

Improving inclusion practices to counter an assimilation deemed ineffective by Francophone immigrants of African origin

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I • INTRODUCTION

- 99% of Canada's population increase (1st quarter 2024) was related to immigration⁽¹⁾
- The profile of recent immigrants is more diverse since 81% of Francophone minority immigrants are citizens of countries in Africa and the Middle East (2022)⁽²⁾
- The majority of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's budget is allocated to settlement and integration services for newcomers⁽³⁾
- Yet, we need to better understand how Francophone immigration strategies are reshaping these communities and influencing cohesion among community members.

II • OBJECTIVES

We seek to understand:

- How do local policies and practices (e.g., programs, events) influence the importance of occupations in people's daily lives?
- What factors facilitate or hinder immigrants' participation in Francophone community spaces?

III • METHODOLOGY

- Methodological and theoretical framework: **Ethnographic study** informed by intersectionality theory and the politics of belonging, exploring **social power relations** with Francophone minority communities
- Secondary data analysis: in-depth interviews** with 5 African immigrants (conducted between 2022-2023). A targeted sample was used to recruit participants
- Analysis:** Verbatim transcripts analyzed with inductive (line-by-line) and **theoretical coding** approaches using NVivo software.

IV • FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

MAIN THEMES

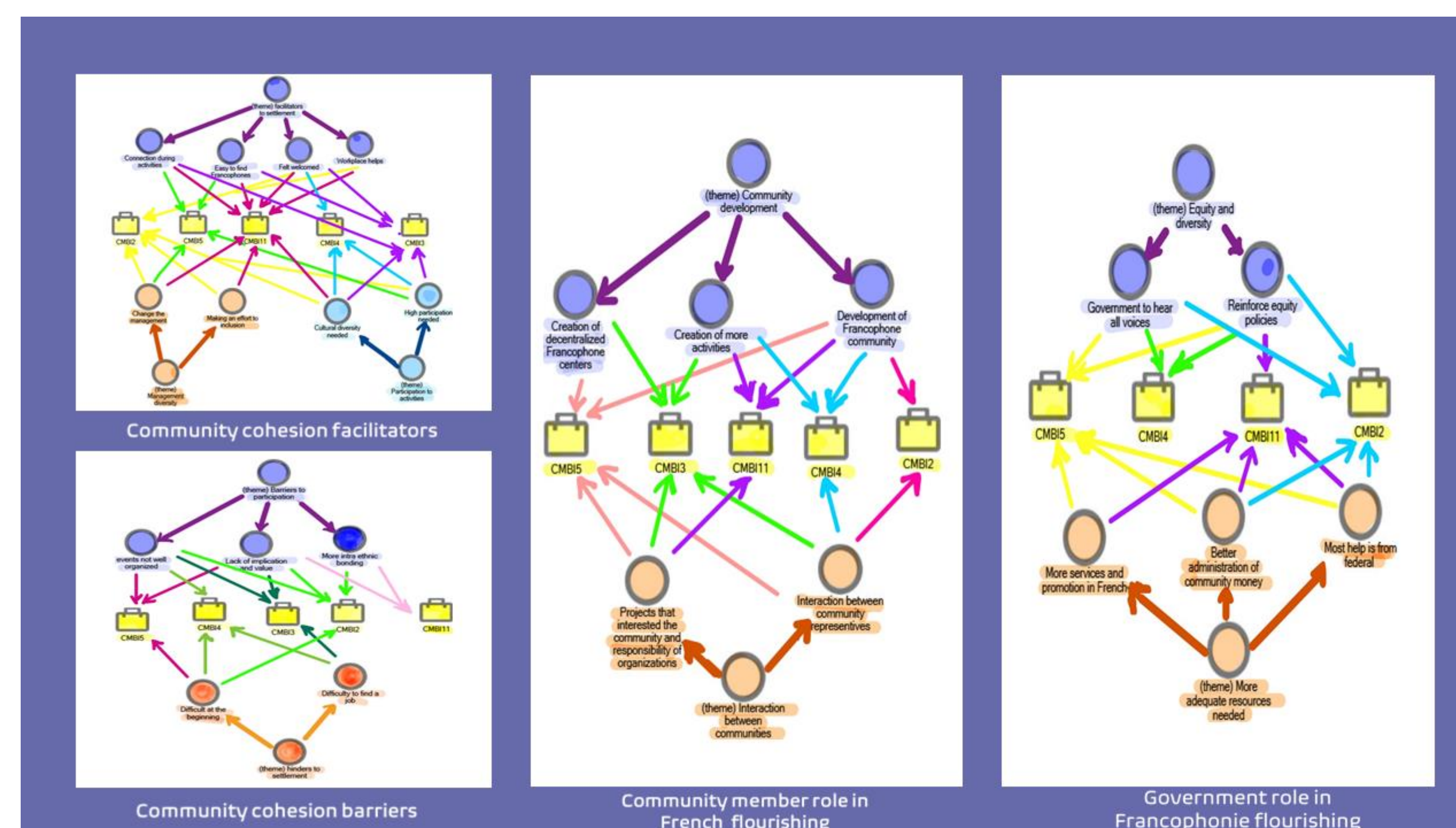
	The paradoxical role of Francophone institutions	An example from this theme is the difficulty for African Francophone immigrants to get a seat at decision-making tables, which can hinder their settlement <i>«Une des causes principales je pense à ce problème de diversité, c'est que la composition des organismes ne se diversifie pas à d'année en année parce qu'il y a aucun terme de mandat que les gens ils viennent, ils passent 7 ans, 8 ans, 10 ans.»</i> (One of the main causes I think to this problem of diversity is that the composition of the organizations does not diversify from year to year because there are no term limits people come, they spend 7 years, 8 years, 10 years.) (CMB11)
	The factors facilitating community cohesion	Participants identified many factors, including the importance of having opportunities to get together <i>« Tant qu'il y a des gens que je connais avec qui j'échange, je me sens pas isolé »</i> (As long as there are people, I know with whom I exchange, I do not feel isolated) (CMB15)
	Barriers to feelings of community belonging	Based on our data, an important obstacle is the language barrier that can complicate integration <i>« Pour trouver l'emploi, c'est difficile pour les Francophones. C'est facile de trouver l'emploi chez les anglophones, mais quand vous ne connaissez pas l'anglais... »</i> (To find a job, it's difficult for Francophones. It's easy to find a job with Anglophones, but when you don't speak English...) (CMB13)
	The power dynamics that shape the individual and collective experiences of racialized newcomers	This theme addressed the external barriers to participation, such as power dynamics in workplace <i>« En général, on ne se sent pas bien accueilli, je trouve... ce qui m'exaspérait que des gens se permettent de te traiter comme si tu étais leur larbin et que tu te fais super mal parlée »</i> (In general, one does not feel welcome, I find... what exasperated me is that people allow themselves to treat you as if you were their servant and you are spoken to badly.) (CMB11)

