Leadership Vibes

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Introduction

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Welcome to the first Leadership Vibes of 2023! We are excited to share articles that cover a range of topics and educational issues from scholars and graduate students.

Dr. Ardavan Eizadirad challenges us to question the acceptance of normalized duties of the university professor and their role as researchers. He asks if the research serving community needs or harming them. Dr. Eizadirad shares ways that he disrupts harmful practices. In this article he examines the notion of brave spaces, and how this can be used to create more equitable and inclusive environments. Dr. Eizadirad argues research used as a medium for activism can also be used to break down barriers and highlight lived experiences as a form of knowledge. Dr. Eizadirad calls for research to be less intimidating, and instead be a process that invites communities in, create space for communities to come together, and works for communities.

In her article, Dr. Zuhra Abawi begins with an account of her own lived experiences as a substitute teacher in a large school board in Southern Ontario where she faced overt racism from the permanent staff. Using her experiences as an entry point Dr. Abawi critically examines Diversity, Equity and Inclusion narratives and practices, and questions claims of school boards commitment to diversity and inclusion. Dr. Abawi points to the lack of racial representation amongst teachers and school leadership. She draws our attention to the very Eurocentric system and curriculum within Ontario schools, and limitations of the Ontario Leadership Framework (2012) with regards to addressing racism and forms of exclusion. She argues that even though the education system talks about equity, diversity, and social justice these are merely buzz words if there are no actions for systemic and sustainable change. Dr. Abawi highlights barriers in hiring practices for racialized applicants and calls attention to the need for educational leaders to name racism, engage a praxis of self-reflexivity, and rethink their hiring practices.

Shezadi Khushal's article entitled "Human Rights and Anti-Oppressive Frameworks: How they diverge and converge to address racism in schools, and the transformational role of educational leaders" interrogates anti-Black racism and forms of oppression in K-8 schools. She argues that the education system in Ontario, Canada is based on a colonial system that is designed to serve a dominant group while marginalizing others. The system perpetuates colonial narratives that is embedded in the social structures of

school organizations. Khushal explores the intersection of Human Rights and other Anti-Oppression frameworks, examining how anti-racism work goes hand-in-hand with Human Rights framework. She offers a framework for moving anti-racism and anti-racist practice from research into practice that will be useful for teachers and leaders in education. Such a shift Khushal argues is necessary if educational institutions are to be transformed.

Dr. Fella Lahmar's article examines the complexities of Muslim women's leadership in education within Islam. In her research Dr. Lahmar focuses on Muslim community in Britain, tracing changing views of early women migrants to second- and third-generation Muslim women. Dr. Lahmar discusses platforms Muslim women leaders use to engage in community supports and socializations, such as the An-Nisa society in Britain. Internal and external challenges remain for Muslim women leaders. In this regard, a number of projects have emerged that nurture and encourage women leadership. In addition, Muslim community in Britain faces obstacles caused by media representation, which adds to the stereotyping of Muslim women. Dr. Lahmar examines leadership within the context of Islam and argues that leadership among other things is value-driven and contested terrain. She examines women leadership within the framework of Islam and seeks to dismantle stereotypical notions of what it means to be a Muslim woman leader.

Jasmine Pham's examines the rise of anti-Asian racism due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications for Asian students in higher education, many of whom opted for remote learning over the past two years due to fear of reprisals for being Asian. Jasmine shares her own experiences of ways the pandemic has changed her thinking and focus as a graduate student at OISE. Pham interrogates the Model Minority Myth, and the subtle ways stereotyping has caused harm to Asian students' self-concept, identity, and sense of safety. Pham points out that despite political support in the form of Bill 299 and funding given by the Ontario government, there is still insufficient resources and supports for Asian students. She is hopeful that with more focus on anti-Asian racism in recent years that there will greater intentionality in challenging and educational spaces created where Asian students will feel less fearful and more supported.

The Centre for Leadership and Diversity seeks to encourage, nurture, and advance the cause of equity, social justice, and democracy. We are committed to uplifting and providing a platform for emerging researchers and scholars to advance respectful debate about anti-oppression and racism. We hope that the articles in this issue open spaces for conversations and co-learning across cultures, interests, and disciplines.

We thank our emerging researchers and scholars for their contributions to this issue. If you wish to contribute to our future issues of Leadership Vibes and would like to get information about how to publish in Leadership Vibes, please do not hesitate to contact one of our team members below:

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Research as Activism:
Disrupting the Binary of the Researcher and the Researched

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Research can be an intimidating word for students, staff, and faculty within the culture of post-secondary institutions. As graduate students and research assistants are mentored to conduct research ethically and effectively in areas of data collection, analysis, and publication, scholars grapple with research expectations in the form of outputs in journals, books, and other mediums. The discourse of "publish or perish" as a rhetoric has been normalized as part of research output expectations for scholars as they navigate the trajectory of becoming a tenured professor. Unfortunately, in many cases outputs- the sheer volume of it- instead of the impact of the research has become one of the major success indicators used to rank universities and their reputations. What is problematic about this approach? What are the implications for how leadership is perceived and enacted? Why has it not been questioned or disrupted? How does this perpetuate harm and exclude Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC), and other minoritized identities? How does this harm communities that do not access the research findings nor reap benefits from being research subjects? This article is intended to spark reflection and dialogue- as individuals and between institutions- to consider what is the purpose and role of research in higher education? In what ways do the binary of the researcher and the researched need to be adapted, subverted, and altered to value relationships with community to reduce harm enacted on local communities? What are the complexities navigating a higher education culture saturated with inequitable power dynamics, various forms of privilege, and prioritization of profit?

This article is intended to be more about questions to push us to pause, decolonize our imagination and spirits, unlearn, think innovatively and counter-hegemonically, and identify where we can commit to action short and long term (Battiste, 2013; Brown & Strega, 2005). It is meant to be a spark and point of departure rather than a destination. The central question explored are the following: What is the role of research as activism where it values and invests in equity, diversity, inclusion (EDI), and decolonization within a publish or perish culture in higher education? What

is the role of research in challenging the status quo, breaking down norms which serve as systemic barriers, and centering voices, perspectives, and lived experiences of identities from equity-deserving groups as counter-narratives to make institutions more equitable? Some examples from my journey as a researcher-activist will be shared as exemplars in coping with challenges, healing, finding community in different circles, and collaborating with community to advance research as activism: #KeepingItReal. We must stay true to our authentic selves within a neoliberal culture that places more importance on profits than relations.

