Exploring Equity and Inclusion in Canadian and Quebecois Contexts

EXPLORING EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN CANADIAN AND QUEBECOIS CONTEXTS

Radamis Zaky and Yeroseo Aris Kusiele Somda

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Forward

DINA SALHA

Safeguarding the right of others is most notable and beautiful end of human being.

Gibran Khalil Gibran

In 2019, I designed and taught an undergraduate course on identity, diversity and inclusivity in media representation and production, at the department of Communication at the University of Ottawa. Topics reflecting dynamic and culturally diverse populations of students and professors and their experiences of everyday life through mediated popular culture, social media, and institutional practices shaped new and revised courses with updated and current topics at the department. Topics falling in line with the theme of identity, diversity, and inclusion took a central place in attempt to reflect the socio-cultural, economic, linguistic, and political reality of the multicultural Canadian landscape and history. The undergraduate course was later followed by a graduate course on the special topic of diversity and inclusion, while focusing on the use of alternative media to elevate the voices of marginalized communities. Students showed immense appreciation of the themes and topics examined during the lectures and discussions, amidst controversies that arose at the time surrounding racism, violence, identity politics, academic freedom, cancel culture, and decolinization of academia. Unfortunately, in the past few years, the political and social environment has not gotten better despite the efforts of many groups and people seeking justice and equality for all. Wars, atrocities, and political strife worldwide have impacted local and global politics and populations. With the rise of radical right wing politics, for example, the conditions of life of communities who have been historically vulnerable and disadvantaged – due to various kinds of colonialism (i.e. settler, exploitation, surrogate, plantation, internal) and imperialist projects — are forever affected by apathy and exclusion. We have seen blunt racism in media coverage of different refugees, where certain groups are portrayed as "better" based on their race and ethnicity, and others are framed as pariahs. We have seen coverage of the Olympic Games in Paris that celebrates able bodies, while coverage of the Paralympics is scarce in mainstream media. We have experienced, in the name of academic freedom, the hacking of platforms by extremist political ideologues and the rationalization of the irrational while censoring, demonizing, and distracting from more progressive narratives. We have seen institutions create Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and claiming absolute commitment to the principles of EDI initiatives and antiracism for all, while, in practice, valuing certain diversities over others.

Equity, Inclusion, Diversity and Decolonization (EDID) is a significant concept and practice because it has to do with empathy and agency. The ability to put oneself in another's shoes and to understand

the other contributes to empowering people from diverse backgrounds to have a voice and to take control of their life through autonomous decision-making.

These inconsistencies between the theory and practice of equity, diversity and inclusion on the macro level also exist on the micro level, and they have to do with imbalances in power structures and how power is understood, despite development of codified policies.

The work of the authors in this supplemental book presents different aspects of EDID studies centered on organizational and institutional activities in regards to development and application of policies and emancipatory practices. It provides an introductory map related to the Canadian and Quebecois context that initiates students to critical thinking about identity, positionality, intersectionality, history, and power. It is a commendable effort. It enriches class content and discussions about the implementation of EDID initiatives and their implication on the labor force.

Inherently, the book tackles the following question: Why do EDID policies, despite being necessary, had a limited or an insufficient impact on inclusion? Why are these policies insufficient to establish a true social equality and inclusion for a diverse labor force? What is under the surface of these dynamics?

In an attempt to answer these questions (initially for myself), I revisited the seminal work of late professor Vincent Mosco. In his book *The Political Economy of Communication* (1996), Mosco explains that under capitalism, the market logic provides a model for collective activities, including businesses and institutions, to be structured around privileging private interests rather than public interests. In order to have a significant understanding of these dynamics, one has to start with the centrality of power and how it is understood. For political economists, power is a resource structured in inequality and is a form of control to preserve the status quo; it shapes the social field. For policy studies, power is viewed as dispersed and as one of the many contributors conditioning the social field. It also overemphasizes the role of the state and its agencies as the authority for policy-making. Thus, it considers policy as "political" in relation to the state, while understating the role of civil society and actors outside the realm of state institutions in policy-making. It also views power as a resource that is "generally diffused throughout society, is not at all a central formative influence" and "that there is not structural tendency for power to be concentrated in one group or interest" (257). This view of power confuses and equates diversity with multiplicity, and mere participation with effective inclusion (258). It has a tendency to underplay the exercise of power, the role of institutional actors, and the formation of social relations that arrange individual choice.

A case in point is a comparative example used in this supplemental book to explain diversity and inclusion. Diversity is compared to being invited to the party, while inclusion is akin to being invited to dance on the dance floor with the others during the party. Critical thinkers would ask: Who organized the party? What purpose does it serve for the institution and the organizers? Who decides the music? What dance moves would be acceptable? Who from the marginalized group is chosen to be included? And why? What are the rules of participation? Who is in control of the event? Who allocates space and who is allowed to occupy certain spaces versus other ones? Who is in control? And most importantly, *how* is control exercised and maintained?

The point being that institutions, states, policies, and so forth do not restrict diversity per se. Instead, they control the access, participation, and outcome of the totality of the politico-economic and socio-cultural forces that shape the social relations within the established power structures.

