize the impact of historically rooted ideologies and practices on contemporary migration. As the present research evaluates the role of institutionally based policies and practices on newcomer service provision, exploring Canada's colonial roots is essential to unpacking the implications of longstanding ideologies on immigration processes today.

Canada bears a long and complex history of migration. An understanding of this past is indispensable to appreciate the country's contemporary migration policies and practices. For thousands of years prior to the transatlantic European colonial-migration to Canada, the Indigenous populations of the land had long occupied and settled as the first peoples of the nation. Evidence of settler colonialism in eastern Canada is recorded as far back as approximately the year 1000, with Viking populations building settlements in Northern Newfoundland (Price, 2013; Cordell et al., 2008). Over time, European settlement continued southward through the Atlantic provinces and westward across the country, eventually reaching the west coast in the 1800s (Price, 2013; The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2016). This process of migration was promulgated by colonial objectives such as the "Doctrine of Discovery" that legitimized colonial nations' legal rights to inherit lands "discovered" through exploration (McNeil, 2016). Such principles paved the way for the ideology of colonization, promoting racial and religious superiority that encouraged and justified the subjugation, exploitation, and displacement of Indigenous peoples from their traditional territories across the country (Wallis, Sunseri & Galabuzi, 2010).

Although many years have since passed from the first encounters between Indigenous populations and European colonial settlers, the legacy of the European colonization of Canada has largely directed the current laws and policies surrounding immigration today (Bonds & Inwood, 2016). As white European colonizers settled the country, their various goals and motivations were adopted and embedded into the law, dictating immigration into the country and outlining parameters for citizenship and belonging. Importantly, within the context of this research, it is integral to acknowledge this colonial past to recognize the power imbalance inherent within colonial relations, that are very much still in practice throughout Canadian society. Acknowledging this is essential in identifying and challenging the repressive structures that persist in the current processes surrounding immigration.

While contemporary newcomers continue to partake in the legacy of colonialism in many ways, the initial settler populations established the guidelines dictating immigration and intake, placing the white European ideologies as the acceptable, permissible standard (Price, 2013). These colonial protocols distinguish the settler experience from contemporary immigration, as contemporary newcomers are expected to "... adapt to the culture already in existence in their new homeland – rather than to expect that they will preserve intact the traditions and values of their countries of origin, as was the case with the settlers." (Collacott, quoted by Todd, 2012). Differentiating between these two realities is valuable in acknowledging the degree of advantage that settlers were granted in their migration to the country, and the lasting expectations of settler society on contemporary intake. The impact of settler-enforced ideals echo in historical records describing discriminations and regulations placed on newcomers to Canada, through the

implementation of countless laws and policies surrounding a newcomer's legal rights, land ownership abilities, labour laws and pay rates, religious freedoms, and social assistance entitlement (Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2019; Price, 2013; Roy, n.d.).

Throughout Canadian history, many of these policies targeted new arrivals who were deemed "alien" (Price, 2013) from the white European settlers who constituted the governing bodies. The enduring practices of settler colonialism ultimately shape the social, political, and economic lives of newcomer populations, creating a hierarchy of deservedness among the resident population and reinforcing racism and white privilege (Bonds & Inwood, 2016).

As such, colonialism and its associated ideologies of white and religious supremacy are not simply relics of Canadian history, but rather are a foundation for the *ongoing* unfolding of practices surrounding immigration in this settler state. Canada's historical settlement has set the precedent for immigration in contemporary cases, moderating immigrant intake based on human capital, and directing resource acquisition and utility for newcomer populations. The legacy of the settler mentality heavily plays into various aspects of the newcomer experience through the positionality ascribed to newcomers, and the degree of entitlement to Canadian rights, resources and belonging that newcomers are afforded upon entry to the country.

Nova Scotia's Unique Migratory Past

Nova Scotia carries its own unique history of migration, existing as the oldest historical landing place for Black migrants to Canada and hosting the largest Black population in the Atlantic provinces, and largest racially visible group in the province (Government of Nova Scotia, n.d.). As established in the introductory chapter, Nova Scotia

boasts a long history of racial tension and discrimination toward African Nova Scotians, often subjecting Black residents to poverty, exclusion, and ostracization (Government of Nova Scotia, 2020a). Despite the many strides made over the centuries to advance civil rights and address past harms made against Black Nova Scotian residents, racism persists. A quick Google search yields numerous recent news articles and think pieces on anti-Black racism in the province's healthcare system, hiring processes, policing, and in environmental policymaking. Several articles regard the mode of racism across the province as "polite" (Mercer, 2020) or "hidden in plain sight" (Lowe, 2009), masking discrimination and authorizing its use. The invisibility of contemporary racism against the Black population poses potential obstacles for Black newcomers to the province. While immigrants do not hold membership to the African Nova Scotian community, Black newcomers to the province may face similar disadvantages due to their physical racialization. The added imperceptible nature of racism in the province allows for its endurance, and the potential for newcomers to unwittingly be subjected to unfair treatment. Recognition of the unique experiences of racialized African Nova Scotians is a necessary component in understanding the potential environment that Black newcomer populations enter when migrating to the province, to better identify the potential barriers they may face in their settlement process.

Recent Trends in Canadian Immigration

From the point of first contact with Canada's Indigenous population up until the mid-twentieth century, newcomers to Canada primarily migrated from areas of Europe or the United States. Over time, this pattern has shifted, with Asian countries including the Philippines, India, and China leading immigration to the country (Statistics Canada,

2017a). In recent decades immigration has increased significantly, as one of the key factors influencing the nation's population growth (Bruce, 2007; Ramos & Yoshida, 2011). A significant majority of the new immigrant population settles in one of four provinces, Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, and British Columbia, largely congregating in the nation's major metropolitan areas within these provinces (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2019b). This purposive settlement in highly populated areas (Statistics Canada, 2008) is often attributed to the greater economic, cultural, and social opportunities and resources that urban areas provide. However, immigration trends suggest an influx in migration to smaller Canadian cities as well.

The introduction of immigration initiatives such as the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP) in 2003 and the Atlantic Immigration Pilot in 2017 (Nova Scotia Immigration, 2020a; Nova Scotia Immigration, 2020b), have stimulated the intake of qualified workers and skilled professionals to the province. Attracting immigrants to less populated cities such as Halifax is a crucial means for bolstering the sustainability of these communities. Many smaller cities across the Atlantic region are experiencing significant westward outmigration of youth to more populated cities, and a steadily aging population (Bruce, 2007; Ramos & Yoshida, 2011). The immigration initiatives noted above aim to offset this and address local labour market challenges by accelerating the immigration process for skilled workers willing to settle in the province or within the Atlantic region (Government of Canada, 2019c). The consequential shift in immigration patterns to these less-populated cities, as stimulated by these initiatives, reshape the racial and cultural demographics of these areas and the corresponding needs of the residing population.

Although nearly a quarter of the foreign-born population currently residing in Nova Scotia originally migrated from the United States or United Kingdom, the number of recently migrated newcomers (arriving between 2011-2016) report markedly different origins (Statistics Canada, 2017b). The number of recent immigrants to the province arriving from various Asian and Middle Eastern source countries is noteworthy, constituting a substantially growing proportion of the newcomer population in the province (Statistics Canada, 2017b). Nova Scotia has seen an influx in newcomer intake from the Philippines, China, India, Syria, and numerous other Middle Eastern countries (Statistics Canada, 2017b) with the greatest concentration of immigrants to the province landing in the Halifax region. As of 2016, the newcomer population in the HRM constituted 9.4% of the total municipal population, with recent immigrants forming 2.4% of the population.

As the largest and fastest growing maritime city and one of the fastest growing census metropolitan areas across the entire country (Statistics Canada, 2020c), the increasing diversity of the immigrant population entering Halifax presents new challenges for both longer-residing Canadians and for the newcomers themselves. Newcomer populations enter Canada with vast backgrounds, resources and needs that may not mirror those expressed by Canadian-born or longer-residing immigrant residents. As Halifax has seen significant intake of populations from countries not previously hosted by the city, it is essential for the HRM to ensure that it is equipped with the necessary tools and resources to ensure the positive settlement of this growing newcomer population. Recognizing the unique needs of Halifax's changing newcomer populations is valuable in assessing current service provision, incorporating changes, and establishing necessary services to address the unique needs of the newcomer population. Particularly, considering the province's desire to

retain newcomers as a viable means of sustaining the province economically (Thevenot, 2019), investing in the needs of the immigrant population is an indispensable tool in creating a desirable environment for newcomers to settle and thrive.

Immigration Statuses and Means of Entry

It is valuable to recognize the diversity of meaning held by the term ‘immigrant’. Within the Canadian context individuals applying to enter the country can be subdivided into several status classifications. These groupings include economic class immigrants (business and professional persons admitted based on skill or labour-market requirements), family class immigrants (dependents and closely related persons of Canadian citizens or permanent residents), and refugees or those entering under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds (sponsored or asylum-seekers) (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020a; Alaggia et al., 2009). Recognizing the various statuses through which immigrants enter Canada brings attention to the diversity existing among newcomer women and the differing circumstances that these groups may experience upon their arrival to Canada.

For economic class newcomers, immigration relies on the capacity to demonstrate a degree of self-sufficiency and ability to become economically established through employment in Canada (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020b). There are numerous economic pathways to entry, including Express Entry, provincial nomination and various specific programs targeting employees to fill specialized employment gaps or work in less-populated areas of the country (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020b). Alternatively, the purpose of family status immigration is to reunite relatives. The family sponsorship path requires agreements of sponsorship from Canadian citizens,

permanent residents, or Indigenous peoples already residing in Canada (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020b). Refugee status immigrants are admitted into the nation out of necessity to flee their country of origin to escape conflicts of persecution or endangerment, war, violations of human rights, or environmental displacement (UNHCR, 2020; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020a). Refugees may enter Canada under sponsorship by the government, through private sponsorship, or as asylum-seekers who request protection upon entering Canada (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020a). Finally, those entering under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds are admitted on a case-by-case basis. These applicants would otherwise not be granted permission to obtain residence through other immigrant classifications (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, n.d.). This category includes applications made by individuals experiencing violence who enter Canada under family class status. Such individuals can pursue exemption from the requirements necessary to apply for permanent residence independent of their sponsoring partner (Alaggia et al., 2009; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, n.d.).

Differentiation between statuses allows for better inferencing of the degree of advantage allotted to immigrant women upon entering Canada, including the potential resources available and means through which women may exit violent partnerships. As economic class immigration typically denotes greater financial, language, and social resources as well as independence, entering Canada with these advantages may decrease vulnerability in cases of IPV and facilitate help-seeking (Alaggia et al., 2009; Merali, 2009). Alternatively, in the case of sponsored spouses and partners, a contractual agreement places immigrants as financial dependents of the sponsor (Immigration,

Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020b). In these situations, women may experience greater reliance on a partner for economic stability and social support, limiting their opportunities for help-seeking (Alaggia, et al., 2009). As of 2017, the two-year conditional permanent residence on sponsored spouses was lifted, decreasing the risks of IPV for newcomer women (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2017). Despite the lifting of this condition and the routes of settlement available in circumstances of endangerment (e.g. pursuing admission under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds), many women fear deportation even with the right to remain in Canada. The contractual agreement of sponsorship may establish a power dynamic of control and dependence between the sponsor and sponsored family members in situations where rights are not made clear to the sponsored individual or if partners are deceitful (Bhuyan, 2012). Additionally, the complexity of the process involved in obtaining permanent residence through Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds and the financial stipulations associated with the procedure may deter women from seeking aid (Alaggia et al., 2009; Bhuyan, 2012).

The categorizations of status listed above do not account for the numerous individuals who enter the country with precarious statuses. Temporary status residents including international students, refugee applicants, and temporary workers and non-status residents such as refugee claim rejections, sponsorship breakdowns, human trafficking victims, visa or permit expiries and undocumented entrants account for the plethora of various statuses not accounted for under full immigration statuses (Mattoo et al., 2017). Individuals falling under any of these precarious statuses lack many of the privileges afforded to newcomers who enter with full immigrant status, including authorization to work and access to public services such as healthcare and education. This exposes

precarious status holders to greater vulnerability and marginalization in cases of IPV (Mattoo et al., 2017; Oxman-Martinez et al., 2005; Bhuyan, 2012). Precarious newcomer statuses glaringly highlight the disparities existing between immigrants, according to their route of intake. According to Bhuyan (2012), the limited allocation of resources and the restrictions placed on those with precarious status underscores the unequal distribution of privilege allocated to newcomers. Newcomer's "right to have rights" (Arendt, 1951, as cited in Bhuyan, 2012), and social membership within Canadian society is assigned in accordance to their perceived value and contributions to the country. This relationship between status and privilege is of significant value in the present research, in exploring the stratified experiences of newcomers in obtaining access and utilizing services.

Situating research within the context of the socio-political environment of settlement and acknowledging the various intersections of inequality existing for newcomers is necessary in determining the distinct obstacles that newcomer women encounter in attaining support within the community. Understanding the province's historical migration roots and the contemporary impact of immigration ideologies aids in recognizing the social positionality of newcomers upon entry, and the potential marginalization that women experience when entering the HRM. Obtaining a more holistic understanding of women's potential social positioning as a newcomer is valuable in understanding their entitlements to citizenship, belonging, and worthiness when accessing available resources.

Intimate Partner Violence in Canada

In the wake of the tragic attacks in the province earlier this year, fueled by IPV, gender-based violence and the underlying misogynist roots have risen to the forefront of

many agendas. Numerous groups are calling for authorities to recognize IPV as a widespread public health issue and serious public danger that requires greater attention in research, policy and on the frontline in policing, healthcare and within the community (Bresge, 2020; Bourgeois, 2020). Intimate partner violence is a complex and multidimensional issue plaguing the nation, involving acts of physical, sexual, financial, and emotional/psychological violence and coercion against current or former spouses or dating partners (Statistics Canada, 2019b; Stockman, Hayashi, & Campbell, 2015; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011; Ahmad, Hogg-Johnson, Stewart & Levinson, 2007). Perpetration of violence is facilitated by the motivation to exercise power, through the domination and control of an intimate partner (Gelles & Strauss, 1988; Gordon, 2000; as cited in Han, Kim & Tyson, 2010). An astounding number of over 99 000 victim reports of intimate partner violence were documented by Canadian police in 2018, not accounting for the unknown number of undocumented cases, nor the cases outside the legal parameters of the Criminal Code (Statistics Canada, 2019a; Perreault, 2015). Public awareness of the issues surrounding IPV began surfacing in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, initiating greater commitment to the reform and implementation of social services, education, and legislative actions combating violence (Alaggia, et al., 2009; Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2013). However, although efforts have been made throughout the years to provide solutions to end violence, IPV continues to persist as a social problem disproportionately affecting women across the nation.

Exposure to violence is associated with a higher incidence of various health concerns including physical injuries and harm, and psychological health issues such as posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, substance abuse, and lower levels of social

functioning (Stockman et al., 2015; Zhang, Hoddenbagh, McDonald & Scrim, 2012; Guruge, Roche & Catallo, 2012; Gagnon & Stuart, 2014; Ford-Gilboe et al., 2009). Furthermore, indirect repercussions of IPV reverberate from these more direct concerns, reflected in the loss of personal productivity and hindered ability to perform efficiently in the workplace, school, or as a parent (Wathen, MacGregor, & MacQuarrie, 2016; Han et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2012). The consequences of IPV plague not only those directly experiencing violent acts but frequently extend to those proximally exposed to the violence (Gelles & Straus, 1988; Grauwiler, 2008; McTavish et al., 2016; Kaukinen, Powers, & Meyer, 2016). Children are particularly vulnerable to the far-reaching threats of IPV, experiencing higher incidences of physical harm, negative social and family functioning, adoption of developmental delays or psychological concerns, and demonstrating greater risk-taking behaviour when compared to children not exposed to IPV (McTavish et al., 2016; Ahmad et al., 2009; Grauwiler, 2008). Additionally, beyond the numerous and significant individual impacts of violence lie the substantial public costs IPV lends to healthcare and social services (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2013). According to an extensive report made by the Canadian Department of Justice, the economic burden of IPV generates an estimated total cost of \$7.4 billion dollars per year to account for the direct costs of services, medical care, and the indirect pain and suffering incurred through IPV (Canadian Department of Justice, 2017; Zhang et al., 2012).

Presently, Canada is taking active strides at multiple levels of government to address these issues by promoting policy changes and implementing programs that aim to counter the perpetuation of IPV. Although there is currently no individual, stand-alone national action plan or policy specifically addressing IPV, various initiatives and

frameworks have been developed to help protect Canadians and bring an end to IPV. In 1988, the *Family Violence Initiative* (Canadian Public Health Agency, 2020) was established to provide a platform for addressing multiple forms of violence including IPV, child abuse, and elder abuse. Implemented by the Public Health Agency, in collaboration with various government departments and community partnerships, this initiative strives to increase public education, overall system response, and means of support for family violence (Canadian Public Health Agency, 2020). In 2017 Canada invested in creating the national *Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence* through the Department for Women and Gender Equality, collaborating across all levels of government to better understand and tackle violence through a gendered lens (Status of Women Canada, 2019). Recently, numerous stakeholders have called for the development and implementation of a *National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Girls* (Canadian Network of Women's Shelters & Transition Houses, 2015; National Association of Women and the Law, 2020), arguing that a long-term pan-governmental plan spanning across and within all jurisdictions is necessary for coordination and consistency in policies and legislation. Such a plan aims to establish a shared understanding of the root causes of violence and correspondingly promote effective approaches to prevention and response to violence that account for intersectional needs.

Beyond nation-wide initiatives are a multitude of other organizations and programs catering to IPV prevention and intervention at the provincial, municipal, and community levels (Prevention of Violence Canada, 2020; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011; Ansara & Hindin, 2010). Various educational awareness campaigns, community-based social programs and services, screening processes and facilities for treatment, provide meaningful support to aid

in further addressing violence across Canadian communities (Alaggia et al., 2009). Moreover, implementation of services that allow women to disclose violence to healthcare providers, hotlines, and other key gatekeepers create opportunities to build connections between a wide-reaching array of additional helping agencies to maximize prospects for support (Ahmad et al., 2007).

Despite the multitude of options available for obtaining support and the policies in place to combat IPV in Canada, gaps continue to exist within the current framework. As a social issue stemming from ideological power relations, violence against women continues to be a pervasive problem that goes beyond individual case-by-case experiences (Ahmad et al, 2009; Adams & Campbell, 2012). Intersecting inequalities ensure that marginalized women, including those carrying immigrant status, continue to represent a staggering proportion of the population experiencing IPV (Robillard et al., 2018; Maltoo, 2017; Gurage et al, 2012), yet these cohorts simultaneously experience disproportional barriers to help-seeking (Tabibi, Ahmed, Baker, & Lalonde, 2018; Adams & Campbell, 2012; Bhuyan, 2012). Understanding the complexity of this dynamic requires critical analysis and evaluation of the structural components facilitating inequality in resource accessibility and utility for immigrant women. Addressing the disparities afforded by the intersection of inequalities is necessary in unpacking the barriers immigrant women confront when seeking support for IPV to better evaluate the underlying ideologies moderating these patterns.

Ideology, Power, and Violence

Gendered Ideologies

Despite the various efforts in place to drive change, prominent gendered ideologies stimulating violence compete to ensure its continuation and correspondingly deny the security and well-being of countless women across Canada. In North America, public awareness of the issues surrounding violence toward women emerged from the private sphere in correspondence with the flourishing feminist movements of the 1970s (Yick, 2001; Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2013). Advocacy for women's rights brought the issues to the public eye, transforming IPV into a distinct social problem requiring social response. However, commitment to secure aid for women experiencing violence has not gone unchallenged. Ingrained patriarchal gendered ideologies preserved within the social framework continue to foster the societal permissiveness of violence (Mattoo, 2017; Wright & Benson, 2010; Michalski, 2004; Yodanis, 2004; Dobash & Dobash, 1979;). Through hegemonic processes, the dominant norms sustained by these ideologies cyclically reinforce the perpetuation of violence and the silencing of those experiencing IPV, as doing so favourably operates in favour of these institutions of power (hooks, 2000). Consequently, as ideology thrives on empowering the already powerful (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002), the processes in place to end violence continue to operate without challenge or evaluation, functioning to preserve the designated social hierarchy and ensure that dominance and control remain in the hands of the powerful.

Unpacking the historical, institutional, and cultural frameworks fostering IPV involves an exploration of the role of patriarchy as a driving force for violence. Generations of subordination and treatment of women as lesser than men has set a foundation for the

continued perpetuation of inequality in violence toward women (Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Yodanis, 2004; Ramos, 2013). The patriarchal ideology of sexism encourages differential treatment of individuals predicated solely by gender prescription (Ramos, 2013). As a consequence of the disproportionate power relations associated with inherited prescriptions of gender, the incidence of experiencing violence is severely compounded for women (Solokoff & Dupont, 2012; Yodanis, 2004; Davis & Greenstein, 2009). In Canada, a considerable proportion of the victim reports made regarding IPV are made by women, accounting for nearly 80% of police reports (Statistics Canada, 2019a). This overrepresentation of women as victims of IPV underscores the societal understandings dictating the roles and expectations of men and women within and beyond an intimate partnership. Through fulfilment of these socialized roles and expectations, gendered ideologies moderate the way in which violent behaviour is often overlooked and maintained within the social world (Gelles & Straus, 1988; hooks, 2000; Davis & Greenstein, 2009).

Beyond sexism, additional patriarchal ideologies espoused within predominant cultural and religious frameworks of society further perpetuate gendered hierarchies (Phelan, Tye, Saponaro, & Millona, 2019; Ramos, 2013; Ahmad et al, 2009; Jiwani, 2005). Notions of familialism, marianism and fatalism embedded within cultural and religious frameworks contribute to the structure of these hierarchies and ensure men's domination and control (Ramos, 2013; Tabibi et al., 2017). Familial norms involving women in traditional, heterosexual partnerships, enforce an underlying gendered role expectation for women to maintain the wellbeing of relationships, and favour loyalty and family cohesiveness over conflict (Ahmad et al., 2009; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011). Consequently,

research proposes that the gendered constructions of women as nurturers and kin-keepers encourages women to put family needs ahead of individual needs (Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Ahmad et al., 2009). Additionally, marian and fatalistic perceptions of womanhood encourage the expectation for women to accept violence as fate and ‘fix’ violent men through care (Ramos, 2013). This victim-blaming places responsibility on women to solve issues of IPV and projects the ownership and individualization of violence onto women, prohibiting help-seeking. Furthermore, also aligned with familialism is emphasis on personal responsibility over private matters, and shame associated with giving others perspective into the imperfection of life behind closed doors (Tabibi, 2017). Within numerous cultural and religious enclaves, the privatization of familial matters is emphasized. Individuals may be hesitant to experience the vulnerability that is associated with admitting ‘failure’ as a partner in a relationship and choose instead to remain silenced.

Intersections of Inequality

When assessing the factors moderating violence toward women, it is essential to recognize that the concepts of disadvantage and marginalization are not one-dimensional, nor are they experienced similarly by all women. Numerous scholars (Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Couture-Carron, 2015; hooks, 2000; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005) express that adopting such a stance is utterly problematic, as it trivializes and universalizes the experience of violence, minimizing the significance of intersecting inequalities. For immigrant women experiencing IPV, assumptions claiming that violence affects all women similarly are highly negligent to the unique issues that this population faces and detrimental to the development of appropriate means of support (Tabibi et al., 2017; Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Solokoff & Dupont, 2005). Universalization of violence shapes the way

instances of violence are interpreted and addressed from a broader perspective, prompting the acceptance of mainstreamed approaches in service provision for women experiencing IPV. Moving forward from a stance that gravitates solely toward the influence of gendered ideologies is essential to recognize how other forms of inequality intersect to shape oppression. Countering universality is a key point of attention within the current research both to acknowledge the diversity of newcomer backgrounds and settlement experiences and in approaching emancipatory practices for IPV support, to inform the modification or development of practices that address violence from multifaceted perspectives.

Beyond the implications presented through ideologies surrounding gender, a significant number of women experiencing IPV assume varying degrees of status due to the intersection of the other roles and social categories attached to their identity (Tabibi et al., 2017; Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011). Intersectionality describes how various forms of classification such as gender identity, sexual orientation, racialization or age interact in a complex and cumulative way to dictate an individual's social standing (May, 2015; Collins & Bilge, 2020). Importantly, an intersectional perspective carries the understanding that no factor of classification is privileged over another, rather, these factors interact to frame an individual's unique circumstances.

While acts of intimate partner violence do not discriminate across identifiers of class, gender, ethnicity, race, culture, or status, as a repercussion of ideological preservation, the consequences of IPV are significantly pronounced for marginalized populations (Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Solokoff & Dupont, 2011). Social positioning for newcomer women in Canada does not end with their status as dictated by the patriarchal ideologies of sexism and familialism that moderate their existence as women. Rather, this status results from the complex assessment of the combined advantages and disadvantages

associated with immigrant women's social identifiers such as race, ethnicity, income, or immigrant status that intersect with gender (Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018; Mattoo, Mann, & Romano, 2017; Solokoff & Dupont, 2005; Couture-Carron 2015; hooks, 2000). Unpacking these inequalities is not a simplistic task, as categories such as racialization, gender and immigration status are not summative. The complexity of these identifiers involves understanding the numerous consequences and disadvantages attached to each identifier, often according to the location and political climate in which the individual resides.

Carrying membership to multiple groups of disadvantage often coincides with adoption of the intersecting inequalities that correspond with each of the overlapping categories of identification. In cases of IPV, these inequalities guide the experiences women encounter regarding both their violent victimization and help-seeking behaviour (Solokoff & Dupont, 2011; Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018; Couture-Carron, 2015). The disadvantages associated with racialized identity permeate lived reality for many immigrant women, and integrally intertwine with the disadvantages produced by sexism and other systems of domination, adding an additional dimension of disadvantage (Jiwani, 2005; Mattoo et al., 2017; Tam, Tutty, Zhuang, & Paz, 2016). In dissecting the compounding effects of intersecting inequalities, Bograd (2005) highlights the intersection of gender with other systems of power, showcasing how various disadvantages contribute to the 'invisibility' marginalized populations experience when seeking violence support. The author asserts that violence is not a monolithic concept. Rather, he promotes that the experiences produced through its practice cannot be predetermined, nor are they equally produced for all individuals experiencing violence (Bograd, 2005), complicating the ability

to generalize experiences of violence and calling for a need to treat cases as unique experiences.

Research surrounding immigrant women's help-seeking aligns with this, citing a lack of economic means (including access to sufficient finances and housing) social isolation, fear of discrimination and racism, degree of language proficiency, mistrust of government and extra-familial intervention processes, loss of immigration status, and potential exclusion from cultural or social groups as some of the numerous factors inhibiting help-seeking (Tam et al., 2016; Alaggia et al, 2009; Ahmad et al., 2009; Solokoff & Dupont, 2011). These unique factors go beyond many of the elements contributing to non-immigrant women's experiences, emphasizing the argument that multiple social categories of gender, immigrant status, and potential connections to racialized status proliferate the disadvantages immigrant women face when entering Canada.

Engaging in deeper examination of the foundations of these disproportionate inequalities is often neglected within research frameworks (Tam et al., 2016; Jiwani, 2005). A local news article reviewing the Canadian Domestic Violence Conference in Halifax in 2018 emphasized the additional disadvantages that newcomer women encounter when faced with IPV. The article cites the loss of social supports associated with migration and the lack of awareness of support pathways tied to their experience as newcomers both serve as factors hindering their ability to obtain aid (MacLean, 2018). Thus, exploring the implications of the pervasive forces mediating marginalization of immigrant populations is essential to navigate means for reform. Recognition of the structural nature of inequality is useful in acknowledging how the barriers surrounding support exceed beyond local and

individual service provision and align with an externally driven system. As such, this will serve to target specific areas requiring reform within broader structural systems.

Help-Seeking Behaviour and Barriers to Support

Help-seeking behaviour for survivors of IPV may take on a variety of forms, with actions often classified into categories of the ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ means of disclosing violence and accessing aid (Hyman, et al., 2009; Simmons, Farrar, Frazer & Thompson, 2011). Formal means of support typically consist of services provided by professional, trained providers through facilities including medical and healthcare services, community services such as shelters or counselling facilities, and police services (Simmons et al., 2011; Fugate, Landis, Riordan, Naureckas, & Engel, 2005). Conversely, informal supports include more personal and relational means of aid, such as consultations with friends, family members, or religious clergy (Ansara & Hindin, 2010). Importantly, although recognized categorically, formal and informal networks of support are not mutually exclusive, parallel pathways of assistance. Instead, services from both networks are often used in combination with considerable overlap to supply the most suitable support for those seeking aid in cases of IPV.