I try very hard to embed activism in all components of my duties as an educator-activist. For many professors, their job duties include three components: teaching, research, and service to the university. Is this the ideal model? How did it become normalized and accepted as the norm? What is not prioritized that should be such as relationship-building with community? What may be missing from the equation? I am encouraging us to think about how can we challenge normalized models within higher education that have become hegemonic (Ahmed, 2021; Razack, 2002; Shahjahan, 2005; Tuck & Yang, 2012) and often unchallenged which promote research but not always in the best interests of community needs- unfortunately in many cases it is for the benefit of the researcher or the institution at the expense of harm to community.

In the remainder of the article, I will share some of the strategies I have adopted over the years to disrupt the normalized policies and practices in higher education that perpetuate harm. For example, as part of my teaching and research practices, I advocate for brave spaces instead of safe spaces (Eizadirad & Campbell, 2021). Brave spaces are a counter-narrative to the safe space discourse and language that is performative. There is no such thing as a safe space, and we cannot guarantee it as educators. Brave spaces seek to marinate the tensions that arise in the classroom to reap its benefits in terms of understanding gained by students. Brave spaces encourage calculated risk taking that fosters relationship-building and centering emotional and spiritual components of teaching and learning as a community of learners to explore alternative vantage points when social justice issues are discussed. This requires taking into consideration the unique positionality of learners and their needs and lived experiences. Brave spaces advocate for equity over equality to advance social justice via a pedagogy of engaging with pain and suffering (Eizadirad et al.,

2022). It is not a linear trajectory but one that holds potential for new beginnings that can be therapeutic and transformative. It involves indulging in feelings of anger, sadness, and most importantly uncomfortableness as it relates to race, sexuality, and other aspects of identity intersecting with lived experiences. Brave spaces sustain the conversation when it gets uncomfortable or diverted, focusing on shifting the critical analysis to systemic barriers and inequities versus attributing root causes of social issues to individual behaviour or genetics. Lastly, brave conversations facilitate exploring contrasting views within a framework that recognizes social issues are complex, nuanced, and require examination from multiple perspectives. The objective is seeking to understand versus seeking to judge and dismiss. In brave spaces, we stand on the shoulder of our ancestors and take moments to pause, learn together, and give gratitude as we work towards inner transformation and strategizing as a collective to better our communities through commitment to actions.

Another way research serves as a medium for activism is its impact on individuals and communities. We must ask how does research help break down systemic barriers, particularly for minoritized identities, as they face a greater magnitude of inequities rooted in the history of colonial logic and white supremacy (Henry & Tator, 2012; James, 2012; Colour of Poverty- Colour of Change, 2019)? Barriers can be physical, spiritual, psychological, or financial. How do we mitigate inequality of opportunity? How do we mitigate harm and microaggressions? Whose voice is included as part of exploring innovative and counter-hegemonic solutions? Whose ideas are being listened to and who is being ignored and for what purposes? We must prioritize valuing lived experiences as a form of knowledge; lived experiences of ourselves, our students, other faculty, and community members directly impacted by the social issue we explore, examine, and discuss in research: #Strategize2Disrupt.

As an act of resistance and subversion (Eizadirad & Portelli, 2018), I am very conscious of the scholars I utilize in my classes as part of course readings. What is their positionality and lived experiences? What ideologies do they perpetuate? Citational practices historically have been very exclusionary, with voices of white men from the Western hemisphere dominating the discourse at the expense of exclusion to others who expressed similar ideas or were the original source of the idea being expressed. We need to change this trend. There are many great scholar-activists whose work needs to be further honored, amplified, and legitimized by being included

in post-secondary courses. Counter-stories are important as they are told from the perspective of those minorized by society and its oppressive systems. Counter-narratives challenge the myth and fallacy of metanarratives taken for granted without being questioned. Critical Race Theory is a great example of a theoretical framework that values counter-stories and lived experiences of those impacted by race and racism within a framework that examines intersections of power, privilege, and colonization. I extensively use Critical Race Theory in my research as a theoretical framework for analysis. This includes its usage in the following books I have been involved with: *[Decolonizing Educational Assessment: Ontario Elementary Students and the EQAO](#)* (2019), *[Equity as Praxis in Early Childhood Education and Care.](#)* (2021), and *[The Power of Oral Culture in Education: Theorizing Proverbs, Idioms and Folklore Tales](#)* (forthcoming 2023).

In a culture where research is often associated with funding secured through granting agencies, how do we ensure the impact of the research is not "done" when the data collection or analysis is completed? How do we make community- the trust established to do the work authentically and the relationships that are built from the research process- an integral part of any research project and its next steps? How can we ensure the community gains access to the tools and the resources required to continue the work on their own? To facilitate this, we need to ensure that publications and other forms of knowledge mobilization are made available in formats accessible to the community. As researcher-activists, we must always ask, who will access knowledge in the way it is produced and in what ways? In the last few years, I have been very intentional in ensuring the issues I highlight in academic platforms such as in journals and books are also shared in more accessible mediums such as blogs, op eds, outlets for non-academics, and oral platforms such as podcasts. Below are some examples covering different topics:

The Conversation Podcast. (2022, December 7). [How can we slow down youth gun violence?](#) [Audio podcast episode]. *Don't Call Me Resilient.*
Eizadirad, A., & Stevenson, E. (December 2022). [To resolve youth violence, Canada must move beyond policing and prison](#). *The Conversation.*
FookNConversation Podcast. (2022, November 16). [Episode 42: Ardavan Eizadirad](#). [Audio podcast episode]. *FookNConversation-Talking About "Academicky" Stuff with Nicholas Ng-A-Fook.*
VoicEd Radio. (2022, October 13). [Raw and uncut: Pain and suffering as critical pedagogy.](#) [Audio podcast episode]. *A VoicEd Radio Exclusive Series.*

To conclude, we all have to do our part, so research is not something that feels intimidating but rather an enjoyable process that facilitates relationship building and helping communities thrive. Research must reap benefits for the people and the communities it studies and works with rather than perpetuating harm on the researched. Therefore, we must not see research and activism as two separate entities, but rather as part of the same continuum which can and should support one another: #ResearchIsActivism.

