The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion

The Five Labours of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-racism Work of Racialized Academic Librarians

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Abstract

This study unpacks the experiences of academic librarians who identify as racialized, a concept that refers to actions and processes rather than an identity, to better understand the weight of equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. The themes that emerged from the interviews with the librarians were emotional labour, interpretive labour, identity labour, racialized labour, and aspirational labour. These forms of labour are often oversimplified, unacknowledged, or unquantifiable. For one line on a curriculum vitae, committee, advisory, or working group, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work may not be compensated or financially supported to reflect the intensity and expertise needed for the work. It is essential to unpack the complexity of the work to demonstrate how to better support racialized librarians who engage with this work that contributes to changes in the academic library and profession.

Keywords: academic librarians; anti-racism; equity; labour

Publication Type: research article

Introduction

In the last two decades, scholars have critiqued, studied, and shared experiences with diversity work in academic libraries and institutions in the United States (Brown, 2004), Canada (Guo & Jamal, 2007), and the United Kingdom (Ahmed, 2012; Kimura, 2014). In the last few years, social movements such as Black Lives Matter and Anti-Asian and Pacific Islander racism in the U.S. and Canada have prompted universities and colleges in North America to produce diversity statements and create diversity-focused committees, working groups, task forces, or special advisory positions. Moreover, diversity work has shifted to include concepts such as equity, inclusion, and anti-racism, as well as to consider terms such as racialized and racialization.

Defining "Racialized" and "Racialization"

The authors have chosen to use the terms racialized and racialization because the concept refers to

> the process through which racial meaning is attached to something that is to perceived to be 'unracial' or devoid of racial meaning. Racialization plays a central role in the creation and reproduction of racial meanings, and its inclusion enriches the study of race and ethnicity. (Gonzalez-Sobrino & Goss, 2019, p. 505)

ISSN 2574-3430, https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

One of the major critiques of racialization is that it envelopes all experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities into a monolithic category. The lack of specificity means that Black and Indigenous people's experiences become enveloped with anyone who is non-white. It should be noted that racialized and racialization are often misused terms. Racialized or racialization is a concept that does not intend to essentialize or encourage identity through one general term; instead, the concepts refer to actions and processes rather than identity. Furthermore, the concept works as a tool to understand how "racial meanings [are] attached to actions, places, or organizations, or... to a group of people" (Gonzalez-Sobrino & Goss, 2019, p. 508). In critical race theory (CRT), this concept is used to understand how structural inequality and discrimination manifest in these interactions or environments (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Henry et al. (2017) explain that "racialization practices are employed to categorize how race is attributed to particular social practices and discourses, such as, for example, the racialization of crime" (p. 4).

Thus, the concept of racialized people is used in this paper; however, this is a concept that may not necessarily be the preferred term by participants. The terminology about race and identity has shifted over time. In the past, scholars used the expressions 'visible minorities' and 'people of colour'. The terms BIPOC, racialized, or racialization are more common in recent scholarship. To respect participants' chosen terms for their identity, their preferred terms will be used according to each participant's usage during the interviews. This does not mean the terms are interchangeable, as each has its history, meanings, and criticisms.

This study aims to define and identify the forms of labour involved in racialized academic librarians executing equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work as part of their professional practice. Additionally, the study will share data collected from participants' interviews and the impact of the various forms of labour related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. The results of the study should not essentialize the experiences of all racialized academic librarians; instead, it presents potential considerations and critical reflections on how we approach equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work, as well as ways to ensure that racialized academic librarians are not overworked and to reflect on the racialized and gendered practices of assigned equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work.

Research Focus

Some racialized librarians have volunteered or been assigned equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work in addition to their core professional responsibilities. Though this work is significant in supporting the embedment and engagement of equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism in academic libraries, the added labour can be unduly placed upon racialized librarians, particularly librarians who identify as racialized women (Anantachai & Chesley, 2018). As some studies in librarianship and education have demonstrated, adding extra work to core responsibilities can cause burnout (Brown et al., 2018; Mahatmya et al., 2022; Mohamed & Beagan, 2019) and unevenly distributed workload (Guillaume & Apodaca, 2022; Hollis, 2023; Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011).

This discussion will focus on the undervalued work (also referred to as invisible labour) of diversity, equity, inclusion, or anti-racism work by racialized librarians. There is a layer of complexity in the experience of supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism work in higher education. James (2012) found that racialized faculty responded differently to

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

institutional pressures about equity work (e.g., compliance, pragmatism, or critical participation). James (2012) identified that racialized faculty are often

> perceived as "experts" on "diversity" (read, minority) issues, racialized faculty members—on their own initiative or by assignment—are often expected to undertake additional responsibilities such as speak on minority issues, serve on "diversity committees, mentor and advise racialized students" and/or handle minority-related problems. (p. 136)

Thus, it is essential to explore this issue of projected labour in the context of academic libraries to better understand how this work as a form of labour impacts racialized librarians' practice and redress any issues that may arise in these situations at work.

The purpose of this discussion is to identify, define, and deconstruct the various forms of labour undertaken by racialized academic librarians so that administrators and managers understand (a) the resources needed for diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism work are allocated and (b) how to better acknowledge and support the librarians that are engaged in this work.