According to Liang and her colleagues (2005), the process of help-seeking can be conceptualized as a cognitive set of phases that involves identifying violence as a problem, choosing to seek aid, and selecting appropriate means of support. In grasping this seemingly linear process, it is essential to acknowledge that the act of help-seeking is not necessarily a clear-cut and simple task for women experiencing IPV. Rather, significant consideration is involved in navigating the individual, interpersonal, and sociocultural factors that moderate the decision-making process (Tam et al., 2016; Liang et al., 2005;

Simmons et al., 2011). This undertaking requires women to gauge the benefits of help-seeking in relation to the potential threats and consequences associated with obtaining support at multiple levels of the social framework.

From a critical perspective, exploring the source of these issues and the obstacles they pose requires recognition of the ideological structures and practices facilitating the barriers existing at each of these levels. Identifying the structural ideologies that set the foundation for help-seeking is valuable in assessing immigrant women's opportunities to seek support, and decisions to utilize services. Numerous ideological practices contribute to the complex web of barriers immigrant women are forced to navigate when experiencing IPV. Elements of patriarchy, familialism, racism and immigrant status all shape immigrant women's experiences and prescribe their ability to obtain meaningful support (Ahmad et al., 2009; Bograd, 1999). Acknowledgment of help-seeking from a more critical approach ensures that the range of factors beyond the individual are considered, highlighting the numerous structural barriers enforced by society that hamper the ability to actively secure aid (Ahmad et al., 2009).

It is significant to note that help-seeking necessitates the recognition of violence or danger within a partnership (Hyman et al., 2009). The act of disclosure, often viewed as the initial point of help-seeking, frequently marks the first public acknowledgement of violence within a partnership (Hyman et al, 2009; Simmons et al., 2011). Although a seemingly uncomplicated and obvious task, several factors may complicate women's ability to recognize and disclose IPV. Relationships laden with violence may still be intimate in nature, muddying perceptions of danger and suppressing the inclination to seek support. In such cases, it may be incredibly difficult to relinquish the bond and investment held in the

relationship, particularly if notions of familialism and the obligation to sustain a partnership thrive (Ahmad et al., 2009; Tam et al., 2016).

Additionally, identifying violence is further complicated by potential cultural or religious definitions of what constitutes violent behaviour (Ahmad et al., 2009; Liang et al., 2005; Briones-Vozmediano, Goicolea, Ortiz-Barreda, Gil-González & Vives-Cases, 2014). As understandings of violence widely differ and IPV may not consistently be perceived as maladaptive behaviour. Cultural or religious ideologies strongly encouraging women's subordination, and embracing obligations of obedience, honour, and submissiveness may perpetuate women's silence (Liang et al., 2005; Ahmad et al., 2009; Tam et al., 2016). Incorporating this with cultural tenets imposing norms that condone familialism and other practices encouraging women's roles as nurturers and kin-keepers further complicates this (Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011; Liang et al., 2005; Couture-Carron, 2015). These may urge women to stay with their partners or risk potential ostracism and shame or promote the normalization of violence. By enforcing stigma surrounding help-seeking and permitting violence as normative behaviour, sociocultural barriers such as these inhibit the ability for women to acknowledge or report violence. Correspondingly, many cases of violence remain private and undisclosed to any network of support.

Alternatively, in cases where violence *is* acknowledged by women experiencing IPV and help is desired, the web of personal circumstances, and the social and cultural factors beyond the individual complicate the ability to actively seek help (Ahmad et al., 2009; Liang et al., 2005; Tam et al., 2016). Core questions surrounding personal safety, economic security, and emotional vulnerability facilitate the weighing of protective and risk factors associated with disclosing violence and obtaining support (Ansara & Hindin,

2010). A valuable component associated with leverage to help-seeking includes the availability of resources. Access to resources provides individuals with the power and capacity to buffer the negative effects and decline in economic status that typically correspond with leaving a relationship (Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011). Both material resources (e.g. finances, housing etc.) and a strong non-violent social support network (e.g. family, friends, access to social resources etc.) act as significant protective factors that allow for individuals to gain confidence in support seeking. For immigrant women, the various additional disadvantages linked to their immigrant and visible racial status, including those tied to language proficiency, racism, and decreased access to social ties often confound the ability to possess protective factors (Hyman et al., 2009; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011). These vulnerabilities are intimately intertwined with the frameworks dictating the degree of power and advantage immigrant women are awarded in accordance to their status and social positioning, and correspondingly the structures regulating the resources available to them (Tam et al., 2016; Solokoff & Dupont, 2005; Eakin, Poland, Coburn, & Edwards, 1996). As such, newcomer women undertake unique obstacles to help-seeking that surpass those typically experienced by women facing IPV who do not identify as racialized or as immigrants.

Numerous researchers have acknowledged the impact of intersecting inequalities in help-seeking, and the systemic nature of power in facilitating immigrant women's greater disadvantage in obtaining support (Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Adams & Campbell, 2012; Couture-Carron, 2015; Solokoff & Dupont, 2005; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011; Hyman et al., 2009; Bograd, 2000). One of the significant intersections of inequality involves the connection between gender and financial resource acquisition (Tam et al., 2016; Hyman et

al., 2009; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011). Barrett and St. Pierre describe the “feminization and racialization of poverty” (Christi-McMullin, 2005; as cited in Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011) as a noteworthy process through which a disproportionate number of racialized women experience economic marginalization. The authors argue that it is not specifically the notion of race that complicates help-seeking and access to resources. Rather, it is the integral relationship between race and economic disadvantage that poses difficulties for racialized women over white counterparts also experiencing violence (Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011). Structural processes regulating the unequal distribution of power offer women with lower economic status, a greater risk of poverty, and lower opportunities for career advancement in comparison to men (Hyman et al., 2009; Solokoff & Dupont, 2005). For racialized women, access to stable finances is fundamentally compromised, as a product of the inequalities linked to their identity, creating a clear disadvantage for this population. This suggests that intersecting inequalities of economic disadvantage, gender, and race compound the vulnerabilities experienced by many violence survivors and increase the difficulty for racialized women to access the resources necessary to seek help.

Importantly, it is essential to note that racialization and immigrant status are not synonymous lived experiences. While many immigrants hold racialized status, not all racialized people in Canada are immigrants. The consequences associated with racialization, such as the “feminization and racialization of poverty” are often further compounded for newcomer immigrant women who bear the additional status of immigrant. According to Bui (2003), a greater likelihood for help-seeking is observed for higher income immigrant women with access to social resources for support, further marginalizing immigrants with lower economic status. Economic marginalization may be further

pronounced for newcomer women who often secure lower paying jobs and decreased accreditation for educational qualifications than non-immigrant women (Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011; Raj & Silverman, 2002). As such, even in cases where immigrant women secure employment, the higher propensity to carry a lower economic status and instability when first entering the Canadian workforce may result in dependence on partners for the degree of security that income and status provide. This may be particularly relevant for women entering Canada as sponsored dependents of a spouse through family class immigration or for women holding more precarious statuses such as temporary workers or undocumented migrants in Canada (Robillard et al., 2018; Mattoo et al., 2017; Simmons et al., 2011; Bhuyan, 2012).

Beyond financial resource acquisition, a multitude of other social factors contribute to the limitations impeding help-seeking. These include barriers to service provision such as a lack of publicly dispersed information concerning the services available, inadequate access to culturally appropriate services, discrimination in receiving services, and communication barriers (Tam et al., 2016; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011; Hyman et al., 2009; Merali, 2009). The complexity and lack of clarity involved in the process of successfully exiting family class sponsorship under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds is daunting and costly for many immigrant women who may not have access to sufficient information or the support needed to complete the application (Alaggia et al., 2009). Furthermore, lack of proficiency in the constitutional Canadian languages poses several obstacles involving access to education and employment, social isolation, and limited opportunities to engage and integrate into the community at large, limiting social networks and familiarity with their rights and resources available (Bui, 2003; Ahmad et al., 2009).

Addressing the influence of the underlying variables contributing to help-seeking inequities is essential for bridging the gaps in resource access.

Substantial research on help-seeking often highlights the value of informal networks as the preferred means of support, especially through disclosure to family members, neighbours, and friends (Kaukinen, 2002; Liang et al., 2005; Ansara & Hindin, 2010). Research involving immigrant women shows similar trends, with women frequently opting for consultations among their personal social circle over formal figures such as the police or medical professionals (Tam et al., 2016; Ansara & Hindin, 2010; Simmons et al., 2011). These personal networks are important sources of aid, providing emotional and tangible support, stimulating mental well-being, and safeguarding against the psychological harms associated with IPV (Liang et al., 2005). Evaluations of help-seeking behaviour have highlighted the value of informal means of support as a gateway for initiating the help-seeking process (Kaukinen, 2002). The avenues of support offered through informal networks have been identified as a significant pathway for aid in their own right, as well as in their positioning as vehicles to further types of formal aid (Kaukinen, 2002). Access to well-informed informal systems may grant immigrant women entry to a greater network of support through information sharing. For immigrant women, this aspect of information sharing may prove to be incredibly important, as many immigrant women enter Canada with a limited social network and lower familiarity with existing sources of formal support in comparison to longer-term residents, deeming available informal support systems incredibly valuable.

Although much research cites the substantial and meaningful contribution informal networks provide for survivors of IPV, in many cases informal sources of aid are

unprepared to protect women from the perpetrator of violence or aid in altering her life course in the capacity that formal networks are equipped and designed to do (Simmons et al., 2011). Conversely, formal venues of support operate specifically to combat violence and possess abundant resources and the legal capacity to provide effective services to protect women. However, these resources are not always accessed and remain underutilized by immigrant women (Tam et al., 2016). The discrepancy between the multi-faceted capabilities of formal networks and their insufficient use by immigrant women raises inquiries surrounding what factors facilitate their undesirability. Perceived social status appears to play a significant role in this process. In their research on help-seeking Ahmad and colleagues (2009) express that many immigrant women experience anxiety when seeking support from mainstream professionals due to their ethnic minority status, and fears of judgment. Numerous researchers echo this sentiment, suggesting that status-related barriers including racial stereotyping and labeling, lack of cultural competence, financial and language barriers, and discriminatory treatment inhibit access to formal support networks (Tam et al., 2016; Hyman et al., 2009; Simmons et al., 2011; DuMont et al., 2012).

Consequently, although informal networks may be limited in their ability to offer aid, they may be viewed as a more approachable means of support. This is of considerable concern, particularly in the case of new immigrant women, as the propensity to possess a substantial social network is typically limited, contributing to a decreased ability to seek appropriate support through these networks (Ahmad et al., 2009; Bui, 2003). Immigrant women within smaller cities such as Halifax, with an even smaller available network experience a significant disadvantage, bearing preference for informal networks of support

that may not necessarily exist to provide the much-needed aid. Thus, evaluating the distinct issues posing barriers for immigrant women in the Halifax region is essential in understanding how to best identify roots of inequality and address reform in formal systems of support to offset the potential lack of an informal network.

A recurring theme in the current body of immigrant IPV research reveals that women choose to seek aid most frequently in extreme cases of violence toward themselves or their children (Tam et al., 2016; Ahmad et al., 2009; Ford-Gilboe et al., 2009; Guruge et al., 2012). Ahmad and colleagues (2009) recount several disclosures from South Asian immigrant women, stating that support was only sought when “water crosses over your head” (p. 618), or in other words when they felt as if they were drowning. This pattern is even more distinct in the decision to use formal resources with women often avoiding disclosure until no other options are available, and danger becomes unbearable (Ahmad et al., 2009; Ansara et al., 2010). While mentioned in numerous articles, the problematic nature of help-seeking solely in severe cases of violence is rarely given serious acknowledgement. The analogies of ‘drowning’, ‘hitting rock bottom’, and reaching ‘the end of the road’ (Ahmad et al., 2009) highlight the extreme endangerment women experience before choosing to seek formal aid. Although formal services may have the potential to provide means for support beyond that of informal sources, many women are not readily accessing these supports. The adamant avoidance of formal support raises deeper inquiries surrounding why this dynamic exists, and what status hierarchies promote the aversion of formal support. Furthermore, as limited research seeks to specifically ask whether the formal resources that do exist are useful and sufficient for the needs of

immigrant women, deeper inquiry will open conversation to go beyond the limitations of the current understandings of help-seeking.

Service Provision and Help-seeking for Immigrant Women

In the field of IPV research, assessment of the relationship between service provision and help-seeking behaviour for immigrant women has garnered limited investigation. Due to the propensity for immigrant women to have low access to an extensive informal support network, the ability to seek support from formal service providers is often integral for securing safety from IPV (Briones-Vozmediano et al., 2014; Sinha, 2012). However, numerous factors hinder both the ability for immigrant women to access support, and for service providers to offer resources successfully and meaningfully. As outlined, immigrant women form a specific cohort of the population, with simultaneously unique and diverse needs. Consequently, this poses potential difficulties for service providers to successfully offer support and direct immigrant women to appropriate IPV help-seeking resources.

As implementers of IPV policies and key resources for immigrant women, acknowledging barriers from the perspective of service providers is valuable in recognizing areas requiring reform. Research exploring the strains to IPV service provision in Spain suggests a series of four categories contributing to the barriers that service professionals encounter in offering support (Briones-Vozmediano et al., 2014). Notably, three of these categories echo many of the factors previously acknowledged concerning the gaps in help-seeking. These include the homogenization of immigrant and non-immigrant women and ambivalence regarding differences in their needs, recognition of the various obstacles and issues associated with migration and settlement, and an insufficiency of existing resources.

A fourth category acknowledges service providers' frustration with immigrant women abandoning the help-seeking process, through a concept the researchers pose as 'anticipated failure' (Briones-Vozmediano et al., 2014). This refers to an expectation for immigrant women to withdraw from support due to the structural factors that limit their ability to access and utilize resources, creating frustration and a lack of productivity for those attempting to provide aid (Briones-Vozmediano et al., 2014).

This aspect of failure denotes service providers' acknowledgement of the incongruence between the desire to offer support to immigrant women and the ability to successfully do so. In the research, the authors describe abandonment of help-seeking as a consequence of the frustration service providers experience in cases of immigrant IPV, resulting from the inefficiency of the available resources (Briones-Vozmediano et al., 2014). Importantly, although these frustrations exist on the individual level, the fundamental roots of these obstacles stem from systemic failure at the structural level. This recognition is perfectly captured in a comment from one informant, stating "[w]ell, I don't know which is worse: an abusive husband or a society that abuses women by not giving them the support they need" (Briones-Vozmediano et al., 2014, p. 1018). Connecting the relationships between immigrant help-seeking, service provision, and the structural barriers facilitating the experiences of all parties involved is essential in unpacking how these factors engage to perpetuate the barriers immigrant women face.

Despite the existence of various policies surrounding IPV and the immigration process, research such as that done by Briones-Vozmediano and her colleagues (2014) on experiences at the localized level of service provision illuminates the potential obstacles that arise in the help-seeking process. This research provides very insightful information

surrounding the gaps existing in help-seeking processes, impacting service provision and reception. The present study utilizes a similar perspective, tapping into the experiences of frontline workers who interact with newcomer populations in their daily work. Similar to the work mentioned above, the current research examines how barriers to service may develop as a consequence of existing policies and practices. Furthermore, moving beyond the work of Briones-Vozmediano and her colleagues (2014), the present study seeks to explore how existing barriers specifically impact newcomers in the HRM, a less-populated Canadian city that inherently hosts a smaller new immigrant population and fewer immigrant-specific resources than other Canadian metropolises.

Adopting an Intersectional Approach

Although immigrant women entering Canada may experience a number of similar obstacles and circumstances such as challenges in resettlement, language proficiency, racism, limited financial and social resources and barriers to career attainment (DuMont et al., 2012), experiences of individual immigrant women are not universal. Newcomer women are not a homogeneous cohort, and the vast conditions and challenges they experience vary greatly according to the individual, interpersonal, and socio-cultural environment surrounding the immigration process (Liang et al., 2005). Differences in ethnic and cultural background, the variations within the new host society, and the individual resources and personal circumstances of individual women generate the conditions of women's experiences. These factors, intimately tied to the statuses and identifiers women assume, moderate the ability and degree of confidence and security women possess in cases of violence (Liang et al., 2005; Bui, 2003; Merali, 2009; Tam et al., 2016).

Despite the extensive variation in experiences and needs of newcomer women, many existing services refrain from providing intersectional approaches to support. Rather, many programs follow a “cookie cutter” approach (Abraham & Tastoglou, 2016) that homogenizes women, providing a one-size-fits-all pathway to IPV aid. A notable portion of existing violence research adopts a similar mindset, grouping racialized women and immigrant women into one homogenous entity, assuming similar lived experiences for all racialized people in Canada (Hyman et al., 2009; Yick, 2001). Additionally, while factors such as length of time in Canada and identification within an ethnic or cultural group may offer a better understanding of immigrant women’s experiences, they are often overlooked. As such, newcomer populations are often relegated solutions that are not tailored to their needs and correspondingly are denied the appropriate resources for effective help-seeking. Developing research on IPV that specifically explores barriers through an immigrant lens, and more narrowly through a lens that focuses on newcomers to the Halifax region, is essential to highlighting the diversity of experience existing within the immigrant population and among the culturally variant groups that this population encompasses.

Within the Canadian context, a significant amount of existing research concentrates specifically on large Canadian cities, as the majority of the country’s foreign-born population dwell within these larger metropolises. However, both the formal and informal resources available to new immigrant populations within large cities may not reflect the resources available to newcomers in small and mid-sized cities (Williams et al., 2015; Sinha, 2012; Hancock, Ames & O’Behnke, 2014; Ragusa, 2013). Correspondingly, larger cities may possess a more varied selection of services and a different degree of community responsiveness to situations of IPV than smaller cities, where isolation may be a more

significant issue. As suggested in the growing body of research, immigrant women face a wide array of challenges which are frequently compounded by the identifiers that contribute to their social, cultural, racial, and economic marginalization (Liang et al., 2005; Solokoff & Dupont, 2005). Due to lower influxes of immigration and less familiarity with the individual needs of immigrant women, formal IPV services in smaller cities may not host as many culturally specific and culturally sensitive services. Moreover, with a lower overall immigrant population, cultural or ethnic enclaves and communities may be limited (Ragusa, 2013). Decreased proximity to social networks may be problematic, as many immigrant women thrive within immigrant communities (Wright & Benson, 2010) and may favour support from an informal network with a shared language, cultural, or ethnic background.

The political and social climate existing in a new host society is equally necessary to account for in immigrant-oriented research. At a societal level, issues nestled within the social framework of the city, such as prominent attitudes and stereotypes toward newcomers or racialized individuals can significantly alter relations between new immigrants and longer-term Haligonians. This climate is integral in shaping the unique experiences that newcomer women encounter in settlement and requires recognition in investigation of newcomer experiences to the HRM. Attentiveness to the unique social climate existing in the provincial and municipal landscape is imperative in addressing the broad issues that shape help-seeking opportunities and abilities for immigrant women in the Halifax region.

The implications of ignoring the diversity between immigrant and other racialized groups, and within the immigrant population are far-reaching, as they contribute to the

development of generalized or mainstreamed policies and social programming available to women seeking refuge from violence (Kulkarni, 2019). Contemporary research on intersectional approaches for IPV celebrate services and programs that align with the individual expressed needs, preferences, and the situational contexts of the individual (Kulkarni, 2018). The current research aims to re-evaluate help-seeking from a critical standpoint and assess the barriers immigrant women face with consideration of the specific ideologies underscoring their individual experiences. In presenting immigrant women's issues as a distinct social problem, the research seeks to validate the life experiences of this population. With the changing trends of immigration to Halifax, shifting from the predominantly European and American population of newcomers to greater numbers of Asian and Middle Eastern newcomers (Statistics Canada, 2017b), Nova Scotia requires re-assessment of the current services to scope out potential deficiencies. This is a necessary step in exploring the ways in which services may be improved in smaller cities with growing immigration, such as Halifax, to accommodate for the needs of this unique new Canadian population.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

In order to investigate the barriers and facilitators contributing to help-seeking, a modified institutional ethnography, informed by the critical framework, was adopted to guide the research. A critical framework was specifically selected to explore and address the pervasive, ideological practices and power structures regulating violence and help-seeking behaviour for newcomer women. Correspondingly, in identifying these systems of inequality, the critical paradigm was used to elicit potential areas requiring change within the existing system of ruling relations. The following chapter serves to navigate the role of the critical paradigm in conceptualizing service provision for violence and assessing the intersection of violence with race and immigration. In doing so, this chapter further aims to establish the appropriateness of adopting a modified institutional ethnography to evaluate the systems of inequality moderating newcomer women's service experiences. Furthermore, this chapter emphasizes the necessity for emancipatory action as a component of a critical theoretical research process, as an obligation to the community that the research serves.

The Critical Paradigm

The critical paradigm is rooted in the work of the Frankfurt school, originating in the 1920s as an institution devoted to the study of society through the contemporary application of the Marxist tradition (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002; Agger, 1991). This school of thought oriented itself away from the objectivity associated with previous traditional, positivist models rooted in the scientific method, instead arguing that knowledge itself is embedded within a historical and social foundation (Agger, 1991). Since the time of its inception, the social critique of 'knowledge' has unceasingly

remained as a central objective of critical research framework. As such, this paradigm has continuously placed the “social construction of experience” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002, p. 88) at the forefront of exploration, in relation to the power structures and forces that regulate experience as a process of societal control.

As culture consists of the “ideas, mores [and] norms” regularly practiced by a society (Held, 1980, p. 80), its components essentially dictate how reality is experienced throughout the social order. The exploration of inequality through the critical paradigm necessitates recognition that dominating perspectives existing in the social world are shaped by value-laden social constructions embedded in power structures (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002). Development of this illusory world does not occur as a rite of passage or at a particular life stage, but rather is ingrained throughout life-long socialization (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). According to the critical framework, these understandings of reality are intentionally circulated by dominating social institutions to normalize and justify the goals of the ruling class (Stoddart, 2007). Consequently, social problems are not only created, but perpetuated by greater societal structures, purposely functioning to exercise societal manipulation and control (Littlejohn, 1992). Critical scholarship involves the critique of existing social conditions and ailments, to uncover underlying power structures and recognize the ways in which marginalized groups are systemically oppressed.

For the purpose of the present research, the concepts of ideology, hegemony, and discourse, central to a critical framework, will be briefly reviewed. These concepts are essential to understanding the ways through which the ideas of dominating structures and institutions are absorbed by society and utilized to establish networks of power and

oppression. According to the critical perspective, reality consists of the implicit beliefs that are deeply embedded within the social order and imperceptibly adopted as acceptable and unquestionably true (hooks, 2000). Stemming from Marx's work, the concept of ideology describes the various sets of values, ideas, assumptions, and beliefs that collectively shape the dominant societal worldview and existing status quo (Stoddart, 2007). Through their circulation, prominent ideologies persist as normative and natural phenomena, establishing a realm of expectation that facilitates the uncritical acceptance of dictated attitudes and behaviours. Consequently, individuals falsely experience their lives as a product of fatalist, unchangeable, and static social conditions. As such, ideologies operate to justify the power and privilege of the dominating class, permitting social power to be maintained and regulated by a limited, powerful few, at the expense of the large subordinate class (Stoddart, 2007).

Recognition of the normativity and cultural permeation of ideologies is critical to understanding their role in structuring a hegemonic society (Held, 1980). Ideology plays a crucial role in establishing a hegemonic state. Through the willingness to exist within the ideological illusion of a manufactured reality, individuals willingly and blindly consent to personal subordination (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002). Hegemony describes the ways through which prominent institutions of power ensure that a particular social order is adopted and maintained as the normative manner of operation. Central to Gramsci's work, hegemony aids in normalizing the interests of the ruling class, encouraging voluntary participation and acceptance of an oppressive and exploitative system (Stoddart, 2007, Gramsci, 1992). From Gramsci's (1992) perspective, hegemonic dominance is achieved not

with the use of force, but through the propagation of ruling ideologies as “common sense” and normative, seamlessly integrated into the normative function of society.

The concept of discourse is simultaneously valuable within both the critical framework and within institutional ethnography. Foucault (1977) asserts that knowledge and power are inherently connected, and discourse is an essential component in the development of the dominant concepts and constructions of reality. Discourse functions as a vehicle for power, through the deliberate distribution and circulation of texts, language, and systems of thought (Stoddart, 2007). As a mechanism of social power, these bodies of knowledge shape and create the meaning systems that dominate the social world. It is through discourse that certain ideas become operative within society, defining and governing everyday understandings and actions (Nelson, 2008).

The dominant ideologies favouring powerful social institutions formulate “regimes of truth” (Nelson, 2008, p. 15) that are ultimately embedded and transmitted among social institutions as unquestionable, taken-for-granted facts. Consequently, these discourses often dictate thoughts, actions, and reactions to situations within society, while erasing the historical premises of these streams of truth (Nelson, 2008; Stoddart, 2007). As such, in narrating “truth” these discourses aid in legitimizing and perpetuating acceptance of the dominating ideologies. Discourse operates as an instrument for exercising social power and establishing hegemonic order in society. Acknowledging the role of the prominent discourses surrounding immigration, violence, and service provision was an essential starting point within this research, in identifying and critiquing the overarching structures preserving their operation.

Importantly, social institutions operate in a web-like manner (Hall, 1997; Nelson, 2008), enveloping social relations across numerous areas of society, including the media, law enforcement and educational systems. Often embodied as individual organizations or systems of organizations (Scott, 2001), social institutions are rooted and regulated vertically by extra-local bodies of power, such as a government. Simultaneously, organizations exist horizontally, functioning to fulfil various societal roles and ensure the compliance of other institutions through maintenance of the status quo. The intricate connections between various institutions strengthen and facilitate the existence of these institutions, encouraging a system that operates in favour of those holding power and ensuring that power remains within their reach. Discourse plays a significant role in facilitating these connections, operating as a medium for communication and the fortification of ideologies across institutions to strengthen hegemony. In this research, utilizing a critical lens was valuable in pinpointing the interactions existing between various ideologies, to better understand how shared ideological principles are fostered throughout the social order.

As a critique of social normalcy, the critical paradigm engages in identifying the origins of shared values, and sequentially, investigates how ideologies operate to sustain inequalities and preserve the undisputed status quo (Guba, 1990). In exercising critical social consciousness (Held, 1980), common standards and “truths” maintained by systems of power are challenged and brought to light as false rationalizations. Conceptualizing this research within the critical paradigm revealed power structures perpetuating the inequalities faced by immigrant women, and evaluation of their role in facilitating barriers to help-seeking and service attainment. Through examination of the ideologies embedded

in the policies and practices used by service providers, this paradigm contributed to a better understanding of the systemic nature of power within systems of help-seeking, and its covert role in strategically allowing these issues to continue as normative practice. Finally, adoption of this lens was pertinent in looking ahead toward challenging ideological frameworks and developing suggestions for emancipatory means of change within current systems of ruling.

Ruling Relations and Intersections of Inequality

Critical theories emphasize the need to unpack ruling relations as a platform for challenging the status quo and enacting social change (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002). Within the current study, this involved assessment of the multidimensional statuses that newcomer women possess and understanding how these statuses facilitate women's experiences within various societal institutions. In their work, Bograd (2005) states that "no dimension, such as gender inequality, is privileged as an explanatory construct of domestic violence, and gender inequality itself is modified by its intersection with other systems of power and oppression" (p. 27). Similarly, various immigrant specific factors such as immigrant status at intake and English or French proficiency, facilitate newcomer women's positioning and experiences in help-seeking processes. Utilizing a critical lens was beneficial in acknowledging and appreciating the intersections of inequality that newcomer women experience and unpacking the role that statuses play in navigating service provision.