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Challenging the Status Quo: Diversifying the Principalship in Ontario Public Schools

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Introduction

"Run No Frills!" the white male gym teacher yells at a child who is South Asian and has worn out shoes. The teacher stands there holding a meter stick laughing and talking about how *these* students have limited athletic ability in comparison to his own white, middle-class children. It is my first year as a substitute teacher and I am terrified. Completely frozen I stand there in shock looking at the student he was ridiculing, our eyes meet, and I see a look that I recognize. I am reminded of my own white, male gym teacher who would refuse to learn to pronounce my name correctly and defaulted to calling me *"Zorba the Greek or Zorro".* I recall finally standing up to him and asking him not to call me that because it's not my name and I am not Greek. It really was to no avail. I stand in the gym with the teacher I am forced to substitute with, crossing my arms uncomfortably. He is a full-time permanent teacher; his teaching partner is away, and I am covering for her. *"They really need to start limiting immigration here, they all just come here and use the system".* I glanced at him and moved to the other side of the gym to interact with the students, who all looked terrified. I was acutely aware of what this teacher was doing, he was trying to engage in white racial bonding (Fascher-Bonding, 2013) with me, a practice that I had become accustomed to and one which I noticed quite often while I was in teacher's college. I tried to pass the day with as little communication as possible, at the end of the day, he insisted that I provide my information so that he could call me for daily supply work. I didn't want to but felt put on the spot. I sat at the desk writing my racialized name down and handed the piece of paper to him and he turned red and walked away. Being white passing has undoubtedly provided me with many unearned privileges, but those privileges diminish when processes of racialization occur. Teacher colleagues have made racist comments to me, only to come back and apologize, usually with the *"oh I didn't know".* When I stated my first Long Term Occasional assignment (LTO), a teacher complained in the staff room about how the South Asian principal only hires Muslims and that reverse racism was occurring. There are countless other stories from the field that I can narrate, but the common thread of these three educators mentioned is that each of them were promoted into leadership positions. These stories, incidents and acts of racism are not unique to my experience, but rather pervasive and far reaching into the very essence of school culture, one which is

embedded with whiteness and white privilege. Despite multiple policies concerning equity and diversity being drafted across the province, these practices continue, and the perpetrators are often rewarded with promotions and salary raises, while those anti-racist educators, many of whom are Black, Indigenous, and racialized are barred from accessing these perks, unless they play the game.

Context

Ontario is often prided as being Canada's most racially diverse province, notorious for hosting one of the most equitable and inclusive public education systems in the world. However, this is largely overshadowed by racial inequities that continue to persist in education. From discriminatory disciplinary practices, streaming processes, teacher biases and deficit thinking, as well as an overwhelmingly Eurocentric curriculum, Black, Indigenous and racialized students are told that education is not a space of belonging for them. These discourses of belonging and exclusion are further reinforced by the teachers and administrators who are overwhelmingly white and middle-class (Abawi, 2021a, Turner, 2015; Ryan et al, 2009). This phenomenon was coined as the 'teacher diversity gap' by Turner (2014/2015) to describe the discrepancy between majority white teachers and predominantly racialized students. Therefore, most teachers and administrators cannot relate to the lived experiences of the students, families, and communities in which they serve (Tuters & Portelli, 2017). School leaders thus either enhance or undermine antiracism and social justice in their schools in terms of how they view and respond to diversity and difference (Pollock & Briscoe, 2020). As the Ontario teacher workforce is overwhelmingly comprised of white, middle-class teachers, those who transition to the role of the principalship are largely white and middle-class.

Barriers to Hiring for Diversity

The recent release of the Ministry's Review of the Peel District School Board (2020), highlighted how the tapestry of whiteness and white privilege is woven into structural and institutional practices, including teacher hiring and promotion to administrative positions. Whiteness is permeated into teacher education programs through processes of socialization, gatekeeping practices, such as barriers to Internationally Educated Teachers (IETs), mentorship programs, as well as discursive constructions of who can be a teacher (Morris, 2016; Solomon & Daniel, 2015). Much of the findings of the Report speak to nepotism, favouritism and the selection of candidates for leadership positions who conform to the culture of the board, or otherwise, do not rock the proverbial boat. White teachers have markedly different experiences in accessing teaching employment than their Black, Indigenous, and

racialized colleagues (Abawi, 2021a). Further, it has been widely documented that teachers who do dare to engage in anti-racism and social justice work are often reprimanded through various avenues, including the stifling of their career opportunities, isolation and ostracization (Armstrong et al, 2013; Ministry of Education, 2020; Ryan, 2012; Shields, 2004; Tuters & Portelli, 2017). While calls have been made from the grassroots level to diversify the teacher and administration, most notably through parent and community activism, as well as widespread racism through police brutality, many of these calls have not been materialized. As such there remains an underrepresentation of Black, Indigenous and racialized educators in both permanent teaching positions as well as leadership roles in Ontario's publicly funded school boards. Moreover, extant literature suggests that those who make hiring decisions tend to hire candidates that look like them (Rivera, 2012). This is clearly exemplified in permanent teacher hiring and administrative promotion decisions, as highly qualified Black, racialized and Indigenous candidates are time and again passed over for white candidates who follow suit and do not rupture or even ripple the status quo of this tapestry of whiteness.

Becoming an Administrator in Ontario

Ontario is somewhat of an anomaly when it comes to school administrator accreditation. To become a vice-principal or principal in Ontario, one must hold an acceptable undergraduate degree, certification in three divisions (one of which must be intermediate), two specialists, or one specialist and half a masters' degree, as well as a minimum of five years of teaching experience. The principal accreditation consists of a two-part certification process, the PQP (Principal's Qualification Program), parts one and two (OCT, 2017). The PQP is hosted out of both faculties of education as well as professional organizations such as the Ontario Principal's Council and the Ontario Catholic Principal's Council. The PQP program includes a practicum component, which is supervised by the candidate's mentor, or their current principal or vice-principal. Ontario can be described as unique when it comes to the principalship, because unlike other Canadian provinces, and US states a masters' degree is required as a prerequisite to administrative programs. The PQP program is based on the Ontario Leadership Framework (2012) and fails to mention race or antiracism even once. Some promising strides have been made to the PQP guidelines as of 2017, which indicates that "candidates will support diversity and promote excellence, accountability, anti-racism, equity, partnerships and innovation" (OCT, 2017, p. 9). However, the narrative of anti-racism and equity in the document are constructed through a neoliberal lens that effectively commodifies diversity and difference and conflates the terms with academic success and discourses of privatization, accountability and quality assurance premised on standardized test

scores. In this juncture, equity, diversity and social justice appear to be appealing buzz words but emanate from liberal multicultural norms. Whereas Canadian liberal multiculturalism offers a celebratory approach to recognizing difference, equity and diversity constructs emphasize the differences between equality (liberal multiculturalism) and equity (neoliberalism). Thus, equity and diversity are supported, so long as students marginalized by the white supremacy of educational institutions conform, and like racialized teachers, do not disrupt the norm.

