

Displacement-plurality (D-P) in women refugees, its influence on work engagement and implications for diversity practice: a critical and reflective review

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Displacement-Plurality (D-P) in women refugees and its influence on work seeking and engagement during settlement, and implications for diversity practices

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Displacement-plurality (D-P) in women refugees, including its influence on work seeking and engagement during settlement, and implications for workplace diversity practice: a reflective and critical review and call for research

Personnel Review

Abstract

Approach: This paper is a reflective and critical review of the intersection between gender, forced displacement and work. It addresses a blind spot in the current work literature, which fails to address the impact of displacement on refugee women and the consequences of displacement for vocational engagement during resettlement.

Purpose: Much of the current research on women refugees and work focuses solely on settlement, neglecting the effects of displacement within this equation, despite its significant impact. Drawing from the wider literatures of international development, migration, gender, work psychology, and sociology, this paper provides a framework to guide informed research within this area.

Findings: This paper contributes to current literature in four ways. First, it adds forced displacement to the peripheral-intersections literature informing Acker's theory of 'inequality regimes'. Secondly, it contributes to a deeper understanding of how pluralities and intersectionality develop during forced displacement, by introducing the theory of displacement-plurality (D-P). Thirdly, it contributes to Human Resource Management (HRM) diversity practice by explaining the relationship between D-P and related constructs, such as work engagement (WE), economic empowerment (EE), work-related factors (WRF), and psycho-social factors (PSF), to help improve localised diversity practices in relation to refugee populations. Fourthly, it provides a detailed framework to guide research and practice in this area, supported by a critical evaluation of the current refugee work literature.

Originality/Value: When we understand displacement-related factors, we can move towards a more emancipatory approach to intersectionality, allowing us to develop a more sophisticated approaches to diversity in organisations. In turn, this helps us to understand people's lived experiences and their responses to organisational interventions more effectively.

Keywords: gender; diversity management, displacement-plurality; refugees

Introduction

In 2018 the UNHCR reported that 24 million people were displaced to host countries across the world, making this the fastest growing and most vulnerable population in the world (Hainmueller, Hangartner et al. 2016). Despite their physically and emotionally arduous journeys to safety, refugees often experience exile as uprooting, social marginalisation, and social drift, even after reaching host countries (Ekblad and Jaranson 2004). Aid programmes attend to matters relating to the first stage of resettlement, such as shelter, nourishment, registering with a doctor, and treating basic ailments. They are also concerned with political implications for governments, as well as protection and basic human rights during displacement. However, aspects such as mental well-being, leisure opportunities, work, and economic empowerment are thought of as secondary when people are considered to be fighting for mere survival (Hudnall and Lidner 2006). Moreover, during resettlement, agencies' strategies aim to maintain traditional family units (Manchanda 2017). Helping male heads of households into work reduces caseloads, and allows the agencies to attend to larger numbers, because women tend to present a more complex picture in relation to work (Halpern 2008). This strategy does not empower, and it continues to create a low-income minority within refugee populations, as well as creating skills deficits, poverty wages, and a dual burden on women for work and family care (Gowayed 2019). Refugees are also likely to experience a racialised and gendered labour market where they are disadvantaged compared to native workers, are often exploited, and have fewer career opportunities, exacerbating the weaknesses of the agencies' resettlement strategies (Itto 2008, Knappert, Kornau et al. 2018, Knappert, van Dijk et al. 2019). Evidence shows that refugees commonly earn less than natives, that this likelihood increases for women refugees (IMF 2016), and that refugee women are shown to be most disadvantaged, with only 7 per cent achieving employed status in the UK (Cheung and Phillimore 2014). In order to overcome such disadvantageous resettlement strategies, the United Nations Refugee Agency made transactional resettlement and the economic empowerment of women and girl refugees key priorities, in their Global Compact

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3 for Refugees in 2018 (UNHCR 2018). The compact provides a concrete set of measures to
4 ensure responsible refugee resettlement by member countries, including creating jobs and
5 opportunities in local host areas, and placing emphasis on economic empowerment of women
6 and development of girls (Betts 2018, UNHCR 2018). Stemming from this, countries like the
7 UK would have a responsibility to create sustainable vocational routes for refugees, and this
8 is likely to have a domino effect on policy and practice over the coming years. With these
9 improved provisions creating more opportunity for diaspora populations to enter the workforce,
10 it is imperative for HR practice to consider the place of refugees within the current minority
11 landscapes, and the implications for workplace diversity programmes.
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26 International human resource management (IHRM) scholars have called for more
27 authentically equitable diversity programmes which consider: the changing labour
28 demographic due to globalisation and internationalisation; and, finding more effective ways to
29 engage under-utilised segments of the global labour force (Syed 2007, Groutsis, Ng et al.
30 2014, Öztürk, Tatli et al. 2015, Knappert, van Dijk et al. 2019). The benefits of effective
31 diversity programmes include higher market capitalisation (Singh 2007), increased creativity,
32 enhanced learning (Blazevic and Lievens 2004), increased post (migrant) settlement
33 effectiveness, and improved performance and retention of talented personnel in organisations
34 (Groutsis, Ng et al. 2014, Knappert, van Dijk et al. 2019). Further benefits include decreased
35 litigation against employers for discrimination (Cox 1994), and more justice-led approaches to
36 diversity management (Noon 2007). Workplace diversity practices have progressed from
37 seeing diversity as simply affecting any employee who is not a white, Anglo-Saxon, able
38 bodied, heterosexual male (Linnehan and Konrad 1999), to more intersectional and context-
39 specific approaches. New approaches include relational frameworks (Syed and Özbilgin
40 2009), corporate culture (Gordon 1995), micro-emancipation (Zanoni and Janssens 2007),
41 and queer theory (Metcalf, Woodhams et al. 2008), which explore in detail how intersections
42 create disadvantages in working life for respective populations. HRM literature recognises that
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3 there are segments of the labour force which remain disadvantaged as a result of belonging
4 to a minority by age, gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and other minority characteristics.
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6 However, for effective change-inducing diversity management to occur, localities need to be
7 foregrounded in solutions (Öztürk, Tatli et al. 2015). As a result, there are calls for
8 organisations to take more emic approaches, that seek to understand behaviours in their
9 particular cultural contexts, both to improve diversity practices through the extensive use of
10 diagnostic checks, and to understand diversity questions within the specific context in which
11 they are to be applied (Öztürk, Tatli et al. 2015). Such sophisticated approaches also allow
12 diversity programmes to compensate for simplistic equality laws which are unable to
13 accommodate intersectionalities (Healy, Bradley et al. 2011).

