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Perspective

Exploring the Nature of Diversity Dishonesty within Predominantly White Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Public Health at the Most Highly Selective and Highly Ranked U.S. Universities

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Abstract: The concept of "diversity dishonesty" has emerged as a pressing concern within highly selective and highly ranked schools of medicine, pharmacy, and public health at elite and highly ranked U.S. universities, particularly in the context of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. This phenomenon, defined as a lack of sincerity and genuineness in an organization's commitment to genuine and measurable change regarding diversity, raises significant questions about the authenticity of their endeavors. Organizations often engage in surface-level or performative actions related to diversity, creating the illusion of progress and dedication while failing to enact substantive and meaningful advancements in promoting diversity and inclusivity. This applied research inquiry uses a review of literature, research theories, and research frameworks to delve into the nuanced dynamics of diversity dishonesty, exploring how organizations demonstrate a commitment in form but not in substance. The practice of tokenism, where diverse individuals are hired and prominently featured in organizational materials but are not genuinely valued, emerges as a defining characteristic of diversity dishonesty. Moreover, when questions regarding the authenticity of their commitment arise, organizations may resort to gaslighting minorities, further exacerbating the issue. Recognizing the critical need to address diversity dishonesty, this article comprehensively explores frameworks to understand and combat this phenomenon. It seeks to engage with viable theories, problem-solving approaches, and contextual models that can illuminate the complex interplay of factors contributing to diversity dishonesty. By shedding light on the mechanisms through which elite and highly ranked predominantly White schools of medicine, pharmacy, and public health engage in performative acts without enacting transformative cultural change, this research aims to pave the way for more genuine and impactful DEI efforts and future research in this area.

Keywords: affirmative action; diversity dishonesty; diversity; equity; inclusion; allyship; higher education administration; organizational climate; organizational behavior; diversity fatigue; racial battle fatigue; academic redlining; medical school diversity; pharmacy school diversity

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1. Introduction

The unprecedented racial disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the tragic death of George Floyd and other unarmed Black men by police officers due to systemic racism underscore the urgent need for a profound societal reckoning (Burrell 2022). This global awakening has reverberated within the corridors of medical training institutions across the United States, prompting declarations against racism, expressions of solidarity with marginalized communities, and a critical reevaluation of diversity and inclusion endeavors (Suh et al. 2023). However, amidst these declarations, a disheartening reality persists: the persistent stagnation in the recruitment, retention, and support of racial and ethnic minority trainees and faculty within medical training institutions, emblematic

of systemic inequities deeply entrenched within the academic pipeline (Argueza et al. 2021; Levy et al. 2023; Nakae and Subica 2021).

Beyond the confines of medical training institutions, the imperative for diversifying the medical profession resonates with profound societal implications. The dearth of minority representation within the medical field perpetuates health disparities, erodes patient trust, and undermines the delivery of culturally competent care (Argueza et al. 2021; Levy et al. 2023; Nakae and Subica 2021). Moreover, previous research underscores the manifold benefits of diversity in healthcare, from enhancing clinical decision-making to fostering innovation and advancing health equity in public health, medicine, and pharmacy (Kayingo et al. 2022). Consequently, the imperative to dismantle systemic barriers and cultivate a diverse and inclusive medical workforce transcends mere academic discourse, constituting a moral and public health imperative of paramount significance (Argueza et al. 2021; Levy et al. 2023; Nakae and Subica 2021).

In the wake of the tragic death of George Floyd, Black Lives Matter protests, and the subsequent rise of mishandled racial incidents on the campuses of predominately White, highly selective, and highly ranked universities in the U.S., many of these universities have recognized the urgent need to take concrete steps toward fostering diversity and inclusion (Morin and Burrell 2024). To address such challenges, these universities have proactively created dedicated diversity and inclusion roles, developed comprehensive diversity statements, and initiated climate surveys to assess the prevailing campus atmosphere (Burrell and Richardson 2023).

A rush to make diversity a priority is probably most evident when organizations are in trouble or when the sky is falling, as in the recent case of Texas A&M. Texas A&M University announced in July of 2023 the resignation of its president in the fallout over a Black journalist who said her celebrated hiring at one of the nation's largest campuses unraveled due to pushback over her past work promoting diversity. President Katherine Banks's exit comes as lawmakers across the U.S. target diversity, equity, and inclusion programs on college campuses.

Another significant example is the failed hiring and tenure controversy of professor Nikole Hannah-Jones at U.N.C. Chapel Hill in 2021. Black students and faculty at U.N.C. saw this incident as another instance of how the university fails to encourage and welcome researchers of color.

For many predominately White, highly selective, and highly ranked U.S. universities, the development of robust diversity statements served to publicly affirm institutional values and priorities, demonstrating a commitment to addressing long-standing disparities and fostering a more inclusive campus culture. These statements articulated aspirations and signaled accountability to stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and the broader community (Burrell and Richardson 2023; Wilton et al. 2020).

Simultaneously, implementing climate surveys allowed these elite and prestigious universities to engage in data-driven assessments of the experiences and perceptions of individuals within their academic communities. These surveys provided valuable insights into areas requiring improvement, helping universities tailor their diversity and inclusion initiatives to meet their diverse constituents' needs and concerns (Burrell and Richardson 2023; Wilton et al. 2020).

The United States has made some strides in recognizing the imperative of fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within its predominately White, highly selective, and highly ranked U.S. higher education institutions (Wilton et al. 2020). While university diversity statements, diversity program managers, and mission statements underscore institutional commitment, the actual litmus test of DEI progress lies in concrete actions and measurable outcomes (Wilton et al. 2020). Many organizations since 2021 have been in a shell game of diversity dishonesty (Wilton et al. 2020). This phenomenon reveals the extent to which many universities still need to move from rhetoric to genuine efforts, emphasizing the multifaceted benefits of DEI cultures in colleges and universities.

Pursuing diversity, equity, and inclusion within American higher education institutions is not merely a matter of mission statements but an ethical and intellectual imperative. While rhetoric and symbolic gestures are meaningful, the actual test of commitment to DEI lies in the actions taken and the results achieved (Wilton et al. 2020). The benefits of cultivating DEI cultures in colleges and universities are manifold, encompassing enriched learning experiences, innovative scholarship, and empowered individuals.

"Diversity dishonesty" refers to a phenomenon in which organizations, particularly those in the context of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts, appear to be insincere and disingenuous in their commitment to genuine and measurable change regarding diversity (Wilton et al. 2020). It describes a situation where organizations engage in superficial or performative actions related to diversity, giving the appearance of progress and commitment but failing to make substantive and meaningful improvements in promoting diversity and inclusivity (Wilton et al. 2020). Diversity dishonesty is demonstrated by organizations that will show token efforts to invest in diversity but not make critical and monumental changes to internal processes, structure, and policy to support diverse people and manifest in transformational cultural change (Wilton et al. 2020). Diversity dishonesty is hiring diverse people, putting them on organizational photographs and advertising assets, not valuing them, and then gaslighting minorities when the issue of genuine commitment is raised (Morin and Burrell 2024).

From highlighting the importance of diversity and inclusion in job ads to company imagery including people of various backgrounds, it is becoming more challenging to tell if organizations are embracing diversity or merely portraying themselves as more inclusive than they are (Morin and Burrell 2024; Wilton et al. 2020). Employees who feel they are working at an organization that is dishonest about diversity will feel that they are being treated like a commodity (Burrell and Richardson 2023; Wilton et al. 2020). If an organization is more interested in getting more people from a specific group to satisfy some performative urge but is not interested in those people as humans, this can lead to employees being less trusting of the organization, its values, and its leadership (Burrell and Richardson 2023; Wilton et al. 2020).

Diversity dishonesty highlights the frustration minority groups feel within these organizations, who perceive that their concerns and experiences are not being authentically addressed (Wilton et al. 2020). Instead, they witness initiatives that seem more focused on public relations, optics, or "window dressing", with efforts to create a positive image of diversity and inclusion without enacting substantial change in the workplace culture, policies, or practices (Wilton et al. 2020). "Diversity dishonesty" reflects a sense of deception and disillusionment among minorities who may have high expectations for real and measurable progress regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion but feel let down by organizations prioritizing appearances over genuine transformation (Morin and Burrell 2024; Wilton et al. 2020). It underscores the need for organizations to move beyond symbolic gestures and demonstrate a sincere commitment to fostering diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments where all employees are genuinely valued and supported (Burrell and Richardson 2023; Wilton et al. 2020).

