

Knowledge and Power in the Academy: Faculty and Staff Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Training in Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions

by

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## Abstract

Most Canadian post-secondary institutions have publicly identified reconciliation and other equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) priorities in their goal statements and strategic plans. However, it is not clear how (or if) they are ensuring the institutional capacity exists to make the type of transformative changes these goals imply. It is argued here that a critical, yet overlooked component of this capacity building is meaningful EDI training for faculty and staff. The literature argues that those in positions of power and privilege have been culturally conditioned to *not see* violence and oppression in our institutions. If this is so, it becomes vital that EDI training initiatives provide an opportunity to critically analyze the impact of personal power and power embedded in institutional structures. However, the review also revealed the most common type of EDI training offered is superficial and does not support the development of a more critical lens through which to interrogate power. As the evidence to support these concerns has been largely anecdotal, this study set out to gather a more comprehensive, descriptive data set that provides a snapshot of faculty and staff EDI training initiatives across Canadian post-secondary institutions. This study takes a pragmatic approach to data gathering and uses a mixed methods approach to support the investigation of complex systems and processes. Based on issues raised in the literature review, a national survey was designed to support the gathering of large amounts of both quantitative and qualitative (descriptive) data from those doing “EDI work”. A focus group was then held that allowed for a deeper examination of key issues raised in the survey. Findings echoed concerns that most EDI training for faculty and staff is superficial and does not get at deeper issues related to power and equity. The analysis also revealed that differing perceptions of safety may be a critical factor impacting the perceived need for EDI training and the type of training typically offered. Galtung’s Violence Triangle model frames the research as it broadens the concept of “violence” and helps elucidate power imbalances and the mechanisms that both create and maintain them.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Why this Research Matters: My Story

I am a White, now middle-class, female who grew up in the 1960's and 1970's. I am also a racist, though I have only recently come to understand what that means. I come from a large Irish Catholic family, and we did not have much money growing up. I spent most of my younger years in the close, homogenous, self-contained environment of Canadian Armed Forces bases where your identity choices were Catholic or Protestant. Difference and privilege for me was understood in terms of rank, not race. I only knew of racism growing up from the occasional television coverage of the civil rights movement and the book, *Black Like Me* (Griffin, 1961) we read in High School. Because of my place of privilege, I was ignorant and did not understand racism—I could not see it and thought it was something that happened elsewhere.

I had my first *conscious* experience of racism when I left home and moved to a small prairie city. I was shocked and saddened as most people I was exposed to were openly racist toward Indigenous people. I think my shock was due to having had no conscious experience of this type of blatant racism. I was told that Indigenous people were dangerous, lazy, drunks, and didn't want to work. When I questioned this characterization of a whole group of people, I was told that the people thought this because many Indigenous people were on Social Assistance, many were engaged with the child welfare system, and many were caught up in the criminal justice system. In some ways, my insular experience growing up on a Military base shielded me from automatically buying in to this narrative. Instead of automatically confirming the stereotype for me, I wondered why that was, and where the Indigenous people were who did not fit this description.

The only information I was getting about Indigenous people was from the media and people I knew in the community. On the rare occasion that people knew anything about Indigenous people being forced onto reservations and into residential schools, the consensus was twofold: First, that whatever happened, happened a long time ago so they (the Indigenous people) just need to “get over it”. Second, that they (whoever the White speaker was) had no personal responsibility as they weren't the ones who did it. I continued to

struggle to understand and now realize the naivety of my thought processes around issues of racism, social and economic marginalization, oppression, and poverty at that time.

In my undergraduate degree, I studied religion and psychology. The discussions and explorations exposed me to many different epistemologies, worldviews, values, thoughts on religious pluralism, human motivation, counselling strategies, learning and perception. However, at no time during my undergraduate degree did we formally talk about “othering”, racism, systemic violence, oppression, or the impact of residential schools or colonialism.

After graduation, I worked for seven years at a family resource center as a family-life education facilitator and counsellor. Most of the “clients” we worked with were Indigenous, those living in and from generational poverty, and women. Most were where they were because of individual and structural racism, though I would not have known of those concepts at the time. At no time during my seven years did we (all White staff) talk about the impact of poverty, residential schools, or inter-generational trauma. My experiences with the people we served did not support the negative stereotypes I had been exposed to and so I continued to question the common narrative. What I did know was that I loved working in adult education, and I wanted to learn more about it. Since I did not have an education background, I was required to take an adult education certificate program to enter a Masters of Education program. It was in this program that I learned about the social justice foundations of adult education and the thoughts of theorists like Paulo Freire. For the first time, I was intentionally exposed to the critical inquiry of social justice issues, community engagement, education, power, and equity.

The following year I began the Master of Education degree, with a counselling major. The class sizes were small and about fifty percent of my classmates were Indigenous women. It was in these classes that I heard stories from both first and second-generation survivors of residential schools and the sixties scoop. It was here that I learned why many Indigenous people were on Social Assistance, were engaged with the child welfare system, and were caught up in the criminal justice system. I learned that Indigenous people could not just “get over it” as they were struggling with the effects of inter-generational trauma. Though I learned a lot, at this point I still thought that people were struggling with the effects of things that happened in the *past*.

For the next 18 years, I worked in adult education, mostly in post-secondary institutions in faculty development, learner assessment, and curriculum and program development and evaluation. Throughout my work I advocated for understanding and critical thought about how we work with Indigenous and other marginalized learners but was often told, “that’s not the way we do things” or “they don’t need special treatment, they need to figure out how to be successful in our system, because that’s the way the world is”. Those responses never felt right, and I did not know how to respond to them. I had no idea how much more I had to learn.

In the later part of that 18 years, I experienced firsthand what it felt like to be unsafe and judged negatively just for being who I am (or who others thought I was). At 39 years old I overcame my own internalized homophobia and came out as a queer. While freeing and empowering in many ways, it also was not safe. I experienced vehicles trying to run me down for holding my partner’s hand on a public street, have been refused service once they knew I was queer, and most painfully, the disappointment and lack of respect from those close to me.

In the five years before I started my PhD studies (2011-2016), more and more post-secondary institutions began to acknowledge that harms had been done and that racism (and other isms) were present in our institutions. Institutions began to include cultural competency and reconciliation as part of their strategic plans and goals and these statements became prominent in their marketing material. Many equity initiatives were begun. I worked on several projects identifying gaps in learner and employee knowledge around issues related to cultural competency. Once identified however, there were few or no resources put in place to support either learner or faculty and staff<sup>1</sup> development related to issues of equity. In my experience Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)<sup>2</sup> programs and initiatives were

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<sup>1</sup> Some people I have spoken with feel that separating “faculty” and ‘staff’ marginalizes regular staff members as there is a perceived hierarchy with faculty members being given more importance in the academy. I do not disagree. However, I have left the terms as they are as that was the language used in the survey and focus group.

<sup>2</sup> The term “equity, diversity and inclusion training” (EDI) is being used here as that is the language now being used both in practice and in the literature. In this research the term is meant to represent *all* the ways we provide education/training to our faculty and staff to ensure that the goals related to equity, diversity, and inclusion are met. This includes reconciliation and ant-racism efforts. It is understood that the term itself is problematic and may not resonate with all readers.

largely underfunded, never made it to implementation stage, or were cancelled outright. This has also been the experience of many colleagues working on equity issues in post-secondary. What is important to an institution is evidenced by what they support financially, and the lack of support and concern made the institutional statements about the need for equity and reconciliation feel hollow to me. There was a lot of talk about what should or could be done but not a lot of getting anything done.

I was confused, frustrated, and saddened by this seeming conflict between what people professed to be important and what got done. I wanted to understand *why* it was that way. I thought I could gain this understanding if I learned more about issues related to cultural competency, equitable schools, and how to move beyond competing priorities and stagnation and so applied for and was accepted into the PhD program in Peace and Conflict Studies. My cognate area is post-secondary education.

In my PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies, I was *finally* exposed to concepts about systemic structural violence against the “other”. I learned that because of my White privilege I was often blind to oppression, assimilation, and trauma. It was the first time I really understood and leveraged a critical theorist perspective to look at post-secondary education and the work I was doing through the lens of power. It was in my PhD studies that I realized that violence against the “other” (other than White, male, and straight) is happening *every day* in our post-secondary institutions across Canada. It is happening today; it is happening *now*. Most importantly, I realized that *I am part of it, and my ignorance contributes to it*. It was a painful awakening since I considered myself an educated person and thought I was truly embracing diversity and understood social justice. For me, the moment of understanding structural violence was like having a Magic Eye<sup>3</sup> picture that finally came into focus after staring at it for 20 years. I felt equal measures of elation, mortification, and humility. And lest this story sound like I now know everything, I assure you I do not. I continue to learn and make mistakes, some big, some small. My experience only made me *really* understand how much more I must learn.

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<sup>3</sup> An autostereogram (often referred to as a “Magic Eye” picture) is a two-dimensional image that has a hidden three-dimensional image that requires you to look at the picture in a very particular way before you can see the embedded image.

I am telling my story because I believe this is also the story of many Canadians—even today. The stories from the participants in this study also support this view. We have been given a self-perpetuating narrative about Canada that was written by those who have and now hold power that Canada is a safe place where everyone has the same life chances. Because we have not been told the whole story, and because the voices of those who have a different version of the story have been silenced, many Canadians do not see the imbalance of power, their place of privilege, or the violence perpetuated in these relationships.

Many Canadians still believe everyone is equal and has equal life chances in this country and in our post-secondary institutions. They *do not see* or understand the personal and systemic violence present in our society and in our public institutions that harm and stack the deck against those who are marginalized. Though the Truth and Reconciliation report, the Murdered and Missing Women and Girl’s report, the finding of hundreds of unmarked graves at former residential schools, and the Black Lives Matter movement has raised awareness of equity issues, most Canadians (and that includes post-secondary faculty and staff) remain largely unaware of the continued oppression and violence in our society and in our post-secondary institutions.

## 1.2 The Elephant in the Academy: Ignorance of Power, Oppression and Violence

The expression “the elephant in the room” is a metaphor for an obvious problem or difficult situation that people do not want to talk about. It is described as,

an important or enormous topic, question, or controversial issue that is obvious or that everyone knows about but no one mentions or wants to discuss because it makes at least some of them uncomfortable and is personally, socially, or politically embarrassing, controversial, inflammatory, or dangerous. It is based on the idea/thought that something as conspicuous as an elephant can appear to be overlooked in codified social interactions and that the sociology/psychology of repression also operates on the macro scale. (Wikipedia, 2022)

This definition seems an apt description of the issue of EDI training for faculty and staff in Canadian post-secondary institutions. I was often bewildered by peoples’ reaction

when I have raised concerns that faculty and staff members may not really understand equity issues and that this lack of capacity may be a contributing factor to continued violence. Invariably, colleagues and administrators would nod their head in the affirmative and say that it is important and then the conversation would slide away to something else. It is as if there is a permanent blind spot or predilection to steer away from looking at ourselves— to clearly name our contributions to violence.

It is critically important to realize that the elephant is not and has not been invisible to those who are marginalized in our institutions. Marginalized peoples are well aware of the impacts of power, privilege, and oppression and do not see Canada nor Canadian post-secondary institutions as safe spaces. As will be discussed further in Chapter 7, even using the terms “safe spaces” in this research was problematic as there was an assumption made by the researcher that that is the way Canada and Canadian post-secondary institutions are seen by most. As importantly, marginalized peoples have shouldered the burden of trying to get those who are privileged and in power to see that they are not safe space for all.

Clearly, there are faculty and staff that have a deep understanding of power imbalances, oppression, and violence, but it is likely that many do not. Like my own experience, many, maybe even most, would not have had an opportunity to gain more than a cursory understanding of their privilege, their power, and how the status quo facilitates continued oppression in our institutions. If EDI training is offered at all it is most often voluntary, superficial, and utilitarian. It is seldom about imbalanced power relations and relationship building. It is important to acknowledge that the acquisition of an advanced degree or professional certification seldom provides a deep enough understanding of equity issues that would prepare people to be part of institutional change. Let me be clear that this discourse is not about blame or judgement but rather is intended to point to a lack of opportunity to learn about equity issues in a meaningful way.

This lack of a deeper understanding of equity issues extends throughout the academy and is inextricably linked to the myth of safety in Canadian post-secondary institutions. As will be discussed more fully in the next chapter, many Canadian faculty and staff would characterize our post-secondary institutions as safe and, for the most part, equitable spaces.

This narrative is comforting as it doesn't threaten our identity, we don't have to *do* anything, *change* anything, *give up* anything, or even *think* about anything. The problem is this is not everyone's "truth". Those who are marginalized may not regard our institutions as places of safety at all, but rather as sites of violence and oppression (Berry, 2013, Henry and Tator, 2009, Henry, Dua, James, Kobayashi, Li, Ramos and Smith, 2017, Rodríguez, 2018).

### 1.3 Why this Research?

As I was learning about power, privilege, and oppression, several pieces fell into place for me that I thought could help me understand the seemingly slow progress on equity goals in the institutions in which I worked. Specifically, it occurred to me that if we expected faculty and staff to change their behaviour and the institution to change its behaviour to become more equitable, they needed to first be able to *see* the violence being perpetrated—if they couldn't, what would motivate them to change? Though Canadian post-secondary institutions have publicly identified a desire to create and sustain climates in which *all* post-secondary community members feel welcomed, supported, included, valued, and safe (Universities Canada, 2019), it is not clear how (or if) they are ensuring that the institutional capacity exists to make the type of transformative changes these goals imply.

I began to research EDI training in general, and in post-secondary institutions in particular. The research I came across indicated that many current approaches to training are largely ineffective and possibly even harmful. Also, training is most often seen as "nice to have" and not "need to have". Though there is an abundance of literature about EDI (or "diversity") training in general, I found little related to training for post-secondary faculty and staff. I could find no systematic research that gathered data about what training is happening in our institutions across Canada, what the people doing the training (or were responsible for the training) thought about its effectiveness, whether short- and long-term impact is being defined or measured in any way, and whether there were other issues related to EDI training for faculty and staff that were not evident in the general literature. Without this data, it is difficult to have meaningful discussions about EDI training or make evidence-based decisions regarding our approach to building faculty and staff capacity. Though speaking generally about race relations in Canada, the following quotation from the

Canadian Race Relations Foundation (2021) succinctly describes the disparate perceptions about EDI training for faculty and staff.

There is the desire or tendency to see the state of race relations in Canada today as either good or bad, but the reality is that there is no single story. Some see a positive story of dramatic improvements from previous generations, the expanding inclusion of Canadians from different races in all walks of life, employment equity policies, and the establishment of anti-racism offices in governments. Others see a negative story of persistent systemic racism that continues to oppress the lives and opportunities of racialized individuals and communities. Both realities exist, and perspectives are based on personal experience, anecdote, media reporting and political agendas. There is no easy way to reconcile these perspectives, but what can help is credible, empirically-based evidence about the current situation, and how progress is or is not being made over time. (p. 1)

This research set out to begin gathering data about EDI training for faculty and staff in Canadian institutions. Specifically, the questions this research set out to answer were, “How are Canadian post-secondary institutions supporting faculty and staff training related to diversity?”, “What is the perceived impact of current initiatives?” and “How is it measured?”. It is hoped that this work can provide a common understanding of the current state of EDI training for faculty and staff, draw attention to common issues related to the training, gather data about current processes for measuring impacts, and realize that it is necessary to first learn about power before meaningful change will happen.

#### 1.4 Overview of Dissertation Chapters

Chapter 2, *The Myth of Safety in Canadian Post-secondary Institutions* examines literature that highlights the problematic myth of safety and equity in Canadian post-secondary institutions. It also examines the role of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training for faculty and staff in the maintenance of these myths.

Chapter 3, *Power, Violence, and Post-secondary Education* examines power and how current power and knowledge relationships in our institutions directly impact whether people recognize EDI issues at all, how people perceive EDI issues, how the need for training is perceived, the type of training offered, and whether training initiatives are adequately resourced. The chapter uses Johann Galtung's theory of the "*Violence Triangle*" to expand common understandings of violence and facilitates the recognition of direct, cultural, and structural violence in our institutions ascribable to imbalanced power relationships.

Chapter 4, *Researching EDI Training: Methodological Issues* looks at the types, impacts, and measurement of EDI training, definitional and validity issues related to the study of EDI training, and training effectiveness. This examination also highlights the role of power in EDI training by contrasting a functional approach versus a social justice approach. Together, an examination of these theoretical areas reveals the connection between power relationships, violence, and EDI training in our institutions.

Chapter 5, *Methods*, identifies the research questions and their significance. It also discusses the rationale for the research methods used, including the methodical approach and questions asked. Finally, the chapter provides the rationale and a description of the data gathering tools including a national survey and a focus group.

Chapter 6, *EDI Training for Faculty and Staff* and Chapter 7, *Assessing and Implementing EDI Training for Faculty* explore the findings from the national survey and the focus group. The findings from the data and a discussion of those findings are woven together throughout these two chapters. The findings are organized into five major categories that capture the research questions thematically. These include EDI professionals and their roles, definitions and perceptions of EDI training, EDI training types and barriers, and finally, evaluating EDI training.

Chapter 8, *Conclusion*, provides a synopsis of the findings of the research and discusses possible reasons for the findings. Finally, several suggestions are offered about how EDI training could be reframed that may help build the capacity needed to support personal and institutional change related to equity in Canadian post-secondary institutions.

## Chapter 2: The Myth of Safety in Canadian Post-secondary Institutions

Since 2019, the landscape of race relations has changed significantly. In May 2020, the tragic death of George Floyd at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer launched an unprecedented movement of anger, political advocacy, and renewed attention to racism and racial violence across the USA and around the world. In Canada, the fight for justice and respect for Indigenous Peoples continues to evolve, and in May received a fresh jolt with the discovery of 215 unmarked graves of Indigenous children at the Kamloops Indian Residential School in B.C. As well, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the existence of anti-Asian sentiment in many parts of the country.

(Environics and CRRF, 2021, *Race Relations in Canada*, p. 1)

### 2.1 Introduction

The optimistic narrative about the safety of Canadian post-secondary institutions is belied by the evidence. While many Canadians and Canadian post-secondary institutions believe the narrative that Canada is a “post-racial success story”, there is ample evidence that indicates that the country is still racially stratified (Heer, 2012, p.1). This chapter examines literature that draws attention to the problematic myth of safety and equity in our institutions. It also provides an analysis of the role and impact of EDI training for faculty and staff in the maintenance of this myth.

### 2.2 The Myth of Safety in Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions

Canadian institutions are responding to the need to serve increasingly diverse newcomer and international students as well as a higher proportion of domestic students from marginalized populations (Booker, et al., 2016; CBIE, 2013; Universities Canada, 2019). While increased contact with diverse peoples offers opportunities to connect and learn from each other, it often causes conflict as people struggle to relate to the “other” (Chang, 2013; Cook-Huffman, 2011; DiAngelo, 2018; Fleras, 2017; Howard, 2016; Luxton and Mossman,

2012). Increased diversity in our institutions has been accompanied by increased rates of intercultural intolerance and violence, protectionism, and the worst manifestations of nationalism (Anastasiou, 2011; Chideya, 2016; Harris, 2017; Leonardo, 2018; Richmond, 2017; Stewart and Valian, 2022). As Chang (2013) argues, the potential negative effects of this diversity are often disregarded and can lead to “increased incidents of antipathy, conflict, and balkanization” (p. 173).

Many examples of the negative effects of diversity in post-secondary institutions can be found in the literature. For example, the 2021 race relations study done by Environics and the Canadian Race Relations Federation (CRRF) indicated that 27% of respondents indicated that they had experienced discrimination due to race or ethnicity at school or in university (Environics and CRRF, 2021, p. 38). The Universities Canada (2019) national survey on *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at Canadian Universities* also noted that there are many ongoing equity issues including the need to translate the value of EDI and a lack of diversity in senior leadership. Also, the Ontario Human Rights Commission survey (2015) found that over 100 survey participants said they had experienced racial profiling in the education system. The survey reports that this was “often directed at First Nations, Metis, Inuit and other peoples, Muslims, Arabs, West Asians and black people and is often influenced by the negative stereotypes that people in these communities face” (para. 1-7)

As well, Misawa’s (2014) national study demonstrated an increase in bullying in Canadian post-secondary due to racist and homophobic attitudes. There is also a growing body of evidence that shows that faculty from marginalized populations are still under-represented in post-secondary institutions and struggle with tenure processes and skewed expectations (Ahmed, 2012; Casado Pérez, 2018; Henry, et al., 2017; Tuck, 2018, Universities Canada, 2019). Along with the reports noted above, scholars have been telling us time and again that Indigenous and Black students across Canada do not have the same opportunities and they carry shame and anger because they are confronted daily with racist comments and are having difficulty successfully navigating an education system that does not reflect or honour their culture (Battiste, 2013; Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994; Cote-Meek, 2014; Fitznor, 2006; Henry and Tator, 2009; John Hopkins University, Medicine, 2021; Ryerson University, 2020; Scarborough Charter, 2022 ).

While these are individual snapshots of peoples' experience, they demonstrate that feelings of safety in Canadian post-secondary institutions is not everyone's truth. Students and staff are experiencing violence everyday in Canadian post-secondary institutions. In 2009 Henry and Tator described Canadian post-secondary institutions as "sometimes hostile, oppressive, unsafe learning and working environments" (p. 3). This climate of violence for many in our institutions was once again highlighted in the 2017 landmark book, *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities* by Henry, et al. In their book the authors argue that while there has been an increase in discussions about equity and race, little has changed.

Notwithstanding the promise of equity, the university is a racialized site that still excludes and marginalizes non-White people, in subtle, complex, sophisticated, and ironic ways, from everyday interactions with colleagues to intuitional practices that at best are ineffective and at worst perpetuate structural racism. (p. 3)

Continued racism, heterosexism, ableism, and other forms of marginalization are widespread in our post-secondary institutions (Ahmed, 2012; Fleras, 2017; Henry and Tator, 2009; Henry, Dua, James, Kobayashi, Li, Ramos, and Smith, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2016; McLaren, 2015; Stewart and Valian, 2022). Marginalized community members have repeatedly said that there is a problem and real change needs to happen. The voices we hear in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) *Calls to Action* (TRC, 2015), the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report (2019), and the Black Lives Matter movement are getting harder to ignore. Canadians are beginning to realize the stories we have been told about who we are may be more myth than fact. It is argued here that while it is hard to rewrite these narratives, it is critical that we do. Meaningful change requires not only the *goodwill* of all members of the academy, but also the *knowledge* and *skills* to create change both individually and collectively. If we do not collectively gain this capacity, people will continue to be hurt.

## 2.3 Lack of Meaningful EDI Training for Faculty and Staff

Deeming a location a "safe space" does not absolve institutions from the responsibility of making sure their members are adequately trained in EDI principles and actions. (Survey participant)

The 2021 *Race Relations in Canada Report* completed by Environics in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF) indicated that while there has been an increased *awareness* of equity and safety issues over the last several years, this awareness has not translated into action. There appears to be a common perception by those who are privileged that if we are talking about something it means we are *doing* something to make change. This misperception was evident in the CRRF study as they found that White respondents were most likely to say that progress has been made and Black and Indigenous people were less likely to say meaningful progress has been made (Environics and CRRF, 2021). Discrimination is not a thing that happened in the past and is now over because we have talked about it. We need the knowledge and skills to *do* something about it.

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000) Freire talks about the need to educate, through conscientization to reduce or eliminate oppression built into our systems. Battiste (2000) speaks directly to the need for conscientization of educators. She contends that “educators are challenged to unravel stereotypical assumptions and theories entangled in cognitive imperialism — the persisting ideologies from our colonial past that remain part of our educational system” (2000, p.ix; see also Haskell & Randall, 2009). This conscientization is critical for if educators are unaware, they won’t do anything. This is unfortunate as we must collectively be a force for change. Developing this awareness is necessary if we are to work toward a reality that includes an academy where all students and staff members thrive and we understand that it is not only the individual that needs to change, but the system itself (Nuri-Robins et al., 2017).

The need for systemic change was underlined in the summer of 2016. In August 9<sup>th</sup> of that year a 22-year-old Indigenous man, Colton Bushie of the Cree Red Pheasant First Nation, was fatally shot on a rural Saskatchewan farm by its owner, Gerald Stanley. Stanley

stood trial for second-degree murder and for a lesser charge of manslaughter, but was ultimately acquitted in February 2018 by an all-White jury. The verdict sparked protests, rallies, vigils, and many debates about racism in policing and the justice system in Saskatchewan and across Canada. Indigenous faculty members and their allies responded by calling on senior leadership at post-secondary to take a leadership role in addressing systemic and structural racism. In their open letter, published February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018, they argued that unconscious biases and assumptions are not held just by individuals, but are also systemic and “thereby institutionalized”. The letter notes that the biases and assumptions “exist in everyday interactions, language, policy, strategic policy, strategic planning priorities, funding, and other practices” (para. 5) and call for a rejection of “one off” diversity initiatives that promote narratives of multiculturalism or those that romanticize our cultures” (para. 10). Recommendation 3 of this letter: *Supporting anti-oppressive education* stresses that the type of diversity training must go beyond typical, superficial diversity education.

For our lives and the lives of queer people, and other people of colour to be respected and safe we need structural and institutional commitment to understandings of history and struggle in relation to and with each other. This must include critical anti-racist and anti-colonial graduate and undergraduate courses (para. 10).

In an interview about the open letter, Alex Wilson, a professor at the University of Saskatchewan and a member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation argued that the Canadian education system has failed everyone and that we have a "responsibility as educational institutions to teach about racism and anti-racism and that's not really happening" (CBC News, 2018).

Despite the tragedy of Colton Bushie’s murder and the uncovering of ongoing abuse and genocidal government practices outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Report published a year earlier (2015), it seems it was not until the world personally and collectively witnessed the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police in 2020 that structural violence became unmistakable and entered the consciousness of the majority of the public.

This publicly shared tragedy and the ongoing media coverage of Black Lives Matter demonstrations was a significant catalyst for change in our communities and in our post-secondary institutions (Stavro, 2023). These events triggered more meaningful discourse about anti-racism in our educational institutions in Canada and led to tangible changes such as policy review and the creation of special committees and task forces to address equity issues. As Wood and Hudson (2021) note, “the murder of Floyd led to the confrontation of race and racism within the higher education sector in a way that hadn’t been experienced before.” (para. 5)

In order to address the mounting evidence of racism and other forms of marginalization, and to manage an increasingly diverse student population on campus and at eventual workplaces, post-secondary institutions have focused on initiatives intended to help *students* gain a “global perspective and help them to contribute to a more peaceful, environmentally secure and just world” (Shultz and Jorgenson, 2012, p.1, see also Abdi and Shultz, 2011; Bannier, 2016; Griffith, Wolfield, Armon, Rios and Liu, 2016, Hutchison and Wiggan, 2009; Sit, Mak and Neill, 2017). There has also been an effort to ensure teachers in the kindergarten to grade 12 system understand equity issues. However, there has not been an equal effort to provide this type of training for post-secondary faculty and staff.

It appears we forget that faculty are also “teachers” and may not have the knowledge and skills related to working in an environment that calls for a robust understanding of diversity/social justice/anti-racism (Bensimon, 2007; Egbo, 2019; Friesen, 2015; Gay, 2010; Hamer and Lang, 2015; Hutchison and Wiggan, 2009; Indigenous Faculty Members and Allies, 2018; Kailin, 2002; Reardon, 1999). Although student diversity is increasing, between 80-90 percent of post-secondary instructors are “White,” (Kailin, 2002; Universities Canada, 2019). Stachowiak (2015) argues that curricular activity related to social justice and diversity are not enough to support student transformation if we do not “truly address the deep-seated need of related faculty development” (p.118).

The UNESCO report (2015), the Truth and Reconciliation Report (2015), the Canadian Bureau for International Education Report (2013), the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada report (2016), Indigenous Faculty and Allies (2018), and National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019), and the Black

Lives Matter movement (John Hopkins University, 2020; Ryerson University, 2020) have all identified the need to provide meaningful equity, diversity, and inclusion training for faculty and staff<sup>4</sup> members.

While it is understood that engaging with training is not the only way to initiate change, it is a critical and not well understood piece of an ongoing process. Faculty and staff members are being asked to analyze curriculum, use equitable hiring practices, ensure equitable advancement processes, and interact respectfully with students, staff, and faculty who are part of marginalized populations (Branche, Mullennix and Cohn, 2007; Egbo, 2019; Howard, 2016; Mayhew and Grumwold, 2006; Vogel, 2018). It can be argued that this may be an insurmountable task if they have not had a meaningful opportunity to learn about EDI issues themselves (Assaf, Garza, and Battle, 2010; Bensimon, 2007; Egbo, 2019; Friesen, 2015; Gay, 2010; Hamer and Lang, 2015; Howard, 2016; Hutchison and Wiggan, 2009; Indigenous Faculty Members and Allies, 2018; Kailin, 2002; Reardon, 1999; Reconciliation Canada, 2017; Rocke, 2012). As stated earlier, the acquisition of an advanced degree or professional certification in no way guarantees this understanding.

The literature raises several concerns about the current state of EDI training for faculty and staff. If present at all, diversity training is rarely mandated and is seen as ‘nice to have’, and not ‘need to have’ (Ahmed, 2012; Howard, 2016). Further, even if EDI training is mandatory for faculty and staff members, it may not be the right *type* of training. The concern raised in the literature is that typical diversity training approaches are short term (4 hours or less), focus on difference rather than relationship building and may produce superficial understanding that causes more damage by reinforcing stereotypical thinking (Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov, 2004; 2000; Kolowich, 2015; Taras and Ganguly, 2016).

It is argued that instead, what is necessary is EDI training that uses critical pedagogy to elucidate structural violence and that challenges assumptions about others that are held uncritically (Friesen 2015; Indigenous Faculty Members and Allies, 2018; Stachowiak, 2015; TRC, 2015). Specifically, the research suggests that if institutions want to be safe

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<sup>4</sup> Senior administrative staff are included under “staff”.

places that are free of racism and become places that foster inclusiveness and respect, they need to be more deliberate in their efforts to ensure that faculty and staff are exposed to methodology that supports a deeper, critical understanding of the dynamics of power, positionality, and structural violence (Berila, 2015; Bishop, 2015; Indigenous Faculty and Allies, 2018; Mayo and Larke, 2010). Haslerig et al. (2013) recommend diversity training that will “focus on pedagogy and offer concrete tools for activating the diversity already present ...rather than the more perfunctory “sensitivity” training often implemented” (p. 169). Faculty and staff members need to not only understand *what* happened, and what *is* happening, but also have the capacity to explore *why* personal and systemic exclusion and marginalization exists within academia. However, as many post-secondary faculty members may not have had an opportunity to learn about power, privilege, and systemic oppression, they would not be able to see the need to change and believe that students need to change and adapt to them and the institution, thus reinforcing extant power structures (Nuri-Robins, et al., 2017).

Without the ability to recognize our personal and institutional positionality and power, we may not see inequities at all and may have little motivation or commitment for EDI training initiatives. Freire (2000) and many other critical theorists have made the clarion call to educate about the oppression built into our systems. Despite this, this type of conscientization has not typically been a goal of education (Harber and Sakade, 2009). This appears to be true of professional development activities in general, and of interest to this study, the professional development for post-secondary faculty and staff. Nightingale et al. (2015) note, “the engagement of academic staff as a particular challenge” (p. 1; see also Aragón, Dovidio, and Graham, 2017).

## 2.4 Conclusion

Ongoing violence in Canadian post-secondary education is a reality but is often not seen. As marginalized peoples take a stand against this violence and as we learn more about historic and ongoing oppression, the need to understand power, privilege and positionality becomes clearer. While the need for EDI professional development initiatives for teachers in

the primary and secondary education system has been well argued (Booker et al., 2016; Brown-Jeffy and Cooper, 2011; DeJaeghere and Cao, 2009; Gay, 2010; Gorski, 2016; Kaikkonen, 2010; Liu and Milman, 2013; Ragoonaden, Sivia and Baxan, 2015), research related to the need for professional development for faculty, staff and administrators in post-secondary institutions is almost non-existent (Ahmed, 2012; Booker et al., 2016; Brown-Glaude, 2009; Egbo 2019; Nightingale, Law, & Webb, 2015). However, ensuring that faculty and staff members have the knowledge and skills needed to create these safe and respectful spaces or to support their students to do the same is critical (Friesen, 2015; Hamer and Lang, 2015; Howard, 2016). As Rocke (2012) asks, “how does an individual facilitator create that safe learning environment, and also deal with any conflict that may erupt in conversations over contentious issues without any training or support? ... The lack of adequate preparation is unfair to both the facilitator and participants and can potentially result in less than ideal learning environment...” (pp. 205-206, see also Assaf, Garza, & Battle, 2010). This lack of institutional capacity is a problem, and we know little about it in the context of Canadian post-secondary institutions.

The following two chapters capture the literature review that was completed for this work. Chapter 3, *Power, Violence, and Post-secondary Education* examines power and how current power and knowledge relationships in our institutions directly impact how people perceive EDI issues, whether people recognize EDI issues at all, how the need for training is perceived, the type of training offered, and whether training initiatives are adequately resourced. Chapter 4, *Researching EDI Training: Methodological Issues* looks at the types, impacts, and measurement of EDI training, definitional and validity issues related to the study of EDI training and training effectiveness. This examination also highlights the role of power in EDI training by contrasting a functional approach versus a social justice approach.

## Chapter 3: Power, Violence, and Post-secondary Education

I don't think Canadian institutions are seen as safe spaces by marginalized peoples. They might be seen as safe by those with white, cis-gender, able bodied, English as a first language privilege. Since those are generally the people with power to influence decisions that then hinders diversity training, yes [seeing Canadian institutions as safe spaces impacts diversity training].  
(Survey participant)

### 3.1 Introduction

Understanding power relationships is key to understanding institutions of higher education as sites where conflict exists, and inequality can be reinforced—or dismantled (Ahmed, 2012; Carnevale, and Strohl, 2013; Egbo, 2019; Howard, 2016; Fleras, 2017; Henry et al., 2017; James, 2010; Rata, 2012). There *is* violence in our post-secondary institutions in Canada and yet it often remains invisible to people in those institutions who do not understand power and privilege. It is argued throughout this work that understanding power relations is key to understanding the current state of EDI training for faculty and staff and Canadian post-secondary institutions. Specifically, faculty and staff need to understand power as it is expressed in their role in perpetuating or ameliorating violence as they “wittingly or not, set tone, make decisions about power and power sharing, and help determine the nature of the learning/facilitation space” (Kornelsen, 2013, p. 253; see also Reardon and Snauwaert, 2015; Stachowiak, 2015).