Indigenizing and decolonizing work in the academy by librarians identifying as Indigenous peoples should not be conflated with equity, diversity, inclusion, or anti-racism work. This is not to say that Indigenizing and decolonizing work is a separate form of invisible labour; instead, this area warrants a separate study; furthermore, no interview participants identified as Indigenous Peoples.

A Background on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-racism

Before delving into the research study, we note the differences between the terms *equity*, *diversity*, *inclusion*, and *anti-racism*. Some terms' meanings, purposes, and criticisms differ and should not be mistaken as interchangeable, nor should these terms be turned into acronyms for convenience. In this study, each term enacts different forms of work. Often, the terms diversity, equity, and inclusion are used together, and the depth and meaning of each term can become lost as each term means very different things and requires different critical actions. Several analogies in various forms are used to understand the difference between each term, often in the form of a party or meeting.

Equity involves looking at an organization's structural and procedural aspects to identify barriers and find ways to remove those barriers. Finally, inclusion is collective and individual work that everyone must do to ensure that different approaches and voices are given space, legitimized, and or included in critical decision-making processes that impact an organization. Universities and colleges do not consistently utilize the term anti-racism. Though equity is a necessary term that signals active resistance to racism (Kendi, 2019), some organizations claim that the term *neutrality* or more "inviting" terminology is more appropriate for their organizations because they are perceived as less aggressive.

Equity refers to "an ongoing process of assessing needs, correcting historical inequities, and creating conditions for optimal outcomes by members of all social identity groups" (Akbar & Parker, 2021, p. 12). In the context of higher education, it means examining how admissions and hiring standards and processes privilege certain groups and exclude additional groups intentionally or unintentionally. In relation to diversity, equity can contribute to diversifying a

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

student population or hiring and retention by examining structures that privilege certain groups. It is often argued that equity should be emphasized, as diversity and inclusion cannot be achieved without reviewing and removing barriers to higher education as a student or job seeker. One of the challenges with equity is that it is often conflated with equality, which is very different, as equality assumes different groups have the same resources to achieve the same goal. In contrast, equity recognizes privileges and challenges that create barriers for specific groups. Furthermore, equity requires interrogating systemic obstacles, often resulting in little action as the status quo currently benefits dominant groups. It can be argued that inclusion is necessary as it gives power and puts diverse voices in important decision-making spaces and groups that can prompt this review and change in systemic practices and barriers.

Diversity is inviting people from different backgrounds with different perspectives to a party or meeting. At the same time, equity ensures that those very people can get to the party or vote in the meeting. Inclusion is being asked to dance or giving space for different people to speak up and giving weight to their perspectives and opinions. Thus, diversity refers to representation within an organization and requires recruitment and efforts to increase representation from under-represented groups.

The term diversity is often used in higher education regarding the admission of students, recruiting, and hiring of faculty, librarians, and staff with under-represented identities. Akbar and Parker (2021) define diversity or a diverse group as

> involving the representation or composition of various social identity groups in an organization or community. The focus is on social identities that correspond to societal differences in power and privilege and, thus to the marginalization of some groups based on specific attributes—e.g., race, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, spirituality, disability, age, national origin, immigration status, and language. (Other identities may also be considered where there is evidence of disparities in power and privilege.) There is a recognition that people have multiple identities and that social identities are intersectional and have different salience and impact in different contexts. (p. 12)

Ahmed's (2012) work examines the institutionalization of the term and concept of diversity. Moreover, Ahmed (2012) identifies the commercialization of the word diversity in branding universities and colleges to imply or promote diversity at the institution. Tamtik and Guenter (2019) refer to this as *cosmetic diversity*, where diversity is used to perfect an institution's image via diversity that can be seen but does not redress retention and barriers that marginalized groups experience in the institutions. However, the term diversity can be vague and broad, and its lack of specificity may mean an institution can claim diversity even though that diversity is focused on one identity rather than multiple identities or groups that have historically been or currently are being excluded and marginalized. Implementing diversity alone tends to manifest as tokenism and prompt issues around recruitment and representation, as diversity assumes that different groups of people have access to the same resources, pathways, and privileges. For that reason, equity accompanies the term diversity to acknowledge the barriers that may exist that can lead to a low number of equity-deserving applicants to a job or how institutions and professions have low numbers and representation from equity-deserving groups.

Inclusion refers to "[a]n environment that offers affirmation, celebration, and appreciation of different approaches, styles, perspectives, and experiences, thus allowing all individuals to bring

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
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in their whole selves (and all of their identities) and to demonstrate their strengths and capacity" (Akbar & Parker, 2021, p. 12). In higher education, this may ensure that different voices and ways of being/doing are supported and represented by a decision-making body. Inclusion requires diversity and equity to ensure that these voices are represented and respected at every level of the institution. Artiles et al. (2006) examine how inclusion aims to redistribute power to those who have been marginalized and does so in the same system, leading to a lack of transformation to oppressive systems. However, Jayakumar et al. (2018) note that white fragility and avoidance of discomfort have led to a watering down of the problematic issues that equity-deserving groups face in an organization. The term inclusion is a positive and good feeling term that skirts confronting more problematic ideologies such as white supremacy. For that reason, some argue that organizations must be explicit and cite the ideologies they are actively fighting and standing up against, such as anti-racism, anti-homophobia, and anti-patriarchy.