The power structure that prioritizes the capitalist market logic emphasizes fragmentation, division, and competition. These apply to socially constructed identities and their corresponding socially constructed hierarchies. Rather than create collective consciousness and alliances, identity politics have

replaced class struggle with group self-assertion (See the work of Todd Gitlin, 1993). The result of such a condition is to make the laborers bear the responsibility of competing for a place and space in EDID relations – which, in essence, is an antidote to EDID's principle. This environment creates divisiveness, distraction from questioning the system, and conditions that allow the commodification of EDID by institutions and various groups in order to fill a legitimacy gap in social relations, much like Social Responsibility branding. Under these conditions, the importance of recognizing the political and class nature of intersectionality and positionality becomes diluted in commodified identities intertwined in systems of oppression, competition, extreme individualism, and annihilation of humanity.

The questioning of power relations in shaping social inequalities reveals an interconnection between decolinization and political economy's approach to the centrality of power and class that were mentioned above.

Decolonization is a process of dismantling colonial legacy and the narratives formed to maintain dominance that ultimately determine the degree of political independence. The works of Linda Tuhiwai, bell hooks, Edward Said, among others, discuss the intersection of patriarchy, capitalism and colonization, and the possible ways to reclaim political independence and self-determination, as well as cultural, social, and economic autonomy. Decolinization is in part about questioning the existing system and its practices while calling for accountability and transparency.

It is beyond this forward to discuss the processes of decolonization. The economic, political, cultural, social and historical dimensions of such a task (on the macro and micro levels) are never-ending processes of challenging the status quo and restoring balance in power relations. However, it is definitely a journey to explore and take up in classroom discussions.

This supplementary book is a starting point for critical questioning of lived experiences under particular dynamics of power relations that go beyond the workplace culture. Conversations in the classroom should be able to address the following questions: How does EDID address structural barriers? How do EDID initiatives provide alliances? And under what conditions EDID initiatives may contribute to divisiveness? What is decolinization in the context of EDID? What are the legacies of colonization that persist in our system that prevent the ultimate effectiveness of EDID? What is the role of researchers and academics in ensuring the collective well-being of disenfranchised communities? Are all attempts under Capital to abolish inequity, racism, and "non-diversity", at best, a band-aid solution and at worst, just marketing gimmick? Isn't the existence of band-aid solutions better than their absence? How are these harshly negative criticisms about temporary solutions countered by both institutions and activists? Who needs EDID? Under what conditions social justice, equality, and EDID can be achieved?

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Introduction

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Equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization (EDID) has become a very popular topic in recent years in Canada. Activism for EDID efforts was adopted by members of many historically marginalized groups that led public and private organizations in Canada to become more critical of practices of organizations from both sectors. A major condition to achieve accomplishments in the area of EDID was to understand the complexity of the Canadian context. There are two special attributes for the Canadian context. Firstly, it is important to fully understand Canada's colonial history and legacy of colonialism. Secondly, Canada's colonial legacy led to the development of two major different cultures: Anglophone and Francophone. Francophone culture is well presented in the province of Québec. Québec has not only adopted French as its official language but has its own distinct culture and methods when integrating newcomers. The rest of Canada (that speaks English primarily with few bilingual exceptions) have a completely different culture.

Canada is a country of immigration. The number of immigrants is growing and the number of Canadians who were born outside of Canada is rapidly growing. As of the first quarter of 2024, Canada continues to see significant growth in its immigrant population. Nearly 25% of Canada's population is made up of immigrants, the largest percentage in over 150 years. Specifically, in the first quarter of 2024, Canada welcomed approximately 121,758 immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2016). Canada's colonial legacy and the diverse composition of its population created a complex reality for EDID. Resultantly, we decided to develop a resource titled *Exploring Equity and Inclusion in Canadian and Québecois Contexts* for students in the field of humanities and social sciences.

This open-source resource is mainly designed for communication students who are studying organizational communication and primarily focused on the Canadian context. It fills an important need as most of the available textbooks are mainly American-focused textbooks and as a result, do not properly represent the complexities of the Canadian context. This pressbook is divided into four chapters. The first one provides different definitions and explanations for EDID. The second chapter focuses on the existing legal frameworks that are meant to legally organize EDID in both Canada and Québec. The third chapter focuses on the importance of the culture of EDID as legal frameworks alone will not achieve effective EDID. Chapter 3 also provides readers with some practical recommendations for best practices that organizations can use to achieve EDID for hiring practices. The last chapter focuses on the ramifications on mental health when EDID is not achieved.

Every chapter is composed of four components: a short text, a video, a five-question, multiple-choice quiz, and reflective questions. The short video is an interview with an expert. The video aims to provide students with practical advice from an EDID expert. We do highly encourage students to answer

the reflective questions in groups instead of doing it individually as that will help students to better understand different perspectives regarding EDID.