Investigation into the ways in which these systems of power intersect with one another aided in illuminating the compounding disadvantages presented to newcomer women experiencing IPV. As explored in the previous chapter, sexism, misogyny, and

notions of prescribed gender roles, as dictated through patriarchy, are perhaps the most noticeable sources of structured inequality, through which men experience advantage over women in cases of violence (Solokoff & Dupont, 2005; Ahmad et al., 2009). However, for immigrant women, three significant aspects of identity: gender, potential racialization, and immigrant status operate together to facilitate experiences of inequality, and consequently moderate the ability to seek aid. Utilizing a critical perspective to evaluate these dimensions was significant in connecting the hegemonic processes existing at the individual level of help-seeking that connect to broader, social frameworks perpetuating the barriers immigrant women experience.

Importantly, recognizing intersectionality also aided in preventing assumptions of homogeneity surrounding newcomer women's experiences of violence and help-seeking. As outlined in the purpose of the current study, the research sought to bring attention to the experiences of newcomer women, whose perspectives are highly valuable in understanding service provision processes for this unique population. Adopting a lens that presumes that all women, or all immigrant women, experience violence similarly would heavily disregard the very real, and unique experiences that newcomer women face. As such, a non-intersectional perspective narrows the discourse to those of the dominating majority, only serving to maintain the status quo and limiting the necessity for reform in the systems currently regulating help-seeking and support. Embracing a belief of universality in experience would heavily suppress alternative and marginalized discourses, encouraging the silencing of dissent to standard practice. Furthermore, a lack of recognition that resources for help-seeking are skewed in favour of women who do not assume numerous identifiers of disadvantage posed the danger of perpetuating the disparity that significantly

marginalized groups face. To counter this, infusing intersectionality within the critical approach was necessary to address the discrepancies in current frameworks that do not ascribe to racialized and immigrant populations.

Institutional Ethnography

Initially arising in the early 1980s, institutional ethnography developed from Dorothy Smith's inquiries regarding the role of knowledge as a facilitator of oppression (DeVault, 2006). Positioned as both a social theory and method, this approach to research examines how daily life is organized through dialectical processes (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). These dialectical inquiries investigate how inequalities and the various ideologies that sustain them exist as a component of a larger social system of interconnected parts, rather than isolated, unchangeable truths (Carroll, 2004). Through institutional ethnography, dialectical methods are utilized to acknowledge how societal systems and institutions interact to establish and maintain power relations, in order to challenge existing assumptions and commonly held truths (Carroll, 2004).

As a critical theory, institutional ethnography centres on disentangling the hidden ruling relations that are taken-for-granted and deemed as normative within everyday practice (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). In mirroring the broader critical framework, conducting an institutional ethnography necessitates acknowledgement of the relational nature of the social world, in which both the individual and overarching structures holding power interact to establish the existing reality. Within this structure, the activities existing within everyday life are coordinated and controlled through the invisible organizing powers of an extra-local body of power (Smith, 2005). As such, institutional ethnographies acknowledge ideology not merely as a distant concept, but as a process integrally

embedded within individual everyday life and constituted within the activities and discourses practiced by individuals.

Institutional ethnography attempts to expose the connections between daily life, professional practice, and overarching policies. This method utilizes individuals' experiences as a gateway for unpacking social relations (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). Examination of ruling relations through institutional ethnography involves navigating the connection between individual, everyday experiences and greater, external systems of power through the discourse and activities moderating everyday existence (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). This process involves recognition of texts and textually-mediated activities as fundamentally facilitated by the ruling relations of power (Smith, 2005). In unpacking this dynamic, institutional ethnography attempts to display the hegemonic nature of ruling relations, and the ability for activities within local settings to be coordinated trans-locally through the policies and practices delegated through discourse. Smith labels this process as "textually-mediated social organization" (Smith, 1988), a process practiced without significant awareness or conscious realization throughout everyday life, that facilitates social coordination. This exemplifies the hegemonic nature of ideology and the ease through which individuals willingly ignore, and correspondingly reproduce power relations within society. Textually-mediated social organization operates via the practices grounded in the discursive environment that are routinely incorporated and guide social activities (DeVault, 2006). Institutional ethnography deems individuals within the environment as 'experts' within their daily existence, establishing their positions and voices as valid and essential to understanding the practices moderating reality (Campbell & Gregor, 2002).

According to DeVault (2006), this examination involves unpacking the day-to-day activities that individuals partake in to unveil the power structures reinforcing their existence. Through this process, institutional ethnography aims to aid marginalized individuals to understand the frameworks through which they operate in their daily lives and recognize the implications of these practices. In mapping the local to the trans-local frameworks of organization, institutional ethnography illustrates the socially organized systems moderating daily existence. Through examination of these maps, institutional ethnography seeks to develop ways to challenge and bring forth transformation to these ruling practices (Campbell & Gregor, 2002).

Within the current research, mapping the textually-mediated social organization of IPV service provision was incredibly useful in unveiling the structural processes that facilitate help-seeking and the ability to obtain meaningful service for newcomer women. As service providers frequently abide by policies and guided procedures within their daily practice, the taken-for-granted nature of textual coordination is intimately incorporated within their daily activities serving clients. Evaluation of the obstacles that each service provider discussed in their support of immigrant women provided a meaningful framework for teasing out the overarching structures and institutions moderating practice. As established in the discussion of the research, assessment of the textualized environment informing practice for service providers highlighted the power of discourse within regulatory documents and procedures, as they direct practice concerning newcomer women in cases of IPV support.

Transformative Practice

In reflection of the consequences associated with a lack of access to necessary and appropriate resources in cases of violence, there is value in investigating not only the ideologies contributing to the disparities that exist, but also to engage in facilitating emancipation from sustained inequalities. As a traditionally marginalized population, newcomer women are often provided with less priority and opportunity in voicing their concerns. As such, there is an inherent moral responsibility within the critical framework to empower these less represented populations and bring forth means of transformation. Through evaluation of the prominent meaning systems that intentionally moderate structural inequalities, researchers utilizing the critical paradigm take on an action-oriented role. The ultimate goal is to disrupt and dispel the perpetuation of current ideologies sustaining the status quo, with the purpose of establishing transformative improvement within society (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002). In doing so, the critical paradigm aims to emancipate society from a state of “false consciousness” to “true consciousness” (Guba, 1990, p. 24).

Institutional ethnographic analysis proposes a similar goal, seeking not only the sources of inequality, but developing solutions that aim to reform the organization (DeVault, 2006). As ideologies become apparent through the mapping of the local and trans-local by ruling texts, the ideological process can be critiqued and transformed by those who are marginalized and subject to these practices (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). Campbell and Gregor (2002) assert that institutional ethnography provides a knowledge resource for individuals who seek to create a more equitable society. This reflects the emancipatory nature of institutional ethnography, and recognition of life as a

social process that assesses not only how the issues surrounding inequality arise, but also evaluate solutions that involve organizational change. Recognition of the focus on bringing change to organizational processes is an incredibly valuable aspect of institutional ethnography within the current study. As many of the barriers to help-seeking exist within the structural framework, addressing issues through service providers serves to bridge the individual to the broad structures that moderate the inequality. Through investigation using institutional ethnography from a critical standpoint, the research points to potential pathways to transformation from the structures moderating inequality, offering suggestions to bring forth change within the current institutions.

Chapter Four: Methodology

The present chapter attends to the processes involved in preparing and conducting the current research. In opening this chapter, a section concerning my fundamental assumptions and positioning as a researcher is first presented, to unpack personal biases and limitations within the study. This is followed by a section surrounding the use of qualitative research methods as the means of data collection. Details surrounding the participant sample utilized within the research will then be presented, followed by an outline of the recruitment procedures employed. The materials used throughout the research process and the procedures through which they were implemented are then outlined, followed by a section noting the challenges faced in recruitment and maintaining participant confidentiality and privacy. Finally, in closing of the chapter, the qualitative approaches employed to analyze the data are outlined.

Position as a Researcher

Prior to delving into the details surrounding methodology, I am compelled to reiterate my personal orientation as a researcher and admit my positioning as both biased and non-objective. Reflexivity is an essential component in the adoption of the critical tradition within social research (Eakin et al., 1996). Given that personal experiences and educational background may moderate both the collection and analyses of the data, acknowledging my assumptions was a critical aspect of the methodologies adopted in the research.

As an academic, my understanding of both IPV and the help-seeking process is largely based on knowledge and information available through literature bearing an academic stance. As such, the extent of my personal comprehension of IPV is informed

greatly by the academic lens that I assume and may not reflect or represent the experiences and knowledge of service providers who work with immigrant women. Stemming from a critical framework in which the social construction of reality is emphasized, my personal experience of reality is fundamentally my own. Therefore, throughout the research process I actively sought to be mindful of the orientation I assume as a researcher and reflect on the impact of the position from which I conducted the investigation.

When offered the privilege to enter a community in which I am not a member, it was essential not only to realize my role as an outsider, but also as a knowledge transmitter, relaying information on behalf of those in the community. In entering the space and seeking a better understanding of help-seeking through the experiences of service providers, it was crucial to remain aware of my role in representing the population I was entrusted to, and recognize the responsibility invested in this task. From a critical perspective, it was necessary to be constantly cognizant of the words and language selected to frame my research questions and relay my findings, as they ultimately shape the depiction of those I interviewed, as well as the immigrant women they serve. As a vehicle for sharing the stories and information that the service providers entrusted, cautiousness and respect were important in presenting information and representing the population interviewed.

Qualitative Methods

In alignment with the critical framework, an interactive and dialogic research method was employed to explore the power structures present within the network of IPV service provision, with the further objective of developing suggestions for transformative change (Lather, 2004). To address these inquiries, qualitative research methods were

selected as the appropriate means for exploring the dominant ideologies surrounding violence and help-seeking behaviours. As inductive means of exploration, qualitative research methods encourage the use of personal insight through narratives and interviews to draw patterns and themes through data. In doing so, these methods acknowledge the subjective and socially-constructed nature of human behaviour and an understanding of the research process as non-neutral and value-laden (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

For the research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with service providers who are directly involved in IPV cases concerning immigrant women. The interview questions were open-ended, to encourage subjectivity within the interview. This offered participants a platform for expressing their voice through dialogue, in ways that quantitative analysis generally does not permit. Allowing flexibility within the interview structure aimed to reduce limitations associated with quantified methods of knowledge-seeking, allowing for responses beyond those preconceived or anticipated when designing the research questions. This approach encouraged sharing of personal perspectives within the discussion.

Furthermore, acknowledging and embracing the diversity of lived experience was integral to the qualitative research process. Through the thoughtful formatting of the interview questions and flexible adherence to the interview guide, the interviews encouraged individuality within responses. Although the research primarily sought to unpack and evaluate the roles of overarching structural inequalities on IPV help-seeking, it concurrently aimed to showcase the voices of service providers at the individual level. Importantly, engaging in dialogue through the interview process was essential for exploring intersections of inequality, to evaluate how various barriers interact to create the

unique obstacles that immigrant women face. Implementing a methodology that allowed for subjective dialogue from participants and rich contextual detail was incredibly valuable in producing research that elevated the insight of those who lent their voices to the research. Use of qualitative techniques within the research sought to honour the individuality of voice and bring attention to issues that directly affect a traditionally marginalized and underrepresented population.

Through adoption of the critical perspective, the research focused on evaluating the role of broader structures of power in the active shaping of societal understandings surrounding help-seeking behaviour at the individual level. Examining the interview dialogue as a source of understanding was significantly beneficial for unpacking some of the intricate and surreptitious ways through which ideology is inserted in day-to-day interactions. According to Kincheloe and McLaren (2002), language is an integral tool necessary for the investigation of subjective understandings of reality through a critical framework. Thus, adopting techniques that acknowledge the richness of experience and depth offered through spoken dialogue best complemented the complex nature of each participant's personal constructions of reality. As previously mentioned, through the use of a modified institutional ethnography, analysis of dialogue aimed to illuminate the ways that structured power relations exist through "textually-mediated social organization" (DeVault, 2006). In evaluating the policies and practices that mediate help-seeking behaviour and resource access, factors beyond the individual were explored, seeking to unveil some of the interconnected and pervasive ideologies that facilitate daily experiences.

Participants

Recruitment of Service Providers

Selecting service providers as the core research sample aimed to bring attention to the experiences of those directly invested and involved in practice surrounding IPV help-seeking. In their research, Barrett & St. Pierre (2011) assert the importance of practitioner engagement in identifying and combatting the barriers existing within practice that limit access and utility of help-seeking resources for women experiencing IPV. Particularly in cases of greater social isolation and economic marginalization, the authors emphasize the need for addressing the inequalities that increase risk for disenfranchised populations. Consequently, this guided the intention to connect research with practice and solicit involvement from those directly involved in cases of IPV. As such, service providers were approached as key informants to aid in identifying some of the structural barriers hindering practice, and to elicit suggestions for areas within policy and practice that may benefit from implementing modifications.

As individuals who are directly involved in help-seeking work, the experiences of service providers were key in beginning to unpack the unique issues that immigrant women face and the disparities surrounding the current services available. Through regular engagement and direct involvement in various cases of IPV with immigrant women, service providers possess a wealth of knowledge about the day-to-day lived experiences of women residing in Halifax. Additionally, through exposure to a multitude of cases and diversified situations, service providers carry a rich array of knowledge that was highly useful for the study. This diversity of information was incredibly valuable in developing an

understanding of the issues that women may face when seeking support and simultaneously highlighted the specific patterns and barriers that exist for immigrant women in Halifax.

Furthermore, the information that practitioners offered concerning ‘texts’, or overarching policies and legal conditions that inform their practice, lent unique and invaluable perspectives on help-seeking processes. The breadth of knowledge was particularly useful for exploring the discrepancies within the ‘texts’, informed by structural practices, that facilitate the day-to-day experiences of immigrant women and impose barriers to obtaining support. This was a crucial aspect of the institutional ethnographic evaluation of the dialogues associated with access to help-seeking. In engaging with service providers through discussion, the research raised awareness of the issues and exposed the role of overarching structural ideologies as they infuse within daily practice, guiding the experiences of help-seeking at the local level.

Research Population

The proposed research sample was anticipated to include between five and eight service providers for the interviews. Recruitment of this number of participants was deemed reasonable for reaching saturation of the data. In total, the research sample consisted of five individuals from diverse facets of help-seeking services within the Halifax Regional Municipality, including legal aid, victim services, newcomer orientation, social services, and community navigation. Although individuals engaged in a wide range of support functions were approached for recruitment, it was mandatory for participants to be currently employed as service providers within the Halifax Regional Municipality and involved in an area that provides support to immigrant women seeking aid for IPV. Participants were also required to be over 19 years of age (the legal age of the majority

according to the Age of Majority Act of Nova Scotia) at the time of participating in the interview, in order to provide their personal consent to participate. Additionally, it was essential for participants to have a minimum of one year of experience working in the realm of IPV support provision for immigrant women. This criterion served to obtain the participation of service providers who have experience and familiarity with the issues encountered in practice, providing a sufficient degree of depth and breadth of insight for the research.

Participation was sought from a variety of local organizations that aid in supporting immigrant women experiencing IPV. These included organizations specifically involved in providing immigrant services and orientation to newcomers when landing in Canada, organizations that service and counsel women involved in or exiting an abusive partnership, and organizations involved in intervention services such as rehabilitation for perpetrators of violence and in criminal proceedings. As various venues of service provision offer distinct resources and methods of support, involvement of key individuals from varied backgrounds was essential to the exploration of the issue. Obtaining the perspectives of a diversified population from differing facets of service provision aimed to establish a broad understanding of the multitude of issues experienced by immigrant women, while simultaneously identifying patterns and similarities existing across various services. Seeking participation from an array of service areas encouraged both diversity within the interview responses, and a general understanding of the barriers encountered when seeking aid from the various platforms that immigrant women access for IPV support. As such, selection of the service providers for the interview process was intentional and highly purposive.

Although participants' places of employment were kept confidential, various facets of their backgrounds and employment experiences were noted. These factors showcase the diversity of knowledge and capabilities possessed by interviewees and the wide scope of practices utilized by various service providers. Although not solicited, a number of the participants interviewed claimed a country other than Canada as their country of origin, often being first- or second-generation immigrants in the country. A few participants also noted variations within their personal religious or cultural practices, providing a unique understanding from those perspectives. Educational and employment backgrounds also varied among participants. While some participants were beginning their careers within community and social practice, others carried twenty or more years of experience within the field. Furthermore, participants showcased a plethora of employment roles, with some working on the frontline of IPV cases in intervention, and others focusing on educational pieces, policy development, and programming. Additionally, several participants mentioned their engagement in IPV-related work outside of Nova Scotia and Canada, demonstrating a wide range of knowledge and experience.

Recruitment

A purposive sampling approach that incorporated a combination of criterion and snowball sampling was employed to recruit participants. Criterion sampling involved recruiting participants who met the specific eligibility criteria, and snowball sampling involved "branching out" from these initial participants to establish contact with further potential participants. This purposive recruitment strategy was utilized in the attempt to obtain suitable candidates for interviewing from the limited pool of service providers available. Cohen and Arieli (2011) suggest that such a method is beneficial in cases where

potential informants are limited, owing to marginalization or specialization within the population. Due to narrowness of the research topic and the corresponding restrictions to the potential pool of informants, this strategy was useful for drawing participation from the moderately limited population serving newcomer women. Furthermore, due to the significant degree of connection within the service provision network, seeking potential contacts through individuals deeply engaged within the network was an integral strategy utilized in recruitment.

To implement the snowball sampling recruitment process, suggestions for potential network contacts were requested from participants upon completion of the interview process, to direct recruitment toward further appropriate informants for the research. Initial participants were invited to share information about the study with any colleagues that they believed may be interested and suitable as informants. Information letters were shared with participants to distribute among colleagues. My contact information was available on the recruitment letters, and prospective participants were encouraged to contact me for additional information about the research or to participate. In addition to sharing recruitment information with colleagues, several participants personally connected me with other service providers that they believed would be willing and interested in contributing to the research. Furthermore, as my thesis committee members are heavily involved in work surrounding newcomers and violence related intervention, they played a significant role in distributing my call for participants throughout their personal networks.

Measures

To gain insight into the various barriers immigrant women face when seeking support in cases of IPV, an exploration of the personal experiences of individuals working

directly with these women was conducted, to begin unpacking the complex structures facilitating help-seeking for this population. As mentioned, institutional ethnography evaluates social relations beginning from the local, day-to-day experiences of those experiencing marginalization, and moving upwards to the trans-local systems of organization that moderate inequality (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). This process traditionally involves investigation of social relations among various levels of social existence. The first level involves exploration within the local setting, involving interactions and experiences of the individuals who are subject to the issues. Next, level two investigates the experiences of those beyond the setting, discovering the interactions existing with those who are centrally impacted by the issues. Examination at this level aids in establishing a map between the local and trans-local, to better understand ruling relations (Campbell & Gregor, 2002).

Within the current research, a modified institutional ethnography was adopted. Through this, informants from level two served as the entry point for investigation of the ruling apparatus associated with immigrant women's experiences. Although service providers reside beyond the setting of immigrant IPV, they are intimately engaged in the cases with immigrant women in their day-to-day practice. Additionally, they are informed and guided by extra-local policies and practice, connecting them to overarching bodies of power. As such, service providers straddle between the dominant and subordinate positions of power, holding a key position in the map of ruling relations. This population functioned as key informants, aiding in bridging the local and trans-local 'texts' and practices that inform immigrant women's experiences of IPV help-seeking.

A series of individual qualitative interviews were conducted to gather information from the service providers. As particular individuals represented different voices, it was valuable to acknowledge the different experiences of individuals within various roles. Consequently, each interview was conducted individually to allow each participant to offer their unique perspective. This intended to provide a greater array of insight into the ways through which ideologies are exercised within different sectors of service provision and varying levels of social support.

Each of the interviews was semi-structured and flexibly guided by a pre-developed interview guide informed by existing research surrounding barriers to help-seeking behaviour (e.g. Briones-Vozmediano et al., 2014; see Appendix A). Although key questions from the interview guide primarily initiated the discussion and ensured that specific topics were covered within the interview, questions asked were modified or added beyond the guide as they arose and became relevant to the conversation. The semi-structured nature of the interview guide allowed for an open, safe environment for participants to be heard and for stories and personal anecdotes to naturally emerge. This contributed greatly to exploration of unique issues faced within facets of service provision.

Additionally, there was no predetermined sequential order to the questions, although questions were categorized according to various themes. Offering flexibility within the interview structure provided greater freedom for participants to respond openly and lead conversation as they deemed appropriate. Encouraging freedom in directing the dialogue and inviting participants to bring forth issues believed to be significant within their own experience aimed to uncover their unique perspectives. Additionally, from a

critical perspective, use of flexibility and allowing for participant autonomy in guiding conversation was valuable in providing participants a voice within the research and the empowerment to contribute the information that they considered the most important to relay.

While the use of semi-structured interviews provided a means of gaining original and unpredictable information, offering general guidelines to explore specific themes related to ideologies and help-seeking for IPV was useful for directing the research and ensuring that key topics were explored in the discussion. This provided a framework for evaluating the patterns that arose in the interviews. Themes from previous research on help-seeking guided the development of the questions selected for the interview guide, with a focus on textually-mediated social organization (DeVault, 2006) and the relationships between daily activities and overarching structures. Additionally, questions were framed in accordance with themes relevant and unique to the population of immigrant women living within Halifax. For example, in some interviews, questions open-endedly requested recollection of experiences in providing services to immigrant women versus non-immigrant women or explored some of the unique barriers that service providers faced when providing aid to immigrant populations. Specificity within the questions aimed to focus the conversation and encourage participants to recall situations or obstacles they had come across both at the experiential level (i.e. barriers within their personal practice), as well as at the regulatory level (i.e. obstacles that exist within policies and frameworks guiding practice).

Procedure

It is important to note that the collection of the data was completed prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, the circumstances surrounding face-to-face interviewing and meeting with participants were not restrictive and did not require the precautionary measures necessary at the time of publication. The process of recruitment began early on, to gauge community interest in the project and obtain institutional support from various organizations. An initial project summary was emailed to gatekeepers at several agencies across the HRM to inform them of the future project. Providing this information served to offer transparency to each organization about the nature of the research and aim to obtain organizational backing to enter the organization for recruitment purposes. Additionally, initial contact with gatekeepers intended to establish support and request guidance for the recruitment of suitable candidates. While numerous organizations across the Halifax Regional Municipality were contacted, only a limited number of organizations expressed interest and reached out with support to aid in the research.

Upon receiving approval from the Research Ethics Board at Mount Saint Vincent University, a detailed letter was provided to the gatekeepers who expressed initial interest and support, further explaining the general purpose and nature of the research project (see Appendix B). This letter provided information on the topic of study and rationale for the research, expectations for participation, and acknowledgement of the potential for dissemination of the research findings. Gatekeepers were provided with similar information letters to distribute to potential participants and disburse throughout each organization (see Appendix C). Several gatekeepers as well as members of my thesis committee also recommended specific service providers from various organizations and

connected me with these potential candidates. Any prospective participants were encouraged to contact me directly.

Once I obtained direct communication with potential interviewees via email or phone, I ensured that all eligibility criteria were met and addressed any questions that participants presented. Following this procedure, any service providers still open to participating in the interviews were sent an informed consent form (see Appendix D) via email and asked to review it prior to the interview. This form was provided at least one week prior to the interview, to allow time for the participant to read the material, consider participation, and bring forth any questions or concerns that arose prior to the interview.

Following the delivery of the informed consent forms, interviews were scheduled at the convenience of each service provider. Each interview took place in a face-to-face setting, with the location of the interview mutually agreed upon by the researcher and participant. All participants chose to complete the interview at their place of employment, although alternate meeting locations (e.g. a rented study room at the library or a public coffee shop) were offered if they provided greater comfort and privacy for the interviewee.

Upon meeting, the informed consent form was verbally reviewed with each participant and participants were asked whether the conversation could be audio-recorded, solely for the purpose of the research study. During this time, I also ensured that each interviewee understood their role in the research and their rights as participants. Any further Any further questions were acknowledged, and participants were asked to sign the informed consent form in my presence once all questions were addressed. Obtaining

participants' signatures on the form indicated their consent to participate in the research. Two copies of the informed consent form were signed by each participant, to provide one copy for the participant and one for my personal records.

Just prior to beginning the interview, I offered a personal introduction, to set the foundation for a safe and respectful conversation environment. I disclosed information about myself as a student researcher and shared my personal interest in immigration and service provision for marginalized populations to emphasize my dedication to the field. This aimed to set my intentions and contribute to the sense of safety between the participants and myself. It was apparent by the positive responses received following my self-disclosure that through sharing my personal background and experiences, power differentials were somewhat reduced and there was a sense of trust and rapport built with participants.

Each conversation was led through flexible and open-ended use of the questions prepared for the interview guide (see Appendix A). Through the use of prepared prompts, the interview aimed to cover a series of topics that concern the barriers to help-seeking that immigrant women face. These questions explored service providers' experiences working with immigrant women in cases of IPV and the obstacles they encountered throughout the process. The dialogue involved exploration of the various resources available to women experiencing IPV, and whether these differ from those specifically available to immigrant women. The interview further explored whether service providers deem the available resources as effective and useful and evaluated the barriers that exist within service provision to limit help-seeking for immigrant women.

Aligning with institutional ethnography, the questions were designed to explore the connections between daily practice and the overarching ‘texts’ (e.g. policies, laws etc.) that moderate service provision. This aided in bringing forth broader, more structural understandings of social order that operate within the realm of service providers’ daily activities. Participants were given moderate reign over the direction of the conversation, to solicit potential unanticipated responses and perspectives. Each interview lasted approximately one hour to one hour and thirty minutes in length.

Following engagement in the interview, participants were once again reminded that the information shared was solely for the purpose of the research and that their personal credentials and all accounts shared would remain confidential. Once completed, all participants were thanked for their involvement, final questions were encouraged, and participants were provided with a letter including my supervisor’s and my contact details for any questions or concerns, as well as a list of community resources and counselling services for mental health support if required following the interview process (see Appendix E). The resources selected for this list of resources were specifically selected as they are available at little or no cost to the participant.

In the debriefing process, participants were reminded that their right to withdraw their contribution did not cease with the completion of the interview. They were advised to contact me if they later decided to retract any portion of their interview. Furthermore, they were offered the opportunity to review the transcripts of their interview and omit any portion or the entirety of their interview from the data. Participants were given a period of two weeks following the transcription of their interview to review and make alterations to their interview document. All participants gave permission for their interviews to be

included in the analysis. However, one participant opted to not have any direct quotes incorporated into the final report. Finally, participants were encouraged to pass along information regarding the research to their colleagues, if they believed they may be suitable candidates for the interview.

Challenges and Obstacles

Recruitment

Participant recruitment proved to be both a challenging and eye-opening aspect of the research process. Although there are a variety of organizations providing helping services to women experiencing IPV, complications in gaining access to services, participant hesitancy, and organizational workload demands, led to difficulties in obtaining ideal candidates for the research. Due to these various obstacles, utilizing recommendations from ‘insiders’ and developing rapport with organizations was crucial to the recruitment of the interview population.

The greatest challenge confronted in the recruitment of participants was establishing connections with suitable gatekeepers to act as a liaison within each organization. Formal gatekeepers often play a vital role in obtaining suitable candidates for qualitative research as they grant formal access to an institution and aid in gaining leads to valuable informants (Wanat, 2008; Archibald & Munce, 2015). As a student attending university in a non-native province and very much an ‘outsider’ in the realm of service provision, I relied heavily on gatekeeper support in seeking participants. Importantly, support from members of my thesis committee was essential in facilitating a basis of trust within the community and obtaining interview candidates. As reputable members of the

service provision network, my committee members greatly aided in bridging my connections with various service organizations to attain community interest and support.

Obtaining trust from organizations and potential interview candidates was a key component in the recruitment process to acquire informants. Throughout the recruitment phase, I made efforts to be transparent, informative, and respectful of time with agencies and potential participants in order to limit any hesitancy expressed by organizations. As it takes time to develop relationships with communities, it was important to demonstrate full transparency in my intentions and goals as a researcher. Expressing my interest in the community and their needs beyond the research project and demonstrating my investment in the immigrant population was valuable in establishing relationships with the organizations. Building rapport was necessary not only to gain entrance into organizations, but also to have the most optimal experience in the interview. Utilizing the connections available through my committee members greatly aided in gaining the trust of organizations, leading to the successful recruitment of participants. Furthermore, disclosing information about myself as a researcher and expressing my interest in the field of IPV and immigrant support was highly valuable in developing trust with interviewees and opening the floor for honest conversation.