9 themes were observed (table 1) with the first theme (barriers to participation) having the most references (29).

TABLE 1: THEMES SUMMARY

THEMES	DESCRIPTION
Barriers to participation	Potential barriers for Francophone immigrants of African origin living in Metro Vancouver to participate in community activities
Barriers to settlement	Potential barriers for Francophone immigrants of African origin living in Metro Vancouver to settle in their new home
Facilitators to settlement	Factors supporting the settlement of Francophone immigrants of African origin living in Metro Vancouver
Leadership diversity	Changes needed at management levels in workplaces to facilitate community cohesion
Participation in activities	Participation in inclusive community activities as a cohesion facilitator
Community development	Factors developing the community as a role in enabling the French language to flourish in Metro Vancouver
Interaction between communities	Interaction between communities from different ethnic backgrounds as a role in helping the Francophone community to flourish in Metro Vancouver
Equity and diversity	Lack of equity and diversity as a barrier to the government's role in supporting the Francophone minority community
More adequate resources needed	More adequate resources are needed in the government to support the Francophone minority community

PROJECT MAPS



- The 4 project maps show the relationships between themes, sub-themes and the participants
- The community cohesion facilitators project map had the highest number of themes and sub-themes



VI • REFERENCES

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- Figures from Freepik

V • CONCLUSIONS

- Our study responds to an **urgent need to understand the implications of the increasing arrival, settlement, and integration of racialized French-speaking immigrants** for community cohesion in Francophone minority communities.
- Our recommendations focus on inclusion practices that can counter the violence of assimilation that nurtures parallel solitudes within the community.

Acknowledgements

- Research coordinator:** Anne-Cécile Delaisse (PhD Candidate, UBC)
- Funding:** SSHRC Insight Grant
- Primary investigator:** Suzanne Huot
- Co-investigators:**
 - Nathalie Piquemal (University of Manitoba)
 - Leyla Sall (Université de Moncton)
 - Luisa Veronis (Université d'Ottawa)
 - Faïçal Zellama (Université de Saint-Boniface)



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