This book has received funding from the University of Ottawa Open educational resources managed by the Morisset Library. I want to thank librarians Mélanie Brunet and Catherine Lachaîne for all their generous support and help during the process of producing this book. I also want to sincerely thank Professor Dina Salha in the Department of Communication for all invaluable mentorship and guidance during the process of writing this book. I also want to thank Oumaima Sedrati, Tiana Rangoussis, and Yeroseo Aris Kusiele Somda, the research assistants who did an amazing job in collecting and analyzing a lot of the material in this resource. I also want to give special thanks to Tiana Rangoussis for writing the last chapter on EDID and mental health and give Yéroséo Aris Kusiélé Somda for co-authoring the rest of the chapters with me. I am grateful to Youssef Hamed for editing all the videos embedded in this resource. I also want to acknowledge the generosity and support of the experts who agreed to be filmed and share their expertise with us.

I fully understand that achieving an ideal EDID in Canada will take a long time and that combating intersectional systems of oppression is a challenging process. However, I am hopeful that this resource might assist in the development of a more just society.

Radamis Zaky, Ph.D.

Chapter 1: Defining Equity, Inclusion and Diversity

Equity, Inclusion and Diversity

RADAMIS ZAKY

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Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) have become buzzwords in various public and private organizations in Canada. In recent years, many Canadian employers have created new positions and specialized departments focusing on issues related to EDI. Here are a few examples:

- In 2009, the University of Toronto established the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, which aims to support and enhance diversity and equity within the university's community.
- In 2015, McGill University launched an initiative called Equity at McGill as part of the university's broader commitment to diversity and equity within the university community.
- Mount Sinai Hospital established a new division called the "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Department." It aims to "improve our diversity efforts to create a thriving workplace and provide the best environment for excellent patient care and patient satisfaction"(Mount Sinai Hospital).

There are many other public and private organizations following the same path. For example, Vancouver established an Equity and Inclusion Office in 2017 to develop and implement policies promoting diversity and inclusion across city services and employment. The Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) introduced "The Diversity and Inclusion Blueprint" in 2007, with subsequent updates reflecting evolving EDI priorities.

In addition to establishing departments, initiatives, and programs within existing organizations, the country of Canada and the province of Québec have seen the creation of organizations aiming to help different employers become more inclusive. The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) is a prime example, founded in 2012 to provide tools and training for promoting diversity and inclusion in workplaces. There are some specific organizations that were established to focus on a particular aspect of diversity, such as sexuality and sexual orientation. Pride at Work Canada, founded in 2008,

helps private, public, and non-profit employers create safer, more inclusive workplaces recognizing the skills of 2SLGBTQIA+ people (Pride at Work Canada).

With all these various initiatives and considerations, essential questions need to be explored: how can we appropriately and critically define "equity" and "inclusion" in the workplace when recognizing diversity? And what are the required conditions and practices for them to be achieved?

Ruchika Tulshyan, in her seminal book *Inclusion on Purpose: An Intersectional Approach to Creating a Culture of Belonging at Work* (2022), provides important definitions of these terms. Tulshyan asserts that equity refers to "identifying and dismantling systemic barriers to the representation and inclusion of women, people of color, and people from other historically marginalized communities" (Tulshyan, 2022, p. 06). The two key concepts in Tulshyan's definition are representation and systemic barriers. The lack of representation of members of historically oppressed groups is not due to a lack of personal abilities or professional skills but because of systemic barriers preventing their representation in the workplace.

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As a case in point, official statistics and various reports show the ramifications of these systemic barriers on Black women. These ramifications include, but not limited to, the inability of Black women to join the workforce, the experience of racism in the workplace, and their obvious and alarming underrepresentation in leadership positions. Statistics Canada (2016) shows that the unemployment rate for Black women in Canada was 11.1% compared to 6.4% for non-racialized women. Black women who can join the Canadian workforce are paid less compared to white men and white women for similar roles. It also reported, in 2016, that Black women earned an average of 37% less than white men and 21% less than white women. The Black Experience Project conducted by Environics Institute revealed that 76% of Black women reported experiencing some form of discrimination based on race in the workplace (Environics Institute, 2019). These examples confirm Tulshyan's arguments that white supremacy and anti-Blackness are pervasive in work environments. It is important to understand that "race is a social construct, not a biological one" (Tulshyan, 2022, p. 13). This social construction is not natural or neutral but is designed to empower certain people and disenfranchise others.

Vernā Myers, Vice President of Inclusion Strategy at Netflix, provides one of the best analogies for diversity and inclusion by saying, "Diversity is being invited to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance." Policies can be considered as the invitation to the party, while culture— workplace and organizational —is the dance floor where individuals can either dance freely or be restricted or negotiate and mitigate the conditions of the access, participation, and outcomes of such "inclusion".

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This chapter introduces pertinent definitions of the concepts of "equity" and "inclusion." The next chapter discusses a selection of legal frameworks for equity and inclusion in Canada and Québec. Before you move to the next section, listen to what our experts have to say and test yourself by taking the short quiz.

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Reflection Questions

- How do the definitions of equity and inclusion provided by Tulshyan resonate with your understanding of these terms?
- What are some examples of systemic barriers you can identify in your own experiences or observations?
- How do you think organizations can move from merely inviting diverse individuals to ensuring they feel included and valued?