Further, it is argued that power relations impact whether, or what type, of EDI training is offered, whether it is mandatory, whether it is resourced and whether its impact is measured in any meaningful way. The first section looks at several theories of power that are used to elucidate how power mechanisms manifest in our institutions. The second section introduces Galtung’s theory of the “*Violence Triangle*” that can help make visible the structures and mechanisms of power in our post-secondary institutions that both create and maintain violence.

## 3.2 Power

### Theories of Power

Though there are many theories related to power, French and Raven's (1959), Galbraith's, (1983), Foucault's (1980) and Torelli and Shavitt's (2010) theories will be discussed here as their descriptions of power can help us understand how power imbalances manifest and are maintained in our educational institutions and how these unequal power relations impact EDI training for faculty and staff.

#### *French and Raven*

French and Raven (1959) described five forms of power. The first is *coercive power* in which the person with less power complies because they believe another can punish them. That punishment may be physical, social, emotional, political, or economic. An example of coercive power might be Indigenous students and communities continued need to comply with, and work within a Western-European educational model or risk losing funding or recognition (Bouvier, 2016). Another example is the tendency to routinely identify young black male students as “at risk” who need special educational supports. This type of discourse “justifies mechanisms of social control” needed to “instill discipline”, resulting in much higher rates of academic discipline and suspension compared to white students (James, 2021 p. 431)

*Reward power* is based on the perceived right of someone to provide or withhold rewards, dependent on whether the person complies with demanded or expected behavior. These rewards could be something tangible, something emotional, or a social reward. Examples might include funding for schools, or the adoption of a Western-European speech and mannerisms in school to gain cultural or social “capital” (Bourdieu, 1997; Fleras, 2017). Another example of how reward power may play out is if schools on reserves indoctrinate their students more fully into the Western-European way of knowing and being. In this case the students may be more successful in the dominant society, and the school itself may be rewarded with additional funding. The system is reward-oriented and appears positive, but the cost of the loss of identity and culture is high (Battiste, 2013; Fleras, 2017; Graveline, 1998). While this form of power and influence appears gentler, it is covert and manipulatory and possibly comes at a higher overall cost (Galtung, 1969).

The third form is *legitimate power* which describes when the less powerful agree to another's authority to make demands of them and to make decisions for them. An example would be a supervisor (Dean or Director) who assigns faculty workloads, a faculty member outlining how an assignment must be done, or an administrator insisting on Western approaches to assessment that fit in with existing institutional policies. The fourth form is *referential power* in which a person respects or somehow identifies with the person who has influence. An example of referential power might be marginalized peoples buying into the "Canadian Dream" of prosperity if they emulate those who have power. The final form of power is *expert power* in which the person with less power believes that the person with power has more knowledge or abilities than they themselves do. For example, immigrant or Indigenous students or their parents may not question what, or the way, they are being taught (De-Moll, 2010, French and Raven, 1959; Turner and Schabram, 2012).

### *Galbraith*

Galbraith (1983) described three types of power. The first is *condign power* in which submission is won by making the alternative sufficiently painful. An example condign power might be seen in the fallout from the questioning of power itself. In many instances, both marginalized faculty and those who work for social justice education in our institutions experience negative consequences in terms of their reputation and chances for advancement (Ahmed, 2012; Fleras, 2017; Henry et al., 2017; Tuck, 2018). The second is *compensatory power* in which submission is bought through reward or promise of reward. This is like French and Raven's *Reward Power* noted above.

The third form of power is *conditioned power* in which submission is gained by persuasion through altering belief. An example of conditioned power is hegemony, whereby those who have little power in our institutions (students, marginalized faculty) accept without question the ideology and control of the powerful. Hegemony is a key concept in understanding both the invisibility of violence in our post-secondary institutions, how power is gained and maintained, and the perceived need for a social justice approach to faculty and staff EDI training (Egbo, 2019; Darder, et al., 2017; Howard, 2016). Hegemony will be explored in depth below in the section on the mechanisms of structural violence.

Conditioned power provides the foundation for blaming marginalized peoples for their plight and is a result of imbalanced power and a strategy to hide power. “Pulling yourself up by the bootstraps” is a mantra that tells marginalized students that they are just not trying hard enough, and it also tells the same story to the privileged— that marginalized students are just not working hard enough. In our schools, faculty or staff members may blame low student performance on the student’s “poor motivation, inadequate intelligence, and bad mothering” (Fine, 2018), rather than attributing it to structural factors in the environment (Hyde, 2021; McLeod, 2009; Stachowiak, 2015). This deficit model is a myth as differences in power create an unequal playing field for students (Howard, 2016; Irizarry, 2009; Schwebel and Christie, 2007; Schwalbe, 2008). These narratives cause harm. As Fine (2018) relates, blaming marginalized students for their lack of success “simultaneously inject in youth of color a deep sense of structural outrage and a shadow discourse of personal responsibility” (p. 69).

### *Foucault*

Unlike the definitions and types noted above, Foucault (1980) makes a clear distinction between power and *positions of power*. He believed that everyone has intrinsic power. However, not everyone is in a position of power. He did not see power as an either-or reality, but rather as a context-based phenomenon in which power is *relational* and is constantly being re-negotiated and maintained (De-Moll, 2014; Foucault, 1980). This is an important distinction because it means that power balances can be shifted. Foucault also argued that there is no such thing as knowledge as a thing or as a ‘truth’, but rather, it is a negotiated understanding, largely legitimated by those in power. As such, he saw no separation between power and knowledge and instead referred to ‘power/knowledge relations’. He also saw power being used for both dominance and resistance (Darder, et al., 2017; Foucault, 1988). Foucault’s work is important for our discussions around EDI as it provides a lens with which to interrogate the inimitable legitimacy of Western ways of knowing, what counts as knowledge. Foucault’s work also compels us to examine and shift power imbalances.

Torelli and Shavitt (2010) argue that defining power is further complicated by differences in the understanding and use of power across cultures. They note that their study of culture and power provides evidence that cultures cultivate and maintain different views of power, and the best use of power. They argue that this understanding is key to understanding power relationships. Their research found two main differences across cultures in terms of understanding power. One way of understanding power, *vertical individualism*, is defined in personalized terms and should be used to advance the individual's personal status and prestige. In the other, *horizontal collectivism*, power is understood in socialized terms in which the appropriate use of power is to benefit others and the collective (p. 703). Their findings indicate that there are “sociocognitive and behavioral correlates of vertical individualism and horizontal collectivism as they relate to power” (p. 723).

The authors propose that understanding cultural differences also helps understand the more “benevolent” side of power. Specifically, they found that there was a statistical significance that associates a “benevolent view of power with a horizontal collectivist cultural orientation” that was evident in “beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral intentions” (p.719, see also Tuck, 2018). They argue further that consideration of the use of power as benevolent differs from Western European notions of how power has typically been conceptualized in personal terms (p. 719). It is important to note here that most Canadian post-secondary institutions are built upon Western European models of education.

Bishop (2015) describes the western model of power as “power-over” and those from more cooperative cultures as “power-with” (p. 31). What is important to note is that differing cultural perceptions of power can create misunderstanding and perpetuate conflict (Turner and Schabram, 2012). Battiste (2005) argues that one of our greatest challenges is figuring out how to balance “colonial legitimacy”, with Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing (p.4). Continued ignorance of Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and arrogance that Western European ways are the ‘right way’ reflects power imbalances and leads to difficult relationships (Battiste, 2013; Fitznor, 2006). Until we see the need to analyze and acknowledge our perceptual differences that are based on differing cultural ideologies, we

will be prevented from moving toward understanding and positive transformation of our relationships (Kornelsen, 2013; Lederach, 1995).

It is argued here that these cultural differences also impact the type of faculty and staff EDI training that is seen as needed. Specifically, vertical individualism may see appropriate diversity training using the “banking method” (Friere, 1990; Rocke, 2012) where an expert provides information *about* different cultures and is used to *fix a problem*. As Henry and Tator (2010) argue “multicultural approaches suggest that gaining an understanding of other cultures is sufficient to combat racism. Diversity labels cushion the organization by allowing it to hide behind the rationalizations that managing diversity is all that is required...such a view implies that racism results from diversity, and that it can be managed. Thus, racism is considered something to be 'managed', not necessarily opposed” (p. 340). Those who understand power and power relations from a horizontal collectivist perspective may take a social justice approach that focuses more on dialogical methods and would be used to *build/repair relationships* (Boulding, 2000; Kornelsen, 2013).

#### *Relational Nature of Power*

De-Moll (2014) states that power is always relational and is “greatly impacted by both the motivations of the power holder as well as the individual over whom power is held” (p.69-70). French and Raven (1959) also argue that power is fundamentally *relative* in that it can only be defined in terms of an understanding of the current status of any given relationship. That is, both parties in the relationship must agree to the power relation—though perhaps not consciously. Foucault (1980) also speaks about relationality as he describes power as alive, fluid, and context based. Finally, cultural differences in the perception of power also point to its non-static, relational character.

This understanding that power is relational and not an absolute tangible thing is critical for this study because it implies that power balances *can be changed*. Specifically, if faculty and staff had a robust understanding of the relationality of power, they would be better able to see their own position of power and subsequent privilege, the impact that power has on others and themselves and their relationships, and that they have both agency and an imperative to change power balances to increase equity. Specifically, a robust

understanding of relational power is key to understanding the maintenance of hegemony, social reproduction, and resistance (Rebick, 2009).

Finally, understanding the relational nature of power is critical to understanding the notion of “systemic violence” that is becoming more prevalent in current discussion around equity in our post-secondary institutions. Systemic violence is violence that is built *into* our systems. Systemic violence is intimately connected to an imbalance in relational power and without a robust understanding of how power and violence are connected, systemic violence as a concept is not easily understood. Galtung’s *Violence Triangle* model is offered in the next section as a theoretical framework that can aid understanding of what is meant by systemic violence and the mechanism that both create and maintain it. Looking at the relational nature of power imbalances through Galtung’s theoretical lens broadens the concept of “violence” and makes it easier to recognize the different forms of violence in post-secondary institutions as well as their connection to each other.

### *Defining Power*

Before we begin an analysis of the role of power on EDI training for post-secondary faculty and staff, it is important to state what is meant by “power” in the context of this work. While power is a common term and variable in Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) analysis, it is often not clearly defined. As with many terms in PACS research, there appears to be an assumption that everyone will know what is meant and so the intended meaning is not always revealed (Sandole, 2011). De-Moll (2010) tells us that the “nature of power makes it difficult to grasp. It is not a thing possessed and used at will, but a phenomenon that is inherently situational and difficult to locate in absolute terms” (p. 2, see also Galinsky, Magee, Inesi, and Gruenfeld, 2006). Based on the theories of discussed above, this analysis will adopt the definition of power offered by Merriam-Webster (2019) which is *the ability to act and produce an effect, and the possession of control or influence over others* (Oxford Dictionary Online, 2019).

### 3.3 Galtung's Violence Triangle

Canadians tend to see racism as a function of the prejudiced attitudes and actions of individuals rather than systemic inequities in the country's laws and institutions. (Enviro-nics and CRRF, 2021, p. 6)

#### Structural Violence

Power and violence are both individual and systemic. For faculty and staff to see violence at all, they must first understand power. It is critical for them to understand how the mechanisms of power work to create and maintain violence on our institutions. This section uses Galtung's notion of the violence triangle to illustrate how the type of power discussed above plays out everyday in our institutions.

Galtung first introduced the concept of *structural violence* in his 1969 article, *Violence, Peace, and Peace Research* and makes the distinction between *direct violence* as an event; one which is overt, can be seen, and has a direct subject and object (what we normally understand as violence), and *structural violence* (a process) which is built into our systems, is usually covert, and may not have a direct object or subject. Galtung's notion of *structural violence* is what is usually meant when we talk about *systemic violence*. In the 1969 article, he defines violence as “*the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is. Violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance*” (Emphasis in original, p.178). He further states that structural violence “shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances” (p. 171; see also Schwebel and Christie, 2007; Galtung, 1969; Hamer and Lang, 2015; Stiles, 2011; Weigert, 2008). These unequal life chances are unmistakably evident in our post-secondary institutions. As Epp and Watkinson (1997) contend, “educational systemic violence results from the practices, procedures and educational conventions that prevent students from learning, thus harming them” (p. 5). However, as will be discussed, various mechanisms often prevent the violence from being seen.

Structural violence is systemic, widespread, often invisible, and resistant to change. While structural violence is built into structures, it also maintains those structures. These oppressive structures uphold social stratification and "guarantees privilege amongst its

leaders, prioritization of their political agenda, and an enforcement of their methods and ideologies” (Stiles, 2011, p.5; see also Fleras, 2017; Gillies and Lucey, 2007; Leatherman and Griffin, 2011; McLaren, 2015; Pashby, 2012). It is important to note that while repressive structures are human creations, they also constrain human agency, impacting available choices and therefore behaviour (Galtung, 1969; Hamer and Lang, 2015; McLeod 2009; Schwebel, 2011; Weigert, 2008).

There are several key concepts in Galtung’s notion of structural violence that directly impact this study. The first is his explanation of the difference between negative and positive peace. Simply put, negative peace is the absence of direct violence, and positive peace is the absence of direct *and* structural violence as well as the intentional striving for social justice for all (Weigert, 2008). What is important to note is that if we don’t see *direct* violence in our institutions, we may not see any violence at all and conclude that things are peaceful. For example, much of what happened in Canadian Residential Schools can clearly be seen as forms of direct violence. However, the ongoing assimilation of Indigenous students by imposition of a Western-European educational model that negates their identity and values may not be seen as violence at all (Simpson, 2014; Graveline, 1998). Without seeing the different forms of violence, we may not see the need to change the system or our own behavior.

The other key concept related to this study is what Galtung describes as the difference between the “subjectivists” and “objectivists” conceptualization of violence. Subjectivists say actors must have some perception of conflict—if there is no awareness, there is no *intent* to do harm (Wiegert, 2008, para. 9; see also Davis, 2010; Fleras, 2017). For example, both students and faculty members may blame poor student performance on the students, rather than attributing it to structural factors in the environment, including a lack of understating of power and inequity on the part of (still) mostly white faculty and staff members (McLeod, 2009). Another common example would be faculty *meaning well* by not wanting to “water things down” (read—adjust the content of the curriculum or how it is taught) as they believe that would disadvantage the student in the long run. The prevailing understanding is that if the faculty member *meant well* (had no intent to harm), then there was no violence.

Objectivists, on the other hand, argue that conflict can exist without the awareness of the actors since *incompatible interests* are what define conflict and whether there is awareness of the conflict or not, it is embedded in the structure of the system (Webb, 1986, cited in Weigert, 2008). What is critical to understand is that in this scenario structural violence needs neither intent nor awareness on the part of faculty and staff to exist. As Galtung (1985) notes, “structures are the settings within which individuals may do enormous amounts of harm to other human beings without ever intending to do so, just performing their regular duties as a job defined in the structure” (p. 145). Structural violence from, and within, education is often invisible, it is the ‘tranquil waters’—the norm (Galtung, 1985, p. 174). Understanding the difference between subjectivist and objectivist views of violence is important to understand as *meaning well* is often offered as justification for continuing violent behaviours, not seeing a need to critically analyze the impact of our behaviour, and to diminish the perceived need for change.

### Cultural Violence

Galtung’s (1990) article, *Cultural Violence* expanded his definition of violence to include *cultural violence*. Cultural violence is not an event or a process he says, but rather an “invariant, a ‘permanence’”; it is the values and ideology we hold and what we know to be “true” (p. 294). In the article he states that “culture preaches, teaches, admonishes, eggs on, and dulls us into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them (particularly -not exploitation) at all” (p. 294). In short, cultural violence is the reason we see what is happening in our institutions as “normal”. His description of how the three types of violence form a *Violence Triangle*, and how each interacts to uphold power is an excellent summary and worth quoting at length.

At the bottom is the steady flow through time of cultural violence, a substratum from which the other two can derive their nutrients. In the next stratum the rhythms of structural violence are located. Patterns of exploitation are building up, wearing out, or torn down, with the protective accompaniment of penetration-segmentation preventing consciousness formation, and fragmentation-marginalization preventing organization against exploitation and

repression. And at the top, visible to the unguided eye and to barefoot empiricism, is the stratum of direct violence with the whole record of direct cruelty perpetrated by human beings against each other and against other forms of life and nature in general. (1990, pp. 294-295)

While direct violence is self-evident, it is the *invisibility* of cultural and structural violence in our post-secondary institutions that fosters its continuance.

In the article, Galtung explores six cultural domains in which violence is enacted, including religion and ideology, language and art, and empirical and formal science. He argues that the specific values and ideology (knowledge and “truth”) we hold in each of these domains impacts our perceptions of violence and how it is used to legitimate direct or structural violence. Stated differently, the narratives produced by cultural violence are what maintain the current power imbalances and make us believe that what is happening in our post-secondary institutions is “normal”, thus preventing us from seeing the violence (or the need to question it) at all.

An examination of each domain can help make this type of violence visible, demonstrate how cultural violence impacts our perceptions of violence, and how the narratives produced by cultural violence are used to legitimate direct or structural violence in our post-secondary institutions. Examining these cultural narratives helps illuminate the often-unconscious nature of our thinking and judgment processes. The unconscious acceptance of “the way things are” is what is often referred to when referring to *unconscious bias*, one of the most often cited types of EDI training offered for faculty and staff.

### Religion

Canada has traditionally been seen as a Christian country (Egbo, 2019; Fleras, 2017). Galtung (1990) argues that Christianity, Judaism, and Islam all have characteristics in common that impact our values and the type of structures we create (see also Mazuri, 1990). Specifically, all these religions have a male god that is seen as ultimate authority. Questioning of “truths” or “right beliefs” is considered immoral. They are also dualistic, representing very clear distinction between right and wrong or good and evil (Howard, 2016). Also, those who are privileged (still predominantly, White, straight, males) are granted the freedom (permission) to live well in this life and the poor and marginalized can

only hope to live well after death. True believers are favoured, and non-believers are seen as pagans or heretics (Galtung, 1990; TRC, 2015). Hall (2018) provides an example of this when he relates that when Indigenous knowledge was removed from the land and enclosed in Western schools, it was relegated to “witchcraft, tradition, superstition, folkways, or, at best, some form of common sense” (p. 86).

### Ideology

Galtung (1990) argues that while secularism has reduced the influence of God, it has not changed the basic way we view the world in terms of “either-or”; there is still a dichotomy between the chosen and the not-chosen. The chosen now are those *who are like us*. Although fewer people today would overtly make a distinction between a true believer and a heretic, there is still a dichotomous self and “other”.

In our Canadian post-secondary institutions, those who are White, male, straight, and upper-class are the referent, the chosen. Women, Indigenous peoples, people of colour, LGBTQ2IA people, and those living in poverty are a deviant from that norm (Fleras, 2017; Gorski, Davis, and Reiter, 2013; Heer, 2012; Luxton and Mossman, 2012; McLeod, 2009). This deviance marginalizes them as *less than* and sets the stage for sanctioned structural and direct violence (Fleras, 2017; Galtung, 1990; Young, 1990). As Rothbart and Cherubin (2011) argue, this dualistic thinking creates a *Moralpolitik*, akin to a “religiosity of difference” that “manifests in imperatives to oppose the enemy, convert the contaminated, and act according to the (ethnic, racial, religious, political, social, economic) “laws” of nature” (p. 61). Galtung (1990) argues further that as groups of people are exploited because of their deviance from the norm, a self-fulfilling prophecy is created— “they become debased because they are exploited and they are exploited because they are seen as debased, dehumanized” (p. 298, see also Fleras, 2017). This self-fulfilling prophecy is evidenced in beliefs of meritocracy and deficit models in our education systems that will be explored further in upcoming sections (Fleras, 2017; McLaren, 2015; Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2017).

### Language

Galtung (1990) argues that certain languages and language conventions can contain inherent violence and marginalization (see also Corson, 1995; Shor, 2016). He notes

specifically that Spanish and French languages (and some forms in English), “make women invisible by using the same word for the male gender as for the entire human species” (p. 299). Another example in English is the term “guys”, as in “you guys” that is used for all genders and is rarely questioned. However, using the term “you girls” in a room full of men is not likely to be met with the same acceptance (Lester, 2014).

As well, both Augsburger (1992) and Avruch (1998) describe differences in language conventions between high-context and low-context cultures. Augsburger (1992) describes this as “cultural relativity” (p. 39). He argues that we need to acknowledge that there are differing cultural *perceptions* in high-context (collectivistic) and low-context (individual) cultures. These differences include perceptions about power balances, communication, and negotiation styles, and understanding of conflict. He argues that, in general, “privacy and autonomy are the hallmarks of individualistic, low-context cultures just as interdependence and inclusion are the trademarks of a collectivist, high-context cultures” (p. 92). This differential understanding of power based on culture resonates with the work of Torelli and Shavitt (2010) discussed earlier.

Faculty and administrators who come from the dominant Western-European culture in Canada who use low-context communication styles may see students or faculty who use a high-context communication style as being as ignorant or incapable. Also, Indigenous, immigrant, and international students are often disadvantaged and disrespected when they face language hegemony, as language embeds their worldview (Lee, 2008). Blum and Ullman (2012) argue that students spend much of their energy constructing “the right kind of identity and using the right kind of language” (p. 370). Both marginalized students and staff must monitor which language they use and in which situation (Blum and Ullman, 2012, p. 370).

## Art

Galtung (1990) also argues that violence is implicit in what counts as art, and what is depicted in art. Examples of “art” include artwork, television, movies, music, and media. Rothbart and Cherubin (2011) state that “ingroup psyche is shaped by stories that have the effect of demonizing the Other as uncivilized, savage, ignorant, and of degenerate character” (p. 60). For example, written stories (including media) and movies of Indigenous peoples

show them as either as dangerous or “noble savages” (Ellingson, 2011; Ross, 2014; TRC, 2015). This labelling is linked to efforts to control their image as it legitimates the idea that “wild” or “savage” native peoples need to be brought to a state of “domestication”, at any cost, and for their own good (Ellingson, 2011, pp. 229). Also, Canadian media portrayal of Indigenous or Black peoples (while slowly changing) does not normally offer pictures, video, or stories about successful, healthy people. What is portrayed are the crimes, drunkenness, and child abuse stories (Cole, 2020; King, 2012; TRC, 2015).

### Empirical Science

Galtung (1990) argues that another form of cultural violence can be seen in empirical based research in which we are indoctrinated to see ‘evidence-based’ *truth*. He argues that the use of the empirical method to determine truth (facts) is a self-reinforcing myth. He gives the example of economic doctrine, which he argues “studies empirically the system prescribed by its own doctrines, and finds its own self-fulfilling prophecies often confirmed in empirical reality” (p. 300). Elements of postmodernism also suggest that knowledge based on empirical methodology can no longer be accepted as an objective set of testable truths because it is produced by processes that are “inherently ‘captured’ by features of the social world it seeks to explain” (Stringer, 2014, p. 47; see also Galtung, 2011; Shor, 2016). That is, the outcomes of any research will validate the researchers own perceptual universe.

Importantly, this “evidence” has been used by the powerful to reinforce extant divisions of labour which can be found in our institutions, within our country, and globally. This legitimization of oppression keeps poor people, communities, and countries poor. That empirical science is also used as a form of oppression that reduces life chances can be seen in in culturally embedded standardized assessment practices and streaming of marginalized students into low paying occupations to maintain the status quo (Galtung, 1990; Fanon, 1963; McLaren, 2015; McLeod, 2009). This social reproduction *will not be seen* by instructors and administrators who have not been exposed to concepts of relational power, nor will they question the veracity of their outcomes or methods— they will simply be seen as fact (Hamer and Lang, 2015; Schwebel, 2011).

## Formal Science

Galtung (1990) argues that the teaching of formal science methodology is another form of cultural violence as it disciplines us into “black and white thinking” and “polarization in personal, social and world” (p. 301). What is problematic is not the form of thinking itself as it has clearly helped make many positive advances that have improved the lives of most (Biesta, 2014). What is problematic is seeing it as the *only* legitimate way of thinking, or arriving at truth (knowledge) (Battiste, 2005; Battiste, 2013; Wilson, 2008). Other ways of knowing are seen as illegitimate (Giri, 2013; Graveline, 2000; Simpson, 2014; Wilson, 2008). In our institutions, non-Indigenous staff may think that Indigenous ideology and practices that are incorporated into meetings and classes are quaint and are to be tolerated yet are not a critical part of a “real” education process (Cote-Meek, 2014). It may seem even more unlikely that Indigenous knowledge not only has merit, but that it could also inform Western ways of knowing (Falkenberg, 2016). Tuck (2018) contends that we need a different view of power and change to “make space to speak what is otherwise silenced, make transparent that which is otherwise concealed, and make meaningful that which is otherwise forgotten or devalued” (p. 165).

Differences in beliefs about educational practices also makes it difficult for Indigenous students to navigate our systems. For example, Hardes (2013) notes that traditional Indigenous cultures have a philosophy of “non-interference, non-competitiveness...that do not mesh with the mainstream emphasis on competitiveness, especially for marks, found in post-secondary education” (p. 249). He also notes that while ‘stepping in and out’ of education may be “quite acceptable for Aboriginal people, it is a source of frustration for staff and faculty in mainstream post-secondary institutions” (p. 250).

A heartbreaking consequence of having to adapt to the Western educational system is that Indigenous student often feel the need to leave part of who they are at the door of the institution (Dei and Kempf 2013; Friesen, 2015; Fitznor, 2006; Bear-Nicholas, n.d.). Styres (2017) relates that when urban Indigenous youth were asked about whether they struggled with their identity, all respondents answered “yes” and one noted “yes—we are all confused...if you say you are not, you’re lying” (p.66).

Giri (2013) argues that knowledge “has become imprisoned within a variety of structures of domination, commodification, illusion and isolation” (p.1). Decisions about what counts as knowledge, how knowledge is/should be created, and what knowledge is important to learn are based on who holds the power (Olsson and Hiezmann, 2015; Hall, 2018; McLaren, 2015). As noted above, this power/knowledge relationship was first described by Foucault and manifests in myriads of ways to uphold structures of oppression in our post-secondary institutions (Darder, et al., 2017; Foucault, 1988). Kanu (2016) argues that there is a hierarchy of knowledge systems in which the cultural knowledge of the dominant groups is presented as the most (sometimes only) appropriate curriculum, while cultural knowledge from marginalized populations is “omitted, misrepresented, or given only token mentioning in the curriculum” (p. 150, see also Bickmore, 2006; McCallum, 2012; Reading; 2015). Battiste (2013) refers to this dominance as “cognitive imperialism”.

Empirical methodology tells a story of ‘the way things are’— what we *know*, and what we believe to be ‘right’, ‘normal’ and ‘true’. Based on these stories, knowledge is reproduced, norms are established, and we control our behaviour and the behaviour of others. There is danger in hearing only the story told by the dominant culture as it will reinforce existing power structures and be used to maintain control of the marginalized (Adichie, 2009; Chaterjee, Mucina, & Tam, 2012; DiAngelo, 2018). Chaterjee, et al. (2012) argue that power lies in “how stories are told and retold” and that they can both harm and heal (p. 121). The self-serving stories of the dominant are the stories we hear ‘at the knee’, stories we hear in the media (Chaterjee et al., 2012; Fleras, 2107; King, 2012, TRC, 2015) and stories we hear in our educational institutions (McLaren, 2015, Howard, 2016; McCallum, 2012).

Post-modernist and post-structural theorists argue that knowledge is always situated, as the experiences of those who create the stories shape the narrative (St. Pierre, 2012). Further, there is no such thing as ‘objective truth’ in these narratives but, rather, they have value and power only because they are socially sanctioned and a reflection of the power relationship between dominant and non-dominant groups (Egbo, 2019; Stringer, 2014). As importantly, different groups interpret these stories from their own historical perspective (Rata, 2012).

We must critically examine, or deconstruct, these narratives, or “regimes of truth” (Foucault, 1980, p. 131) to make visible the relationship between power and knowledge (Apple, 2012; Egbo, 2019; Freire, 2000; McLaren, 2015; Stringer, 2014). Stringer (2014) argues that from a “post-modern perspective, attempts to order people’s lives on the basis of scientific knowledge largely constitute an exercise in power” (p. 47). Lofgren (2014) states that the offering of “neutral” *objective* advice by the privileged is a deceit as the knowledge they bring is “deeply dyed in the hue of the official ideology of the governing class” (cited in McLaren, 2015, p.xxiii).

Analyzing which stories are *omitted* is as telling as deconstructing the stories that are told. Marginalized populations are excluded from sharing their knowledge or participating in the decision-making process regarding education because their knowledge and values are not seen as important or as legitimate (Cote-Meek, 2014; Dei, 2002; Fitznor, 2006; Friesen, 2015; Gillies and Lucey, 2007; Graveline, 1998; Harper, 2012; Wilson, 2008). For example, many Indigenous scholars believe that dominant Western curriculum is lacking as it does not use holistic educational approaches as do Indigenous knowledge systems which focus on mind, body, spirit, and heart (Bell, 2016). For many Indigenous learners, spirituality is part of their knowledge-making and yet it is often not respected or acknowledged (Battiste, 2013; Bear-Nicholas, n.d.; Falkenberg, 2016; Fitznor, 2006; Wilson 2008). Also, our institutions do not recognize or reward collective knowledge-making and do not recognize differing conceptions of who owns knowledge (Giri, 2013; Graveline, 1998; Hall, 2018; Paquette and Fallon, 2014; Wilson, 2008).

*How* knowledge should be shared is contested. Pedagogical principles for transmitting cultural knowledge from marginalized groups are still not widely integrated in any meaningful way (Lafleur, 2016; Topkok and Green, 2016). Instead, they are often appropriated or given tokenistic representation (Howard, 2016). For example, Styres (2017) argues that the traditional use of story as a means of teaching and learning has served Indigenous people well because the nature of the process incorporates new living knowledge as well as past knowledge. In Indigenous culture, a story is not static or historical as in Western-European cultures (Fitznor, 2006). Rather, each person telling the story adds to it from their current lived experience.

Styres (2017) argues that the revitalization of oral traditions as a method of knowledge dissemination and creation “may serve to disrupt dominant Western conceptualizations and (re)tellings of the tangled histories of colonial relations” (p. 84). If we want to achieve social justice in our post-secondary institutions, faculty and staff need to hear stories, or “counter-narratives” from marginalized groups (Ahmed, 2012; Chatterjee et al., 2012; Kornelsen, 2013; Styres, 2017). Only when the dominance of the single story is made visible, is it possible to interrupt it. As Chatterjee, et al. (2012) tell us, the telling of stories by the marginalized peoples is a way to “contest silencing and forced invisibility” (p. 122).

A number of situated approaches do question the claim of ‘truth’ of existing western paradigms. These approaches shift our perceptions and are often embedded in a “situated identity” such as queer, race, class, ableness, Indigenous, and gender, to name a few (Denzin and Spooner, 2018). As an example, Denzin notes that Indigenization “interrogates from within the very notions of evidence, of science, of methodology, and of community. As deeply and importantly, Indigenous methodologies remind us that science is a moral discourse” (Denzin and Spooner, 2018, p. 45). However, there has been resistance from dominant groups to legitimize alternate ways of knowing (Gee, 2011). Racialized people are not supposed to challenge the status quo and are expected to be “grateful for the marginal space offered to them” (Chatterjee et al., 2012, p. 130; see also Ahmed, 2012; Grande, 2018; Henry and Tator, 2009; Simpson, 2014). Resistance from both privileged and marginalized peoples in post-secondary institutions are explored in more depth in the following section that explores the mechanism of structural violence.

Earlier we defined power as the ability to act and produce an effect, and the possession of control or influence over others. Ameliorating the control and influence from cultural and structural violence as described above is not an easy task as there are entrenched mechanisms of power in our post-secondary institutions that support the continued exploitation of marginalized people. As will be discussed below, these mechanisms both generate and maintain exploitation in our post-secondary institutions by restricting our ability to see the violence at all, by controlling the narrative, and by setting up power

dynamics that discourage marginalized peoples from working together to change the status quo.

### Exploitation in our Institutions

Exploitation refers to an inequitable benefit that is realized by one group of people (oppressors who have more power) compared to others (the oppressed who have little power) and is present and constantly renewed in Canadian post-secondary institutions. It is important to acknowledge that there is a difference between the *stated aims* of our educational institutions as sites of social justice, and as educators for social justice, and the exploitive *practice* of functionalism driven by a capitalist neo-liberal agenda (Denzin and Spooner, 2018; Egbo, 2019; Fine, 2018; Hall, 2018; hooks, 1994; Kahan, 2019; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014; Westheimer, 2018). These often-conflicting goals are related to who holds power and are a source of tension and conflict, and, unless critically examined, will continue to be so (Bentley, Sullivan and Wilson, 2017). Merriam-Webster (2019) defines tension as: “being tight or stiff, applying force and being stretched, also a state of anxiety, [or] a balance maintained between opposing forces or elements” These are all apt descriptions of what is being felt today in our post-secondary institutions as marginalized populations are forcing us to question our claim that our institutions are sites of social justice and to realign our perceptions of who we really are and what we are actually about (Fleras, 2017). In Canadian institutions of higher education, exploitation is maintained through the privileging of Western ways of knowing and through adoption (forced or otherwise) of the neoliberal agenda of the powerful.

On the one hand, our post-secondary institutions are seen as a place to gain the knowledge and skills needed to reproduce the status quo and feed capitalist economic engines, and, on the other hand, the desire to produce citizens who are taught and encouraged to think critically about the world and who contribute to making our communities better places for all. These aims can be seen as a “functionalist” mandate more aligned with “training” and a “social justice” mandate more aligned with *education* and they need to be considered when trying to understand EDI training efforts in Canadian post-secondary institutions.

### *Functionalist Mandate*

Those in power who support a functionalist view of education sustain continued exploitation of marginalized students, faculty, and staff. This exploitation may take the form of unequal resource distribution such as money or access to opportunity and is often justified by social rules that maintain class differences (Fleras, 2017; Galtung, 1990; McLaren, 2015; McLeod, 2009). From this functional position, the development, implementation, and evaluation of faculty and staff training related to critically thinking about equity in terms of power relations may not be seen as important or desired.

Functionalists believe that the goal of education is to “reinforce the existing social and political order” (DeMarrias and LeCompte 1995, p. 7, cited in Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014). Their main goal, though not always overtly stated, is to maintain the status quo and so can be understood as a process of social reproduction (Egbo, 2019). They do so through the generation and maintenance of cultural and structural violence which instills unquestioned obedience to those who hold power, assimilating or “acculturating” students into the dominant culture, and by streaming or sorting students into educational and occupational paths that uphold the existing economic system. Functionalists see these efforts as critical mechanisms for the maintenance of prosperity and social unity (Egbo, 2019; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014). While these are laudable goals, the problem is that they assume that there is consensus on the values and beliefs in society related to what prosperity and social unity looks like (Darder et al., 2017; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014). Functionalist perspectives simultaneously support a neo-liberal agenda and hinder needed conversation about power.