Anti-racism has been used by education scholars (Dei, 1999) or conceptually developed by African-American feminist scholars (hooks, 1994) to identify the hidden and deep curriculum of white supremacy and colonialism in education. Anti-racism focuses on supporting racial equity in society. One of the major criticisms of this concept, when utilized by organizations, is that it is

> a speech act, [that] might accumulate value for the organisation, as a sign of its own commitment…[d]eclarations of commitment can block recognition of racism, whilst the recognition of racism can function as a declaration of commitment, which then retrospectively undoes the recognition of racism. (Ahmed, 2006, para. 11)

In addition, the term anti-racism does not acknowledge the complexity and intersectional racialized identities (e.g., gender, sexual identity, age, and dis/ability). The depth of anti-racism work requires knowledge drawing from CRT, such as intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), to ensure that anti-racism work avoids essentializing racialized groups and interest convergence (Bell, 1980) to be able to identify when anti-racism work is performative and only benefiting the institution rather than equity-deserving groups.

When we unpack the meanings behind diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism, the work is insurmountable if assigned to an individual or small group. The work and forms of labour involved in these areas, particularly in departments and institutions that lack staffing and funding, mean that as institutions, individuals or committees must dedicate professional and personal time and resources to the work. This is often done in academia without compensation or release from other responsibilities and limited resources. Though many institutions have textually committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism, many initiatives and programs related to this work are much needed, and at some institutions, diversity, equity, inclusion, or anti-racism have become embedded in the form of offices and departments.

At times, diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism work can be particularly challenging and require heavy and intensive working periods. For example, some working groups may run a study and generate a self-study report based on chronicled assessments and data analysis. Some committees may be reviewing institutional policies and providing recommendations. In addition, individuals who do this work in departments may take on leading and organizing affinity groups, events such as speaker series, or creating "cultural" displays. Some faculty and librarians involved in the work temporarily, such as working groups, committees, and term appointments, express this work as one line of service in their curriculum vitae or their annual reports as a short

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description. Invisible forms of labour emerge in this work that go unacknowledged, underfunded, and understaffed. Multiple forms of labour often occur when doing diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. This research highlights why library managers and administrators must understand the capacity required for equity, diversity, inclusion, or anti-racism work.

Literature Review

This study focuses on participants from the United States and Canada; thus, the literature review is drawn mainly from research from those countries. Furthermore, this approach to the literature review does not intend to imply that the results of this study apply to librarians and libraries outside of the United States and Canada if no participants identified as academic librarians from different countries. Moreover, this study does not discuss decolonizing and Indigenizing as all interview participants focused on anti-racism or diversity, equity, and inclusion work. It is important not to assume or conflate decolonization and Indigenization though the work may intersect in some contexts.

Invisible Labour

Some scholars explore the topic of diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism work with racialized people or communities through the concept of invisible labour. Feminist scholars initially developed the term invisible labour used to identify the unpaid domestic and reproductive labour of people who identify as women (Poster, et al., 2016). Examples of this can be found in DeVault's (1991/1994) research that identifies society's belief that household work such as cooking, shopping, and caring for the family is considered an act of love rather than a form of labour that requires a specific set of skills and knowledge. Adams (2022) examines how this kind of work is valued by labour law and explains that caring labour

> is not, then, readily commodifiable in the sense that it cannot be easily reduced to quantitative metrics such as time, effort, and output; in other words, when it comes to care, what matters is not how much labour or how quickly it is provided, but how, and with what subjective effects...This is simply compounded by the fact that the motivations for performing caring labour, and doing so in a particular way, assume an extraordinarily complex and multi-faceted form; because the work itself implies selflessness, an ability to prioritize the needs of the care recipient, it is deemed inimical to the sort of 'extrinsic' motivations associated with work, which are linked in the law with ideas of employer control. (p. 397)

The research on invisible labour has expanded and been applied to various fields that discuss labour and work. Budd (2016) explains that the invisible label has become a term to reference work that is "undervalued and overlooked" (p. 28); Budd identifies that invisible work is further made complex by contextual factors (e.g., political or institutional culture). In addition, Budd (2016) argues that the way we view or understand work can "shape our beliefs about who is valued as a worker and what is valued at work" (p. 44).

The literature on invisible labour and diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism work in higher education often identifies themes of workload inequity, lack of support or compensation, and undervaluation of the work. Through a feminist perspective and interviews, Gordon et al. (2022) identify how racialized women face challenges with the "just say no" mantra in higher education. They found that there was an expectation of taking on extra work related to diversity, equity,

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

inclusion, or anti-racism due to their identity. Even when they said "no," the pressure of future equity work was placed on them (Gordon et al., 2022). Dariotis and Yoo (2020) surveyed how Asian American women in academia engage with care work as a form of invisible labour to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. Dariotis and Yoo (2020) found that Asian American women experienced more care work and emotional labour to engage with this work as well as having to support their colleagues and students. However, a challenge faced in this work is that the false narrative of the over-representation of Asian Americans in academia compared to different racialized groups means that this kind of service is further devalued and deemed unimportant by hegemonic groups.

To further deconstruct these forms of invisible labour in the academy, Crapo Kim et al. (2020) conceptually explore and identify three forms of invisible labour: scholarly midwifery, diversity and liberatory labour, and ontological labour. They identify that invisible labour can move beyond the diversity committee and mentorship work and into the day-to-day navigation of dominant white norms in the academy (ontological labour), as well as the running of events, conferences, and other scholarly communication work (scholarly midwifery). Co (2021) examines and identifies disparities in workload in legal academia and uses the terms invisible labour and critical race feminism to explore the impact such labour has on racialized faculty that identify as women. Co (2021) also identifies how this work is undervalued yet over-assessed, often attributed to requirements in academic culture to perform service despite studies demonstrating that women receive 3.4 times more requests for service and mentorship than their male colleagues.