Before you go to the next chapter please do this short quiz

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Chapter 2: Understanding Legal Frameworks

RADAMIS ZAKY AND YEROSEO ARIS KUSIELE SOMDA

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The legal frameworks of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the country of Canada and the province of Québec are built upon key charters and acts that set the foundation for multiculturalism and interculturalism. This chapter explores the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, and the Employment Equity Act, analyzing their impact on multiculturalism, interculturalism, and Employment Equity Act in Canada.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (issued in 1982) and the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (issued in 1975) are the two major frameworks for multiculturalism. The two charters lead to two distinct pathways. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms contributed to the development of multiculturalism while the Québec charter of Human Rights and Freedoms contributed mainly to Interculturalism. Jean-Pierre Dupuis (2017) identified important distinctives between multiculturalism in Canada and interculturalism in Québec, which are outlined below:

Multiculturalism in Canada is based on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 (Dupuis, 2017):

- *Policy Framework*: Canada is known for its official policy of multiculturalism, initiated in the 1970s, which recognizes and celebrates diversity within the country.
- *Diverse Society*: Multiculturalism in Canada acknowledges the coexistence of various cultural and ethnic groups. It promotes the idea that individuals from different backgrounds can maintain their cultural identities while participating fully in Canadian society.
- *Inclusive Approach*: Multiculturalism emphasizes inclusivity, equal opportunities, and the protection of minority rights. It aims to build a society where people of all backgrounds feel valued and contribute to the nation's social and economic fabric.

Interculturalism in Québec is based on the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms in 1975 (Dupuis, 2017):

- *Distinct Approach*: Québec, while part of the Canadian federation, has taken a somewhat distinct approach to cultural diversity through interculturalism.

- *Preservation of French Language and Culture:* Interculturalism in Québec is often associated with efforts to preserve the French language and Québécois culture. The province places importance on maintaining a strong Francophone identity.
- *Integration with French Values*: While recognizing and respecting cultural diversity, interculturalism in Québec emphasizes the integration of various cultural communities into the broader Québec society while adhering to shared values, particularly those associated with the French-speaking majority.

The Employment Equity Act was established shortly after the **release of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms**, specifically in 1986. The Act was designed to protect and empower members of the most vulnerable groups in the community, namely Aboriginal peoples, women, immigrants, and people with disabilities. Although compliance of this Act was initially mandatory for federal government agencies exclusively, it was expanded in 2012 to include Crown corporations, various government agencies, and more than 500 federally regulated private sector companies (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2013).

There are three major tenets for the Act: to promote equality, correct disadvantages, and achieve representation. Equality is achieved by eliminating structural barriers faced by the designated groups. The barriers that designated groups face are both historical and structural. Thus, one of the act's major objectives is to correct these disadvantages. The hope is that, resultantly, representation in federally regulated workplaces will be achieved and this will effectively reflect the diversity that exists in Canadian society.

Thus, employers covered by the Employment Equity Act (EEA) are obliged to identify and eliminate employment barriers for designated groups, institute policies and practices to achieve an adequately representative workforce, and monitor and report on their employment equity progress to the government. Since the implementation of the EEA, there has been notable progress in improving the representation of the designated groups in the workplace. For instance, women have made significant strides in attaining leadership positions, particularly in the Québec public sector.

The results of these legal frameworks had more of an impact on women in Québec than in other provinces in Canada. Women have made significant gains in leadership positions within the Québec public service. For example, the percentage of women in senior management roles in Québec increased from 6.8% in 1980 to 38.8% in 2007 (Drolet, M., & Amini, M. M, 2023) However, the statistics show that women have seen slower progress in attaining leadership roles nationwide, particularly in the private sector. As of 2020, women held 18.8% of board seats among FP500 companies in Canada, highlighting ongoing disparities (Statistics Canada). Nonetheless, while gender equity is necessary for achieving fairness and justice, it is important to apply a more developed intersectional approach as an analytical framework.

The concept of "Intersectionality" became a core analytical approach in both academia and activism since the prominent, Black, American, legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw published her 1989 seminal essay "*Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Policies*". Crenshaw's work criticized critical race theorists/activists and feminist theorists/activists for their focus on the single axis framework of either race or gender, as if they were not interrelated. Crenshaw argued that the recognition of the complex ways in which race and gender intersect is essential in defining, describing, and understanding Black women's experiences and systemic oppression. Intersectionality, as an analytical tool, exposes the overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalization at work.

Intersectionality as theory and praxis continued to progress and mature since Crenshaw's famous paper. Scholars, such as Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge, expanded the definition of intersectionality in their book *Intersectionality*:

> Intersectionality investigates how intersecting power relations influence social relations across diverse societies as well as individual experiences in everyday life. As an analytic tool, intersectionality views categories of race, class, gender, sexuality, class, nation, ability, ethnicity, and age—among others—as interrelated and mutually shaping one another. Intersectionality is a way of understanding and explaining complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences (2020, p. 02).