Chomsky (2018) argues that neoliberalism is a form of “class war” that assigns power, and thus authority, to the privileged (Chomsky and Spooner, 2018, p.59). Enactment of the neo-liberal agenda within Canadian post-secondary institutions benefits those who have access to power and disadvantages those who don’t and is inextricably tied to social reproduction intended to uphold the existing structure of domination and exploitation (Battiste, 2013; Blum and Ullman, 2012; Fleras, 2017). As Fine (2018) argues, policies based on the neo-liberal agenda “reliably produces cumulative disadvantage for youth of color and academic water wings for most young people who are White, especially if they are wealthy” (p. 69).

Shor (2016) argues that “the corporate neoliberal capture of higher education is hostile to critical thinking about power in school and society” (p. 8, see also Brookfield, 2017). However, it is important for faculty and staff to think critically about power as it has a significant impact on their work, the safety of our education institutions, and student outcomes (Brookfield, 2017; Chomsky and Spooner, McLaren, 2018; Shor, 2016; Spooner and McNinch, 2018; Westheimer, 2018). As Westheimer (2018) argues, there is a need to pay attention to the neoliberal “grand heist” of the public’s “understanding of the importance of a liberal democratic education” (p.208) as many faculty and staff in Canadian post-secondary institutions, like me, may not have had a liberal democratic education that focused on critical inquiry and how to question power and the status quo.

The functionalist perspective impacts EDI training for faculty and staff because while many institutions claim to have a social justice mission, they in fact operate from a functionalist agenda intended to keep in place (and reinforce) existing power structures. Providing faculty and staff with the knowledge and skills to see and criticize existing power imbalances may be seen as counterproductive. As such, it is reasonable to question whether social justice education for faculty and staff members is not supported (or it is coopted) because those in power who support the neoliberalist agenda would prefer not to have their power questioned. (Apple, 2012; Galtung and Udayakumar, 2013; McLaren, 2015; McLaren, 2018; Shor, 2016; Tuck, 2018). This tension is not new. As Brownlee (2015) argues, “the modern university has always contained the contradictory tensions of both servicing power as well as providing the tools necessary to critique power... as one of its prime mandates, the critique of the social and cultural milieu that created and funds it” (p. 13, cited in Spooner and McNinch, 2018). Westheimer (2018) provides an example of this tension at one of Canada’s largest universities. He shares part of the University of Toronto’s mission statement.

The most crucial of all human rights...are meaningless unless they entail the right to raise deeply disturbing questions and provocative challenges to the cherished beliefs of society at large and of the university itself. (University of Toronto 1992, p. 226)

He goes on to argue that while the words reflect the desire for the stated social justice goals, the “institutional leaders at the university who drafted these words do not believe them and do not abide by them” (p.226). This concern over rhetoric versus reality, or ‘talking the talk’ rather than ‘walking the walk’, is a common theme found in the literature which describes the *practice* of social justice in higher education as “aspirational” at best, and a marketing tool at worst (Ahmed, 2012; Fine, 2018; Fleras, 2017; Gee, 2013; Henry et al., 2017). Meaningful EDI training for staff is often described by intuitions in terms of an ongoing “aspiration”. A little over a year into her position as the University of Manitoba’s first Vice-Provost of Indigenous engagement, Lynne Lavalée, resigned citing her efforts to fight racism were met with frequent resistance from administration and that she had to constantly justify why Indigenous initiatives were important. The Provost and Vice-President Academic replied that while Indigenous achievement was a cornerstone of its vision and they were “deeply committed” to institutional transformation, “fulfilling strategic plans can be challenging” (para. 11-13, CBC, 2018). This is an aspirational statement, but it is important to understand that an aspiration is only the *stated* hope of achieving something, not the achievement of that thing.

The functionalist perspective focuses on a business model of education and is made evident in concepts like the *knowledge economy*, so frequently used today. Also, as business models focus on money, functionalists can rationalize not funding social justice initiatives (such as EDI training) by stating there is less (or not enough) money and so other things must be prioritized. Shrinking budgets prioritize what knowledge is important to teach (Ahmed, 2012; Bishop, 2015; Westheimer, 2018). This rationalization typifies the myth of *fictive austerity* that provides justification to give less money to public education and “nice to have” rather than “need to have” EDI training initiatives.

A senior administrative leader at a Canadian post-secondary institution stated that the main reason they hadn’t implemented their diversity training plan for instructors, or their plans to integrate social justice curriculum, was because there were limited resources as they were experiencing government cutbacks. During the time of that statement, this institution hired four new health and safety positions and spent millions on a new technical centre.

What that administrator really said was “the issue of learning to treat people equitably and respectfully is not a priority”.

The neo-liberal agenda also justifies directing more resources toward areas that require technical skills, such as management and professional programs, and less directed toward liberal arts programs which support more critical analysis of social justice issues such as equity (Shor, 2016; Westheimer, 2018). Chomsky argues that this “makes perfect sense from a business point of view. You don’t want your workers to be free and independent; you want them to do what they are told” (Chomsky and Spooner, 2018, p. 60). Further, the focus *within* disciplines supports the existing capitalist agenda. As an example, engineering faculties may focus their attention on cheaper ways to extract oil instead of finding sustainable ways to provide energy. (Bentley et al, 2017; Shiva, 2015). As Spooner and McNinch (2018) argue, “ultimately at stake is the very notion of what can be considered knowledge itself” (p. xxv, see also Westheimer, 2018). The neo-liberal agenda also directly impacts whether social justice education is provided for students. I have heard repeatedly from instructors that there is “no time” to teach knowledge and skills related to EDI as they need to focus on the technical curriculum. Ira Shor (2016) describes this rationale as the “the pedagogy of content”.

Whether or not, and what type, of EDI training is provided for faculty and administrators is also impacted by the neoliberal agenda (Ahmed, 2012; Bishop, 2015; Stachowiak, 2015). Faculty and administrators may be accomplished and respected in their field but be “profoundly ignorant” about their power and social positionality (Howard, 2016, p. 37). The neoliberal agenda is reinforced if administrators, faculty, and staff are not provided with meaningful EDI training themselves, as you first have to *see* there is an issue before you feel a need to address it. The lack of awareness becomes a vicious, self-reinforcing cycle. Even if some do see a need, the lack of meaningful opportunities for faculty to learn leaves them feeling uncomfortable and unprepared to approach these issues with students or with their colleagues. (CBC Unreserved, 2019; Howard, 2016; Reconciliation Canada, 2017).

### *Social Justice Mandate*

Exploring unconscious bias, power, positionality and oppression and how these things impact how we interact, behave and communicate. EDI training also would help us to do our work with an equity lens, whether we are administrators, managers, program staff or instructors. (Survey participant)

Personally, EDI training needs to have a specific element of decolonization education at its core. EDI training consists of two major elements. Requirements and the development of intrinsic behaviours and practices to advance the balancing of power differentials that feed social inequities. (Survey participant)

In contrast to the functionalist mandate, the mandate of social justice education is to be able to critically question power. Social justice theorists maintain that to understand knowledge you must understand the *interests* of those in power and be able to contest practices that serve them (Egbo, 2019). Fisher and Ury (2011) state that “interests motivate people; they are the silent movers behind the hubbub of positions, your position is something you have decided upon. Your interests are what caused you to decide” (p. 43).

Mthethwa-Sommers (2014) states that social justice education is that which “unveils issues of domination and subordination and seeks to achieve equity and social justice by eliminating domination and subordination of people” (p. 22). The main goal of social justice education is conscientization; the development of a critical consciousness that allows us to meaningfully critique the world around us and our place in it (Darder et al., 2017; Egbo, 2019; Fanon, 1963, Freire, 2000; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014, McLaren, 2015).

There are two ways in which this conscientization in social justice education is achieved. The first is the recognition, acknowledgement, and questioning of educational institutions as structures that maintain the status quo, and which consequently favours the dominant group and marginalizes people who are ‘other’. The second is that this questioning must lead to an effort to change those institutions to make them more equitable. (Darder, et

al., 2017; McLaren, 2015; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014). Galtung's (1990) theory of structural and cultural violence, though not emanating from studies in education, can also be seen as a social justice education theory as it attempts to make visible ongoing violence, oppressive structures and practices, and advocates for more equitable conditions. Galtung (1969) himself suggests that "in order not to overwork the word violence we shall sometimes refer to the condition of structural violence as social injustice" (p.171).

### Mechanisms of Structural Violence

As noted above, Galtung (1990) explains that there are 'mechanisms' or causes of structural violence that uphold exploitation by impeding peoples' ability to think critically about the structures that support exploitation, thus preventing them from acting, *or even seeing a need to act*. As argued earlier, if people's lack of understanding prevents them from seeing the violence in our universities and colleges, they will have little motivation to change themselves or their institutions.

The four mechanisms include penetration, segmentation, fragmentation, and marginalization (see also Hamer and Lang, 2015; McLeod 2009; Schwebel, 2011; Weigert, 2008). These mechanisms both create and maintain asymmetrical power relations and repressive structures within our educational systems. As Galtung (1990) notes, the mechanisms can be seen both as "parts of exploitation or as reinforcing components in the structure" (p. 294). The following sections use Galtung's four mechanism to frame a discussion about power, exploitation, and the maintenance of violence and oppressive hegemonic practices in our educational institutions.

#### *Penetration*

*Penetration* refers to inserting someone (or their views) from outside the oppressed group to filter and control information. Hegemony is a form of penetration. It is important to discuss hegemonic processes in some detail as it is these processes of cultural violence that allow for the penetration of ideas and ideologies that both create and maintain asymmetrical power balances. The concept of hegemonic penetration can help us understand current power imbalances and the impact they have on equity in post-secondary institutions and on EDI training within those institutions.

## Hegemony

First described by Gramsci (1971), hegemony can be seen as a form of penetration as it works to insert and maintain the views (knowledge, values and beliefs) of those in power. This penetration is a form of cultural violence as these views are presented as impartial and objective but are actually only the views of those who hold power. Hegemony is an invisible form of power. Its effectiveness relies on this invisibility and the acceptance of the power relation by all parties (Ahmed, 2012; Darder, et al., 2017; DiAngelo, 2018; Egbo, 2019; Foucault, 1980). The forms of hegemony discussed below both *create* power imbalances and *maintain* invisibility of consequent violence in our institutions of higher education.

### Hegemony of the Marginalized

Egbo (2019) argues that “when hegemony is operational, dominant groups are able to eliminate resistance and opposition by (re) presenting imposed power and ideological domination as consensus” (p. 10). This consensus, or “common-sense thinking” is cultivated through the many types of power relations discussed earlier (Darder, et al., 2017, p. 12; see also Casado Pérez, 2018; Egbo, 2019). Augsburger (1992) describes *common-sense* as “the expression of our particular cultural pool of assumptions” (p. 8).

Galtung (1969) argues that the objects of structural violence are “persuaded”, rather than coerced (p. 173). Thus, hegemony can be seen as a form of power, *conditioned power* as it does not use direct violence, but instead, people are socialized to believe the story of those in power and to support them, even if their interests are incompatible. This socialization is enacted through the application of both personal and institutional rewards (reward or compensatory power), threats of punishment (coercive or condign power), or belief that those who have power are the experts (expert power) (Darder, et al., 2017, Bishop; 2015; Fanon, 1963; McLaren, 2015).

Over time, and through constant reinforcement, the ideology of the privileged asserts their power as ‘right’, or the ‘way things are’. This ‘knowledge’ or ‘truth’ becomes internalized in those without power and they accept the truth of those in power. This conditioned perception is a form of violence and has impacts on marginalized students, staff, and faculty. Further, the consensus-based idea of educational institutions as neutral, rather than as sites where privilege and social class are reproduced, removes responsibility from the

mainstream populace for the lack of success for many marginalized students, staff, and faculty. However, teaching is not neutral activity, it is a political activity (Bailey, 2000; Battiste, 2013; Cote-Meek, 2014; Dei, 2002; Egbo, 2019; Freire, 2000; Hall, 2018; Henry, et. al, 2017; Howard, 2016; Schwebel and Chrisite, 2007).

Any attempt to understand hegemony and how educational institutions perpetuate inequalities must also examine the *hidden curriculum* or ‘hidden knowledge’ (Egbo, 2019; Vicot, Semper, and Blasco, 2018; Bear Nicholas, n.d.). Educational institutions operate through a hidden curriculum that works against the success of marginalized students. Egbo (2019) defines the hidden curriculum as “the behaviours, attitudes, and knowledge the school unintentionally teaches through its content selection, routines, and social relationships” (p.73). The hidden curriculum inserts dominant ideologies while diminishing the knowledge, values, and world views of marginalized groups (Egbo, 2019; Dei, 2002; Henry and Tator, 2017; Kanu, 2016; Vicot, Semper and Blasco, 2018). The hidden curriculum often manifests as institutionalized structural violence in the “forms of discrimination, exclusions, and oppression built into taken-for-granted norms” (Kanu, 2016, p. 151; see also Fleras, 2017). The hidden curriculum also supports social reproduction. In Canada for example, middle-class White culture and values are embedded in the hidden curriculum and so those who are from this culture have “cultural capital”, or hidden knowledge. Students whose culture is not represented are disadvantaged and often seen as less capable of learning and are streamed into less intellectually demanding occupations. (Bourdieu, 1997; Egbo, 2019; McLeod, 2009; McLaren, 2015; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014).

### Ignorance of Hegemony by the Privileged

Ignorance blinds those who were born to privilege to the daily struggles of those who are marginalized in our communities. Galtung (1969) relates that structural violence is “as natural as the air around us” (p. 173). The violence is embedded in day-to-day practices and so is normalized, making it invisible and is the reason for much of our complacency and our perceived lack of responsibility as educators.

Without an understanding of power, faculty and staff cannot see or question this violence and do not see the harm they are doing. Critical theorists argue that social justice

education is needed if we are to question the monopoly on what counts as knowledge, and what counts as education (hooks, 1994; McLaren; 2015; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014). Post-secondary faculty and staff must become critical theorists of their *own* practice if we are to stop the violence directed at marginalized faculty, staff, and students (Howard, 2016; Sensoy and Di Angelo, 2017). Hooks (1994) argues that the goal of education should be to teach social justice education, not to uphold the status quo, and that both students *and teachers* must engage in the interrogation of power (see also Hall, 2018).

While violence may not be overtly legitimized by the dominant group, it is covertly legitimized if the dominant group does little to stop the violence. (Chomsky, 2018; Fleras, 2017; Galtung, 1985; Howard, 2016; McLaren, 2015). However, it is important to understand that while marginalized people are the ones who suffer from invisible hegemonic power, those who would be considered privileged are also impacted. That is, asymmetrical control and power *are often invisible to the dominant group* as well (Egbo, 2019; Galtung, 1969; Galtung 1985; Galtung, 1990, McLaren, 2015). Educators and administrators in higher education in Canada are kept blind by the same mechanisms of structural and cultural violence and accept that things are ‘the way they are’. They too have been indoctrinated into the myth of meritocracy that tells us that we all have equal chances if we just work hard enough.

Jay McLeod (2009) poignantly argues that there is a myth embedded in the American consciousness (and I would argue the Canadian consciousness as well) that it is the land of equal opportunity. He states that because of this myth, people believe that educational achievement is “due to differences in ambition and ability” (p. 3). He argues further that this dream of upward mobility is not a dream at all but “a hallucination” (p. 4). Leatherman and Griffin (2011) note that actors of a ‘failed state’ are often blamed for the failure due to their own “dysfunctional” population without considering their colonial background.

What is important to consider is that educators do not *innately* understand that structural violence represented by the power to say what constitutes knowledge and "proper learning" leaves the deck stacked against any that do not represent the group in power. Those with power are the ones who are frequently the least aware of it (Egbo, 2019; Sensoy and

DiAngelo, 2017). As noted above, many who are privileged have been taught to see the problem as inherent within marginalized peoples themselves.

Other scholars like Chrisjohn et al. (2002) argue that we do have responsibility for our actions and saying “I didn’t know” is not enough. He argues that “observing is not an involuntary act, but is a conditioned and selective choice” (p.7). However, the key word here is *conditioned*. The omission of our duty to provide safe spaces is complicated as many of those who are privileged don’t even know *there is something they should be observing*. As Fleras (2017) argues, our “polite fictions” routinely “gloss over inconvenient truths” and *whitewash* our collective consciousness (pp. 146-147). Again, it is important to note that these “fictions” embedded in the mechanisms of invisibility work equally as well for the privileged. McLaren, a leading advocate for social justice education, shares that at one time he too was “blind to the most damaging effects of exercising my professional duties among the children of the disaffected, the disadvantaged, the disenfranchised, the dispossessed” (2015, p. xxiv). The story of my learning journey at the beginning of this dissertation resonates with this statement.

### *Segmentation*

*Segmentation* is a form of both cultural and structural violence and refers to giving the marginalized only a very partial view of what goes on, or limits access to information (Weigert, 2008, Galtung, 1990). For example, we are provided only a limited view of peoples’ reality through the media we see and read, the textbooks we use, the limited access to government or church documents, and the stories we have been told and tell each other. Though it is changing, we rarely hear the voices of the marginalized. What we hear and see still predominantly reflects the view of the dominant group who holds more power. For example, though staff and faculty members in Canada hear about the problems faced by Indigenous communities, they may not understand how broken treaties, residential schools, the sixties scoop, cultural genocide, and racist laws and policies contribute to these problems (Chrisjohn, et al. 2002; Czyzewski, 2011, TRC 2015). This lack of understanding may extend to other marginalized groups as current assumptions that drive people’s beliefs are based on ignorance and historical assumptions. Canadians often do not have the opportunity to hear or understand marginalized peoples’ narratives. However, hearing and legitimizing

the voices of *all people* is essential if moving beyond coexistence to positive relationships is the goal (Khan, 2019).

Penetration combined with segmentation ensures the oppressive system allows only a very partial view of oppressive structures. This limited view often pertains equally to those who are in positions of privilege or those that are marginalized.

### *Marginalization*

Galtung (1990) states that *marginalization* refers to the exclusion of people based on their position in the socioeconomic structure, their race, gender, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, or physical ability and reduces their life chances (see also, Darder, et al., 2017; McLaren, 2009; Young, 1990). Marginalized people have less power. As stated earlier, students and faculty who are ‘other’ in some ways are marginalized and experience violence in Canadian educational systems through biased attitudes of teachers and administrators, eurocentric curricula, biased assessment practises, streaming of marginalized students into non-academic programs, and unrepresentative administration, faculty, and staffing. (Battiste, 2013; Dei and Kempf, 2013; Egbo, 2019; DiAngelo, 2018; Fleras, 2017; Henry and Tator, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2016; McLaren, 2015).

While it is understood that all marginalized people experience various forms of social dominance and violence, in the interest of managing the scope of the discussion in this section, what follows focuses primarily on the impacts of racism in our institutions. While not discussed specifically in this study, it is understood that race does not stand on its own and intersects with other identity markers such as age, gender, gender identity, ability, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation (Ahmed, 2012; Darder et al., 2017; Henry et al., 2017; hooks, 2000; Luxton and Mossman, 2012; Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2017).

It is important to understand that racial categorization is not apolitical or neutral. Categorizing necessarily focuses on boundaries and differences that can lead to marginalization and the “justified” denigration, abuse and exploitation that may follow<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> How being described in someone else’s terms can lead to denigration is vividly illustrated in the book *Night Spirits* by Bussidor and Bilgen-Reinart (2000).

Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov (2004) argue that a state can exacerbate difference and create conflict though their ability to say, “what is what and who is who and thereby to impose legitimate principles of vision and division of the social world” (p.32). This identification, or labelling, is used to divide and rank people to “subordinate, exclude and exploit them” (Wacquant, 1997, pp. 34. cited in Brubaker, et al., 2004). The authors further argue that state imposed racial or ethnic categories often are intentional and have led to denigration and genocide. While current instances of categorization may lead to less direct violence, they continue to support instances of structural violence, such as deciding who has access to certain types of jobs or educational opportunities. Racist categories have also shifted over the years. As Leonard (2018) notes, as biological notions of race inferiority were disproved, notions of cultural inferiority replaced them creating a shift from “biological racism to cultural racism” (p. xvi, see also DiAngelo, 2018).

Gary Howard (2016) states that racism, specifically White dominance, is a “selective poison that continually contaminates the lifeblood of those people who have not marked with the genetic code of whiteness” (p. 23). Critical and Critical Race theorists agree that race must be seen as a significant variable when examining marginalization and social justice within our educational institutions (Dei and Kempf, 2013; DiAngelo, 2018; Egbo, 2019; Fleras, 2017; Gilmour, Bhandar, Heer and Michael, 2012; Harper, 2012; Henry and Tator, 2009; James, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2016). James (2010) describes racism as, the uncritical acceptance of a negative social definition of a colonized or subordinate group typically identified by physical features (i.e. race-black, brown, yellow, red). These groups are usually believed to be intellectually, physically, and culturally inferior, which gives oppressive groups “justifiable” reasons to dominate and oppress them by denying them power and privilege. (p.136).

This definition is valuable as it points to the fact that that racism is not *real* in any objective sense. Rather, it is a socially constructed *relationship* that is used for maintaining power and dominance of the privileged, usually by dominant White groups (Ahmed, 2012; DiAngelo, 2018; Fleras, 2017; Galtung, 1990; James, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2016). Fleras (2017) argues that “race, ethnicity, and aboriginality” must be understood as perspectives

taken; a way of “seeing and being seen” in the context of inequality and injustice (p. xi, see also Rothbart and Churubin, 2011).

Marginalization is also self-reinforcing. Many marginalized students come from families who have a lower socioeconomic status and lower income can interfere with educational attainment because of increased stress, poorer housing, and lack of tuition (Bear Nicholas, n.d; Harges, 2013; McLeod, 2009; TRC, 2015). Lack of equivalent educational opportunities in the kindergarten to Grade 12 school system experienced by marginalized communities (often due to inequitable funding) leads to students who do not have the basic math and English skills needed for entrance or for continued success in post-secondary programs. Students may also lack adequate study skills and positive role models as many are still the first from their families to engage in post-secondary education (Battiste, 2013; Harges, 2013; Henry et al. 2017). Marginalized students fail and are marginalized because they fail.

Continued marginalization of people within our institutions of higher education causes harm and has a significant impact on their opportunities or what Galtung (1969) calls there “life chances”. It is important to understand that marginalization of people is not just something that happened in the past- it happens everyday in our institutions. As an example, Indigenous peoples in Canada and in Canadian post-secondary institutions continue to be marginalized and discriminated against because of racially biased stigmatization and stereotyping (Belanger et al., 2012, Fiske, Belanger and Gregory, 2010; Fleras, 2017; Palmer and Driedger, 2018). Despite the end of the more obvious direct violence of the past, our institutions persist in forms of cultural violence characterized by Colonial assimilationist programs that reflect Western institutional values, beliefs and practices and focus only on Western European ways of knowing (BearPaw Legal, 2015; Fleras; 2017; McFarlane & Schabus, 2017; Menzies, 2008; Ross, 2014; Scarborough Charter, 2022; Wallace, 2013). Causing harm through marginalization manifests in low enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of Indigenous students compared to the general population (42% compared to 78%) and the gap in basic foundation skills (math, reading) (Battiste, 2013; Bouvier, Battiste, and Laughlin, 2016; Perry, 2012). Hardwick et al. (2016) state that “the most serious consequences of colonial practices include the harm done to Indigenous ways of

learning and knowing, threatening formal and informal education for future generations of Indigenous students” (p. 135; see also Glen, 2016).

Further, the historic trauma and current external realities of marginalized students can create internalized racism which can lead to uncertainty regarding their identity and worth. This confusion can lead to a sense of hopelessness and lateral violence which can impact their physical and mental health (Battiste, 2013). While the information above relates to Indigenous students, there is a parallel experience for Immigrant and Black/African Canadian students (Chaterjee, Mucina, & Tam, 2012; Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994; Khan, 2019; University of Toronto, Scarborough Charter, 2022). To exacerbate the problem of marginalization, those who are privileged often cannot see their racism and continue to blame racialized people for their socio-economic status or how well they do in school. Henry et al. (2017) argue that in Canadian universities our concept of neutrality or “‘racelessness’ and ‘colour blindness’ serve as alibis for the persistence of inequality and racialized and gendered social hierarchies” (p. 13).

### *Fragmentation*

Finally, *fragmentation* refers to systems that keep marginalized people away from each other, so they do not have a chance to talk, resist, or work in solidarity to make change (Galtung, 1990, pp. 292-294, see also Bishop, 2015; Fanon 1963; Freire, 2000). Chaterjee et al. (2012) tells us that “together, the pathologizing of “Asian” bodies, the intrinsic inferiority and criminality of black bodies, and the always disappearing Indigenous bodies work to triangulate racialized communities against one another through a logic of white supremacy” (p. 131). Importantly for this investigation, it is critical to consider whether fragmentation may be a factor in EDI training efforts at post-secondary as those in power work to keep the majority of the privileged ignorant and complicit by keeping invisible the structures of power.

### *Power and Resistance*

As discussed above, both the marginalized and the privileged may be blind to their complicity in oppression. However, as marginalized groups become informed and claim their power, they begin to resist the status quo (but often pay a price for doing so). In

concert, dominant groups are forced to think about social justice issues but are also pushing back as their power, control, and identity is challenged (DiAngelo, 2018; Howard, 2016).

### *Resistance of the Marginalized*

Egbo (2019) argues that “when people become conscious of disempowering social structures, they develop counter-hegemonic resistance and challenge the status quo, including unfair practices, ideologies, and attitudes that are transmitted through the school” (p. 1). Darder, et al. (2017) argue that resistance begins when marginalized people critically challenge “notions that denied them their humanity, imposed them as a disposable class, and trampled their self-respect as people” (p. 3).

As an example, resistance is especially poignant for Indigenous students and faculty. (Battiste, 2013; Bouvier et al., 2016; Cote-Meek; Dei, 2002; Kanu, 2016). Uribe (2006) argues that for some Indigenous people, buying into the states notions of education is to “lose independence and to be culturally spirited, this means assimilation” (p. 17). Crey (n.d.) also cautions that schooling has largely been a mechanism for assimilation. She argues that “educational institutions continue to represent a threat to Aboriginal Communities and cultures, leaving many Aboriginal people feeling deeply ambivalent about them and the history they represent” (p. 6). As argued above, continued structural violence experienced by Indigenous students creates a disproportionate disengagement and failure within our school systems. Not only are we not meeting their needs, but we may also in fact be causing more damage (Cote-Meek, 2014).

Passive acceptance of assimilation efforts and prescriptive government processes have not served the Indigenous population well (Hokowhitu, 2010). The long history of cultural genocide and assimilation policies has led many to believe that non-Indigenous staff members and administrators still think they know what is best for Indigenous people. The postsecondary institution is a microcosm of our larger society (Watt & Linley, 2013, p. 7). Given the history of the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, mistrust and rejection of government processes represented by the postsecondary institution can be seen as a reasoned response rather than as confusing, and irrational behavior.

### *Refusal versus Resistance*

Grande (2018) argues that refusal is different from resistance in that it does not “take authority as a given” (p. 181). She notes that refusal includes refusing to buy into dominant knowledge formation and that “asserting Indigenous Knowledge itself as a form of refusal; a space of epistemic disobedience that is “delinked” from Western, liberal, capitalist understandings of knowledge as production” (Grande, 2018, p. 181). She cautions however, that “academic refusal” within the university is not without risk.

Refusal to participate in the politics of respectability that characterizes institutional governance can result in social isolation, administrative retribution, and struggles with self-worth. Similarly, the refusal to comply with the normative structures of tenure and promotion (e.g., emphasizing quantity over quality, privileging single-authored monographs) can and does “lead to increased marginalization, exploitation, and job loss....and the continuation of settler domination and colonization” (pp. 181-182).

Ferguson (2015) also argues that those in positions of power prefer resistance because it can be “negotiated or recognized,” but refusal “throws into doubt” the entire system and is thereby more dangerous (cited in Grande, 2018, p.183). Cote-Meek (2014) relates that Indigenous scholars are often not seen as “real academics” and if they speak out against what they see as continued assimilation, they are often labeled as too sensitive or troublemakers (pp.82-84, see also Bishop, 2015; Henry et al., 2017; Wilson, 2008). Grande (2018) argues that “‘reform’ of the university is untenable, and that such efforts tacitly, if unintentionally, perpetuate the very racist structures they fight” (p. 169).

Resistance versus refusal is evident within the Indigenous community itself, where two distinct philosophies related to Indigenous education are in conflict. *Parallelism* is a form of refusal and argues for a separate and distinct, but equal, education system characterized by a drive for sovereignty, self-determination, and a revitalization of Traditional culture (Widdowson and Howard, 2013, p. xv, see also Smith, 2018). The other, *integrationism*, is a form of resistance and focuses on reconciliation and ways in which to integrate Indigenous students into the existing educational structure. Integrationists fear that without integration, Indigenous students will continue to lack the training needed to

participate fully in the job market, thus perpetuating or prolonging their marginalization (Widdowson and Howard, 2013, pp. xvii-xix).

### *Resistance of the Privileged*

Yes. I think it [perceptions of safety in our institutions] affects a perception of how radical the [diversity] training needs to be and how deeply it needs to change structures. There's resistance to those deeper changes, partly because they're hard and they upset power and established ways of doing things, and we would need a stronger rationale and commitment to social justice (and sense that we're not meeting the mark) AND a sense that we can really change things to support really radical diversity training. (Survey participant)

There is significant resistance to changing oppressive power structures as the dominant population acts to maintain the status quo (Carnevale and Strohl, 2013; DiAngelo, 2018; Harber and Sakade, 2009; Hutchison and Wiggan, 2009; Schwebel and Christie, 2007; Leonardo, 2018). As Galtung noted in 1969, “when the structure is threatened, those who benefit from structural violence, above all those who are at the top, will try to preserve the status quo so well geared to protect their interests” (p. 179). This resistance may be caused by threats to identity and fear and anxiety about losing control while stepping outside of our “whitewashed world” (Howard, 2016, p. 18).

Pushback against meaningful EDI training comes in various forms. Darder, et al. (2017) argue “each time a radical form threatens the integrity of the status quo, generally this element is appropriated, stripped of its transformative intent, and reified into a palatable form” (p. 12). Students who are ‘other’ find their culture essentialized (if discussed at all), further negating their identity (DiAngelo, 2018; Fischer, 2011; Lee, 2008). These essentialized or tokenized additions to the curriculum are what Howard (2016) terms the “Heroes and Holidays” approach to multicultural education (*Diversity week*, *Aboriginal days*) (p. xv). Galtung and Udayakumar (2013) argue that peace education efforts within schools “tended to accumulate dust, and became gray and flat like everything else. What is left is only the alibi: society has done something about “peace” and “development,” it is on the school curriculum. Bravo” (p. 4). Gorski (2013) states that he has “watched *diversity* and

*equality* and *inclusion* be appropriated by people and institutions wishing to sprinkle them with glitter and feign the appearance of institutional change, the same way so many people use Safe Space stickers” (para. 6).

Pushback also comes in the form of “reverse discrimination” and is evidenced when White students and staff who often see any specialized programming and supports to marginalized populations as giving unfair advantage and resent any resources spent on these initiatives (Bishop, 2015; DiAngelo, 2018; Hardses, 2013; St. Denis, 2011). We can also see pushback in the rise of xenophobic White identity politics (Chideya, 2016; Leonardo, 2018; Richmond, 2017; Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2017). Leonardo (2018) argues that the appropriation of identity politics by Whites speaks to its “desperation, as a last measure, to resort making itself finally visible” He notes however, that once visible, “it will be difficult for whites henceforth to disappear into the brightness of the cave out of which they have been forced” (p. xviii). While meaningful EDI training can ameliorate ignorance of conflict and violence in our institutions, the personal transformation needed may not come without personal cost (Bishop, 2015; DiAngelo, 2018; Howard, 2016; Kornelsen, 2013). As Schwalbe (2008) argues, “...eradicating oppression requires challenging the moral background rules that allow the devaluation of subordinate groups” (p. 180)—not an easy task. Faculty and staff need the ability to be able to see and analyze power relations and think and act critically about equity in our institutions. They also need to be supported through this process.

Rocke (2012) argues that fear of exposing their ignorance and being called a racist stops people from engaging in meaningful dialogue. However, this "culture of silence" is what maintains racism and prejudice (see also Harris, 2017). Further, this avoidance of dialogue and interaction may be seen by marginalized populations as further evidence of prejudice. Keehn (2015) notes that it can feel like an impossible task for dominant group members to “‘wakeup’ and to move away from feelings of being unaware, apathetic, or overwhelmed” (p. 373). Looking at our implicit bias tells us that we cannot trust our own perceptions, and this can be frightening (DiAngelo, 2018). Often, when Canadian administrators, faculty and staff begin to learn that they are causing harm through their ignorance, especially when they consider themselves to be caring and open-minded, they feel

their identity threatened which can cause anger, anxiety, embarrassment, confusion, fear, guilt, and pushback (Bishop, 2015; Cormier, 2017; Darder et al., 2017; Devine, Plant, and Buswell, 2000; DiAngelo, 2018; Fleras, 2017; Howard, 2016).

### Power and EDI Training for Faculty and Staff

The deeper, more meaningful social justice-based EDI training that is needed may be unfamiliar and difficult to many who were educated in an institution with a functionalist mandate. As argued at the beginning of this chapter, the interrogation of power and its relation to knowledge, as well as their mutually reinforcing nature, is key to understanding institutions of higher education as sites where conflict and violence exists, and inequality can be reinforced or dismantled. It is vital for post-secondary faculty and staff to understand that those who hold power legitimate what counts as knowledge, what knowledge is important to learn, how it is produced, how it is disseminated, what we teach, who is a good student, who is a good instructor, and how we prepare those who teach (Ahmed, 2012; Howard, 2016; Darder, et al., 2017 Vicot, Semper and Blasco, 2018). While this argument is usually made in relation to what and how we teach students, it is equally relevant when analysing what and how we teach faculty and staff. For those working in post-secondary, critically examining power and its relationship to knowledge is crucial for an examination of *their own* education related to EDI.

Understanding power and its relation to knowledge is important to the analysis of what is happening with EDI training for faculty and staff for two reasons. First, without a clear understanding of power and its relation to knowledge, post-secondary faculty and staff will not have the capacity to support the types of social justice goals articulated in goal and strategic plan statements. Second, revealing the impact of power and knowledge relationships may elucidate why, institutionally, there has been little focus on building capacity for meaningful EDI training capacity.