Anti-Racism and Transformative Leadership

In order for anti-racist, transformative leadership to transpire, racism must be named (Lopez, 2017), and ultimately change-makers and disruptors reconceptualized as true leaders. Canada tends to defer to the United States as the country and society with the racial issues and this amnesia, particularly Canada's own history of slavery, anti-Black racism, ongoing genocide and exploitation of Indigenous communities and lands, Islamophobia and anti-Asian racism are minimized. While it would be both dangerous and problematic to assume that all Black, Indigenous, and racialized educators and education leaders are inherently anti-racist, there is limited representation of non-white educational leaders in our schools and this impacts instructional leadership, programming decisions and support for equity, antiracism and social justice work. As Lopez and Jean-Marie (2021) posit, anti-racism work cannot be additive. Antiracism and transformative leadership must embed antiracism into hiring and promotion decisions and processes. These decisions and processes continue to create barriers to Black, Indigenous and racialized candidates from obtaining leadership positions. As mentioned, the career trajectories of white educators differ substantially from racialized educators, and as extant literature asserts, the routine, top-down board approaches and lip service to diversifying the teaching profession and providing access to leadership positions is anything but transformative. The widespread parent and community activism that the Greater Toronto Area has witnessed to combat anti-racism is transformative and offers insights to re-imagine antiracism and transformative leadership from the ground up, in collaboration with parent and community activists. Further, widening the pool of Black, Indigenous, and racialized candidates for leadership positions through concerted efforts with teacher education programs, more cluster hires of Black, Indigenous, and racialized faculty, as well as access to teacher education pathway programs can change both the Eurocentric dominance of leadership, and the overrepresentation of white, middle-class educators occupying these critical roles. These suggestions shall be further discussed in the concluding paragraph.

Conclusion

It is crucial for educational leaders, especially white educational leaders, to engage in self-reflective praxis, to unpack and interrogate how their positionality and white privilege impact their hiring decisions and understandings of who or which bodies make 'good' teachers and 'good' leaders (Abawi, 2021a/b). However, self-reflective praxis alone will not suffice, when it comes to recruiting more racialized leaders. While demographic data has already been collected at two of Canada's largest school boards, the Toronto District School Board and the Peel District School Board, there is no distinction between staff who work in administrative roles, as permanent teachers vs. non-permanent teachers, Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and Teaching Assistants. This amalgamation of data under 'staff' makes it impossible to determine if boards are adhering to antiracism and equity practices set out in the Ontario Equity Education Action Plan (2017). Some recommendations for enhancing diversity and anti-racism leadership in Ontario schools entail - increased partnerships need to be made between boards and faculties of education, most notably programs like the Centre for Leadership and Diversity (OISE), as well as engaging in community and parent partnerships. The Ontario Leadership framework must be re-drafted to name whiteness, white privilege, and racism, while the PQP guidelines have adopted some antiracist language, albeit informed by neoliberalism, ongoing antiracism education and training must be mandated. Finally, multi-year promotion opportunities, continued support and resources, such as mentoring programs, and pathway programs to make teacher education more accessible to Black, Indigenous and racialized educators. Until steps are made to name, dismantle and rethink leadership in schools, the status quo of complacency as an ideal will be privileged over activist and anti-racist educators and leaders.

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Human Rights and Anti-Oppressive Frameworks: How They Diverge and Converge to Address Racism in Schools, and the Transformational Role of Educational Leaders

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Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

Background and Introduction

Our education system is not broken; it was built this way. This statement is based on the premise that our education system was intentionally designed to serve some and marginalize others. Colonization is a major part of Canada's history. Because colonization is present in day-to-day systems and institutions, not addressing it hinders the ability to make change and further perpetuates marginalization. We must be aware of the events of the past in order to address contemporary manifestations of racial discrimination and coloniality in present day. Lopez tells us the legacy of colonialism is reflected in the continued presence of structural racism in educational practices (Lopez, 2020, p. 14). Woldeyes and Offord tell us, "our curriculum and teaching practices are embedded within hierarchical structures that are legacies of colonialist and European intellectual traditions" (Woldeyes & Offord, 2018, p. 25). Ugwuegbula tells us that, "schools continue to position Western education as the centre of legitimate knowledge, and any other knowledge as additional and insignificant" (Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness, 2022). By excluding already marginalized students from their lived experiences, we are contributing to further social marginalization, impacting self-esteem, sense of belonging, engagement, and academic performance.

Research Problem and Rationale

In this paper, I interrogate systemic racism in K–8 schools through exploring the continued perpetuation of injustices derived from coloniality, both within educational systems and in the colonization of the mind. By this, I refer to the long and persistent content and messaging inherently connected to education through systems and social structures that facilitate the dissemination of colonial narratives. In my capacity as a scholar and leader, I contemplate on how I can create space for voice and

action and how I can encourage leaders to understand the importance of accountability, ethical modelling, transparency and checking their biases.

State of Public Education

I was recently interviewed by SAGE's Social Science Space Journal for my work on anti-racist leadership. I spoke about how the horrific misconduct and gross negligence toward George Floyd sparked a global uproar in the fight against racism, bringing to light the deeply entrenched systemic racist practices that are prevalent in systems and structures. As a racialized woman raising racialized children, I think about the impact of racism on identity, mattering and belonging, as well as student academic performance and outcomes. Educational institutions have a responsibility to address and eliminate racism from educational policy, curricula, assessment and evaluation practices, as well as daily school activities. Equally, school leaders have a moral, ethical, and legal obligation to those they serve and lead. The onus must be placed first and foremost on educational leaders to engage in critical self-reflection, which includes examining their own racial location and identity, and understanding their power and privilege (SAGE Social Science Space, 2021).

