

Exploratory Social Justice Case Study Design: Operationalizing Public Library Services for Women Refugees from the Middle East and North Africa Region

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the role of urban public libraries in Texas from the perspectives of women refugees (from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region) and urban public library representatives in Texas, U.S. Women refugees share their daily concerns since they arrived in the U.S. Through utilizing critical race theory (Crenshaw, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 1998), critical feminist theory (De Beauvoir, 1949; De Beauvoir 2009; hooks, 2000; hooks, 2009), and Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991; Crenshaw, 2016; Crenshaw, 2018), this project explores the information needs and information seeking behaviors of women refugees (including their interaction with public libraries).

The researcher is implementing narrative inquiry by conducting interviews and focus groups to learn about the individual and collective experiences as related to the information services that public libraries provide to MENA women. After analyzing the collected data, the researcher and MENA women refugees are co-developing an information services model for public libraries. Moving forward, the researcher is conducting content analysis of the public libraries' websites and social media sites to check their information offerings. Then, she is conducting focus groups with library representatives to discuss what they offer.

As a social justice imperative, implementing these methods allow women refugees to represent their voices, and give them agency and authority to work with the researcher and public library representatives. Together, they will build an information services model and propose a strategic action plan, to be implemented by public libraries in Texas to support the information needs of women refugees from the MENA region.

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ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Social justice; Information needs; Information seeking; Community engagement; Public libraries.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

women refugees; MENA region; critical race theory; critical feminist theory; intersectionality.

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