2. Problem Statement

According to Davis and Fry (Davis and Fry 2019), there is a substantial lack of minority faculty members working at predominately White, elite, and prestigious colleges and universities in the United States. Black, Latinx, Native American, and multi-racial faculty and student members, compared to their proportion of the U.S. population and the student populations at colleges and universities, are underrepresented at the highest-ranked universities in America (Davis and Fry 2019; Gasman 2022).

The term "redlining" historically referred to the practice of marking areas with predominantly Black populations in red ink on maps, signifying regions where banks and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) would deny mortgage and insurance services (Rodríguez et al. 2022). However, contemporary usage extends this concept to encompass

discriminatory practices that deny or disproportionately burden marginalized communities across various sectors, including banking, insurance, healthcare, consumer goods, and education (Rodríguez et al. 2022). Redlining manifests in disparities in the geographical distribution of health services and facilities within marginalized communities, leading to reduced access, poorer health outcomes, and increased financial burdens on individuals seeking care (Rodríguez et al. 2022).

Academic redlining represents a parallel phenomenon characterized by systematically excluding students from underrepresented backgrounds from entry training programs and faculty roles in medical schools, pharmacy schools, and public health schools at the most highly selective and ranked U.S. universities. Failure to achieve proportionate representation of minorities as faculty and students at these institutions perpetuate disparities in healthcare delivery by limiting the diversity of perspectives and experiences within the healthcare workforce, hindering efforts to effectively address the complex needs of diverse patient populations (Rodríguez et al. 2022).

Redlining in healthcare encompasses spatial disparities in access to services and structural barriers that impede equitable representation and participation in healthcare professions. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires comprehensive strategies that dismantle systemic inequities and foster inclusive environments within healthcare delivery and educational institutions (Kayingo et al. 2022; Rodríguez et al. 2022; Nonyel et al. 2021).

While many universities have diversity statements, job roles, and diversity websites, the disconnect between what is publicly stated and the results creates a confusing narrative that can imply that the statements universities offer to commit to diversity are dishonest or insincere. Real progress requires moving away from cultures that foster diversity dishonesty and moving toward cultures that hold senior leaders, admissions directors, student service professionals, deans, department chairs, and search committee members accountable to produce tangible results in terms of selecting highly qualified minority candidates and developing psychologically safe cultures (Burrell and Richardson 2023). This inquiry seeks to discuss the nature of diversity dishonesty and why exploring the concept is needed because there is limited research.

3. Purpose

This perspective article aims to explain the nature of "diversity dishonesty" within U.S. universities and DEI efforts. Grounded in established theories and emerging frameworks, we aim to dissect the nuanced dynamics of diversity dishonesty. We seek to understand the nature of insincere commitments, including tokenism and gaslighting, as they relate to organizational culture and commitment. We bridge the gap between theory and practice by proposing problem-solving approaches and contextual models. Ultimately, our goal is to guide organizations toward more genuine and impactful DEI efforts, ensuring that their commitment aligns with substantive and transformative cultural change. This research contributes to the imperative of authenticity in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.

4. Practical and Social Implications

The discussion on "diversity dishonesty" from this inquiry bears significant practical implications for medical schools, pharmacy schools, and schools of public health, particularly in improving health outcomes, addressing health disparities, and focusing on illnesses that disproportionately harm underserved and under-resourced communities. These nuanced dynamics underscore the urgency of transcending superficial commitments toward fostering genuine change. Practical problem-solving approaches and contextual models offer structured strategies for these institutions, promoting accountability and transparency in pursuing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. By aligning goals with measurement criteria, they mitigate the risk of diversity dishonesty and fatigue, thus enabling institutions to more effectively address health disparities and meet the needs of marginalized communities. Moreover, cultivating trust and inclusivity within these

institutions contributes to a psychologically safe environment, fostering collaboration and innovation in research, healthcare delivery, and community engagement. This study is a crucial resource for highly selective, elite, and predominately White universities. It guides them in their quest for authentic and impactful DEI initiatives that promote health equity and improve health outcomes.

From a social perspective, the implications of this perspective on "diversity dishonesty" are profound. They highlight the imperative of substantive shifts in DEI efforts within medical schools, pharmacy schools, and schools of public health, particularly in their roles as stewards of public health and advocates for underserved communities. Moving beyond token gestures, this discussion advocates for authentic transformation, offering practical strategies and contextual frameworks to enhance accountability and transparency. Such a transition reduces discrimination and fosters a more equitable and inclusive social environment critical for addressing health disparities and promoting health equity. By creating psychologically safe spaces for faculty and students, these institutions can better engage with communities, develop culturally competent healthcare interventions, and advocate for policies addressing health's social determinants. Thus, this academic commentary is a vital resource for organizations committed to advancing DEI efforts, ultimately creating a more inclusive and just society prioritizing the health and well-being of all individuals and communities.

5. Originality/Value

This inquiry's perspective is of paramount originality due to its profound social implications. It underscores the urgency of transitioning from tokenistic DEI efforts to genuine organizational transformation. Its uniqueness lies in providing practical, problem-solving approaches and contextual models that enhance accountability and transparency, setting it apart from conventional studies. The paper's originality shines in its emphasis on reducing discrimination complaints and fostering psychological safety for faculty and students. By aiding organizations in navigating the complexities of DEI, it serves as an invaluable resource, contributing to the broader goal of building a more inclusive and just society.

6. Method

This article uses a perspective/commentary approach. The importance, value, and recognition of perspective articles is that they serve as a platform to provide insightful and forward-looking assessments of current developments or recommendations for policy within a specific field of study. By systematically reviewing the available literature, authors can pinpoint topics or aspects of the subject that need to be adequately explored or understood. A perspective approach can serve as a foundation for future research by synthesizing existing knowledge and providing a comprehensive overview. It can establish a baseline understanding of the subject matter, including key concepts, theories, methodologies, and findings, which can guide subsequent empirical studies. These articles often provide valuable insights into the evolving landscape of a particular discipline, offering readers a glimpse into the author's vision of future directions, new policy approaches, and potential breakthroughs. Perspective approaches matter and should not be discounted, because they contribute to scholarly discourse by fostering discussion and debate, guiding researchers, and shaping potential areas of future study in the field.

Viable solutions can be uncovered by leveraging current frameworks from the literature and innovative applications tailored to the specific context (Hamlin et al. 2019; González-Torres and Rodríguez-Sánchez 2023; McIntyre et al. 2015). This approach draws upon a wealth of theoretical knowledge rooted in organizational psychology, management theory, and sociology, among other fields, to create a comprehensive toolbox of strategies and frameworks (Hamlin et al. 2019; González-Torres and Rodríguez-Sánchez 2023; McIntyre et al. 2015).

The goal is to explore these frameworks to diagnose issues, collect data contextually, and design solutions that align with an organization's unique challenges and goals (Hamlin et al. 2019; González-Torres and Rodríguez-Sánchez 2023; McIntyre et al. 2015). One of the strengths of this approach lies in its adaptability. By utilizing established frameworks and theories as starting points, researchers, administrators, and organizational development professionals can build upon well-tested concepts and theories that can provide guardrails, steps, tools, and direction for complex organizations genuinely interested in solving complex problems (Hamlin et al. 2019; González-Torres and Rodríguez-Sánchez 2023; McIntyre et al. 2015).