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28 Despite this progress, there is currently little research and informed practice about how
29 systems of inequality are reinforced within HRM, in relation to refugee populations (Knappert,
30 Kornau et al. 2018). There are doubts as to whether there is a truly level playing field within
31 workplaces for this population (Knappert, Kornau et al. 2018, Arifeen Shehla and Syed 2019).
32
33 In an attempt to understand refugees' behaviour, researchers too often draw on literature
34 relating to migrant groups which bear the closest resemblance to refugee populations. This
35 approach is misleading, because migrants differ from refugees in a multitude of ways,
36 including: their status, types of visa, displacement and personal circumstances; their levels of
37 personal and psychological safety; their access to immediate knowledge and resources, in
38 comparison to resident populations; and the levels of agency they are able to exercise on their
39 country of residence and place of work (Campion 2018). The unique life experiences refugees
40 accumulate during displacement, as well as their original backgrounds and circumstances,
41 make economic, social, and cultural integration a complex experience for women refugees.
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43 An experience which is quite distinct from that of migrants, who would have more agentic
44 approaches towards, and choice in, work-related settlement (Newland, Tanaka et al. 2007,
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Campion 2018). There is also evidence in displacement literature to show that there is a whole

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3 landscape of gendered eventualities shaping the lens through which a woman views her world
4 during resettlement, which in turn determines the level of disadvantage experienced
5 (Manchanda 2001). Within this literature, gender is conceptualised as a dynamic process ; it
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7 is as much about practices and what people say, as it is about the static qualities of identity,
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9 social status and what is learned through socialisation.”(Martin 2003). As such, the concept of
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11 gender contains multiple meanings, expectations and behaviours that are fluid and shifting,
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13 yet robust and persistent at the same time, lending itself to being understood through the
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15 Ackerian lenses of plurality and intersectionality (Connell 1987, Acker 1998, Acker 2012).
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17 Personal perceptions also guide work-engagement: whether certain jobs are considered
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19 ‘man’s work’ in originating countries can determine their take-up (Campion 2018). Although
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21 there is increasing research attention given to plurality and intersectionality in minority and
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23 ethnic women at work (Mellahi and Budhwar Pawan 2010, Arifeen Shehla and Syed 2019),
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25 very little attention is given to refugee women (Tomlinson 2010, Arifeen Shehla and Syed
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27 2019). Diversity practices developed through such a misinformed lens can give rise to
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29 unintended inequality regimes, above and beyond the pre-existing inequalities of class,
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31 gender and race that minority groups are already more likely to be exposed to (Acker 2006,
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33 Holck 2016). On the other hand, if the multifaceted influences of intersectionality on a person
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35 are named and visible, then their (harmful) effects could be lifted to allow more equitable
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37 diversity practices (Reskin 2002).
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This paper aims to address this blind spot in the literature, through a reflective and critical review of the impact of displacement on women and how it affects their vocational engagement during resettlement. The conceptualisation of ideas embodied within the paper closely follows the evolution of a programme of research by the author, which looks into work engagement of women refugees. The concept is informed by the author’s research over a four-year period, her personal interactions and discussions with members of the refugee community, and her observations of the unintentionally oppressive regimes to which they are subjected. This is a

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3 reflective and critical review, rather than an exhaustive and systematic one, intended to
4 explicate some of the author's own observations, in addition to those of other researchers and
5 practitioners engaging with the area of women's economic empowerment in resettlement. The
6 paper draws on a diverse set of literatures, including international development, migration,
7 gender, occupational psychology, sociology, and human resource management, to critique
8 the lived experiences observed and their implications for work. The theory of displacement-
9 plurality (D-P) is proposed to explain how gender-related factors, and specifically plurality
10 created during displacement, impacts the work lives of women refugees. The paper then
11 evaluates current research findings on refugee populations, to understand the effect of D-P
12 on work engagement (WE) and economic empowerment (EE), and its mediating effect on the
13 relationship between work-related factors (WRF) and psycho-social factors (PSF). In the
14 process, the implications for HRM diversity practices in relation to women refugees are
15 discussed. Diagram 1 provides an illustration of the conceptualisation that is discussed and
16 debated throughout this paper. It is hoped that this paper will provide the much needed push
17 for researcher engagement and multidisciplinary academic debate in this area.