Finally, retention was another obstacle faced throughout the recruitment process. In the initial stages of obtaining organizational interest and support, a number of key gatekeepers responded favourably to the project. However, in communications following the approval from the Research Ethics Board at Mount Saint Vincent University, several organizations were unable to accommodate interview requests. Most frequently, service providers who expressed interest declined participation due to a heavy workload. This

became a notable pattern in numerous attempts at seeking participants through a variety of helping organizations. Several service providers openly admitted to having an overloaded schedule due to limited resources and the necessity to adopt additional tasks to accommodate for resource shortages. Consequently, service providers had very little time available to take on additional commitments, including participation in research.

Both Rugkåsa and Canvin (2011) and Archibald and Munce (2015) allude to this issue, stating that uncompensated requests for time (i.e. non-payment) are an obstacle in the recruitment process, and a motivating factor in the de-prioritization of research participation by organizations.

Importantly, from a critical perspective, the over-working of service providers points to fundamental gaps in the availability of resources within these organizations. The need for workers to fulfil additional roles to accommodate financial and resource shortages is concerning in reflection of the potential lack of resources available to serve newcomer women. This issue alludes to the potential for continual marginalization of immigrant women, if service providers are facing difficulties in maintaining a balanced workload and are consequently unable to accommodate for the needs of the diverse populations they serve. This issue of overworking will be further explored in the discussion of the research findings, as it was not only a barrier in participant recruitment but was repeatedly alluded to throughout the interviews as an obstacle in service provision.

Confidentiality, Privacy, and Participant Safety

Numerous measures were taken to preserve the safety and privacy of participants and protect all information disclosed through their involvement in the research. Throughout the interview process it was critical that participants were aware of the voluntary nature of

the research to alleviate any pressure to divulge information that they were not comfortable releasing. Additionally, although having support from gatekeepers was instrumental throughout the study, gatekeepers were not granted access to any data collected.

Furthermore, gatekeepers—most of whom were senior staff in the participating agencies—were not permitted to know who among their employees agreed to participate in the study.

This step was necessary to ensure that interviewees were protected and not at risk of repercussion or penalty for their disclosures.

Additional safeguards were taken to warrant the comfort and privacy of participants during the interviews. Participants were given the opportunity to select the location for the interview, suitable to their comfort and privacy. Moreover, participants chose whether the interview would be audio-recorded and whether direct quotes could be utilized in the development of the final thesis. As the interviews proceeded, participants were reminded that they were free to disclose as much or little information as they chose, were able to stop the recordings, or withdraw from the interview at any point.

A major concern surrounding interviewing was the potential for participants to share confidential information regarding their work or specific individuals that they may have worked with. While confidentiality is always a significant concern, research involving marginalized populations, such as immigrant women, requires particular consideration. As these populations experience great vulnerability, substantial effort was taken to ensure the confidentiality of the stories shared and the women who are directly associated with the stories. All identifying information about specific cases was offered the highest degree of security manageable to maintain confidentiality. Following the interview process, recordings made on rented recording devices were deleted prior to the returning of the

devices. This ensured that those beyond the interviewer and participant did not have access to the contributions made. I was solely responsible for transcribing the audio-recordings into written transcripts to ensure that the recordings remained private and confidential. Through the transcription process, all names and identifying information of participants were stripped from the data to conceal the identities of the participants. These changes remained consistent in all documents developed from the transcripts. Once the audio-recordings were converted into written transcripts, the original audio-files were permanently deleted.

Participants also had the opportunity to review their transcripts following the transcription of the interview to ensure that the information utilized in the research was acceptable and accurate. Following the initial transcription of the voice recordings, participants were provided with a copy of their written transcript via email and given a period of two weeks to review the document. During this time, they had the opportunity to omit or alter any information from the interview, including potentially identifying information. Any changes requested were made to the transcripts prior to analysis, to allow for greater control over the dissemination of data. This process of member checking was performed to ensure that any information that may compromise participant's privacy and confidentiality was omitted to ensure that any information shared in the body of the formal thesis (i.e. quotes and interview excerpts) was deemed appropriate by the participants.

Data collected was primarily stored electronically, on a password-secured laptop computer. This included all voice recorded audio-recordings, transcriptions of the interviews, and data inputted in the analysis software (MAXQDA). A copy of all data was also stored electronically on a password protected USB drive, for backup purposes. These

files were created for the purpose of having duplicate files in the case that the original files become corrupt. This, along with any physical pieces of data collected (e.g. original interview notes, printed transcriptions used in analysis) were locked in a filing cabinet within my home. As material was recorded on a device rented through the university's IT&S Department, all audio-files were deleted once transferred to my personal computer, prior to returning of the device to ensure that the voice recordings were not shared with anyone.

Data Analysis

As posed by Basit (2003), “[q]ualitative data analysis is not a discrete procedure carried out at the final stages of research. It is, indeed, an all-encompassing activity that continues throughout the life of the project” (p 145). Aligning with this attitude, evaluation of the research was not solely restricted to a single phase of the research process. Rather, the process of analysis was a dynamic procedure involving evaluation of the data from the time of collection, throughout the coding process, and into the formal theorizing of the assessments made and development of a written account. To initiate this process, each interview was digitally recorded to preserve as much verbal information as possible for evaluation. Throughout and shortly following the interview process, field notes were developed, identifying observations, thoughts, unrecorded conversational notes, and additional information that lent to the initial unpacking of the interview data. Upon completion of each interview, the interviews were transcribed verbatim from the recordings for ease of organization and analysis. During the transcription process the reading and reviewing of the interviews led to greater familiarity and the development of initial patterns and codes from the data. All data was imported into MAXQDA, a qualitative analysis

software. Through the use of this computerized program, thematic assessments of each of the conversations took place. Analytic coding of the interviews was completed to organize and explore the information shared by participants and draw common themes that arose among the various commentaries.

Prior to engaging in a formal coding procedure, it was valuable to first become familiar with the data by reading and scanning the transcribed interviews. At this point, significant passages and impactful moments within the interview conversations were flagged, and preliminary notes were documented for each of the interviews. This process of “pre-coding” (Layder, 1998; as cited in Saldaña, 2015) served to illuminate potential areas worthy of consideration in the data. Highlighting key passages and quotations was useful to emphasize supportive segments within the interviews, to later contribute to the discussion of the data in the final written account (Saldaña, 2015). Additionally, as suggested by Saldaña (2015), the process of initial pre-coding and notetaking was valuable in developing tentative codes and investigating potential patterns within the data, a practice that transitioned nicely into the formal coding process.

Coding of data played a significant role in the process of analysis. Guided primarily by the work of Strauss and Corbin (1990) on qualitative coding using grounded theory methodology, the interviews were subjected to open, axial, and selective coding to organize the data and establish common themes within the interviews and theorize the data. This process aided in evaluating the linkages between the practices of the service providers at the local level, and the overarching ruling relations occurring within trans-local settings. Two procedures facilitated this; the first involving comparative analysis of the data, and the

second scrutinizing the connections within and between the data and drawing questions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Firstly, engagement in open coding of the data was performed, through a process termed the concept-indicator model (Strauss 1987; as cited in LaRossa, 2005). Through this procedure, the data was subdivided and assigned to categories to allocate meaning to units of information. Using the concept-indicator model, similarities and variations between various ‘indicators’ (i.e. segments of words, phrases or sentences within the interviews) were discerned, by making comparisons and connections between them. From this, associated indicators were correspondingly grouped and coded as indicators of a particular, higher-level ‘concept’ (LaRossa, 2005). Aligning with Strauss and Corbin’s (1990) model, this method of open coding involved recognizing relevant or patterned phenomena within the interviews and pinpointing various examples within the data that align with this occurrence, based on commonalities, contrasting factors, or other showcased attributes (Basit, 2003). The process of open coding of the interviews continued to the point where inclusion of further indicators no longer yielded significant insights to the concept, deeming the concept theoretically saturated (LaRossa, 2005). Open coding was used in the development and coding of ‘categories’, which involved the classification of concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), or grouping of similar or dissimilar but related concepts (LaRossa, 2005).

Axial coding of the data involved analysis of individual categories, to explore and understand the relationship of one category to other categories (LaRossa, 2005). Through axial coding, the parsed data was reconfigured and reorganized in a new way, to extract relationships in terms of their properties and dimensions (Walker & Myrick, 2006). This

investigation explored the causes, contexts, contingencies, consequences, covariances, and conditions (“the six C’s”, see Strauss & Corbin, 1990; LaRossa, 2005) surrounding a focal category. Essentially, this component of the coding process required the relating of a set of variables to a focal variable, in order to formulate connections and begin the theorizing process (LaRossa, 2005). Finally, engagement in selective coding was exercised, to extract what Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 116) deem as “the story line”. Selection of a core category aimed to develop and refine a theory from the data, by honing in on the individual category within the analysis that is both theoretically saturated and centrally relevant (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; LaRossa, 2005; Walker & Myrick, 2006). While my analysis never reached the point of refining a theory, I was able to develop a central “story line” through my analysis, through the establishment of a core category. The core category identified through selective coding carries significance in its interrelationship with other categories and role as an overarching, central concept within the research. As detailed by Basit (2003), throughout the coding process, the researcher is involved in organizing data for the purpose of analysing and forming links, to ultimately move beyond the data into theorizing. Throughout the coding process, the development of concepts and categories continuously worked toward linking data to the ideas examined in the literature and being explored through the research.

Abiding by the critical framework, the development of codes was informed by investigation of ideology and aspects associated with the marginalization of the immigrant women facing IPV. As noted by several researchers (LaRossa, 2005; Saldaña, 2015), the process of analytical coding is well-suited for investigations concerning the evaluation and understanding of language. This aligns well within the research, as the coding

process was utilized to dissect the dialogue and evaluate the role of ideology in perpetuating “textually-mediated social organization” (DeVault, 2006). Particular attention was given to uncovering any mention of themes that overlap with prominent ideologies and their presence and connection to daily activities. Additionally, references made to the concrete barriers and limitations existing in help-seeking for immigrant women were further given particular attention in the thematic coding process, in the analysis of their relations to the ideologies perpetuating IPV.

As the critical framework calls for the address of injustice and promotion of transformative change, the data gleaned through this research aims to establish a meaningful understanding of the barriers that newcomer women face in seeking support for IPV. Stemming from the results of the research, potential steps for initiating emancipation are worthy of contemplation and exploration. Furthermore, as the focus of investigation is how ideologically-based ‘texts’ mediate help-seeking barriers, it is worthwhile to acknowledge how modifications made to these ‘texts’ may improve access help-seeking for newcomer women. Exploration of these ideas are addressed in the Discussion chapter.

Chapter Five: Research Findings

To fully explore the role of structural forces on IPV resource and service availability and accessibility, I will begin by returning to the original research questions driving the study. Through exploration of the personal experiences of service providers, I sought to develop a more in-depth evaluation of the unique and varied issues newcomer women may encounter when seeking IPV support in Halifax. Three key research questions guided my investigation, seeking to explore: 1) What is the availability and accessibility of resources for immigrant women experiencing IPV in Halifax?; 2) According to service providers, are the available resources meaningful and useful for immigrant women within the context of geographical placement and cultural demographics?; 3) According to service providers, what are the structural barriers immigrant women face in seeking help for IPV, and how are these mediated by the texts that inform them?

Through an institutional ethnographic exploration of service provision, these questions were specifically developed to explore the various ways through which structural forces impact resource availability and utility at the local level. Importantly, as specified by DeVault and McCoy, the goal of an institutional ethnography is “not to generalize about the group of people interviewed, but to find and describe social processes that have generalizing effects.” (p. 18, 2006). As such, the aim of the present research is to explore how dominant discourses and processes may reproduce the barriers experienced by immigrant women. Although the interviewees are located across somewhat varied service and organizational roles, they experience similar ruling relations through a shared social organization, a premise emblematic of institutional ethnography (DeVault & McCoy, 2006). In exploring the conversations shared with each service provider, the research aims

to understand how these common experiences and the ‘everyday world’ of service provision are shaped and organized by trans-local processes.

The first two of the research questions posed above will be addressed within this chapter, to explore the dominant themes that arose in the interviews through discussion with service providers. This will begin with a section exploring the service providers’ perspectives on service availability and accessibility, to gain insight on the prominent gaps existing in the framework of service provision. An examination of the themes surrounding the appropriateness of existing services will follow, to reveal prevalent issues that may deter immigrant women from accessing the necessary help-seeking resources. The final layer of investigation will be the focus of the corresponding discussion chapter, as it aims to expand on the initial questions surrounding help-seeking barriers, to pinpoint the overarching factors impacting resource availability and accessibility. This discussion will aim to unpack the role of institutional discourses and practices in moderating the ability of service providers to provide meaningful resources to newcomer women immigrating to Halifax.

Numerous themes emerged from the research through the process of qualitative coding. This chapter will begin with an exploration of intersectionality as a recurring concept acknowledged by all service providers in the interviews. Next, the chapter is thematically organized into sections that outline the core barriers participants described as central to immigrant women’s experiences of resource acquisition and utilization. First, the barriers surrounding the availability and accessibility of resources in Halifax will be explored, with discussion of the core themes related to the lack of resource awareness among immigrant women, funding and service limitations, the role of community in

resource acquisition, and immigrant status. Themes of resource incongruence, men's role in addressing IPV, and the criminalization of violence will then be identified, in reflection of the suitability and usefulness of available resources for newcomer women.

The Participants

As a starting point for exploration, institutional ethnography begins its investigation of ruling relations with individuals who are intimately connected to and whose experiences are shaped by the institutional processes under investigation (DeVault and McCoy, p. 18). In the current research, service providers served as the point of entry into the exploration. The themes identified in this chapter were derived from conversations shared with service providers working intimately with newcomer women.

The individuals interviewed for the research included five service providers working within the Halifax Regional Municipality in roles related to intimate partner violence service provision. At the time of the interview, each participant was actively involved in providing resources for immigrant women within their area of employment, with length of service ranging from just over one year to over twenty years of service. Notably, two of the five interviewees identified themselves as immigrants to Canada, offering a unique perspective of service provision, both from a service and immigrant lens.

The organizations from which participants were recruited included an array of service-oriented agencies that attend to the needs of women experiencing intimate partner violence. The areas of employment and duties performed by participants varied greatly between each interviewee, with some service providers directing their efforts in delivering preventative resources for IPV, including services to prevent the continuation of violence,

and others focusing primarily on intervention-based services. Across the board, participants claimed active involvement in offering navigational services to women experiencing IPV, to guide women toward the most appropriate services for their needs. While some service organizations identified as immigrant-specific, catering solely to immigrant populations, other organizations provide services to all women experiencing violence.

Intersectionality as an Overarching Theme

Although all women seeking support for violence in Halifax face many similar barriers, factors exclusively experienced by newcomer populations may further encourage marginalization, making these issues distinct and unique to this cohort of women. The concept of intersectionality frequently emerged in the interviews as a topic of discussion brought forth by the service providers. Service providers often pointed to the intersectional realities that newcomer women experience as factors connected to many of the themes that developed in the research. First coined by Black feminist scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality seeks to showcase how systems of power collectively operate to shape individual experiences within society (Collins, 1998; Clarke & McCall, 2013). Although the framework originally centred on the inherent relationship between race and gender in understanding Black women's positionality and erasure in civil rights law (Crenshaw, 1989), it has since expanded to incorporate the numerous ways that systems of power contribute to the formation of status and identity (Collins, 1998; May, 2015). Intersectionality acknowledges that various forms of classification such as race, class, and gender interact in a complex and cumulative way to dictate an individual's unique social standing (Collins, 1998; May, 2015). Consequently, various forms of privilege and oppression manifest simultaneously within a "matrix of

domination” (Collins, 1998), disproportionately impacting those who are most marginalized in society.

The Immigrant Identity and Intersectional Experience

The major barriers outlined in this chapter, as developed from the participant interviews, reflect the unique issues that service providers believe newcomer women encounter when seeking aid for IPV. This section addresses the predominant barriers newcomer women are confronted with when entering Halifax, or otherwise, issues that Canadian-born or longer-residing immigrant women may not encounter or experience in the same way. Importantly, this does not preclude all Canadian-born women from experiencing similar issues to the ones described below, but rather is reflective of what the service providers indicated as being experienced predominately by newcomer women. Evaluation of these issues through an intersectional lens serves to provide a perspective of the unique challenges faced by newcomer women, in relation to the various intersections of inequality that they face.

Within the context of the current research, the concept of intersectionality is exemplified in the ways that social identifiers such as racialization, immigrant class, and economic status impact service acquisition and utility for immigrant women. Several service providers discussed the various ways in which the privileges and disadvantages held by the women shape their access to resources and supports. For one service provider, the intersecting inequalities that immigrant women face make navigating services an overwhelming experience:

...but if it's a racialized [immigrant] person and they have low income, are not working, have a disability, have experienced racism, *are* experiencing racism

through the health system, or through insurance companies, or things like that ... it's really hard to navigate all of that, then I'm there to support that process, because we recognize that it's very exhaustive, and difficult. And they don't have a support system outside of professionals.

While several of the issues mentioned including income, employment, and disability are not unique to immigrant populations, the cumulative effects of the immigrant-specific identifiers (i.e. racialization and isolation as a newcomer) exacerbate the difficulties women encounter when faced with these other obstacles. As Crenshaw explains in her work, the “intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism” (1989, p. 140). Correspondingly, for newcomer women, the experiences of racialization, immigrant status, and other immigrant-specific social markers impact service acquisition in a cumulative way and may encourage the marginalization of this population. Consequently, immigrant women face disadvantages prior to even accessing services through the obstacles present when navigating and seeking to acquire appropriate services. Discussion of the ways in which service navigation is complicated by immigrant-specific social identifiers such as race, economic status and immigration status arose repeatedly throughout the interviews and will be further explored in later sections of this chapter.

Participants further noted that recognizing the intersecting inequalities that immigrant women face is a key aspect in providing services and easing newcomer women's vulnerability to barriers. Service providers acknowledge these obstacles as multi-dimensional, stating that:

...these crisis situations are usually very complex and complicated, and none of them come just as one. So, if you have a housing issue, for instance, and you start talking about housing, you figure out that there's some other layers, and layers, and layers of things happening that may have contributed to this.

Adopting an intersectional approach has been useful for service providers to acknowledge the numerous and complex ways that various social barriers contribute to women's experience of IPV help-seeking. For the interviewees, recognizing the complexity of IPV cases and the linkages between various barriers is necessary for understanding the multitude of factors facilitating violence and correspondingly developing and providing appropriate services to support women.

Acknowledging the existence of these 'layers' and their role as deterrents to obtaining aid is valuable for recognizing the unique challenges encountered by women when navigating services and receiving appropriate and meaningful treatment. Participants shared examples alluding to the network of problems faced by immigrant women, explaining that the barriers surrounding IPV cases do not exist as isolated, single issues. Rather, for newcomer women, numerous obstacles frequently coexist, connected to the various social factors tied to their identities as newcomer women. This concept of the interconnections between various issues was recurrently acknowledged throughout the interviews as a barrier to both service navigation and provision. Although the chapter is divided into various individual themes, the concept of intersectionality and the ways through which newcomer women's identities regulate their social location underlies each of the themes noted in this chapter. Many of the barriers addressed in the following sections are intricately connected to one another and exist in tandem, coordinating to proliferate the

obstacles newcomer women face in the help-seeking process and limit their ability to navigate through society. These linkages will be further explored throughout the chapter, in establishing the IE map, to acknowledge the ways that barriers collectively operate to create an environment that further marginalizes newcomer women and hinders resource access.

Barriers to Resource Availability and Accessibility

The initial area explored through the research encompasses the availability of current resources for immigrant women experiencing violence, and correspondingly, the various barriers that may impede newcomer women from accessing these existing services. According to the interviews with service providers, several core barriers exist, moderating the ability for newcomer women to obtain support for IPV. A notable lack of awareness of legal rights and the justice system, as well as a lack of knowledge of the services and resources available to newcomer women were mentioned as major obstacles to accessibility. Additionally, limitations to organizational funding was perhaps the most cited barrier hindering women from accessing services and simultaneously restricting service providers from delivering necessary services to cater to the needs of immigrant populations. Furthermore, despite the importance of cultural communities in many areas of settlement, interviewees cited cultural enclaves as a potential hindrance to obtaining necessary supports for IPV, due to differing cultural ideologies surrounding family roles and violence, collectivism, and potential for isolation from the wider community. Finally, the status that immigrant women possess when entering the country greatly impacts the degree and types of services that newcomers are eligible to access when experiencing IPV, limiting the availability of some resources. The following subsections will further elaborate

on each of these barriers identified, through the anecdotes and experiences shared by the service providers interviewed.

Barrier #1: Lack of Awareness of Laws and Resources

Despite the availability of resources to aid women in cases of violence, all service providers in the research sample expressed frustration with dispersing knowledge and awareness of resources to immigrant women new to Halifax. Several service providers acknowledged this issue of accessibility as universal for all women seeking support, whether they are new immigrants or longer-residing Canadians. “There is a miss in communication. Like, they’re not given any for — information, they don’t know where to go for information. Um, they don’t understand why [laugh] no one is communicating with them, or what’s happening.” However, they note that distinct extenuating factors further marginalize immigrant women. As described by one participant:

But I think it comes down to the fact that like Canadian-born women, um, can - for the most part - speak English, and already are kind of quite aware of the um, and like the process of, like, what happens when somebody is arrested and charged and like that kind of thing. Whereas, like immigrant women are coming in from – to like a new culture, new laws, new country, um, and they’re not so familiar with that system and what services are available.

In this reflection, the service provider cites several factors, such as language competency and the novelty of Canadian laws and systems as barriers specifically experienced by immigrant women.

This sentiment is mirrored by two other service providers who offer resources through mainstream, non-immigrant-centred service organizations. These participants

expressed that the lack of knowledge that newcomer women possess surrounding the services available within the city is reflective in the absence of these women as clients within their organizations. In response to whether they have had the opportunity to work with many immigrant clientele in a mainstream organization, one participant replied, “we haven’t unfortunately, and I think that there’s just, like, a lot of, kind of, barriers to that.” She later points to awareness of the services as a major challenge that many newcomer women struggle with when seeking support for IPV.

In discussing the navigation process, a further service provider notes the deficiency in guidance beyond the initial settlement of immigrant women to Nova Scotia.

We were speaking about, like, the process, like, what happens when folks come to Nova Scotia, as like Nova Scotia sponsored, um, immigrants... What kind of education are they given, like, on laws, domestic violence? ... And um, she was like: “Oh ya, we do like seminars and like tell them about the laws and stuff and la, la, la.” But it's like: “Okay, so you do a week of like education, and then you, like, send folks off on their way, and there’s no follow up, there’s no, like ... continual check-ins or anything like that” I don’t know, just like, how do we get that awareness out there to people that need it?

She addresses that although newcomer women may be introduced to numerous resources and organizations through their initial orientation, much of the information may be glossed over, as the process of orientation is information-dense and condensed over a short period of time. Importantly, she notes that the lack of continual follow-ups may result in women not being able to access help when it is needed, as the information is only offered through

the initial period of newcomer orientation and may not be a priority or a relevant resource during that length of time.

All service providers interviewed agreed that a lack of knowledge concerning newcomer women's legal rights and navigating the justice system also hinders help-seeking for newcomer women. Recounting personal experiences with clients, one service provider acknowledges the tremendous fear and misunderstanding that some women possess surrounding their rights. Although many organizations offer navigational services and support for women needing to face the justice system, service providers cite the complexity and overwhelming nature of navigating the various services as a deterrence for women to seek support through these avenues. They note that particularly when women perceive a risk of losing their children or facing deportation, many immigrant women become overwhelmed and opt to keep matters of violence private.

Barrier #2: Funding and Service Limitations

One of the major barriers noted by service providers involves their own ability to serve immigrant women. Various service providers acknowledge constraints to funding as a major obstacle in their capacity to alleviate the intersecting barriers that immigrant women face when attempting to access services. Impediments such as a lack of transportation to an appointment or a lack of childcare were noted as common barriers for immigrant women to attend meetings with service providers. One service provider describes how these obstacles limit the ability for women to access services, stating that:

We generally tell people that, like, we don't have transportation or childcare funding, um, so, they have to, kind of, figure that out on their own. Um, but I recognize that, like, tho—those are two barriers, that, like, we're kind of putting up,

um, I mean—so—so, if it's a r—you know, a really marginalized person...they just wouldn't be able to get here without, um, bringing their kids... So, um, sometimes it's really hard to physically, like, just come to your appointment.

The service provider recognizes that although the core issue of violence is central to experiences IPV, supplementary issues often exist in tandem with violence. In some cases, intersecting factors can limit the ability for women to even attend meetings or appointments. While issues such as these are well known among the service providers interviewed, these barriers persist, as organizations remain under-funded and unable to accommodate for these extraneous needs. One service provider explains that in such cases, “we try to make it work. Or try to, like, you know, find, um, another way...to, kind of, build solutions.”

Furthermore, funding guidelines and legal limitations were identified as factors moderating service availability and accessibility. Due to the mandates associated with organizational funding, service providers are limited not only to *what* services they are able to provide, but to *whom* they are able to offer services to. This issue was elaborated in one service provider's explanation of service eligibility at her place of employment. In this case, due to funding stipulations, only women carrying permanent resident status can access and utilize services within the organization. Consequently, for organizations reliant on external funding, these parameters dictate the accessibility of services for women with differing immigrant statuses who also seek support.

Strain on service providers, due to limited resources, was also a significant topic of discussion throughout the interviews. Limits to funding constrain service capacity within organizations, contributing to increased workloads for a smaller cohort of employees, and

increased waiting periods for women seeking aid. The inability to provide quality service to clients is a concern for one service provider who remarked:

I have over two hundred open files right now. Um, and I do recognize that there are some clients that need a lot more support, um, than others... and sometimes I feel like I don't have ... the time to be able to dedicate it to them.

She adds:

...sometimes I think because all of the systems are just like so overworked, um, we're not taking the time to do that. And I am so guilty of sometimes moving on from files too quickly... and I think it's just – it comes down to like time and resources.

The service provider notes that in the case of new immigrant women, this strain can be particularly problematic, as the necessity for additional support or variations in service is greater than that of Canadian-born or settled immigrants. Requiring the additional service of translators or incorporating immigration law further complicates these cases and can become taxing for service providers with limited time and resources.

Importantly, two service providers acknowledged the discrepancy between the increasing demand for services and the absence of additional resources to accommodate for this growing need. In one example, understaffing was acknowledged as a major limitation contributing to service restraint. When discussing the inability to accommodate clients immediately upon uptake, one participant related, "I think we've been underfunded and overwhelmed for a long time, so, you know, swinging our flag [laughs] telling everyone we're here was not our priority. We're kind of just nose down, get the work done." She elaborates that despite their desire to help more people, as an organization, they are

reluctant to advertise their services due to limits in their ability to take on more clients. Consequently, waiting lists for necessary services are often the reality as service providers are unable to keep up with demand. Furthermore, despite a strong desire to expand services to accommodate for the diversified needs of clients, including those of newcomer women, service growth is given low priority. She notes:

Resources is [*sic*] always the problem... we really could use, you know, double our staff to—to, uh handle the—the work that we have now, and we would like to do more work with children and so that we're more family—and we would be a—it would be great if we could do more community work in terms of just educating the public and promoting our services so people know about it—all those things we don't do because we have, um, more work than we can do now...trying to expand doesn't seem like a good idea.

As mentioned, limiting service expansion due to funding and staffing cuts also contributes to the stagnation of community education and other preventative measures for addressing IPV. Several service providers disclosed a desire to increase their organization's role in engagement with the immigrant community through educational programs and a stronger focus on violence prevention for this cohort. However, due to limits in capacity, intervention-based services have become priority and the standard of service provision, to address the needs of those already at risk of violence.

Additionally, lack of funding limits the ability for organizations to hire a varied staff, to accommodate for a diversified clientele.

We do what we can, but obviously if we had more money and we could have, you know, a more varied staff, [laughs] not an all-white staff, or—or very loaded up on women. Um, you know that obviously would be, I think, helpful.