While the development and existence of legal frameworks are crucial to implement justice, they are not enough for the achievement of equitable systems and structures in the workplace. Other factors mutually contribute to discriminatory practices that are not readily visible or monitored by the legal frameworks. Paul Eid and his team conducted an eye-opening social experiment after developing the "discrimination testing" method. Their method included a test aimed to determine discrimination rate in hiring. The researchers sent fictional CVs to employers in the Greater Montreal area. The CVs were comparable in all aspects with the exception of the candidates' ethnocultural origin and background, which was easily identifiable by the names given to prospective candidates. According to Paul Eid's survey (2012), for each position advertised, researchers sent a CV with a name that sounded like a Québec Francophone name and three others with names that sounded more of African, Arabic, and Latino origin. Analyzing the choices made by the employers, Eid (2012, p. 40) showed that the net discrimination rate is 35.1% for people of Arab descent, compared with 42.1% for people of African descent and 28.3% for people of Latino descent, in the Greater Montreal area.

Eid's discrimination test asserts that achieving equity and diversity is a socialization problem and that legal frameworks are not sufficient in overcoming structural and social barriers faced by members of minority groups.

In summary, legal frameworks like the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, and the Employment Equity Act play crucial roles in promoting EDI in Canada. However, achieving EDI requires ongoing efforts to address social and structural barriers, as well as an understanding of intersectionality.

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In order to have a more comprehensive view of the dynamics of achieving EDI, the next chapter focuses on anticipatory socialization in organizations as a part of the culture of the workplace.

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Exercises

- How do the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms differ in their approach to multiculturalism and interculturalism? What are the implications of these differences for cultural diversity in Canada?
- In what ways has the Employment Equity Act impacted the representation of designated groups in the Canadian workplace, particularly in Québec? How might this impact differ across other provinces?
- How does the concept of intersectionality, as described by Kimberlé Crenshaw and further expanded by scholars like Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge, challenge or complement the legal frameworks aimed at promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in Canada?

Before you move to the next chapter please answer this quiz:

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Chapter 3: Breaking Cultural Barriers: Enhancing EDID through Anticipatory Socialization in Organizations

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The first chapter discussed the different ways to understand EDID. The various definitions highlighted that there are two major tenets for EDID: policies and culture. The second chapter focused on the two major policies that shape multiculturalism in Canada. Despite the fact that such legal frameworks and policies have significantly contributed to achieving some justice for members of various disenfranchised groups, there are still major challenges in realizing ideal EDID. Cultural challenges and the lack of an intersectional approach are among the two major challenges. Thus, this chapter will focus on cultural barriers to achieving ideal EDID by exploring the concept of anticipatory socialization.

Defining Culture

It is important to define culture before discussing the concept of anticipatory socialization. Defining culture is a very challenging task (Lenard, 2020). Culture can be described as a "notoriously overbroad concept" (Song 2009: 177) and a "notoriously ambiguous concept" (Eisenberg 2009, p. 07). Patti Lenard (2020) asserts that "culture" can refer to "the set of norms, practices, and values that characterize minority and majority groups." However, defining culture is complex to the extent that there is no consensus around a single understanding of culture in political and legal spheres (Lenard, 2020). Lenard (2020) developed four categories reflecting different views on culture: culture as encompassing groups, culture as social formation, culture as dialogue, and culture as identity.

Lenard utilized the work of Will Kymlicka on "societal culture." Kymlicka asserts that societal culture "provides its members with meaningful ways of life across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational, and economic life, encompassing both public and private spheres" (Kymlicka, 1996, p. 76).

Different philosophers, like Avishai Margalit, Moshe Halbertal, and Michael Walzer, also offer an

encompassing account of culture (Lenard, 2020). However, this approach has faced much criticism. Critics posit that this is an "essentialist" perspective that is not realistic.

The essentialist objection targets the assumption that members of a culture will hold the same set of practices, norms, and values to be important and to the same extent. Critics argue that this assumption does not hold; in any actual culture, members will have different commitments to its defining practices and norms, and there will be disagreements around which practices and norms are defined in the first place (Lenard, 2020).

Therefore, the other views on understanding culture primarily respond to this critique. One way to overcome essentialism is to understand culture as social formation. This approach highlights the fact that a culture's historical trajectory does not require that its defining norms, values, and practices remain unchanging over time (Lenard, 2020). Thus, members of similar cultural groups are not homogeneous, and the process of defining culture is ongoing, with meanings always being deliberated. This leads to the understanding of culture as dialogue.

Lenard asserts that the major purpose of culture as dialogue is to emphasize that a culture's members are the source of its main practices, values, and norms. This perspective highlights that a culture is not "given" to its members from above as a fixed and unalterable entity. Rather, members of a culture are, in a fundamental way, its authors (Lenard, 2020). Therefore, the meaning of culture is contested and continuously reimagined and transformed by its members and through their interactions (Tully, 1995).

The last way to view culture is as identity. "To answer the challenge of how to identify a culture and its members, one proposal focuses on the subjective component associated with belonging to a cultural group" (Lenard, 2020). It is important to mention that the identity-focused view is not necessarily culturally based, as seen in the case of LGBTQ+ communities.

To sum up, the formation and evolution of culture is not a natural process but a result of a socially constructed process that reflects various conflicting power dynamics. Understanding the different views of culture is important for comprehending the complexity of anticipatory socialization.