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44 **Towards a theory of displacement-plurality (D-P) in women refugees**

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46 There is evidence in international development literature on gender aspects of displacement
47 to show that women do not have the linear trajectory through displacement and resettlement
48 that is currently thought to be the case (Tomlinson 2010, Manchanda 2017, Kandanearachchi
49 and Ratnayake 2018). Media depictions of refugee women as helpless and superfluous
50 persons with children, dislocated, destitute, uprooted and unwanted (Manchanda 2001)
51 continue to misrepresent the actuality of their predicament. During war, women become heads
52 of households, taking on sole responsibility for caring for the young and elderly, as well as
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3 protecting them from the atrocities of war, and managing the full running of day to day activities
4 (Manchanda 2017). At the same time, they must cope with the psychological impact on
5 themselves from witnessing war and from being under the constant threat of physical or sexual
6 violence against themselves or those under their care. This threat of sexual violence, which is
7 commonly used as a weapon of war against women and girls, makes them more vulnerable
8 during displacement than men and boys (Manchanda 2001). Access to income is also reduced
9 for women during displacement, due to their primary roles as caretakers; usually their own
10 needs become secondary to their children's. This can give rise to reduced self-efficacy in skills
11 in which they were well-versed prior to displacement, and there could be a general lack of
12 confidence to try new things; for some women this might mean shying away from engaging in
13 work, as this was previously not their norm (Vithanagama 2018). This leaves little time or
14 space for women to attend to the psychological consequences of their own experience of war.
15 The end of a war can also see an abrupt transitioning of women's roles, where they are
16 required to hand over sole power of the household and decision making to men, who may or
17 may not be returning from war. This also plays out at a societal level, where peacetime sees
18 male/female roles revert to their original expectations, even in some of the most long-running
19 conflicts, such as those in Sri Lanka and Israel (Manchanda 2017).

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42 During resettlement, refugee women play the role of change agent *and* act as a source of
43 continuity and tradition, as they have primary responsibility for reconstructing domestic life.
44 The possibility of them making an economic contribution is therefore overlooked (Mahler and
45 Pessar 2006). Although challenging, plurality created in displacement is also a source of
46 empowerment for women (Pessar 2001, Wimalasiri and Phatak 2017). For instance, Pessar
47 (2001) found that refugee camps create transnational subjects who can think and act beyond
48 hegemonic constructs of national citizenship and male supremacy. Even the simplest items,
49 such as ingredients for food, are used as powerful tools with which to reaffirm cultural identities
50 in the face of aggressive, oppressive regimes instituted within refugee camps during war
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3 (Wimalasiri and Phatak, 2017). It is likely that these otherwise oppressive spaces are used in
4 unique ways to renegotiate belonging, as refugees consider their own 'belongingness' and
5 'otherness' to their surroundings in the light of emerging pluralities caused by displacement.
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7 Labels such as 'woman', 'ethnicity' and 'culture', which are used in conventional diversity
8 literature, become inadequate to explain the fullness of D-P (Tomlinson 2010), and pluralities
9 themselves become spaces of power struggle and power relations (Brah 1996). This suggests
10 that the women need to exercise active agency to be able to navigate displacement and
11 resettlement (Özbilgin and Woodward 2004, Tomlinson 2010). If women gain such rights and
12 experience during displacement - considered a positive impact on women's empowerment –
13 then women also have their hard-won equality weakened, if not reversed, during resettlement.
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15 This leads some women to actively seek out work in order to grow their new-found
16 independence, resilience, and agency (Ritchie, 2018). But sometimes, reverting to gendered
17 roles during resettlement (for example, by taking on domestic work seen as more as more
18 appropriate) can prevent women from completely embracing the agency they acquired during
19 the displacement process, or even force them to give it up altogether (Sav and Harris 2013).
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38 The socially constructed reality of women's roles in society, the activities they take on in war,
39 and the changes they undergo during displacement all lead to changes in their social positions
40 and priorities, and give rise to multiple competing identities which are important for their
41 survival during their adverse journeys to safety (Tomlinson 2010, Manchanda 2017). As this
42 can happen numerous times during displacement, women's identities remain continuously
43 'becoming', as they are constructed and reconstructed throughout their (psychological or
44 geographic) journey of displacement. Even emotion has been found to be culturally
45 'reconstituted' (Ozkaleli 2018). As such, the pluralities formed in displacement would be
46 distinct from any other form of plurality conceptualised from civic populations, such as the
47 intersections created due to disadvantages experienced at the intersection of class, race and
48 gender (Acker 1998). Research into the impact of war on women has often called for
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3 exploration outside the scripted frames of gender, in order to make accurate judgements,
4 rather than seeing displacement as merely a geographical concern (Manchanda 2017,
5 Ozkaleli 2018). These women have in fact experienced transformed and empowered roles as
6 leaders, amidst conflict, trauma and social disruption (Manchanda 2001).
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11 12 13 14 15 **D-P, work engagement and economic empowerment (D-P, WE and EE)** 16