Similarly, one service provider working in a non-immigrant specific organization admitted to feeling underqualified or sometimes unable to address the specific needs of immigrant women or to provide relevant services that resonate with the newcomer clientele, stating:

sometimes I'm kind of, like—my hands are tied in terms of what I can do for a lot of other issues that [immigrant women] have which, um, oftentimes become, like, the... priority in terms of things that we talk about. Um, and so, um, if they've—if they've kind of exhausted all of their other resources—they've become kind of just like—like I'm just kind of listening and not really being able to, like, actually do anything because it's not my mandate or I—I have no idea, like, how to, you know, deal with, like, immigration things that can help them, or *me*. So, it's—it's really difficult in those times.

This was a significant point, as the service provider stressed that the limits to provision are difficult both on herself and the client. She expresses frustration with her inability to address some issues faced by immigrant women due to the parameters of her position and limited knowledge surrounding immigrant-specific matters. Importantly, she notes that in such cases, immigrant-specific issues that arise as core conversation topics may not be met with appropriate solutions.

For many of the service providers interviewed, the visible disjuncture in their desire to support immigrant women and their ability to do so is rooted in existing resource limitations. Participants point to funding constraints as a major barrier to service expansion

and the ability to increase diversification in the workplace to serve minority populations. Additionally, they note that these fiscal limitations encourage the overworking of employees to compensate for the resource gaps. As acknowledged by two participants, such restrictions may result in service providers feeling unequipped to serve immigrant populations due to limitations in their abilities or being unable to fully dedicate themselves to individual cases due to time restraints. Consequently, without the necessary resources to develop sound programming, both women and service providers encounter recurring barriers to services and limitations to addressing immigrant-specific issues, perpetuating the marginalization of this population.

Barrier #3: Immigrant Communities as Deterrents to Support

Across all interviews, service providers emphasized the significant role cultural immigrant communities often play in the help-seeking process. Members of these immigrant communities often face similar experiences and challenges as other newcomer women, providing mentorship and guidance throughout the settlement process. Additionally, due to longer-term exposure to Canadian laws and practices, these communities often offer insight into life in Halifax and provide an informal orientation to newcomer women. This is consistent with previous research highlighting the benefits of cultural communities in both settlement and help-seeking processes (Hyman et al., 2009; Ansara & Hindin, 2010; Barrett & St. Pierre, 2011).

Several participants noted that engagement in a cultural enclave or community plays a key role in newcomer women's decisions surrounding help-seeking. Longer-residing immigrants who have previously utilized services offer awareness of what services are available and guidance on how to access these services. Importantly, recollection of

personal experiences can increase newcomer women's trust in service providers, creating stronger levels of confidence in the competence of services. One participant stated that this is an essential way to reach victims of violence:

...especially with my clients, they'll say: 'Oh yes, um, like so-and-so in the community has told me about [organization's name redacted].' Or, like: 'You worked with my family member, or, like my community member', and it's like word of mouth is how it gets out.

Similar to previous research, service providers acknowledged that these community connections can be a meaningful tool for gaining newcomer women's trust and building rapport. Another service provider further elaborated on the growing value of cultural communities. Reflecting on her experience working with immigrant women in the province over the past two decades, she claimed that "the fact that maybe women are learning about their options through the experiences of other women in their community is really important...And that they're coming forward." She noted that with the increase in immigration to Halifax in recent years she has seen notable growth in the role of immigrant communities as a vital connection to services and resources, offering much needed informal social support.

However, despite the very valuable role cultural communities may play in helping newcomer women, according to the interviewees, cultural communities may also discourage immigrant women from utilizing support services. As illustrated in the following subsections, although these communities may play a significant positive role in the settlement of newcomers, in some cases, these groups may hinder the ability for newcomer women to access appropriate services when experiencing IPV. In some

instances, an over-reliance on community members to act as translators for newcomer women can lead to participant attrition from services. Furthermore, due to cultural or religious beliefs, community members may discourage women from acquiring formal support, encouraging women to keep violence private. Additionally, the over-reliance of newcomer women on existing immigrant communities, or alternatively an inability to find members of an immigrant community for support and connection may isolate women and decrease their ability to communicate meaningfully with service providers in formal service networks.

Reliance on Community Members as Vehicles for Communication. Community support plays a particularly valuable role when a newcomer woman's proficiency in an official Canadian language is low, as it aids in reducing isolation and offers a channel for accessing mainstream services and resources within society. Especially in cases where obtaining a translator is difficult or costly, utilizing community members as translators is valuable for overcoming language barriers. One service provider expresses the importance of family and community members as active members in service provision, explaining:

I've had two very recent cases where, um, the women don't actually speak any English at all...umm, so it's a lot of relying on, um, community members, family members, their own children, to set up appointments, to relay on information back and forth.

Unfortunately, while community members often act as a valuable vehicle for communication between newcomer women and service providers, helping to alleviate obstacles surrounding costs and language barriers, the constant need to rely on a third person for communication can be a taxing and complicated process. The service provider

laments, that “sometimes when that is the case, I find folks get lost in the cracks.” She explains that due to the difficulties in arranging appointments around the schedule of a third-party, at times these clients eventually stop attending meetings, as the process of arranging a meeting becomes overly complicated. Furthermore, as these third-party translators are not ‘experts’ within the field, potential for miscommunication or incorrect translations further complicates the situation.

Cultural Beliefs Surrounding Violence. Importantly, while building connections with other immigrants from their country of origin may positively impact women’s help-seeking, interviewees suggested that in some cases community involvement can impact help-seeking in adverse ways. For some women, cultural communities may discourage help-seeking, deeming violence a private matter, or the right of a partner. Several service providers make note of their experiences dealing with this issue. One interviewee recalled a discussion with a previous client who was discouraged from speaking about IPV. The client recalled their encounter with community members, explaining: “I spoke to people in my community who said like, but that’s your husband’s business ...just kind of like shut up about it.”

Beyond this, service providers explain that when women do choose to reach out to formal services, they are often faced with backlash and isolation from communities. For many newcomer women, maintaining respect and credibility within the community is crucial, and abiding by the rules and social practices of the collective is highly enforced. Numerous service providers explained that the pressure to abide by these practices deters women from speaking out against violence. One participant clarified:

sometimes, if they're in a community where to talk about domestic violence or to say that this is happening, like, the community will isolate the person, and exclude them, and there's a lot of pressure to not...say what is happening.

Another interviewee further expanded on this topic, remarking that the experience of disapproval and isolation extends broadly, and that while women are "...faced with a huge level of stigma and possibly sometimes exclusion from the communities in which they live...They may be facing serious consequences, um, in terms of family members overseas." In such cases, the pressure to remain silent is momentous, as women may risk losing numerous avenues of support. One interviewee cites the role of collectivism and loyalty to the family and community as a moderator of a woman's acceptance or isolation from a community:

So, there are expectations from partners to meet all the—the needs of the collective rather than the individual, right? So: 'What is going to happen if I decide to leave? And how is *my* family going to respond?'...So, I've seen women say to me: 'No, I cannot—I cannot take that risk because it would—it would be devastating for my family—it would bring shame for my family, and it could bring, also, some serious repercussions'.

Another service provider echoes similar sentiments, attributing the perpetuation of women's silence to community coercion and pressure to maintaining their duties as a 'woman'.

...On the other hand, sometimes it also leads to a little bit of an isolation, in terms of being in the community that is tight-knit, that resolves its own problems, uh, within the community. Um, if maybe there is not always um a good understanding

of, um, what the rights of the women are and maybe supporting this um—um perception that women are the pillars of the family, and that they need to stay, and you know, maybe—maybe some of the practices may not always be the appropriate practices to—to support the women experiencing domestic violence—could be even perpetrating the domestic violence.

Interestingly, through this commentary, the service provider juxtaposes the traditional understanding of community as a source of strength and belonging, with the experience of isolation that many women undergo when seeking to establish social connections.

Additionally, she notes that in such cases, the community may further facilitate the damage caused through violence, rather than aid in alleviating the harms committed.

Isolation from the Greater Community. Unfortunately, in some cases, cultural communities may also discourage women from accessing services if a member of the community previously had negative service experiences with an organization. One service provider expresses her concern:

... some of these women may be deterred from continuing what they want to do and how they want things resolved in their families, and that then going back into their communities, the communities then will go underground with some of the things and will stop having these conversations.

In close-knit communities, the negative experiences of one community member may act as a deterrent for an entire community and dissuade access to formal services for all members. Due to the immense trust a newcomer woman may have in their cultural community, these groups carry a significant impact on the decision-making process when choosing and continuing to access formal help-seeking services.

Additionally, when discussing the value of community connection and support, one service provider notes the dangers of an immigrant community becoming isolated from the greater community of Halifax. When asked to further elaborate on this issue, she explained:

I find that some communities, as I've mentioned to you... are very connected as communities... and supportive of their mem-each other and provide—because maybe some of these communities have been—members of these communities that have been here for a longer time. They are very supportive in, maybe, bringing or sponsoring other community members coming here, supporting them in *many, many, many* ways, so that people don't actually sometimes have a need to access all our services.

Due to strong social ties to the community, according to this service provider, some women may find themselves without connections or knowledge of services beyond the community, resulting in a lack of integration within Halifax. Reliance solely on the cultural community may limit immigrant women's ability to engage with the network of formal services within the city, narrowing the number of supports and resources available to them. Additionally, lack of engagement beyond the cultural community may hamper immigrant women's settlement into the city in numerous ways. This may encourage marginalization of newcomer women if there are fewer opportunities for skill building, English-language learning, and access to other opportunities such as educational or employment resources.

Limited Immigrant Communities. Although some immigrant communities have experienced longer-term immigration and have developed over the years, building strong cultural enclaves in Halifax, this isn't the case for all immigrant groups. Importantly, two

participants discussed the implications of the lack of cultural communities available in Halifax, in comparison to those available in various other Canadian cities that they have lived or worked within. As immigration to Halifax has traditionally and continues to be largely North American and Western European, other cultural enclaves are often less pronounced when compared to larger, more metropolitan cities such as Toronto or Montreal. Consequently, the lower diversity of settled community members in Halifax contributes to less availability of a cultural cohort for support and guidance for newcomers. This discrepancy is particularly apparent in rural areas beyond the HRM. Several service providers note that an absence of cultural communities is a substantial issue, especially when relocation of a victim from Halifax to a more rural location is necessary. As noted by one participant:

...some of the women would need to have—to go to other shelters outside of Halifax. The—their knowledge and capacity, or their—let’s put it this way, their experience working with immigrant women might not be the same as the ones in Metro.

Additionally, particularly in rural areas in the province, the absence of cultural communities corresponds with access to fewer language translators when translation services are required for communication between clients and service providers. In cases where a newcomer woman is relocated to a more rural location, the combined lack of a cultural community and a low capacity for shelters to support immigrant women contributes to greater isolation and marginalization of women and increased stress for service providers. Consequently, one service provider articulates that for women leaving violence and relocating to rural areas “it’s very isolating outside the city, ... When you

can't speak the language, you have no transport, you know, you're in a community, maybe you don't know any—I mean, 'cause they're going to think: "Am I in a worse situation?"

Barrier #4: Immigrant Status

Upon immigration to Canada, women may experience numerous challenges or barriers to accessing much-needed resources. Interviewees reported that immigrant status plays a major role in both the availability and accessibility of services for IPV. As previously mentioned, the status under which a newcomer enters Canada determines which services and resources an individual is granted access to. For victims of IPV, this may compromise admittance to appropriate programs and resources. One example offered by a service provider encompasses the restrictions placed on orientation services for newcomers to Halifax. She notes that many orientation services are reserved specifically for newcomers with permanent resident status. This excludes immigrants who may enter the country under other circumstances but may still seek support to aid in orientation and help-seeking. In such cases, this isolates non-permanent residents, who may already experience vulnerability due to the precarious nature of their status in Canada and potential for deportation. Without access to orientation services, non-permanent resident women may not be aware of necessary IPV-related services, or have troubles obtaining appropriate resources when needed.

Settlement Priorities. Even when granted service eligibility, some immigrant women may not access resources due to settlement priorities. The need to attend to the 'survival' components of immigration, such as job acquisition, language competency, and obtaining housing is often given precedence in the settlement process. One service provider describes this pattern, stating that understanding Canadian laws and personal rights as a

citizen is not often at the forefront of settlement for newcomer women when arriving in Halifax. Unfortunately, by the time a woman may require support for violence, the service provider suggests that she may be:

left without a lot of understanding of her rights, of—of the ability to be able to be self-sufficient, of her ability to speak of her concerns, so, and if she’s already become a Canadian citizen... you need to send them out there.

The service provider states that once a client becomes a Canadian citizen, they are no longer entitled to the settlement services that are reserved for permanent resident status clients. As such, during the window of permanent residency, clients often prioritize ‘necessary’ services, such as those related to obtaining housing or employment. Consequently, issues such as IPV are often forced aside, and may not ever be addressed during the settlement process. Unfortunately, because such issues are not given precedence in settlement, women are often not equipped to deal with such issues once the more urgent matters are settled.

Dependency on Perpetrator. A related barrier that newcomer women may also encounter when trying to leave an abusive partner is dependence on their partner. The concept of prioritizing certain settlement goals corresponds with the notion that the settlement needs of the primary worker—often the husband—are deemed most important for newcomer partners and families. Particularly in cases where other family members are sponsored by the primary worker and reliant on their income, investment in the needs of the breadwinning partner is essential.

As a result, when women obtain citizenship and reach the termination of access to many immigration services, they may not have addressed their own settlement needs. One

service provider suggests that because of the prioritization of men's needs during the settlement process, at the point of reaching citizenship "the capacities are not there to support this woman who hasn't still gone to full—full-fledged uh settlement... So, she may not know the language, she may not have been exposed to a—a broader um society." Although the resources were available during permanent residency, these women may never have had the opportunity to access appropriate supports and build capacities to live independently. Consequently, women may face vulnerability and further isolation from the greater community, limiting the protective factors that community membership provides to women wishing to leave a violent partnership.

Another participant states that the skills and capacities adopted through the process of settlement greatly impact a woman's independence, offering an example: "if the women's language level is low, confidence is huge with it, and then some of them, you know, they don't leave the home, they won't go out, they don't know how to communicate. They're afraid to be on their own. Understandable." Reflecting on the prioritizing of men over women in settlement processes, this is a significant point, as many women may be unintentionally neglected, and may not have the opportunity to develop useful skills that encourage their confidence and independence. Subsequently, without the ability to utilize settlement resources to develop skills, build language competency, or establish a social network, women may become socially and physically isolated, reinforcing their vulnerability and reliance on the perpetrator of violence.

Barriers in Resource Utility

Beyond service accessibility and resource acquisition, the research aimed to explore the utility of existing resources. This layer of exploration surrounds the compatibility of the

resources available for newcomer populations and examines the potential barriers that may limit the usefulness of these resources. Drawn from the interviews with service providers, various themes arose, pointing to the issues limiting service utility for newcomer women. Some of the central barriers faced by newcomer women include incongruencies in resources, due to shortages in culturally relevant services and language limitations. Participants also noted a lack of inclusion of perpetrators of violence within many of the processes involved in cases of IPV as a major issue in current service provision. Finally, the over-criminalization of violence and issues with the existing justice system are also noted as recurring problems for many women seeking aid. According to the service providers interviewed, many of the resources available are not a suitable solution for newcomer women, based on women's personal needs and desires, resulting in an incompatibility between services and service users. In some cases, this dissonance can promote further marginalization of newcomer women and decrease their autonomy in the decision-making process. These core themes will be further expanded in the subsections below.

Barrier #5: Resource Incongruency

A common theme recurring throughout the interviews includes the incompatibility of many of the existing resources for newcomer populations. Although many resources may be available and accessible for immigrant women, there continues to be obstacles when accessing resources due to a lack of cultural relevancy and language barriers. Particularly within services created for the mainstream population, organizations may not have the means to accommodate for the differences in client needs or possess the varied resources necessary to accommodate a diversified population.

Cultural Competency. Knowledge about the contexts within which newcomer women experience IPV is central to providing culturally competent services. For many newcomer women, a lack of relevant resources may pose a fundamental problem for help-seeking. Several service providers acknowledged this as a major source of difficulty when navigating IPV and supporting immigrant women. They recognize that overarching Western concepts and practices evident in various programs utilized in Halifax are often incongruent with the cultural understandings and personal views of immigrant women. Consequently, these services misalign with the needs of newcomer women. In example, one interviewee referred to the inappropriate use of measures designed for longer-residing Canadians to assess an immigrant perpetrator's degree of risk for reoffending. She explains that this scale focuses solely on a perpetrator's encounters with police and criminal records within the country, failing to account for their history of violence prior to entering Canada. In such cases, the lack of culturally relevant methods may result in a tendency to overlook the danger that immigrant women may face, and a failure to provide necessary protection for victims of violence.

One service provider states the necessity for culturally relevant services for IPV that are cognizant of the experiences of immigrant partners both pre and post migration:

I find that there sometimes is like miscommunications, especially when it comes down to language, um, and again like culture, because a lot of the cultures that we speak with, um, men are head of the households, women have to do what their husbands ask of them, um, but also women are dealing with this whole, um, 'women's liberation' in Canada, and the fact that they have more rights, or different rights, and um, than they had at home, and like, trying to navigate that, but also like

respecting their husband. And then their husband is going through the process of, you know, not — dealing with, like, different cultural norms, and like maybe he hasn't been able to locate a job yet, and um, ya, it's very, very complex.

This account alludes to the intricacies of the immigration process, and the obstacles that both partners may encounter when negotiating the ideologies and practices of their pre-migration experience with their new lives in Canada. Despite the necessity for culturally competent services, service providers suggest that many organizations are ill-equipped, and may not provide adequate support for navigating the complex integration of two cultures. These issues are linked to the obstacles surrounding funding limitations and the ability for organizations to expand to attend to the diversified needs of their clientele.

Language. All service providers interviewed agreed that language poses a very significant barrier for newcomer women that longer-residing residents do not encounter. Communication with help-seeking services can be particularly challenging for women with low ability to communicate in an official language of Canada. Service providers acknowledge that many organizations within Halifax offer services and resources solely in English or French.

...if you have somebody who doesn't speak any English and isn't picking up the phone because they are — they can't communicate, we call and leave a message *in English* [laugh], which they can't understand, and then we send a letter in English, umm, that can be completely missed, right?

Although well-intentioned, without appropriate language services, communication attempts are ineffective in connecting immigrant women to necessary services. In such cases, the service provider acknowledges the tendency for these vulnerable women's cases to

potentially be overlooked if correspondences are not returned. Miscommunication is another issue that service providers frequently encounter when working with immigrant populations. The interviewees point to assumptions made by service providers or inaccurate translations made by translators as potential causes of misunderstandings and the corresponding incorrect or ineffective responses to a violent situation.

Furthermore, discrepancies in a victim and perpetrator's language competency can contribute to the isolation of newcomer women and creation of obstacles in service acquisition. In their interview one service provider describes a case in which a newcomer woman was experiencing extreme violence for an extended period and encountered no intervention when contacting the police. In this situation, due to her limited ability to communicate in English, the client was unable to effectively convey information to authorities, posing a barrier for her to access necessary services. Instead, her English-speaking husband became the first point of contact for communication with the authorities, manipulating the situation in his favour and informing police that there were no issues or cause for concern. As such, the case was closed, and no effective solution was reached for the newcomer woman.

In addition to facing problems in communication when reporting instances of violence and understanding the information relayed to them, newcomer women may also come across issues with translation services. Access to appropriate translation services was mentioned by numerous service providers as a significant issue in Halifax. In multiple interviews, service providers express that although they are grateful for the access and use of translators for service provision, use of these services is not an ideal means of communication. Various obstacles, including the cost of translation services and an

inability to obtain immediate access to a translator when needed create barriers to successful service provision. One participant disclosed that on some occasions, immigrant clients may face longer wait times for services due to the need to accommodate for translators' schedules. Tasks such as setting up an appointment or communicating with a service provider in a meeting can be impossible without translation services, and requires the coordination of service providers, clients, and translators to ensure smooth communication. However, one service provider states that in some cases this can be exceptionally difficult to accommodate due to the limited number of translators available for some languages.

Particularly in cases where women are relocated to shelters beyond the Halifax Regional Municipality, access to culturally relevant service and language resources may be even more sparse. In discussing the necessity for some immigrant women to relocate beyond the HRM, due to limited shelter space within the municipality, one service provider addressed the stark difference between the availability and variety of services within the HRM in comparison to the services in rural Nova Scotia. In describing these differences, she pointed to several factors influencing the limited capacity and knowledge of service providers in rural areas. Minimal experience serving immigrant women and a lack of necessity or funding to adopt immigrant-specific services or resources such as language translators are contributing factors limiting services for newcomer women in rural communities. As such, these limitations only further isolate immigrant women when attempting to access services.

Barrier #6: Exclusion of Perpetrators in Treatment.

The participants interviewed in the research acknowledged major gaps in service provision surrounding the need to include perpetrators of violence—primarily men—into the equation when developing and offering IPV resources. Although a few services currently exist for men who use violence, such as those offered through New Start and the new Domestic Violence Court System, service providers note that there are waitlists for these services. Furthermore, participants remarked that there is often an exclusion of perpetrators of violence in many existing services. However, service providers are encountering a growing societal desire to include men in the treatment and addressing of intimate partner violence.

In describing her roles in intervention-based services, one service provider emphasizes the need for inclusion of both parties in addressing IPV for immigrant couples, as most partners wish to remain together after instances of violence.

We kind of work as a team to support *both* individuals in the couple. Ya, so it's not like just the victim is getting *all* of the support, and then her partner, or his partner, isn't getting any support so if they want to end up back together again it's kind of like mismatched And that's the thing, 'cause like most of our couples do get back together. Or are married and have been married for a long time, um, and honestly the goal is for them to be back together. So, once they've identified that that is their goal, then we just kind of work to support that, and kind of do that in a safe way.

Actively engaging both the victim and perpetrator is essential in cases where partners wish to remain together, as both partners can develop personal skills and resources to strengthen their relationship and avoid further maladaptive, violent encounters.

Current trends in service provision are moving toward alternative programs and restorative approaches to treating violence. These restorative methods for addressing conflict approach cases of violence with a goal of reparation and the restoration of relationships, rather than retribution for perpetrators (Government of Nova Scotia, 2018). Restorative justice approaches for violence encourage the inclusion of all parties affected by the violence, to ensure that accountability is made for the harms caused by the perpetrator and that those affected by the violence remain central to the process of reparation (Government of Nova Scotia, 2018). Other alternative programs, such as the Gender-Based Violence Prevention Program through the YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs (YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth, 2018) shift common narratives surrounding violence to focus on the need for men to foster healthy, non-violent methods for handling conflict in relationships. Many of these programs engage young men and are designed as preventative measures, to encourage the development of positive partnerships and alleviate the need for later intervention for violence.

Service providers are seeing greater numbers of men who are taking steps toward accepting responsibility for their actions and desiring a need to make personal changes. Correspondingly, organizations are adapting to this need and beginning to offer approaches to treat violence that align with this perspective. Settlement services are modifying programs and developing additional resources to adjust to this demand for services that move away from traditional punitive practices, specifically creating services with

immigrant experiences in mind. One service provider elaborates on this, describing services that recognize cultural shift as an obstacle for many immigrant men when migrating to Canada. They explain, “then their husband is going through the process of, you know, not — dealing with, like, different cultural norms, and like maybe he hasn’t been able to locate a job yet, and um, ya, it’s very, very complex.” The introduction of these services in recent years has provided a venue for men to voice their concerns surrounding personal stresses associated with settlement and offer a vehicle for developing proactive solutions for addressing these issues.

In her discussion of men’s roles in addressing violence, one participant hesitantly proposed that she views men “as potentially consequences of systems in which they were raised and born.” She elaborates further, acknowledging the influence of society on men’s perspective of the world and corresponding roles as ‘men’. Through the opportunity to identify these harmful behaviours through services for perpetrators of violence, men are able to unpack the ideologies and beliefs they may carry surrounding their role as a ‘man’ in the relationship. This shift in perspective is suggested to initiate the desire for men to make changes and be able to “take back their lives”.

Unfortunately, despite the numerous positive changes and the shift in service provision from retributive toward preventative and restorative practices, there continues to be a stigma associated with the treatment of men who use violence. One participant discussed the unfounded shame accompanying service provision for perpetrators of violence. Competition of limited resources is a significant source of strife. She disclosed that obtaining funding and support is often an obstacle, as many do not see the value of services for perpetrators of violence, deeming it more suitable to funnel resources to

address the strains in services for the victims experiencing violence. Consequently, the growth of these much-needed resources is still slow-moving, and current services remain only sparsely available.

Barrier #7: Over-Criminalization of Violence

The criminalization of violence was a significant theme throughout the interviews. Specifically, numerous service providers pointed to the legal process of pro-charge and pro-arrest policies in Nova Scotia as ineffective means of dealing with IPV for all women seeking aid. Numerous interview participants emphasized that very few women are aware of the processes associated with these policies and become unintentionally trapped within the justice system once they contact authorities for help. Describing a hypothetical experience, one service provider unpacks how this experience can be highly stressful for women.

...there can be a lot of pressure on the wife to not press charges against her husband, um, because she is seen as being responsible to doing that. But when police go in and *they* take the responsibility on, um, it becomes like a confusing process of like: ‘Okay, I’ve called police for help. I didn’t want charges pressed, but you guys pressed charges anyway and now my husband can’t come home, and he can’t talk to me, and I don’t understand what’s happening.’

For immigrant women, several implications arise with the removal of a partner following a report. One service provider notes that particularly for women who rely on their partner for financial support, removal from the home may be highly detrimental to the victim. Furthermore, the potential consequences of reporting, including the chance of losing custody of children, status vulnerability and potential deportation, or fear of being

removed from a home and placed in alternate housing provide additional complications that many immigrant women encounter.

The process of criminalization is highly critiqued among the participants. Several discussed that the punitive nature of these services is detrimental to both the perpetrator and the victim, and simply does not bring forth desirable results. Isolation is a significant consequence of the criminalization process, as newcomer victims may face the disapproval of their family and community due to reporting, as well as lose their partner. One service provider suggests that isolation is also an obstacle for the perpetrator, explaining that when men are removed from the home and charged, they may lose their employment and experience difficulties in obtaining housing and other necessary resources.

Loss of Power and Autonomy. According to the interviews, immigrant women often experience a loss of autonomy when faced with the justice system. One participant expresses that for some women “the abuse of the justice system was worse than the abuse they were experiencing at home.” This disheartening statement suggests that for some women, the consequences of reporting violence or utilizing the justice system are damaging for newcomer women, creating greater harm than the violence itself. This is highly unfavourable, as it contributes to avoidance of help-seeking and decreased trust in authorities.

Significantly, numerous service providers allude to cases where immigrant clients who have been forced to navigate the justice system have spoken of feelings of oppression and victimization. One participant discloses “...the clients that I’ve spoken to that have gone through the justice system, um, have spoken a lot to...feeling oppressed, or like, um, thinking that the system may be racist or prejudice towards, like, their culture or their

race.” This is a significant remark, as avenues of support become streams of further marginalization for newcomers seeking aid. Additionally, one service provider notes that when newcomer women discuss the barriers they encounter, they speak of the lack of support received in achieving the results *they* wish to see happen.

Correspondingly, other service providers suggest that engaging with the justice system often increases stress for women, rather than helping to alleviate it. One participant communicates that for women, the “problem is not only domestic violence, but they’re dealing with all the—the problems with—that the court has thrown at them.” Another interviewee mirrors this, discussing the difficulties experienced when facing pro-charge and pro-arrest processes. She laments that women who have gone through the process “...feel almost revictimized. Not *almost*, [they] feel revictimized”. These statements are highly alarming, as they demonstrate the potential harm that the justice system may impose on women who are seeking support. This further raises questions surrounding the effectiveness of current approaches to justice, and whether the current practices are accomplishing the goals that they were set to achieve.

This disempowerment and loss of control is related to immigrant women’s desire to remain with a partner solely to have a choice in whether a partner is arrested or prosecuted in cases of IPV. One service provider claims that through the process of criminalization women are stripped of their authority and ability to engage in the discourse surrounding their relationship. She states that often it is not necessarily the act of the charging and prosecution, but the timing and removal of choice that are harmful to women. Women are often caught off guard in cases of pro-charge and pro-arrest, and desire authority and personal volition in the choices surrounding the help-seeking process. Importantly, for

some women, the ability to have a semblance of control over the process is a significant aspect of the decision-making process, moderating whether women choose to seek formal support for cases of IPV.