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Anticipatory Socialization

"Anticipatory socialization describes the period of time before an individual joins an organization" (Kramer & Bisel, 2017, p. 31). Anticipatory socialization involves communication processes that lead to two important decisions: role and organization. Anticipatory role socialization explains how our communication experiences shape our decisions about the roles or careers we will assume in organizations, including paid and non-paid work. Individuals also develop and shape their general attitudes toward work during this period. Anticipatory organizational socialization examines individuals' communication experiences in shaping their decisions about which organizations they want to join (Kramer & Bisel, 2017). Michael W. Kramer and Ryan Bisel (2017) assert that the recruitment and reconnaissance process and the selection process are the most important elements in anticipatory organizational socialization.

Anticipatory Role Socialization

Scholarly research agrees that family, education, peers, previous experience, and media are five important sources that influence individuals' occupational choices (Kramer & Bisel, 2017). However, it must be argued that these elements are not neutral and do not provide equal conditions for everyone.

The Canadian education system has been criticized for perpetuating class differences and reinforcing stereotypes. Schools in affluent neighborhoods often have more resources, better facilities, and more experienced teachers, while schools in lower-income areas may struggle with underfunding and limited resources. This disparity affects the quality of education that students receive, thereby influencing their anticipatory socialization experiences (Davies & Aurini, 2011; James & Turner, 2017). A study conducted by HB Ferguson et al. (2010) finds that students from low-income families are less likely to complete high school or pursue any kind of post-secondary education. Consequently, individuals from low-income families are unable to find well-paid jobs, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and limited social mobility. Educational inequities are perpetuated both from outside the educational system and from within (James & Turner, 2017).

James and Turner (2017) argue that tracking systems, standardized testing, and differential access to gifted programs disproportionately benefit students from higher socio-economic backgrounds, reinforcing existing inequalities. Thus, education as an important tenet is very complex and socially constructed in a way that enables some people and disenfranchises others. Consequently, education does not qualify everyone the same way.

Critical media scholars assert that media often perpetuates traditional gender roles, portraying men in leadership and decision-making positions while women are frequently depicted in domestic or subordinate roles (Aujla-Sidhu, 2022). Researchers that studied depictions beyond gender, including the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and Indigeneity, shows that these depictions reinforce harmful stereotypes, limiting these groups' perceived potential and societal contributions. Canadian media often depict Indigenous people as victims and disregard their important role as effective contributors to our contemporary society. These negative depictions of women, LGBTQ individuals, Indigenous people, and members of ethnic groups effectively contribute to the development of a culture that hinders the anticipatory socialization of women, especially Black and women of color, and members of various disenfranchised groups.

Anticipatory Organizational Socialization

Kramer and Bisel (2017) assert that the ultimate goal of any organization is to hire the right employee who can perfectly fill the job requirements. This concept is called "person-job fit" (2017, p. 45). "From a management perspective, having the right person in the right position improves the efficiency and productivity of a unit, whereas having the wrong person leads to problems" (Kramer & Bisel, 2017, p. 45). Recent research in organizational communication has started to shift from distinguishing organizations hiring based on person-job fit to person-organization fit (P-O). Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) posit that hiring P-O involves matching the employee with the organization's values and beliefs, in other words, organizational culture (Kramer & Bisel, 2017). Some research argues that P-O hiring contributes more to employee retention as well as to various positive behaviors such as helping and cooperating with others and volunteering for extra duties (Kramer & Bisel, 2017, p. 45). EDID researchers and activists criticize P-O hiring, claiming it is a discriminatory way of hiring.

"Hiring culture fit is among the most widespread and exclusionary hiring practices today. When you're hiring for fit—given that most companies in Western countries are led by white men—by default, you're hiring for sameness. 'Culture fit' is an unspoken code that people have around what's acceptable and what's not within an organization, or even in a society" (Tulshyan, 2022, p. 101). Therefore, hiring employees who the organization believes culturally fit the organization means empowering those who are already empowered and contributing to the vulnerability of already disenfranchised groups. Tulshyan argues that it is much better and more profitable to adopt a hiring strategy focused on "culture add" rather than "culture fit" (2022, p. 102). A culture-add hiring strategy will achieve a more

inclusive workplace. Research shows that working teams formed of culturally diverse employees lead to important contributions to the organization, such as developing more innovative solutions, leading to better organizational profits and bigger market shares (Phillips, 2014). Culture-add hiring leads to more justice and fairness within the organization (Tulshyan, 2022).

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Practical Recommendations for Organizations

Dupuis (2017) suggested important recommendations for more effective anticipatory organizational socialization, focusing on three main points:

Diversity Training and Awareness: To ensure that minorities, including women and ethnocultural minorities, succeed in the workplace, organizations should implement mandatory diversity training programs. These programs should educate employees and management on unconscious bias, microaggressions, and the importance of an inclusive workplace. Training should be continuous, with regular updates and refreshers. Moreover, organizations should celebrate diversity events and encourage open dialogues about diversity and inclusion.

Mentorship and Sponsorship Programs: To support the career advancement of minority employees, organizations should establish formal mentorship and sponsorship programs. Mentors can provide guidance, share insights, and help mentees navigate organizational culture. Sponsors, who are often senior leaders, can advocate for their protégés, opening doors to new opportunities and promotions. Organizations should track the progress and outcomes of these programs to ensure they are effective and beneficial.