Databases utilized included Pub-Med, Pro-Quest, Ebsco-Host, S.C.O.P.U.S., Google Scholar, I.G.I. Global Publishing, Research Gate, and Academia.edu. Boolean search terms that were used to explore related literature or research:

Search Terms
1. (diversity) AND (highly selective universities)
2. (diversity) AND (highly selective universities) AND (medicine)
3. (diversity) AND (highly selective universities) AND (pharmacy)
4. (diversity) AND (highly selective universities) AND (public health)
5. (diversity) AND (highly selective universities) AND (faculty)
6. (diversity) AND (highly selective universities) AND (students)
7. (diversity) AND (predominantly White Universities)
8. (diversity) AND (predominantly White Universities) AND (medicine)
9. (diversity) AND (predominantly White Universities) AND (pharmacy)
10. (diversity) AND (predominantly White Universities) AND (public health)
11. (diversity dishonesty) AND (predominantly White schools) AND (medicine)
12. (D.E.I. efforts) AND (predominantly White Universities)
13. (D.E.I. efforts) AND (results)
14. (D.E.I. efforts) AND (elite universities) AND (pharmacy)
15. (minorities) AND (medical school)
16. (minorities) AND (pharmacy school)
17. (minorities) AND (highly selective universities) AND (public health)
18. (minority students) AND (highly selective universities) AND (medical school)
19. (minorities) AND (medical school) AND (Racial bias) AND (Inclusion)
20. (minorities) AND (pharmacy school) AND (Racial bias)
21. (minorities) AND (pharmacy school) AND (Racial bias) AND (Inclusion)
22. (surface-level actions) AND (diversity) AND (public health)
23. (surface-level actions) AND (diversity) AND (medicine)
24. (surface-level actions) AND (diversity) AND (pharmacy)
25. (students) AND (tokenism) AND (medical schools)
26. (students) AND (tokenism) AND (pharmacy)
27. (students) AND (tokenism) AND (public health)
28. (racism) AND (higher education) AND (students)
29. (racism) AND (higher education) AND (faculty)
30. (racism) AND (higher education) AND (medicine)
31. (racism) AND (higher education) AND (public health)
32. (racism) AND (higher education) AND (pharmacy)
33. (diversity) OR (tokenism) AND (highly ranked universities)
34. (authenticity) AND (commitment) AND (diversity) AND (White institutions)
35. (gaslighting) AND (minorities) AND (education)
36. (micro-aggression) AND (minorities) AND (higher education)
37. (marginalization) AND (minorities) AND (higher education)
38. (racism) AND (theory) AND (higher education)
39. (racism) AND (impact) AND (higher education)
40. (racism) AND (impact) AND (medical school)
41. (racism) AND (impact) AND (pharmacy school)
42. (racism) AND (theory)
43. (racism) AND (contexts)
44. (diversity) AND (contexts)

Search Terms
45. (diversity) AND (frameworks)
46. (conceptual framework) AND (diversity dishonesty) AND (academic institutions)
47. (transformative cultural change) AND (D.E.I.) AND (elite universities)
48. (review of literature) AND (diversity dishonesty) AND (predominantly White institutions)
49. (diversity) AND (inclusion) AND (results)
50. (diversity) AND (inclusion) AND (impact)
51. (diversity) AND (higher education) AND (genuineness)
52. (diversity) AND (higher education) AND (authenticity)
53. (diversity) AND (inclusion) AND (organizational culture)
54. (diversity) AND (inclusion) AND (organizational climate)
55. (diversity) AND (inclusion) AND (organizational change)
56. (diversity) AND (inclusion) AND (U.S. universities)

The review focused on current and relevant research, encompassing a broad spectrum of literature. Initially, 259 publications were evaluated, ensuring that the literature review was inclusive and exhaustive, capturing various perspectives and findings. By incorporating 59 publications in the final analysis, the review was able to synthesize diverse viewpoints and insights, thereby providing a holistic understanding of the topic. Each publication was critically assessed for its relevance, quality, and contribution to the field. The rigorous evaluation process included criteria such as methodological soundness, theoretical contribution, and practical implications. By focusing on current publications, 71% being less than five years old, the review ensures that the recommendations are firmly grounded in the most recent and relevant research findings, making them immediately applicable to the field.

7. Diversity Fatigue

Diversity dishonesty also manifests itself in forms of diversity fatigue, which refers to the exhaustion, resistance, or diminishing enthusiasm that individuals and organizations may experience when dealing with DEI efforts over an extended period (Wilton et al. 2020; Branson 2019; Doan and Kennedy 2022; Lam 2018; Smith et al. 2021). According to previous research, diversity fatigue often includes (Wilton et al. 2020; Branson 2019; Doan and Kennedy 2022; Lam 2018; Smith et al. 2021).

8. The Burnout Factor

One significant aspect of diversity fatigue is burnout. Individuals, especially those actively promoting DEI, may experience burnout due to the emotional labor involved. Constantly advocating for marginalized groups, confronting bias, and navigating sensitive conversations can be emotionally draining. This burnout can manifest as a decreased willingness to engage in diversity-related activities, leading to fatigue (Wilton et al. 2020; Branson 2019; Doan and Kennedy 2022; Lam 2018; Smith et al. 2021).

9. Resistance and Pushback

Resistance is another facet of diversity fatigue. Feeling overwhelmed or skeptical, some individuals may resist or push back against DEI efforts. This resistance can stem from various sources, including a fear of change, a sense of threat to one's identity or privilege, or simply a belief that diversity initiatives are unnecessary or politically motivated. Pushback also refers to the discomfort, defensiveness, or lack of openness to understand or acknowledge the validity of those different experiences when confronted with conversations or situations related to race. Such resistance can hinder progress and contribute to diversity fatigue at an organizational or societal level (Wilton et al. 2020; Branson 2019; Doan and Kennedy 2022; Lam 2018; Smith et al. 2021).

10. Diminishing Enthusiasm

Over time, enthusiasm for DEI initiatives can wane due to perceived slow progress or a sense of futility. Individuals or organizations may become disillusioned and disheartened when they do not witness tangible results from their efforts. This diminishing enthusiasm can lead to a sense of hopelessness, making it challenging to sustain the momentum required for meaningful change (Wilton et al. 2020; Branson 2019; Doan and Kennedy 2022; Lam 2018; Smith et al. 2021).

11. Diversity Dishonesty Impacts

An organizational culture of diversity dishonesty at a university can have significant and far-reaching impacts on minority staff, faculty members, and students, affecting them mentally, emotionally, and in various other ways. Here are some of the forms in which this lack of commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion can manifest (Burrell and Richardson 2023; Zambrana 2018).

12. Stress and Anxiety

The absence of a welcoming and inclusive environment can lead to heightened stress and anxiety levels among minority individuals. They may constantly worry about experiencing discrimination, microaggressions, or exclusion (Burrell 2023).

When individuals from minority groups do not feel welcome or included, it can significantly impact their psychological well-being. This dynamic is often manifested through heightened levels of stress and anxiety. The absence of a welcoming environment means that minority individuals may feel a constant sense of unease and insecurity in their environment.

Persistent stress from experiencing discrimination or exclusion can lead to physical health problems, such as high blood pressure, sleep disorders, and heart disease (Burrell 2023). Prolonged exposure to a hostile or unsupportive atmosphere can contribute to depression and burnout among minority individuals (Burrell 2023).

Overall, the absence of a welcoming and inclusive environment harms the well-being of minority individuals and undermines organizational effectiveness and sustainability. Therefore, organizations must prioritize creating and maintaining environments where everyone feels valued, respected, and included.

13. Isolation and Loneliness

A lack of diversity and inclusion can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Minority individuals may struggle to find belonging within the university community (Burrell 2023).

At the individual level, feelings of isolation and loneliness can have detrimental effects on mental health and overall well-being. Minority individuals who struggle to find a sense of belonging within the university community may experience heightened stress, anxiety, and depression. These dynamics can negatively impact their academic performance, hinder their ability to engage in campus activities, and impede their overall satisfaction with their university experience. Additionally, feelings of isolation may lead to decreased motivation and disconnection from peers and academic resources, further exacerbating feelings of loneliness.

From an organizational standpoint, a lack of diversity and inclusion can have broader implications for the university as a whole. It can hinder efforts to attract and retain a diverse student body, faculty, and staff, limiting the exchange of diverse perspectives and ideas essential for academic excellence and innovation. Additionally, a homogenous university community may need help to effectively address the needs and concerns of diverse student populations, leading to gaps in support services and resources.

Moreover, lacking diversity and inclusion can tarnish the university's reputation and standing as a progressive and inclusive institution. It may deter prospective students,

faculty, and staff from affiliating with the university, resulting in a loss of talent and potential revenue.