The diagram below from Lopez and Jean-Marie (2021) depicts a framework for addressing racism in schools. Lopez and Jean-Marie posit a framework for action that educational leaders can employ as they challenge anti-Black racism in everyday practice. In naming racism or other acts of hate, we come to understand how racism manifests in everyday schooling practices. In owning the issue, the educator's positionality comes to play in terms of how they position themselves, where they are active, and how they are complicit. In framing, educators must be intentional and purposeful in their actions and must look for spaces in their work to actively challenge anti-Black racism, such as in curriculum development, pedagogy, assessment and evaluation practices, and student discipline. To reach its desired impact in combatting antiracism, anti-racist work must be sustained. This requires collaborative mentorship, developing and deepening critical understanding of anti-Black racism, finding space and time to dialogue, sharing resources, and engaging in ongoing reflection and agency (Lopez & Jean- Marie, 2021, p. 60). This process is important for educators to use individually or collectively in order to bring about system-wide change. I include this framework because the marginalization of students through

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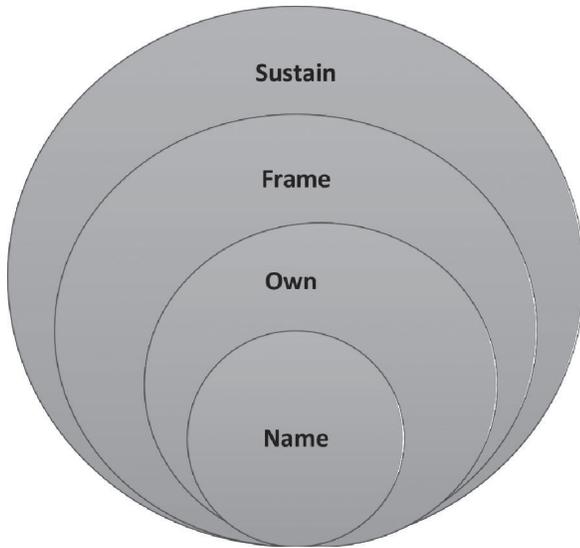
anti-racist practices cannot be left up to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts alone. (Lopez & Jean-Marie, 2021, p. 58).

How a Human Rights Framework Intersects with Other Anti-Oppressions Frameworks to Combat Racism

Human rights principles are one avenue for achieving racial equity, but they must go hand-in-hand with other anti-oppression frameworks to further the work of inclusion, diversity, and social justice. Human rights focuses on building relationships, social and cultural inclusion, active and participatory citizenship, making legal language more accessible and fostering attitudes of tolerance, respect, solidarity, and responsibility. Anti-racist education compliments the work of human rights in terms of teaching lessons that go in-depth about communities of colour, giving students opportunities to read books about themselves, to help strengthen their awareness and understanding of social identities, and to encourage students to use their voice for collective action - which can lead to engagement, empowerment, and sense of belonging. A decolonizing frame focuses on the removal of colonialist thought and Eurocentric Western Imperial epistemologies in educational policies and practices; in creating spaces and resources for dialogue where all students can participate; and centering non-dominant voices, which can help marginalized students connect with their identities, histories, and experiences.

Critical Praxis: Moving Theory to Action

Moving from theory to practice, I offer suggestions for meaningful and lasting change in six categories: Leadership, Teachers & Teaching Practices, Student Voice, Community Partnerships, Hiring Practices and Professional Development.

Leaders play a pivotal role in transforming educational institutions, and in the day-to-day lives of students. Leaders need to learn how to challenge racist norms and understand how these practices impact racialized students (Davis & Armstrong, 2012).

Finally, leaders must model the change they want to see (Davis & Armstrong, 2012). Some recommendations for leaders include:

- engaging in critical self-reflection to gauge biases and perceptions;
- acknowledging their own racial location and biases, and admitting their own gaps in knowledge (Carr & Lund, 2009; Evans, 2007; Solomon, 2002; Theoharis & Haddix, 2011);
- advocating for changes to harmful school practices, including using inclusive language;
- providing space and time for staff to engage in difficult conversations;
- engaging in active listening and open dialogue;
- reviewing policies and practices that have an impact on racialized students; and,
- reporting, monitoring, and tracking data to help understand where progress is being made and where the deficiencies lie.

Teachers hold great power in shaping and transforming student's minds and overall well-being. Some recommendations include:

- also engaging in self-reflection;
- challenging deficit thinking;
- challenging biases in parent–teacher engagements;
- focusing on cultural competence and racial awareness, which requires a recognition that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality; and
- considering alternate forms of learning - sharing circles, story-telling, photo essays, performances and reflective writing.

When students are able to "unpack the inequitable systems that shape their school and the world around them, they are not only able to see themselves as powerful changemakers, but they are able to find their voice and become advocates for themselves and others. Students should be taught complex critical thinking and decision-making, which will eventually lead to developing the skills required for leadership roles. Students who are given opportunities to engage in more specific discussions across subject areas can develop skills to consider different points of view, build on previous knowledge, come up with solutions, and incorporate feedback"

(Examining Learning Through an Anti-Racist Lens, 2020). Collectively, these serve to empower students beyond just academics.

Developing partnerships between all educational stakeholders is key. While schools have a vital role in their capacity to manage change, it must be supported by collaborative engagement and alignment with communities. Some recommendations include:

- actively seeking out opportunities for cultural dialogue with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Community-based partners;
- co-planning school events with parents and community members, such as move nights or heritage nights; and
- surveying the Community on what they would like to see in schools, and developing a shared plan with stakeholders.

Changes to recruitment and hiring practices require a complete culture shift. Human resource leaders and employers need to look beyond narrow job classifications in order to transfer lived experiences and knowledge of people of colour into the workplace. Developing plans to recruit and retain people of colour therefore, is key.

Finally, equity, anti-racism, social justice, and culturally relevant materials must be embedded in professional development training initiatives, and the training must be action-oriented.

Conclusion

In my quest to understand why injustice and oppression continue to persist, I reflect on what it is that must change – in schooling, in leadership, in ourselves. A whole school approach to reform is necessary. All stakeholders - from leaders to educators to students to parents to communities - must actively and intentionally resist Eurocentric Western paradigms deeply rooted in systems and policies. To be intentional about creating equitable practices, and to make space for non-dominant epistemologies, leaders must undergo a journey of unlearning and relearning. In this paper, I have explored how racism in K-8 schools persists through the preservation of deeply entrenched systemic policies and practices. In doing so, I have attempted to highlight the pivotal role of leaders in meeting their obligations and responsibilities in upholding human rights in schools. I have proposed utilizing a human rights

framework as one pathway for achieving racial justice. When combined with other anti-oppressive frameworks, human rights acts as a springboard to further promote the urgency for developing tools for inclusion, diversity and justice.

As educators, researchers and leaders, we must ask ourselves: how can we create a bias-aware, equitable and inclusive school environment - where human dignity is positioned at the centre of student success?