Invisible labour in relation to racialization was discussed by Wingfield and Skeete (2016), and Wingfield and Alston (2014). Wingfield and Alston (2014) explore how organizational hierarchies maintain power imbalances and inequality where racialized workers often reproduce the very oppressive structures of the organization as directed by people in management or senior administration roles who seek to maintain the status quo to their benefit. Furthermore, Wingfield and Alston (2014) identify how invisible and unspoken forms of labour, such as identity work, are expected of racialized workers where their mannerisms and appearance must assimilate and emulate the dominant cultural norm in predominantly white organizations.

In the library and information science (LIS) literature, invisible labour is often applied more broadly to the labour that goes unacknowledged by administrators. Clarke et al. (2022) look at academic library work overall and identify various items, from after-hours duties and information technology troubleshooting to supporting and mentoring student workers just to name a few. Kendrick (2020) explores invisible labour in the public library sector. They identify that the invisible work done by librarians in public library settings is why there is low recognition and support invested in the staff and public libraries. Henninger et al. (2019) explore how librarians in precarious positions also take on invisible forms of labour. Though briefly mentioned, they focus on the impact and workload of librarians in precarious positions. Through a critical lens, Nicholson (2019) identifies the invisibility of labour in academic libraries and the heavy commitment of time put into library instruction work (e.g., creating video tutorials). Neumann (1999) also mentions invisible labour in the context of "behind-the-scenes" work done to keep libraries running.

Kendrick and Damasco's (2019) research touches on invisible labour in discussing the morale among ethnic and racial minority academic librarians. They interviewed librarians who identified as part of a racial or ethnic minority group experiencing low morale. Kendrick and Damasco

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

briefly discuss invisible labour in diversity work. However, they focus on abuse and morale and provide specificity in forms of abuse. Their work identifies various responses to emotional, verbal/written, system, and negligent abuses experienced by racial or ethnic minority librarians in academic libraries.

Method

Recruitment

The participants were recruited through a survey related to their experiences and challenges with organizational barriers. The respondents were contacted through e-mail and provided information about the study and a consent form approved by research ethics boards at the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia. The data was drawn from interviews with 14 participants (five participants were early-career librarians, six were mid-career librarians, and three were late-career librarians)[1]. Most participants (n=10) worked at a college or university in the United States; fewer participants (n=4) worked at a Canadian university. All participants were academic librarians who identified as members of the BIPOC or racialized community. Due to the size and adherence to privacy and confidentiality, identities have been anonymized to protect the participants.

Analysis

Participants were interviewed for one hour using a semi-structured format. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded with NVivo. The interviews were part of a more extensive study on organizational barriers, and the emergence of equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work was unexpected and a strong topic of conversation when we interviewed the selected librarians. The initial questions focused on management, human resources, identity work/workload, professional development, and the tenure process. However, much of the interviews were taken up on the topic of identity work and the workload related to it. Most of the conversations in the recordings were about labour and work related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism. As a result, we chose to analyze the transcripts separately from the survey data from the more extensive study on organizational barriers.

We familiarized ourselves with the transcripts by reading through each one and taking notes on our own to avoid influencing one another. Once we were familiar with the transcripts and with each participant's responses, we began coding through an inductive approach where the codes and themes were informed by the data in the transcripts. We met again to review our coding work through NVivo and written notes to ensure that the codes were clear and defined the same way by each of us. We conducted a second round of coding to ensure consistency. We met again and discussed the codes to construct themes. Once we named themes, we conducted further research to identify concepts and terms that were relevant or related to the themes from the coding process.

Participants could withdraw at any time during and after the interview before the anonymization and aggregation of data. They were also compensated for their time. The interview questions were themed around structural and organizational processes and actors. One of the areas discussed was identity work performed by racialized academic librarians. Participants shared and discussed workload as an issue, but many specified that despite the workload, they were committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, or anti-racism work. Instead, some participants

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

expressed frustration at the need for more acknowledgement and the need for resources. This work was identified as unrelated to retention issues; however, given the time and emphasis on this topic, a subset of data was drawn out and further coded related to types of labour enacted and equity, diversity, inclusion, or anti-racism work. After several readings by the researchers, themes and codes were identified in the transcripts. The researchers analyzed the data through the concept of invisible labour and ways in which cultural taxation is experienced by academic librarians. To further unpack the interview data related to the topic, the data were also analyzed using terms developed by scholars who had examined forms of labour in a higher education setting.

All participants identified two to five forms of labour that emerged when tasked with or engaged in discussions on diversity, equity, inclusion, or anti-racism work. The five forms of labour that emerged in the discussions were:

(a) Emotional Labour: Maintaining and repressing certain emotions (e.g., anger, frustration, etc.) in service positions or work.

(b) Interpretive Labour: Understanding how to navigate the dominant culture and reading social cues and contexts to further advocacy or influence.

(c) Identity Labour: Modifying one's identity to assimilate to the dominant culture and norms to be heard and legitimized.

(d) Racialized Labour: Navigating predominantly white institutions and discrimination based on racial identity.