Inclusive Hiring and Promotion Practices: To address systemic barriers and biases in hiring and promotion, organizations should adopt inclusive practices. This includes using diverse hiring panels, ensuring job descriptions are free from biased language, and implementing blind recruitment techniques. Regular audits of hiring and promotion data should be conducted to identify and address disparities. Organizations should set measurable diversity goals and hold leadership accountable for achieving them.

Practical Steps for Inclusion

1. Candidate Search

Tulshyan (2022) recommends that organizations must focus on highlighting the required skills instead of specifying a certain university degree. This way of drafting the post would encourage a lot of people to apply as they might have the required skills for the job but not necessarily the required university/ college degree. Tulshyan (2022) asserts that it is important to explain the hiring process in the job posting as not all applicants have the same knowledge and experience of applying to jobs. Making sure that the post is posted in different networks is key for diversity and inclusion.

2. The Interview

Tulshyan (2022) recommends practical steps that will make sure that the interview process is more culturally sensitive and diverse. A homogeneous interview panel and group of people making a hiring decision are less likely to pick someone different. Next, Tulshyan recommends that each interview debrief should begin with the question, "Where could bias be showing up in this decision?" It sounds uncomfortable, and it can be, but naming biases is necessary to practice inclusion on purpose during hiring. Refrain from asking questions or having conversations about culture fit or criteria (both official

and informal discussions) around culture fit. Seek to bring "culture add"—people who are different and will add diversity to your team. Create more structured interview processes to reduce the subjectivity that often informs hiring decisions. After the interviews are completed, reconvene as an interview group as soon as possible. We have an overreliance on first impressions rather than facts to make decisions. If you wait a long time to discuss candidates, it's more likely that you will default to these first impressions versus their qualifications. Next, articulate decisions aloud. When we are required to explain our reasoning, or listen to others' thoughts, we can typically catch our own bias in action or even ask for more information if we hear our colleagues making biased judgments.

3. The Job Offer and Follow-up After Hiring

Information about the salary range stated up front can reduce the unintentional creation of a pay gap. Depending on how your organization handles salary conversations, a recruiter will either discuss this with a candidate before the interview or pay will be discussed once a hiring decision is made. The earlier this conversation is had, the better. By incorporating these recommendations, organizations can foster a more inclusive environment that supports the success and advancement of minority employees, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and diverse workplace.

Conclusion

This chapter explored cultural barriers to achieving ideal EDID in organizations by discussing the concept of anticipatory socialization. The chapter began by defining culture and exploring various perspectives on understanding culture, emphasizing that it is a socially constructed process influenced by power dynamics. The concept of anticipatory socialization was then introduced, focusing on anticipatory role socialization and anticipatory organizational socialization. The chapter highlighted how education and media play significant roles in shaping individuals' occupational choices and attitudes toward work, often perpetuating inequalities and stereotypes. Additionally, it discussed the shift from person-job fit to person-organization fit in hiring practices, criticizing the discriminatory nature of hiring based on cultural fit. The chapter concluded with practical recommendations for organizations to foster a more inclusive environment, including diversity training, mentorship programs, and inclusive hiring practices. By addressing these cultural barriers, organizations can work towards achieving more equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplaces.

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Reflective Questions

- In what ways have your anticipatory socialization experiences shaped your perception of workplace roles and organizational culture?
- In what ways do you see culture as being dynamic and evolving in your own community or workplace?
- How does the concept of culture as identity resonate with your personal experiences or those of individuals in marginalized communities?

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Chapter 4: More Than Mind Over Matter: Why Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, & Decolonization Matter For Mental Well Being

RADAMIS ZAKY AND KONSTANTIANA RANGOUSSIS

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This chapter explores the positive contributions of EDID for the mental health and well-being of individuals. Incorporating various psychological frameworks, we analyze the protective roles and risk reductions that EDID can contribute and its importance. This chapter reviews the impacts of experiencing racism and discrimination on an individual's mental health and well-being while suggesting improvements. By changing elements in the structure of the environment and prioritizing the implementation of EDID through various frameworks and practices, safe and stable environments can be developed to promote positive mental health outcomes and well-being.

Well-Being & The Role of The Environment

An individual's environment plays a significant role in their mental health and well-being. One's environment can "restrict choices and limit opportunities," affecting their ability to function and develop healthy practices (Nikelly, 2001), especially for those who are already limited through being racialized and marginalized. Health, both physical and mental, is determined by sets of biological and physiological variables in conjunction with social determinants of health such as socioeconomic position and community context. One key aspect of the social basis of health is social integration, which promotes attachment to the community and reduces feelings of alienation, victimization, fear, and mistrust (Nikelly, 2001). Therefore, it is paramount that individuals have access to a community that is diverse, inclusive, and equitable in order to reduce the risk of further alienation, victimization, and marginalization.

Growing research suggests that targeting the modification of behavior itself is not sufficient to improve mental health outcomes if the adverse structures remain intact (Nikelly, 2001). The importance of promoting EDID within organizations is to facilitate environmental and social restructuring, creat-

ing spaces that are healthy and safe for all individuals, rather than relying on individuals to navigate adverse environments and cope with the subsequent consequences independently.