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Muslim Women's Leadership: Theory and Praxis

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Muslim women's leadership agency

In the educational arena, some key terms are used to convey authority status for Muslim women within their Muslim communities. These terms confer female scholarship or ritual leadership authority such as *ʿālimah* (a learned woman), *hafizah* (female Quran memoriser), *imāmah* (female prayer leader), *murshidah* (female spiritual guide), *shaykhah* (a woman with religious knowledge), m*uʿallimah* (female teacher), *mudarrisah* (female teacher) and *ustādhah* (female teacher/lecturer) (Bano & Kalmbach, 2012). Each of these terms needs to be read within its contextual limitations as their meanings shift over time and space. Approaches to religion interpretation versus cultural norms chart some changes which have taken place across the generations. In Britain, while female pioneer migrants in the 1960s and 70s approach religious practice to preserve traditional cultural heritage, for the second and third-generation migrants, "religion has become a vehicle for emancipation from cultural restrictions" (Akhtar, 2014, p. 232). Enhanced literacy obtained by younger Pakistani women, for example, enabled access to religious knowledge beyond the limitations of the community's early religious leaders that the pioneering generation of women, due to their restricted literacy, had to rely upon when navigating religious issues. Accordingly, religious practice has evolved in various social forms creating spaces for community members of all ages to engage in communal activities (Akhtar, 2014, p. 232).

Female Muslim educators have founded various organisations to present platforms for Muslim women's leadership and engagement in their societies. In Britain, for example, the Women of An-Nisa Society was co-founded in 1985 by activist family members Humera Khan, Khalida Khan and Aisha Khan. Interested in the welfare of Muslim families, particularly women, children and young people, An-Nisa Society set up a Supplementary Muslim School (SMS) in 1986 as its first major project. Although the organisation deals with many other civic concerns related to its stated goal of existence, issues of identity and education concerns remain at the heart of Muslim families (An-Nisa Society, n.d.). The Arabic name *An-Nisa* (Women) reflects the *An-Nisa* Quran

chapter and one wonders whether the founders were inspired by this chapter to select such an Arabic name. Their gender "as Muslim women" and as 'mothers' does not preclude them from fulfilling duties within the broader world.

> ...it's very important for our girls to see strong role models; they see us as women running the school being influential in it, and they see a lot of other women who are very competent and capable involved in the school. (Humera Khan, An Nisa Society, SMS[1]) (CTS, 2017)

This An-Nisa example presents an interesting avenue to examine how an organisation of women was born from one family to serve Muslim families and support their communities.

Beyond Islamic schooling, Muslim women in Britain are slowly but steadily moving to leadership positions at different key Muslim communities' organisations. However, Muslim women leaders are still facing Muslim internal and external ongoing challenges, stereotypes, and struggles. At the 31st of March 2019 Women's Conference in London, the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) urged for more Muslim women in leadership roles in Muslim-led organisations across the UK (MCB, 2019). The conference also witnessed the launch of the 2019 Women in Mosques Development Programme (WIMDP), expanding upon the 2018 programme, with the aim to develop female leadership within mosque trustees, committee members and centre managers (MCB, 2019). Accordingly, on 31st January 2021, Zara Mohammed, 29 years old, became the first woman and youngest leader elected as a Secretary-General (SG) of the MCB, an organisation that defines itself as: "the UK's largest and most diverse national Muslim umbrella organisation with over 500 members including mosques, schools, charitable associations and professional networks" (MCB, 2021). However, instead of celebrating such an achievement, on 4 February 2021, the BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour programme held a controversial interview with Zara Mohammed (Middle East Eye, 2021). The interview has been described, in an open letter to the BBC signed by more than 100 public figures, as a "strikingly hostile" interview (Abdel-Magied & Khan, 2021). The comparison made of female imams with priests and rabbis, demonstrates Fatima Mernissi's (Mernissi, 1987, p. 7) (1987, p. 7) argument that the tradition of discussing

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[1] Supplementary Muslim School (SMS)

Muslim women "by comparing them, explicitly or implicitly, to Western women," leads to "senseless comparisons and unfounded conclusions" often limiting the issue to "who is more civilised than whom". Moreover, the reference to rabbis and clergy as an example to women's leadership progress, demonstrated what Said (1997, p. 42) described about the media coverage of Islam as having "the tendency to treat Islam as something without a history of its own." It further demonstrates a superior approach of colonial feminism to discussing Muslim women issues. This interview adds to the ongoing knowledge production on the status of Muslim women within Islam and Muslim societies. Still, Zara Mohammed's election as a SG to a key Muslim organisation in Britain reflects change within these Muslim communities in terms of inclusivity and representation. However, pressing on the question of the number of Muslim female imams in the UK, with a restrictive scope of what imam is about in Islam, shows a marginalisation of a Muslim woman leader's voice, theoretical framework, priorities and Muslim communities' needs.

Islamic leadership: A brief theoretical overview

Leadership is value-driven; it concerns "vision and strategy and providing the inspiration to the people working in the organisation so that the aims of the organisation can be achieved" (Kydd et al., 2003, p. 1). The value system of Muslim women leading Islamic organisations stems from various theoretical and contextual associations. Creating a powerful vision for their leadership demands interpreting and integrating Islamic sources and contextual circumstances. Leadership from an Islamic framework is ontologically and epistemologically linked to debates on human nature, development and sources of knowledge; it is rooted in the concept of the oneness of God (*Tawḥīd*) (Memon & Zaman, 2016). However, focusing on the theoretical underpinnings of women leadership from an Islamic framework begs the question: how has leadership been theorised in the Quran and practiced by the Prophet?

From Quranic verses, the central concept of *Tawḥīd* (the oneness of God) attaches to the essential purpose of human existence on earth. All other terms are linked to *Tawḥīd*; this includes worship (*'ibādah;* acts of devotion; service to God*)*, vicegerency and succession *(istikhlāf)* and knowledge (*'ilm*), three concepts that witness the first debate on the nature and purpose of human existence on earth, based on the Quranic narration (Quran: 02: 30-33). These principles form part of the paradigm for Islamic

education. The concept of vicegerency (*istikhlāf*) is linked to the concept of religious-political leadership *(imāmah)*. The afterlife dimension of belief brings leadership into the ontological sphere that has implications for other key concepts of 'justice' and accountability, as the human being (*insān*) is instructed to deal with the universe as a trusteeship (*amānah*). According to Arabic lexicon, the term *imām*, discussed in Zara Mohammed's BBC interview, infers various meanings (Ibn-Mandhur, 2010). It can convey a prominent title in religious or other fields of knowledge which signifies established scholarly leadership. In the Quran, an *imām* is one who has been taken as a role model or followed by people (Quran: 25: 74); the *imām* of prayer presents such an example. The term *imām* also refers to the chief of the people, regardless of their faith/non-faith backgrounds (Quran: 17: 71). The concept contains reference to the register in which one's acts are recorded, like an activity log (Quran: 36: 12). It also refers to 'a wide and clear path' (Quran: 15: 79). It is worth noting that the term '*imāmah*' has other theological definitions and debates within *Shī'ī* and *Sunnī* thought, discussion of which lie beyond the scope of this article. Some other concepts indicating leadership include *wilayah* (meanings include: assistance, friendship, devotion, and authority), *qiwāmah* (leadership, guardianship) and *imārah (*leadership, from Arabic root *amr*, having to do with command*).