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18 The rules and regulations that govern work present a sterile work environment to those who
19 are balancing a plurality of roles in their evolving identity during resettlement. Race, gender
20 and class are not distinct and isolated realms of experience. Instead, they come into existence
21 through contradictory and contradicting relationships to each other; they are also locally
22 situated and understood as such (Acker 2006, Dill 2015). As well as defining the core identity
23 of women, plurality can also give rise to intersectionality, which is the possibility of oppression
24 through any of the multi-dimensional aspects of the plurality of the women; this can present
25 difficulties for work and workplace integration (Acker 2006, Ozbilgin, Beauregard et al. 2011).
26 Essentially, intersectionality provides insights into the extent to which the effects of plurality
27 might dictate disadvantage for a woman refugee when engaging with work. This effect of
28 displacement can create further invisible intersections over and above those we already
29 understand through research on other work populations (Acker 1998, Acker 2006, Healy,
30 Bradley et al. 2011, Acker 2012, Öztürk, Tatli et al. 2015, Ozturk and Tatli 2016).
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49 Gender pervades the deepest of structures, and even the term 'job' is an implicitly gendered
50 concept which already contains gender-based divisions of labour and separates public and
51 private spheres (Acker 1998). Acker's (2006) landmark theory on inequality regimes helps us
52 to understand the consequences of what might happen when micro-level (individual)
53 dimensions interact with macro-level (organisational) realities, whilst providing frameworks to
54 respond with the most relevant and ameliorating diversity practices. In her original theory,
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3 Acker (2006) described inequalities as being sustained through loosely interrelated practices,
4 processes, actions, and meanings associated with class, race and gender. According to this
5 theory, individual disadvantage is maintained at multiple levels within the labour market and
6 social structures, by actors with power and control over goals, symbols, personal interactions,
7 and identities (Healy et al., 2017). The concept of intersectionality challenges binary thinking
8 (Shields 2008) and is also more present in the eye of the beholder and not necessarily
9 available to the introspection of an outsider (Acker, 1998). These inequalities are also
10 sustained by patterns embedded in wider society, politics, history and culture, all of which give
11 rise to systemic differences in access to and control over the resources needed for survival
12 (Acker, 2006). Although Acker's original theoretical propositions were based on the
13 intersection of class, race and gender, there is growing empirical evidence to show that the
14 more peripheral intersections, such as sexuality (Wright 2013), class-based inequalities
15 (Özbilgin, Beaugard et al. 2011), religion and cultural differences (Healy, Bradley et al.
16 2011), and occupational group and migration (Oikelome and Healy 2013), all have an effect.
17 This complex human array of pluralities, formed through adverse circumstances, adds to the
18 way in which the displacement experience contributes to regimes of inequality in organisations
19 and in society. If D-P is neglected in resettlement and diversity programmes, it leads to a lack
20 of social recognition and culturally appropriate idioms to legitimate the real experiences
21 women go through during war, displacement and resettlement. Moreover, neglecting the
22 subtler implications of resettlement and work engagement renders even the most basic of
23 work interventions ineffective, and could even prove 'humiliating' to the women themselves
24 (Hudnall and Lidner 2006).
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53 In their study of underrepresented groups in employment, Dickens and Chavez (2018) found
54 that identity-shifting developed as a coping mechanism to diminish the negative
55 consequences of discrimination, and that it could take on an agentic quality. However, in
56 refugees identity-shifting is a coping mechanism that essentially assists survival during
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3 displacement (Tomlinson 2010, Manchanda 2017). Therefore, whether this proposition can
4 be applied to refugees is questionable. Some studies informing the selection and assessment
5 of refugees have reviewed the working patterns of migrant Muslim women in the West (Ali,
6 Ashish et al. 2017). Ali et al's (2017) study indicated that this group experiences severe levels
7 of unemployment, despite a high percentage (57 percent) wanting to engage in work. They
8 found that this was a result of triple paralysis, arising out of key factors that defined this non-
9 engagement, including a lack of skills and training, scarce support for domestic and childcare
10 responsibilities, and the lack of success in the labour market and society. Their paper also
11 highlights that the separation of work and family that exists in the West cannot be applied to
12 the migrant population, due the unique way in which intersectionality influences spill-over
13 effects in different cultures (Staines 1980). Other studies have found that migrant women of
14 Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage take time out to take sole responsibility for childcare,
15 which is culturally important for them. They therefore very seldom make use of formal childcare
16 provisions (Akhtar 2014). This pattern was also seen among Hindu and Sikh communities in
17 Canada (Reitz, Phen et al. 2014). Other issues, such as mixed socialising involving alcohol
18 consumption, lack of attention given to prayer times, and dress code restrictions are also seen
19 as primary barriers to women in these minorities entering the workforce (Scott and Franzmann
20 2007, Ali, Ashish et al. 2017). Moreover, mixed socialising may have an impact on the
21 confidence of the individual women in their new work environments, for cultural and religious
22 reasons, and their potential to form supportive networks in the workplace could be
23 compromised as a result. This could also lead to an increase in attrition after commencing
24 employment.