Power and knowledge relationships unfold and interact in complex ways as knowledge further legitimates power relations in a continual and mutually reinforcing cycle. Further, once legitimated, these relationships become essentially invisible and so rarely questioned by faculty and staff; they are normalized and seen as ‘the way things are’ (Ahmed, 2012; Bishop, 2015; Darder, et al. 2017; Fleras, 2017).

However, as McLaren (2015) argues, it is imperative for teachers and students to ask the questions “How is knowledge produced? Who produces it? How is it appropriated? Who consumes it? How is it consumed?” (p. 12). These are the questions that need to be raised in EDI training because educators must be able to critically examine, or deconstruct, the extant “regimes of truth” (Foucault, 1980, p. 131), make visible the relationships between power and knowledge and understand how oppressive relationships are supported or dismantled (Cremin and Guilherme, 2016; Egbo, 2019; Freire, 2000; McLaren, 2015; Rhoads and Szelényi, 2011; Tuck, 2018).

Finally, imbalanced power relationships effect the type of EDI training offered in an institution and how it is valued, evaluated, and resourced. For example, those in power who come from a functionalist perspective will see EDI training in terms of utilitarian goals (legal compliance for access, meeting labour law requirements, or access to funding) and this type of training will be seen as critical and mandatory. In contrast, when those in power see EDI training in terms of the social justice goals (insuring equity through building respectful relationships) it is often considered “nice to have” instead of “need to have”. This difference in perception will impact the type of EDI training that is resourced and whether there are any processes in place to measure the impact of the training.

### 3.4 Conclusion

At the beginning of the chapter power was defined as *the ability to act and produce an effect, and the possession of control or influence over others*. Dominant groups in our post-secondary institutions are defined by their power over others and being able to see power imbalances is central to understanding the current state of EDI training in our institutions. As Galtung suggests, if we don’t see *direct* violence, we may not see any violence at all and conclude that things are peaceful (safe). If we believe our institutions are basically safe places, we will see little reason to change either ourselves or our institutions. The invisibility of structural violence brought about by power imbalances is dangerous and must be ameliorated. As Martin Luther King states, “It’s not the violence of the few that scares me, it’s the silence of the many”.

Power relationships conceal past and continued structural violence in our post-secondary institutions. As was argued above, the invisibility and asymmetrical nature of power within

the academy is inextricably tied to how, or whether, we perceive the need for meaningful EDI training for faculty and staff. Galtung's (1990) theory of the *Violence Triangle* was used here to unveil violence and conflict within our institutions and uncover the nature and mechanisms of invisibility and power. As argued through this work, if our administrators, faculty, and staff cannot see the mutually reinforcing cycles that support oppression, social reproduction, and the maintenance of the status quo within our own walls, it is impossible to see the need to disrupt them. If we cannot see the impact of power, it will be difficult to see the need for more meaningful EDI training.

Differences in knowledge and power impact structural violence and manifest in post-secondary education in three ways: as effect, as cause and as (partial) solution. Power imbalances create a lack of, or unequal educational opportunities. Power imbalances cause and perpetuate structural and cultural violence through the teaching of conformity to the existing ways of knowing and structures that perpetuate the violence. And finally, gaining a *meaningful* understanding of power imbalances can be part of a solution if it allows people to see the previously invisible cultural and structural violence in our post-secondary institutions. Considering these findings, the research survey and focus group asked questions directly about power and questions were also asked that were less direct but were intended to get at data that may signal power imbalances.

What is meant by "meaningful training" is described in the following chapter related to methodical research issues. Specifically, the difference between "EDI training" and "Social Justice Education" is discussed in terms of the intent and the outcomes of each. As will be discussed more fully below, most current EDI training initiatives tend to focus on types of diversity alone and highlight *differences* and how to manage them (Ahmed, 2012). In contrast, initiatives that attempt to address diversity and its impact on equity provide a deeper, critical understanding of how power and privilege support inequities and focus on *relationship building*.

## Chapter 4: Researching EDI Training: A Review of Methodological Issues

The key terms used in EDI training “from ‘inclusion’ and ‘integration’ to ‘racism’ and ‘diversity’ are stretched to mean everything and yet nothing, without much concern for precision or clarity” (Fleras, 2017, p. x).

### 4. 1 Introduction

Most research that addresses the ways in which we learn about equity, diversity, and inclusion are found under the headings of diversity *training* or Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) *training*<sup>6</sup>. A basic search for literature related to EDI training yields, literally, thousands of studies. Most of these studies look at EDI training for staff members in organizations and is considered a form of professional development. However, as noted above, there are few studies that examine EDI training for faculty and staff in post-secondary institutions.

There is also an abundance of research found related to social justice education (or peace education in all its variants), but these training initiatives are most often focused on educating students or community members, rather than faculty or staff members. While in many ways peace education appears to be synonymous with EDI training, most of the research from the Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) field would not meet the above definition of professional development as these initiatives are generally targeted toward community participants or primary and secondary students in post-conflict contexts as a form of “peacebuilding” (Del Felice, Karako, and Wisler, 2015; Galtung and Udayakumar, 2013; Kester and Cremin, 2017; Reardon and Snauwaert, 2015; Rocke, 2012; Salomon, 2009; Tinker, 2016a). An exception might be professional development for “peace workers”.

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<sup>6</sup> Unless specified, throughout this work the term *EDI training* is used to refer to all the ways we learn about race, reconciliation, ethnicity, culture, class, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, physical and cognitive ability, and power and privilege as this is the term currently used most broadly in the literature and in most post-secondary institutions across Canada (DiAngelo, 2018; Universities Canada, 2019).

While these professional development activities do correspond with the definition of professional development and have similar content (environmental sustainability, peace and human rights, feminism, anti-racism), and training context (organizations), the primary *goal* of the training is to build the knowledge and skills needed for peace workers to support conflict transformation (Training of Trainers in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation, Molitor, 2007; United Nations peace keeping forces, United Nations Peacekeeping Resource Hub, 2019). Though the end goal of all EDI training might be conflict transformation, it is not the primary role (job function) of most staff members in the examples used in the bulk of the literature.

It was interesting to note that in a review of the literature that PACS scholars were more likely to use terms like equity, diversity, and inclusion training, while research from outside of PACS (education, management, sociology, medicine, psychology) rarely use the term “peace education”. In fact, three meta-analyses on EDI training did not search the term peace education for their preliminary cull of articles, nor were any PACS journals reviewed (Alhejji et al., 2016; Bezrukova, Spell, Perry, and Jehn, 2016; Kalinoski, Steele-Johnson, Peyton, Leas, Steinke, and Bowling, 2012). A word search for “peace” in all 3 meta-analyses studies came up empty.

Within this abundance of research, there appears to be a common theme that the study of EDI training is fragmented and struggles with definitional and methodological issues-regardless of the type of EDI training or related research. These common issues are examined in the following sections as the concerns raised informed both the design of this study as well as several of the questions asked in the survey.

## 4.2 Research Issues

Despite the large amount of research related to EDI training, drawing conclusions from the research literature is difficult as what is meant by “EDI training” is often unclear. As described in the quotation above, it can mean everything and yet nothing as terms used are often not defined or are unclear. As such, one of the questions in the survey asked participants directly to define what they meant by EDI training. While there was no

consensus, definitions generally fell into descriptions of a process or descriptions of an anticipated outcome.

Berzekova, Jehn, and Spell (2012) state, there are “a myriad of different forms, shapes, and combinations of diversity training” (p. 222). Due to this variation, learning opportunities related to EDI, human rights, and reconciliation can either be seen as ubiquitous or rare in institutions and organizations, depending on the definition used (Reardon and Snauwaert, 2015). Also, without this clarity, scholars and practitioners viewing results may end up talking at cross-purposes. This is an important consideration as this study asked participants to describe the EDI training in their institution. Responses to these questions varied but this variation may be due to the practitioner’s definition of EDI training as well as what is taking place. While this research does not resolve these issues, it attempted to provide some clarity by asking questions about the form the training takes, the content of the training, and its overall purpose.

Further, Alhejji and Garavan (2013) argue that while all EDI training shares some common goals, a distinction needs to be made between *EDI training* and *diversity education* as they represent separate streams of research and practices. They argue that diversity education takes place in educational institutions and “focuses on enhancing the diversity awareness of students and graduates to prepare them for the world of work and effective functioning in organisations” EDI training, on the other hand, is directed at *employees* and focuses on “specific organisational goals” and is customized to address specific, identified needs (p. 2). This distinction does help parse out the information related to EDI training and reminds us that institutes of higher education are themselves “organizations” whose faculty and staff members undertake “EDI training”.

Alhejji et al. (2016) note that the variety of training designs make it difficult to draw conclusions and the variety may “potentially explain the inconsistency of outcomes across studies and the lack of evidence at the organizational level” (p.96). Variables such as the type of EDI training, length of training, or content of training are rarely considered when discussions of efficacy or impact are debated (Alhejji and Garavan, 2013). A clear understanding of what we mean by “EDI training” is important as it will impact what we want to know about it and what variables or outcomes are of interest to study. Clarity is also

important in terms of researching the impacts of EDI learning opportunities as initiatives that identify an increase in equity and inclusion as a goal may seem as if it has failed, but in truth, it may not have really been tried (Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014). To provide clarity about the type of EDI training discussed, survey participants in this study were asked to provide information related to type of EDI training, the length of training, the content of training, the purpose of the training, and the anticipated outcomes of the training.

### 4.3 Defining EDI Training: Professional Development Training versus Social Justice Education

As discussed in Chapter 2, many scholars and practitioners working in various organizations, EDI training departments, and peace education organizations agree that training/educational efforts must be part of our response to inequities. For example, in a national survey that studied barriers to employment of Indigenous peoples in the Canadian public service, researchers reported that “the overall findings from both the survey and the Dialogue Circles indicate that appropriate cultural awareness training is essential to building a workplace that is supportive, respectful and inclusive” (Government of Canada, 2017 ; see also Government of Canada’s, *Evaluation of Canada’s Action Plan Against Racisms* (CAPAR), 2010). Danesh (2015), working from a peace education framework, notes that “education is regarded as the most effective tool for developing a unity-based worldview and for creating both a culture of peace and a culture of healing (p. 147). However, as noted above, there is little agreement about *what* is important to learn, *how* it should be taught and measured, *what* the purpose is or *who* the information should benefit. This lack of clarity is exacerbated by the ongoing debate in the literature about the difference between training and education. Therefore, it is important to at least understand the questions raised about the difference between the two forms of learning as they predominate the literature related to EDI training and the analysis of this research.

Some scholars frame the debate about the difference between training and education in terms of the *process* used. For example, education is concerned with learning theory *about* something and training is the *application* of that theoretical learning (Blair and Serafini, 2016). Others frame the debate in terms of the expected outcomes—is the learning meant to

be “transformative” for the learner or is it meant to build knowledge and skills the learner will need for work (Giroux, 1988)? Still others frame the debate in terms of the *purpose* of the learning. Others question whether the purpose of the learning should be for conscientization or to provide the knowledge and skills needed for work (Elmore, 2014; Freire, 2009). Other scholars argue that there is no difference and that all learning is part of a continuum, and any difference is a matter of perception dependent on your focus on the continuum (Surbhi, 2015).

Indeed, the literature review completed for this work does appear to indicate that learning about EDI falls on a continuum from gaining a simple awareness of the types of difference to a deeper understanding of how differences in power create structural violence. Thus, it was important for this study to distinguish learning initiatives that typically address *type(s) of diversity* only (a more functionalist approach), and those that attempt to address the impact of that diversity on *equity* (a more social justice approach) (Berry, 2013; Schoorman and Bogotch, 2010; Smith, 2015).

Initiatives focusing on types of diversity alone highlight *differences* and how to manage them (Ahmed, 2012). In contrast, initiatives that attempt to address diversity and its impact on equity provide a deeper, critical understanding of how power and privilege support inequities and focus on *relationship building*. There is ample research that suggests that the latter must be addressed if learning initiatives are to cultivate a deep enough understanding of power and privilege to foster behaviours that increase inclusion, build relationships, and support reconciliation efforts in our post-secondary institutions (Berry, 2013; Balcazar, Suarez-Balcazar, and Taylor-Ritzler, 2009; Weaver, 2008). A more thorough exploration of each type of EDI learning opportunity offered below also makes evident the connection between the type of training offered and power relationships (Elmore, 2014).

### EDI Training with a Focus on Difference: A Functionalist Perspective

*The Glossary of Educational Reform* (2013) defines the term professional development as “a wide variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve

their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness” (para 1, 2). The *Business Dictionary Online* defines professional development as a “process of improving and increasing capabilities of staff through access to education and training opportunities in the workplace” (para. 1). And finally, the online *Cambridge Dictionary* defines professional development as “training that is given to managers and people working in professions to increase their knowledge and skills” The common denominator in these definitions is that professional development training is directed at *staff*, which in this instance refers to post-secondary faculty and staff (which includes administrators).

The bulk of the research found in the literature is related to this type of learning initiative. This EDI training addresses differences and the management of those differences. The literature indicates that the impacts of this type of training range from slightly effective, neutral, ineffective, or damaging in terms of increasing inclusion and reconciliation efforts —by which I mean efforts to equalize peoples’ life chances. This type of training falls under the headings of equity, diversity and inclusion, diversity, cultural sensitivity, multicultural or intercultural training and focus on “celebrating difference”, legal compliance, increasing tolerance, and improving how we live, work, and teach others who are different, or “other” (Berry, 2013; Rocke, 2012). This training uses predominately didactic methods to teach and often focuses on creating an *awareness* of differences and how to manage or exploit those differences and is usually offered as half day training sessions (Ahmed, 2012; Alhejji, H., Garavan, Carbery, O'Brien, and McGuire, 2016; Garavan, Carbery, O'Brien, F., and McGuire, 2016; Bezrukova, Jehn and Spell, 2012; Bezrukova, et al., 2016; Kalinoski, et al., 2012; Watt and Linley, 2013).

The research raises several concerns about this type of training. First, as Guibernau and Rex (2010) note, the act of defining what is “diverse” in the first place reflects the power to say what is not diverse or ‘normal’. Most EDI training is intended to increase inclusion of “others” who are not a White, Western, heterosexual male (Ahmed, 2012; Chaterjee, et al., 2012; Ste. Denis, 2011). Another concern raised is that these approaches do not consider intersectionality of identities within diverse groups and instead highlight superficial differences in values and beliefs that may reinforce stereotypes and exacerbate misunderstanding and conflict (Carbado, Crenshaw, Mays, and Tomlinson, 2013; Rocke,

2012; Walter, 2018). As Bregman (2012) states, “EDI training doesn’t extinguish prejudice. It promotes it” (para. 15). While most EDI training efforts state that their goal is a more inclusive institution, research suggests that very few professional development initiatives are designed to support this goal (Bezrukova, et al., 2016).

Also, the motivation for this type of training may differ from other types of training even though the *stated* goal is increased equity, diversity, and inclusion is the same. Research efforts are often undertaken to make the “business case” for EDI training (Kalinowski, et al., 2013; Tomlinson and Schwabenland, 2010). Rocke (2012) states that most EDI training initiatives are focused on legal compliance related to diversity and equity (see also Alhejji and Garavan, 2013). She argues that “the training delivered under diversity management has been criticized as “window dressing” as it fails to address structural or institutional racism and social inequality” (p. 94).

Others argue that this type of training is used by those in power to appropriate or tokenize diversity to serve their own interests to make “institutional racism invisible” (Sleeter & Delgado Bernal, 2004, p. 241; see also Ahmed, 2012; Darder, Torres, and Baltodano, 2017; Gorski, 2013; Rocke, 2012; Shen-Miller, Forrest and Burt, 2012). Alhejji and Garavan (2013) use the term “ceremonial adoption” to refer to this motivation (p. 19). Galtung and Uyakumar (2013) argue that, often, “what is being taught is a reflection of the past handed over into the present so as to secure a continuity into the future, and usually also in conformity with national ideology and upper class thinking” (p. 1-2).

The literature also indicates that the short duration of these initiatives impacts their effectiveness as it does not encourage in-depth analysis of social inequality or support behavioural change (Ahmed, 2012; Banks and Banks, 2013; Booker, Merriweather, and Campbell-Whatley, 2016; Henry and Tator, 2009; Rocke, 2012). Also, organizations who do not provide adequate time for professional development may be sending “mixed messages” about the importance of diversity and equity. These mixed messages are also sent when administrators champion diversity and equity in their mission statements and strategic planning documents but do not themselves attend training, while encouraging others in lower ranks to do so (Henry and Tator, 2009; Rocke, 2012).

This type of EDI training rarely asks people to critically analyze their own assumptions or the underlying systemic causes and power relations that perpetuate social injustice and inequitable practices in the first place (Czyzewski, 2011; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2011; Stachowiak, 2015). Critics of this approach suggest that being able to say you have gone to a workshop, or you have provided a workshop, (or you have talked about providing training) do not equate to the stated goals of increased equity and reconciliation (Ahmed, 2012; Bishop, 2015; Henry and Tator, 2009; Henry et al., 2017).

Alhejii and Garavan (2013) note that there is little research that focuses on measuring impact in terms of decreased discrimination or organizational impacts for this type of training. Instead, most impact metrics focus on how the participants felt about the training itself or if there was an increase in knowledge.

The most prominent research methods used to analyze this type of training are concerned with replicability and generalizability. They tend to use an experimental or quasi-experimental design to gather quantitative data related to participant responses, which then undergo statistical analysis. Statistical data is then used to make inferences or draw conclusions about the efficacy of the training, or the effects of specific independent variables (participant characteristics or demographics, time, location, length of training, mandatory versus voluntary attendance, etc.). Data collection tools include self-report end of training feedback/evaluations or surveys, questionnaires, Implicit Association Test (IAT), or assessment inventories which sometimes incorporate pre and post training and control group measures into their design (Alhejji and Garavan, 2013; Alhejji et al., 2016; Bazgan and Norel, 2013; Bezrukova, Jehn and Spell, 2012; Bezrukova, et al., 2016; Hammer, 2012; Kalinoski, et al, 2012). Many professional associations have created their own self-report questionnaires (Kahr-Gottlieb, and Papst, 2013; Winterowd, Adams, Miville, Mintz, 2009).

Griffith et al. (2016) report that most assessments use either Likert-Scale items or multiple choice “to directly measure the knowledge components”. Examples of these intercultural competence assessments include the “Global Awareness Profile (GAP; Corbitt, 1998) and the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (W.D. Hunter et al., 2006)” (p. 12). Some researchers have also used “Implicit Association Tests and Q-Sort Methodology” that are intended to assess implicit attitudes by

measuring response time to “two mental representations, or concepts”. These tests assume that there is a relationship between the response to the different images and their attitudes toward what is represented by those images (Yang and Montgomery, 2013). Griffith et al., (2016) provide a sample of one, the *Tests of Hidden Bias*. This test is intended to assess “negative prejudices toward various ethnic groups by presenting examinees with a photo of a White/Caucasian face next to an African American face on a computer screen and requiring the participant to quickly select the “good” or “bad” photo” The authors note that these methods have been criticized as being “Americanized” and inferring complex attitudes from responses to images (p. 13).

### EDI Training with a Focus on Equity: A Social Justice Education Perspective

Other EDI learning opportunities<sup>7</sup> explore how “differences are used to entrench inequality” and use a more critical, dialogical, and facilitative approach that embodies the call to question power (Moodley, 1995, p. 812, cited in Friesen, 2015, see also Berry, 2013; Booker, et al., 2015; Grossman, Thayer, Shuffler, Burke, and Salas, 2015). Research related to this type of EDI training is found under the titles of social justice education, peace education, global citizenship education, cultural safety, democracy education, anti-racism, anti-oppression, human rights pedagogy, and many Indigenous awareness efforts (Abdi and Schultz, 2008; Abdi and Schultz, 2011; Adams, Bell, Goodman and Joshi, 2016; Andreotti, 2012; Bruenig, 2009; Densberger, Dorius, Hamilton, Johnson, Koon-Magnin, Maull, and Smith, 2009; Rhoades and Szelenzi, 2011; Schultz, et al. 2011). Research related to this type of EDI training indicates it can initiate change which leads to increased inclusion, understanding of human rights, and reconciliation efforts (Booker et al., 2016; Stachowiak, 2015). However, few *professional development* activities, as defined above, use this deeper, critical approach.

There is a strong and uniform call in the literature to move away from EDI training efforts that essentialize culture and instead focus on social justice education approaches that use this type of critical pedagogy to interrogate power and inequality and that use

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<sup>7</sup> That may be called “training”.

relationship building approaches (Ahmed, 2012; Bailey, 2000; Battiste 2013; Graveline 1998; Howard, 2016; Indigenous Faculty Members and Allies, 2018; Jorgenson and Schultz, 2012; Kailin, 2002; Moreno, 2010; St. Denis, 2011; Stachowiak, 2015; TRC, 2015<sup>8</sup>).

Jorgenson and Schultz (2012) state that what is needed is “education that is based on postcolonial inquiry, critical thinking, and deep engagement that results in changes in learning, action, and both local and global social conditions” (p. 16). The TRC report (2015) also states the need for, “teaching all Canadians to *think more critically* about the history of human rights violations against Aboriginal peoples” (Emphasis added, p. 251). Bell (1997) further argues that the goal of EDI training should be to develop the critical awareness and skills “necessary to understand oppression and their own socialization within oppressive systems, and to develop a sense of agency and capacity to interrupt and change oppressive patterns and behaviors in themselves and in the institutions and communities of which they are a part” (Cited in Stachowiak, 2015, p. 120; see also Mthethwa-Sommers, 2012). Alhejji et al. (2016) call this the *social justice perspective* of EDI training (p. 98).

Social justice perspectives assert that for training to be considered successful, change must not only occur for the training participant, but that change must then lead to organizational/institutional (structural) change. This type of training often seeks to “transform” participants. Tursunova (2015) describes transformative learning as learning that “relates to the processes by which people transform their own and others tacit frames of reference of values, attitudes, and assumptions and reflect constructively on them to generate beliefs and opinions underlying their actions” (p. 132). The outcome is for participants to question their beliefs and stereotypes, consider the perspectives of others, and understand that “their beliefs are located in the historical, socio-cultural, and political context” (Srinivasan, 2015, p. 121). The outcomes are changes in capacity of both cognitive, affective (emotion), and dispositional domains (Srinivasan, 2015). Avruch (1998) also argues that genuine resolution of conflict needs to be differentiated from the *management* or *mitigation* of conflict. He argues that to genuinely resolve conflict, you need to get at root causes, “not just episodic or symptomatic manifestations” (p. 26, see also Hauss, 2010).

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<sup>8</sup> Recommendation 62 ii, 63 iv, p. 331

The most prominent research methods used to assess this type of training use case studies and more reflective, participatory, and dialogical methods such as journal writings, interviews, focus groups, dialogue circles, or storytelling to collect “data”. There is less concern for generalizability and more for providing “thick description” (Ahmed, 2012; Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Lo Bianco and Bal, 2016; Mayo and Larke, 2010; Nightingale et al., 2015). These dialogical methods are often coupled with document analysis (curricula, marketing material, organizational documents such as strategic plans or mission statements) (Ahmed, 2012; Bickmore, 2006; Booker et al., 2015; Branche, Mullennix, and Cohn, 2007; Nightingale, Law and Webb, 2015).

Clarifying the difference between “training” and “social justice” approaches is critical to this study because it provides a needed distinction between the major *types* of training that are often conflated in the research and explores how each type of training is impacted by power relationships. As such, several questions in the survey were included that gathered information about the type of EDI training. These questions asked specifically about the intended outcomes of the training, the length of training, delivery methods, as well as the intended purpose of the training. Further, defining EDI training type illuminates the most common research approach taken to study each type of initiative.

The type of training is also connected to the philosophical stance used to design and evaluate training initiatives. Providing clarity about the different stances can afford increased transparency when trying to compare training outcomes and impacts. These differences are explored in the next section.

#### 4.4 Clarifying Philosophical Stances

This section provides a brief overview of the issues related to evaluating EDI training in both formal research studies and our day-to-day efforts to evaluate individual EDI training initiatives. The philosophical stances described below impact both the design and outcomes of training efforts. It is argued here that part of the reason for fragmentation and confusion in researching EDI training may be that these stances are rarely stated in the research, making comparisons and efforts to build a coherent body of knowledge difficult. How professional development for EDI happens and is researched is dependent upon the research paradigm

and underlying beliefs about how knowledge is created and can be measured. When creating processes and tools for researching EDI training, it is important to ask the questions “What are the underlying beliefs and assumptions about knowledge?”, “How is research defined?”, and “What are the methodological issues that arise?”.

Biesta (2015) argues further that we must pay attention to the ontology and the axiology of education, or we run the risk of uncritically putting “both educational research and educational practice on a technological track” (p. 13). The author critiques positioning that focuses on “finding out ‘what works’” and assuming something doesn’t work if no connections can be made through empirical methods (p. 12). He notes that this drive to connect teaching inputs and assessment outcomes to make education more effective “ultimately amounts to a distortion of what education is ‘about’ and of what it ought to be ‘about’” (p. 13). Further, he contends that while this approach may work at an instructional level, it does not translate into research questions about cause and effect. He states that “things go wrong when this question is taken out of its context and becomes a general and abstract issue for research and policy in such a way that two other questions that are absolutely crucial – How does education actually work? And what should education work for? – disappear from sight” (p. 13). The findings from the literature review completed for this work suggests that there are three major philosophical stances that impact the paradigms that underlie research related to EDI training. Biesta (2014) also states that perhaps the reason we cannot answer the question of which philosophical stance is the correct one is not due to having the wrong answers, but rather, from asking the wrong questions. He states that what we need to do is analyze and revise “the assumptions from which our questions stem” in the first place (p. 34).

Thinking critically about these stances is also an act of reclaiming power. As Taylor and Brownell (2017) argue, we must develop a “critical lens” to challenge the hegemony of dominant voices, paradigms, ontologies, and epistemologies found in EDI training (p. 338). Stringer (2014) argues that to get rid of the “fascism in our heads” we need to be critical about the way knowledge is defined and created (p. 49). This call to define our philosophical positioning in relation to knowledge creation (our research paradigm) is important as each offers differing perceptions, beliefs, and assumptions and so are “intrinsically value-laden”

(Wilson, 2009, p. 33). Our research paradigm frames all aspects of research design related to EDI training, including the methodological approach we choose (Wilson, 2009).

The first major philosophical stance theorizes that knowledge is static and there is one version of reality. Based on this belief, this external reality can be objectively measured. Research methodology in this instance is based on experimental design and the gathering of measurable (usually quantitative) data sets. Researchers examining EDI training from this stance would argue that it is not enough to say that we can't try to analyze this work because it is too difficult or the variables too complex. Rather, they would take an empirical experimental design approach and operationally define various responses or independent variables and apply control measures to isolate the effects of the variable. They would also argue that a failure to engage in objective analysis of initiatives prevents us from ensuring that EDI training initiatives are having a positive impact, making iterative improvement, or ensuring that resources are used effectively.

PACS scholars also argue that the tools of empiricism can and should be used as part of research and practice (Sandole, 2011; Tinker, 2016b). These authors underscore the need for rigour in evaluating peace education practice as we are not just manipulating theoretical variables, but impacting people's lives, and often the lives of those most vulnerable. Tinker (2016b) argues that many peace education studies "have been tautological, without any independent and externally measurable variables to determine a programme's success and/or failure, all of which has failed to provide academic scholarship with any enriching empirical data" (p. 34).

The second major philosophical stance theorizes that the knowledge we learn can never be truly defined as it is an internal phenomenon; all knowledge is subjective and is always relative to the person and their environment. From this perspective, there can be no such thing as objective "truth", only individual or socially constructed perceptions of truth that are shaped by context, power relations, and sense of agency. Biesta (2014) notes that Hume "came to the conclusion that the existence of an external world of enduring object is a 'very useful hypothesis,' but not something that can ever be proven" (p. 35). Those coming

from this stance would also argue that the “performativity<sup>9</sup>” of language or discourse used in our research legitimates, creates, regulates, and constrains both research and practice and is designed to maintain the status quo and so must constantly be interrogated (Maclure, 2013; Galtung, 1990). Researchers would argue further that all learning experiences are value-laden and so cannot be measured in the sense of describing a phenomenon as either ‘true’ or ‘false’ (Lo Bianco and Bal, 2016). From this perspective, knowledge is a context-bound phenomenon consisting of multiple realities and there is an emphasis on the “need to listen to previously silenced voices” (Egbo, 2019, p. 21). Stringer (2014) notes that “inquirers of all perspectives and paradigms have joined in the collective struggle for a socially responsive, democratic, communitarian, moral and justice-promoting set of inquiry practice” and needs to be “deeply responsible to those it serves” (p. 53).

Researchers with this perspective also critique the dominant forms of analysis on which knowledge claims are based (i.e., the scientific method) and are themselves less concerned with reliability and generalizability found in empirical experimental design. Instead, they are more concerned with providing meaningful descriptions of phenomenon as described by the people in those situations. Research therefore tends to use more qualitative measures. This stance has been criticized for “an anything goes” philosophy that does not allow for generalizability or accountability and that it is a largely intellectual rather than practical enterprise (Biesta, 2014). As Biesta (2014) states, “the main unease when everything becomes sociologised and when everything is seen as a social construction, is that the idea of knowledge itself begins to disappear, so that we end up with a universe full of opinions” (p. 33) and “if we give up objectivity, the only thing left is chaos” (p. 36).

The third major philosophical stance theorizes that knowledge (meaning) can only be gained by *acting* in our environment. That is, we only truly gain knowledge when we have the experience of applying our previously learned “cognitions” in a real situation (Holmes and Smyth, 2011). Knowledge is both “out there” and “in here”, as it is created through the continued relationship (transaction) between understanding and doing. Knowledge is renegotiated, debated, and interpreted in light of its *usefulness*. Knowledge then, is based on

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<sup>9</sup> Performativity has various definitions depending upon the discipline within which it is used. I am using it here to mean that the use of specific language itself is a form of action that can shape beliefs and outcomes.

“grasping the relationship between our actions and their consequence” (Biesta, 2014, p. 37). Stated differently, humans ‘learn by doing’ and truth is ‘what works’ (Holmes and Smyth, 2011, pp. 149-150).

Based on a critical reflection of the outcomes of our actions, we reformulate our theories and knowledge (Kritt, 2018). The term *reformulate* is used as it is believed that we never enter a novel situation from a neutral standpoint, but always bring our previously learned knowledge and values with us (Biesta, 2014). In this way, this stance agrees that meaning is subjective, in the sense that we all bring our socially constructed understandings of the world to bear when interacting with it. However, their focus is on the practical consideration of how socially constructed meaning help us get through our day-to-day lives (Biesta, 2015; Holmes and Smyth, 2011). This stance does not completely reject the notion that there are measurable truths. Rather, they are seen less as facts and more as “useful truths” created to help us function in our daily lives. Therefore, the outcomes of research are not ‘truths’, but ‘warranted assertions’ (Biesta, 2014). Knowledge is not static, but it constantly tested and changed as we interact with the world.

Holmes and Smyth (2011) argue that this approach is most useful when there are situations “that are complex, about which little is known, and where a range of interpretive possibilities is most appropriate” (p. 153). Accordingly, the best method to use is the one that will solve a given problem. Therefore, mixed methods or action research is often used in these instances (McNiff and Whitehead, 2011).

This third stance frames the significant and growing body of literature from social justice educators that challenges the notion of raising awareness and visibility through professional development activities alone, rather than raising awareness *and acting in the environment* to change underlying structures (Cremin, 2015; Tuck, 2018, Wilson, 2008). Tuck (2018) challenges us, “at the risk of bruising friendships”, to rethink our belief that change will happen if we just provide missing information, a deeper understanding, and raise awareness and visibility of social justice issues (p. 160). Rocke (2012) argues that; “racism is viewed as an irrational belief system, and in order to become a non racist individual, one requires rational education” (p. 96). Further, Cremin (2015) argues that narratives that “position social and political problems as errors in logic, empathy or information flow” are

problematic and further, they are “patronising, lacking in self-awareness and vastly underestimates powerful sociocultural, political and economic networks, as well as issues of sustainability and the complexity of human decision-making” (p. 10).

While this research argues for training that provides a deeper understanding of racism and power, it also asks to provide the evidence of change these initiatives are said to provide. We need *both* individual and institutional change. It is also important to realize that institutions are made up of individuals. The “institution” itself does not make decisions or commit transgressions; *people do*. Individually, we commit, justify, rationalize, teach, condone, or ignore violence in our post-secondary institutions.

#### 4.5 Defining Measurement Variables

An issue of concern when researching EDI training is the seeming interchangeability of the terms *assessment*, *program evaluation*, and *research*. When using the term *assessment* here I am referring to the assessment of individual learning. When I refer to *program evaluation*, I am referring to the process involved in evaluating the teaching, learning *and* assessment methods used for EDI training initiatives. When referring to *research* related to EDI training efforts, I am referring to a process that uses more formal research methodology to evaluate the impact of courses or programs beyond the individual learner. While these distinctions help bring some clarity, program evaluation and research are still conflated as program evaluation is sometimes seen as a form of research.

Another concern raised in the literature is related to the disconnection between stated goals (outcomes) and measurement of those outcomes. Lack of definition of both dependent variables (personal or institutional impact) and independent variables (e.g., length or type of EDI training) can conflate findings. There is no consensus on *what* should be measured to determine the effectiveness or impact of EDI training. Griffith et al. (2016) note that because of the complexity of diversity skills, it is often hard to identify “an appropriate criterion to evaluate the predictive validity” (p. 26). For example, professional development related to EDI training that has a goal of transformation but is evaluated only by asking the participant whether they liked the training or thought it valuable, will not allow for meaningful assessment *or* iterative improvement.

Do we want to measure higher rates of inclusion, less reported racism or homophobic attacks, better relationships with others who are different, or simply whether a participant enjoyed the training and thought it relevant? To confuse matters further, training has both positive and negative outcomes including: an *increase* in conflict resolution skills, respect for the other, critical analysis of power, cross-cultural competence, global competence, intercultural competence, global citizenship skills, positive peace, tolerance, empathy, democratic beliefs, reconciliation; or, the *reduction* of aggression, violence, delinquency, prejudice, stereotyping, and ethnocentrism (Alhejji, et al., 2016; Bezrukova et al., 2016; Del Felice, Karako and Wisler, 2015; Griffith et al., 2016; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014; Salomon and Nevo, 2002). Scholars from a human resource or organizational behaviour perspective might also include measures such as individual change in the form of enhanced job satisfaction, better individual performance, greater commitment to the organisation, or organizational goals such as retention of employees, changed ethnic and gender composition of workforce, or increased organisational performance and customer satisfaction (Alhejji and Garavan, 2013, p. 15; see also Mor Barak, et al., 2016).