14. Imposter Syndrome

The absence of support and recognition can contribute to imposter syndrome, where minority faculty and students may doubt their abilities and feel like they do not belong (Burrell 2023). At the individual level, imposter syndrome can have profound negative effects on mental health and well-being. Minority faculty and students who experience imposter syndrome may constantly doubt their abilities and achievements, leading to increased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. These feelings of inadequacy can hinder academic and professional performance, as individuals may refrain from taking on new challenges or seeking out opportunities for growth and advancement due to fear of failure or being perceived as incompetent.

Furthermore, imposter syndrome can erode individuals' sense of belonging within the academic community. When minority faculty and students doubt their abilities and feel like they do not belong, this can lead to feelings of isolation and alienation. This dynamic can hinder their ability to fully engage in academic and professional activities, participate in collaborative research or projects, and form meaningful connections with peers and mentors.

From an organizational perspective, imposter syndrome among minority faculty and students can have broader implications for the institution. It can contribute to decreased retention rates, as individuals may leave the institution searching for environments where they feel more supported and valued. Additionally, it can hinder efforts to recruit and retain diverse talent, as perceptions of unwelcoming or unsupportive environments may deter prospective faculty and students (Burrell 2023).

Moreover, imposter syndrome can undermine the institution's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. When minority faculty and students do not feel supported and recognized for their contributions, it can perpetuate systemic inequities and reinforce existing power dynamics within the academic hierarchy. This kind of experience can hinder efforts to create inclusive and equitable environments where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive and succeed (Burrell 2023).

15. Underrepresentation

Minority faculty, students, and staff may find it challenging to advance in their careers due to a lack of representation in leadership positions and decision-making roles (Burrell 2023). At the individual level, the lack of representation in leadership positions can hinder the career progression and professional development of minority faculty, students, and staff. Without access to leadership roles and decision-making responsibilities, individuals may face limited opportunities for advancement, recognition, and influence within the organization. This dynamic can result in feelings of frustration, disillusionment, and stagnation, as individuals may perceive their career trajectories as constrained by systemic barriers and biases.

Furthermore, the absence of representation in leadership positions can perpetuate feelings of exclusion and marginalization among minority faculty, students, and staff. When individuals do not see themselves reflected in leadership roles, it can undermine their sense of belonging and efficacy within the organization. These variables can decrease morale, engagement, and job satisfaction, as individuals may feel undervalued and overlooked in the organizational hierarchy (Burrell 2023).

From an organizational perspective, lacking representation in leadership positions can have broader implications for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. When minority individuals are underrepresented in leadership roles, it can reinforce existing power dynamics and perpetuate systemic inequities within the organization. These variables can hinder efforts to create inclusive and equitable environments where all individuals can thrive and contribute fully to the organization's mission and goals.

Moreover, more representation in leadership positions is needed to ensure that the organization effectively addresses the needs and concerns of diverse stakeholders. Without diverse perspectives and voices at the decision-making table, organizations may overlook important issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, leading to missed opportunities for innovation, growth, and progress (Burrell 2023).

16. Limited Opportunities

When individuals from minority groups have fewer opportunities for mentorship, research engagement, and leadership roles, it can have profound consequences for their academic and professional growth and the organization as a whole (Burrell 2023).

At the individual level, limited access to mentorship, research opportunities, and leadership roles can hinder the academic and professional development of minority students and faculty. Mentorship provides guidance, support, and networking opportunities for navigating academic and career pathways. When minority students and faculty have fewer mentorship opportunities, they may lack access to valuable resources and advice for academic and professional success (Burrell 2023).

Moreover, disparities in research opportunities can impede the ability of minority students and faculty to engage in scholarly activities and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their respective fields. Research involvement enhances academic learning and skill development and provides networking, collaboration, and recognition opportunities within the academic community. When minority individuals are excluded from research opportunities, their ability to build expertise, establish credibility, and advance their academic careers is limited (Burrell 2023).

Additionally, the lack of access to leadership roles can hinder the career progression and visibility of minority faculty within academic institutions. Leadership roles allow individuals to exercise influence, contribute to decision-making processes, and shape institutional policies and practices. When minority faculty are underrepresented in leadership positions, it not only limits their ability to advocate for the needs and interests of their communities but also perpetuates systemic inequities within the organization (Burrell 2023).

From an organizational standpoint, disparities in opportunities for mentorship, research, and leadership roles among minority students and faculty can have broader implications for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. When individuals from minority groups are systematically excluded from these opportunities, it undermines the organization's commitment to creating inclusive and equitable environments where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive and succeed. These dynamics can lead to decreased morale, engagement, and retention among minority faculty and students, eroding trust and credibility in the organization's leadership and values.

17. Unfair Treatment

Discriminatory practices can result in unequal access to resources, research funding, publishing opportunities, recognition, awards, and career advancement opportunities (Burrell 2023). They can manifest in various forms, including bias in decision-making processes, unequal treatment, and systemic barriers that disproportionately affect individuals from marginalized or underrepresented groups.

At the individual level, discriminatory practices can result in unequal access to resources and opportunities essential for academic and professional success. For instance, minority faculty, students, and staff may face barriers in accessing research funding, training programs, scholarships, and publishing opportunities compared to their counterparts from privileged or dominant groups. These variables can hinder their ability to pursue research projects, advance their education, and establish themselves as leaders in their fields, ultimately limiting their career prospects and opportunities for growth (Burrell 2023).

Moreover, discriminatory practices can perpetuate inequities in career advancement and professional development. When individuals from marginalized or underrepresented groups are systematically excluded from opportunities for career advancement, they may

face limited options for upward mobility within the organization. These dynamics can result in stagnation, frustration, and disillusionment among affected individuals, as they perceive their career trajectories as hindered by systemic biases and barriers (Burrell 2023).

From an organizational perspective, discriminatory practices can have broader implications for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. When individuals are unfairly denied access to resources, opportunities, and recognition based on factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, or other protected characteristics, it undermines the organization's commitment to creating inclusive and equitable environments. These variables can lead to decreased morale, engagement, and productivity among affected individuals, eroding trust and credibility in the organization's leadership and values.

18. Lower Retention Rates

Minority students may be more likely to drop out or transfer to other institutions if they feel marginalized or unsupported (Burrell 2023). At the individual level, feeling marginalized or unsupported can significantly impact the academic success and well-being of minority students. Studies have shown that students who feel marginalized or unsupported are more likely to experience stress, anxiety, and depression, which can negatively affect their ability to focus, engage in coursework, and persist in their studies. Additionally, feelings of isolation and alienation can lead to decreased motivation and a sense of disconnection from the academic community, further exacerbating the likelihood of dropout or transfer.

Moreover, the decision to drop out or transfer can have long-term consequences for the academic and professional trajectories of minority students. Dropping out or transferring to another institution can disrupt their educational journey, delay their degree attainment, and hinder their ability to pursue their career goals. Additionally, it can have financial implications, as students may incur additional costs associated with transferring or may forfeit scholarships or financial aid packages.

From an organizational perspective, high dropout and transfer rates among minority students can have broader implications for academic institutions. They can undermine efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, eroding the institution's reputation and standing as a welcoming and supportive environment for all students. Additionally, they can lead to decreased retention rates, impacting the institution's enrollment numbers, graduation rates, and overall financial stability.

Furthermore, high dropout and transfer rates among minority students can perpetuate systemic inequities within the institution. When minority students are disproportionately affected by feelings of marginalization or lack of support, it can reinforce existing disparities in educational attainment and contribute to the persistence of achievement gaps between minority and non-minority students.

19. Poor Community and Public Relations

A university perceived as not committed to DEI can face reputational damage and backlash from the community, alumni, and potential students (Burrell 2023). A university demonstrating diversity dishonesty can have a profound and detrimental impact on the mental, emotional, and overall well-being of minority staff, faculty members, and students. It can also hinder their educational and career prospects, perpetuate inequality, and harm the institution's reputation. Consequently, fostering a truly inclusive and diverse campus environment is not only a moral imperative but also crucial for the success and well-being of all university community members (Lam 2018; Zambrana 2018).

20. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) constitute paramount principles that transcend mere buzzwords; they encapsulate profound concepts that have substantial implications for organizations, employees, and stakeholders. Diversity denotes the presence of individuals from a myriad of backgrounds, encompassing differences in race, religion, ethnicity, gender,

age, sexual orientation, and abilities (Burrell 2021; Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021). It serves as a recognition of the rich tapestry of perspectives, experiences, and talents that collectively enrich an organization (Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021; Burrell et al. 2023). Equity further signifies all individuals' just and fair treatment, ensuring that opportunities and resources are distributed equitably, irrespective of background or identity (Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021; McLester et al. 2021). Inclusion, the final pillar, embodies embracing diversity and fostering a culture where every voice is heard, respected, and empowered to contribute fully (Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021; Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d). In essence, DEI represents a holistic commitment to fostering an environment where everyone feels valued, has equal access to opportunities, and can thrive without fear of discrimination or exclusion (Burrell 2022; Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021).

For organizations, embracing DEI is more than a moral imperative; it is an astute organizational strategy (Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021; Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d). Diverse teams bring various perspectives that fuel innovation, enhance problem-solving, and drive creativity. Furthermore, fostering a culture of equity and inclusion nurtures engagement, loyalty, and productivity, resulting in a more vibrant and sustainable workforce. In today's globalized and interconnected world, organizations prioritizing DEI are better positioned to adapt to changing demographics, mitigate reputational risks, and navigate the complexities of a diverse and multicultural marketplace (Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021; Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d).

For employees, DEI is a beacon of empowerment and a catalyst for personal and professional growth. It means working in an environment where their unique backgrounds, perspectives, and talents are acknowledged, actively sought after, and leveraged (Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021; Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d).

It signifies an organization where merit is the yardstick of advancement, untainted by biases or discriminatory barriers (Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d). DEI instills a sense of belonging and psychological safety, allowing individuals to bring their authentic selves to the organization, resulting in increased well-being in its culture (Burrell 2022). Moreover, DEI fosters an environment where stakeholders are more likely to align with organizational values, bolstering their commitment to the organization's mission and vision (Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d; Jeffries 2018; Özturgut 2017).

For stakeholders, DEI signals a commitment to social responsibility and ethical leadership. It reflects an organization's dedication to fostering a just and inclusive society where opportunities are accessible to all (Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d). Organizations that fail to prioritize DEI may face reputational damage, legal repercussions, and the erosion of stakeholder trust (Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d; Jeffries 2018; Özturgut 2017).

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not ephemeral trends but enduring principles that shape the contemporary landscape of organizations (Burrell 2022; Jeffries 2018; Özturgut 2017). They empower individuals, drive organizational success, and signal ethical leadership to stakeholders. In an era characterized by global interconnectivity and heightened social awareness, DEI represents a path toward a more equitable and inclusive future for organizations and stakeholders that they serve. Embracing these principles is the right thing to do and a strategic imperative that positions organizations for long-term prosperity and relevance in an ever-evolving world (Copeland and Tarver 2020; Nunes 2021; Sabie-Aridi et al. 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d).

21. Impact of Diversity Dishonesty

According to the records, when Gary King started working as a full-time faculty member at Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) in 1998, there were fewer than three other Black faculty members for every one hundred full-time faculty members (Anderson 2021). However, the proportion of Black full-time faculty members on Penn State's flagship campus has not changed since King's time there (Anderson 2021). In 2019, it came in

at 3.2 percent. This absence of African-American faculty members is consistent with the pattern seen at many of the most highly ranked and highly selected universities, with only a few exceptions (Anderson 2021). According to statistics from the federal government, the percentage of Black professors working at Ohio State University that year was 4.1 percent. In comparison, the percentage of Black professors working at Michigan State University was 4.7 percent, and that of Black professors working at the University of Maryland was 6.2 percent (Anderson 2021).

Following the murder of George Floyd in Minnesota, racial reckoning was sweeping through higher education (Anderson 2021). Many educational institutions have changed the names of buildings formerly connected with White supremacists, eugenicists, and other forms of racism (Anderson 2021). Additionally, they are examining campus policing policies and admissions procedures in locations where Black students continue to be grossly underrepresented (Anderson 2021).

Several people have used the hashtag #BlackInTheIvory on social media to discuss issues of race and racism prevalent in academia (Anderson 2021). The hashtag compiles accounts of marginalization and neglect.

22. Shifting Winds on the Support for Diversity

In a significant legal development, the Supreme Court rendered a groundbreaking decision in 2023, effectively banning race-based affirmative action in college admissions (Maye 2023; Meyer and Pita 2023; Knox 2023). This verdict represents a notable setback for institutions of higher learning, which have long depended on affirmative action policies spanning four decades to foster racial diversity within their campuses and redress historical patterns of overt and covert racial exclusion (Maye 2023; Meyer and Pita 2023; Knox 2023). The prohibition of affirmative action has intensified the challenge for many universities in achieving proportional representation of historically underrepresented groups while concurrently imposing new constraints on endeavors toward racial equity and equal opportunity in higher education (Maye 2023; Meyer and Pita 2023; Knox 2023).

The intricacies surrounding racial discrimination underscore the necessity for targeted, equitable, and comprehensive approaches to rectify past injustices and advance principles of fairness. However, the recent judicial ruling has muddied the waters concerning what constitutes permissible action in pursuit of diversity and inclusion, thereby engendering potential long-term ramifications for all institutions of higher learning (Maye 2023; Meyer and Pita 2023; Knox 2023). These dynamics necessitate a critical reevaluation of strategies to promote diversity and inclusion within the educational landscape, calling for innovative and adaptive approaches to navigate the evolving legal landscape while upholding core principles of fairness and equity (Burrell and Richardson 2023; Maye 2023; Meyer and Pita 2023; Knox 2023).

23. Myths about DEI

One of the prevailing myths surrounding affirmative action and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives is the notion that these efforts prioritize unqualified candidates solely based on their race or ethnicity (Rae 2024). This misconception overlooks the rigorous evaluation processes typically employed in affirmative action programs, which consider many factors beyond race, including academic achievements, extracurricular involvement, socioeconomic background, and personal experiences (Gassam-Asare 2024). DEI initiatives aim to create a more inclusive environment by recognizing and valuing diverse perspectives, talents, and backgrounds, ultimately enriching the educational and professional landscape for all individuals involved (Rae 2024). Another common myth is the belief that affirmative action and DEI efforts lead to lowering standards or quotas, resulting in the admission or hiring of less qualified candidates (Gassam-Asare 2024). However, research has consistently shown that diversity enhances organizational performance and fosters innovation, debunking the notion that diversity compromises excellence (Rae 2024; Gassam-Asare 2024). Moreover, affirmative action policies are designed not to guarantee outcomes but to level the

playing field and provide equal opportunities for historically marginalized groups facing systemic barriers to access and advancement (Gassam-Asare 2024).

In the discourse surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), there persists a misperception that such initiatives foster animosity towards White individuals. While DEI workshops may indeed engage with concepts such as White supremacy and privilege, as well as systemic barriers, proficient DEI practitioners do not center their discussions on fomenting hostility towards White individuals. Such a focus would be antithetical to the overarching objective of DEI, which is to cultivate environments of inclusivity and equity (Gassam-Asare 2024). Meaningful dialogues about systemic inequities and racism necessitate an acknowledgment of the historical role played by groups, systems, and policies in perpetuating harm against non-White communities and individuals. However, these discussions should be rooted in factual historical analysis rather than conjecture, allowing for nuanced understandings of complex issues (Gassam-Asare 2024).

Another prevalent misconception revolves around the belief that DEI initiatives exclusively benefit specific demographic groups. Affirmative action stands as a prominent example of a DEI initiative. Despite its cessation by the U.S. Supreme Court in June of 2023, it remains pertinent for analysis due to prevailing beliefs regarding its beneficiaries (Gassam-Asare 2024). Contrary to popular belief that affirmative action primarily advantages Black individuals, empirical data from the United States Labor Department reveal that White women constituted the primary beneficiaries of affirmative action programs (Gassam-Asare 2024). These data underscore the need for a more nuanced understanding of the impact and beneficiaries of DEI initiatives, challenging simplistic narratives and emphasizing the multifaceted nature of equity-focused interventions.