Conclusion

As discussed in the opening of the chapter, the current investigation of the barriers surrounding help-seeking and service provision will not end with the conclusion of this chapter. Rather, in utilizing a modified institutional ethnographic approach to exploration, there are numerous layers of investigation to unpack, from the local to the trans-local. Returning to the process of ‘mapping’ social relations (DeVault, 2006), the research aims to explore ruling relations and better understand the textually-mediated social organization surrounding help-seeking for immigrant women. As such, the following chapter will continue this examination of social relations through examination of the texts that moderate the themes acknowledged in this chapter.

The current chapter described the numerous issues and barriers surrounding help-seeking from the perspectives of service providers, at the local level. This exploration sets the stage for the institutional ethnographic exploration of the trans-local, to better understand the social processes that contribute to the everyday actions and abilities of service providers. As such, in moving forward with the discussion chapter, we will return to “reading up the ladder of privilege” (Mohanty, 2003, p.511) to understand the connections between the barriers existing at the local level and how they connect to the texts mediating them (i.e. the laws, policies, and structural practices moderating practice). Aligning with the goals of institutional ethnography, the following chapter will explore the texts that moderate daily practice to better understand how the barriers discussed within

this chapter connect at higher levels of ruling relations to the less visible structures moderating them.

Chapter Six: Discussion

Introduction

As a modified institutional ethnography, analysis of the results of this research will explicate the ideologies embodied within texts that coordinate IPV service provision for newcomer women. This will be presented as a map, through which the disjunctures between these discourses and the everyday lives of newcomer women will be revealed.

In the final sections of the chapter, I explore the implications of the research findings for service providers and for immigrant women through discussion of the research limitations and proposed recommendations for future research and practice. As this research is informed by the critical framework, it seeks not only to address the sources of inequalities in service provision, but also to explore potential practices that may address inequalities. This final section will explore how the ideological processes in operation can be critiqued and transformed, offering a basis for recommendations for change at both local and trans-local levels of existence.

Mapping Service Provision

According to DeVault (2006), institutional ethnographies involve unpacking every day, localized practices to unveil the ruling relations embodied therein. Ruling relations coordinate the practices and are mapped through institutional ethnographies, bringing into view the disjunctures, or lines of fault, between institutional practice and everyday lives. In the context of the current research, interviews with service providers served as an entry point to the mapping the complex web of ideologically driven discourses that create and sustain the ruling relations coordinating their everyday work with newcomer women. Mapping of the interviews revealed that external texts including organizational mandates,

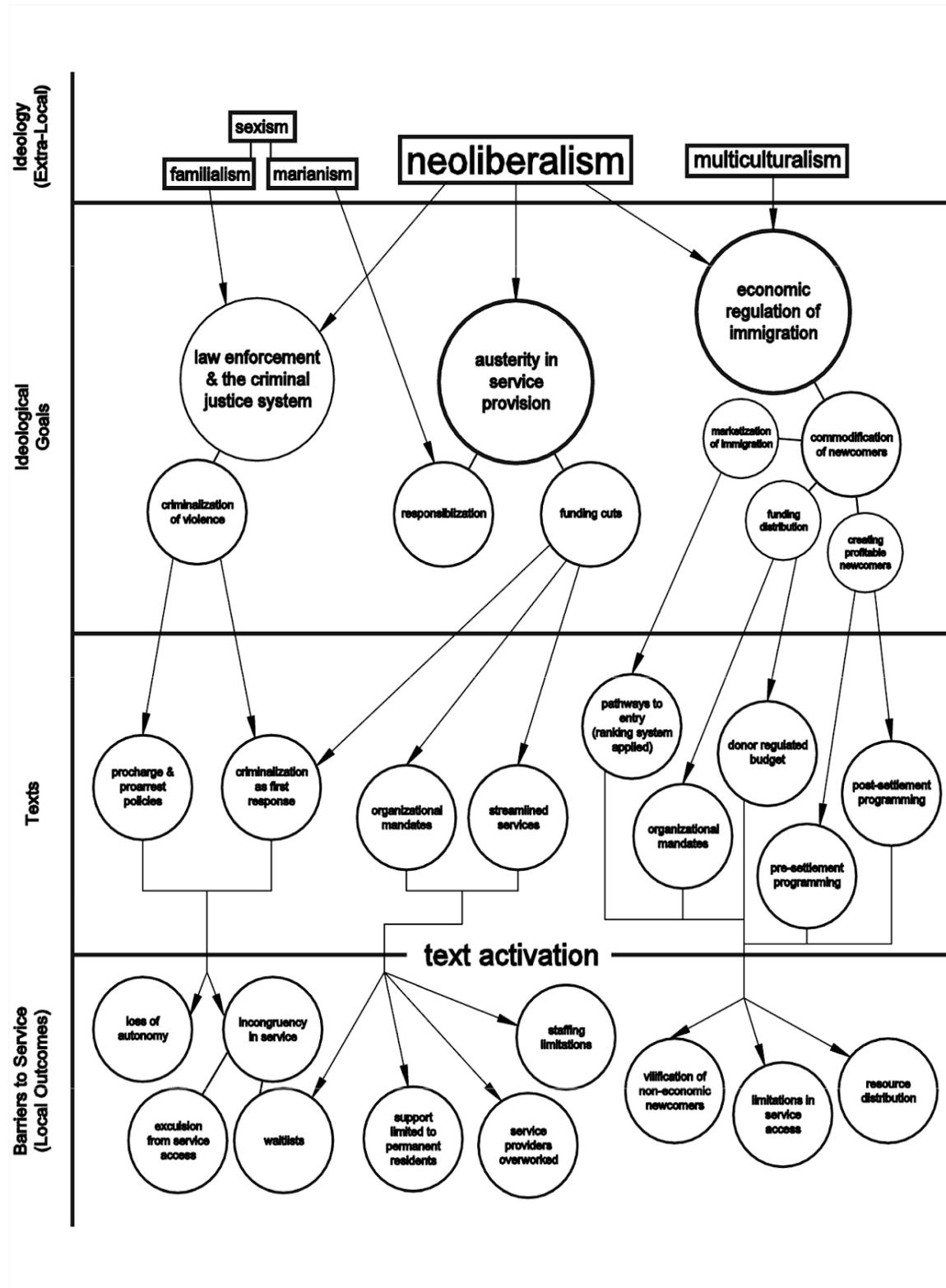
laws and policies, criminal procedures, and immigration requirements influence IPV service provision. Although various ideologies emerged in the analysis of the interviews, neoliberalism repeatedly surfaced as an ideology that coordinated the numerous issues identified by service providers.

In the following section of this chapter, I will discuss neoliberalism, revealing the ideology as not merely a distant concept, but as a process integrally embedded in everyday experiences and constituted within the activities and discourses practiced at the local level. Next, the discussion will delve into the function of activated neoliberal texts as reinforcers of the barriers existing for newcomer women seeking IPV support. This portion of the discussion will analyze the barriers highlighted in the previous chapter, connecting them to the various ideologies and textually-mediated processes perpetuating IPV and newcomer settlement ruling relations. Finally, this chapter will evaluate neoliberalism's role in reasserting and sustaining various other violence-related ideological frameworks including patriarchy, familialism, marianism and multiculturalism.

The map documented below (Figure 1) visually depicts the complex web surrounding newcomer IPV service provision, as drawn from the research. It illustrates the relationships existing between extra-local ideological forces and local service practices for IPV and newcomer support. The map showcases the means through which ideologically-driven processes are materialized through various service provision and immigration related texts. Furthermore, it illustrates the role that these texts play in creating and moderating the current environment of newcomer service provision.

Figure 1

Mapping Newcomer IPV Service Provision



The Normalization and Pervasiveness of Neoliberalism

Although often presented as an economic system operating on free market principles, neoliberalism has persisted as an all-encompassing ideology, permeating not only the economic, but political, cultural, and social systems of Canada (Coulter, 2009 p. 26-27; Bauder, 2008; Man 2004). Initially growing in popularity as an alternative to failing Keynesian policies that advocated for active government involvement in corporate activities, neoliberalism appealed to those seeking less economic regulation. Advocates of neoliberalism favoured a government coordinated by market practices, rejecting the heavy moderation of the market under Keynesian economics (Coulter, 2009). According to neoliberal principles, encouraging free market concepts such as deregulation, privatization, and tax reform would stimulate economic prosperity and enhance the well-being of deserving, hard-working citizens.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, aligning with much of the Western world, Canada had largely embraced neoliberal economic practices (McBride & McNutt, 2007). This has led to a significant reconfiguration of the state, involving a transition from a focus on public welfare and economic control to one where market principles prevail. Indeed, neoliberalism extends the application of market principles and practices to areas *beyond* the market (Foucault, 2008). Correspondingly, under neoliberalism, non-economic spheres are shaped and moderated by the discourses of the free market. This diffusion of ideals into the political, cultural, economic, and social spheres facilitates the hegemonic perpetuation of neoliberalism, marking it as the natural order of things. Although neoliberalism has faced criticism since its induction into Western practice, its critics denouncing the unchecked power it awards to wealthy corporate bodies, condemning the consequential disintegration

of socialism, escalation of income equality, and growing welfare austerity resulting from its success (Dobrowolsky, 2008), the advantages it grants to those who benefit from its practice assure its tenacious continuation. As such, the normalization of neoliberalism encourages its perseverance and reproduction in day-to-day experiences. Consequently, neoliberalism continues to regulate many decisions and practices associated with both immigration and IPV service provision.

The Activation of Neoliberal Texts in Settlement and IPV Service Provision

The following section will examine the ways in which neoliberal ideological processes contribute to the barriers described in the previous chapter, exemplified through the texts that moderate service provision and immigration. According to Bauder (2012, p. 42), “in IE, texts do not just pop into existence, nor are they naturally occurring; rather, they are to be understood as a moment in a sequence, activated by the social relations that continue to be authorized in the making of the text and in activating the text in local settings.” Through analysis of interviews with the service providers, three neoliberal processes repeatedly arose as core reinforcers of the existing service barriers. These include the economic regulation of immigration, the practice of austerity in service provision, and the neoliberal stance on criminalization and the justice system. Exploration of these three main processes will illustrate the complex web of localized barriers expressed in the interviews, and the mediating texts serving a neoliberal agenda.

The Economics of Immigration: Commodifying Newcomers

The adoption of a market rationale beyond the market has contributed to the commodification of service provision. Such a framework centres profit-based merit, including labour contributions and productivity, as integral to Canadian identity,

normalizing the valuation of individuals based on their economic output. The reach of this monetarily driven system is apparent in the discourses governing immigration across the country. From its onset, Canada has marketed immigration as a necessary component of the country's financial success (Man, 2004; Bhuyan et al., 2017). In recent years, the former Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Ahmed Hussen, referred to immigration as "integral to our country's future, helping to spur economic growth, job creation and our prosperity" (Hussen, 2017). This rhetoric mirrors the objectives of neoliberal ideology, staunchly advocating for the economic rewards reaped from incorporating newcomers into Canadian society. Notably, such a dialogue establishes a framework of deservedness for both the selection and assessment of immigrants entering Canada, gauging worthiness for entry, citizenship, and resource acquisition on newcomers' utility and human capital.

The Marketization of Newcomer Intake. As part of a federal Multi-Year Immigration Plan (Government of Canada, 2019a), Canada has demonstrated bias toward the intake of economic stream candidates, stratifying migration experiences for newcomers to Canada. In 2020, the country is set to admit nearly 58% of newcomers through economic-based immigration pathways, a proportion higher than any other means of admission. Through economic streams, potential newcomers are appraised in accordance with their ability to contribute to the Canadian economy. In vetting suitable candidates for entry into the country Canada employs the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS; Government of Canada, 2019b), a set of selection criteria that heavily favours applicants with strong economic potential. The points-based assessment measures factors including a candidate's English or French competency, education and employment background,

provincial nomination, and pre-immigration offers for employment (Government of Canada, 2019b). Scoring highly on such qualities can reward potential candidates with an invitation for Express Entry into the country (Government of Canada, 2019b), an immigration pathway specifically reserved for immigrants entering through economic streams.

This growing trend toward a more economically focused immigration strategy is further demonstrated by a decrease in the ratio of immigrants being welcomed through family reunification and humanitarian streams, in favour of economic class immigrants (Government of Canada, 2019c). Various political parties, including the Conservatives under Stephen Harper and the PPC represented by Maxime Bernier have promoted a resounding aversion toward family reunification, deeming immigrants entering via this pathway as unproductive and burdensome on taxpayer dollars (Chen & Thorpe, 2015; People's Party of Canada, 2019a). In his campaign for Prime Minister in the 2019 federal election, Bernier pledged to considerably limit the intake of refugees and family reunification cases, pledging to end the reunification of parents and grandparents entirely, if elected (People's Party of Canada, 2019b). Within his campaigning, he stated that the country's "immigration policy can benefit Canadians only if we welcome the right kind of immigrants" (Maxime Bernier, 2019, August 7), later emphasizing that economic interests must be the priority of immigration initiatives. This further exemplifies the streamlining and development of immigration policies to indirectly uphold state-driven neoliberal goals through non-economic processes. The current Liberal government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has presented a very different discourse surrounding family reunification. In their 2015 campaign, the Liberal party outlined plans to boost family reunification and

increase intake of non-economic newcomers, including refugees. However, comparisons of immigrant intake by the current Liberal government and previous Conservative government suggest that there is little difference in both parties' intake of parents and grandparents through non-economic immigration pathways (Dobrowolsky, 2017; Blatchford, 2019). Contrary to the positive rhetoric surrounding family reunification by the current governing party, research suggests that economically driven immigration remains the focus of contemporary Canadian immigration policy (Dobrowolsky, 2017). The ongoing process of immigrant selection and the purpose of immigration have thus been shaped to mirror the economic goals of the country, celebrating and welcoming newcomers who fulfil these goals.

The strategic recruitment of economic-stream newcomers and the introduction of intake avenues such as Express Entry exemplify how immigration strategies and procedures are purposefully shaped to ease the migration process of newcomers that align with neoliberal goals. Although these processes are indeed advantageous to those possessing the necessary qualities that contribute to successful admission, they highlight the insertion of market models into the immigration process. Importantly, it is worth noting that these processes often deflect from the multifaceted ways immigration enriches Canadian society, focusing solely on the economic benefits that it provides. Consequently, through the application of these recruitment strategies both the process of immigration and the individual candidates seeking entry are commodified, operating solely for the goals of a neoliberal agenda. Enforcing such a narrative is highly problematic, as it effectively overshadows the humanity of newcomers, encouraging perceptions of newcomers as marketable bodies valued by their capital contributions.

Exerting Control Through Funding Distribution. These ‘filters’ and distinct pathways used to determine candidates’ suitability for intake fuel neoliberal ideologies concerning the deservedness of newcomers as they enter the country. Promoting the valuation of economic-based entrants perpetuates the disfavour projected onto those entering through non-economic categories, such as sponsored immigrants or temporary foreign workers-many of whom are made vulnerable to exploitation and violence (Dobrowolsky, 2011; Bhuyan et al., 2017; Chen & Thorpe, 2015). The disadvantages of this vilification echo in the realm of general service provision, as described by the interviewees. Several service providers acknowledged the parameters and limitations surrounding newcomer access to various organizations across the city. They pointed to organizational mandates and not-for-profit status expectations as factors establishing these restrictions. Three of the service providers interviewed specifically stated that not-for-profit regulations and ordinances posed challenges in service provision, moderating both what the organizations could or could not do, as well as *who* the organization is permitted to serve.

Service eligibility was commonly noted as a barrier to service provision, particularly for newcomers, as provision is often bound by regulations that shape the operations and activities permissible within organizations. Interviewees labelled eligibility requirements as “problematic and limiting”, constraining the reach of services and increasingly marginalizing those already facing barriers. They acknowledged that many services cater solely to individuals possessing permanent resident status, limiting access for those with more precarious statuses. Service eligibility is often heavily regulated by both the internal and external stakeholders of an organization, including the donors who fund the organization’s activities. Notably, as immigration is a federally regulated initiative, many

of the services available to newcomers are supported through federal streams of funding, including Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC; ISANS, n.d.). As with any donor-subsidized initiative, funding for both immigrant and IPV services is often granted to organizations that mirror and facilitate the agendas of the donating body.

Accordingly, the limitations surrounding eligibility noted within the interviews may stem from the expectations and parameters encouraged –or potentially required– by funders. This alludes to the highly transactional and market-based model implemented in funding distribution, through which newcomers with promising contributions for the country’s economic growth are rewarded with service access. The specific allocation of resources and marketization of service provision (McBride & Evans, 2017) demonstrates a trend toward the concept of deservedness, and the need for organizations to hold accountability and meet the expectations of donors’ who ‘invest’ in the organization.

Through the necessity to appease funders, organizations may unintentionally shape practices, utilize techniques, and establish a discourse closely mirroring that of the funding body. In her writing on neoliberalism, Ong (2006) reinforces this, stating that “citizenship elements such as entitlements and benefits are increasingly associated with neoliberal criteria so that mobile individuals who possess human capital or expertise are highly valued... [whereas] citizens who are judged not to have such tradable competence or potential become devalued and thus vulnerable to exclusionary practices” (p.6-7).

This statement encompasses the effectiveness of text activation in fortifying neoliberal ideology. Through the implementation of funding-driven organizational parameters, service providers are bound to guidelines of both who to serve and how they may serve their clients. This consequently reinforces and perpetuates the stratification that

newcomers encounter, according to their stream of entry. Newcomers holding more precarious statuses may be unintentionally refused essential immigrant services, as well as IPV related services (e.g. physical and mental healthcare) and face further marginalization through their forced ineligibility to access various streams of IPV support. As such, newcomers lacking in highly valuable human capital are excluded from services valuable for both the prevention and intervention of IPV.

This process reflects the less visible ways through which ideologies reproduce neoliberal goals within non-state settings, demonstrating the textually-mediated social organization of service provision. In controlling the flow of scarce funds to various service organizations, external funding bodies maintain power from afar. Close monitoring of organizational spending and the implementation of service parameters reduces the level of autonomy service providers and organizations are granted at the local level. Instead, external donors are permitted a degree of control over organizational activities, effectively producing the results desired by the funding bodies.

Creating Profitable Newcomers. Processes surrounding pre-settlement support also illustrate the bias toward those who fit the criteria as suitable candidates for employment, facilitating their settlement and integration into Canadian society. These processes are often designed to encourage the success of economic contributors, at the detriment of non-contributors, who are perceived as burdens to society (Bhuyan et al., 2017). A prime example of the economic principles of neoliberalism materializing through pre-settlement processes is the introduction of government funded pre-arrival services. The settlement online pre-arrival program (SOPA; ISANS, 2020) is offered to individuals prior to immigrating to Canada. This program is advertised as a means for newcomers to arrive

prepared, offering free pre-arrival services that aid in “job readiness, success and retention” (ISANS, 2020).

The nature of the program blatantly carries economic motives, serving to prepare newcomers for employment in Canada. The SOPA website homepage claims that resources include: “one-on-one orientation, job search support, employment counselling, and workplace culture training, as well as referral to a wide range of post-arrival services upon entry into Canada” (ISANS, 2020). These resources showcase the bias toward economic preparedness for newcomers as a pre-arrival necessity, merely stating referrals to other support services as an after-thought for post-arrival. The program’s emphasis on preparing immigrants for the workplace potentially stunts their readiness for other aspects of adapting to life in Canada. Within the interviews, one service provider noted that in some cases, instances of IPV begin post-immigration, as a consequence of the stresses related to settlement. This claim is notable, as it demonstrates the potential repercussions of emphasizing economic needs over other highly important settlement needs in settlement programs and services.

Additionally, although numerous organizations within the province provide various means of support to aid in the transition to Canadian life post-settlement, certain aspects become more pertinent and central to settlement, particularly those surrounding employment acquisition. Aligning with neoliberal goals and corresponding economic-based streams of immigration, upon arrival, obtaining employment is a central component of the settlement process. According to the service providers interviewed, initial settlement often centres around the needs of the breadwinner, frequently a male partner, to ensure their success in financially providing for the family. Consequently, through the settlement

process, men are supplied with useful tools including language learning, socialization, and employment support to facilitate their positive settlement and independence in Canada. Conversely, as noted by the interviewees, women may not be centred in the settlement process and are not afforded the same level of language learning, educational experiences, employment, and social opportunities as men.

The lack of opportunity provided to newcomer women to obtain these key skills may encourage the isolation and vulnerability that service providers alluded to in the interviews. As peripheral actors in the settlement process, some newcomer women may heavily rely on their sponsoring partner for financial, social, and language support. As one service provider notes, because much of the focus is placed on men within the initial years of settlement, by the time women are able to turn the focus on their own development and settlement, their permanent resident status concludes and they become full-fledged citizens. Due to organizational parameters concerning services access, in the transition to citizenship, newcomer women lose their eligibility to access many essential immigrant-specific services. As a result, women may reach citizenship feeling ill-equipped to thrive independently, encouraging their dependence on their partner and furthering their isolation from the greater community.

In a related stream, several service providers acknowledged that possessing low English or French language skills contributes greatly to poor service acquisition for many immigrant women. They state that misunderstandings, low access to translators, and women's inability to communicate effectively with service providers severely limit IPV help-seeking, often allowing women to "fall between the cracks". As noted by a service provider, many communications made by organizations, such as correspondence by letter

mail, are written in English. She states that receiving no response following a communication often leads to dropping a case. Consequently, possession of low English language skills significantly impacts service acquisition and utility.

Abiding by a profit-centred model of settlement that prioritizes men's immigration effectively marginalizes newcomer women, hindering their ability to not only access appropriate services in cases of IPV, but to possess the tools necessary to access available resources. It is essential to recognize the value of protective factors that contribute to the ability for newcomer women to report violence and leave a violent situation. Often taken-for-granted tools such as the ability to understand and communicate in an official language may gravely impact a newcomer woman's ability to access support services, as indicated in the interviews. Through the inherent economically driven processes regulated through organizational priorities, women's development of essential skills, such as official language learning may be overlooked. As a result, the prioritization of men in settlement processes and the corresponding neoliberal mandates and policies informing program delivery downplay the value of equipping women with the tools and skills essential for navigating services and obtaining useful support when experiencing IPV.

Austerity in Service Provision

A prime component of the neoliberal agenda is the implementation of austerity policies and practices as a means of minimizing budget deficits and bolstering profits. Exercising austerity involves winnowing away processes or activities that lack profitable value, often at the detriment of those with lower incomes (Jackson, 2010). As previously mentioned, in foregoing the Keynesian system, the Canadian government shifted its emphasis from operating in the public interest to governing in the interest of corporations

and the wealthy (McBride & Evans, 2017; Jackson, 2010; Dobrowolsky, 2012). This transition effectively led to a reduction in the role of the federal government in the social realm. Tax-heavy programs and services faced scrutiny, as they hindered the government's ability to protect capital and encourage economic growth. As a result, Canada administered severe reductions in federal support for many social services, unloading responsibility for these services onto provincial and local governments, not-for-profit providers, communities, and families. The current Liberal government under Justin Trudeau has demonstrated a desire to deviate from austerity in their leadership (Lowe, Richmond & Shields, 2017). During their tenure, the Liberals have consistently vocalized and exercised a shift away from austerity, moving toward an increased focus on social policy and public services (Liberal Party of Canada, 2020). Although the Liberal government's stance on immigration echoes this approach, current policies and funding continue to align with austerity-focused governance (Lowe et al., 2017; Dobrowolsky, 2017).

The reach of austerity policies and practices is highly visible in both IPV services and immigrant settlement initiatives. As acknowledged by all five of the service providers interviewed, austerity practices severely interrupt an organization's ability to effectively execute organizational activities to the extent desired. Through the implementation of austerity practices such as funding cuts, applying responsabilization, and the relegation of 'private' matters onto women, service provision is heavily impacted by government implemented austerity. The following sections will elaborate on the various issues noted by service providers, connecting them to the austerity policies and practices that have generated and continue to facilitate their existence.

The Consequences of Funding Cuts. As a means of preserving federal funding, responsibility over many facets of service provision has largely been delegated to provincial and municipal level governments and the not-for-profit sector. The shift in responsibility to more localized settings has placed significant pressure on service providers and organizations operating at these levels. Within the interviews, service providers pointed to funding limitations as central to several of the barriers affecting their ability to offer services. Service providers noted that the limited availability of resources is directly related to the extent of a service provider and organization's reach when providing services as well as to directives to streamline services. According to all service providers, austerity practices related to budget cuts significantly impact work on the frontline.

Several service providers noted that austerity-enforced budget limitations force workers to take on more than they are realistically able to. As acknowledged in the results chapter, one interviewee expressed that the sheer number of open cases she regularly juggles creates obstacles in her ability to provide meaningful service to each individual seeking support. Consequently, efficiency often takes precedence over more time-consuming processes such as building rapport and establishing relationships with clients. The necessity to decrease the quantity of open cases effectively turns service provision into a numbers game, through which clients requiring more time or resources—such as those facing language barriers—may be overlooked. The need for organizations to operate in such a way mirrors the market model often implemented in service provision (Finley, Esposito & Hall, 2012; Edmonds, Richmond, & Shield, 2017). Operating under a neoliberal model, many organizations are required to measure 'success' in accordance to the sheer number of clients serviced or changes in scores in pre- and post-service tests

(Finley & Esposito, 2012). Such processes depreciate the value inherent in providing quality service. This pressures service providers to shift their service model in favour of reaching 'goals', potentially further marginalizing women experiencing violence, if their needs cannot be fully met within an allotted time frame.

Staffing issues also arise as a direct consequence of the austerity practices implemented in service provision. When inquiring with the interviewees about the changes they would like to see within their organizations, all participants responded with a desire for expansion and a greater ability to effectively serve marginalized populations, including newcomer women. Several service providers noted the current need to streamline services and offer 'one-size-fits-all' programs to clients, due to a lack of resources or human capacity to expand current practices. Although such programs are in place to encompass the generalized needs of most women experiencing IPV, they neglect to account for diversity and the unique experiences among women. Additionally, organizations are often limited in their ability to hire a diverse staff to accommodate for the range of needs existing among the populations they serve. According to one service provider, this contributes significantly to incongruities between the needs of clients and the ability to effectively provide support. Specifically, she stated that the lack of non-Western practices and cultural diversity among existing staff narrows the lens through which IPV is examined and treated, resulting in the use of treatments that fail to meet the needs of newcomer clients.

Austerity further limits organizations' ability to offer programs that are not deemed as economically practical or do not demonstrate immediate, obvious results. For many of the interviewees, growth has become an afterthought in service provision, as organizations attempt to keep up and stay afloat with the loads they currently have. Consequently,

services are often focused solely on the intervention of violence, as ensuring women's safety is the most immediate concern for organizations. Less attention and funding are relegated to preventative measures as their value is not as overt, and the need to protect those who are already experiencing violence is the priority. As a result of the focus on intervention, instances of violence are mediated once they occur, rather than prevented before they happen through focus on root causes. This increases risk for women, allowing violence to escalate before action is taken. Furthermore, focusing on intervention-led programming ignores the need for organizations to approach violence as a structural phenomenon, requiring change at a level beyond the individual.

Responsibilization of Newcomers. A key aspect of neoliberal austerity policies and practices involves the transfer of responsibility from the state to the individual, a concept referred to as responsibilization (Pyysiäinen, Halpin, & Guilfoyle, 2017). Through this process, the state relinquishes many of its duties, increasingly shifting the ownership of issues onto individuals and other non-governmental bodies (Kelly and Caputo, 2011, p. 11). Through the adoption of responsibilization, Canada has seen a shift away from its dedication to social welfare and the collective good (Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018; Walsh, 2011). As such, structurally imposed barriers have become depoliticized and relegated as personally inflicted, individual issues (Kelly and Caputo, 2011, p. 17). This internalization of responsibility is evident in the contemporary distribution of social provisions, recurring fiscal cuts to government funded services, and the pathologizing of individuals who require or rely on social support (Pyysiäinen et al., 2017).

