Gender inequality and access to quality employment enabling women to secure affordable Vancouver housing plays an important role in women’s empowerment in the post-COVID-19 urban landscape. A great deal of research has shown that women have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19 job loss leaving them permanently behind. The significance of this study is the emerging COVID-19 pandemic impacts are more likely to show there are gendered consequences that have a relationship with Kain’s Spatial Mismatch hypothesis. Specifically, in the degree to which spatial mismatch could explain women’s labour market recovery within Vancouver’s unique transnational Hong Kong influence and Downtown East Side indigenous diaspora. These two components although not a majority of the labour market, affect spatiality and polarization of wealth concentration. In understanding the Vancouver labour market, we build on the assumptions of critical urban theory, to find that Spatial Mismatch works out differently for Vancouver. Although a small subset in British Columbia’s labour force, these two important factors play out in the development of just-in-time analysis to better understand emerging COVID-19 pandemic gender impacts and gendered consequences. The Vancouver Spatial Mismatch rationale explains why Vancouver's unaffordable housing market creates distance between where immigrant and working poor live and travel to available jobs. The definition of “working poor” are those whose annual income level falls below the poverty line. The hypothesis is: Vancouver's housing unaffordability leads to longer travelling times to work for immigrant workers which obstruct their labour market outcomes.

There is a need to understand that Vancouver’s economy is mainly a service-labour reliant resort economy. Yet to date, there has been scant research on the impact women’s Covid-19 job loss has had on their ability to stay put in their homes. In a number of studies, it has been found that the majority of low-wage front-line retail positions were filled by women whose traditional care-giving roles easily led to service work. Statistics Canada October 2020 in their published findings on Impacts on Immigrants and People Designiagted as Visible Minorities found: Immigrants are disproportionately represented in jobs with greater exposure to COVID-19 – 34% of front-line/essential service workers identify as visible minorities (compared with 21% in other sectors), and. visible minorities are also more likely to work in industries worst affected by the pandemic, such as food and accommodation services – compounding health and economic risks. Work precarity and inequality that shaped employment long before COVID-19 arrived was made worse by the pandemic. The Centre for Future Work, Stanford describes precarious work as: employment practices that rely on less stable and secure arrangements, typically demonstrating great fluctuations in working hours and compensation.

The purpose of this paper is to understand why women have been the most vulnerable to permanent job loss by COVID-19 lockdown. Pre-COVID-19 downtown food courts and mall retail outlets had already been existing on very low profit margins. Furthermore, the impact of gender inequality intersecting with the hollowing out of the labour force, that Sassen’s 1991 Global City describes, has shown the vulnerabilities of Vancouver’s over-heated housing crisis leading to economic impoverishment. Peck, Siemiatycki and Wyly (2014), suggested in “Vancouver’s Suburban Involution”,

Vancouver’s long-metastasizing affordability crisis threatens not only to the immiseration of sub-median households but perhaps even the viability of its service-labour reliant resort economy... (p.412).

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows by understanding the origins of Economist John Kain’s 1968 Spatial Mismatch Hypothesis (SMH) which argued that low-skilled minorities residing in US inner cities experienced poor labour market outcomes because they are disconnected from suburban job opportunities. Moreover, spatial mismatch is the mismatch between where low-income households reside and where they find suitable job opportunities. Visualizing the post-COVID-19 gendered labour force landscape could be envisioned by **recognized methodologies of tract level summary data on housing type and household composition in a mixed methods** research with a small subset of ethnographic life story interviews. Life Story Interviews would bring causality of the "how" and "why" women were disproportionately affected by Covid-19 job loss. I am interested in visualizing Census Metropolitan Area tract data using Spearman's Rank Correlation creating zones of transportation routes to and from places of employment and dwelling of immigrant and sub-median income workers. Additionally, the recognized tract level summary data would be Statistics Canada Job Vacancy Wage Surveys, Labour Force Surveys and Canada Housing Surveys where respondents who were asked where each person said they were either rented or were home owners, in relation to their commute length to where they work.

McLafferty and Preston (1992) Spatial Mismatch and Labor Market Segmentation for African-American and Latina Women found that the primary problem was not spatial access to employment but rather a lack of access to well-paying jobs. These differences in mismatch reflected the combined effects of gender- and race-based segmentation and spatial access to employment and transportation. Their 1996 research showed that spatial barriers still limit employment prospects for the majority of minority African American women living in the region’s core.

Alonso’s 1964 Bid Rent Theory showed how the price and demand for real estate change as the distance from the central business district (CBD) increases. For the working poor, Bid Rent becomes a “drive until you qualify” farther away from the CBC until affordable housing is found which is farther away from downtown amenities, which in turn, create longer transportation commutes to jobs. Jobs where those who can afford to live in the downtown core pay more for amenities and real estate offices and retail outlets. Peck, Siemiatycki and Wyly (2014) argued in part, that Vancouver’s unaffordable housing crises means the working poor cannot afford to live in Vancouver or if they do stay put, they live in substandard basement suites.

Kain was concerned with the effects of housing market segregation/discrimination on the employment and earnings of Black Chicago and Detroit residents. Next, Kain broadened his work to study the effects of housing market discrimination on housing prices, home-ownership and educational opportunities. In Kain’s 2004 research paper, “A Pioneer's Perspective on the Spatial Mismatch Literature” he emphasized what may be the most serious example of spatial mismatch and its negative impacts on Black welfare: the continued concentration of Black children in low-achieving inner-city schools and the impact of these patterns on the achievement of individual Black children.