The Intersection of Racism & Mental Health and The Role of Structural Changes and EDID Frameworks

Racism, from microaggressions to discrimination, has significant implications for mental health, particularly among racialized and marginalized communities, such as Black Canadians and Indigenous Peoples. Research exploring the complex relationships between racial discrimination, mental health outcomes, and coping mechanisms highlights the need for structural changes to mitigate these issues.

Data has shown a clear link between increased levels of racial discrimination and microaggressions and higher rates of anxiety (Kogan, 2022). A study conducted by Cary Kogan et al. (2022), focusing on the experiences of Black Canadians, found that nearly one third of participants showed clinically significant levels of anxiety as a result of the psychological toll of racial discrimination. Persistent exposure to racism is associated with a variety of negative mental health outcomes, including increased depressive symptoms, PTSD, and anxiety (Jacob, 2023). Psychological resilience was shown to provide modest protection against the effects of microaggressions. However, it does not offer significant relief from racial discrimination itself (Kogan, 2022). Various coping strategies employed by racialized individuals to manage the stress associated with racism may offer some relief. Commonly used strategies include seeking social support, engaging in religious/spiritual practices, and problem-focused coping (Jacob, 2023). Nonetheless, while these strategies offer short-term relief, they often do not address the root causes of stress and trauma (Jacob, 2023). These individual efforts are not enough to disrupt systemic and institutionalized racism. Structural changes within institutions and communities are necessary to foster more supportive environments for racialized and marginalized groups.

Positive mental health outcomes and wellness may be achieved through EDID. EDID frameworks play a crucial role in restructuring environments in ways that may act as protective factors against racism. While it is impossible to eradicate discrimination entirely, EDID initiatives can reduce frequency and impact by fostering more inclusive and equitable environments. Functional and effective coping strategies combined with systemic changes offer a more comprehensive approach to improving mental health outcomes.

An example of this is the work done by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto. CAMH has implemented a number of EDID initiatives, such as the Office of Health Equity, which aims to address health disparities and promote equity within the institution and the broader community. Their efforts include training staff on cultural competency, developing community partnerships to better serve diverse populations, and conducting research on the mental health impacts of racism and discrimination. Another example is the creation of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) in Winnipeg. The NCTR supports mental health and well-being through its commitment to preserving the history and legacy of residential schools and promoting reconciliation. By acknowledging the historical injustices faced by Indigenous Peoples and providing a platform for their stories to be heard, the NCTR helps to foster a sense of community and healing, which are essential for mental well-being.

The University of British Columbia's (UBC) Inclusion Action Plan is another instance where EDID initiatives have been successfully implemented. UBC has committed to creating an inclusive campus by addressing systemic barriers, fostering a culture of inclusion, and implementing strategies to support the mental health and well-being of its diverse student body. This includes providing mental health resources that are culturally sensitive and accessible to all students.

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Trauma and Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities in Canada have faced centuries of trauma due to colonialism, systemic racism, and ongoing discrimination. The residential school system, in particular, has left a legacy of intergenerational trauma that continues to affect the mental health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples. Survivors of residential schools and their descendants often experience higher rates of PTSD, anxiety, depression, and substance use disorders. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has documented these impacts extensively, emphasizing the need for culturally appropriate mental health services and supports that acknowledge and address this historical trauma. Initiatives like the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework aim to provide a holistic approach to mental wellness that incorporates traditional healing practices and community-based support, recognizing the importance of cultural identity and connection to the land in the healing process.

An example in the work of Niel Arya et al. (2018) highlights how Canada's colonial history and systemic racism continue to affect the mental and physical health of Indigenous peoples—generational trauma and mistrust of healthcare systems are exacerbated by these challenges. Acknowledging the shortcomings of the existing systems and organizations and emphasizing the need for structural reforms in healthcare are crucial for advocating for culturally safe care frameworks that address historical injustices and power imbalances (Arya, 2018).

Addressing the mental health impacts of racism requires a multifaceted approach. While individual coping strategies are useful, they must be complemented by structural changes to reduce the prevalence and impact of racial discrimination. EDID frameworks offer a way to create more equitable and inclusive environments, potentially alleviating some of the mental health challenges associated with racism. As we strive for systemic change, it is crucial to understand and address both the individual and structural elements of racism to improve the overall well-being of marginalized communities.

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Reflective Questions

- How do EDID frameworks contribute to creating safer and more supportive environments for marginalized communities, and what specific examples from Canadian contexts illustrate these contributions?
- In what ways can psychological resilience and individual coping strategies mitigate the mental health impacts of racism, and why are structural changes still necessary despite these individual efforts?
- How does the legacy of colonialism continue to affect the mental health of Indigenous communities in Canada, and what specific structural reforms could address these historical injustices?
- What role does social integration play in promoting mental health and well-being, and how can inclusive community practices be implemented to reduce feelings of alienation and victimization?
- How can organizations and institutions in Canada better incorporate EDID principles to not only support individual mental health but also drive systemic changes that reduce discrimination and promote equity?

Please do the quiz below

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