In the process of immigrant settlement, enforcing responsibilization fortifies capitalist conceptions of the 'ideal' immigrant as a self-sufficient, employed individual

(Walsh, 2011). As such, the implementation of responsabilization practices normalize and reward individuals who do not require government aid to thrive. Conversely, as illustrated in previous sections, newcomers who are unable to fulfil this role of self-sufficiency are plagued as burdensome, utilizing valuable tax dollars through their need for social avenues of support. This contributes to the devaluation of collective responsibility over others, in favour of autonomy, promoting an anti-welfare ideology. As such, newcomers enter the country with an expectation to manage their own settlement, encouraging narratives of self-sufficiency as a measure for success and deservedness for entry. Concepts of responsabilization echo strongly in current immigration narratives that gauge the human capital of newcomers and deem potential reliance on social aid as undesirable and unnecessary risks.

Responsibilization is embedded in the structured vetting of immigration intake processes. Canada boasts strict regulations concerning who is granted permission to enter and permanently reside in the country. Many of the requisites leading to successful intake include an individual's ability to embody the ideal, responsible citizen. Under programs such as the Federal Skilled Worker Program for Express Entry into the country (Immigration, Refugees, & Citizenship Canada, 2019), applicants are measured for their 'fit' as an eligible candidate for entry. Categories for eligibility include measurements of an applicant's language skills, educational background, work experience, age, arranged employment upon entry and ability for a potential partner to adapt to life in Canada (Immigration, Refugees, & Citizenship Canada, 2019). Each of these factors wagers on an applicant's ability to thrive independently and be personally responsible for their own settlement needs, lending to greater success in obtaining entry through this process.

Aligning with overarching neoliberal goals, implementing responsabilization ensures that such newcomers demonstrate low risk for utilizing government-funded services or relief, aiding in curbing welfare state spending.

This structuring of deservedness is further evident in the restrictions placed on service eligibility. Within responsabilized frameworks, non-economic based newcomers are framed as draining or burdensome on the system (Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018). Two service providers interviewed noted that eligibility to many services is limited to a narrow range of newcomers according to their immigrant status. Specifically, there exists a requirement in many immigrant-based services for clients to carry permanent residence status (Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018). Additionally, entitlement to many essential services such as healthcare is provided only to newcomers with full immigrant status (Miklavcic, 2011). Consequently, those holding more precarious statuses face limited eligibility for services through the implementation of policies surrounding their status (Jayasuriya-Illesinghe, 2018; Abidi, Tastsoglou, Brigham, & Lange, 2013; Miklavcic, 2011). Adopting concepts such as responsabilization in immigrant policies and practices and treating violence as an individual, personal issue deflects responsibility from institutions of power that facilitate its perpetuation.

Neoliberalism, Criminalization and the Justice System

Canada possesses an unsavoury record of anti-Black racist incidents concerning law enforcement and the criminal justice system (Jiwani, 2002; Maynard, 2017). Despite considerable outrage via media-based exposure, an ever-growing body of research, and the exponential growth of social movements such Black Lives Matter in recent years, experiences of racism persist (CBC Radio, 2020; Black Lives Matter, n.d.). At the time of

writing this section, thousands of people are uniting in demonstrations across the globe to decry racialized violence against Black individuals at the hands of law enforcement. The growing mobilization of conversations surrounding institutionally sanctioned violence against Black-bodied people is encouraging, involving not only the general population but penetrating the institutional bodies that enforce the disparities Black citizens experience. Notably, beginning in 2016, the Department of Justice Canada hosted roundtables in cities across the country to review the criminal justice system and acknowledge its shortcomings (Department of Justice Canada, 2019; Fox & Tabbara, 2018). Conclusions of the discussions that took place through the roundtables reinforce that the current criminal justice system disproportionately targets marginalized populations, negatively impacting groups including Black Canadians and newcomers with precarious immigrant status (Fox & Tabbara, 2018). These evaluations substantiate criticism of the current justice system.

In Nova Scotia, the tense relations between the Black Nova Scotian community and the criminal justice system have long existed throughout the province. In recent years, Halifax police have come under fire for the disturbing, overwhelmingly disproportionate criminalization of the Black population in policing, charging, and incarceration (CBC News, 2019; Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, 2019). Inaction and indifference at the municipal council level has diminished trust within the racialized Black community in Halifax in the capacity of local law enforcement and the justice system to protect and serve this marginalized population (Rutgers, 2017). Although strained race relations carry a long history in the province, permeating the justice system, this sentiment is not exclusive to the long-residing Black population. Several service providers noted that distrust toward law enforcement and the justice system exists among many racialized newcomers. According to

the interviewees, racialized immigrant clients are often hesitant to involve law enforcement and the justice system in matters related to IPV, citing fears of racism and a loss of autonomy as major deterrents for accessing aid through these avenues of support. The service providers recount newcomer women's decision to access or avoid these services because of previous negative personal encounters with law enforcement or the justice system, either by themselves and/or influential community members, a source of support valued by newcomer women particularly if they are unfamiliar with the practices and procedures of their new country.

Importantly, the loss of autonomy in addressing IPV was noted by service providers as a significant factor contributing to newcomer women's distrust and aversion toward law enforcement and the justice system. Service providers acknowledged that the processes employed in addressing IPV, such as mandatory pro-charge and pro-arrest policies often misalign with the actions that newcomer women desire when seeking support in a violent situation. They note that the mandatory pathways of arrest and separation of partners ultimately erases personal discretion in the decision-making process, resulting in the revictimization and disempowerment of newcomer women. Such statements are alarming, as the services designed to aid and protect women not only fail to provide support but contribute to the systemic marginalization that newcomer women experience. This notable gap between the actions newcomer women desire from services, and the outcomes of their support-seeking highlights the incompatibility of the ideological processes embedded in law enforcement and the criminal justice system with newcomer women's needs. Both law enforcement and the justice system cater to ideologies of power through exercising control and order (Paterson, 2010). Such processes are highly incongruent with the expressed

needs of safety and reconciliation noted by service providers in the interviews. Application of these processes render useless in such cases of IPV. This disjuncture illuminates the disturbing gap existing between what newcomer women seek and expect from law enforcement and the criminal justice system and the actual outcomes of seeking aid.

The tendency to default to criminalization in addressing IPV, through the implementation of punitive measures such as mandatory arrest, is reflective of the neoliberal shift to a tough on crime regime (Paterson, 2010; Mehrotra, Kimball, & Wahab, 2016). In the economic, social, and cultural shift toward neoliberal ideology, the justice system saw a corresponding shift in approaches toward crime. Beginning in the 1980s, managerial principles shaped the criminal justice system, borrowing techniques from the austerity-driven private sector to establish cost-efficient, and results-driven processes to address crime (Bell, 2011). This growing focus on law and order corresponded with a decrease in funding for alternative social means of managing maladaptive behaviour, such as community support groups, institutional care for mental health, and other welfare services that foster community cohesion. With respect to IPV, research conducted by Abraham and Tastsoglou (2016) and Paterson (2010) acknowledge that criminalization processes prioritize separation of partners as the primary response to violence. Similar to the conclusions of the present research, the authors argue that offering such a narrow route for support disregards the unique goals and needs of the women seeking aid and may not be the most appropriate solution for addressing IPV. In defaulting to criminalizing IPV, other means of treatment are relegated as secondary measures, utilized when funding permits. This effectively upholds neoliberal ideology and reinforces austerity in the allocation of social funding. Furthermore, the emphasis on separation over the elimination of violence

effectively shifts responsibility of violence onto the partners, placing women in an increasingly vulnerable position.

The numerous negative experiences shared by the interviewees highlight the necessity for system reform, to explore and adopt alternative measures of treating violence and improve outcomes for newcomer women. In several of the interviews, service providers noted that current processes tend to individualize violence, neglecting the systemic conditions that give rise to its existence. Additionally, they stated that the punitive methods currently implemented are often harmful for immigrant women, as they homogenize women and fail to address the broader, institutionally allocated barriers that newcomer women face, as revealed in this research. As such, numerous immigrant-specific vulnerabilities, including immigrant status and language barriers further compound the experience of seeking support but are not accounted for in providing aid. Accordingly, alternative approaches need to be investigated to address the current disjunctures newcomer women experience in accessing support. Transforming the criminal justice system is essential in establishing meaningful services that recognize unique immigrant experiences and align with the needs of newcomer women seeking aid for IPV.

Intersections of Neoliberalism and Other Ideologies

Although neoliberalism emerges as the central ideology present in the current IE map, other ideologies can also be discerned. Throughout the explication of the discussions with the service providers, these additional ideologies emerged not solely as parallel factors contributing to IPV barriers, but as interconnected with neoliberalism. In examining the connections between the various ideologies in play, it became clear that these ideologies also play an integral role in reinforcing the underlying goals of neoliberalism, validating

the policies and practices moderating newcomer deservedness of IPV services and resources. Drawn from the interviews, the ideologies operating in tandem with neoliberalism include sexism and its branches of familialism and marianism, and multiculturalism as a specific tool used for immigration. The following sections will parse the roles of these additional ideologies and frame their connections to the overarching neoliberal goals of both Canadian immigration and IPV service provision.

Sexism and Associated Ideologies. The relationship between patriarchal sexism and IPV has been extensively explored in violence research. Countless articles connect toxic sexist dominance, patriarchal entitlement, and control with the devastating consequences of violence in the relationships of newcomers and long-residing Canadians alike (Ansara & Hindin, 2010; Du Mont et al., 2012; Renzetti, Lynch, & Dewall, 2015; Souto, Guruge, Merighi, & De Jesus, 2019). In IPV research, sexism and patriarchy are frequently acknowledged as central factors contributing to the disproportionate percentage of relational violence allocated to women in partnerships. Beyond that, these ideologies frequently influence women's decisions to seek support or leave a violent partner when faced with IPV (Barrett, Peirone, & Cheung, 2020; Suoto et al., 2019).

In the interviews service providers noted that various cultural and religious beliefs that newcomers hold, such as familialism and marianism, often moderate women's help-seeking behaviours and experiences. For many of the newcomers served by the interviewees, the expectation for wives and female partners to maintain their intimate and familial relationships reinforces the privatization of violence. Consequently, many newcomer women avoid utilizing IPV services, deeming violence a private family matter. This relegation of IPV to the family as an individual, personal matter effectively

responsibilizes the issue of violence, aligning with the neoliberal desire to responsibilize social issues for austerity purposes, despite their roots in systemic practices. As such, through the exercise of ideologies such as familialism and marianism, many newcomer women internalize violence's root causes and solutions and are expected to 'repair' their relationship independently, discouraging their use of external support, reinforcing the responsibilization of violence thereby justifying the continuation of austerity-enforced funding cuts for public IPV services.

Multiculturalism and its Ideological Reach. Interestingly, the ideology of multiculturalism repeatedly surfaced in the analysis of the interview material. In exploring the discussions with the service providers, it became apparent that the national embracing of multiculturalism is skewed and often oriented toward the neoliberal rewards that the ideology imparts. At surface level, multiculturalism aims to address marginalization toward minorities, allowing for individuals to experience societal acceptance while maintaining and celebrating their unique ancestry and traditions (Kymlicka, 2015; Thobani, 2018). However, as immigration policies are filtered through a neoliberal framework, the extent of Canada's acceptance and welcoming of newcomers is predicated on the perceived economic value of individuals and their ability to exercise self-sufficiency in settlement.

According to Kymlicka (2015), multiculturalism emerged as a tool to bolster neoliberal governance. Newcomer minorities are invited to integrate and participate in Canadian markets, enticed by the promise of membership and acceptance within Canada's multicultural society. However, this exchange is largely transactional. Under neoliberal direction, multiculturalism was intentionally framed to encourage and legitimize the responsibilization of citizens and concurrently operate to strengthen the Canadian

economic market. This lent to the valuation and welcoming of newcomers in accordance to their ability to contribute economically to the country and thrive independently. As acknowledged earlier in the chapter, newcomer access to resources is frequently tied to a newcomer's status at intake. This ultimately reflects the neoliberal concept of 'deservedness', rewarding economic contributors with access to socially funded immigrant and IPV services. Neoliberally-defined multiculturalism aids in facilitating the social inclusion of immigrants based on their alignment with the status quo. The stratified allocation of resources as contingent upon settlement status illustrates the conditional nature of multiculturalism, and its function as a means of marketizing and commodifying immigration practices and service attainment.

As neoliberalism and multiculturalism were adopted in tandem, citizens were expected to demonstrate greater acceptance of minoritized people and simultaneously accept cuts to social welfare programs and services (Kymlicka, 2015; Thobani, 2018). These dual processes encouraged an 'us' versus 'them' mentality, emphasizing the "otherness" of newcomers and bringing to question the rights of newcomers to access social welfare (Kymlicka, 2015). Multiculturalism effectively operates as a tool of neoliberal control, celebrating and catering to newcomers that fit the profile of the 'good', self-sufficient immigrant, and vilifying non-contributing citizens by denying social-funding and welfare. This process aids in reinforcing the responsabilization of newcomers and justifies the denial of providing welfare services to newcomers with precarious status, legitimizing neoliberal policies and practices that ultimately exclude vulnerable women from accessing aid in cases of IPV.

Research Limitations and Recommendations

It was beyond the scope of this project to complete a full institutional ethnography of service provision. Consequently, decisions surrounding the research process were constrained by both personal and technical limitations. As this is a masters level research project, the complexity of taking on a full institutional ethnography on the selected topic was beyond the requirements and expectations of the thesis component of the program. With the support of my research supervisor, I adopted a modified format feasible for this thesis research. This resulted in modifications to the structuring of the project and the selection of the research population. As such, in contrast to the typical research base of a traditional institutional ethnography, firsthand accounts of IPV service experiences from newcomer women situated at the local level were not collected for the research. Instead, service providers, straddling between the local and trans-local levels of existence were the key informants in the research.

The decision to utilize service providers as the central informants in the interview process was also a personally driven choice. As a student, it was beyond my research capacity to interview individuals about extremely sensitive subject matter. Although the barriers experienced by newcomer women were central to the research inquiries, seeking information directly from this population was above my skill level and qualifications as a researcher. For ethical reasons, choosing not to interview immigrant women was a sensible choice. However, the erasure of newcomer women's voices in the interview process poses major limitations to the representativeness of the research findings. It is inaccurate to assume that the perspectives of the service providers interviewed are a true reflection of the experiences that newcomer women face. The lack of these firsthand personal perspectives

is a significant limitation, as investigating marginalized voices is integral to the goals of institutional ethnography. Thus, moving forward from this research, it is a central recommendation for future exploration of the topic to extend the research beyond the modified institutional ethnography used, to centre minoritized voices of newcomer women. Extending the research population base to include newcomer women who have directly experienced IPV will be highly beneficial in establishing a more complete map of service provision, to understand existing barriers from the perspective of those directly affected.

Additionally, unanticipated obstacles that emerged in the recruitment process created further limitations for this study. In seeking to obtain interviewees during recruitment, significant challenges were encountered in gathering a varied research sample. Although a wide number and variety of organizations were invited to participate in the research, it was difficult to recruit potential interviewees, particularly from more peripheral service organizations serving women who have faced IPV. Many organizations expressed initial interest in the research, but communication often tapered off after first contact, and interviews were never arranged. As a result, the population interviewed is not fully encompassing the wide variety of services existing in the HRM.

The difficulties faced in obtaining participants and scheduling interviews is perhaps reflective of workload issues noted in the research. The slow response rate of organizations and struggles in obtaining interview participants hints at the deeply problematic overworking of many service providers, across various organizations. Each of the service providers interviewed acknowledged the overbearing workloads they often carry on a day-to-day basis, and their inability to stretch further to take on additional tasks beyond their assigned load. As one service provider stated, it leads to "...just hiding... We're kind of

just nose down, get the work done.” The personal struggle to recruit participants was an educational experience, shedding a sliver of light on the barriers existing in contacting and accessing organizations. While participant recruitment is in no way equated to the dire nature of seeking services for relieving IPV, it is concerning to know that the process of reaching organizations can be lengthy and challenging. As explored previously, the overburdening of service providers is significantly troublesome in relation to the consequential barriers it poses for newcomer women who attempt to access services.

As many of the women interviewed had once stood in my place as former graduate students, several shared stories of their own experiences as student researchers. They empathetically related to the struggles of contacting and obtaining participants for research, elaborating on similar difficulties faced with recruitment. One service provider stated that due to the time constraints and various pressures surrounding service provision, there are a limited number of service providers who meet with students for research purposes. She noted that in her experience, it is constantly the same individuals and organizations who meet with students for interviews, while other organizations are often difficult to reach and arrange meetings with. While it is certainly encouraging to hear that there are individuals who constantly contribute to the discourse and work tirelessly to ensure that marginalized populations are heard, it does bring to question whether these recurring voices promote an echo chamber of dialogue in existing research. The absence of the non-participating voices may contribute to missing key perspectives in the overall discussion. Consequently, the limited number and low variation of voices heard may not fully encapsulate the range of experiences of all service providers in the HRM. This will be a notable area worthy of further exploration.

Recommendations for Practice

This study focuses on how ideologically-driven discourses coordinate IPV service provision for newcomer women. As a critical study, however, consideration must also be given to the potential for transformation (Bohman, 2019). Recognizing the ways that ruling relations operate through service provision serves as a launching point for navigating how to act against these oppressive forces and bring about change. According to the research findings, in the dominant discourses surrounding newcomer IPV help-seeking, neoliberal ideology arose as a core system moderating the social, economic, and political frameworks surrounding service provision. Although potentially indirect, the suggestions embedded in following paragraphs aim to counter or facilitate the dismantling of the neoliberal practices surrounding service provision. These recommendations for practice at both the local and extra-local levels of experience seek to challenge the dominant structures enforcing the status quo by empowering service providers and women at the local level of experience. Although these suggestions may be seemingly minimal in scale, implementation of these practices carries potential to counter the structurally imposed barriers and to aid in combating oppression to foster positive social change.

Engaging in Change at the Local Level

One of the key recommendations emerging from the research is the need to equip immigrant women experiencing IPV with empowering skills. Although the barriers seem overwhelming, protective factors that leverage support or facilitate the stay-leave decision process can also be mobilized. As acknowledged throughout the interviews, newcomer women may be overshadowed by their male partners in the settlement and integration process, due to the neoliberal centring of breadwinning men in settlement programs and

services. Consequently, if IPV occurs, these women may be ill-equipped to access services if they cannot access the protective factors. As such, providing access to resources such as English or French language learning, employment training and job acquisition, education, and social connections is highly beneficial for allowing women to successfully settle in Canada, alleviating reliance on their partner. Ensuring the distribution of such resources is vital to empowering newcomer women and creating a buffer in cases of violence. This is a significant recommendation for shifting power from both greater institutions (such as the judicial system overseeing a case), and male partners, as women will have the necessary tools to understand their rights as newcomers, navigate IPV policies and practices, communicate effectively, and have the power to dictate how their IPV case is handled.

Another recurring recommendation proposed by interviewees is the need to build more meaningful partnerships and collaborations between organizations to strengthen practice and better serve newcomer women. While deep connections currently exist between many service organizations, one service provider noted that a great amount of time is often lost in the necessity to communicate between various organizations. The service provider stated that sometimes seeking information about clients from other organizations can pause any progression on a case for days. Particularly in the case of IPV, time is often of the essence, and women cannot afford to wait for days or weeks to hear a response from a service provider. She suggested that streamlining services, and perhaps sharing a database of client information between services, would quicken service response and ease provision. This would lend to lessening the workload for service providers, as they would have immediate access to client information to expedite cases. Additionally, such a change may

lessen the potential for cases to fall between the cracks due to communication issues between service providers and clients.

Importantly, while increasing efficiency within the workplace is ultimately a capitalist and neoliberal solution of improving services, adopting such a change may prove beneficial to ease workflow for those providing services to newcomer women. Altering communication at the local level has the potential to decrease workloads for service providers by lessening the need to communicate with other organizations to collect client information and speed up service to newcomer women who often face long wait times for service. Furthermore, in increasing the amount of time service providers can dedicate to individual clients, more personalized service may be possible, to counter the current “one-size-fits-all” service structure that some organizations ascribe to. Particularly in the case of serving newcomer populations, this may be highly valuable in adapting programs and services to attend to the unique barriers that newcomer women encounter.

In a similar stream, another service provider suggested that offering a broad range of services within a single organization could be useful to holistically serve women and form more culturally relevant practice. For example, providing immediate access to translation services within non-immigrant-centred organizations could accelerate the pace of cases. Communication between service providers and newcomer women was a core barrier expressed by many service providers. In the case of newcomers facing language barriers, greater and more immediate access to a wide range of translators was repeatedly acknowledged as a meaningful step forward in improving service provision. Providing access to readily available translator services is a necessary step for empowering newcomer

women facing language barriers, to provide reign over their own voices for effective communication with service providers.

Additionally, establishing collaborations between organizations has the potential to empower service providers, by providing access to tools that they may not already possess. As two service providers mentioned, service providers may feel ill-equipped to provide newcomer women with support, particularly within organizations that do not specialize in serving newcomer women. Obtaining access to newcomer-centred training, resources, and consultations with immigrant organizations may strengthen services at the local level and empower service providers to better serve immigrant populations.

At the core of these issues is the financial strain that many organizations face. Due to the neoliberal constraints imposed on social service provision, organizations are often forced to do more work with fewer resources or streamline resources to provide more generic programming and services. Within the context of the current neoliberal environment, it may not be realistic to suggest increasing funding as a core recommendation for practice. Such a resolution is dependent on shifting institutional goals and values at the extra-local level. Primarily, this would require altering the priorities of government spending and the distribution of funding to mirror a more socialist agenda. While this is an ultimate solution to the various barriers existing for newcomer women, proposing smaller actionable changes may be more appropriate for the scale of this student research. Encouraging collaboration between various organizations and placing greater focus on empowering service providers and newcomer women may be a more feasible suggestion for action. In strengthening organizations and equipping them with the necessary resources and tools for serving newcomer women, we may begin to see a

positive shift toward the dismantling of barriers noted by the interviewees. For the purpose of this study, these suggestions may be more appropriate paths for challenging the greater institutions of power moderating service provision and combatting oppression in smaller, but meaningful ways.

Promoting Change at the Extra-Local Level

The hegemonic persistence of ruling relations poses one of the greatest challenges for dismantling existing systems of power. In maintaining the status quo, the institutional structures that create and foster the dominant discourse persevere as the unquestioned norm. In the context of the current research, this results in the major decisions and ruling texts surrounding both immigration and IPV service provision to remain in the hands of a powerful few at the extra-local level of experience. As a steppingstone for enacting change, it is necessary to interrupt these unquestioned, normative patterns of ruling to confront and change the ideologies promoting oppression at the local level.

One approach to challenging the oppressive ruling relations guiding newcomer service provision is to interject at the location where ruling texts are conceived. Including immigrant women into institutional practices largely dominated by Canadian-born men (e.g. government, the justice system) would insert these less-acknowledged, yet highly valuable voices into the public discourse. One service provider stated that incorporating immigrant perspectives into institutions where policies and practices are rooted is an integral move forward, in bringing forth the voices of newcomer populations and instigating change in the ways that they best see fit. Encouraging and supporting immigrant women to take part in these extra-local institutions would provide minoritized newcomer

voices a platform in a position of power, and aid in dismantling the laws and practices that contribute to IPV service barriers.

Increasing female representation in governing systems is a movement that has gained great interest in recent years. Canada has seen a call to improve the representation of women and minoritized groups in political roles, including the inclusion of more newcomer and indigenous women in all levels of governing (Vecchio, 2019; Women and Gender Equality Canada, 2019). In past years, Canadian leadership has made viable strides in supporting women to enter government roles. The Liberal government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau introduced Canada's first cabinet with a balanced number of men and women in 2015, a trend continued through his leadership (Ditchburn, 2015, November 6). While improvement is evident through these actions, progress is slow-moving and the number of newcomer voices within the political realm continues to be relatively low.

There is no simple solution to equalize the existing imbalance in current politics and low representation of newcomer women within government positions. However, there are plenty of things that can and ought to be done to ensure that newcomer women's voices are included in the public discourse. Tackling the issue from a structural perspective and addressing the complex underlying barriers that women face when becoming involved in government is necessary to appropriately address this gap. Recent research highlights obstacles such as weaker professional networks, the financial barriers of campaigning, and the patriarchal nature of government as significant deterrents for all women to engage in political positions (Vecchio, 2019; WFUNA, n.d.). Coupling these difficulties with the unique barriers that may accompany immigration, such as the devaluation of foreign credentials or racialization, seeking a role in government can be an unappealing and

daunting ordeal for newcomer women. Providing newcomer women with the tools to support their political engagement could aid in easing the process and countering the barriers that contribute to newcomer women's low participation in the political realm. Suggestions for increasing participation from women within government include equipping women with relevant training and creating workplace, mentorship, and networking opportunities to empower women and alleviate the obstacles they face in entering politics (Vecchio, 2019). These suggested actions would be similarly beneficial for newcomer women interested in engaging in politics. Adopting such changes would be highly advantageous to increase the representation of newcomer women in these roles and establish a political environment in which decisions made are more reflective of the views and priorities of the newcomer community.

Furthermore, it is suggested that shifting the ideologically driven narratives surrounding women in politics is necessary to alter current societal perspectives that may hinder their inclusion in politics (Vecchio, 2019). In a report by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, one speaker critiques that "women's political participation can only be removed once society's attitudes about gender change" (Karen Sorensen, Mayor of Banff, as an individual, p. 29). The document provides a detailed exploration of various ideological barriers that perpetuate the exclusion of women in politics, including their familial responsibilities, gender and career path stereotypes, discrimination in the workplace, and perceptions surrounding their leadership ability (Vecchio, 2019). Unpacking these structural issues and adjusting societal perspectives of women is necessary for establishing a permanent shift in the current ruling relations. This can be highly favourable for reshaping perspectives surrounding women's roles and ability to

participate in politics in the future, ultimately providing women greater avenues to enter the political realm and normalizing their participation within this field.

Notably, the introduction of immigrant women into these institutional positions may carve a safe space for *other* newcomers to openly share the issues that truly affect them. Creating a trustworthy avenue for addressing concerns has the potential to be highly empowering for newcomer women both at the extra-local and local levels of experience. In both the Literature Review and Results chapters, it was emphasized how valuable cultural communities are in establishing social ties and capital for newcomers and building trust, openness, and candidness in sharing personal experiences. Including more newcomer women's voices from immigrant communities can be highly meaningful in empowering the community to feel heard, and to address the existing bifurcation of consciousness newcomer women experience, between their experiences of settlement and service provision and reality as dictated through neoliberal policies and practices. Incorporating community members in positions of power has the potential to establish greater empathy and understanding of newcomer community needs, increase responsiveness to the issues faced by newcomer women, and allow for greater representation of newcomer discourse to be included in the conceptualization of service provision. In doing so, such inclusion of newcomer women in these roles could ease the disjuncture existing in current IPV service provision and create services and practices that demonstrate greater alignment to the needs of immigrant women experiencing violence.

Additionally, there is evidence supporting the benefits of reshaping services within the criminal justice system. As elaborated in the Results chapter, there is a growing movement toward incorporating less punitive and more restorative practices into services

addressing and treating IPV. The goal of many of these alternative methods for addressing violence is the reparation and restoration of relationships, rather than retribution for violent perpetrators (Government of Nova Scotia, 2018). Restorative justice approaches for violence encourage the inclusion of all parties impacted, often including partners and any children involved, to ensure that accountability is made for any harm and that the needs of those affected by violence are addressed in the process of reparation (Government of Nova Scotia, 2018). Importantly, many of these programs and services aim to take a preventative approach to violence, focusing on teaching boys and men to establish healthy, non-violent methods for handling conflict in relationships, to alleviate the need for later intervention for violence.

As mentioned, settlement services are also modifying and developing new resources to adjust to the demand for less punitive practices and modifying services with immigrant experiences in mind. Continuing to incorporate these methods into practice and expanding them to accommodate for the various settlement and integration obstacles newcomer populations experience may be a valuable action in addressing service barriers and improving services to suit the needs of newcomer women. Similar to the need to incorporate women's voices in the development of ruling texts, adopting these changes within the justice system is a significant way to address the gap experienced by newcomer women between what services they are currently receiving from the justice system and what services truly align with their needs and experiences. As many of the laws surrounding violence are established through neoliberal goals that may not correspond to the needs of newcomer women, making these changes may aid in creating experiences that are more parallel to what women truly need. Particularly, accounting for the needs of

women and children and allowing for women to guide the service experience can be highly empowering for newcomer women at the local level.

