

Harnessing Intersectionality and Storytelling to Enhance Inclusivity in the Workplace

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Summary

Campfire Kinship is a social enterprise committed to building inclusive organizational cultures through training, advisory and leadership development with a focus on EDI & storytelling. We also partner with community organizations to highlight diverse voices through projects like our book [Landed, Transformative Stories of Canadian Immigrant Women](#) and podcast [Hearth 2 Heart](#). Currently, we are pioneering the application of intersectionality into STEMM (science, technology, engineering and medicine) fields in partnership with Lotus STEMM. We are conducting a significant three-year research initiative funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) called Breaking Barriers, which aims to uncover and address barriers that South Asian women in STEMM face. By gathering stories and applying an intersectional lens, we are learning effective ways to navigate the complexities of diverse identities within professional settings, thereby fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment in STEMM.

Theory / Method / Workflow

Our approach is grounded in change management principles, focusing on actionable strategies that can be applied in the workplace based on evidence-based practices as well as stakeholders' actual lived experiences. By integrating these principles, we facilitate workshops and interventions that not only highlight but actively address the complexities of intersectional identities in STEMM. For systemic change, we leverage CCWESTT's definition as "modifying components or combinations of components within a system to address and remove fundamental societal, environmental, and cultural elements that prevent gender equity. Through the systems-change pathway it has chosen, CCWESTT seeks to alter and adapt systems to achieve gender equity, rather than seeking to change women, non-binary, gender nonconforming, and gender-diverse people."

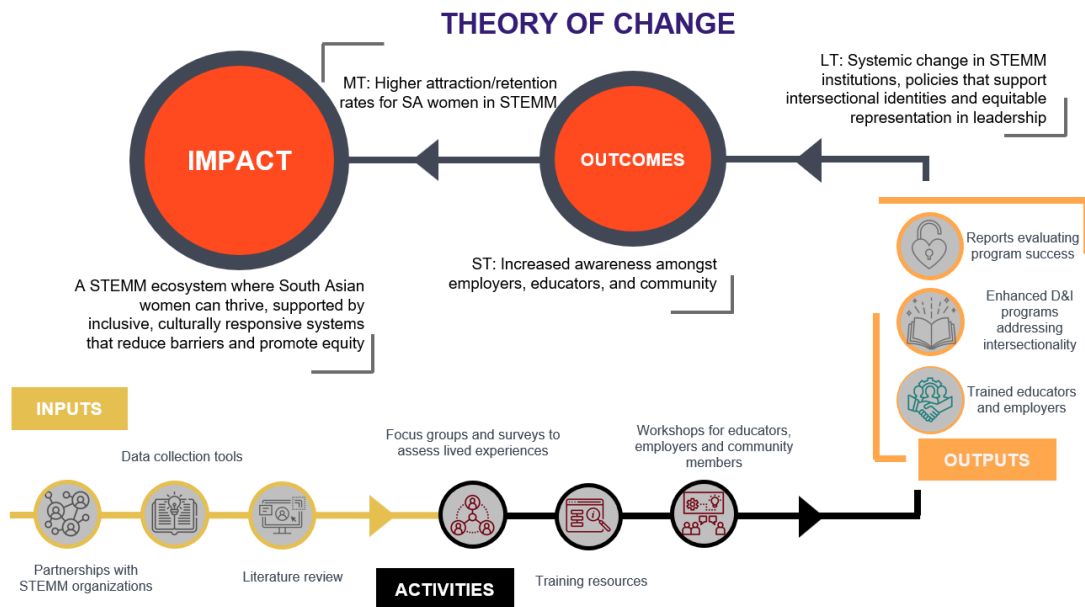


Figure 1 – Breaking Barriers Theory of Change Model

Storytelling serves as a critical tool in this process, offering a powerful means to relay personal experiences and humanize data, thereby fostering empathy and understanding. This combination ensures that solutions are not only effective but also resonate on a personal level with all stakeholders involved.

Results, Observations, Conclusions

The application of storytelling combined with intersectional analysis has revealed significant insights of the systemic obstacles faced by underrepresented groups, and possible reasons why many traditional EDI programs have not sustained successful organizational change. It is proving effective in promoting understanding and fostering change, which is which is often not achieved through conventional EDI strategies.

Novel/Additive Information

This presentation will outline the methods and strategies developed through our project, showcasing how storytelling and intersectionality can be effectively used as tools for enhancing inclusivity in the workplace particularly within STEMM fields.

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