

Facilitators and barriers to engagement in mental health and substance use: a scoping review

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Background

- Health research has seen a shift towards engaging people with lived experience (PWLE) throughout the research process, particularly in the mental health and substance use (MHSU) field ¹
- Despite existing literature on engagement in health research, factors that contribute to meaningful engagement in MHSU research remain unclear

Objective: To explore the unique barriers and facilitators to engagement in MHSU research

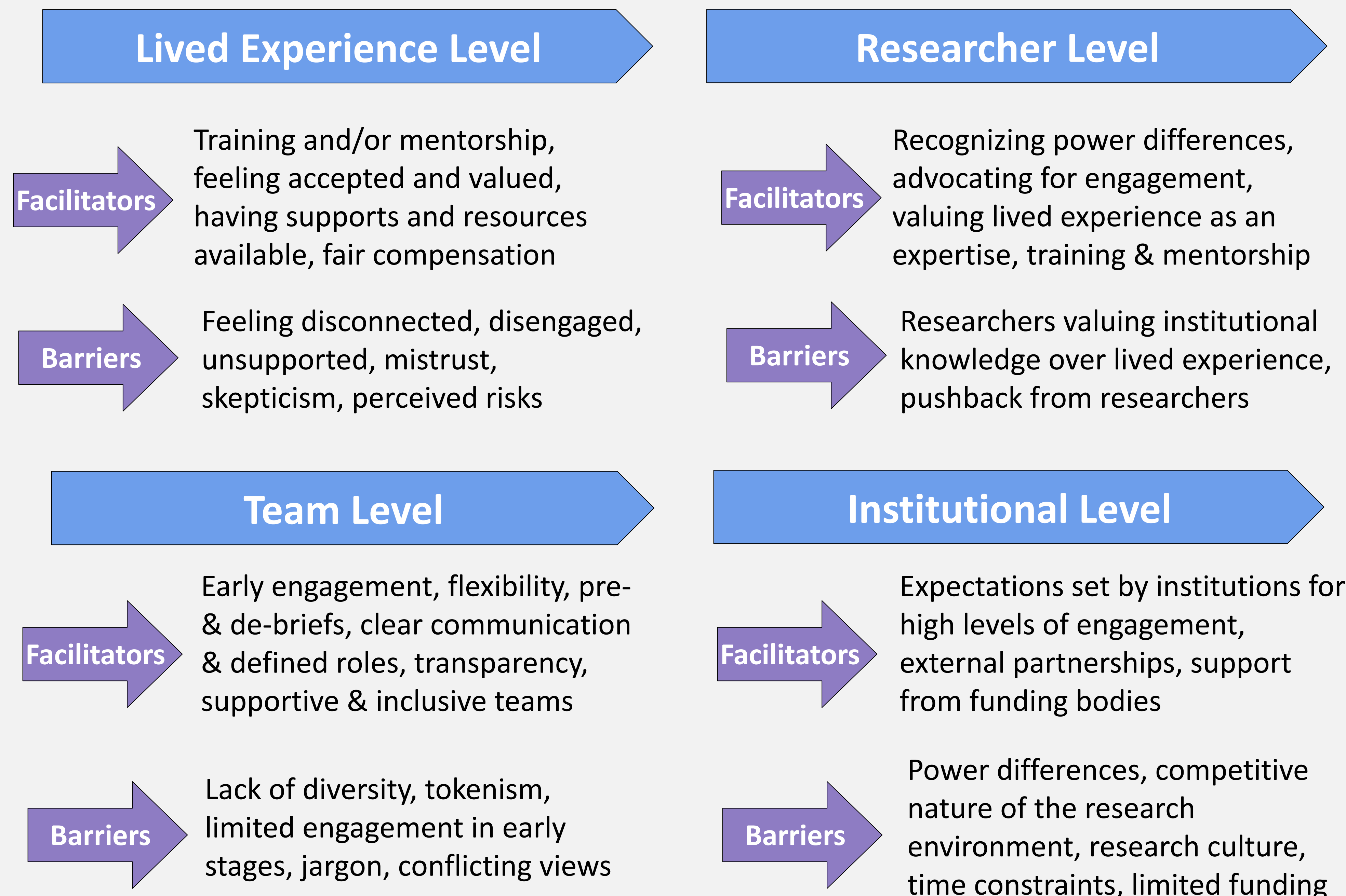
Methods

- Scoping review was guided by Arksey and O'Malley ² and Levac et al. ³
- Databases included: Medline (Ovid), CINAHL (EBSCO), PsychINFO (ProQuest)
- **Inclusion:** journal articles published in 2012–2022, focused on engagement in research context, MHSU research
- Included articles (N=61) were uploaded to NVivo 12 and codebook thematic analysis was used to identify barriers and facilitators

EDI & SGBA+ Considerations

- PWLE included as advisors, collaborators, and co-authors on the research team, ensuring that the voices of those directly impacted by MHSU are represented.
- Research procedures designed to foster EDI by actively involving PWLE during the screening, analysis, and write-up phases (e.g., PWLE co-screened titles/abstracts, provided ongoing feedback, refined manuscript drafts).
- SGBA+ integrated into the data charting process and analysis; charted sociodemographic data for PWLE in the studies, including gender and ethnicity.

Results



Discussions

- Several barriers reflect prioritizing research needs over lived experience knowledge, limiting full potential of engagement
- We need to actively work towards power-sharing and prioritize institutional changes to diffuse power imbalances

Strengths: Multiple databases, thematic analysis, engagement throughout review

Limitations: No grey literature, articles came from high-income countries and were only in English, missed relevant articles due to engagement terminology

Conclusions

- Barriers and facilitators highlight the complexity of engagement and need for multi-level strategies to foster meaningful engagement
- Findings can provide valuable insights for researchers, policy-makers, and organizations aiming to enhance engagement in MHSU research