Additionally, there is a lack of clarity about whether we are (or should be) measuring changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviour—or some combination of all (Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 2016). Models focusing on attitudes or cognition are prevalent, but those focusing on behaviour (actual implementation) are few (Alhejji et al., 2016; Berzekova et al., 2016; Griffith et al., 2016; Truong et al., 2014). Griffith et al. (2016) argue that sound research and evaluation must include “specific definitions of the construct and its subdimensions; include cognitive and noncognitive (i.e., affective and skill application); and must clarify the relationship and interactions between the multi-dimensional subdimensions” (p. 6).

This lack of clarity leads to concerns of validity; specifically, in challenges of measuring intended outcomes, and the ability to make inferences (Griffith et al. 2016). Alhejji et al. (2016) state that “the measurement of the diversity-training outcomes is methodologically deficient. Studies to date utilize different types of outcomes and they measure them in different ways.

These differences make the comparison of results difficult. Few studies utilize objective measures of outcomes” They argue further that these issues lead to research that is “fragmented, disjointed, and of mixed quality” (pp. 96-97). Tinker (2016b) also argues that in peace education research, “the overall purpose and meaning... has been taken for granted” (p. 34).

As noted above, those researching diversity come from different disciplines and use a particular “lens” or stance which comes with its own philosophical assumptions, analytical tools, types of intervention, and the methods used to assess initiatives (Galtung, 2011; Pruitt, 2011). As well, the intended outcomes and how they are described and measured will differ dependent on the “pedagogical and political stance of the trainer and organization” (Rocke, 2012, p. 93) or “their own particular vision of a desirable society” (Salomon, 2002, p. 2). As Cremin (2015) argues, “research is always defined within the parameters of the paradigm in which it sits, and by the epistemology of its researchers” (p. 9).

Even within specific disciplines such as business or human resources, the construct is not agreed upon or used consistently. For example, Griffith et al. (2016) use the term *Intercultural Competence* (ICC) but note that it must be seen as complex “multidimensional construct” (p. 1). They reported that their analysis found “the current state of the literature to be murky in terms of the clarity of the ICC construct” (p.1). These multidimensional or multifaceted approaches speak to the variety of factors that must be taken into consideration as well as how each factor interacts with the others (Reimer et al. 2015). Scholarship related to EDI training could benefit from some agreed upon definitions and goals as a common understanding would allow for more meaningful research, evaluation, and the creation of best practice models. Pruitt (2011) notes that in the PACS field “research is rarely cumulative, and most practice is informed by experience rather than research” (p. xix). The lack of consensus regarding outcomes translates into a lack of consensus regarding training impact and the tools that should be used to evaluate it.

Griffith et al. (2016) argue that “the variability of criteria raises a concern regarding the reliability of the criterion measures, given that a poor measure of the criterion may hinder validity evidence” (p. 26). To further exacerbate the problem, many EDI training

initiatives are not assessed at all, or do not actually assess whether the training had the desired (stated) impact (e.g., increased equity and inclusion).

Further, there are also many scholars who question whether it is possible or desirable to even try to measure outcomes related to EDI training. Tinker (2016b) notes that peace education evaluation is rarely done due to “low levels of awareness concerning the importance and usefulness of evaluation, the lack of expertise in evaluation methodology, budgetary and time constraints, and general avoidance” (p. 34). Srinivasan (2015) takes a pragmatic stance when she argues that peace education is not about knowing or memorizing facts, but instead is an act of critical reflection about our interactions in the world. She argues further that “such learning can be neither measured nor tested” (p. 117). Gurkaynak, Dayton and Paffenholz (2011), while speaking of PACS practice in general, note that theorists and practitioners are not convinced of the value of evaluation of their work as they find it “nearly impossible to conduct” because of the complexity found in peacebuilding efforts. The authors relate that practitioners often argue that program outcomes or impact can’t be measured with traditional measurement tools “as they are incapable of measuring the kind of intangible changes that occur” (p. 286). Pearson and Lounsbery (2011) also note the difficulty of operationalizing these concepts. It is difficult to make a sound argument for EDI training if the outcomes are not clearly defined or measured.

Still, it is important to make a sound business case for EDI training or initiatives will not be resourced (Kalinowski et al., 2013). To frame the issue in business terms—how do we identify and articulate the return on investment for both the individuals in the academy and the institution itself? Figuring out how to get at the impact is important as Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) note that “training departments often see training as an end unto itself, rather than something that is simply a contributor to job performance. This lack of connection to performance and accomplishing key organizational results puts training into the “nice to have” category, instead of something that is required for organizational success” (p. 15).

If EDI training is to be supported, it must show relevance to institutional goals (Ahmed, 2012; Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 2016). As Tinker (2016b) notes, demonstrating results is important in peace education as well. She states that PACS practitioners are under

pressure to “prove to the educational research community, policy makers, taxpayers, and the peace community that their peace education programmes are reducing violence” (p. 35). There has been significant work in this area by the Government of Canada Research Tri-council, who has been developing tools for evaluation through their *Dimensions*<sup>10</sup> program. This program provides tools and processes to assess the current state of EDI in our institutions (Government of Canada, *Dimensions*, 2022).

The reported range of impacts varies widely and may explain why many question whether EDI training actually “works” (Bregman, 2012; Kolowich, 2015). Most training initiatives are assessed only at a basic level— sometimes known as the “customer service” evaluation (Alhejji and Garavan, 2013; Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 2016). This form of evaluation gathers opinions about whether participants enjoyed the experience or thought it was relevant to them. More research is needed that meaningfully evaluates whether training participants were able to take the information and apply it appropriately in their work. Given the multitude of definitions, theoretical frameworks and research methodology noted above, Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick’s (2016) four-level model for evaluating training is offered here as a useful analytical tool as it provides a common language and framework for further discussion both in this paper and in the EDI training field in general. As such, the survey included several questions related to outcomes and impact that were framed using the levels in their model that is described in detail below.

#### Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick’s Four Levels of Training Evaluation

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick’s (2016) model of training evaluation offers descriptions of differing levels of evaluation that range from simple reaction data, to measuring long term impacts. Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick’s (2016) model describes Level 1, *reaction*, as “the degree to which participants find the training favorable, engaging and relevant to their jobs” (p. 24). The authors refer to Level 1 as the “customer satisfaction” measurement of training.

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<sup>10</sup> Institutions across Canada are invited to sign onto the *Dimensions Charter* which is intended to “foster increased research excellence, innovation and creativity within the post-secondary sector across all disciplines, through greater equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)” and “help drive deeper cultural change”. Institutions will be able to submit evidence of their progress to obtain differing levels of recognition. To assess institutions, criteria for assessment and assessment tools were developed with the aid of institutions who took part in the pilot program. [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/EDI-EDI/Dimensions\\_Dimensions\\_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/EDI-EDI/Dimensions_Dimensions_eng.asp)

They also state that “approximately 80 percent of live classroom programs and 58 percent of electronically delivered programs are evaluated at Level 1” (p. 24). Most importantly, the authors note that the amount of time dedicated to this type of data collection and analysis far outstrips its benefits, and is far less important than Level 3, which collects data on actual implementation of the knowledge (p. 24).

Level two, *learning*, refers to “the degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in the training” (p. 23). *Attitude* in this sense describes the degree to which training participants believe that the training was worthwhile. It is important to note that measurement of attitude change in this model does not assess whether long-held beliefs or attitudes have changed, but rather, whether or not participants see the importance of complying to avoid disciplinary or legal action. This is important as many EDI training evaluations refer to changes in “attitude”, but do not clearly define what the term means. Also, measuring “attitude” is particularly prone to error as people may respond in ways to make themselves seem more likeable by providing answers they believe will be seen as more appropriate; a phenomenon known as “socially desirable responding” or “faking” (Almeida, Simões, and Costa, 2012; Griffith, et al., 2016). Griffith et al., (2016) state that one way to overcome socially desirable responding in self-report measures is to ask the same questions in multiple ways or to use scenario-based evaluation tools. There are challenges in measuring attitude and skill, as they require an interpersonal interaction (in situ or simulation using role play) to occur to be assessed (Griffith et al., 2016). There are attempts to get at the skills component using virtual based simulations, situational judgment tests that ask participants to respond to a hypothetical situation, role playing, or responding to a theoretical “critical incident” (Griffith, 2016, p. 26). However, this is rarely done as it is resource heavy in terms of time for both participants and trainers.

*Confidence* refers to “the degree to which training participants think they will be able to do what they learned during training on the job” (p. 24). The authors argue that measuring self-reported confidence levels may help identify potential barriers to participants applying what they have learned. However, it does not measure whether their confidence at the time translates into application of knowledge and skills on the job. *Commitment* refers to whether

participants state they will apply what they have learned during training to their job. The authors note that the benefit of including measures of stated commitment is that they let participants know that they must put in time and effort beyond the training itself. However, it does not measure whether they follow through on their commitment.

Level three, *behaviour*, refers to “the degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job” (p. 22). This is what Alhejji and Garavan (2013) term “training transfer” (p. 12). Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) point out the need to identify “critical behaviors” which participants will have to consistently perform on the job and that are clearly linked to achieving organizational success. The authors also state that it is important to identify and assess the implementation of “required drivers”. These are “processes and systems that reinforce, monitor, encourage, and reward performance of critical behaviors on the job” (p. 22). Without these, participants may try to practice what they have learned, but if the system does not support the changes, they may give up. Alternatively, participants who do not want to implement changes will find compelling reasons to avoid doing so.

Alhejji and Garavan (2015) note that “post-training implementation is significantly influenced by trainees’ perceptions of environmental factors” (p. 12). Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) note that institutions that provide support and monitoring “can expect up to 85 percent application on the job”. On the other hand, institutions that rely primarily on the training alone “achieve only around a 15 percent application” (p. 23). The authors argue that implementation of required drivers is perhaps the biggest indicator of program success for any initiative.

And finally, level 4, *results*, refers to “the degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the training and the support and accountability package” (p. 20). Stated differently, does the training support the organizational purpose and mission? In the case of EDI training, does it lead to realization of the goals stated in mission and strategic planning documents related to creating diverse, safe spaces? The authors note that “while this definition of results is straightforward, frustration with the seeming inability to relate a single training class to the organizational result is common” (p. 21). In terms of peace education, Tinker (2016b) argues that the lack of meaningful evaluation of most initiatives

“reflects an absence of accountability in terms of determining what impact these programs are having on participants, and whether they are yielding their intended results” (p. 35).

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) argue that it is important that all four levels are defined in ways that are *measurable*, and that all four levels are measured. The measuring of multiple levels is important as it supports what Chang (2013) calls the *ecological perspective* of higher education which suggests that “there are tight interconnections between individual change, institutional change, and social change” (p. 172). This notion is also reflected in the *transactional* perspective noted above (Biesta, 2014). Alhejji et al. (2016) used similar ordering in their meta-analysis of EDI training. They state that they “conceptualized outcomes into three categories: learning outcomes, which included individual-, team-, and organizational-level outcomes; social justice outcome, which included equal opportunity, procedural fairness, and attitudes toward diversity; and business impacts, which included individual, team, and organizational performance outcomes” (p. 97). Tinker (2016b) notes that those working in the field of peace education “are aware of the importance of empirical research in terms of documenting best practices, recording lessons learned, improving the quality of programs, demonstrating to funders that they are getting ‘value for their money,’ and in understanding how they are contributing to the reduction of violence and the construction of a culture of peace” (p. 35, see also Gurkaynak, et al., 2011). All of these authors call for meaningful evaluation that moves beyond the “customer satisfaction” level.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

There appears to be a general consensus by researchers that the study of EDI training is fragmented and struggles with definitional and methodological issues-regardless of the type of EDI training or related research (Alhejji and Garavan, 2013; Griffith, Wolfeld, Armon, Rios, and Liu, 2016; Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014; Tinker, 2016a). One way to begin the conversation about definitional issues is the frame the discussion in terms of the difference between a functional training approach and a more transformational social justice education approach.

It can be argued that the overall understanding of EDI goes hand in hand with the type of training offered and consequently, the capacity for change. That is, little

understanding of EDI may lead to little understanding of the *need* for training, which sustains ignorance and the status quo. A superficial understanding may lead to superficial change efforts that may be tokenized or coopted for marketing purposes. A more fulsome insight of equity issues may make evident the need for meaningful social justice education that will lead to personal and institutional change.

Functionalist approaches to training focus on difference and managing that difference and is often not effective and may cause more harm than providing no training at all. It is argued that what is needed is a social justice education approach that provides an opportunity to gain deeper understanding of power relations and their impact on equity and continued marginalization in our institutions. If these deeper, more transformative approaches are not taken, the impact of the learning opportunities may not produce the type of understanding that would allow faculty and staff to be part of the change required to support the ubiquitous strategic goals related to increasing equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation in our post-secondary institutions. Measuring the impact of these learning opportunities is critical. The following chapter further explores definitional and other factors impacting the evaluation of EDI initiatives.

## Chapter 5: Methods

### 5.1 Introduction

As was stated earlier, most Canadian post-secondary institutions have publicly identified reconciliation and other equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) priorities in their goal statements and strategic plans (Universities Canada, 2019). However, it is not clear how (or if) they are ensuring the institutional capacity exists to make the type of transformative changes these goals imply. As has been argued throughout the paper, a critical, yet overlooked, component of this capacity- building is the ability of faculty and staff to comprehend how imbalanced power relationships both continuously create and maintain inequities in our institutions. This research set out to examine whether current EDI training initiatives can build this capacity and what factors impact the type of initiatives typically offered.

It became evident during the literature review that perceptions of safety and violence may be a critical factor impacting the type of training typically offered, the perceived need for EDI training, and whether faculty and staff's capacity to engage meaningfully in EDI initiatives was seen as important enough to measure. To explore the link between perceptions of violence and EDI training and whether current training initiatives are building the capacity to understand imbalanced power relationships, it was first important to gather data about what EDI training *is* happening for faculty and staff in post-secondary institutions across Canada as this data is lacking.

As discussed in Chapter 2, though there is an abundance of literature about EDI (or “diversity”) training in general, there was little related to training for post-secondary faculty and staff and no systematic research that gathered data about what training is happening in our institutions across Canada. Without this data, it is difficult to have meaningful discussions about EDI training or make evidence-based decisions regarding our approach to building faculty and staff capacity. To gather this data, EDI professionals working across Canadian post-secondary institutions were asked to complete a survey. A focus group was then used to follow-up with common themes that were raised in the survey.

This chapter identifies the research questions and their significance and discusses the rationale for the methodical approach taken for the study. The specific research methods used are discussed. A description and the rationale for the national survey and the focus group used to gather the data are provided.

## 5.2 Research Questions

The questions this research set out to answer were, “How are Canadian post-secondary institutions supporting faculty and staff training related to diversity?”, “What is the perceived impact of current initiatives?” and “How is it measured?”.

To answer these larger questions, the survey questions were arranged into the five main data categories that asked about the EDI practitioners’ role and their experience of implementing EDI training, what type of EDI training is typically happening, whether perceptions of safety or violence impact the type of training offered, how (or whether) individual learning is being evaluated for impact, and how EDI Training is being implemented at their institution. The descriptions below include the types of questions asked and the rationale for these questions. The findings and discussion section of this work are also arranged according to these categories.

Category 1) *Your Role in Diversity and Inclusion Training* questions were intended to provide some information about the perceptual contexts of the people answering the questions in the survey and focus group. Practitioners were asked specifically about what motivates them to do their work as well as a series of questions intended to interrogate the role imbalanced power relationships have on EDI training. These questions asked practitioners if they had personally experienced disrespect or discrimination at their institution, whether they thought EDI training was a priority and adequately resourced, and the challenges they faced implementing meaningful EDI training. This section also included demographic information related to the geographical area they worked in, their role in their institution, and whether they worked in a college or university setting.

Category 2) *Equity Diversity and Inclusion Training at Your Institution* The rest of the questions asked were intended to gather information about the type of EDI training initiatives typically offered to faculty and staff. These questions looked at whether participants’ institutions were providing EDI training, the typical duration of training, who

typically provides the training, the content of the training, whether it was provided face to face, online or in a blended format, and whether it was mandatory. The question about how they were defining EDI training was included as this was raised as a methodological issue in terms of program evaluation and research related to EDI training and their answer provided some context for the rest of their answers. The questions describing typical EDI training initiatives were included to provide a description of the field in Canadian post-secondary institutions. These questions are also important as particular answers to these questions can signal imbalanced power relationships and the impact of perceptions of safety and violence (as was discussed in the literature review).

Category 3) *Perceptions of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion* looked at how practitioners were defining EDI, how important they thought it was for different institutional community members (students, faculty, support staff, and administration), and how they perceived their institution—from a “site of conflict for individuals facing equity, diversity, and inclusion issues” to “basically a safe space for all” The question about how they were defining EDI training was included as this was raised as a methodological issue in terms of program evaluation and research related to EDI training and their answer provided some context for the rest of their answers. The other questions were intended to explore extant power relationships and their impact on training initiatives and how perceptions of safety and violence impact the perceived need for training and the type of training offered.

Category 4) *Evaluating EDI Training at your Institution* looked at whether EDI training is being tracked, who is responsible for monitoring whether or not EDI training for faculty and staff is carried out, whether their institution measures the impact of EDI training for individual or institutional change, how they are measuring impact, what the intended outcome of the training is, what methods they use to collect information to evaluate the training, and practitioners perceptions of the difficulty of articulating and measuring the learning outcomes of EDI training. These questions were asked for two reasons. First, it was important to gather the practitioners’ thoughts about definitional and measurement difficulties related to program evaluation and research related to EDI training as these were prominent issues raised in the literature review. The second reason is that initiatives that are important to an institution are usually tracked for impact and a lack of concern about impact

may signal that the initiative is not as important as stated. In this case, the question is raised about whether or not institutions are really concerned with whether faculty and staff have the capacity to understand power and its impact on equity, and therefore have the capacity to contribute meaningfully to the transformation articulated by institutional goals and strategic plans.

Category 5) *Implementing EDI Training at Your Institution* asked practitioners about how EDI training is chosen, whether supports are in place for faculty and staff to help them integrate their learning, challenges practitioners face implementing EDI training, if they received adequate administrative support and resourcing, the perceived purpose of EDI training, and finally, whether they thought that perceptions of Canada and Canadian post-secondary institutions as safe spaces impacts how the need for EDI training is understood. These questions help get a sense of what may be impacting the perceived need for various types of EDI training, whether EDI training choices are purposeful or ad hoc, and whether training is adequately resourced, all of which speak to the relative importance given to the training by administrators who hold decision-making power.

### 5.3 Rationale for Methodological Approach

Overall, this study takes a pragmatic approach to data gathering. The study used a mixed methods research approach as it “offers powerful tools for investigating complex processes and systems” (Fetters, Curry & Creswell 2013). As Cameron (2009) notes, many researchers and theorists coming from a pragmatist philosophy use a mixed methodology approach. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) summarise the philosophical position and rationale for using mixed methods:

We agree with others in the mixed methods research movement that consideration and discussion of pragmatism by research methodologists and empirical researchers will be productive because it offers an immediate and useful middle position philosophically and methodologically; it offers a practical and outcome-orientated method of inquiry that is based on action and leads, iteratively, to further action and the elimination of doubt; and it offers a method for selecting methodological mixes that can help researchers better answer many of their research questions. (p. 17, cited in Cameron p. 141, 2009)

Biesta (2014) argues that “the only way to solve the problem in an *intelligent* manner and not by simple trial-and-error is by means of a systematic inspection of the situation” (Emphasis in original, p. 38). He argues that from a pragmatist point of view, research needs to identify the problem and develop suggestions to address that problem. It is in this way that we find out “what the meaning of the situation actually is” (p. 38). This research can in some ways be seen partly as a scoping study or a way to “find out what the meaning of the situation is”. The study first used existing research to identify common themes and important variables related to EDI training that were then used to frame the questions in this study. The literature review set out to first identify a commonly identified problem (that there is continued systemic violence in our institutions that has been largely invisible) and then examine ways to address the problem (making it visible, gathering data about training initiatives that are working). The problem that was first examined through the literature review was then expanded upon by gathering the voices and stories of the EDI practitioners doing work related to EDI in general and EDI training in particular.

The study used a mixed-method research methodology as its primary method of data collection (Holmes and Smyth, 2011). This approach is useful from a pragmatic standpoint as it not only describes what is, but also what could be (Biesta, 2014). This pragmatic approach also aligns with the social justice philosophy described earlier that asks us to move beyond understanding and in to action.

The survey took a pragmatic approach by asking specifically about what type of training was happening and why. The survey included a number of forced and limited choice questions that allowed for quantitative data collection and a variety of open-ended questions that allowed for qualitative data to be gathered. The focus group questions were based on the themes that arose from the survey and allowed for a deeper, richer discussion about definitional issues, barriers, and the impact of power. Both the survey and focus group also gathered insights about what we are doing now that works and suggestions about what could be done differently.

As the impact of power is central to this work, the data collection and analysis are informed by a critical theoretical approach that strives to reveal, critique, and challenge

power structures. It was hoped that gathering a description of the current state of EDI training would provide the baseline data needed for further research that could provide insights into how to transform current practice. Feinberg (2014) calls this approach “critical pragmatism” and states that it can be used to refine and expand local, common sense understanding and “provide some general guidelines for addressing educational problems” (p. 149; see also Bekerman, 2011; Martínez-Alemán, Pusser and Bensimon, 2015; Ramos, 2013). This approach is in line with Gounari’s (2013) call for a critical and active stance or “critical peace education” and the active use of “militant peace” (p. 71; see also Bajaj and Brantmeier, 2011).

Rocke (2012) argues that any research that examines inequities must use methodologies “that seek to both inform and work towards social justice” (p. 122). In this sense, the research can also be seen as a form of what Cremin (2015) terms “transformative inquiry” or “reflective inquiry”, as it had as its aim the gathering of knowledge *and* social action. Stinger (2014) describes a version of pragmatism that aligns with these aims, called “prophetic pragmatism” (p. 51). Prophetic pragmatism calls for an “explicitly political mode of cultural criticism...that encourage more creative democracy through critical intelligence and social action” using “communicative action” (p. 51). The goal of this research is to begin the conversation, or “communicative action”, richly describe the current situation, identify problems, and build shared knowledge.

To gather the bulk of the data, the research used an anonymized survey process. In line with concerns raised earlier about power imbalances, the research process intentionally provided a safe process that gave EDI practitioners across Canada the freedom to say what they thought, to tell their stories, and to have their voices heard without fear of repercussion. Institutions did not have the power to control or edit their voices. This concern about controlling the message was raised by Ahmed (2012).

Practitioners across the public sectors repeatedly said to our diversity team that too much research in this field is premised on finding what the institutions *want found*; from toolboxes to best practice. Too much research thus becomes translated into mission speech, turning stories of diversity and equality into institutional success stories. There is much less research describing the complicated and messy situations in

which diversity workers often find themselves. When description gets hard, we need description. (Emphasis in original, p. 10).

This research provides a comprehensive description of what is happening in EDI training for faculty and staff across this country by using an anonymous survey and going directly to the people doing the work. What was found was indeed messy and complicated.

Using these critical approaches require the use of methods that are respectful of the voices of all participants, are dialogical (communicative), and that place the researcher as a co-participant and learner rather than a neutral expert. Cremin (2015) argues that for peace education research, “there is a need for methodology to avoid reproducing the kinds of structural and cultural violence that peace work seeks to address” (p.11; see also Bannier, 2016; Galtung and Udayakumar, 2013). This perspective requires analyzing how the research process itself, as well as the final outcome, could benefit the participants and communities in which the research is carried out (Cremin, 2015). In this case, community refers to the community of “EDI workers” in higher education across Canada.

Any research related to social justice education must also examine structural violence, power, and knowledge in post-secondary institutions. Peace education, critical ethnography, and transformative inquiry demand a close analysis of power issues in research and the “potential harms and unintended consequences for subjects and others, and avoid co-option by funders, clients, colleagues or others” (pp. 11-12). Ahmed (2012) and Roche (2012) both raise concerns that participants may feel that their work is being evaluated or question the motivation for the research or wonder who the research will benefit. Having the survey anonymous and not going through institution for approval were strategies to address these concerns.

Power issues may be especially poignant with Indigenous participants who have typically engaged in research in which they had significantly less power than the researcher, and where Indigenous approaches to knowledge were not honoured (Stanton, 2014; Wilson, 2008). It was important that this research was carried out in a way that was not “*transgressive*” and did not contribute further to othering (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007, p. 15). To honour relationships, methodology was used that is congruent with Indigenous research methodologies and respects Indigenous worldviews as outlined in Chapter 9 of the *Panel on*

*Research Ethics* (see also Government of Canada, 2018; Graveline, 2000; Kovach, 2010; Wilson, 2006). Creating research processes where people could share their stories without worry of repercussion and having a dialogical focus group were intended to ensure voices that are often silenced could be heard.

The study used a mixed methods approach as it supports the investigation of complex systems and processes (Cameron, 2009; Fetters, Curry & Creswell, 2013). The quantitative and qualitative data was integrated in several ways. First, data from the quantitative survey was used to inform the qualitative focus group protocol. As well, during the analysis and reporting, data from both sources are woven together using a theme-based approach that provides a more complex description (Creswell & Clark, 2017). In keeping with the pragmatic philosophy, it was felt that using mixed methods was also the most practical approach.

All participants were from post-secondary institutions or affiliated organizations across Canada. The focus group included faculty members and those staff working on both formal and informal EDI training initiatives.

## 5.4 National Survey

### Rationale

Pragmatically, if you want to know what is happening in terms of EDI training in Canadian post-secondary institutions, it is reasonable to ask the professionals doing the work. As such, a survey was developed and administered across Canadian post-secondary institutions to those doing “EDI work”. The survey questions were based on issues that were raised in the literature search as described earlier in this chapter. The survey was administered in such a way as to ensure anonymity, thus creating a safe space to capture the voices of these EDI professionals. The survey format also supported the gathering and analysis of large amounts of both quantitative and qualitative (descriptive) data.

## Approval

Attempts to acquire individual institutional approval for employees to take the survey were not sought. Instead, the surveys were sent directly to individuals identified as doing “diversity work”. This was done for several reasons. First, as the research asked questions that may elicit responses that critique the policies and practices of an institution, there was concern that individuals may not feel comfortable providing information. The direct email invitation provided an opportunity for them to respond anonymously. It was hoped that this method would give the people doing the work a chance to have their voices heard in a way that felt safe.

Second, there was concern that if institutional consent was required, some may not endorse the research project, or they might send the survey only to those who may describe the institution's actions in a more favorable light as it will gather data that may critique or challenge the policies and practices of institutions. Only one institution requested the full ethics review before permission could be granted. The institution did not respond with permission to send out invitations for the survey, and as responses were anonymous, it is not known if permission was granted to their faculty and staff to participate. As noted in the TCPS2, “Where the goal of the research is to adopt a critical perspective with respect to an institution, organization or other group, the fact that the institution, organization or group under study may not endorse the research project should not be a bar to the research receiving ethics approval” (TCPS Article 3.6).

## Survey Instrument

The survey was administered in English and French and was open from October 2020 to January 2021<sup>11</sup>. The survey consisted of 35 questions including: Fourteen (14) yes/no questions, seven (7) open-ended questions, ten (10) that had areas to expand (e.g. Something else?, Please elaborate/expand), seven (7) multiple response, five (5) forced choice, one (1) question with a four-point Lickert scale from “Not at all important to very important”, and one (1) question that collected demographic information (gender, race,

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<sup>11</sup> See Appendix B

type of institution, and geographical location). As described above, the survey questions were distributed into five main topics or categories that included:

- Your Role in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Training (which included demographic information)
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Training for Faculty and Staff at your Institution
- Perceptions and Definitions of EDI
- Evaluating Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Training at your Institution
- Implementing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training in your Institution

Participants who took the online survey were anonymous. Those who began the survey but did not wish to submit it could exit the survey and the information was not included in the overall data. However, once submitted, it was no longer possible to delete individual responses as the survey was anonymous and results aggregated. Participants were notified of this in the informed consent document. Participants were able to answer only the questions they wanted, and many questions had a *not relevant* or *prefer not to answer* option. As the survey data was anonymous, there was no way to directly contact participants to provide them with results. Instead, a document that captured the results was emailed to all participants that were originally sent an invitation by the Principal Investigator (PI). Those who received the data from the survey were invited to provide feedback and comment. All feedback has been incorporated into the overall analysis of the results.

### Response Rate

Emails were sent to 297 discrete email addresses (either individual or to centres). Research relating to response rates for email surveys indicates that between 10-20% return is average so 10% would be 30 responses and 20% would be 60 responses. I received 107 responses, 100 in English and 7 in French (approximately 36% response rate). However, those who received the invitation directly from the PI were asked to forward the survey link to those who they thought were doing this work and might like to participate. The anonymous nature of the survey meant there was no way to determine who the invitation was forwarded to, and as such it is not possible to determine an accurate response rate. People were generous with their time and had much to say. There were 431 discrete

responses to the open-ended questions and 192 to the questions asking people to expand/elaborate or to describe if the answer was something other than the responses listed.

### Survey Participants

One of the concerns raised in the literature about research related to EDI training is self-selection bias and reliance on self-report measures (Alhejji, Garavan, Carbery, O'Brien and McGuire, 2016, p. 140). However, this research specifically targeted EDI professionals who would naturally have an interest in responding to this survey. See Chapter 6 for a further description of participants.

## 5.5 Focus Group

### Rationale

The focus group was used to follow-up with common themes that were raised in the survey and allow people to more fully share their stories. As Akula (2017) states, story-sharing serves as a staple of EDI training and initiatives because of the transformative power stories have on relationships... We cannot give someone our life experiences for them to comprehend the truths of experience; instead, we offer stories to help people understand those parts of ourselves (pp. 180-181).

This dialogical approach was a way to both make space for and collect narratives that respected the participants' voices and allowed them to co-create meaning and build relationships (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2011; Carless and Douglas, 2016; Kornelsen, 2013; Kovach, 2010; Tursunova, 2015; Wilson, 2006). The dialogue was also intended as a collaborative effort to understand the "current state" and to solve common problems (Joseph, Oh, and Ackerman, 2018). Narrative approaches are also in line with the pragmatic philosophical approach as it focuses on pragmatic concerns. As Carless and Douglas (2016) argue, "rather than focusing on constructs, opinions, or abstractions, narrative methods prioritize an individual's *experience* of concrete events" (p. 307).

## Focus Group Process

Due to continued need for social distancing and worries around travel due to COVID 19, the focus group was completed online using Zoom. The focus group used ZOOM conferencing and there was an audio and video record of the session. Participants were given a choice of whether they appeared in the video recording and had the option of activating or disabling their own video function on the platform. Participants were asked to state their name before responding in the focus group so their contributions could be accurately coded. Participants were told that if they wished, they may use a pseudonym, rather than their name.

Both Kovach (2010) and Wilson (2008) describe the importance of honouring the voices of Indigenous people who have shared their story. As such, all focus group participants were given the option of waiving confidentiality in the informed consent document and to keep either their first name, last name, or both. One participant chose the option of keeping their first name. Individuals that did not opt out of the confidentiality agreement were assigned a pseudonym. Focus group participants had the transcript emailed to them directly and were asked to provide feedback and correction.

I began the focus group by briefly sharing my own story of learning about diversity and so placed myself within the context of the study as a researcher and co-participant as advised by Meijl (2005). This narrative or storytelling approach was used as it is congruent with Indigenous research methodology, is relational, and elicits peoples' lived experience (Government of Canada, 2017; Keehn, 2015; Kovach, 2010; Lopez and Zúñiga, 2010; Zúñiga, Nagda, Chesler, and Cytron-Walker, 2007). As noted earlier, the focus group protocol<sup>12</sup> was based on both the literature review and the salient themes that emerged from the national survey.

## Focus Group Participants

The email sent to potential survey participants asked them if they would like to participate in a focus group that would deepen the dialogue about faculty and staff EDI training. Those that were interested contacted the PI with their contact information. There were no exclusion criteria for participants. The focus group consisted of four self-selected

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix C

survey participants. The focus group initially had six participants but two notified the PI that they could not make it shortly before the session was scheduled. There were two persons working directly as EDI staff, one faculty member, and one PhD student who provides specific cultural training. The focus group took place in January 2021 and took the form of a Dialogue Circle (Government of Canada, 2017).

## 5.6 Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to the current study. The first and most important is that only EDI Professionals were asked to respond to the survey. This relates to the concern noted earlier by Alhejji, et.al. (2016) that much EDI research relies solely on self-report measures. While this is a strength in the sense that these are the EDI experts doing work in Canadian institutions, they may represent a particular focus that may not be shared by others (e.g., students, administrators). A related limitation is that it must be understood that the data reflects the expert opinions of the respondents and does not represent definitive proof of “what is”.

The third limitation is the study had a very small number of participants for the focus group and so represent only a small sample of practitioners’ views. This lack of breadth of opinion for the more in-depth interrogation of issues is mediated somewhat by the amount of qualitative data in the survey itself which was significant. The fourth limitation is that because the survey respondents were anonymous, it is not possible to know exactly how each region in Canada is represented, what regions are represented in each province, or the size of the institutions that the practitioners were reporting on. Most participants indicated they were from the Western Region of Canada, with Eastern Provinces with the next highest rate and then the Atlantic Provinces. There were no respondents that indicated they were working in the North.

## 5.7 Data Analysis

The questions in the survey were already organized into five major categories that captured the research questions thematically. These included EDI professionals and their roles, definitions and perceptions of EDI training, EDI training types and barriers, and finally, evaluating EDI training. The quantitative data was automatically compiled by the

survey software and was reported as is. The qualitative data responses from both the survey and the focus groups were also aligned within the five categories and then broken down into more discrete themes within each question. All data were analyzed within the context of the overall research questions related to current EDI training initiatives, how training impact is being evaluated, and how power relations impact these factors.

## 5.8 Significance of Questions

As noted above, while there is ample research related to EDI training for teachers in the K-12 system, very little research has looked at the specific context of training for faculty and staff at Canadian post-secondary institutions. As argued in previous chapters, it is important to understand how Canadian colleges and universities are building institutional capacity for change by ensuring that all faculty and staff have the knowledge and skills needed to support the stated goals related to social justice, reconciliation efforts, and to embrace and act upon equity, diversity, and inclusion issues. It is also important to understand the types of EDI training offered and whether they are being incorporated in a comprehensive and measured way (Srinivasan, 2015).