24. Conflicting Perspectives Perpetuate Diversity Dishonesty

According to the findings of the Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center 2016), there are significant discrepancies between the perspectives of Black and White adults about racial discrimination in the U.S., which manifest themselves in interactions and beliefs. These varying viewpoints create obstacles that hamper engagement, full participation, and organizational cultural change. According to research by the Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center 2016), to a much greater extent than Whites, Black people believe that Black people are mistreated in various spheres of life, including interactions with the police and applying for a loan or mortgage. According to the Pew Research Center (2016), achieving racial equality is still difficult for many Black people. According to a survey by the Pew Research Center in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2016), an overwhelming majority of Black people (88%) believe the country must continue making reforms for Blacks and Whites to enjoy equal rights. However, 43% of Black people doubt such changes will occur. According to the Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center 2016), 42% of Black people feel that the country will ultimately make the necessary changes for Blacks and Whites to have equal rights. However, only 8% of Black people believe the country has made the improvements needed (Pew Research Center 2016).

According to the study, Black and White adult respondents had quite different conceptions of being Black in the United States. According to Horowitz et al.'s (2019) research, for instance, Black people are far more likely than White people to feel that Black people are treated less appropriately. According to Horowitz et al. (Horowitz et al. 2019), almost six out of ten Black people and fewer than half of White people believe that Black people are treated less equitably than White people in a variety of contexts, including hiring, compensation, and promotions; when applying for a loan or mortgage; in stores or restaurants; while voting in elections; and when seeking medical treatment. Also, according to Horowitz et al.'s research (Horowitz et al. 2019), most White people believe that Blacks and Whites are treated equally in each of these spheres, while only a tiny minority of White people believe that Whites are treated less equitably than Blacks.

More than a year after protests erupted across the country after the death of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police, the public remains firmly split over how

far the nation has moved in tackling racial inequality and how much further it has to go (Horowitz et al. 2019). These differences in perspective are brought into sharp focus by the national reckoning in the United States regarding the past of slavery and racism. According to research conducted by Horowitz et al. (2019), a total of 53% of adults living in the United States believe that increasing attention to that historical period is beneficial to society. In comparison, 26% of adults believe it is detrimental, and 21% of adults believe it is neither beneficial nor detrimental.

Of adult African Americans, 75% believe that increased public attention to this issue is a positive development, with 54% indicating that it is "very good" for society (Horowitz et al. 2019). Most adults who identify as Asian American (64%) and Latinx (59%) similarly have a favorable outlook on this. However, considerably fewer Asian American and Latinx adults believe it is perfect (Horowitz et al. 2019). Among White adults, less than half (46%) agree that increasing attention to the history of slavery and racism in the United States benefits society, with just 24% stating that it is very good for society (Horowitz et al. 2019). A third of White people say that it is harmful to society.

According to research conducted by Horowitz et al. (2019), over eight out of ten Black individuals believe that much further work must be done to guarantee equal rights for people of all racial and ethnic origins in the United States. Of these, 58% believe that to reach this aim, the majority of the nation's laws and central institutions need to be entirely rebuilt because they are inherently prejudiced. In comparison, 19% of people believe that the necessary adjustments can be made by working within the systems that are now in place (Horowitz et al. 2019).

According to Horowitz et al. (2019), most Black adults are doubtful about the progress that the United States has achieved on this issue over the past 50 years. According to Horowitz et al.'s (2019) research, only 19% of respondents believe that the country has made a great deal of development, while 64% believe that it has made only a little, and 16% believe that the U.S. has not made any progress at all (Horowitz et al. 2019). A plurality of people who identify as Asian American (44%) and adults who identify as Latinx (38%) agree with the statement that the United States has achieved a significant amount of progress toward racial equality during this time (Horowitz et al. 2019).

According to Horowitz et al. (2019), a total of 31% of the population believes that White people gain a great amount of benefits from societal advantages that Black people do not have, while 27% believe that White people derive a reasonable amount of benefit, and 40% believe that White people derive little or no benefit from advantages that Black people lack. These data highlight the necessity to develop and implement frameworks capable of changing corporate cultures and addressing diversity dishonesty in all organizations, especially colleges and universities.

Pursuing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at universities is rooted in fairness, justice, and meritocracy (Burrell and Richardson 2023). It is a noble undertaking that should not be misconstrued as threatening non-minorities or compromising organizational standards (Burrell and Richardson 2023). Instead, DEI initiatives are fundamentally concerned with leveling the playing field and fostering an environment where highly qualified individuals from underrepresented groups can flourish and contribute their talents unimpeded (Burrell and Richardson 2023; Jeffries 2018; Özturgut 2017).

The essence of DEI lies in the belief that talent knows no race, gender, or ethnicity, and that opportunities should be extended based solely on merit (Burrell and Richardson 2023). It seeks to dismantle the barriers that have historically hindered the progression of competent minority individuals, offering them the rightful recognition and access to positions commensurate with their skills and qualifications (Burrell and Richardson 2023). DEI initiatives, far from lowering standards, emphasize recognizing the diverse talents and perspectives that can elevate an organization's overall performance (Burrell and Richardson 2023).

25. Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Framework

Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Framework categorizes organizational cultures into four types: Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy. Research has shown how understanding and aligning with these cultural types can facilitate successful change efforts (Yu and Wu 2009; Quinn et al. 1991).

Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Framework is valuable for understanding and addressing critical elements related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) activities to change organizational culture, overcome barriers in organizational systems, and manage employee resistance to change. The framework identifies four fundamental organizational culture types, each of which has implications for DEI efforts:

Clan Culture—Clan cultures strongly focus on collaboration, mentorship, and employee well-being (Yu and Wu 2009; Quinn et al. 1991). In the context of DEI, a clan culture can serve as a supportive foundation for change initiatives. Organizations with a clan culture are often more open to embracing diversity, as they prioritize nurturing a sense of belonging and inclusivity. They emphasize employee development and engagement, which can facilitate buy-in and participation in DEI activities.

Adhocracy Culture—Adhocracy cultures prioritize innovation, adaptability, and risk-taking (Yu and Wu 2009; Quinn et al. 1991). These cultures may be more open to experimentation and change in DEI efforts. However, they may also face resistance from established norms and processes. Effective DEI initiatives in adhocratic organizations require creative approaches that align with their innovative spirit.

Market Culture—Market cultures emphasize competitiveness, results, and goal achievement (Yu and Wu 2009; Quinn et al. 1991). In these cultures, DEI activities must demonstrate a clear connection between diversity and business outcomes to gain traction. Highlighting the competitive advantage of diversity and inclusion can be an effective strategy in market-oriented organizations.

Hierarchy Culture—Hierarchy cultures focus on stability, control, and efficiency (Yu and Wu 2009; Quinn et al. 1991). DEI initiatives in hierarchical organizations may encounter resistance due to the rigidity of established systems. Change efforts should be carefully planned and communicated to address concerns related to potential disruptions. Emphasizing the alignment of DEI goals with organizational stability can help mitigate resistance.

Understanding the dominant culture within an organization according to the Competing Values Framework is essential for tailoring DEI activities effectively. It allows DEI practitioners to identify potential allies and obstacles, align strategies with the existing culture, and address resistance in culturally sensitive ways. Successful DEI initiatives often involve a combination of strategies, including education, communication, and leadership support, tailored to the specific cultural context within an organization.

26. Organizational Network Analysis (ONA)

Organizational network analysis (ONA) is invaluable for comprehending and effectively addressing pivotal facets of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) activities. ONA extends to initiatives designed to reshape the organizational culture, surmount impediments ingrained within organizational systems, and adeptly navigate and mitigate employee resistance toward transformative change (Garcia 2015; Tichy and Fombrun 1979; Cross et al. 2013).

ONA provides a unique lens for understanding and influencing these critical aspects of an organization's dynamics (Garcia 2015; Tichy and Fombrun 1979; Cross et al. 2013).

Identifying Influential Actors—ONA enables organizations to identify key influencers and connectors within their networks (Garcia 2015; Tichy and Fombrun 1979; Cross et al. 2013). In the context of DEI, understanding who holds sway and shapes opinions can be pivotal. These influential actors can be vital in championing and endorsing DEI initiatives, helping to drive culture change more effectively.

Mapping Communication Flows—ONA allows organizations to visualize how information and communication flow through their networks (Garcia 2015; Tichy and Fombrun 1979; Cross et al. 2013). Organizations can identify potential bottlenecks and gaps in dissem-

inating DEI-related information by analyzing communication patterns. Addressing these communication challenges is essential for breaking down barriers within organizational systems and fostering transparent, inclusive dialogues.