Bridging Research and Practice

Lastly, an important area to address regarding practice-based suggestions for change, is the need to assess and potentially bridge the relationship between research and practice. During the process of recruitment, I experienced an air of apathy surrounding the research from some service providers invited to participate in the research. I was faced with mild skepticism and inquiries surrounding whether there was any concrete value in the research, if no further action is taken beyond the written document. Notably, this experience of apathy became a tangential topic brought forth by two interviewees in our conversations. For each of the service providers interviewed, frontline practice is the core of their work, so the practical elements of my research were highly important to their own work and living realities. From a critical perspective, it is essential to not only explore power from a theoretical perspective, but to empower and to enact meaningful change or engage in praxis through the dissemination and implementation of the research.

The experience of apathy toward research within the realm of practice is not a new concept, and this divide has been discussed both in academic research and within the general discourse surrounding a growing wariness toward current academia (Bolton & Stocis, 2003; Panda & Gupta, 2014; Hoffman, 2016). Yet, despite thorough discussion, the issue continues to resonate with service providers, without resolution. Particularly from a critical standpoint, it is essential to assess this issue and seek meaningful ways to address this divide, and bridge research and practice. According to previous research, the issues surrounding dissemination often originate in the disengagement between the realms of

research and academia versus service agencies and policy making bodies (Brownson et al., 2018; Lucyshyn, 2016, Aug 15). Various academic and mainstream articles discuss the complex nature of research dissemination and the tendency for the distribution and consumption of academic work to remain within academic circles, rendering it unavailable to the general public due to disengagement, overuse of academic language, and access paywalls (Martel, 2018, March 29; Hanneke, 2019). Consequently, the impact and reach of academic-based research is constrained by these limitations, restricting the implementation of research suggestions into practical applications.

As acknowledged in several courses within the MA FSGN program, Knowledge Translation (KT) is an essential component of delivering academic research through more digestible and accessible means of communication. Creating content that utilizes media platforms that are both widely accessible and consumable for the day-to-day use of community partners and non-academics is significant in breaking barriers that academia places in KT (Martel, 2018, March 29; Rokka, 2012, July 1). This suggested call for altering the means and strategies surrounding the sharing and distribution of research is vitally important to the current study, as critical theory is driven by praxis, and aims to not only acknowledge the theoretical bases of inequality but also hone in on the actionable application of means for change. Exploring and applying the potential ways for addressing the gap between research and practice, through the creation of more publicly engaging, accessible content is a necessary step toward establishing a better connection between the research community, service providers, and policy makers, to develop research that can be accessed by a larger audience and better applied in practice.

Conclusion

In recent years, the province has utilized immigration as a tool for increasing population growth, filling employment gaps, and strengthening local communities. As such, the demographic characteristics of newcomers to Halifax are continually changing and the population is increasingly becoming more diverse. As the immigrant population of the Halifax region continues to grow, representing numerous social groups and identities, it is imperative to recognize the potential challenges newcomers face in the processes related to settlement. The present study evaluated the ways through which the intersectional realities associated with immigrant identity guide service access and provision for newcomer women. In exploring the intersectional experiences of seeking and obtaining violence support, the research sought to unpack the obstacles newcomer women encounter when seeking aid for IPV in the Halifax region. Through a modified institutional ethnographic exploration of service provision, the research traced upwards from service providers' personal experiences supporting newcomer populations, to identify the overarching institutional systems and ideologies contributing to and perpetuating existing service barriers. From this, a map of the ruling relations surrounding service provision was established.

Informed by the critical framework, the modified institutional ethnography centered service providers as the local 'experts', contributing their experiences serving the immigrant community. Through mapping service provision from the local to trans-local levels of experience, various systems and institutional structures were identified as inherently linked to the barriers in service access and experiences for newcomers. Drawing from the interviews, gaps in service provision for newcomer women stem from the

ideological employment of neoliberal ideology in immigration processes, violence services, and the criminal justice system. Through the application of ‘texts’ such as the implementation of written policies and funding stipulations in frontline practice, extralocal ruling bodies direct and regulate practice at the local level. As such, guided by trans-local ruling bodies, neoliberal ideology is effectively activated within the realm of newcomer service provision. The research further established that the activation of other ideologies including sexism and multiculturalism serve to sustain neoliberalism at the local level. Together, these practices serve to normalize and legitimize neoliberal practices, functioning to bolster its hegemonic existence in local service provision practices.

Although the research was limited in its design as a modified institutional ethnography, it illuminates the very serious consequences of perpetuating the current ruling relations. As noted by the service providers interviewed, the existing barriers to provision not only burden the providers who are overworked but harm the already-marginalized newcomer women who experience revictimization by the services designed to provide aid. This research illustrates that in working to shape better settlement and victim service experiences for newcomer women, it is integral to further examine how local obstacles surrounding support are facilitated by systemic bodies of power.

To better understand the implications of these results, future studies could benefit from addressing the issue from the perspective of newcomer women. The current research was limited to the views of service providers, due to ethical and practical limitations, however, newcomer women have the potential to offer a wealth of information on service barriers in future expansions of the current research. Furthermore, as the study abides by a critical theoretical perspective, it is necessary to move beyond the theoretical examination

of the issue to explore practical, actionable means for transformation. As noted in the recommendations, focusing on the application of the findings in extensions of the current work is essential in altering current ruling relations and developing more inclusive programs and services that better serve newcomer clients experiencing IPV.

Furthermore, although the research unpacked the role of neoliberal ideology in the realm of IPV service provision, this work is part of a greater picture and offers a window into the discernable gaps existing across many institutions, as a result of neoliberal processes. At the time of developing this thesis, Canada as a whole is seeing a paradigm shift toward a more critical evaluation of existing institutions of power, practices, and largely accepted norms. The rise of the Black Lives Matter movement (Black Lives Matter, n.d.), growing queries on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and the realities facing Indigenous people (Razack, 2016; Savarese, 2017), and budding interest in environmental rights (Poto, 2017; McGregor, 2018;) are but few examples of the many issues we are currently seeing Canadians critically confront in contemporary society. We are no longer existing in an era of passive acceptance of the status quo. Rather, there is a growing desire among Canadians toward creating equity across institutions to accommodate for the disproportionate marginalization that disenfranchised groups experience.

This is highly relevant in the overall environment of the HRM, as we see growing interest in creating policy changes in areas such as systemic racism (Draus, 2020, Jan 24), income inequality (Tutton, 2020, Mar 11), and growing gentrification in low income neighbourhoods (Devet, 2019, Sept 23). While these issues may appear unrelated, they are intimately linked in the desire to better serve those traditionally excluded from greater conversations surrounding policy development and implementation. There is value in examining ruling relations in the

development and application of policies, laws, and regulations that inform day to day practice across organizations and institutions. Critical analysis of these discourses is valuable in interrupting the potential ways that laws, policies, and practices contribute to ongoing racism and the colonial legacy prominent in the history of the HRM. Furthermore, understanding these gaps is necessary in modifying and reshaping these texts to account for marginalized voices and ensure their inclusion in future discourses.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Guide

I. Programs/Services Available:

1. Can you tell me about your line of work? (Probe: position, general duties and responsibilities). How long have you been involved in this area?
2. How central is addressing violence to your work? Is it your specific area of focus or an aspect of what you do?
3. Could you please describe the services and programs that you personally provide through your work to address intimate partner violence?
 - a. Are these programs and services preventative or an intervention once violence occurs? (Prompt: When are they provided? Are they offered generally and at any point in time, to provide information to all women? Are they specifically targeted toward women who are currently experiencing violence? After violence has occurred?)
1. Is your work immigrant-specific, or do you cater to all women, including immigrant women?
2. Beyond your area of work, what types of services does your organization provide for immigrant women experiencing violence? (Probe: Other types of support? Referrals to other services?)
3. Are you aware of any other services available for immigrant women in HRM that address intimate partner violence?
 - a. Are these services/programs similar to the services/programs that you or your organization provide? Are there differences? (e.g. women's shelters vs. counselling services, legal aid, medical assistance etc.)
 - b. Do any of these other programs/services operate in collaboration with your programs/services?

II. Barriers to Services:

Accessing Services:

1. Could you walk me through the process of accessing resources/services through your organization?
 - a. How does the process typically begin? (Prompt: Professional referral, self-referral, requirement to attend program as component of settlement process?)
 - b. Who is qualified to access services through your organization? How is 'immigrant' defined (e.g. length of time residing in Canada, official status as a refugee, permanent resident etc.)?
 - c. How long may someone access services? Is there any financial cost to services?
 - d. What is your perspective on the current process for accessing resources? Are there any aspects that you feel work very well for immigrant women seeking services? Are there any aspects that you feel may make seeking

services difficult? (Probe: Factors that may enable/impede access and potential barriers to service/support.)

Engagement with Services:

1. I'm interested to learn more about how immigrant women *experience* the services provided once they have access to a program/service?
 - a. Are there particular types of services/programs that immigrant women access more often than others? (Prompt: Educational material/programs, legal support, housing services etc.) Are there programs that they are not seeking/utilizing as often? If so, what might account for these differences in service use?
 - b. Do you experience any variations in the types of services utilized by immigrant women in comparison to the services being used by Canadian-born women? If so, how do they differ? (Probe: Discrepancies in availability/range/type of services) Are there any variations in the use of services between cultural groups, or women from differing countries of origin? What factors may impact these differences in service use?

III. Issues Service Providers Face:

1. In your own day to day experiences as a service provider, do you experience any challenges that may limit your ability serving immigrant women? What are they? (Probe: Financial limitations/ program funding, language barriers, cultural differences etc.)
 - a. What practices may be in place that you feel limit your ability to serve the immigrant population? (Probe: Legal, organizational limitations/boundaries)
 - b. How do you understand these practices? (Probe: Structural factors – e.g. laws and policies that limit what a service provider can/cannot do)
 - c. How do you manage all of this? Has anything been helpful for you in navigating some of these challenges? If so, what helps? (Probe: Community related activism or other methods being employed to counter challenges)
2. Are there any changes that you would like to see that may help ease some of these barriers? Do you have any examples of what you would like to see changed? (Probe for various levels of change i.e. legal changes, organizational changes, societal changes)
3. What do you feel would be the best approach for addressing these challenges? (Probe: Levels of change - Can issues be locally addressed within the organization? Are these a government issue? Is there a need for changes at the societal level?)
4. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me?
5. Do you know anyone who might be interested in sharing their perspectives on their role as a service provider for immigrant women? (Refer participants to information in *Appendix D: Letter to Potential Participants* to share with any potential participants).

Appendix B

Letter to Service Providing Organizations



Department of Family Studies and Gerontology

Title of Study: *Exploring the Structural Barriers Facilitating the Availability and Utility of Help-Seeking Resources for Immigrant Women Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence*

This letter is a request for *[name of organization]*'s support for a project I am conducting as a component of the Master of Arts degree in the Department of Family Studies and Gerontology at Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. I am seeking permission to recruit employees from *[name of organization]* to participate in my research project. This project is in partial fulfilment of my program's graduation requirements, and will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Deborah Norris.

I would like to provide you with more information about this project that explores barriers to service provision for immigrant women experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV). The purpose of this study is to investigate the various factors limiting immigrant women's ability to obtain meaningful support in cases of IPV. Within this area of inquiry, I am interested in evaluating the overarching, structural factors that limit access to support from the perspective of those who provide services. This will involve exploration of the experiences of service providers executing the services and programs currently available within the Halifax Regional Municipality. Knowledge and information generated from this study may be beneficial for researchers, programmers, and community members in the evaluation, modification, and development of programs and services catering to the population of immigrant women.

This project will involve individual interviews with service providers who work directly with immigrant women experiencing IPV. It is my hope to connect with service providers from *[name of organization]* who are engaged in the programs and services that assist immigrant women who experience IPV, and invite them to participate in this research project. I believe that these individuals will offer unique perspectives and insights relating to the potential limitations they witness and encounter when serving immigrant women.

To participate in the interviews, individuals must be over 19 years of age, and be able to communicate fluently in English. Prospective participants must have a minimum of one-year experience working with immigrant women in cases concerning IPV support within the Halifax Regional Municipality. Participation is completely voluntary. All participants will be informed and reminded of their rights to participate and ability to withdraw at any time

throughout the study without penalty. Each participant will receive a document detailing information about this study, as well as informed consent agreement forms.

Each interview will last approximately one hour, to one hour and thirty minutes in length. Throughout the interview I will be inquiring about the service provider's experiences serving immigrant women who seek support for IPV. To explore the topic, potential questions will include investigation of the barriers that they perceive immigrant women to face in obtaining support, the obstacles service providers may have encountered in their work supporting immigrant women, and the overarching policies and practices that may limit help-seeking. Additionally, participants will be provided with an opportunity to share any further information not addressed within the body of the interview.

During the interview, the audio-recording device used may be switched off at any time, if the participant so chooses. Participants will not be required to answer any of the questions posed during the interview, and may choose at any point to move on to the next question or end the interview without penalty.

There is no expectation that individuals will experience distress due to participation in the interview, however, there is a possibility that participants may feel uncomfortable discussing some of the topics. Participants will be reminded that they may skip questions without penalty or stop the interview at any time to avoid any discomfort. If a participant experiences significant distress by participation in this study, I can direct them to confidential services and resources within the community that will be able to provide support.

There is no anticipated direct benefit to the participant, although participation is likely to contribute to a deeper understanding of the barriers immigrant women encounter in seeking support for IPV. Stemming from this, participation may lead to an increased focus on the issue within the realm of research and contribute to the potential modification or development of policies and services to better serve the population of immigrant women experiencing IPV.

Any personal information shared through participation in the research project will only be accessible to me and my thesis supervisor, Dr. Deborah Norris. Any written material produced including the informed consent forms, transcribed copies of the interviews, and interview notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Additionally, electronic records of the interviews (voice recorded audio files and transcripts) will be stored on a password protected computer.

All participants will have a pseudonym assigned and any additional identifying information will be removed from the data during the transcription of the interview. If requested, these changes will be consistent in any reports, papers, or presentations produced from this research. No information shared will be released to any external individuals or agencies.

While all measures will be taken to ensure participants' privacy and confidentiality, it is valuable to note that due to the nature of the research complete anonymity may be difficult to guarantee. However, participants will be offered the opportunity to review a transcript of their interview and may change or omit any part of the interview from the study. Additionally, participants may also choose to withdraw the full interview from the project. Upon transcription of the data, the audio-recorded voice files will be destroyed. Other materials such

as the interview transcripts or notes made during the interview will be permanently destroyed five years after the completion of the research project.

Following completion of the study, information shared through the interview may be used in publications or presented at conferences. Identifying information will not appear in any publications, papers, or presentations that emerge from this research. With participant permission, key segments may be drawn from the interview and used in publications or presentations to highlight themes emergent in the research. A summary of the research findings can be provided to your organization at your request.

If you have any further questions regarding this research project or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation through [*name of organization*], please contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or by email at manila.tanafranca@msvu.ca. You may also contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Deborah Norris at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or by email at deborah.norris@msvu.ca

Additionally, should you wish to voice concern about this research project or seek further information regarding ethical considerations, you may contact the Chair of the Mount Saint Vincent University Research Ethics Board at (902) 457-6350 or by email at research@msvu.ca

Yours sincerely,

Manila Tanafranca

Masters of Art Candidate
Department of Family Studies and Gerontology
Mount Saint Vincent University

Appendix C
Letter to Potential Participants



Department of Family Studies and Gerontology

Title of Study: *Exploring the Structural Barriers Facilitating the Availability and Utility of Help-Seeking Resources for Immigrant Women Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence*

I am seeking participation for a research project that I am completing in partial fulfillment of my graduation requirements for the Master of Arts in Family Studies and Gerontology program at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU), Halifax, Nova Scotia. The purpose of this project is to explore the potential obstacles immigrant women encounter when seeking support in cases of intimate partner violence. I will be investigating this topic from the perspective of service providers who work directly with immigrant women, to explore their experiences in providing support. This will involve exploration of the barriers in existing services and programs currently available within the Halifax Regional Municipality. Following completion of the project, results from the study may be used for publication in academic journals or presented at conferences.

I believe that due to your active involvement in providing services to immigrant women experiencing violence, you are best suited to speak to the various issues concerning access to support services. This project will involve a one-on-one interview discussing your experience of providing services to immigrant women. The following includes the eligibility criteria for participation:

- Be at least 19 years old;
- Speak English fluently;
- Have a minimum of one year's engagement directly serving immigrant women in cases concerning IPV in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

This project will involve participation in one face-to-face interview that will last approximately one hour to one hour and thirty minutes in length. The interview will take place at a location of your choosing, within or external from your place of employment. At the time of the interview you will be asked about your experiences working with immigrant women who face IPV and the barriers and obstacles you have encountered. Additionally, you will be provided the opportunity to share any further information not addressed within the interview questions.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. During the interview the recording device may be switched off at any time, if you so choose. At any point throughout the research process you

may fully withdraw from the study without any negative consequences by informing the researcher that you no longer wish to participate. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed when applicable. Furthermore, you may choose to skip any question during the interview, but continue to participate in the rest of the study.

While there is no expectation that any discomfort or distress will be experienced as a result of your participation in the interview there is a possibility that you may share some personal information by chance, or that you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the interview if you feel the questions cause any distress or if talking about them makes you uncomfortable. You may ask to skip questions without penalty or stop the interview at any time. In the event that you feel significant distress by participation in this study, I can direct you to confidential services and resources within the community that will be able to provide support.

There is no anticipated direct benefit to you, but your participation is likely to contribute to a deeper understanding of the barriers immigrant women encounter in seeking support for IPV. Stemming from this, your participation may lend to an increased focus on the issue and the potential development or modification of policies and services to better serve the population of immigrant women experiencing IPV.

Any personal information shared through participation in the research project is confidential and will only be accessible to me and my thesis supervisor, Dr. Deborah Norris. Any written material produced including the informed consent forms, transcribed copies of the interviews, and interview notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Additionally, electronic records of the interviews (voice recorded files and transcripts) will be stored on a password protected computer.

With your consent, the entire interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate the collection of information, and later transcribed verbatim for analysis. However, during transcription, your name will be replaced with a pseudonym and any identifying information will be omitted from the data. These changes will be consistent in any reports, papers, or presentations produced from this research. Your information will not be released to any external individuals or agencies.

While all measures will be taken to ensure your privacy and confidentiality, it is valuable to note that due to the nature of the research complete anonymity may be difficult to guarantee. However, you will be offered the opportunity to review a transcript of your interview and may choose to alter or omit any portion of the interview. You may also choose to withdraw your interview from the project. Upon completion of the interview transcription, the audio-recorded voice files will be destroyed. Other materials such as the interview transcripts or notes made during the interview will be destroyed five years after the completion of my thesis.

Following completion of the study, information shared through the interview may be used in publications or presented at conferences. Identifying information will be omitted from publications, papers, or presentations that emerge from this research in accordance to your requests. With permission, key quotations may be drawn from the interview and used in

publications or presentations to highlight themes emergent in the research. A summary of the research findings can be provided to you at your request.

If you have any further questions regarding this research project or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or by email at manila.tanafranca@msvu.ca. You may also contact the faculty member supervising my thesis work, Dr. Deborah Norris at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or by email at deborah.norris@msvu.ca

Additionally, should you wish to voice concern about this research project or seek further information regarding ethical considerations, you may contact the Chair of the Mount Saint Vincent University Research Ethics Board at (902) 457-6350 or by email at research@msvu.ca

Yours sincerely,

Manila Tanafranca

Masters of Art Candidate
Department of Family Studies and Gerontology
Mount Saint Vincent University

Appendix D
Informed Consent Form



Department of Family Studies and Gerontology

Title of Study: *Exploring the Structural Barriers Facilitating the Availability and Utility of Help-Seeking Resources for Immigrant Women Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence*

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Manila Tanafranca from the Department of Family Studies and Gerontology at Mount Saint Vincent University (Halifax, Nova Scotia). This research project is being completed in partial fulfillment of the M.A. graduation requirements, and as such the results of the study will be included in Ms. Tanafranca's Masters written thesis and presented at her thesis defense. Your participation in this project is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Please consider this information carefully before deciding on whether to participate in this research.

This Informed Consent Form has three parts:

- Study Information
- Consent to Participate in the Research Study Form
- Consent to be Audio-Taped Form

Study Information

Purpose of the Research: This research project explores the barriers to service provision for immigrant women experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV). The purpose of this study is to investigate the various factors limiting immigrant women's ability to obtain meaningful support in cases of IPV. The research will evaluate the overarching, structural factors that limit access to support from the perspective of those who provide services. This will involve exploration of the barriers in existing services and programs currently available within the Halifax Regional Municipality, through the experiences of service providers. Knowledge and information generated from this study may be beneficial for researchers, policy makers, program developers, and community members in the evaluation, modification, and development of programs and services catering to the population of immigrant women.

You are being invited to participate in this study because of your role as a service provider for immigrant women experiencing IPV. The experiences you have gathered through your work may contribute greatly to a deeper understanding of the barriers to services. The following information will allow you to establish your eligibility for the study. Eligible participants must:

- Be at least 19 years old;
- Speak English fluently;
- Have a minimum of one year's engagement directly serving immigrant women in cases concerning IPV in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

What you will be Asked to do in the Research: This project will involve participation in one face-to-face interview that will last approximately one hour to one hour and thirty minutes in length. The interview will take place at a location of your choosing, within or external from your place of employment. At the time of the interview you will be asked about your experiences working with immigrant women who face IPV and the barriers and obstacles you have encountered. To explore the topic, potential questions will include investigation of the barriers that you perceive immigrant women to face in obtaining support, the obstacles service provider's may have encountered in their work supporting immigrant women, and the overarching policies and practices that limit help-seeking. Additionally, you will be provided the opportunity to share any further information not addressed within the interview questions.

If you do not wish to answer any of the questions during the interview, you may choose to move on to the next question without penalty. No one other than the interviewer will be present unless you would like someone else to be there. The information recorded is confidential, and only the researcher (Ms. Tanafranca) and her thesis supervisor (Dr. Deborah Norris) will have access to the information documented during your interview. During the interview the recording device may be switched off at any time, if you so choose. With your consent, the entire interview will be audio-recorded. Additionally, the recordings will be transcribed verbatim, however you will have a pseudonym assigned and all identifying information will be omitted from the data during the transcription process. Your real name and any other identifying information will not be included in any documents produced from the data. Once transcribed, you will be offered the opportunity to review the transcribed interview and choose to amend or omit any portion of the interview.

Potential Risks and Benefits: While there is no expectation that any discomfort or distress will be experienced as a result of your participation in the interview there is a possibility that you may share some personal information by chance, or that you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the interview if you feel the questions cause any distress or if talking about them makes you uncomfortable. You may ask to skip questions without penalty or stop the interview at any time. In the event that you feel significant distress by participation in this study, Ms. Tanafranca can direct you to confidential services and resources within the community that will be able to provide support.

There is no anticipated direct benefit to you, but your participation is likely to contribute to a deeper understanding of the barriers immigrant women encounter in seeking support for IPV. Stemming from this, your participation may lend to an increased focus on the issue and the potential development or modification of policies and services to better serve the population of immigrant women experiencing IPV.

Confidentiality: Any personal information shared through participation in the research project will only be accessible to the researcher, Ms. Tanafranca and her thesis supervisor, Dr. Deborah Norris. Any written material produced including the informed consent forms, transcribed copies of the interviews, and interview notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Additionally, electronic records of the interviews (voice recorded files and transcripts) will be stored on a password protected computer.

Your name will be changed and identifying information will be stripped from the data in the development of your interview transcript. Similarly, these changes will be consistent in any reports, papers, or presentations produced from this research. Your information will not be released to any external individuals or agencies.

While all measures will be taken to ensure your privacy and confidentiality, it is valuable to note that due to the nature of the research complete anonymity may be difficult to guarantee. However, you will be offered the opportunity to review a transcript of your interview and may choose to change or omit any part of the interview from the study. You may also choose to withdraw your interview from the project. Upon completion of the transcription process, the audio-recorded voice files will be destroyed. Other materials such as the interview transcripts or notes made during the interview will be destroyed upon successful completion of the thesis.

Following completion of the study, information shared through the interview may be used for publication in academic journals or presented at conferences. Identifying information will be omitted from publications, papers, or presentations that emerge from this research in accordance to your requests. With permission, key quotations may be drawn from the interview and used in publications or presentations to highlight themes emergent in the research. A summary of the research findings can be provided to you at your request.

Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may stop participating in the study at any time without penalty, for any reason, if you so decide. At any point throughout the research process you may fully withdraw from the study by informing the researcher that you no longer wish to participate. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed when applicable. Furthermore, you may choose to skip any question during the interview, but continue to participate in the rest of the study.

Questions About the Research?: If you have any further questions regarding this research project or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact the researcher at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or by email at manila.tanafranca@msvu.ca. You may also contact the faculty member supervising her work, Dr. Deborah Norris at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or by email at deborah.norris@msvu.ca

Should you wish to voice concern about this research project or seek further information regarding ethical considerations, you may contact the Chair of the Mount Saint Vincent University Research Ethics Board at (902) 457-6350 or by email at research@msvu.ca

Yours sincerely,

Manila Tanafranca

Masters of Art Candidate
Department of Family Studies and Gerontology
Mount Saint Vincent University

Consent to Participate in Research Study Form

Title of Study: *Exploring the Structural Barriers Facilitating the Availability and Utility of Help-Seeking Resources for Immigrant Women Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence*

Participant Agreement: I understand that participation in this project will involve participation in an interview involving my experiences as a service provider, supporting immigrant women who experience intimate partner violence (IPV). I understand that my involvement in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point and for any reason without incurring any penalty. I understand that I am under no obligation to respond to any interview question that I find uncomfortable or invasive. I understand that all personal data shared with the researcher will be handled confidentially and stored securely so that only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data.

I have read and carefully considered the information provided with this consent form. The nature and purpose of this research have been sufficiently explained and I have had the opportunity to discuss the research. I understand the procedures described above and I wish to participate in this study. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. My signature below indicates my consent.

Participant Signature : _____ Date : _____

Participant Name (please print) : _____

Phone Number : _____ Email : _____

Consent for Publication of Materials: Please indicate whether you give permission to the researcher to include direct quotes or excerpts from your interview in publications and presentations resulting from this study.

YES, you may use direct quotes or excerpts from my interview.

NO, you may not use direct quotes or excerpts from my interview.

Participant Signature : _____ Date : _____

Request to Receive Summary of Results: I would like to receive a copy of the summary of the main findings.

YES

NO

Researcher Agreement: I have provided all of the related information to the research participant to the best of my knowledge and have provided the research participant with a copy of this consent form.

Researcher Signature : _____ Date : _____

Appendix E

List of Support Services for Participants



*Department of Family Studies and
Gerontology*

While there is no anticipation or intention for harm, the researcher recognizes that it may be difficult to answer questions related to your role as a service provider. If you feel upset after completing the interview or find that some questions or aspects of the study trigger distress, talking with a qualified professional may help. If you feel you would like assistance, please refer below for a list of services.

If your situation is urgent, contact the **Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team** at **902-429-8167** or toll-free at **1-888-429-8167** or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

For non-crisis services, please contact:

Service	Phone Number	Description
HRM Community Mental Health Clinics	Bayers Road: (902) 454-1400 Bedford/Sackville: (902) 865-3663 Cole Harbour/Eastern HRM: (902) 434-3263 Dartmouth: (902) 466-1830 West Hants: (902) 792-2042	The HRM Community Mental Health clinics offer a range of services to help people manage their mental illness and improve their mental health. The services provided are available at no cost to adults. There are various locations across the HRM.
Family Service Halifax Association	(902) 420-1980 or 1-888-886-5552	The Family Service Halifax Association is an independent, not-for-profit, community based agency. They offer a wide range of counselling services. Many services are accessed through self-referral and fees are based on the person's ability to pay.
Canadian Mental Health Association, Halifax/Dartmouth Branch	(902) 455-5445	The Canadian Mental Health Association promotes the mental health of all and supports the resilience and recovery of people experiencing mental illness.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your participation in this study, its purpose or procedures, or if you have a research-related problem, please feel free to contact the researcher, Manila Tanafranca at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or at manila.tanafranca@msvu.ca or. You may also contact the faculty member supervising her work, Dr. Deborah Norris at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or by email at deborah.norris@msvu.ca

Should you wish to voice concern about this research project or seek further information regarding ethical considerations, you may contact the Chair of the Mount Saint Vincent University Research Ethics Board at (902) 457-6350 or by email at research@msvu.ca.