This research contributes to an understanding of the most common types of EDI training initiatives taking place and how (or if) deeper, anti-oppression education initiatives that are called for in the literature<sup>13</sup> are occurring in our institutions. Further, the findings help us understand whether current training initiatives are having the intended impact. That is, it may help answer the question of whether professional development opportunities

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<sup>13</sup> As stated in Chapter One, very little research has been done that looks at post-secondary faculty and staff EDI training efforts, and none could be found that have been systematic or comprehensive. Therefore, it is important to note that when reference is made to the “literature” or “research” when discussing the findings in the next two chapters, it is most often in reference to EDI training in general and not research that has focused specifically on the context of EDI training for post-secondary faculty and staff. Most of the EDI training research examines what would be considered “professional development” or “training”. Also, it is important to restate that throughout this work, the term EDI training is used to refer to all the ways we educate about race, reconciliation, ethnicity, culture, class, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, physical and cognitive ability, and power and privilege as this is the term currently used most broadly in the literature and in most post-secondary institutions across Canada.

translate into increased inclusion, upholding of human rights, and reconciliation efforts in our institutions of higher education in Canada.

Equally as important, the research interrogates the role power relationships and its impact the types of EDI training initiatives currently in place. Interrogating power imbalances may also support a better understanding of resistance and barriers to the provision and uptake of meaningful EDI training. It is hoped that the information from the study can point to ways to identify gaps in faculty and staff capacity to both understand and engage in creating more equitable institutions. The information might also provide the foundation for evidence-based policy and practice creation, review, and changes.

The findings reported in the following two chapters reflect the voices of over 100 EDI professionals across Canada. Their concerns resonate with the concerns raised by scholars studying EDI training. Their frustration, concern, and dedication to their work is evident in their answers and in the stories they shared. Throughout this document you will find numerous quotations from the participants of the survey and the focus group. This is a deliberate attempt to create space for their voices to be brought into and enrich the academic discourse. Further, direct quotations maintain the clarity of their voices, rather than them always being interpreted through the researcher's perceptions<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> The quotations are all verbatim other than obvious typos which were fixed that might have impeded readability.

## Chapter 6: EDI Training for Faculty and Staff

Our institution has diversity in its staff and student population, yet the skills to effectively communicate and resolve conflicts are often sorely lacking.

Managers and departments leaders, in my experience, have not been equipped to set a culture of EDI, and this matters when tensions and challenges arise.

(Survey participant)

Yes, it is safe for white, middle class populations, as it has been designed for them. If they see no need, there will be no EDI training. (Survey participant)

### 6.1 Introduction

This Chapter and Chapter 7 explore the findings from the national survey and the focus group. The findings from the data and a discussion of those findings are woven together throughout these chapters. The findings from both the survey respondents and the focus group participants are also reported together thematically.

This chapter provides the findings and a discussion of the questions in Category 1) *Your Role in Diversity and Inclusion Training*, Category 2) *Equity Diversity and Inclusion Training at Your Institution*, and Category 3) *Perceptions of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*.

### 6.2 Category 1) Your Role in Diversity and Inclusion Training.

It was important to begin a discussion of the findings by first describing whose voices you are hearing as they are the foundation of this work. As described in the literature review, EDI practitioners are often marginalized for doing their job, experience disrespect or discrimination at their institution, experience constant pushback and “translation exhaustion”, and are often asked to do a myriad of things that are not adequately resourced. Despite how often they reported being overwhelmed by unrealistic work loads and lack of resources, over 100 EDI professionals from across Canadian post-secondary institutions took the time to share their experiences through the survey or the focus group.

Questions in this category were intended to provide some information about the perceptual contexts of the people answering the questions in the survey and focus group. Practitioners were asked specifically about what motivates them to do their work as well as a series of questions intended to interrogate the role imbalanced power relationships have on EDI training. These questions asked practitioners if they had personally experienced disrespect or discrimination at their institution, whether they thought EDI training was a priority and adequately resourced, and the challenges they faced implementing meaningful EDI training. This section also included demographic information related to the geographical area they worked in, their role in their institution, and whether they worked in a college or university setting. The demographics are discussed first.

When asked whether they worked in a College, University or other, 77.19% indicated they worked in a university, 19.29% indicated they worked in a college, and 3.5% indicated other. Of the two who chose other, one identified working in an institute and the other an external race relations organization. Participants were also asked about their primary role in their institution. Most participants indicated they were in a staff role (65.61%). Faculty members/instructors made up 18.96% and 15.15% indicated they were in a Dean/Director role. If participants chose “staff”, they were asked to identify their specific role. The results are outlined in the table below.

*Figure 1 Roles of Staff Participants*

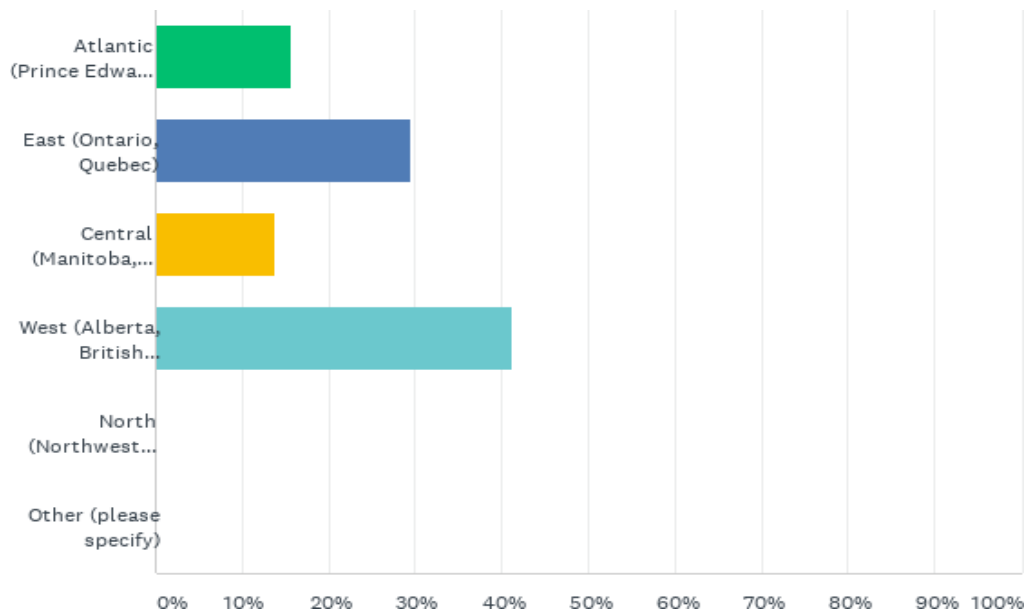
Roles of Participants Identifying as Staff (N=28)	
Centres for Teaching and Learning	25%
Equity Department/Office	17.87%
Indigenous Relations Department	14.28%
Human Resource Department	10.71%
Senior Administrators	7.14%
Other	25.54%

Most respondents indicated that they worked in Centres for Teaching and Learning, followed by Equity Departments/Offices. Equity Departments/Offices had multiple versions of their name but most often included “Human Rights” Offices, “Diversity” Offices, “Equity, Diversity and Inclusion” (EDI) Offices, “Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility”

(IDEA) Offices, and Accessibility Offices (which were often separate entities for equity offices).

### Geographic Location

The graph below indicates the geographical regions in which participants indicated they worked. The choices included Atlantic Canada (Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland), East (Ontario, Quebec), Central (Manitoba, Saskatchewan), West, (Alberta, British Columbia), North (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon), and Other.



Most participants indicated they were from the Western Region of Canada, with Eastern Provinces with the next highest rate and then the Atlantic Provinces. As the data was collapsed into regions, it is not possible to determine which Provinces or areas had the most respondents within each region. There were no respondents that indicated they were working in the North.

## Gender Identification

In the question related to gender, there were no genders identified to choose from so participants were free to identify as they saw fit. Most people that responded to this question identified as Female (63.46%).

*Figure 2 Gender Identification of Participants*

Gender Identification N=52	
Female	33
Male	7
Woman	5
Femme/ Féminine	4
Femme Fluid	1
Gender Queer/non-binary	1
She/her	1

## Race

In the question related to race, there were no races identified to choose from so participants were free to identify their race as they saw fit. Just over half (56.25%) of those that responded to this question identified as White/Caucasian.

*Figure 3 Race of Participants*

Race of Participants (N=48)	
White/Caucasian	27
Indigenous	7
Mixed heritage/Race	6
Black	5
Anishinaabe	1
Kanienkeha'ka	1
South Asian	1
East Asian	1
Chinese	1
Human	1

## Motivation

EDI practitioners are often not in positions of power and as was discussed above, their work often comes with personal risk and is not always appreciated or rewarded. It was

important to understand their motivation to continue their work despite often difficult circumstances. Their work appears to be a constant push at power.

The most common motivation described by practitioners to continue their work in EDI was a commitment to social justice and the reduction of racism. Participants often described their passion to further equity in their institutions. Others spoke of the critical need to educate people. As one survey participant stated, “the true history of Canada needs to be taught, not to place blame, but to see how we can move forward as one, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike”

Some participants shared that their lived experience of marginalization was part of what motivated them to do this work. As one participant shared,

I am a multi-racial queer person who has lived and worked in highly diverse places/organizations and I realize how much this organization has to learn and I understand how people are systemically marginalized.

Slightly over half of the participants (54%) indicated that they considered themselves to be part of a marginalized group of peoples and slightly under half of all participants indicated that they have personally experienced disrespect and/or discrimination in their institution based on the criteria indicated below. The responses are captured in the chart below. The question allowed participants were to select all that apply.

*Figure 4 Experience of Discrimination*

Experience of Discrimination (N=50)	
Race	17
Culture	11
Ability	9
Gender identification	24
Sexual orientation	5
Prefer not to answer	4
Other	14

Many practitioners described the need and desire to change the institution itself. This was described as creating systemic changes to make institutions more equitable and inclusive. Much of the work to change the institution was directed toward changing faculty

members' ability to work more equitably with students and included changing "decolonizing classroom practices" and supporting faculty to feel comfortable "in this new teaching reality" Practitioners also described the desire to reduce harm through the creation of a safer environment. One survey participant shared their desire for change, "I see how staff and faculty members own unexamined whiteness harms students again and again, in so many insidiously damaging ways."

Helping faculty, staff, and students learn more about equity issues was a key motivating factor identified. Practitioners felt that by engaging in EDI training/education they could help make change that would increase a sense of belonging for those that are marginalized. As one participant remarked, "there are prejudices in all organizations and helping to make the institution aware of this is a significant step towards culture change" Others argued that it was important to them to ensure that their institution was more welcoming.

### Summary

While most participants identified as White and female, there was representation from a variety of participants. Over half considered themselves to be part of a marginalized group of peoples. The most common reason given to continue their work was a desire to ensure equity and social justice in their institutions. Most participants worked as staff members in Centres for Teaching and Learning, Equity Department/Offices, Indigenous Relations Departments, or Human Resource Departments. Almost two-thirds of respondents reported working in a university.

### 6.3 Category 2) Equity Diversity and Inclusion Training at Your Institution

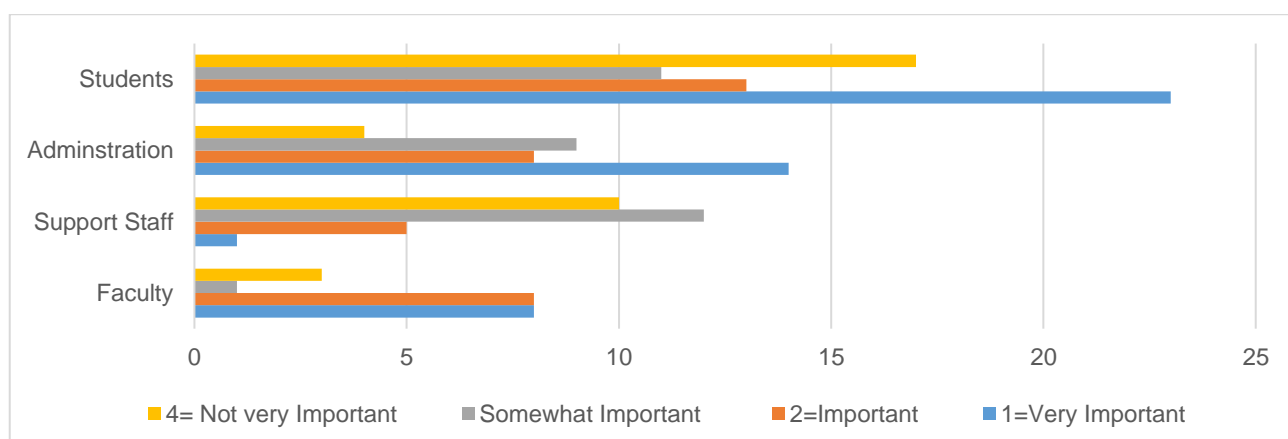
The questions in this section were intended to gather information about the type of EDI training initiatives typically offered to faculty and staff. These questions looked at whether participants' institutions were providing EDI training, the typical duration of training, who typically provides the training, the content of the training, whether it was provided face to face, online or in a blended format, and whether it was mandatory.

These questions were included to provide a description of the field in Canadian post-secondary institutions. As was discussed earlier, concerns raised in the literature review

about the duration, content, and impact of EDI training for faculty and staff have been largely based on anecdotal evidence as there was little data capturing what is happening across Canadian post-secondary institutions. While the data gathered from this survey and focus group is not exhaustive, it does provide an initial data set to begin to have some evidence driven conversations. These questions are also important as particular answers to these questions can signal imbalanced power relationships and the impact of perceptions of safety and violence (as discussed in the Chapter 3).

Participants were first asked if their institution was providing EDI training for faculty and staff. Three quarters of the survey participants indicated that their institution was providing some form of EDI training. Participants were then asked to use a four-point Likert Scale to rate how important they thought EDI training was for each of the following groups: Faculty, Support Staff, Administrators and Students. It was interesting to note that participants indicated EDI training was more important for some. While it would seem logical to this author that institutional members in all roles would have a need to develop the knowledge and skills needed to interact in a more equitable way with others, participants overwhelmingly indicated that they thought EDI training was most important for students, followed by administration, then faculty, and finally support staff. These results are particularly interesting, given that most respondents to the survey would be considered support staff. *Why* participants think it is more important for some was not determined in this research but would be an interesting question to study.

Figure 5 Importance of EDI training for different groups



### Duration of EDI Training

The findings bear out the concern raised in the literature about the short duration of typical EDI training as responses indicate that the vast majority of EDI training for faculty and staff is 4 hours or less (85%). Participants corroborated the concern raised in the literature that short-term training may produce a superficial understanding that causes more damage by reinforcing stereotypical thinking and by giving people the belief that they now “know all they need to know” Rather than learning about the impact of imbalanced power relationships. The small amount of training that was longer than a day (7 hours) included two-day workshops or short courses that were a few weeks or a few months in length. All the longer training opportunities reported were related to reconciliation. One person indicated that the length varies dependent upon the audience.

*Figure 6 Typical Duration of EDI Training*

Duration	Percentage
Less than 4 hours	72%
Half day (4 hours)	12%
5-7 hours	3%
Longer than 7 hours	13%

The following exchange between the PI and a focus group participant illustrates the concerns raised about the duration and content of EDI training:

**Taylor:** We were asked to do a micro learning.

**Principle Investigator:** Micro learning? Half an hour or less?

**Taylor:** 10 minutes or less on unconscious bias-but we did it. But, and its sort of funny, I don't want to be cynical, but-everybody—I can't even tell you how many requests for unconscious bias training I've got in the last six months. And I'm not even 100% sure how to respond to those requests because I think what people want to do is a quiz to figure out what their biases are... We did this unconscious bias training with this learning module and it's out there on our website. People, if they're looking for it can find it, but I really don't want to

tell anyone it's there because I don't want people to think that that's all it is, right?

The frustration, powerlessness and need to do the best they can with limited resources (time in this case) felt by this participant is evident, especially as this is often combined with unreal expectations. As discussed earlier, resource allocation is often a barrier to implementing EDI training that focuses on power and it is the people in power in the institution that make the decisions about resource allocation.

Participants also echoed the concern noted earlier by Gorski (2013), Galtung and Udayakumar (2013), and Howard (2016) that this type of EDI training reflects another form of the appropriation of EDI by those who hold power in the institution. There is concern that these superficial discussions of EDI essentialize and tokenize people and issues and are provided by the institution only as a “tick box” so they can state they have met their obligations to ensure that faculty and staff have the knowledge and skills they need to interact respectfully with all students and colleagues.

### Content of EDI Training

Respondents echoed the concerns raised in Chapter 3 that the bulk of the training offered focuses on issues of difference and how to manage it, and only superficially touches on how our skewed perceptions of others (implicit bias) impacts our thoughts and behaviours. The concern raised is that while conversations about implicit bias may introduce the concept that how we see and react to others may cause inequities, it does not provide the opportunity to critically our own perceptions or the skills to analyze *how* our perceptions create inequitable power relationships that underpin inequities in our institutions (e.g., conversations that explore the mechanisms of structural violence).

Even when the *name* of the training sounds like it should be getting at deeper concepts like implicit bias, in less than four hours it cannot support learners in the type of transformative process that changing our perceptions about ourselves, and our world necessarily entails. If it is meant only as an introduction to the concepts, as one of the focus group participants states, we need to ask, “how we would know if people were carrying on with deeper self-exploration?”

One focus group participant also questioned the underpinning concept behind implicit bias training. Specifically, he questioned the common, Western individualistic approach implied in implicit bias training.

**James:** I think we made advances in terms of problematizing some concepts. That might seem like a solution, but it's actually privileging certain discourse. I think that's part of this unconscious bias, but I think it's also this concept of hegemony-this liberal, capitalist sort of *individual* concept, right? I think those drive the part of the elements that are involved in terms of unconscious bias. Like a 'take it for granted' sort of concept. But ineffective, it's actually an exercise of power and that power of the majority or the sort of unconscious kind of majority.

The table below lists the frequency of responses that participants could choose from that described the content of training.

*Table 1 Content of EDI Training*

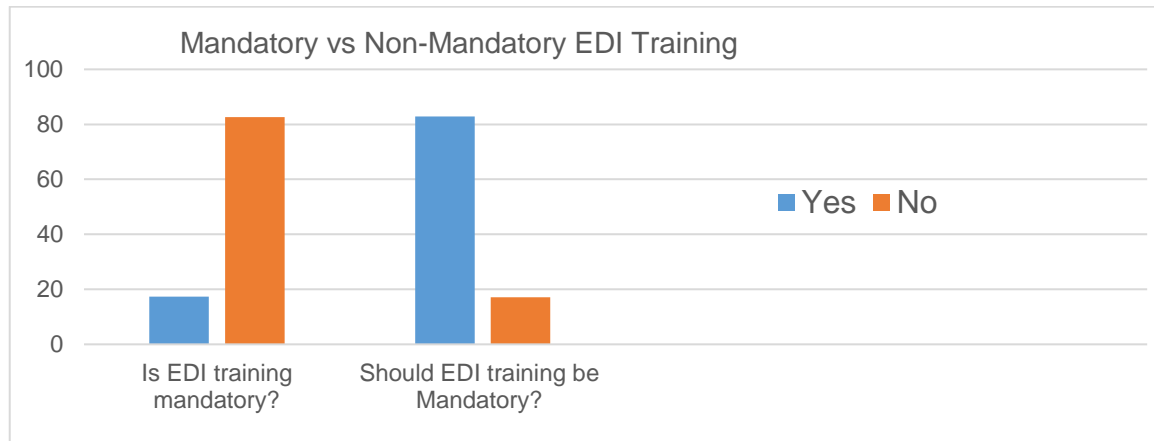
Implicit bias	70.14%
Indigenous Cultural Awareness	58.20 %
Reconciliation and relationship building with Indigenous peoples	47.76%
Legal compliance	47.76%
Racism	46.26%
How to manage diversity	44.77%
Power, oppression, and privilege	44.77%
Emancipation/conscientization	4.92%.

*Note- Participants were able to pick multiple answers to this question.*

### Mandatory versus Non-Mandatory Training

As discussed in Chapter 3, one of the key discussions taking place in the literature and in communities of practice is the voluntary nature of the majority of EDI training. That is, whether EDI training seen as “nice to have” or “need to have”. The results of the two questions related to this topic were striking as they indicate a strong disconnect between what is happening and what the EDI professionals think should be happening.

Figure 7 Mandatory vs Non-Mandatory EDI Training



Eighty-three percent of all participants said EDI training was not mandatory but thought it should be. It appears that this topic is important to participants as the opportunity to expand on this answer generated one of the highest open-ended responses (N=51).

Most participants who answered the open-ended portion of this question (Why or why not?) thought it should be mandatory and provided reasons that fell into the following six categories:

1. It is an essential skill for faculty and staff as EDI should be embedded into all aspects of their work (i.e., need to have, not nice to have). As one survey participant stated, “It is a message. A person, who does not read, has no place in the academy. There are pre-conditions for membership in a knowledge community and EDI practises should be the foundation of all our work”.
2. They did not want to continue to only “Preach to the Choir”, indicating that those who might initially think the content is irrelevant are often those who would benefit most from the training.
3. It is an important way to communicate the value of EDI.
4. People “don’t know what they don’t know” and training may close gaps.
5. To build relationships.
6. To change the culture of the institution.

One survey participant thought the answer of why should be obvious when they stated, “Why? I am one of less than 20 people of colour working here”. One focus group participant describes her concerns about the voluntary nature of the training.

**Taylor:**

My institution is part of developing institutional UDL and CRP modules so they're in draft development. And the biggest thing is implementation... So we've been asked a bunch of times, OK, we're going to create these 15 modules that could potentially take a year to complete (they really are well designed so far from what I've seen) - But if we present them, and it's like a choice, which do they do? Of course, you want that voluntary compliance, not like, OK, “you have to” kind of thing.

But the flipside of that is that when I worked at my previous institution, within your first three months, all staff and students couldn't graduate unless they took First Nations introductory course. It was an intro course and then you have the option of doing advanced modules in worldview and one of them, I think was the *think outside the box but never outside the circle*, which it kind of stays with me as like a mantra. But it was really cool, and nobody fussed about the mandatory aspect that I know of...But I also think they're transitioning from a college to university and to bring that to a University, it's like an immediate, you know, never going to happen kind of thing.

So, we're in development of these more advanced (more than four hours) modules where you possibly could get a certificate at the end. You know, not just a check box- there is follow up. They're really well designed, and I think it's going to be amazing for the province, and it's never been done before and all that innovative talk...and yada yada. But there is *zero* talk about implementing them, so they might just sit beautifully on a website somewhere and no one ever looks again.

Because the biggest one I find, I always want to have workshop trainings and we have the same five people show up. And I'm like “hey, can't

we just make them do it?” And they're like “no”, I'm like, “why not?” You know, you just can't. And I also respect that, but if you're talking about culture change and attitudinal shifts you really can't just be talking to the choir *all the time* and I don't know how to reach those other folks. I've tried everything.

Those who thought it should not be mandatory worried that it could turn into the institution using the training as a “tick box” to prove they had “done” EDI work, but that no meaningful change would come from it. Others thought that mandatory training would not result in changed behaviour. Some participants indicated that it should not be mandatory but that hiring, performance review, and promotion should include EDI metrics (with clear objectives and follow-up). Still others worried that the *type* of training generally mandated often “backfires” as it reinforces stereotypes rather than understanding equity.

Participants also raised concerns about the “chilling effect” mandatory training might have on EDI efforts in general. Several participants noted that the answer is not simple and that it would depend on the institution and where they are in their EDI journey. Others were concerned about a blanket requirement for EDI training as those who are marginalized in our institutions don't need the training, as they live the experience everyday. As one survey participant explained:

The current training starts from a place of assuming that all faculty and staff are unfamiliar with the history leading to reconciliation, or, worse, that they are actively opposed to it. The training should only be mandatory if it is designed to encompass all levels of awareness/education.

Another participant highlighted the connection between mandatory training and adequately resourcing EDI initiatives. They argue that “If training is mandatory, it should be during paid work hours - at present, it is voluntary and outside work hours, but there is a great deal of informal pressure to attend it anyway”.

## Summary

The typical duration of training reported reflects what was found in the literature related to EDI training in other places. The short duration of the training impacts what can be learned and the depth of that learning. In most cases it does not allow time to reflect or to

integrate learning into practice. The shorter duration also impacts content as it prescribes what can realistically be learned in 4 hours. As a result, most training offered offers an introductory and often superficial discussion of equity and our role in it. The reliance on online training is also problematic as it rarely provides an opportunity to debrief about the personal transformation of perceptions that are stated as outcomes (e.g., examining personal bias or our positionality). As noted above, there was a lot of discussion about whether training should be mandatory. This will continue to be a contentious issue as not everyone is in the same place in terms of their learning needs and forcing people to learn something rarely produces positive outcomes. It is notable that mandatory training is more palatable when it is enshrined in legislation or impacts funding. Throughout the study, it was clear that practitioners were frustrated with the amount of time they were given to provide training. However, several participants noted that while it is frustrating to be expected to do EDI training in less than 4 hours, it is better than nothing. It is important to note again that those in power are making the decisions about resource allocation that is preventing the deeper type of EDI training needed to question power imbalances.

#### 6.4 Category 3) Perceptions of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Survey Question: How would you personally define EDI training?

Survey Participant: Training that supports self awareness, relationality and accountability with respect to equity issues, including how power operates to oppress in overt and covert ways.

The questions in this category looked at how practitioners were defining EDI, how important they thought training was for different institutional community members (students, faculty, support staff, and administration), and how they perceived their institution—from a “site of conflict for individuals facing equity, diversity, and inclusion issues” to “basically a safe space for all”. The question about how they were defining EDI training was included as this was raised as a methodological issue in terms of program evaluation and research related to EDI training and their answer provided some context for the rest of their answers. The

other questions were intended to explore extant power relationships and their impact on training initiatives and how perceptions of safety and violence impact the perceived need for training and the type of training offered.

### Defining EDI Training

EDI theorists, EDI practitioners, and PACS scholars agree that having meaningful opportunities to learn about equity, diversity, and inclusion is critical to making our communities and educational institutions more equitable spaces. However, what that training looks like varies significantly. As discussed in Chapter 3, defining EDI training is problematic for several reasons. First, research literature often assumes a common understanding of the term equity, and by default, what is meant by “equity training”. This lack of clarity in definition leads to difficulty when trying to conduct and compare EDI training research findings as well as trying to measure institutional impact.

A second reason defining EDI training is problematic is that the act of defining EDI itself may not be equitable. It was telling that although definitional issues were not part of the focus group protocol, it was one of the first topics raised. James, a focus group participant asked the question, “Who gets to define what equality or equity means?” He argued that how these terms are defined impact what we focus on and the ability to define these terms is itself a form of power. As an example, he described how he thought that the loss of Indigenous languages was not being defined as an equity issue.

**James:** Sometimes I think maybe we should look at equality. And what does that mean for everybody else in terms of who defines equality? Is that a fair question? Like how do we maybe say, for a minority group that might be the recipients of that, that is an exercise of power right? Equality seems like its universalized in terms of the western sort of context. Where do I fit in in terms of equality? Sometimes its sort of disempowering in itself, right? Like, for example, I think of the two recognized languages in Canada are French and English, right. And then, so what about our language, or in terms of the Cree language which I speak. Which is my first language I

learned. And then our language is actually in danger like most languages, of disappearing. So, I think about that, I think in terms of equality, right? So, I think that equality term can be kind of problematic as well, a problematic word.

I think that that's a way of beginning this dialogue in terms of beginning to define what equality means and what it means for everybody else.... And I think sometimes, equality could mean, like, representation of the majority.

Who gets to define what is an equity issue, decide which equity issue is important to learn about, the approach taken to training, the importance (and therefore resources) attributed to it, and how or whether it is assessed reflect who holds power.

Finally, defining equity training is further exacerbated by the lack of consensus about what constitutes “training”. As discussed in Chapter 4, while most EDI training states similar goals related to increased equity and inclusion, the training takes many forms. Most of the EDI training that has been studied falls under the category of professional development and is intended to build skills needed to do a particular job or activity in a way that supports legal or regulatory compliance-what we normally think of as “training”. The knowledge being dispensed in this approach focuses on the management or mitigation of EDI issues.

However, as discussed in Chapter 4, there is a strong and uniform call in the literature to move away from EDI *training* efforts characterized by Freire’s notion of a “banking method” (1990) that use didactic methodology and expects participants to acquire the knowledge that is being dispensed by the instructor in a given time frame. “Education” on the other hand is often seen as more process driven. As argued earlier, many scholars have said that what is needed are social justice “education” approaches that help people develop the critical thinking skills needed to interrogate power and inequality and that focus on what Freire (1990) describes as every person’s ontological inclination to become more human. This approach expects participants to learn to think critically about equity and acknowledges that learning about equity in power relationships between yourself and others is an ongoing process.

## Differences in Definition

While participant definitions did not differ in terms of overall meaning, what was different was the focus on either the *end goal* of learning or the *process* of learning. These different emphases parallel the difference noted between “training” and “education” discussed in Chapter 3.

### *EDI as End Goal*

Results fell into five descriptive categories when the focus of the training was on the end goal. These include Build Awareness of/ Sensitivity to EDI Issues; Build Understanding of Power, Oppression, and Privilege; Understand our Implicit Bias/Understand the Impacts of Racism and Anti-Racism; Meaningful Relationships; Legal/ Funding Compliance; and Institutional Change. Initiatives that were defined in terms of an end goal align with the philosophical stance that argues that the results of “training” should be discrete and measurable.

### *Building Awareness*

Training was most described in terms of the goal of building an “awareness” or “sensitivity” to EDI issues. One participant described the goal of their training as building a general awareness of “not only Indigenous history, culture and ways of knowing, but other groups including but not limited to International, LGBTQS2+, Disabilities”. Another participant described these types of session as building awareness of “key issues within EDI such as equity vs. equality, what being inclusive means, importance of diversity, definition of social justice, impact of privilege, etc. as well as building intercultural competence.” These types of sessions also included learning about one’s own culture and the culture of others. Another participant described the training as an opportunity to learn about “multiple worldviews that exist outside of the dominant, mainstream, ethnocentric paradigm” including differences in perspectives and values, “cultural sensitivity”. These sessions were also seen as a “venue for dialogue”.

### *Legal/ Funding Compliance*

Others defined equity training in terms of the end goal of learning about how to comply with legal (e.g., Access laws, Human Rights laws) or funding agency requirements

(e.g., Canadian Research Chair equity compliance). This type of training was described by several people as “rather superficial” as it focused on legal compliance not changes to “personal behaviours”.

#### *Understand our Implicit Bias/Understand the Impacts of Racism and Anti-Racism*

The second most common way equity training was defined was in terms of learning about implicit bias or racism. They saw EDI training as training that has as its goal an understanding of our implicit bias and the impacts of racism and anti-racism. The goal of these sessions was to identify ones’ own biases and gain an initial understanding of equity issues. Topics included implicit-bias, anti-racism, anti-discrimination, White supremacy/fragility, barriers under-represented or disadvantaged groups may face, and “awareness of the heterogeneity of needs”.

#### *EDI Training as a Process*

Definitions that described EDI training in terms of an ongoing process described several key processes described below. Initiatives that were defined in terms of a process were more aligned to the notion of “education” and have a more constructivist frame of reference that implies that measuring results would be difficult if not impossible as the results of the training and our definitions are context-based and individualistic.

#### *Developing Self-Awareness*

All these definitions spoke to the importance of developing self-awareness about one’s own unconscious bias, personal colonization, and positionality in terms of privilege. This included the recognition that self-awareness must be an *ongoing* attempt to identify, overcome and address systemic and personal biases and prejudices. Self-awareness was described as a critical first step to expand empathy and understanding of others around us and of ourselves. Participants described the importance of “unlearning” stories that uphold the status quo in the development of self-awareness. Topics included implicit-bias, anti-racism, anti-discrimination, White supremacy/fragility, barriers under-represented or disadvantaged groups may face, and “awareness of the heterogeneity of needs”.

### *Critically Examining Power Relationships*

Developing intrinsic behaviours and practices to advance the balancing of power differentials that feed social inequities were also a key part of process definitions. This included imperatives to ensure that training made “space for conversations around power dynamics, belonging, and our role in dismantling unfair structures of power”. Some training was described as the opportunity to learn how to question/reflect on the representation they see in their workplaces and the challenges faced in moving toward equity. Many talked about EDI training as a process to think through how to change inequitable and exclusionary situations at the personal, interpersonal, and/or institutional level. This type of training was also defined in terms of its ability to provide tools and opportunities for participants to analyze root causes of inequity, the impacts, and intersections of personal and institutional power imbalances. This included the ability to analyze their positionality and the advantages or barriers that may bring, as well as the “oppressive systemic and structural impacts of inequity, how it can manifest in a university setting, and how it can and should be addressed”. The goal is “training that helps end racism and other forms of oppression” and supports decolonization.

### *Building Meaningful Relationships through Dialogue*

Learning how to listen and engage in “respectful dialogue with other humans” was also key part of the descriptions of EDI training in process definitions. These definitions described training as that which “supports self awareness, relationality and accountability” and increases the capability of “understanding and relationship building across all peoples” to “increase feelings of respect and belonging”. EDI training was seen as a process to mobilize EDI knowledge to create a safe space for people to engage.

### *Translating Equity Values into Action*

Process definitions also talked about the need to act on the knowledge and skills gained. Developing intrinsic behaviours and practices that advance the balancing of power differentials that feed social inequities was seen as critical. This corresponds with the definition of social justice education discussed in Chapter 3 that requires learning that is then translated into action. This focus on action was described as including developing a

commitment to just, open, and inclusive organizations and practices and the need to hold ourselves and others accountable for “embracing EDI in all we do and learning to intervene in a fair and inclusive manner in a diverse environment.” These definitions often included statements related to institutional change EDI an internalized institutional value. including a shift from "managing" diversity to deeply valuing it” and creating safe spaces where “Everyone has a place and a voice, all voices are valued and heard”.

### Summary

In terms of EDI training, there is little agreement about *what* is important to learn, *how* it should be taught and measured, *what* the purpose is or *who* the information should benefit. Critical examination of an issue must start with a discussion of the terms being used. We should not assume EDI training means the same thing to everyone. Lack of clarity around definitions of both “equity” and “training” create difficulties when trying to compare research findings or discuss day to day operational issues related to providing meaningful educational experiences related to EDI. As important is the need to take the time to critically examine the process of defining equity and what constitutes an equity issue in terms of power. We need to ask ourselves, as James suggests, is the current process we are using to define equity and therefore what constitutes an equity issue inclusive of all voices or is it the only the voice of the majority?

It was interesting to note that while about half of the definitions provided a process-based definition that requires critical thinking, reflection, and personal change, 84% of training was reported as lasting a half day (4 hours) or less. While some shorter training may be sequential (i.e. where there are multiple 4 hour sessions with time in between to reflect), the vast majority are not. Examining the definitions of EDI highlights a disconnect between what people hope EDI training is and what it is actually able to accomplish.