Uncovering Resistance Nodes—ONA can reveal nodes within the organizational network where resistance to change is most concentrated (Garcia 2015; Tichy and Fombrun 1979; Cross et al. 2013). Identifying these resistance areas enables organizations to tailor their DEI strategies to address specific concerns and objections. Moreover, it helps craft targeted interventions to engage employees who may need to be more open or are resistant to DEI initiatives.

Enhancing Collaborative Networks—ONA can identify opportunities to cultivate collaborative networks that support DEI objectives. Organizations can create a more inclusive and innovative culture by fostering connections and relationships between employees who may not typically interact. These newly formed connections can help break down silos and reduce resistance to change by promoting cross-functional collaboration (Garcia 2015; Tichy and Fombrun 1979; Cross et al. 2013).

In conclusion, organizational network analysis provides a data-driven approach to understanding and influencing critical aspects of DEI initiatives. By leveraging the insights gained through ONA, organizations can strategically address resistance to change, break down systemic barriers, and transform their cultures into more inclusive and equitable ones (Garcia 2015; Tichy and Fombrun 1979; Cross et al. 2013).

27. Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-determination theory (SDT) focuses on intrinsic motivation and autonomy (Deci et al. 2017). Research has shown that aligning change efforts with SDT principles can reduce resistance by allowing all stakeholders to feel more in control and engaged in the change process (Deci et al. 2017; Adams et al. 2017; Deci et al. 1994).

Self-determination theory (SDT) offers valuable insights into how resistance to change can impede efforts to cultivate a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse organizational culture, which could result in a culture of diversity dishonesty. SDT posits that individuals have innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and when these needs are not met, resistance to change may arise (Deci et al. 2017; Adams et al. 2017; Deci et al. 1994).

In the context of fostering inclusivity, equity, and diversity, stakeholders may resist change initiatives if they perceive these efforts as threatening their autonomy. For instance, implementing diversity training programs or policies may be met with resistance if employees feel that they are being coerced into accepting certain beliefs or behaviors. To mitigate this, organizations must ensure that DEI initiatives respect employees' autonomy by involving them in decision-making and allowing for choice and self-expression within the framework of DEI efforts.

Competence is another crucial aspect of SDT. Organizational community members may resist change if they lack the necessary skills or knowledge to navigate diversity and inclusion effectively (Deci et al. 2017; Adams et al. 2017; Deci et al. 1994). To address this, organizations should provide comprehensive training and development opportunities to enhance employees' competence in areas related to DEI. Without this support, employees may perceive DEI initiatives as threatening their competence, leading to resistance and lacking engagement in these efforts.

Moreover, SDT emphasizes relatedness, which entails connection and belonging (Deci et al. 2017; Adams et al. 2017; Deci et al. 1994). Resistance to change can also stem from fears of disrupting existing relationships and group dynamics. Organizational stakeholders may be concerned that DEI initiatives will create tensions or conflicts within teams or among colleagues. Organizations must proactively address these concerns by promoting open communication, fostering a sense of belonging, and emphasizing the collective benefits of a more diverse and inclusive culture. By addressing the core psychological needs outlined

in SDT, organizations can better navigate and reduce resistance to change when striving to create a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse organizational culture.

28. Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) explores how individuals process information and respond to persuasive messages during change (Petty and Briñol 2011; Schumann et al. 2012). How information is presented can influence the level of resistance (Petty and Briñol 2011; Schumann et al. 2012). ELM has been applied to understand how communication strategies can reduce resistance to change initiatives (Petty and Briñol 2011; Schumann et al. 2012).

The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) provides insights into how resistance to change can manifest when organizations seek to transform their culture to be more inclusive, equitable, and diverse. According to ELM, individuals process persuasive messages along the central route (careful, thoughtful consideration) and the peripheral route (quick, intuitive processing). In the context of cultural change, resistance can arise from how individuals engage with and interpret persuasive messages related to diversity and inclusion.

First, ELM suggests that when individuals engage in the central route of message processing, they carefully consider the arguments and evidence presented in favor of cultural change (Petty and Briñol 2011; O'Keefe 2013; Petty et al. 2015). If employees hold preexisting beliefs or attitudes that are incongruent with the proposed changes, they may critically scrutinize these messages and resist adopting new values or behaviors (Petty and Briñol 2011; O'Keefe 2013; Petty et al. 2015). Resistance can emerge as employees perceive the change as challenging their established beliefs or threatening their autonomy, leading to cognitive dissonance and pushback against the change initiatives (Petty and Briñol 2011; O'Keefe 2013; Petty et al. 2015).

Second, stakeholders who engage in the peripheral route of message processing may need more deep consideration to change. They may rely on heuristics or superficial cues to evaluate the change efforts (Petty and Briñol 2011; O'Keefe 2013; Petty et al. 2015). Stakeholders may resist the change without thoroughly examining its merits if these cues conflict with their attitudes or values (Petty and Briñol 2011; O'Keefe 2013; Petty et al. 2015). This resistance can hinder the successful implementation of DEI initiatives, as employees may dismiss them based on surface-level perceptions rather than in-depth analysis.

Furthermore, resistance to change, stemming from central and peripheral processing, can contribute to organizational diversity fatigue. As stakeholders encounter resistance from their peers or superiors, they may become disheartened and weary of the constant struggle for cultural change. Diversity fatigue can reduce enthusiasm and engagement in DEI activities, creating a culture where individuals disengage from efforts to promote diversity and inclusion. Additionally, if not adequately addressed, diversity fatigue can evolve into diversity fragility, where stakeholders become hesitant or resistant to discussions and actions related to diversity and inclusion, fearing the potential discomfort and resistance they may encounter. To mitigate these challenges, organizations must employ effective communication strategies, foster open dialogue, and provide ongoing support to minimize resistance and sustain a culture of inclusivity.

29. Psychological Ownership Theory

Psychological ownership theory offers valuable insights into the potential sources of resistance to policies, activities, processes, and structural changes to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within organizations. According to this theory, individuals develop a sense of psychological ownership over their work, roles, and the organization (Pierce et al. 2003, 2001; Dawkins et al. 2017). Resistance can emerge when DEI initiatives threaten or disrupt this sense of ownership.

Firstly, stakeholders may resist DEI policies and structural changes if they perceive these initiatives as impinging upon their autonomy and control. As DEI efforts introduce new policies or alter existing structures, stakeholders may feel that their traditional decision-

making authority needs to be improved. Weak organizational efforts can lead to resistance as stakeholders attempt to safeguard their sense of control and ownership. Organizations must involve stakeholders in decision-making regarding DEI initiatives to mitigate this, thereby addressing their need for autonomy and control.

Secondly, psychological ownership theory posits that individuals develop attachments to their work and to stakeholder and organizational roles. DEI efforts that reassign roles and responsibilities or introduce new activities may threaten this attachment. Stakeholders may resist change if they perceive their established roles, center of influence, and contributions are undervalued or replaced (Pierce et al. 2003, 2001; Dawkins et al. 2017). To address this resistance, organizations must communicate the value of DEI initiatives in enhancing individual contributions and fostering a more inclusive work environment.

Lastly, when DEI efforts challenge established norms or traditional practices, stakeholders may experience resistance due to a perceived threat to their competence. Changes in processes or activities may require new skills or behaviors, leading to employee adaptability concerns (Pierce et al. 2003, 2001; Dawkins et al. 2017). Organizations should provide training and support to combat resistance and enhance stakeholders' competence in navigating DEI-related changes. By addressing these aspects of psychological ownership theory, organizations can anticipate and address sources of resistance and facilitate the successful implementation of DEI initiatives.

30. Dual Concern Model

The dual concern model suggests that individuals consider their concern for self-interest and the organization's interest when facing change (Lo and Parlamis 2012; Musenero et al. 2021). Understanding this dual concern can show why stakeholders may resist change and how to align their interests with organizational goals (Lo and Parlamis 2012; Musenero et al. 2021).

The dual concern model provides valuable insights into how leaders' resistance to organizational and cultural changes, particularly those supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), can stem from concerns about power and influence within their roles. This model consists of two primary dimensions: concern for self-interest and concern for the organization's interest.