In terms of the Prophet's practice, apparently, many listed behaviours and traits derived from his style of leadership are not significantly different from those discussed in leadership literature about effective educational leadership (Kydd et al., 2003; Shah, 2016). The Quranic description of the Prophet's leadership places a unique emphasis on being 'a servant' to His Lord (*'abd*), and on having mercy and compassion (*Raḥmah*) as core elements of his character and leadership role: "And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds." (Quran: 21:107), also (Quran: 09: 128). The scope of 'the worlds' would include people beyond the limitation of the Muslim nation (*umma*h), animals and nature. Interestingly, this key leadership concept of mercy (*raḥmah)* is linked to the female womb (*raḥim*) that is attached to motherhood, family and kinship, as the Prophet stated:

Allah, Most High, said: 'I am the Lord of Mercy (Ar-Raḥman), and this is Ar-Raḥim (the womb, or the bonds of kinship). I have extracted for it a name from My Names. I will bond with those who nurture it, and break away from those who severe it'. (Abu Dawud, 2008, p. 317, Hadith: 1694)

Accordingly, the family and kinship form a crucial unit in Muslim communities' composition and networks. Motherhood forms a core element in those networks. Yet, the nature and scope of 'motherhood' as a leadership responsibility is closely attached to discussions on Muslim women's roles and spaces. Two women stand in the Quran as positive role models for the believers across time and space (Quran: 66: 11-12). Beyond the Islamic theological debate over prophethood of some women, I argue that their role modelling of leadership (*qiwāmah*), with the meaning of persistently standing firm in justice, is a form of leadership (*imāmah*) in faith (*dīn*). The first example is the wife of Pharaoh in her agency when maintaining her principles, rejecting cultural norms of race discrimination, and opposing the tyrannical leadership of her own husband. The second Quranic model presents the example of Mary through her devotion, chastity and spirituality in a culture that elevated males over females in such spiritual services (Quran: 03: 35-48; 19: 16-32). The two examples offer different backgrounds in terms of race and class within their societal structures of the time. Yet, both models projected leadership roles from within the family to extend their impact on society. In both examples, women's agency was enacted against tyranny either through child adoption, by saving the life of an innocent baby, namely Moses, or through motherhood by giving birth and educating a future leader (Jesus). Despite differences in multifaith narratives about these key figures, female Muslim leadership and agency is partly deriving meaning from a shared history of human values against oppression and tyranny in societies. Also, Quran chapter: *al-Mujādila* is named after 'the Woman who disputes' with the Prophet concerning her husband's oppressive cultural marital separation; then she was directly heard and supported by her Lord as stated by the Quran.

God has heard the words of the woman who disputed with you [Prophet] about her husband and complained to God: God has heard what you both had to say. He is all hearing, all seeing. (Quran: 58: 1-4)

Women's leadership from this framework is neither a submissive approach to men's authority nor rivals that of men but acts as an autonomous agency through their Islamic framework of worship to God (*Tawḥīd*). Finally, considering Muslim women's Islamic frame of meaning deemed necessary, not only to understanding their perspectives but also to facilitating deeper scholarly engagement with diverse Muslim women's issues at more equitable and ethical levels which would reflect more diverse philosophical positions to the variety of Muslim women's agency.

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Anti-Asian Racism, Student Advocacy and Student Leadership

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Over the last two years, there has been a rise of Sinophobia and anti-Asian sentiments due to the COVID-19 pandemic (ETFO & TDSB, 2020; Li, 2021). From daily news reports of physical attacks and verbal abuse against visibly Asian people while out and about in public, to the more subtle forms of anti-Asian stereotypes that occur across Canada, it is clear that Asian Canadians are "battling more than the COVID-19 pandemic", they are also battling against anti-Asian racism and the model minority myth (Li, 2021, p. 22). In Canadian classrooms, this has translated to Asian students feeling increasingly unsafe while attending school. In fact, recent studies show that there is a significantly higher percentage of Asian students than students of other racial backgrounds who chose remote learning and attributed anti-Asian racism the main reason for their decision (Li, 2021).

As a queer, East Asian woman who was born and raised in Canada, the last two and a half years have been life changing. I started my studies at OISE as an MEd student in the Educational Leadership and Policy program with the intention to learn more about teacher development in the field of English education. I was wide-eyed and pretty much ready to take on all that this institute had to offer. About halfway through my first winter semester, things shifted online. I went ahead and finished a mixed-methods research paper which explored the impact that native-speakerism, the belief that "native speakers" are the best teachers of English, had on the professional development of English language educators. While I still hold this research area near and close to my heart, the rise in racist encounters I experienced both on and offline over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic shifted my priorities.

I am currently pursuing a PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy at OISE and have dedicated a lot of my time to student groups and communities dedicated to tackling anti-Asian racism and encouraging cross racial solidarity among BIPOC community members. I am currently a member of OISE's Student Experience Committee and a mentor for OISE's mentorship program. I am also the Director of Public Relations for the University of Toronto's Chinese Graduate Student Association and an executive member of OISE's East Asia Interest Group. I decided to join these groups so I can share the experiences I had while growing up a visual minority in Canada, the challenges I have faced while taking a stand for what I believe in, as well

as the opportunities offered at the University of Toronto for student advocacy and leadership. The more I shared, the more I realized the importance of having my voice heard. Of having safe spaces to talk and of carving out spaces for others to share their experiences as well. So, during my doctoral journey, I did more digging and research on this topic.

Model Minority Myth

Asians in North America have also long been victims of the model minority stereotype. While seemingly complimentary on the surface, the model minority myth was used to categorize Asians as a particular group of minority people who have "conformed to colonial values and assimilated into Canadian society" (ETFO & TDSB, 2020, p. 19). People of Asian descent are often perceived as docile, obedient, and apolitical (ETFO & TDSB, 2020). Unfortunately, such stereotypes have created a perception that Asian students do not have strengths and capabilities in areas outside of academics (Li, 2021). As a result, Asian students feel an immense pressure to meet "high educational, occupational, and economic expectations" (Gupta, Szymanski, & Leong, 2011, p. 105).