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53 Ali, Malik et al. (2017) also suggest that employers examine more closely any practices that
54 could bring about discrimination, so as to make their workplaces more friendly to minority and
55 ethnic groups, including refugees. Conflict models in work-life-balance literature also generally
56 base their assumptions on this separation. In these models, conflicts between work and home
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3 are negotiated in a more pragmatic way (Ozbilgin, Beauregard et al. 2011, O'Driscoll 2018).
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5 However, when intersectionality is introduced into this equation, the separation boundaries
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7 are not so clearly defined and the conflict remains unresolved (Ali, Ashish et al. 2017). These
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9 boundaries are, however, seen to be moderated further by factors such as ethnicity, religion,
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11 caste, and migrant status, particularly at the entry level of the labour market (the level of
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13 manual work, which is often all that refugees initially have access to). Ozbilgin, Beauregard et
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15 al. (2011) suggest that the fluid nature of work-life balance, away from the idealised forms of
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17 male-style working, must be considered within diversity programmes, in order to overcome
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19 the effects created by intersectionalities. These should include non-work related
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21 responsibilities along racial and ethnic lines, including different approaches to child rearing
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23 and preferences for conducting family life (Modood, Berthoud et al. 1997, Ozbilgin,
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25 Beauregard et al. 2011). For instance, childcare has been seen as a route to vocational
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27 development. Ogbonna and Harris (2006) suggest that childcare provides a solution to the
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29 problem of lack of local language proficiency - one of the main barriers to workplace integration
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31 for refugees. First, linguistic proficiency allows a woman to help children with their school work
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33 and discuss their development with the school; secondly, it allows them to converse and
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35 engage with whatever is going on in the local community; thirdly, it gives structure and routine
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37 to their weeks (Klenk 2017). Language skills would also help the women to acculturate better
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39 than the men, because men usually end up in jobs which require them to do repetitive tasks,
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41 isolated from much of the host culture and language, making women ultimately more qualified
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43 and suitable for higher end jobs (Gowayed 2019). Kabeer (1999) also found that when
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45 education is related to caregiving and domestic duties women find the activities more
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47 empowering, compared to when they must engage with employment related learning.
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55 There is mounting evidence to show that cultural and religious barriers to work engagement
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57 materialise differently in ethnic minority groups. For example, a study by Brah and Phoenix
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59 (2004) showed that going against family wishes to engage with work might threaten 'Izzat'
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3 within Muslim communities, and that only 24 percent of women who would otherwise be
4 affected conformed to such restrictions. It seems that a majority of women do not let cultural
5 barriers intervene when it comes to work engagement. The study concluded that most often
6 women are prevented from engaging with work by a lack of support from their spouse and
7 family, which is an indirect transference of a cultural norm. Other studies have shown that non-
8 engagement with work can happen for religious reasons. Al-Dajani and Marlow (2010) study
9 on Palestinian refugees working as freelance embroiderers found that the women took
10 inspiration from Prophet Mohamed's first wife, Khadija, who established and ran her own
11 business and managed financial assets without male interference. Indeed, the study shows
12 that ethnic privilege is at work, arising from belonging to certain branches of Islam, in certain
13 countries. This would vary significantly, according to the cultural idioms set in the originating
14 country, and it might even have led to the displacement of some of the women refugees in the
15 first place. It might also be likely to create different intersectional effects, compared to the
16 effects on other migrant groups from the same background. In addition, the studies fail to
17 acknowledge the impact of D-P when extending their conclusions to refugees. Inclusion
18 practices informed by such misunderstandings could even transport pre-existing
19 discriminatory attributions from originating cultures and reinforce feelings of discrimination.
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42 This is an important consideration, given that religious values and practices serve as familiar
43 platforms on which to build transitioning lives (Schindler 1987). Itzhaky and Ribner (1999)
44 studied a community of Jewish refugees displaced from the Middle East to Israel. Their study
45 found a higher level of job commitment and job satisfaction in women than in men. Moreover,
46 the women's responses were supported by a more external locus of control, with high levels
47 of fatalistic thinking, suggesting that the women were more comfortable with the idea of fate
48 guiding their lives, which may well have had implications for contentment with their jobs. On
49 the other hand, a study by Yousef (2001) showed that the Islamic work ethic is devoid of
50 national context and has a direct limiting effect on job satisfaction and organisational
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3 commitment. More research into the systems' effects on the work-seeking, and the
4 engagement behaviours of women refugees, will help to create selection and development
5 practices that can produce more authentic HRM programmes, to attract members of this group
6 into organisations and then retain them. Female immigrants from the same part of one country
7 can have very different class, nationality, and ethnicity (Zavella 1991). This would also apply
8 to refugee populations, once the appropriate D-P assumptions have been made.
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19 The subtle interplay within intersectionality, as discussed above, means that workplaces are
20 unlikely to be sensitive to the needs of women refugees when they do start work. Attrition is
21 therefore likely to be high, as most workplace practices are based on the assumption of
22 homogenous diversity principles (Acker 2006, Ozbilgin, Beauregard et al. 2011). This concept
23 of diversity fails to account for individual differences, for intersectionality, and for plurality; it
24 also fails to bring them into meaning-making for managers. For example, a woman refugee
25 might be discriminated against because of her colour, race, religious beliefs, and clothing or
26 social class, as well as her migrant status (Brah and Phoenix 2004). Or, there may be varying
27 degrees of dominance among the identities held within the intersections (Warner 2008),
28 created through different experiences of D-P, adding a hidden but important dimension to
29 intersectionality. To overcome the problems created by rigid work practices, Scullion and
30 Paauwe (2004) propose that organisations encourage active resistance to norms, by providing
31 opportunities for individuals to practice active agency and carve out their individual
32 preferences (Holck 2016). This could also be extended to the finer details of having autonomy
33 over one's own work practices, to increase job satisfaction and wellbeing (Daniels, Beesley et
34 al. 2008) - for instance, by including prayer times or bespoke childcare in daily work routines.
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56 It is also true that livelihood intervention programmes should not assume that every woman
57 wants to take on lucrative employment, even with support; for some women, livelihoods are
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3 simply a survival strategy rather than an entrepreneurial undertaking (Vithanagama 2018). For
4 refugees, evidence suggests that successful resettlement depends on programmes which
5 allow them to find a place in the new society – for example, by converting skills and
6 qualifications so that they can be used in the ‘new situation’ (Duke, Sales et al. 1999).
7 Vocational training and further education are thus usually considered key aspects of
8 integration, to the extent that such measures foster employability, either in general terms or
9 through enhancement of specific language or work skills, and according to personal
10 preferences . In areas with significant potential for economic growth and a demand for labour,
11 such efforts (crucially) can be seen to be of benefit not only to refugees and their families, but
12 also to the wider communities in which they may settle. This paradoxical effect of D-P creates
13 a prism-like effect (Diagram 1), whereby the impact of any intervention to improve
14 employability might seem precarious, and its effectiveness can only be understood over time.
15 As such, the prismatic effect could mean that intervention could be successful at any point,
16 from the point of work engagement all the way to assisting a person into long-term, sustained
17 employment. For this population, the cascading effects of intersectionality (Healy, Bradley et
18 al. 2011) would be more pronounced and harder to manage where a one-size-fits-all strategy
19 could strengthen pre-existing discriminatory trends. The need for more emic approaches
20 (Öztürk, Tatli et al. 2015) to diversity must be emphasised in this population, for interventions
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47 **D-P’s relationship to work-related factors: host systems and the work environment** 48 **(WRF)** 49