(e) Aspirational Labour: Persisting and sustaining hope for change and the future or attitudinal or internal struggles as a result of the constant persistence under challenging circumstances.

To better understand how these forms of labour may have an impact on racialized librarians while doing diversity, equity, inclusion, or anti-racism work, we unpack, in detail, the meaning of these forms of labour and the ways racialized librarians experience it (see Table 1).

Table 1. Concepts, Codes, and Examples

Form of Labour	Code(s)	Example(s)
Emotional Labour	• Concealing emotions • Emotional support for others	"I'm willing to take that retaliation, but I'd rather protect [BIPOC] folks who are brand new and speak up for them."
Interpretive Labour	• Navigating rules and procedures • Workplace politics	"The DEI person would kind of work with HR... they ended up having to work with HR because of a lot of HR-related concerns. But that's not her job. And I know that one of her frustrations was that there was no power."

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

Identity Labour	• Race and ethnic identity • EDI/DEI work assignment	"I identify as an Asian person, and I was asked to contribute my perspective on race issues related to non-Asians."
Racialized Labour	• Racism • Microaggression	"There were some interpersonal comments, for example, asking if I would help teach my co-workers Spanish in a leisurely kind of way...it was never part of my job to do that."
Aspirational Labour	• Hope/Positive outlook • Internal struggle	"The biggest challenge of my career has been this idea that I'm passionate about anti-racism work but how do you balance that between the fact that it shouldn't just be on you?"

Themes

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism Work

Most participants identified that they were involved in some form of equity or anti-racism work in libraries:

> • 11 of the 14 participants identified that equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, or anti-racism work was important to them personally and professionally.
>
> • 12 of the 14 participants identified some form of involvement in equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, or anti-racism work (e.g., committees, working groups, advisory positions, mentorship programs, and affinity groups).
>
> • 11 of the 14 participants identified that they were not compensated fairly for the work, whether in pay or weight in service.

By taking on equity, anti-racism projects, or committee work, racialized librarians may face challenges or be interested in engaging in the work early in their careers. One of the participants shared that:

> EDI work is a workload that is sometimes expected from BIPOC. And then not often weighted the same when you go up for promotion or review. I think it's not seen as a skill that has been learned. Someone who is doing incredible work on instruction, that's a great skill that they've managed to cultivate. But somehow, if you're [BIPOC], you're just like born with that inherent knowledge, which is untrue. It takes a lot of self-education, research, and work.

Even when librarians engage in self-education and research to develop knowledge and skills for operationalizing diversity, equity, inclusion, or anti-racism work, different forms of labour emerge that impact workload, adding to core responsibilities. This form of taxation impacts

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
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librarians who may already be overworked, burnt out, vulnerable or in precarious positions where they need to focus on scholarship and developing basic skills related to multiple areas in librarianship. Conversely, Shavers et al. (2015) identified some benefits to BIPOC service in equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. Through interviews with faculty who identify as Black, Shavers et al. discovered that there was a difference between general service and race-related service. Shavers et al. explain that race-related service benefited participants because the work spoke to Black faculty's desires to give back, actualize political benefits to the racial community, and connect faculty members with an inclusive community to combat isolation.

Emotional Labour

Emotional labour was initially a term used to describe the work of airline employees, specifically flight attendants, who expressed pleasant smiles and friendly behaviours while suppressing emotions such as annoyance, anger, or sadness. Hochschild (1983/2012) explains that when "emotional labour is put into the public marketplace, it behaves like a commodity: the demand for it waxes and wanes depending upon the competition within the industry" (p. 24). Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) expanded on this concept to identify emotional labour between employees and employers.

In the interviews conducted during this study, the participants identified various experiences of emotional labour where they had to suppress feelings or express positive feelings about equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work with individuals or in groups. One participant described how white fragility can prompt them to shift into a supportive role rather than being supported as a racialized person dealing with racism. They shared about an incident related to racism and a co-worker:

> My boss is like really freaking out about her feelings. I have to help my boss process all of these, complex feelings about being a white person who let her department run not in a very functional way...and that's been much more frustrating. It's emotionally exhausting. It's also frustrating from a workload perspective because it is labour, it's my time that's being taken for doing this instead of doing something else.

Despite their passion for the work, several of the participants mentioned some form of burnout related to the constant emotional labour needed to educate and advocate for equity-deserving groups.

Interpretive Labour

Higher education institutions are notoriously built on hegemonic practices steeped in traditional institutional practices. Some of these practices are unspoken, socialized, and instilled in select groups or drawn on texts developed for and by dominant groups (e.g., Robert's Rules of Order). Graeber (2012) explores the impact of navigating bureaucratic structures and processes. Using the example of 1950s American comedies, Graeber (2012) states that

> the constant efforts women end up having to expend in managing, maintaining, and adjusting the egos of oblivious and self-important men, involve a continual work of imaginative identification, or what I've called "interpretative labour." This carries over on every level. Women are always expected to imagine what things look like from a male point of view. Men are rarely expected to reciprocate. (p. 117)

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

Interpretive labour about equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work in predominantly white institutions means that racialized librarians are doing the work within the traditional rules and bounds in the university or college. Graeber (2012) theorizes that there are two elements to consider: (1) the process of imaginative identification as a form of knowledge and (2) sympathetic identification.

