More than just double discrimination: A scoping review of the experiences and impact of ableism and racism in employment

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Background

Research shows that people with disabilities are among the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market.

The employment disparities faced by people with racialized backgrounds are also well-documented.

The challenges faced by those belonging to both groups are less well-understood.

Intersectional approaches are increasingly used to understand the experiences of people with multiple marginalized identities.

Objective

To explore how racism and ableism intersect to shape employment experiences and outcomes.

Racialized people with disabilities face distinct barriers and challenges in employment, due to the combination of ableism and racism.

Results

• 7 studies examined discrimination allegations made under the Americans with Disabilities Act. 5 studies compared experiences of discrimination for people with disabilities across race and/or ethnicity.

• 9 studies examined unique stereotyping and 7 studies discussed systematic and institutional discrimination arising from the intersection of ableism and racism in the labour market and workplace.

• 24 studies reported on impacts (poorer rehabilitation outcomes, poorer employment rates, lower wages and income, worsened well-being in the workplace and career/professional development).

Implications

• Clinicians and rehabilitation specialists should consider incorporating intersectionality into their practices to better understand and serve racialized people with disabilities.

• Service providers should aim to address gaps and inequities in services faced by racialized people with disabilities which may prevent them from finding and/or maintaining meaningful employment.

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