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51 The moderating effects of D-P on WE and EE can be broken down further into systemic and
52 psychosocial factors, and discussed against current conceptual and empirical studies in the
53 area of refugee work and employment literature. As well as the personal push to engage with
54 work, it is also important to consider how the institutional environment may constrain how
55 people are able to transform their personal choices into action in a way that respects plurality
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(Samman and Santos 2009). There is wide acknowledgement that researchers in the field of refugee and migrant studies lack understanding of the historical, cultural and socio-economic experiences of women and the lives they construct in their host countries, against the backdrop of the socio-economic climate of the country of origin (Franz 2003). For instance, the traditions and idioms in women's countries of origin no doubt influence the way in which women engage with labour markets during resettlement. The number of nationalities within a female displaced population at any one time varies significantly. Between 2016-2019 the top nationalities applying for asylum in the UK included nationals from Libya, Syria, Iran, Pakistan and Bangladesh (HomeOffice 2018). The labour force participation statistics in these countries indicate that the percentages of women engaging in employment there are 24.5, 14.6, 19, 21.9, and 30.6, respectively (TheWorldBank 2019). Taking Pakistan as an example, the traditional patriarchal norms limit the number of roles available for women in the formal sector; therefore, women engage in more informal work, such as domestic work (Isran and Ali Isran 2012). Similarly, in Syria women are expected to lead the home front and take care of the children (Ritchie 2018).

Generally, refugees are underemployed due to: systematic non-recognition of qualifications; discrimination, based on gender and race; lack of social networks outside the refugee community; and language barriers (Baranik, Hurst et al. 2018, Knappert, van Dijk et al. 2019). This is based on an understanding that refugees are already a population that may be facing discrimination, due to their ethnicity, religion, gender-related issues, colour, and refugee status, including more personal factors, such as those related to intersectionality. It has been found that the xenophobic and racist media representations of refugees impact employer attitudes negatively, resulting in reluctance to employ refugees in order to avoid hostility towards their organisations. For the same reason, there is an unwillingness among those who are already engaged with initiatives to be involved in research about refugees (Hurstfield 2004). These forms of discrimination undermine the actual contributions and potential that

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3 refugees have to offer their host communities, and cause damage to any integration
4 programme (Kiragu, Rosi et al. 2011). Two good examples of how well integration can work
5 are Sigmund Freud (Wotruba and Cernovsky 1987) and Albert Einstein (Robinson 2019). They
6 were both refugees who migrated to their final host countries, where they made some of the
7 most significant contributions to science that we have yet known, with the help of the
8 opportunities afforded them at the time.
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19 Cultural factors also play a role in work engagement and success. For instance, refugees and
20 asylum seekers are estranged from the socio-cultural practices, socio-affective dispositions
21 and sensitivities to gender that they are acculturated to in their countries of origin (Sharma
22 2015). Once in a new country, the lives of displaced individuals are dictated by bureaucratic
23 systems enforcing rigid rules and regulations that have little or no resemblance to those they
24 lived under prior to displacement, even if the systems are broadly guided by the conventions
25 of the United Nations (Sharma 2015). Some of the terms used to categorise asylum seekers
26 - such as 'irregular migrant', 'forced migrant', 'voluntary migrant', and 'victim of trafficking' -
27 deem people to either be deserving of protection or fit only for deportation, via neo-colonial
28 stereotypes of agency and vulnerability (Serughetti 2018). Some women who are trafficked
29 have been tricked into believing they are being recruited for employment. On the other hand,
30 levels of awareness are now increasing about sex work being an economic activity which
31 some women and girls choose in order to escape the harsh realities of social and economic
32 deprivation in their home countries, and to help pay off family debts (Serughetti 2018). Not
33 knowing the distinction between these choices renders our understanding and actions simply
34 discriminatory. The Italian state views women who have considered sex work in their migratory
35 plan as practicing agency, putting them in the deportation category - something which is
36 contradictory to the woman's lived experience and (in a worse case scenario) might even force
37 her into a category which does not represent her accurately (Gennep 1960, Serughetti 2018).
38 This is a good example of the problems that arise from labelling migrants and allowing them
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3 to be 'processed' through rigid bureaucratic structures; the process dehumanises them and
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5 leads to forms of exclusion. Researchers have criticised in-country processing systems as
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7 putting refugees in a 'liminal state' (Gennep 1960); they have also questioned whether the
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9 systems are lacking in humanity. For systems that govern work processes and are primarily
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11 designed to serve domestic populations, these effects would be further emphasised and would
12
13 not serve the best interests of the refugees, particularly when the more invisible effects of D-
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15 P come into play. Newman, Bimrose et al. (2018) suggest that the systems that govern the
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17 asylum/refugee process instil rigid compliance, or even a deep sense of fear, in someone who
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19 is a refugee, since adhering to the rules literally means life or death for them, as there is always
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21 the possibility of being sent back to the unsafe conditions of their country of exile. Rules that
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23 enable psychological openness, and encourage wellbeing and agentic success are essentially
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25 prohibited during this period. In order to be granted refugee status, some migrants could even
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27 play out a victim role, lasting throughout their asylum process. Paradoxically, this has the
28
29 potential to strip refugees of the agency and self-efficacy they have gained during
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31 displacement, impacting on their work-seeking behaviours following being granted refugee
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36 37 38 39 40 **D-P's relationship to psycho-social factors (PSF)** 41

