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See table of contents

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Article abstract

This paper discusses the findings of a case study that sought to answer the question of whether and how an institutional faculty hiring policy that has codified a set of EDI best practices can be effectively deployed by search committees to foster more equitable hiring processes and diverse hiring outcomes. The research involved 23 searches implemented over a two-year period within the Faculty of Science of a Canadian research-intensive university. Using a mixed-methods survey design, the study sought to answer the research question by (1) analyzing the self-reported perceptions of the search committee members, including identifying any differences across gender and racial identity of committee members, and (2) analyzing the self-reported experiences of the longlisted candidates, including new hires. The study results suggest that codifying EDI best practices may be a 'necessary but insufficient' condition to advancing inclusive excellence in faculty hiring. While the practices on balances were perceived to be effective in improving equitable processes, their impacts on improving diverse outcomes were mixed. The study revealed several opportunities to clarify and enhance competencies to deploy key practices, and several insights, which have implications for fostering more equitable faculty hiring and diversifying the professoriate with respect to gender and racial representation.

Diversifying the Professoriate in Canadian Academe: A Case Study of Search Processes and Outcomes in a Faculty of Science

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Abstract

This paper discusses the findings of a case study that sought to answer the question of whether and how an institutional faculty hiring policy that has codified a set of EDI best practices can be effectively deployed by search committees to foster more equitable hiring processes and diverse hiring outcomes. The research involved 23 searches implemented over a two-year period within the Faculty of Science of a Canadian research-intensive university. Using a mixed-methods survey design, the study sought to answer the research question by (1) analyzing the self-reported perceptions of the search committee members, including identifying any differences across gender and racial identity of committee members, and (2) analyzing the self-reported experiences of the longlisted candidates, including new hires. The study results suggest that codifying EDI best practices may be a 'necessary but insufficient' condition to advancing inclusive excellence in faculty hiring. While the practices on balances were perceived to be effective in improving equitable processes, their impacts on improving diverse outcomes were mixed. The study revealed several opportunities to clarify and enhance competencies to deploy key practices, and several insights, which have implications for fostering more equitable faculty hiring and diversifying the professoriate with respect to gender and racial representation.

Keywords: diversity and equity, faculty hiring, inclusive excellence, minoritized faculty, recruitment policy

Introduction

Evidence amassed over the last two decades demonstrates that the presence of a diversity of faculty members is a precondition to stimulating disciplinary and interdisciplinary curiosity and creativity and, therefore, to advancing teaching and research innovation and excellence (Freeman & Huang, 2013; Hong & Page, 2004; Milem, 2003; Mwenifumbo & Renner, 2017; Selmer et al., 2013; Smith, 2015; Stewart & Valian, 2018). This argument forms the premise of the *inclusive excellence* paradigm, which affirms the integral relationship between diversity and quality and promotes expanded ways of measuring merit to account for the essential role that the diversity of peoples and perspectives plays in harnessing academic creativity, innovation, and excellence (Clayton-Pedersen et al., 2017).

Through the 1990s and 2000s, several studies explored the benefits of compositional diversity in higher education. Mwenifumbo and Renner (2017) explored the interplay between faculty compositional

diversity (a component of inclusive excellence) and institutional financial health (a component of operational excellence). The study analyzed institutional data on gender diversity, age profile, and salary projections of full-time faculty from nine Canadian universities to make a case for diversifying the faculty. The authors argued that compositional diversity was connected to academic innovation and, therefore, institutional adaptability and responsiveness to the social and economic realities of the time.

Nearly two decades ago, Milem (2003) found that having an increased presence of women and racialized[1] faculty in higher education benefits the research, teaching, and service missions of the university by affording "more student-centred approaches to teaching and learning", "more diverse curricular offerings," "more research focused on issues of race/ethnicity and gender," and "more women and faculty of colour involved in community and volunteer service" (p. 158). Using mathematical modeling, Hong and Page (2004) demonstrated that a diversity of problem solvers is more effective than like-minded problem solvers.