### Perceptions of Safety

Universities are not safe places though. and I feel like most people within these spaces are willing to admit they are unsafe for equity deserving folks, but there is a lack of connection as to how that relates to them unless they are of an

equity deserving group themselves, or one of the very rare genuine allies.  
(Survey participant)

Understanding perceptions of safety and violence in our post-secondary institutions in Canada is critical to understanding the main argument put forth in this work. That is, there is a connection between imbalanced power and the current state of EDI training in Canadian post-secondary institutions. As the data is critical to this argument, the questions related to perceptions of safety are discussed separately in this section. As argued in the context section in Chapter 2, skewed perceptions of safety may be a significant barrier to providing meaningful EDI training and institutional change. Specifically, if people don't see the violence and consider our institutions to be relatively safe spaces, there will be little motivation for change and consequently, little concern to provide meaningful training that focuses on power and oppression. To inquire about people's perception of safety in their institution, participants were asked two questions.

The first question was a forced choice question about their perception of their institution. The choices they had were developed from the literature review related to specific outcomes related to specific types of training. Participants were asked whether they saw their institution as:

- 1) a site of conflict for individuals facing equity, diversity issues,
- 2) a place where some people continue to be marginalized,
- 3) a place of systemic violence against marginalized peoples, or
- 4) a basically peaceful and respectful space for all students, staff, and faculty, with some isolated incidents of violence and exclusion based on a person's gender, race, culture, sexual orientation, or ability.

Slightly more than two-thirds indicated that they saw their institution as "a place where some people continue to be marginalized" or as a "basically peaceful space with isolated incidents of violence and exclusion". Less than a quarter saw their institution as a site of conflict for individuals facing EDI issues or as a place of systemic violence against marginalized peoples. Participants were also given an opportunity to describe something else. Several individuals commented they saw the institution as a combination of the first

three choices (i.e. everything but “Basically peaceful and respectful”). Others indicated that they saw all the choices at different times and in different locations within the institution. One individual described their institution as a “place of systemic bias and microaggressions (rather than violence) against minorities peoples.” Several others indicated that they saw their institutions as a place of marginalization but indicated that there are a lot of people working very hard to improve this. Two individuals saw their institution as basically respectful and peaceful with isolated pockets of racism and exclusion.

Many participants did not see the institution as a safe place. Several participants indicated that they saw the institution as a reflection of colonization that upholds “white supremacy” and a “place of privilege for White people” where “commitment to EDI is surface level”. Others described their institutions as places that were in general very respectful, but where “we nevertheless refuse to understand blind spots and their repercussions on marginalized people”. The following quotations from survey participants reflect these sentiments:

We have one Indigenous educational developer who is new and has created an online decolonizing & indigenizing course for faculty to take voluntarily; this was in response to faculty being asked to "Indigenize" without any guidance. Other training is fairly ad-hoc, and based on individual faculty who organize random learning sessions, or HR who sends out invites to CCDI webinars because it's a corporate activity that they do. Really, there's nothing coordinated yet. There is a new campus-wide committee looking at this issue this year ahead, but the institution is slow to provide resources.

Yes. I think it affects a perception of how radical the training needs to be and how deeply it needs to change structures. There's resistance to those deeper changes, partly b/c they're hard and they upset power and established ways of doing things, and we would need a stronger rationale and commitment to social justice (and sense that we're not meeting the mark) AND a sense that we can really change things to support really radical diversity training.

Thinking that Canada and its institutions are "safe spaces" is an illusion, at least from the perspective of an Indigenous person or people of color. This illusion only benefits the top of the pyramid, which is usually occupied by white males. Plus these institutions (health, RCMP, universities, governments) need to acknowledge that they are built on the foundations of white supremacist ideology before any real change can happen.

It is clear from these sentiments that many see their institutions as unsafe places that are “not ready to decolonialize”. Participants noted that seeing Canada and Canadian institutions as safe spaces impacts the perceived need for EDI training and therefore actually *hinder* moving toward more equitable, safe spaces. One participant described the harm done by skewed perceptions of safety:

I have heard numerous stories from students, staff and faculty whose safety and inclusion has been breached. Plus I have listened to stories of graduate students, staff and faculty who do not have a process where they can lodge human rights complaints, or bullying and harassment complaints at my institution. Again, HR and the unions are involved and this process takes years it seems and causes more emotional and mental harm to individuals.

These skewed perceptions are problematic because they prevent people from seeing violence and so the need for meaningful EDI training.

### Summary

There is often little consensus about how EDI is defined (even within the same institution) and what constitutes EDI training. Current definitions are based on the Western European notions of individuality and cognitively based didactic methods of those who hold power rather than collective, dialogical approaches that attempt to change hearts and minds.

Most EDI training identified is short term and results in a superficial understanding of complex issues of power and privilege. This superficial understanding impacts the teaching and learning process as well as feelings of safety and inclusion. Training initiatives are short term because they are not adequately resourced and EDI professionals feel that something is

better than nothing. EDI training is also often being contracted out to organizations who provide short term training that is seldom evaluated for impact.

Most participants reported that the perception they saw there institutions as basically safe places where there are *some* EDI problems, but they are “working on it”. Training initiatives are present but sporadic, not coordinated across the institution, and rarely measured for impact. Plans for change rarely move past “aspirational” stage. It may be that these initiatives are under resourced as they are not seen as a priority but rather a concession to do the minimum work needed to appear as if they are concerned with faculty and staff capacity to make the type of changes needed to make institutions safer spaces.

## Chapter Summary

The data highlights the strong dedication of EDI professionals to help make institutions across Canada safer places free from violence, and to help faculty and staff see that they are not always safe places. These professionals are asked to change hearts and entrenched systems but are often only given time to put out fires. They are on the front lines and reported constantly facing backlash, having to scramble to provide training with little or no resources, and risk facing violence themselves in the form of professional sanction or destruction. The story that emerges from their voices of is one of frustration, passion, and hope.

There is often little consensus about how EDI is defined (even within the same institution) and what constitutes EDI training. Current definitions of “EDI” and “EDI training” reflect power imbalances as they are based on Western European notions of individuality and cognitively based didactic methods rather than collective, dialogical approaches that attempt to change hearts and minds.

Respondents indicated that most EDI training identified is short term and results in a superficial understanding of complex issues of power and privilege. This superficial understanding impacts the teaching and learning process as well as feelings of safety and inclusion. This can lead to the conclusion that EDI training “doesn’t work” and uphold violence in our institutions by reinforcing stereotypical thinking. Training initiatives are short term because they are not adequately resourced and EDI professionals feel that something is better than nothing. EDI training is also often being contracted out to

organizations who provide short term training that is seldom evaluated for impact. Short term training is not seen as effective and is often seen as an exercise to “check a box” and it is not evaluated for its ability to transform the institution into safer spaces free from violence.

Most participants reported that the perception of EDI in their institutions is that there are *some* EDI problems, but they are “working on it”. Interestingly, this description does not fit with what they report in the rest of their responses or what was discussed in the literature. Another indication of power is the fact that while most EDI professionals think that training should be mandatory, administration most often sees it as “nice to have” and not “need to have”. Training initiatives may be present, but they are most often reactive, sporadic, and not coordinated across the institution. Further, plans for more effective and measured EDI training rarely moves past “aspirational” stage.

Most content of the training frequently focuses on issues of difference and how to manage them, rather than the ability to critically analyze power relationships in our institutions that underpin inequities and violence. While the proliferation of implicit bias training is a nod to ameliorating our ignorance, it is usually not long enough in duration to be meaningful. It is argued here that without that understanding of power and its relation to the creation and maintenance of cultural and structural violence, meaningful training will not happen, or it will happen at too slow a pace to prevent a significant amount of harm from being perpetuated.

## Chapter 7: Evaluating and Implementing EDI Training

As in the chapter above, this chapter explores the findings from the national survey and the focus group. The findings from the data and a discussion of those findings are woven together throughout this chapter. The findings from both the survey respondents and the focus group participants are reported together thematically.

The first part of this chapter reviews the findings and provides a discussion of the questions in Category 4) *Evaluating EDI Training at your Institution*. The questions in this category looked at whether EDI training is being tracked, who is responsible for monitoring whether or not EDI training for faculty and staff is carried out, whether their institution measures the impact of EDI training for individual or institutional change, how they are measuring impact, what the intended outcome of the training is, what methods they use to collect information to evaluate the training, and practitioners' perceptions of the difficulty of articulating and measuring the learning outcomes of EDI training.

These questions were asked for two reasons. First, it was important to gather the practitioners' thoughts about definitional and measurement difficulties related to program evaluation and research related to EDI training as these were prominent issues raised in the literature review. The second reason is that while it is important to understand the types of training offered, it is equally important to understand if they are being incorporated in a comprehensive and measured way (Srinivasan, 2015). Initiatives that are important to an institution are usually tracked for impact and a lack of concern about impact may signal that the initiative is not as important as stated. In this case, the question is raised about whether institutions are really concerned about whether faculty and staff have the capacity to understand power and its impact on equity which would enable them to contribute meaningfully to the transformation articulated by institutional goals and strategic plans.

The second part of this chapter reviews the findings and provides a discussion of the questions in Category 5) *Implementing EDI Training at Your Institution*. The questions in this category asked practitioners about how EDI training is chosen, whether supports are in place for faculty and staff to help them integrate their learning, challenges practitioners face implementing EDI training, if they received adequate administrative support and resourcing,

the perceived purpose of EDI training, and finally, whether they thought that perceptions of Canada and Canadian post-secondary institutions as safe spaces impacts how the need for EDI training is understood. These questions help get a sense of what may be impacting the perceived need for various types of EDI training, whether EDI training choices are purposeful or ad hoc, and whether training is adequately resourced, all of which speak to the relative importance given to the training by administrators who hold decision-making power.

#### 7.1 Category 4) Evaluating EDI Training at your Institution

As stated earlier, because of the spectrum of engagement in the unlearning of racist policies and practices throughout the university that runs from "in utter denial" to "being engaged for a number of years" and because of the complexity of the structures, i.e. which faculties, which units, etc. are even beginning to look within their little power structures for how they cause harm to Indigenous peoples and peoples of color, it is absolutely difficult to measure learning outcomes. Where do you begin? And, who does the evaluating?  
(Survey participant)

The questions in this category looked at whether EDI training is being tracked, who is responsible for monitoring whether or not EDI training for faculty and staff is carried out, whether their institution measures the impact of EDI training for individual or institutional change, how they are measuring impact, what the intended outcome of the training is, what methods they use to collect information to evaluate the training, and practitioners perceptions of the difficulty of articulating and measuring the learning outcomes of EDI training.

#### How EDI Training is Tracked

Another concern that was raised in the literature was that training is rarely being tracked and whether it was possible to get a sense, at an institutional level, of what is being done. Almost half of the participants indicated that EDI training was not being tracked at all. Feedback from participants indicated that in many cases EDI training is monitored informally and the information is not used by central administration.

Participants were also asked a related open-ended question, “*Who* is responsible for monitoring whether or not EDI training for faculty and staff is carried out in your institution?” In most cases it is either the EDI/Diversity/Human Rights Office or Human Resources departments that were tracking EDI training for faculty and staff. Several participants identified more than one area (e.g., Diversity Office and Human Resources). A significant portion of respondents indicated that they didn’t know or were unsure of who was tracking the training. In a few cases Managers or Department Heads were listed as the ones tracking the training. Several other respondents indicated that each area monitors its own training and there is no central coordination.

Several participants shared their frustration about the lack of monitoring or how it is done. One participant described pushback their human resources and Indigenous AVP received from the president of the University when they tried to implement more formalized tracking. Another stated that often the request for monitoring from administration is mostly reactive and seems to be a concern only when there is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Another described that they were hopeful that they would start to track the training and impacts as a “newly appointed President has stated that EDI is a priority - thus EDI may move from window dressing to actual change”. It is clear lack of tracking training can lead to siloed EDI training efforts and the inability to measure institutional impacts of training. The apparent lack of concern by those in power in institutions around tracking what is happening with EDI training points to a lack of importance given to these endeavors.

#### [Intended Outcomes of EDI Training](#)

Participants were also asked to select the outcome from the list below that most accurately describes the intended outcome(s) of their EDI training for faculty and staff at their institution. 61 respondents answered this question. They were allowed to select all that applied. The possible choices were selected as they align with Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick’s (2016) evaluation levels discussed earlier.

#### **Knowledge**

The highest number of respondents (N=44, 79%) indicated that gaining knowledge best describes the intended outcome of the training. This included knowledge about different

cultures (traditional dress, celebrations), residential schools' impact, and the impact of stereotypes on their behaviour.

### **Skills**

Developing skills received slightly less responses (N=42, 73.66%) than knowledge but still accounted for slightly less than a third of the responses. Acquiring skills was described as the ability to apply knowledge in the classroom (selecting materials from diverse authors, engaging learners in different ways of learning/knowing), managing difficult conversations that arise related to EDI, and increased capacity for administrators to make decisions that address power imbalances.

### **Critical Thinking**

The next highest choice was developing critical thinking (N=31, 54.39%) which was described as the ability to think critically about their response to diversity in a novel situation in which diversity is a factor, analyze their thoughts and behaviour for implicit bias, analyze institutional power structures that promote or reduce inclusion. This category reflects Freire's notion of conscientization.

### **Increased Confidence**

Feelings of increased confidence ranked fourth in participants' choices (N=26, 45.6%). This category is described as feelings of increased confidence in dealing with issues related to respect, inclusion, and reconciliation and feeling less anxious about doing or saying "the right thing" when relating to people who are different from them in some way (culture, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation).

### **Something Else**

The other category received was chosen the least (N=8, 14.04%). The category was described as learning about implicit bias awareness, inequities with Indigenous peoples, institutions' legal responsibilities, and how to complete EDI sections in grant applications. The results for this item are interesting as there seems to be a disconnect between what people are saying are the intended outcomes of training at their institution and what is actually happening as these outcomes are the topic of the vast majority of training sessions requested and offered.

As discussed in the literature review, not having clear outcomes is problematic in terms of measuring success and impact. One survey respondent highlighted problems with not identifying intended outcomes:

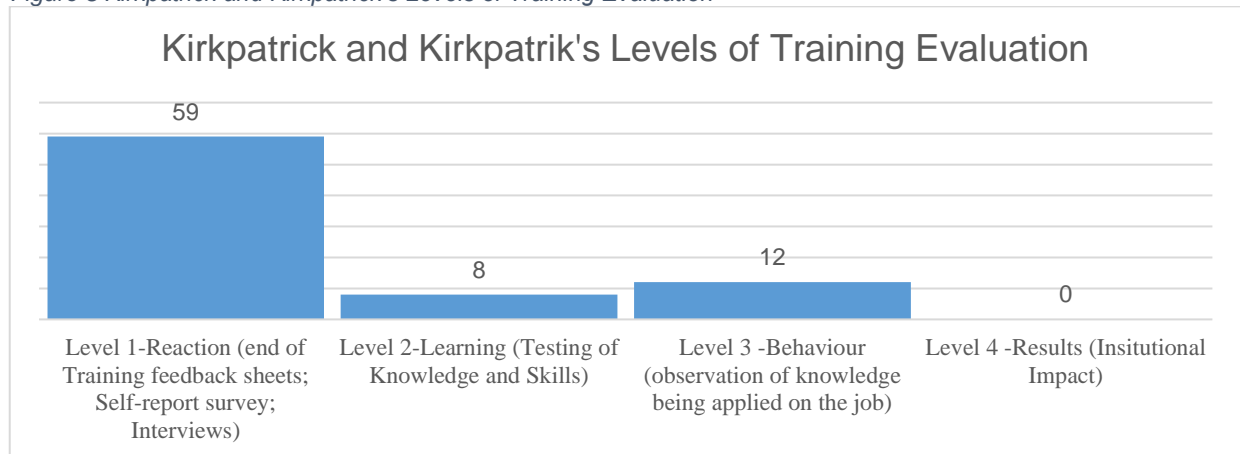
I don't think the institution knows what the intended outcomes are. It demonstrates that it's concerned about these issues, but as mentioned it's not centralized or formalized or monitored. As much as I hate the term "virtue signalling", that's what these EDI efforts appear to be sometimes.

This participant's comment resonates with the concerns raised in the literature that having unclear outcomes supports the appropriation of EDI training by those in power in the institution to serve other needs of the institution (image, marketing, funding compliance), rather than a desire to increase the EDI capacity for faculty and staff to make institutions safer spaces. If the outcomes remain unclear, it is difficult to provide evidence of this appropriation.

#### Methods Used to Evaluate EDI Training

As was noted in the literature, one of the key problems with EDI training is that the learning and the impact of that learning is rarely evaluated or evaluated at a very superficial level. The lack of adequate individual assessment and overall training evaluation that match the stated outcomes causes difficulty in determining training impact, iterative improvement, and research related to EDI training in general. To get at what was happening in terms of assessing EDI training, participants were asked to identify the methods they use to evaluate EDI training from a list of responses that align with Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2016) training evaluation model discussed above. They were given the choice to select all that applied. Most responses indicate that the most common type of evaluation (74.6%) is done at Level 1. This is congruent with the findings from the literature that state that approximately 80% of programs are evaluated at Level 1 which measures *reaction only* and is referred to as refer the "customer satisfaction" measurement of training.

Figure 8 Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's Levels of Training Evaluation



When asked if their institution assessed whether faculty and staff who have taken EDI training have applied their learning to their practice, 94.44% indicated that their institution does not assess whether the learning from the training has been applied to practice.

Survey participants were also given an opportunity to describe other ways they were assessing the impact of training. One participant described monitoring complaints to the Equity or Human Resources offices to see if there has been a reduction in complaints. Other described sometimes using a pre and post test to try and see if training related to “Duty to Accommodate” had made a difference to participants’ knowledge level. Another participant that was providing EDI training specifically for grant applications checked the applications as they came in after the session to see if they faculty were capturing the necessary items. This person also used this method as an opportunity to further participants’ learning by providing additional feedback. Several others described using data metrics such as how often online EDI training was accessed, how many people are accessing resources, or website hits. Another described a standard test that is mandatory after their harassment training but raised concerns that it was “entirely possible to pass it without even going into the online course modules”.

Overall, responses align with Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) findings discussed earlier, and corroborate the concern that training impact, if measured at all, is largely being measured at a very superficial level. The evaluation rarely moves past asking participants if they thought the training was useful or if they enjoyed it. The lack of substantial evaluation

impacts training, implementation, and research efforts. It is impossible to understand whether EDI training is having the intended impact on the person or the institution without evaluation that measures the intended learning outcomes. Also, without appropriate evaluation measures, improvements cannot be made to further training sessions. Finally, the lack of sound evaluation practices makes it difficult to research EDI training impact as the variables may not be comparable. This difficulty is also tied to clearly articulating the outcomes of the training. As argued earlier, if initiatives are important to an institution they are usually measured for impact. However, there seems to be little concern by those in power about determining whether faculty and staff training is effective or not. It is important to clearly identify what we are hoping to achieve rather than an amorphous goal like “closing the gap”.

**Evaluating the Application of Training**

As noted above, training is often not assessed for whether the knowledge is applied to practice (or applied appropriately). When asked whether they evaluate if faculty and staff who have taken EDI training applied their learning to their practice, 95% of participants answered “no”. For participants that answered yes, they were asked to choose from a list of responses that describing how they had applied their knowledge and skills to their practice. The five responses are based on evaluation measures described in the general literature related to EDI training, from PACS scholars and Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick’s levels. The results are shown in the chart below. Participants could select all that applied.

*Table 2: Application of EDI Training*

<b>Application of EDI Training</b>		
<b>Available Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Responses</b>	<b>Responses</b>
They are more aware of their unconscious bias towards others who are different from them.	27%	33
They have used more resources that reflect diversity - e.g., literature, texts, or research papers from women, other cultures, 2SLGBTQIA+ authors.	23%	29

They have embedded issues related to EDI into their curriculum.	19%	26
They have changed the way they interact with others.	15%	18
Something else? Please specify.	12%	16
They are peacebuilders, able to further anti-racism, inclusion, and reconciliation efforts.	4%	6

It is not surprising that most people indicated that they were becoming more aware of their unconscious bias, as this is the training most often offered. However, it is not clear how they were evaluating whether people had more awareness of their unconscious bias. In retrospect, it would have been useful to allow participants to describe *how* the application is being measured. This would be a useful study to undertake in the future. The participants who completed the open-ended “Something else?” part of this question stated they don’t know how or if participants were applying what they had learned, or that they don’t measure learning at all.

A further question asked whether their institution evaluates the long-term impact of EDI training. 58% indicated that they were not measuring long-term impact or didn’t know how it was being done. 30% said they were measuring impact in terms of feelings of safety and inclusion for students, though they did not indicate how this was being done. One survey respondent stated that “Nothing is being measured; there are some accountancy exercises regarding Indigenous content that is being embedded in courses at the senate level, but this seems like a fairly check-box activity that doesn't connect to anything but reporting to government”.

Participants were also asked to describe *how* the long-term impact of training is being measured. Slightly over half affirmed it was not being measured and 31% weren’t sure if it was being measured at all. A small percentage (7%) indicated they were currently in discussions about how this could be done. A still smaller percentage (3%) said they were measuring the impact on the university in terms of less human rights of EDI related complaints, or on the community through feedback from employers about student ability to work effectively and inclusively with diverse populations. Several people described using

external audits or student surveys assessing feelings of safety and inclusiveness (disaggregated by demographic group).

As noted in the discussion related to assessing EDI training in chapter three, there is disagreement about how, or even if, the impacts of EDI training *can* be measured. To gain further insight into this issue, participants were also asked to select the word/phrase that best describes their view about articulating and measuring learning outcomes in EDI training. While no one said it was impossible, the majority thought it was either really difficult or somewhat difficult. A further 17% thought it could be done, but only superficially. Only 7% thought it could be easily done.

Participants also made comments and suggestions about how the learning outcomes could be measured. Several people stated the need for clear descriptions of the intended outcomes and measurement criteria. Others commented that measuring overall training outcomes would be resource intensive in terms of time, Human Resources, and tool development. Some argued that it was not possible to tell if any specific EDI training was the sole cause of personal or institutional change or if was due to the training combined with other factors (media, other training, work expectations, personal motivation). One survey respondent argued:

Because this is so bound up with personal identity and the systems of oppression that we've all grown up in (and may be benefiting from), and it also lends itself to performative superficial actions, it's difficult to tell if someone has absorbed the language without the deep reflection and work necessary to create the learning outcomes we want. And because these are often developed over time and accumulated experiences/interactions, attribution to any one training session is also very difficult.

Several people commented on the difficulty of measuring changes in attitude/feelings/values.

As one survey respondent stated:

I am not sure how you could measure the outcomes of people's attitudes towards issues such as racism, diversity and bias. I think that people will always tell you what they know you want to hear in an evaluation and people

can put on a good face in public view. If people have to take training because it is mandatory does this really make a difference?

Others noted that we would need to measure an institutional change in culture and that this would have to be coordinated across multiple areas and require “institutional will”. Finally, several people pointed out that because everyone is starting at a different point, specific educational models would have to be used that would allow *for measuring development and growth* rather than holding everyone to a certain common standard. This is illustrated in a comment by a survey respondent.

Because of the spectrum of engagement in the unlearning of racist policies and practices throughout the university that runs from "in utter denial" to "being engaged for a number of years" and because of the complexity of the structures, i.e., which faculties, which units, etc. are even beginning to look within their little power structures for how they cause harm to Indigenous peoples and peoples of color, it is absolutely difficult to measure learning outcomes. Where do you begin? And, who does the evaluating?

When asked if their institution measured the impact of EDI training for faculty and staff, 67% indicated that their institution does not measure the impact, 22% indicated that their institution did, and 11% thought the question was not applicable.

### Summary

The findings from this study confirm the issues stated in the literature. Evaluating EDI training is difficult for a variety of reasons, first among them is that people are struggling to articulate outcomes that can be measured. How EDI training is defined impacts whether it is evaluated or whether people think it is possible to evaluate *any* change or impact. Even if outcomes are clearly articulated and effectively measured in some way, suggesting a causal effect between the training provided and the change in behaviour or institutional impact is difficult as these changes are transformational and therefore complex. The difficulty and complexity of assessing EDI training for personal or institutional impact is difficult and as such is rarely done.

However, this does not mean that it should not be measured. It is a critical piece of any training initiative and should be seen as such. However, there also may not be an

appetite on the part of the institution to expend additional resources on assessment. This seems to be a common problem and it may speak to the perceived importance of the training. If initiatives are important to an institution, clear and unambiguous evaluation processes are usually required by those in power.

## 7.2 Category 5) Implementing EDI Training at Your Institution

This category looked at how the type of EDI training was chosen, whether supports are in place for faculty and staff to help them integrate the learning, barriers and challenges they face when trying to implement EDI training whether, whether they thought EDI training was a priority at their institutions, whether the EDI training was adequately resourced, whether training was being implemented reactively or proactively, and whether or not seeing Canadian institutions as safe spaces impacted implementation.

### Choosing EDI Training

Survey participants were asked how they, or their institution, decided what type of training should be provided for faculty and staff—for example, how long the training would be, what the content was, who should be consulted, and whether a formal needs assessment was done. The responses are condensed into the categories described below.

#### **Consultation/Needs Assessment**

Roughly a third of respondents indicated that they did consultation through some form of a needs assessment when deciding what training to offer and what form it should take. This included using focus groups or consulting with advisory committees, unions, and faculty associations. Surveys sent to staff and students were also commonly used. Several people related that they were guided by the best practice suggestions in documents such as the actions outlined in the TRC. Others shared their institution had done a systemic equity/racism audit and were guided by the findings. Consultation with requesting units often occurred as a first step. In several cases respondents indicated that the content was vetted with stakeholders prior to delivery and continuous group and individual consultations were embedded in the process. In most cases internal EDI specialists determine what is needed (e.g., EDI staff, Centres for Teaching and Learning, Indigenous Services, Black Student Support) based on a needs assessment process.

### **I Don't Know/Unsure**

It was revealing that the next highest responses stated that they did not know how their institution chose which training to provide, keeping in mind that the participants in this study were predominately EDI practitioners. In institutions where this was the case, training was often provided by an external agency and items were chosen by administration or individuals from a list of available online modules. The high number of people who indicated that they didn't know or weren't sure also speaks to the concern raised in the literature about poorly articulated outcomes and lack of clarity about the rationale for EDI training. This lack of clarity makes it difficult to assess for impact or to compare the efficacy of different forms of training.

### **On An Ad Hoc Basis**

The next highest description of how training was chosen was described as an ad-hoc response. Participants noted that training was provided as issues arose, because of "obvious deficiencies", or to meet requirements of external agencies (e.g., granting agencies, change in legislation). This included "very poor development of EDI considerations in grant applications". Several people shared that the training was provided after hearing from faculty that they are not confident teaching in a diverse classroom, or they needed clarification of EDI requirements for granting agencies. Other participants said that the decision to provide training was based predominantly on informal conversations with people in positions to "observe committee work and identify concerns", or requests from institution members and not on a formal needs assessment.

Participants shared that decisions about the length and type of training were often based on "How long we can get people to commit", if it fit into schedules, and perceived "readiness and interests of faculty, staff, and students". Decisions about training were often based on the availability of facilitators. These results mirror the concern raised in the literature that institutions often take a reactive rather than proactive stance to EDI training and to equity issues in general. These findings also point to a lack of an institutional plan to increase EDI capacity of faculty and staff. Several participants echoed the concern raised in the literature that the training efforts are often siloed, and they often do not know what is happening in their own institution. Other participants had more cynical comments that

included, “Wherever the grant money comes from” and “Training is usually superficial - maybe a Google search?”

## **Research**

Others described using a more formalized research process to determine need and the type of training that would be offered. This might include research into content, review of policies and legislation, the capacity to conduct training, research about what types of training are effective, and what other institutions are doing.

## **Support for faculty and staff**

When asked if the institution had supports in place to help faculty and staff integrate the knowledge and skills they get from training, many of the participants (64%) indicated they did not have supports in place. If they indicated they did have supports in place, they were asked to describe them. As described in the literature review above, having ongoing support to help people integrate and apply what they have learned is critical to good pedagogy (Brookfield, 2017).

Teaching and Learning Centres were most often cited as the place where support to integrate and apply learning was provided. This took the form of providing and assessing teaching strategies, support with integration of EDI into curriculum, supplying resources, 1-1 consultations and follow-up appointments, proofreading of texts, ongoing discussions, and providing advice. EDI and Human Rights Offices were the next most frequently cited places for support. The support came in the form of providing written materials/slides as reference, coaching faculty, chairs, and individuals, offering time and support to committees, supporting hiring processes, and providing input into strategic planning processes.

The next most often described source of support was from staff from Indigenous offices. It was noted in several comments that these staff members were in high demand. These supports were described as one "drop-in" sessions, and opportunities to follow up after training sessions. Research Offices were also described as a source of support and guided faculty to resources and groups that already done work on EDI, providing support for incorporating EDI considerations in lab groups, providing one-on-one guidance and mentorship, and helping to complete grant applications in which there are EDI questions.

Human Resource staff were also described as ongoing supports, usually through hiring processes. Others described accessing “materials” to support ongoing integration of EDI. These included resources/materials on various websites, including templates and tools, and guidebooks that describe how to integrate EDI. Other comments suggested that participants were unsure of where support would come from, and one participant noted that even though materials and support is available, “they are incredibly under utilized”.

### Barriers to Implementing EDI Training

Canada is seen as polite, but we are racist and colonized, with colonial systems. Until we see the truth of what Canada is and how it was built, we can't move people to want to change the systems. (Survey participant)

This section describes the barriers to implementing EDI training described by participants. Several questions asked participants specifically about barriers they have encountered when trying to implement EDI training for faculty and staff (e.g., resistance, inadequate resourcing). They were first asked a forced-choice question about whether they faced any barriers trying to implement EDI training for faculty and staff. Most participants indicated they had faced barriers (81.5%). The barriers they described included:

- Lack of resources.
- No dedicated release time for faculty and staff.
- Faculty and staff are not all at the same level of knowledge about EDI.
- Resistance from the top administration.
- Lack of interest.
- Discomfort of faculty and staff.
- Lack of institutional commitment.
- Belief that “everything is fine and that there are no challenges, so no need to learn more about EDI”.

As noted in the literature, institutional commitment to EDI and EDI training is often lacking. To gain insight into EDI practitioners’ perceptions of institutional commitment, they were asked if they thought efforts to provide EDI training for faculty and staff were

adequately resourced at their institution. Resource allocation was used as an indicator of institutional commitment as the literature pointed out that while administrators who hold power may say that EDI is important, that often does not translate into the resources needed to commit to action.

Slightly over 84% of participants indicated that EDI training for faculty and staff was not adequately resourced. Interestingly, when participants were asked if, in their opinion, they thought providing EDI training for faculty and staff was a priority for their institution, 56 % of participants indicated they thought it was a priority and 44% thought it was not. There appears to be a disconnect between training seen as a priority and how it is resourced. When asked, 64% of participants indicated that that their institution used training *reactively* to respond to pressing equity, diversity, or inclusion issues. This may indicate that those in power provide support only when an incident has arisen that forces them to manage legal, financial, or image concerns.

Participants were also asked to describe what they found challenging about their work related to EDI training for faculty and staff. One of the most cited challenges was lack of support, commitment or understanding by institutional leaders. This lack of commitment was described as refusal to look at themselves, not recognizing or compensating EDI work, providing only “lip service” to EDI initiatives, no meaningful systemic change, and leaders who not prepared for the discomfort the work requires. One participant noted that continually “not addressing problematic behaviour decreases belief in their intent for and equitable and inclusive institution”. The ability to choose to commit to EDI initiatives reflects a place of power and privilege.

The second most cited challenge was ignorance and denial of issues. One participant echoed the concern raised in the discussion above about the assumption that an advanced degree would equate to knowledge and skill related to equity. They stated that it is problematic to think that “by simply working for this type of institution [post-secondary] that they are open-minded and don't need to do anymore work”. Participants also described denial and the prevalent sentiment that “That does not apply to us, we are fine”. Several people described the frustration with trying to share different perspectives when there are very established beliefs about what "good" research and teaching means. Others described

the ongoing problem with lack of engagement by faculty who “think they don't need it”. One survey participant described this problem at their institution.

Getting the people who really need this training to attend this type of training.

There has been one EDI session offered at the university I work at and most of the people who virtually attended were people that are already involved and committed to making this campus better.

This denial was described by participants as a consequence of privilege. One participant described denial as the “Denial of issues, white privilege, internalized racism, unwilling to let go of power, etc.”, Another described denial in terms of “White privilege and how the faculty union perpetuates this via their privilege is challenging to this work”. One participant described that not understanding that “Indigenous peoples are Nations not an amorphous lump” was a continuous problem. One participant also described the lack of understanding that there needs to be a humanistic approach to training.

Ignorance of systemic, far-reaching implications of inequities and racism was also commonly described as an ongoing challenge and was linked with having to constantly having to explain why equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts are important. Several participants noted that this was one of the most exhausting challenges. One survey participant described this “translation exhaustion”.

Coming from a different background, not white middle class, there is a dual consciousness, and I'm constantly having to translate for dominant audiences our plight and feel like I have to convince folks which is exhausting.

Translation exhaustion and apathetic indifferent attitudes by the privileged.

Overall lack of institutional “buy-in” about the importance of EDI training importance, disagreement about what the training should look like (does it go far enough, does it go too far?) were also described. Several people noted that there is ongoing questioning about whether training is important or useful at all. Tied to the lack of institutional buy-in was the lack of adequate resources. Comments related to lack of resources described such things as the difficulty in finding good facilitators with a strong knowledge base, competing demands on their time, having to do EDI training on top of a full workload or “off the side of my desk”, lack of dedicated time for faculty and staff training (release time), dependence on

voluntary EDI committee work rather than paid staff, and not enough financial resources. Participants argued that lack of resources meant that EDI staff often must prioritize immediate demands such as human rights complaints, serving as experts on multiple committees that need timely input, providing scheduled sessions in classrooms, working on hiring processes, and completing EDI reporting. This meant there frequently was not enough time to provide the type of training that they would like to provide. It is those in power in the institution that make decisions about support and resource allocation.

Resistance was also described as an ongoing challenge. Many described pushback from faculty and staff. One participant described the “constant pushback from colleagues/admin who don't believe they are complicit in systems of oppression”. Others noted that a lack of understanding about EDI maintains the myth of meritocracy described in the literature review above. Many faculty and staff believe that EDI dilutes excellence, and by learning about EDI and asking them to integrate equitable practices that we are then “advocating ‘lowering standards’ rather than inclusion”. The “standards” referred to in these comments reflect the understanding of those in power who most often are referring to Western European notions of what is true and acceptable.