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43 The subject of the mental health of refugees is well documented within the literature, which
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45 finds that there is a prevalence of depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress (among other
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47 mental illnesses) in refugee populations, which is caused by pre- and post-settlement
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49 stressors (Peisker and Tilbury 2006, Carswell, Blackburn et al. 2011). A systematic review of
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51 the literature by Roberts and Browne (2011) found that, among displaced populations,
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53 refugees at higher risk of experiencing negative psychological health were those who had
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55 been subjected to forced displacement, had experienced a more traumatic passage to safety,
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57 and had lower education levels. Refugees meeting this description are mostly women. Due to
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59 increased vulnerability during displacement, women also suffer higher levels of PTSD and
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3 depression than men (Ross-Sherrif 2011). These conditions give way to increased levels of
4 stress, anxiety, sleep disturbances, and feelings of isolation (Deacon and Sullivan 2009), and
5 can impact daily work routines. Direct and indirect consequences arise for women's
6 psychological health during displacement, which act together to disempower them (El Jack,
7 Bell et al. 2003). For example, post-trauma and current mental health problems can make
8 seeking, securing and maintaining work, which all require some level of mental wellness,
9 almost impossible. For this reason, effective diversity measures for this demographic might
10 need to include appropriate welfare and mental health measures, without prejudice.
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23 Factors seen to reduce psychological health in working refugee populations include: perceived
24 levels of discrimination at work (Coker, Elliott et al. 2009) lack of autonomy and inability to
25 exercise choice over work appointments (Campion 2018), which would all lead to reduced
26 resilience (Brune and Bossert 2009). Unlike other migrants looking for work, refugees are
27 faced with circumstances where they are not able to re-engage with professions they might
28 have enjoyed prior to displacement, due to problems with transferring qualifications and
29 language barriers (Campion 2018). These are likely to have a heightening effect on
30 acculturation in relation to work in refugee populations compared to other migrant populations
31 (Groutsis, Ng et al. 2014). Moreover, PTSD and other mental illnesses caused by violent
32 displacement have been found to be left unvoiced and unresolved, due to women's fear of
33 being denied refugee status on arrival. Despite the hardships individuals face during
34 displacement, the post-displacement development agenda rarely tends to give enough
35 attention to this topic. Rather, interventions make a basic assumption of wellness
36 (Somasundaram and Sivayokan 2013). Moreover, untreated illnesses may later affect well-
37 being at work (McPherson 2015). If these indirect effects on mental health could be
38 circumvented, including by way of economic empowerment, this would help to increase a
39 person's agency and their sense of citizenship to the host community (Tomlinson 2010,
40 Roberts and Browne 2011, UNHCR 2018), and would have indirect mental health benefits.
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3 New ways to understand these factors in more detail would facilitate more emancipatory
4 approaches to resettlement and lead to the development of work practices that help more than
5 they harm. However, it is important to remember that the study of causal factors relating to
6 the mental health of refugee populations is difficult, as much of the existing research is cross-
7 sectional (Carswell, Blackburn and Baker, 2011). It is also likely that gender biases are due
8 under-reporting of mental health problems in this population.
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19 **Practical implications**

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22 Understanding of refugee inclusion at work needs to be examined at multiple levels, individual,
23 organisational and country, and the interactive effects of the three also need to be understood
24 (Syed and Özbilgin 2009, Knappert, van Dijk et al. 2019). In line with the D-P framework,
25 diversity programmes might address the three components of WRF, PSF and WE, and the
26 nature of D-P in their strategy and monitoring plans, in order to align practices and make their
27 work environment more inclusive for women refugees. Given the widespread negative societal
28 discourses about refugee populations (Knappert, van Dijk et al. 2019, Ortlieb, Glauninger et
29 al. 2020), it is essential that any organisation interested in a diversity programme serving this
30 population actively challenges this negativity (Ponzoni, Ghorashi et al. 2017). Care needs to
31 be taken to avoid awarding 'deservingness', and other generally pre-defined labels given to
32 refugee populations that essentialise them (Ortlieb, Glauninger et al. 2020), to ensure a truly
33 emancipatory approach to inclusion. The D-P framework could be used to facilitate
34 discussions between organisational decision makers and refugee employees, to scrutinise
35 inclusivity measures and avoid benevolent discrimination (Romani, Holck et al. 2019, Ortlieb,
36 Glauninger et al. 2020).
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57 Tatli, Nicolopoulou et al. (2015) question the level of impact that can be created by any
58 diversity programme, and whether such programmes should serve strategic or justice-based
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3 ends. They place the power of being able to create this balance in the reflexive capabilities of
4 Equality and Diversity champions, working closely with the workforce to deliver E&D goals
5 situated in justice, as well as transforming inequalities in organisations to obtain more balance
6 (Tomlinson and Schwabenland 2010). Practical approaches used in resettlement in the
7 humanitarian sector might be instructive as to how diversity management practices can be
8 implemented within the D-P context by change agents (Tatli, Nicolopoulou et al. 2015). For
9 instance, Shaw (2014) found that integration interventions are particularly constructive when
10 delivered by paraprofessionals, who are themselves refugees, working in collaboration with
11 service providers. Through shared experience, such paraprofessionals are better able to
12 understand the subtler challenges of displacement; they can act as 'culture brokers' (Owen
13 and English 2005) and 'bridge builders'(Shaw 2014). It has also been found that such an
14 approach can ameliorate negative situations quicker, by sign-posting people to relevant
15 internal and external services (Nawyn 2010, Cannedy 2011, Shaw 2014).
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34 Career adaptability discussions could be facilitated by career coaches having prior knowledge
35 of the D-P framework work-related (e.g. integration rules and regulations, English speaking
36 skills, and work-related social networks) and psychological factors (e.g. diagnosed and
37 undiagnosed mental health conditions due to displacement), as well as making appropriate
38 and additional resources available to support individuals (e.g. support pamphlets, resources,
39 and additional funding for work-related training programmes). Moreover, organisations
40 actively offering volunteering opportunities assist further movement of this under-represented
41 population into the labour market. Tomlinson (2010) found that volunteering not only provides
42 interim workspaces where refugee women can negotiate their 'belongingness' and
43 'otherness' to their host communities, it is also a powerful tool for agentic integration into work.
44 Equally, there are valuable opportunities for organisations to be involved in building a new
45 discourse of diversity practice in relation to this population (Tomlinson 2010, Knappert, van
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3 Dijk et al. 2019), and the D-P framework is a useful tool for assisting discussions between
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refugee women and their career coaches.