The process of imaginative identification as a form of knowledge is the work expected of those who have been excluded or marginalized to understand issues and "social relations in question" (Graeber, 2012, p. 118). Participants identified managers would assign or task them with equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work in libraries or the university and college despite the lack of experience or knowledge of complex CRT concepts. Many shared having to spend time learning and understanding the concepts, particularly through self-education and workshops. CRT concepts are complex, and the literature is expansive and includes branches of CRT (e.g., AsianCrit, LatCrit, etc.).

Sympathetic identification is described as "those on the bottom of a social ladder spend a great deal of time imagining the perspectives of, and genuinely caring about, those on the top; it almost never happens the other way around" (Graeber, 2012, p. 119). Most participants in our study shared experiences of expectations that racialized people were going to sit on equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism committees or teach and educate colleagues. One participant shared the following:

> I noticed I was the only person taking on any of the months [related to diversity and ethnic groups]. Nobody would do them. The feedback I heard from colleagues who were all white was that they felt uncomfortable, or they weren't "fun displays to do."

Interpretive labour requires time and resources like many other forms of labour. One needs to take workshops and webinars, read through CRT or social justice-related literature, gain allies, and navigate bureaucratic structures to gain funding or start projects and initiatives.

Identity Labour

Hirshfield and Joseph (2012) identify the term *identity taxation* in reference to the ways racialized women are expected to take on mentoring and advocacy work. They identify the stereotype of maternal and nurturing as a challenge in the academic community, as this means they are often expected to advocate for all equity-deserving groups even though they may not identify with all groups. Hirshfield and Joseph (2012) state that "women of colour in our sample said that they sometimes feel their utility in their department boils down to their gender and race, so much so that their identity as a faculty member is almost negligible" (p. 220).

Some of the participants in our study who identify as racialized women shared instances of having to do displays, events, or workshops for equity-deserving groups. One participant shared the following experience: "I identify as an Asian woman...I was asked to contribute my perspective about Indigenous learners, but much of what I brought to the previous role was based on my own experiences as a racialized learner."

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

Another participant who identifies as a racialized woman shared an experience where a manager, without prompting, told her,

> "You know what, your superpower is diversity." And I replied: "Excuse me? Diversity should be done by everyone, not just one person." She responded with: "Oh...well...you're always talking about it, how we need it. It was meant as a compliment."

It is important to emphasize that all participants agreed that this work was necessary. However, the challenge is that this work tends to fall on racialized people, assuming that identity equates to willingness and capacity to take on equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. This can be a heavy workload unfairly distributed and absolves non-racialized people from doing the important work to engage with important topics related to equity, diversity, inclusion, or anti-racism.

Racialized Labour

Reidinger (2022) explores the invisible labour that people from the Queer community experience and identifies the invisible labour that comes in the form of emotional labour, emotional support, and extracurricular support (e.g., Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirited student groups). Moreover, Reidinger (2022) identifies the discrimination and microaggressions the Queer community experiences in academia and the labour needed to navigate and respond to these interactions as another form of invisible labour. Dhamoon (2020) also identifies racism as a form of workload that BIPOC faculty experience in Canadian universities. Grier-Reed et al. (2020) very pointedly identify racialized labour as

> the effort expended to navigate hostile environments steeped in white racial frame...the extra effort or racialized labour required for People of Color can lead to racial battle fatigue (RBF) or anxiety, frustration, and anger along with helplessness, hopelessness, and depression. (p. 96)

Every participant in our study shared an experience with some form of racism, whether discrimination or microaggressions. Participants shared several incidents where they experienced microaggressions related to their clothing and identity, comments that were hurtful stereotypes, hateful comments towards a specific ethnic group, or credit stealing. One participant shared an experience where a racist comment was made about African Americans:

> I was very taken aback and upon hearing the comment, I suggested that my colleague who heard the comment should go to the supervisor. The supervisor did what they have done in the past, and never submitted anything to HR [human resources]. Finally, they sent it to HR but that person ended up leaving the organization.

These experiences can lead to retention issues and make doing equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work more challenging. It can feel impossible as if one is trying to move mountains. It can also feel isolating and confusing for those trying to navigate and understand who they can trust and who will act to redress these situations. One participant shared the following:

> I experienced a lot of racist comments as a frontline person...I couldn't quite understand where in all the different committees and groups where we're in, where I should bring it up. And nobody tells you...you're just sort of going in it with no direction.

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

Racism is mentally, emotionally, and physically taxing. For some institutions and librarians in precarious positions, there is no access to paid therapies that help to restore and heal racialized librarians who experience harm.

Aspirational Labour

Duncan-Andrade (2009) identifies that critical hope is significant for urban educators who support students who may have experienced challenges and inequity throughout their lives. Duncan-Andrade (2009) explains that,

> critical hope is audacious in two ways. First, it boldly stands in solidarity with urban communities, sharing the burden of their undeserved suffering as a manifestation of a humanizing hope in our collective capacity for healing. Second, critical hope audaciously defies the dominant ideology of defence, entitlement, and preservation of privileged bodies at the expense of the policing, disposal, and dispossession of marginalized "others." (p. 190)

This concept of critical hope contextualized in higher education and with racialized librarians means that hope through shared experiences to heal from the challenges and experiences is essential in avoiding despair and pessimism with equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work when one encounters institutional pushback or challenges. In addition, Yosso (2005) identifies aspiration as an important part of the success of Latinx students in higher education. Yosso (2005) explains that "aspirational capital is the ability to hold onto hope in the face of structured inequality and often without the means to make such dreams a reality" (p. 77).