Firstly, leaders and stakeholders who resist DEI initiatives may prioritize their own self-interests and power within the organization. They may perceive DEI changes threatening their established authority, control, and influence over their departments, policies, processes, and decision-making. This self-interested concern for maintaining the status quo can lead to resistance, as leaders may perceive DEI initiatives as a challenge to their personal power and autonomy. To address this resistance, organizations must communicate that DEI efforts are not about diminishing individual power but creating a more inclusive and equitable environment that benefits all.

Secondly, leaders and stakeholders may also resist DEI initiatives if they believe these changes conflict with what they perceive as the organization's interest. They may hold traditional beliefs or biases that do not align with DEI values, leading them to resist cultural shifts or policy changes. To address this aspect of resistance, organizations must engage in open and transparent dialogues to demonstrate how DEI efforts align with the broader organizational mission and values. Highlighting how diversity and inclusion contribute to improved innovation, performance, and stakeholder relationships can help leaders see that these changes are in the organization's best interest.

The dual concern model illuminates how leaders' resistance to DEI-related organizational and cultural changes can stem from concerns about their own power and the perceived interests of the organization. Addressing these concerns requires clear communication, education, and demonstrating how DEI efforts benefit individuals and the organization. By aligning DEI initiatives with organizational goals and fostering a culture of inclusivity, organizations can help leaders overcome resistance and actively support positive change.

31. Burrell Four-Step Diversity Dishonesty Framework (2024)

The final framework for our consideration is the Burrell Four-Step Framework for understanding how to deal with diversity dishonesty: U.S.S.A.

1. Understand
2. See
3. Speak
4. Act

1. Understand—Comprehend how and why diversity dishonesty occurs and elements of diversity fatigue.

2. See—Recognize and see diversity dishonesty. Numbers do not lie. Numbers tell a story, so if the results in numbers do not match up with espoused values and organizational statements, it is essential to pay attention.

3. Speak—"Silence as complicity" is the concept that remaining silent or passive in the face of racism, mistreatment, micro-aggressions, and discrimination is tantamount to endorsing or condoning such behavior. It implies that failing to speak out or take action when witnessing acts of racism or discrimination suggests a level of tacit approval or agreement with these harmful actions or attitudes. In essence, it indicates that silence in such situations can perpetuate and enable racism and discrimination to persist, as it allows prejudiced behavior to go unchallenged and uncorrected.

4. Act—Allyship, participation, and collaboration are interconnected principles that contribute to developing an inclusive, equitable, respectful, and psychologically safe culture. Allyship means standing up for those marginalized with actions, for allies to say something or do something if they observe offensive or discriminatory behaviors. Allyship ensures support for marginalized groups, participation guarantees that everyone's voices are heard, and collaboration harnesses the power of diversity to drive positive outcomes. Together, they create an environment where individuals can thrive, feel valued, and contribute their best to the organization's or community's collective goals.

32. Conclusions

Healthcare disparities continue to plague the United States, with Black, Latinx, and Native American populations experiencing disproportionate rates of chronic disease, reduced access to care, and poorer health outcomes compared to their White counterparts. Increasing minority representation at public health, pharmacy, and medicine schools is essential for addressing these disparities. Research indicates that patients are more likely to trust and adhere to treatment plans when cared for by healthcare professionals who share their racial or ethnic backgrounds (Nakae and Subica 2021). By diversifying the healthcare workforce, we can improve patient–provider communication, enhance cultural competence, and ultimately reduce disparities in healthcare access and outcomes (Nakae and Subica 2021).

Upholding principles of fairness, justice, and equality is fundamental to being human. Regardless of race or ethnicity, everyone deserves equal opportunities and treatment. Supporting DEI initiatives aligns with these principles and reflects a commitment to building a more just and inclusive society (Morin and Bishop 2023). As members of a diverse culture, all individuals are responsible for contributing to the well-being and advancement of all communities. Addressing systemic inequities and promoting diversity helps create a more harmonious and cohesive society where everyone can thrive (Morin and Bishop 2023).

Cultural competence is a fundamental component of providing high-quality healthcare. It involves understanding and respecting patients' cultural beliefs, values, and practices and tailoring care accordingly. Minority students and graduates bring unique perspectives and experiences to healthcare practice, enriching the cultural competency of the workforce. Moreover, increasing minority representation in public health, pharmacy, and medicine schools can help mitigate biases and stereotypes that may influence clinical decision-making and contribute to disparities in care.

Achieving health equity requires addressing the social determinants of health and ensuring that all individuals have the opportunity to attain their highest level of health.

Minority communities face systemic barriers to healthcare access and quality stemming from historical and ongoing racism and discrimination. By increasing minority representation in public health, pharmacy, and medicine schools, we can dismantle these barriers and empower Black students and graduates to become advocates for health equity in their communities. Additionally, a diverse healthcare workforce is better equipped to address the unique health needs and challenges faced by underserved populations, including minority communities.

Recruiting and retaining Black students and faculty in public health, pharmacy, and medicine schools requires a multifaceted approach that addresses structural barriers and provides tailored support. Outreach programs, mentorship initiatives, and scholarship opportunities can help attract and retain Black students interested in pursuing careers in healthcare. Creating inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity and promote belonging is essential for supporting the academic success and well-being of all minority students, faculty, and staff. Only through authentic collective action can we create a healthcare system that truly serves the needs of all Americans, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Frameworks and models are instrumental in guiding organizations toward genuine transformation in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts (Morin and Burrell 2024). They provide structured approaches and well-defined strategies for moving beyond mere diversity dishonesty and diversity fatigue toward achieving tangible organizational change. These frameworks offer several key benefits in addressing critical aspects such as faculty diversity, psychological safety for faculty and students, minimizing discrimination complaints, and closing graduation rate gaps (Burrell and Richardson 2023).

Firstly, frameworks and models offer a roadmap for organizations to tackle DEI challenges effectively. They provide a structured framework that helps institutions identify specific goals, key performance indicators, and actionable steps to promote diversity and inclusion. By following a proven model, organizations can ensure that their efforts are comprehensive, well-coordinated, and aligned with best practices, ultimately leading to more impactful change (Morin and Burrell 2024).

Secondly, frameworks and models foster a culture of accountability. They establish clear benchmarks and measurement criteria to assess progress in faculty diversity and student outcomes. By holding leaders and stakeholders accountable for achieving these goals, organizations are more likely to prioritize DEI initiatives and allocate resources accordingly, reducing the likelihood of diversity dishonesty and fatigue (Morin and Bishop 2023).

Lastly, these frameworks help organizations build a foundation of trust and transparency. They encourage open dialogue, data-driven decision-making, and the involvement of diverse voices in the change process. This emphasis on openness and inclusivity creates a psychologically safe environment for faculty and students, where they feel valued and empowered to contribute to DEI efforts. Organizations demonstrate their commitment to equitable outcomes for all academic community members by minimizing discrimination complaints and closing graduation rate gaps. By adopting and implementing these frameworks, institutions can foster real organizational change, resulting in more diverse faculty, enhanced psychological safety, reduced discrimination complaints, and improved graduation rates for all students, which are required for predominately White, highly selective, and highly ranked colleges and universities to transform from those that engage in diversity dishonesty.

33. Recommendations for Future Research

Exploring "diversity dishonesty" offers a significant avenue for future research to deepen our understanding of this critical issue within diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. To further explore and address the complexities of diversity dishonesty, the following research approaches are recommended:

1. Grounded theory, a research method known for its ability to develop theories from empirical data, can be instrumental in comprehensively understanding the nuanced dynamics of diversity dishonesty. Researchers can employ grounded theory to uncover

the underlying patterns, processes, and mechanisms leading to insincere commitments to diversity. This approach can unveil organizations' motivations, barriers, and psychological factors, shedding light on why they resort to surface-level actions rather than substantive change. The benefits of grounded theory lie in its ability to provide in-depth insights into the phenomenon, thereby offering a solid foundation for developing strategies to combat diversity dishonesty.

2. Interpretative phenomenological analysis is a research method well-suited for exploring the lived experiences and subjective perceptions of individuals affected by diversity dishonesty. IPA can reveal the emotional and psychological impact of insincere DEI efforts on individuals within organizations. By focusing on participants' interpretation and meaning-making, this approach can capture the essence of their experiences and the psychological processes involved. Conducting IPA on narratives of individuals who have encountered diversity dishonesty can help researchers gain insights into the emotional toll, coping strategies, and potential pathways for empowerment.

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