Another challenge was the lack of institutional coordination of EDI efforts. This often meant that people did not know what others were doing at the same institution, that resources were not being used effectively, and that there were “inconsistent expectations” for those doing EDI work. As one survey participant commented,

There is not a comprehensive plan to do this training and not one area is responsible. It is in our strategic plan but have yet to have a coordinated way to offer these opportunities and track to see if they are making a difference.

Participants noted that not assessing EDI efforts also leads to a lack of data that would indicate what initiatives are making a difference.

The ongoing marginalization of EDI personnel was also described as a challenge. As one participant noted, “White/male fragility is real”. Participants described a system that is structured to uphold “oppressive ideologies” and that those who try to change these structures are often further marginalized. As discussed in the literature section above, those

who speak out are often not seen as “real academics” and if they speak out against what they see as continued assimilation, they are often labeled as too sensitive or troublemakers.

Fear was also noted as a challenge. In some cases, this was referring to the fear of White faculty to make mistakes and do more harm by engaging in EDI practices. Another fear was described as a “Sense of being an outlier or 'weird' for focusing on these things”. Other challenges noted were that EDI conversation were “difficult conversations”, that lack of resources and siloed EDI work often triggers “competing rights” (e.g., trans rights vs. women’s rights versus Black Rights, etc.). This “divide and conquer” method is a clear example of Galtung’s mechanism of fragmentation. One participant commented that because EDI is hard to commodify and therefore put a value on, it is not given priority. Others described the challenge of working with people and institutions who lack of “willingness to take risks that move away from typical white supremacist ways of working”. Others found it challenging to ensure that engagement extended beyond superficial desires like wanting to be seen as an “ally”.

Finally, to follow up on an earlier question related to the impact of perceptions of safety, there was an open-ended question that asked participants directly if they thought skewed perceptions of safety impacted EDI training. Specifically, they were asked the question, “Do you think seeing Canada and Canadian institutions as safe spaces impacts the perceived need for EDI training?” 25 respondents answered yes to this question. Numerous respondents indicated that many White Canadians don't recognize there is a problem at all, and they are “blissfully unaware that these spaces are not safe for everyone”.

They stated that the notion that Canadian post-secondary institutions are safe spaces increases complacency and decreases awareness and perception of issues, thus the need for diversity training becomes “understated”. Others indicated that they saw this as a problem but pointed out that “this perception is a problem in many other spaces in North America”. One respondent stated that the perception of safety essentially made it harder for marginalized people to feel safe to speak out, further maintaining the status quo.

Fourteen survey respondents pointed out that using the term “safe spaces” in this question was problematic as there was an assumption made that that is the way Canada and Canadian post-secondary institutions are seen. They noted that many marginalized people do

not see Canada nor Canadian institutions as safe spaces. They also noted that seeing Canada and Canadian institutions as safe spaces impacts the perceived need for EDI training. These myths can be understood in terms of Galtung's notion of penetration whereby the powerful in the institution insert their views from outside the oppressed group to filter and control information. Three respondents did not think seeing Canada and Canadian institutions as safe spaces impacts the perceived need for diversity training. The following quotations from survey participants support the concern raised in this dissertation about the impact of skewed perceptions of safety on EDI training:

Yes. The entire notion of 'safe spaces' has led to EDI not being implemented or implemented in a such a way to be interpreted as shutting down academic pursuits and classroom learning. Nothing that is perceived as 'traumatic' or 'threatening' or 'controversial' is subject to repeated complaints and push back from both students and faculty. Silencing of voices and even worse only some groups are entitled to safe spaces (read Settlers).

I wouldn't go so far as to describe Canada and Canadian institutions as safe spaces. Both are riddled with systemic issues of bias, racism, etc. I think as more and more people see this and understand that Canada and Canadian institutions are not safe spaces for all, people start to perceive a need for diversity training as a basic, low-risk activity that can and should be carried out within institutions.

Yes, it is safe for white, middle-class populations, as it has been designed by them. If they see no need, there will be no EDI training.

Several participants questioned the motive and veracity of EDI training initiatives in their institutions.

At this moment in time at my institution, it feels like it is a window dressing exercise, with no real changes happening in policies and practices. The

university names EDI as a priority; however, the actions do not meet the rhetorical statements.

EDI training has become an opportunity to have dishonest and distracting conversations of racial issues.

One survey participant spoke about the need for “radical training” due to resistance to change both our perceptions and behaviours:

Yes. I think it [seeing institutions as safe space] affects a perception of how radical the training needs to be and how deeply it needs to change structures. There's resistance to those deeper changes, partly b/c they're hard and they upset power and established ways of doing things, and we would need a stronger rationale and commitment to social justice (and sense that we're not meeting the mark) AND a sense that we can really change things to support really radical diversity training.

It is clear that practitioners are concerned about the general perception of safety in our institutions and the impact these perceptions have on the institutional will to support needed EDI training efforts.

### Summary

The findings related to EDI implementation indicate that much of the training offered is based on needs assessment completed by EDI practitioners within the institution. However, there is also a great deal of EDI training that is offered in reaction to a particular issue that arises (legal compliance, new funding requirement, a particularly egregious issue that goes public) and is usually at the behest of administration. While there are some supports in place for faculty and staff to integrate what they have learned into their practice, it is difficult to offer them consistently as staff are already over-taxed and under resourced.

Challenges faced by the participants mirror the concerns raised in the literature about fatigue from constantly having to “represent” and teach, fear from White faculty and staff

about perpetuating further harm, “preaching to the choir”, lack of support and commitment from administration, lack of resources, and continued denial and ignorance about EDI in general and about the need to attend to the learning requirements of faculty and staff. Perception of our institutions as basically safe spaces is problematic and a significant barrier to meaningful EDI training implementation. Blind spots that prevent people from seeing the continued violence in our institutions are real. This means we cannot see the problem in ourselves and therefore do not see the need to do anything about it, including ensuring faculty and staff have the capacity to support institutional change.

### Chapter Summary

Respondents felt that the rationale and goals for EDI training are poorly articulated, and training is rarely measured for impact (personal or institutional). The barriers discussed indicate that the myth of scarcity driven by a neo-liberal agenda of the powerful is alive and well in our institutions and supports continued violence. It is made visible by the reported disconnect between what institutions say is important and how that is resourced and measured. Many participants identified the cooption of EDI training as a means for “ticking a box”, rather than an effort to build more respectful and equitable relationships that would reduce violence in our institutions. EDI work in our institutions is also under resourced and that this is so for EDI training for faculty and staff. Many participants also confirmed the concern raised in the literature that institutions are not moving beyond rhetoric or aspirations to action in terms of providing meaningful EDI training.

Power imbalances do impact the perceived need for EDI training. The blind spots discussed earlier that prevent us from seeing the continued violence in our institutions are real. This means we cannot see the problem in ourselves and therefore do not see the need to do anything about it-this includes ensuring our faculty and staff have the capacity to support institutional change.

## Chapter 8: Conclusion

Although there are pockets of progression, the system is structured to marginalize people, and white fragility among tenured faculty is RAMPANT (Survey participant).

### 8.1 Revisiting the Context

This work began with the telling of my story. For years I thought that although we had work to do to make postsecondary institutions more inclusive, equitable spaces, they were basically peaceful, safe places. I was wrong. Despite my continued attempts over the years to learn about equity issues, it wasn't until I critically examined what is happening in our post-secondary institutions through the lens of power that I could see the cultural and structural violence and how they are created and maintained. It was then that I realized that what I really needed to do was to overcome my blindness to continued racism, oppression, assimilation, and trauma. As I shared earlier, the revelation that was particularly disturbing for me was that the equity problems in post-secondary institutions were not just the residue from past harms, but rather that this violence is happening *every day* in our post-secondary institutions across Canada. As the literature review and the data from participants in this study bears out, it is happening today; it is happening *now*.

When I realized that my ignorance was contributing to the everyday perpetuation of harm to people, I was shocked and embarrassed. I wanted to find out if it was just me that didn't understand, or if this ignorance was common. As I further investigated structural violence and power, it became clear that my experience was more common than not. Galtung's theoretical framework of violence outlined in his *Violence Triangle* was pivotal in helping me understand the connection between the indoctrination received through cultural violence and the near impossibility for many of us to see *any* problems, let alone that these "problems" were acts of violence that cause real harm to real people daily. When I realized that it was very unlikely that it was just me who couldn't see the violence, it occurred to me

that the continued ignorance<sup>15</sup> of many of us working in post-secondary institutions was arguably a significant contributing factor to the glacial improvement of equity issues.

As I investigated cultural and structural violence further, the role of power imbalances in the perception of violence became clear. As discussed in Chapter 3, *Power, Violence and Post-secondary Education*, power imbalances allow those who hold power to say what is “true” in general and what is true about different people. Our perceptions of safety and violence remain skewed when we don’t interrogate the narrative that Canada and Canadian post-secondary institutions are safe places where all have equal life chances. Recognizing that our perceptions of safety are distorted is critical to understanding the current state of EDI training for faculty and staff as our perceptions impact the perceived need for EDI training, the type of training typically offered, and whether faculty and staff’s capacity to engage meaningfully in EDI initiatives is seen as important enough to measure for impact.

It does not make sense to talk about EDI training without talking about the redistribution of power. Faculty and staff need to understand the connection between imbalanced power and violence in our institutions. They need to be able to be part of the change that will dismantle inherited power structures and redistribute power more equitably. It also does not make sense to talk about EDI training without interrogating extant power structures that impact EDI initiatives.

Galtung’s structural violence model can be used as a tool to help elucidate these power structures and the mechanisms that both create and maintain it. Power structures are inherited and reinforced through the mechanism of cultural violence described by Galtung which normalize and make invisible that violence. Unless they have experienced marginalization themselves, it is difficult for faculty and staff to understand the harm they are doing or are supporting. The violence is everywhere but hidden because it is normalized. Faculty and staff need to be given an opportunity to shift their thinking. They need to be able challenge assumptions created by a white male lens. They need to be able to address and challenge the systemic disadvantages and ongoing oppression experienced by marginalized

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<sup>15</sup> When I use the term ignorance, I mean a lack of knowledge or awareness.

people in our institutions. They need to be able to contribute to the decolonization of our curriculum and structures. All this work inherently means challenging extant power relations. It is critical to understand that faculty and staff do not inherently know how to do this and so the type of EDI training must be able to support this capacity. As was discussed above, social justice approaches to EDI training initiatives that call for a critical about power can best support this learning, rather than the functionalist approach most often employed.

As argued at the beginning of this work, while most Canadian post-secondary institutions have publicly identified reconciliation and other equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) priorities in their goal statements and strategic plans, it is not clear how they are ensuring the institutional capacity exists to make the type of transformative changes these goals imply. It was further argued that part of the required capacity was faculty and staff who (minimally) understand the connection between power and inequities in our institutions. The findings from this research support the concern raised in the literature that most existing EDI training cannot build the capacity to contribute to the type of transformative change needed to make our institutions truly safe places for all. In fact, reports from the participants regarding the lack of adequate resourcing, continued marginalization of EDI staff, and the lack of concern over impact signify that meaningful EDI training is *not* a priority for most Canadian post-secondary institutions.

## 8.2 Making the Elephant Visible

As discussed in Chapter 1, raising concerns about the need for meaningful EDI training for faculty and staff was often met with affirmation but the conversation would go no further. I did not understand how they could acknowledge the problem and then have it immediately disappear from their consciousness. The experience for me can best be described by Douglas Adams' (1982) notion of an "SEP" (Somebody Else's Problem). An SEP is a psychological cloaking device. The character Ford Prefect explains,

"An SEP", he said, "is something we can't see, or don't see, or our brain doesn't let us see because we think that it's somebody else's problem. That's what SEP

means. Somebody Else's Problem. The brain just edits it out, it's like a blind spot. The SEP relies on people's natural predisposition not to see anything they don't want to, weren't expecting, or can't explain". (p.26-27)

In terms of EDI training, it quite literally has been somebody else's problem. Unfortunately, that "somebody else" are the marginalized people in our institutions experiencing ongoing violence.

It seems this phenomenon is not new or unusual when it comes to dealing with social justice issues. Samantha Power (2013) relates the words of Arthur Koestler talking about journalists who dared speak up about the atrocities in Nazi Germany who were labelled as "Screamers". He describes the difficulty they faced in getting people to focus on change, even when they are aware of injustices. He states that "you can convince them for an hour...and then their mental half-defense begins to work and in a week the shrug of incredulity has returned like a reflex temporarily weakened by shock" (p. 515).

It is hard to get people to focus on things that are uncomfortable. Even the use of the word "violence" to describe what is happening in our institutions received pushback from EDI professionals participating in this research. Many people do not see our institutions as sites of violence, but rather as places where there are "some issues" that "we are working on". However, we need to collectively rewrite the story that there are a few bad actors doing a few bad things. We need to remove the psychological cloaking device that prevents us from seeing violence in our institutions; we need to see how our ignorance contributes to the violence; *we need a way to be able to see the elephant in the academy.*

It is a problem if most people in our institutions do not see the continued violence. I am not arguing that this individualistic cognitive approach is the only, or even the best way. It is understood that our personal cognitions both shape, and are shaped by, the external environment. It is also a problem if people don't understand that, even if they do not commit transgressions themselves, they are tacitly condoning those transgressions if they do nothing to change the system. There is a continued strain in the literature between seeing responsibility for continued violence as individual (micro) or macro (structural/institutional). I believe this dichotomy is an illusion and a distraction. We need *both* individual and institutional change. Institutions are made up of individuals. The "institution" itself does not make decisions or

commit transgressions; *people do*. Individually, we commit, justify, rationalize, teach, condone, or ignore violence in our post-secondary institutions. We should take to heart what Kulchyski (2013) writes in *Aboriginal Rights are Not Human Rights* about where the front line is to be drawn in the conflict between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. He states, “maybe the real front line is the one inside each one of us, that place where we keep our latent, lingering ability to care about each other, to care enough to act: this might be the most critical front line of all”. (p. 11) Faculty and staff need to be given an opportunity to first decolonize themselves at an ontological level.

Galtung’s (1990) theory of the *Violence Triangle* helps us unveil the violence and conflict within our institutions and makes evident the impact of power on our perceptions. As it was for me, many faculty and staff members in our Canadian institutions experience(d) cultural indoctrination that convinces us that Canada and Canadian institutions of higher education are safe places. It is important that we understand that the laying down of cognitive biases and stereotypes imparted through this indoctrination prevents us from seeing the violence.

If we are to move to truly equitable places, we need to realize that inequities are due in large part to our own ignorance and the inherent flaws of the system in which we find ourselves. We need the capacity to disrupt the myth of meritocracy which purports that the problems faced by marginalized peoples in our institutions are due to inherent personal flaws. Collectively, we need to ensure that everyone understands that there is not a level playing field for all and that privilege and imbalanced power relationships support these inequities. In short, *we need to be able to see things differently*.

We need to understand that despite the stated rhetoric regarding diversity, equity and safety found in Canadian post-secondary institutions, many students, staff, and faculty are still experiencing violence. We need to understand that right now equity is trapped within “silence and invisibilities” (Henry et al., 2017). The image of the cyclical, self-reinforcing Ouroboros is a fitting metaphor for the state of EDI training in higher education. If we are not given an opportunity to learn about continued violence through meaningful training efforts, we will not see it nor see a need to change ourselves or our institutions. The invisibility and asymmetrical

nature of power *within the academy itself* are root causes of injustice and are inextricably tied to issues of education *for* social justice.

### 8.3 EDI Training and Power

This research has begun the process of filling the gap in the data related to EDI training for faculty and staff. The stories generously shared by EDI professionals have provided insights and a rich description of the current state and understanding of EDI training in Canadian post-secondary institutions. Their voices provide an uncensored description of the “messy situations in which diversity workers often find themselves” that Ahmed calls for (2012, p. 10). This uncensored description is needed if we are to question those in power who make decisions about EDI training.

The study gathered data about the type of EDI training being provided, if current training efforts are effective, if their impact is being measured in any way, and about barriers to implementation. As argued earlier, without this data, it is difficult to make evidence-based decisions regarding our approach to building faculty and staff’s capacity to be part of the type of transformative change needed to make our institutions truly inclusive and equitable spaces.

Power was defined earlier as *the ability to act and produce an effect, and the possession of control or influence over others*. The manifestations of this control and influence are evident throughout the findings of this study. Specifically, findings indicate that EDI training is under-resourced, training is too short in duration and does not get at the deeper issues related to power. Additionally, there are significant barriers to implementing meaningful EDI training and there is rarely an overall “plan” or evaluation strategy that could help us determine if efforts are working.

The findings also reinforce concerns raised in the literature about power and resistance and appropriation of EDI training. This can be seen in the comments that reflect the concern raised by Mthethwa-Sommers that much of the EDI training initiatives “masquerade as being social justice education based when they are not” (2014, p. 22, see also Gorski, 2013). Worries raised in the literature that EDI training for faculty and staff is

often not seen as important, is not supported, or is coopted were also reflected in many of the comments by practitioners. As well, concerns that a considerable amount of EDI training has a utilitarian focus aimed at compliance, rather than a focus on equity and relationship building were echoed by respondents. As Ahmed (2012) argues, the superficial managerial focus of most EDI training is in fact a “containment strategy” used by those in power— it evokes commitment to action, but not to equity (p. 53).

Clearly, the data shows that there are good training initiatives. However, most of the training reported is superficial and is not often evaluated for impact. To get a better understanding of the capacity for change, it is important that we find a way to evaluate the impact of EDI training initiatives. When goals are important, we define them, we try to get it right, or at least we care about trying to get it right. Institutional goals and strategies related to equity mean little if we have no clearly articulated baseline and don’t have a way to evaluate if things are improving. Unfortunately, the very people who make decisions about resourcing EDI training may not understand power and privilege themselves and so may not see the need for meaningful training or the importance of evaluating training impact. As Krahn (2021) argues, it is those who are “privileged—who are also usually the policymakers—who need to gain a better understanding of their privilege and how the systems that they lead perpetuate that privilege” (p. 296).

It was also evident that existing power relationships support a functional approach that encourages short term training efforts and that these efforts are rarely successful and can cause more harm by reinforcing stereotypical thinking. The results of this study validate that this type of training frequently focuses on issues of difference and how to manage them, rather than the ability to critically analyze power and oppression relationships that underpin inequities in our institutions. As was heard from the practitioners in this study, EDI training is often superficial and a means for “ticking a box” rather than an effort to build more respectful and equitable relationships. One of the most striking results was that while eighty-three percent (83%) of all participants said EDI training was not mandatory, they thought it should be. While there is ongoing debate in the literature about whether training should be mandatory, this discrepancy points to a lack of perceived importance for EDI training as

many other types of training that are tied to funding are mandatory (e.g., accessibility or health and safety training).

Practitioners in this study also echoed the concerns of scholars that there is more rhetoric than action, or ‘talking the talk’ rather than ‘walking the walk’. In particular, the concern raised in the literature is that the *practice* of social justice in higher education is "aspirational" at best, and a marketing tool at worst. This lack of commitment to implementation is highlighted by the concerns raised that EDI work in institutions is often under-resourced and so is EDI training for faculty and staff.

As it was for me learning about equity and power, what we “know” is based on beliefs held by the privileged and are not based on fact, but on current and historical racist messaging and ignorance, often perpetuated in our education systems themselves (Cryzewski, 2011; Justice, 2017; TRC, 2015). We need to find ways to reduce our ignorance. Styres (2017) states that,

...failure to *critically* engage the spaces between the two world views leaves behind lost opportunities for creating shared understandings and genuine reconciliations; and leaves a chasm filled with taken-for-granted biases and assumptions, perceived and very real offences, and fractured relationships.  
(p. 28)

Real dialogue about power, knowledge and structural violence is difficult and threatening but it must happen (Berila, 2015; Bishop, 2015; Mayo and Larke, 2010). If we avoid them in the interest of maintaining the status quo, or of not offending, “we are prisoners of peace” (Hampton, 2000, p. 210), negative peace.

Gorski (2013) argues that the outcome of social justice efforts needs to be less injustice. This means we need a way to evaluate if our initiatives are resulting in less injustice. He urges us to “put justice before peace” as “racial justice, rather than racial harmony or awareness, is inverse of racial injustice” (para. 10). As argued earlier, as well as “seeing” power imbalances and oppression, we must also foster the ability to believe that things do not have to stay “the way they are”; to imagine that we can make change for a more just world (Boulding, 2000; Kornelsen, 2013; Lederach, 2005).

The invisibility and asymmetrical nature of power *within the academy itself* impacts the perceived need for social justice education for faculty and staff. As Howard (2016) argues, “we can’t teach what we don’t know, and you can’t lead where you won’t go” (p. 9). Continued ignorance is a privilege and is enjoyed because of our place of power. Our ignorance makes us complicit and reinforces asymmetrical power and continued oppression of the marginalized within our institutions—it is a self-reinforcing cycle that needs to be interrupted. It is from a position of privilege and ignorance that administrators and faculty make decisions about whether they need the knowledge and skills necessary to treat everyone equitably and respectfully.

As was argued in Chapter 3, differences in knowledge and power impact the structural violence that manifests in post-secondary education in three ways: as effect; the effects of a lack of, or unequal educational opportunities; as cause, power differences in education are often a means of perpetuating structural and cultural violence through the teaching of conformity to the existing ways of knowing and structures that perpetuate the violence; as (partial) solution, differences in power can be reduced through training efforts that engage people in critical dialogue about equity and what constitutes knowledge and power, thus elucidating the cultural and structural violence in our institutions.

While it is understood that EDI training is not the only way to address social justice issues in our institutions, it is argued here that it is a critical and not well understood piece of an ongoing institutional change process. Many post-secondary faculty and staff members do not know enough about their own power and privilege to contribute to significant social justice change in the academy. Even when they do know, they are often afraid to integrate topics related to racism, marginalization or oppression—especially if they are White, for fear of not knowing what to do or say and causing more harm. Working towards a more equitable, respectful, and safe environment in a way that is meaningful is difficult if people within the institution do not fully understand the hurt currently being caused and the benefits of respectful relationships. For reconciliation and inclusion to happen training must examine the systemic and invisible nature of structural violence and the relationship between power and knowledge (Collinson and Tourish, 2015). This is important as training can reinforce inequality or can help dismantle it.

A question that needs to be asked is “Are we in this current state because the people who make decisions about priorities and consequent resourcing do not understand the need (because of the invisibility of structural violence), or is it a more deliberate attempt by institutions to maintain the status quo and only meet legal or funding obligations? It is important to understand that if those in power are making these decisions out of ignorance, they do so because they have the privilege of not seeing the violence. Marginalized people in our institutions do not have that privilege; they cannot walk away or tune it out.

The data gathered in the survey and focus group is not exhaustive; there is still much that is not known about EDI training for faculty and staff in Canadian post-secondary institutions. However, the findings from this research can support more evidence-based conversations and decision-making about training as there is less reliance on the anecdotal descriptions found in most of the literature. The research begins the process of unpacking how training efforts are chosen, whether the most typical type of training is seen as effective, and how, or whether, training efforts are being measured in terms of individual or institutional impact. It also explores how power relationships in our institutions impact the current state of EDI training. This data is needed to support conversations about the type of training needed and its effectiveness if our goal is to build respectful relationships with all students, faculty, and staff.

Based on my personal and professional experiences and what I found in the literature, I set out to answer the following questions: “Can the type of EDI training typically offered to faculty and staff in Canadian post-secondary institutions build the type of understanding about power and equity needed to transform our post-secondary institutions into more equitable spaces? Given the results of this research, the answer appears to lay somewhere between “We don’t know” and “No”. The literature review and the comments of participants in this study reinforce the concern that most EDI training offered cannot build the capacity needed for transformation. Further research that clearly defines and articulates expected outcomes and is clear about the philosophical stance they take would go a long way to helping understand the impact of the various types of training being offered.

The answer to the additional inquiry related to whether differing perceptions of safety and violence impact the perceived need for faculty and staff EDI training in Canadian post-

secondary institutions, the answer appears to lay somewhere between “We don’t know” and “Yes”. Certainly, there was enough concern raised in the literature and from the feedback of participants in this study to warrant further investigation.

### 8.3 Breaking the Cycle

This study was not meant to find specific solutions, rather, it was meant to gather information about what is currently happening and generate discussion. However, several suggestions related to perception emerge. One suggestion might be to reframe “EDI training” as *social justice education*, rather than *professional development*. Resolution of conflict in our institutions calls for a different approach to training than just the management or mitigation of EDI issues which are the goal of professional development. As was discussed, when using a professional development approach to training, meeting compliance issues is the objective and anything beyond that is not seen as important. In contrast, *social justice education* uses critical pedagogy to interrogate power and inequality and focuses on the relationship building called for in the literature and by participants in this study and it requires us to *do something, to take action* once we have learned. Cultural violence is the ‘permanence’; the values and ideology we hold and what we know to be true. Structural violence is the process that keeps those values and ideology invisible and prevents us from questioning their “truth”. The act of examining cultural and structural violence is a critical process of social justice education.

Acquisition of a social justice lens can also help us see the social justice issues in our institutions. As argued, the violence in our institutions is often invisible and so there is a perception that *there are no social justice issues*— there is no struggle, no conflict, no problem. It is a self-reinforcing trap that we must escape; if the social justice issues *within* the walls of the academy are invisible, why would we see a need for education *for* social justice for faculty and staff within those same walls? If we don’t learn to see the social justice issues, we will do nothing about them (Cryzewski, 2011; Henry et al., 2017; Justice, 2017; Styres, 2017; TRC, 2015).

It has been argued throughout this work that a fundamental component of this capacity-building is to ensure that faculty and staff members’ have (minimally) an

understanding of the issues of racism, power, and privilege. It is problematic when diversity training is seldom required, given that student diversity is increasing, and most post-secondary instructors and staff are “White”. Further, it is illogical to recognize the need for social justice education for students and not for faculty and staff. As stated earlier, the acquisition of an advanced degree or professional certification in no way guarantees understanding of power relationships and their impact on equity.

Another way we may reframe EDI training is as a response to a health and safety issue. Continued violence in our institutions *is* a health and safety issue. While many Canadians would characterize our institutions as safe places, those who are marginalized may not see them as places of safety, but rather as sites of oppression and violence. This sentiment came up again and again in the literature review and in the voices of participants. The skewed perception of safety interferes with seeing continued violence at all and interferes with moving beyond rhetoric to action. Perhaps framing EDI issues in the more familiar terms of health and safety would help leverage the type of resourcing and support required.

#### 8.4 Final Thoughts

Ongoing violence in Canadian post-secondary education is a reality. The need to understand power, privilege and positionality is clear. Ensuring that faculty and staff members have the knowledge and skills needed to create safe and respectful spaces or to support their students to do the same is critical and we are often asking them to do so without proper training or support. This lack of institutional capacity is a problem. Without deeper, meaningful EDI training, faculty and staff will not be able to create these spaces, nor would they be able to see the need to change in the first place and will continue to reinforce extant power structures.

As was discussed earlier, faculty and staff members are being asked to analyze curriculum, use equitable hiring practices, ensure equitable advancement processes, and interact respectfully with students, staff, and faculty who are part of marginalized populations. That these expectations are unrealistic if faculty and staff have not had a meaningful opportunity to learn about EDI issues was backed by the participants’ comments

in this study. We need to address structural violence and systemic racism in our educational systems. “Invisible” cultural and structural violence is covertly legitimized by those who hold power if little is done to help faculty and staff see it. Training efforts need to provide an opportunity to have meaningful dialogue about power and the mechanisms that support violence. *How* those dialogues happen needs further exploration.

As was discussed in Chapter 2, despite all the publicity and the evidence presented in the Truth and Reconciliation Report, it seems it was not until the world personally and collectively witnessed the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police in 2020 that structural violence became unmistakable and entered the consciousness of the majority of the public. Stavro (2023) argues that the reason for this collective shift in thinking was that “emotional reorientation triggered by visceral dissonance invites one to challenge the *givenness of the situation*. In this case, the murder prompted the questioning of established narratives of race in America.” (emphasis added, p. 144) and peoples’ “existing ways of seeing.” (p. 147).

As was discussed earlier in this work, marginalized community members have told us repeatedly that there is a problem. They have clearly been seeing the elephant in the room. They don’t have the privilege of tuning out or walking away from these problems. More concerning is that we continually rely on the very people who are the recipients of structural violence to repeat these messages and to tell us *why* there are problems. As many participants shared, this is exhausting.

As marginalized populations force us to question and realign our perceptions of who we really are and what we are *actually* about, the need for social justice education for *all* members of the academy becomes clear. The choice to see violence is a privilege not shared by all. Privilege supports our blindness and if we are blind to the suffering of others, we don’t have to *do* anything, *change* anything, *give up* anything, or even *think* about anything.

I know I have learned much through my work and through this study and I know I will continue to make mistakes and must continue to check my perceptions. We have come a long way and many people are starting to see the truth about power, privilege, and violence in our institutions. But the truth is many don’t, and many don’t see it as it is—an insidious invisible systemic problem that needs to be changed. Until that happens, we can’t change, or the change

will be too slow. Building this institutional capacity is necessary if we expect meaningful institutional change that does not suffer from the “tranquilizing effects of gradualism” (King, 1963). Our words and acts must not be aspirational—we must act.

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## Appendix A: Survey Recipients

### Post-secondary Institutions

#### **British Columbia**

1. Ashton College
2. Cambridge College of Technology
3. Camosun College
4. Capilano University
5. College of the Rockies
6. Douglas College
7. Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design
8. Gitxsan Wet'Suwet'en Education Society
9. Justice Institute of British Columbia
10. Selkirk College
11. Kwantlen Polytechnic University
12. Langara College
13. Northern Lights College
14. Royal Roads University
15. Simon Fraser University
16. University of Victoria
17. Vancouver Island University
18. Thompson Rivers University (University College of the Cariboo)
19. University of British Columbia

#### **Alberta**

20. Bow Valley College
21. Lethbridge Community College
22. University of Calgary
23. University of Lethbridge
24. Grant MacEwan University
25. University of Alberta

#### **Saskatchewan**

26. Cumberland Regional College
27. Northlands College
28. Parkland Regional College
29. St. Thomas More College
30. University of Saskatchewan
31. University of Regina
32. Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science & Tech
33. Great Plains College

#### **Manitoba**

34. Brandon University
35. Collège Universitaire de Saint-Boniface
36. Red River College
37. University College of the North
38. University of Manitoba
39. University of Winnipeg
40. Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology

**Ontario**

41. Brescia University College
42. Carleton University
43. Confederation College of Applied Arts and Technology
44. Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology
45. George Brown College of Applied Arts and Technology
46. King's College
47. Lakehead University
48. Laurentian University
49. McMaster University
50. Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology
51. Northern Ontario School of Medicine
52. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
53. Queen's University
54. Ryerson University (Polytechnical Institute)
55. Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology
56. Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning
57. Trent University
58. University of Ottawa
59. University of Toronto
60. University of Waterloo
61. University of Western Ontario
62. University of Windsor
63. Wilfrid Laurier University
64. York University
65. Brock University
66. Conestoga College
67. University of Guelph
68. Humber Institute of Technology
69. University of Toronto
70. Confederation College
71. Centennial College of Applied Arts and Technology

**Quebec**

72. Sent to Central CEGEP office asking to distribute to members

73. Bishop's University
74. Concordia University
75. Université de Montréal
76. Université de Sherbrooke
77. Université Laval
78. McGill University
79. Université du Québec à Chicoutimi
80. Carlton Trail Regional College
81. Cumberland Regional College
82. Northlands College

#### **New Brunswick**

83. Mount Allison University
84. St. Stephen's University
85. St. Thomas University
86. Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)
87. Université de Moncton
88. New Brunswick Community College (NBCC)
89. University of New Brunswick

#### **Nova Scotia**

90. Acadia University
91. Cape Breton University
92. Dalhousie University
93. Dartmouth College
94. Mount Saint Vincent University
95. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design
96. Saint Mary's University
97. St. Francis Xavier University
98. Nova Scotia Community College

#### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

99. College of the North Atlantic
100. Memorial University of Nfld.

#### **Prince Edward Island**

101. University of Prince Edward Island
102. Holland College

#### **Northwest Territories**

103. Aurora College

### [Professional Organizations](#)

Professional organizations included:

1. University Affairs
2. Universities Canada
3. Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)
4. Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)
5. Canadian Council on Learning (CCL)
6. Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE)
7. Canadian Federation of Students (CFS)
8. Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education (CSSHE)
9. Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan)
10. Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)
11. Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE)
12. Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, (CCDI)
13. Polytechnics Canada
14. Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE)
15. Centre for the Study of Canadian and International Higher Education (CSSE)
16. Canadian Association of Disability Service Providers in Post-Secondary Education (CADSPPE)
17. National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS)
18. Canadian Association for Equity and Inclusion in Post-secondary Education (AQEIPS).

## Appendix B: National Survey



Sullivan Survey  
questions for diversity

# Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol

**Principal Investigator:** Cheryl (Sherry) Sullivan      **(Advisor:** Dr. Jessica Senehi)

Protocol# J2020:019 (HS23803)

Knowledge and Power in the Academy: Faculty and Staff Social Justice Education in Canadian Post-secondary Institutions

**\*New document-this protocol was not included with the original submission as the questions are informed by the results of the survey portion of the research.**

## Focus Group Protocol

1. 77% of people who responded to the survey indicated that their training for faculty and staff is less than 4 hours. Do you think this is enough time for people to understand equity issues and to build the skills needed to for them to support reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility initiatives?
2. 48% of people who responded to the survey indicated that the training touched on power and oppression and 2.33% deal with emancipation and conscientization. The comments that accompanied this question indicated that most of this training came in the form of implicit bias training. Do you think implicit bias training gets at these issues, especially if it likely 4 hours or shorter in duration?
3. What, in your opinion, is the most critical thing for faculty and staff to know and be able to do with respect to reconciliation and EDI initiatives?
4. In the survey, two questions were asked about whether or not reconciliation and EDI training is mandatory or not. The first question asked whether or not it was mandatory. Only 18.18 % indicated it was mandatory and 81.82% indicated that it was not. The second question asked whether or not they felt it should be mandatory. 20% thought it should not be mandatory, but fully 80% thought it should be. This is a large discrepancy. Can you talk about why it isn't mandatory when most respondents thought it should? What is the role of power and who holds power in regards to whether or not it is mandatory?
5. There were 20 plus comments made about reconciliation and EDI training being superficial, "window dressing", or the universities attempts to "cover themselves. One comment indicated that the diversity training itself was a way to "have a dishonest and distracting conversation" about real equity issues. Can you comment on this?
6. One of the questions asked if people faced challenges implementing reconciliation and EDI training. 82.35% indicated they faced barriers. Have you faced barriers? If so, can you describe them and ways you have tried to overcome them?