The labour of hope should be considered, as it draws on the psychosocial abilities (Brackney & Westman, 1992; Duggleby & Williams, 2010) of those engaged with the work. Aspiration or hope is an important form of labour that motivates, inspires, and maintains an emotional and mental commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, or anti-racism work. One participant shared their experience with advocating for more than diversity at their institution by engaging with inclusion and equity:

> But we shouldn't be just striving for the minimum, we should be actually setting the example or trying to be part of what all libraries are trying to strive for with this work, which is to increase inclusion, equity, and diversity within libraries.

Many of the participants expressed some form of aspiration by reaffirming the work's importance. Though many expressed some form of burnout, they still emphasized that the work needed to be done. There was often an expression of internal struggle before reaffirmation that the work was necessary.

Making Invisible Labour Visible and Valued

Though these forms of labour emerge in various contexts and are not just unique to equity, diversity, inclusion, or anti-racism work, if not addressed, they may inflict harm in the form of burnout and moral injury. Participants provided helpful advice on addressing the concerns raised or identified practices that needed to change.

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

Hiring an EDI Specialist in a Permanent Position

If equity, diversity, inclusion, or anti-racism work is a priority for universities and colleges, it is essential to treat it as such. This type of work should be treated as something other than an afterthought and as something more than what someone can do on the side of their desk. It is critical to advocate for funds for an equity work-related position. If base funding is available, creating permanent positions that help support the work is essential. Moreover, those who are hired should have education and experience in social justice work. This means allowing non-librarians to take on the role if needed. One participant shared:

> People say they like my perspective, they want to hear my perspective on a lot of other things. And so, I'm being pulled in a lot of ways, and I had to recently say no a lot because I'm already overwhelmed and I am on the verge...of burnout because I've been on this committee, that committee, and all the committees because people are asking me to be on them.

Another participant shared that scope creep can also impact workload and the informal ways this work is assigned to a racialized person:

> I think that the more frustrating thing has been the informal contexts I feel like scope creep happens. They tried to imply my work [related to technical areas of LIS] was related to it [DEIA] but in a way that's coded. They would say, "Oh, you're really good with people and we historically struggle with DEIA work. So this would be a good opportunity for you to bring your perspective."

It should not be assumed that all racialized librarians want to, or have the capacity to take on equity, diversity, inclusion, and/or anti-racism work. It is important that racialized librarians are given the power to choose whether they want to take on equity, diversity, and inclusion work. Though an institution may hire a specialist or librarian in a permanent position, it is still important to make space and invite racialized librarians and staff to contribute their perspectives and avoid essentializing different groups. Gorski and Erakat (2019) examine activist burnout and focus on racialized scholars. By interviewing racialized activist scholars, Gorski and Erakat (2019) found that white scholar activists impacted and sped up their burnout by

> embracing unevolved or racist views, undermining or invalidating the work or racial justice activists of colour, showing a lack of willingness to step up and take action when needed, exhibiting white fragility in activist spaces, and taking credit for the work and ideas of activists of colour. (p. 793)

Given these vulnerabilities when engaging with the work, it is imperative to invest in permanent positions with the time, knowledge, and expertise to support this work and not have it fall solely on those whose expertise lies in other areas. In addition, these positions should be protected from the influence of management and/or senior administration so that a person in an EDI position can address institutional and management practices without the threat of losing their job.

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

Compensating, Weighting, and Approving Work Releases

The administration is often provided with higher salaries or stipends to reflect the level of responsibilities that come with the position. In turn, if equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work must be done by librarians and staff in-house, compensation should be offered or discussed with those who take on the role. However, in academia, we argue that this goes towards service. As discussed, racialized librarians experience several forms of labour that make the work more challenging. What is more, it is not simply service work, it requires a level of expertise and labour that quickly leads to burnout. Participants shared that they were aware that equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work was a heavy workload that was not often reflected in pay or reviews. Moreover, the work can emerge in informal ways. One participant shared:

> Right now, I sit on our library's EDI committee. I think as far as EDI work, I think I do a lot of it for the institution. But I do think that the EDI work is a workload that is sometimes expected from BIPOC. And then not often weighted the same when you go up for promotion or review.

Many studies have demonstrated how racialized faculty often face barriers during the tenure and promotion process (Croom, 2017; Arnold et al., 2016; Urrieta et al., 2015; Damasco & Hodges, 2012; Henry & Tator, 2012; Hao, 2003; Curry, 1994; Braddock, 1978). To better compensate and weigh this form of activity, administrators need to discuss methods of compensation with human resources and budget for it. Moreover, this work cannot simply be done by one person or a few people without funded resources such as an EDI budget that includes honorariums, stipends, or fees for trainers/online modules to name a few.

Re-imagining Equity and Anti-racism Training and Education

Assumptions that a racialized person can immediately comprehend CRT and other terminology mean that they will need more tools or language to navigate these complex topics. Expertise must be built, thus if this work is done in-house, investment in training and education must be provided to ensure that librarians are well-equipped with conceptual tools and knowledgeable in navigating these topics and issues.