Conclusion

The theory of displacement plurality (D-P), explained in this paper, has clearly illustrated that work seeking and engagement following forced displacement are very different from work seeking in civic life. The very pluralities which are developed by refugees to combat the uncertainties of displacement, and which empower them in seeking refuge, can give rise to intersectionalities during resettlement, as they come into contact with host societies impacting their lives in unique ways (Knappert, Kornau et al. 2018). The institution of work is one place where societal intersections can be played out to create very evident disadvantage (Acker 2006, Nishii and Özbilgin 2007, Öztürk, Tatli et al. 2015); it is therefore a place where D-P can have a very evident effect. Moreover, the prismatic effect of D-P, which might create idiosyncratic responses to interventions, means that one-size-fits-all interventions are likely to produce discriminatory effects in this population. However, these can be overcome by well-designed diversity programmes that address contextual factors (Özbilgin 2009, Groutsis, Ng et al. 2014, Öztürk, Tatli et al. 2015), such as the systemic and psychosocial factors presented in this paper. Where refugee lives are left in a liminal state due to oppressive systemic regimes and poorly understood displacement experiences, such practices (at an organisational level) can even serve to counteract the feelings of exclusion created by displacement. Thus, this is a place where diversity programmes can help to overcome societal stereotypes and create wider benefits. In particular, the D-P theory proposed in this paper suggests considerations for local toolkits (Groutsis, Ng et al. 2014), when translating diversity laws and policies into practice in relation to a single person from a refugee population. This can be achieved through detailed observation of D-P and its related constructs - systemic (WRF) and psycho-social (PSF). Not only would such actions contribute to the effectiveness of diversity programmes, they would also help to deliver the wider ethical commitments of the

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3 organisation. The conceptual framework proposed on the impact of D-P on economic
4 engagement and empowerment, as related factors, is illustrated in Diagram 1.
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11 In addition, knowledge of displacement circumstances, and therefore D-P, adds to our
12 understanding of the Ackerian propositions of intersectionality, based on the three pillars of
13 gender, class and race, in three ways. One is that D-P proposes forced displacement as a
14 peripheral construct that extends our understanding of how inequality regimes can be created
15 in organisations, in addition to other factors like sexuality, class-based inequalities, religion
16 and migration. The second is that D-P suggests how HR practices can work to counter this.
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18 Third, it provides a deeper, more dynamic understanding of how intersections are created in
19 a very vivid way, to create constellation effects. We need to take into account multiple
20 intersectional effects. As well as its relevance to work, Ackers' theory is shown here to be
21 relevant to resettlement programmes where intersectionalities might be negotiated earlier on
22 in the integration process into host countries. In this context, the theory might help to mitigate
23 the long-term disadvantageous effects on refugee populations after settlement. The
24 framework is directly relevant to sectors which generally have larger numbers of refugees in
25 their workforces, such as the humanitarian and third sectors (Galera, Giannetto et al. 2018).
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44 This detailed understanding of the impact of displacement, and its ongoing effects on work
45 seeking and engagement, should help scholars and practitioners to navigate the intersection
46 between gender, displacement and work more appropriately, in a contextual way. Further
47 research is needed into each of the constructs, to provide empirical support and insight into
48 the propositions I make here. It is my position that having a deeper understanding of the
49 multitude of factors affecting women refugees would enable an authentically empowering,
50 compassionate and emancipatory approach to integrating refugees into work. It is hoped that
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this will initiate further exploration and debate in this area, within the academic community and in practice, and will help develop the area further.

Personnel Review

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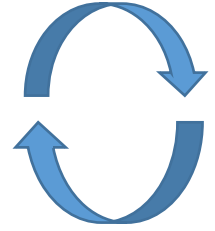
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Personnel Review

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Work-related factors: host system and work environment (WRF)

- Integration rules and regulations
- Policies
- Funding and priorities
- Attitudes towards refugee communities
- Opportunities
- Individual and national patterns of work, prior to displacement
- Local support and resourcing in relation to work



Dynamic relationship between factors

Psycho-social factors (PSF)

- Experiences pre and post displacement, and during settlement
- Displacement context
- Cultural factors (origin and resettlement)
- Psychological health and well-being factors
- Gender

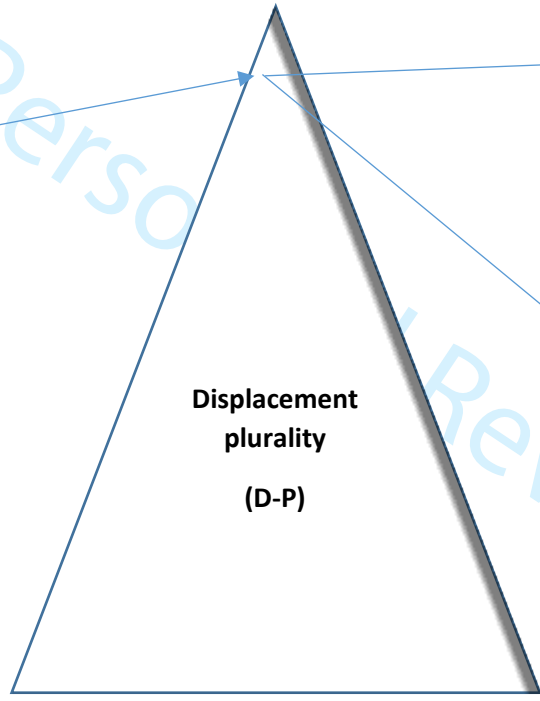


Diagram 1: Framework for research

A diagram showing the moderating effect of D-P on PSF and WRF, and resulting in the effects of work engagement (WE)

Work engagement (WE)

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (EE)

Take-up and engagement of available opportunities

Personnel Review

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