For Asian students who are unable to achieve academic success, they often feel a strong sense of "inadequacy and self-doubt" which can lead to a deterioration of their mental well-being and even thoughts of "suicide" (Gupta, Szymanski, & Leong, 2011, p. 105). As such, the model minority myth has created a narrow view of Asian students where all of them are high achieving and neglecting "the vast diversity among Asian students, many of whom are underachieving in our schools" (Li, 2021, p. 23). In fact, many Asian students who do not fit into the stereotypes of the model minority myth often face barriers to success, such as "social exclusion from peers and teachers; lack of positive coping skills; and substance abuse tied to stress" (ETFO & TDSB, p. 42). Implications

While we may not physically see the more subtle forms of racism in our schools, our Asian students are not only feeling the harmful effects of racism but are also suffering silently. North American Asian students often "ignore or minimize their own psychosocial difficulties" to uphold their "model" status (Gupta, Szymanski, & Leong, 2011, p. 105). This has contributed to the negative attitudes that Asian students have towards reaching out to authority figures for help, especially if they believe in the myth that all Asians are "well-adjusted and have no problems" (Gupta, Szymanski, & Leong, 2011, p. 105). As a result, "Asians are three times less likely than their white counterparts to seek treatment for their mental health concerns" (Li, 2021, p. 24). "Being racialized as the source of the virus has further exacerbated the mental health

struggles for Asians" (Li, 2021, p. 24). So, not only has the rise of anti-Asian sentiments caused our Asian students to feel less safe at school, the stereotype of the perfectly quiet and successful Asian student further makes our school system ignorant of the suffering and challenges Asian students face (ETFO & TDSB, 2020).

Context for Ontario Classrooms

According to a census portrait conducted in 2012 by the TDSB, "Southeast Asian students feel significantly less safe than others at school" and "students of Vietnamese descent were much less likely to have an adult(s) whom they could turn to for personal support" (ETFO & TDSB, 2020, p. 20). East and Southeast Asian students were also reported feeling "less comfortable participating, answering questions, and speaking up in class" than their peers (ETFO & TDSB, 2020, p. 58). This data highlights how East and Southeast Asian voices have been missing from our schools and suggests that Ontario classrooms have not created a welcoming and safe environment for Asian students to speak up and participate in class.

In response to the rise of anti-Asian sentiments during the COVID-19 pandemic the Ontario government passed Bill 299, the Anti-Asian Racism Education Month Act in 2021. Ontario also provided about $50 000 to the Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice (CCNC-SJ) and $10 000 to the Asian Canadian Educators Network (ACENet) (OLA 2021). With these funds, a series of workshops, videos and lessons that address the prevalence of anti-Asian racism were created. The (TDSB) and (ETFO) have also long been leaders in addressing equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression in our classrooms. To help school leaders and educators address racism in their classrooms, the TDSB and ETFO worked together and published a resource entitled *Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: A Resource for Educators* in December 2020. This resource offers educators with an approach that focuses on an "anti-oppressive framework and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy" (ETFO & TDSB, 2020, p. 4). This resource also documents the lived experiences of Asian educators and highlights the issues that Asian students face in Ontario classrooms.

The Need for Student Voice

Despite this increase in funding and the passing of Bill 299, little attention has been paid to what is happening on the ground. I spent hours googling and searching for programs and practical applications of all the theories and suggestions reflected in these resources and video workshops and found nothing Even TDSB and ETFO's *Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: A Resource for Educators* is mainly theoretical in nature and serves more as a starting point for teachers and school leaders to engage in culturally responsive pedagogy and school leadership than to understand the student experience and how to tailor their practice to the specific students in their schools.

The text itself is an excellent starting point and asserts that student voice is essential when it comes to tackling racism. So, it is about time we start including these essential voices.

For students to feel like their voices matter, they "need to see themselves reflected in their learning" (ETFO & TDSB, 2020, p. 58). The validation of student culture and voice though, is more than celebrating diversity during multicultural days and sending home newsletters during the holidays It means providing students with safe spaces to talk about their experiences and simplifying their voices so that real policy changes and program initiatives reflect what students actually need "True anti-racism education involves an aspect of social action driven by students" (ETFO & TDSB, 2020, p. 63). Our students are the ones impacted by these culturally responsive practices and policies, so it makes sense to consider their lived experiences. On paper we know that on average, Asian students tend to perform well on exams, but we also have data on how they do not feel supported or safe to participate in discussions at school. Why is that the case? What is missing from our policy texts? How are their experiences and social interactions a result of ruling relations? To uncover these issues, we need to include student voices.

Although policy and program makers assert that they have the wellbeing of our students in mind, the lack of resources and programs available on the ground to address anti-Asian sentiments despite having so much of their beloved data highlighting this issue demonstrates how our current system simply is not working. A paradigm shift is required to stop relying on emergent theories that generalizes the Asian student experience and instead, uncover the lived experiences of individual students who happen to also be of Asian descent.

Affirming cultural identities requires us to challenge the status quo beyond superficial means. School leaders must scrutinize the traditions within their schools and how it disadvantages marginalized students. For students to feel like they matter we need to support them in the dismantling of the stereotypes. For Asian students, it means we disrupt the model minority myth, and it means we treat our students like the unique individuals they are, as opposed to a single, uniform group. Only in reaching out, being an active advocate and including traditionally silenced voices can school leaders create a safe space where students feel like their cultural identities are not only celebrated, but respected and validated.
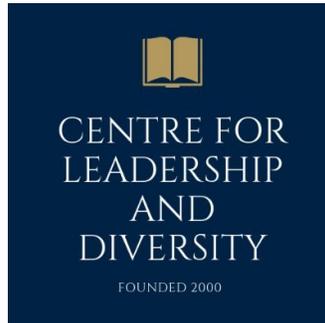Conclusion

I did not have a lot of opportunities to speak out and advocate for myself during my high school years, but I have been able to do so now as a graduate student. While I

am just one voice, one educator and one researcher who wishes to tackle racism head on, the fact that so many people were nodding their heads along during my presentation gave me hope. And really, every single time I present at a conference or seminar to share my work, I realize that the spaces we have carved for ourselves have gotten bigger and will only get bigger with time. I know there is a lot of doom and gloom, but I can see that we are making a lot of progress and I hope this momentum continues to pick up. I hope we can offer the spaces we needed as students to our students moving forward.

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