One participant shared an experience where they were assigned equity, diversity, and inclusion work outside their core responsibilities: "Outreach is not even on my job description. I did all the [EDI] outreach events I attended and put together our activities for an event. I did all those things." In addition, this work and education should not fall on equity-deserving groups; instead, this is training and education that all members of the institution should seek out. The same participant shared the following: "At my current position, all of my supervisors that have been white...they always make very inappropriate comments. And microaggressions, towards me for being racialized, for being non-white, and for speaking [a non-English language], all kinds of things." Though some argue that training and workshops can be surface-level engagement (Ahmed, 2006; Dei, 1996; Kimura, 2014), they are one of many forms of engagement that should be done and offered. CRT and equity or anti-racism frameworks are not simply learned by reading a few articles or attending one workshop. Instead, extensive study and self-work are involved in gaining insights and expertise. Dei (2001), a renowned Canadian anti-racist educator, emphasizes that the way we educate is an integral part of increasing engagement and empowerment that inspires action.

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
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Funding Support Groups for Racialized Librarians Engaged in the Work

Yosso (2015) identifies that families or communities play an essential role in the academic success of Latinx students. These groups can be beneficial in allowing those involved in the work from equity-deserving groups to share and unpack experiences. One participant shared the following:

> With respect to the emotional, mental, and kind of physical burden that this type of work takes on BIPOC individuals, BIPOC groups can be a real safe space. [This] BIPOC group that I'm a part of has been a real safe space...it's a space where we can run a meeting that is not tied to bureaucratic norms of Robert's Rules. [The rules] are tied to the experiences and relationships that we have within this group.

Administrators and institutions, in consultation with other groups, should offer some space, time, and funds to demonstrate that racialized groups or affinity groups are welcome in the library. These funds can allow for refreshments or training and workshops for equity-deserving groups. In addition, space should be given to those involved in the group in an attempt to be conscious that the presence of supervisors or managers may create an overly formal space. Pour-Khorshid (2018) examines how a racial affinity group helped members develop knowledge and practices and heal from toxic experiences.

Creating Community and Actions for Leadership Accountability

Several participants in our study identified a manager or supervisor as having a role in their challenges with equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. One participant shared about an incident where they had to deal with racist comments while working on a banned book inquiry, which can be taxing to navigate if one is not trained as an equity practitioner. The participant shared the following: "My boss said they didn't understand why the book was bad. They asked, 'Was the boy a [derogatory term]? Was he a drug dealer?' And then she looks at me...She kept asking what I thought about it."

These situations should not arise as a part of the collective institutional effort to redress racism and inequities in the institution. If they do, institutions need to hold leaders and managers accountable. Accountability should not fall solely on workers; managers should also demonstrate ways in which they engage in equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. This kind of accountability can be expressed through a university librarian or dean of libraries report that lists workshops attended, committees chaired, and so on that is openly shared with librarians and library staff.

Conclusion

The discussions from the interviews are in no way meant to essentialize or imply that all racialized librarians are experiencing these labours. However, the study intends to point to issues that have arisen for racialized librarians, managers, and institutions to pay attention to and have conversations with those engaged in equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work. Simply put, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work is not just another committee or working group. This work is intended to make system-to-organizational level changes and put redress into action. In reference to diversity practitioners in institutions, Ahmed (2012) writes that "diversity workers encounter obstacles that are often not visible to other staff with whom they

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
DOI: 10.33137/ijidi.v7i3/4.41002

work...diversity work can take the form of repeated encounters with what does not, and seemingly will not, move" (p. 51). Through interviews, participants shared forms of labour that were not recognized or reflected in compensation or academic reviews. This includes emotional, identity, interpretive, racialized, and aspirational labour. To address this, some actions that administrators can take include investing in positions that focus on equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work; work releases, compensation, or heavier weighing for this kind of service for racialized librarians; committing to continual training and education for everyone in the institution; funding support groups for racialized librarians; and creating opportunities for leaders and managers to communicate and act on equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism commitments.

However, it is vital to note that all these changes to value equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism work also require follow-through action from administrators and institutions. The labours of racialized librarians must lead to broader organizational changes that can be seen through policies, procedures, and implementation of recommendations. Otherwise, the work is performative and is perceived to not be as valuable or worthy of action. The impact of changes to institutional practices and culture through equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism work on people's lives and experiences means that this work deserves recognition beyond the usual committee or working group one-liner.

Positionality Statements

Silvia Vong identifies ethnically as a Chinese person and identifies as a woman and settler living in the land now called Canada. Her current research area focuses on equity and anti-racism work in higher education in Canada. Silvia's research approach typically uses Bourdieu to examine structural issues in higher education institutions while drawing on CRT to identify where whiteness, colonialism, and racism are embedded in these structures.

Allan Cho identifies ethnically as a Chinese person and identifies as a cisgender male and settler living in the land now called Canada. His current research focuses on anti-racism and trauma-informed librarianship.

Elaina Norlin identifies ethnically as an African American person and identifies as a cisgender female living in the land now called the United States of America. Her current research interests focuses on healing toxic and dysfunctional workspaces and leadership development.

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to the participants who provided valuable insights and thoughts on this topic. We did not approach this work lightly, and we are grateful for the time and personal experiences that were shared in the interviews.

Endnotes

[1] Librarians with five or fewer years of experience were coded as early-career. Librarians with six to ten years of experience were coded as mid-career. Librarians with ten or more years of experience were coded as late-career.

ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
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ISSN 2574-3430, jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/index
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