Within the last decade, a study conducted in Denmark analyzed the relationship between academic staff diversity and their equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)-related competencies (Selmer et al., 2013). The study collected self-reported data from 489 professors, associate professors, and doctoral students. The authors found that cultural and linguistic diversity among academic staff was strongly associated with non-discriminatory attitudes towards diverse people and tolerance for diverse opinions, worldviews, and cultural practices. This study supports the argument that compositional diversity can foster inclusive mindsets and behaviours, which, in turn, can foster a culture of inclusion. Using documentary analysis, Freeman and Huang (2013) found that ethno-racially diverse co-authors of scientific papers produce higher-impact research. These studies demonstrated that diversity is beneficial for academic productivity and innovation.

More recently, in their book entitled *An Inclusive Academy: Achieving Diversity and Excellence,* Stewart and Valian (2018) described the evidence-based benefits of inclusive and collaborative teams in the academic context. They reinforced the "importance of diversity and inclusion for innovation and better theories," described the "development of innovative solutions to scholarly and public policy problems and deeper understanding of intellectual issues" as key research values, and cautioned that "institutional leaders and agencies supporting all scholarship, including those supporting scientific advancement, need to be concerned about arbitrary restrictions on who pursues scholarship in order to maximize the likelihood of innovations" (p. 61).

Despite the plethora of evidence on the benefits of diversity and the presence of decades-old federal legislative imperatives and levers, like the Federal Employment Equity Act and the Canadian Human Rights Act, Canadian universities have been slow to demonstrate substantive progress to close representational gaps across the four federally designated groups (FDGs)[2]. In part due to the saliency of gender and racial dimensions of difference, most studies and statistical analyses of faculty recruitment and retention have focused on uncovering and examining disparities in the gender and racial diversity of the professoriate, revealing persistent underrepresentation and underutilization of women and members of racialized communities (Ahmed et al., 2017; Donaldson & Emes, 2000; Eaton et al., 2020; Momani et al., 2019; Ramos & Li, 2017; Wijesingha & Ramos, 2017). Within the Canadian context, a team of social and political science scholars recently provided quantitative and qualitative evidence of the systemic inequities faced by racialized faculty members (Henry et al., 2017). Taken together, the data presented by these authors suggests that the often cited limited "pipeline" argument for the lack of racial diversity among applicants, candidates, and/or hires may be overstated. In the early 90s, the "pipeline" argument that not enough women doctoral students or prospective faculty were available was similarly dispelled (Wylie, 1995). While research on the actual availability of viable applicant pools must continue to be expanded through the systematic data collection efforts of Statistics Canada, as well as augmented efforts by academic and professional associations, the over-reliance on this argument must be interrogated as a form of denial of the multiple ways that individual biases and systemic inequities in hiring processes

[1] The term racialized is a more contemporary term used in Canada and preferred over "visible minority", which is defined by the government of Canada in the Employment Equity Act as persons, other than Indigenous peoples, who do not identify as Caucasian, European, and/or white in race, ethnicity, origin, and/or colour, regardless of birthplace or citizenship.

[2] In the Canadian context, the four Federally Designated Groups (FDGs) that have historically been and are still contemporarily under-represented within the academy are Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) peoples, members of racialized communities including people of Black/African descent and diaspora, persons with disabilities, as well as women, and particularly those in STEM fields.

continue to act as barriers to diversifying the professoriate.

The lagging pace of change in relation to recruiting and retaining scholars who are members of FDGs has triggered renewed studies and advocacy efforts across the sector to illuminate the problems of persistent bias and systemic inequities. In recent years, senior academic administrators in Canadian institutions of higher education have adopted the language and embraced the concept of inclusive excellence (Universities Canada, 2017) as an attempt to revitalize previously unsuccessful efforts to advance EDI in the academy, and particularly to diversify the professoriate. In the last decade, several studies have uncovered promising policy interventions to enhance faculty gender and racial diversity (Bilimoria et al., 2008; Bilimoria & Buch, 2010; Bohnet, 2016; Chugh & Brief, 2008; Pritlove et al., 2019; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017; Smith et al., 2004; Smith et al., 2015). Only one of these studies, undertaken by Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017), employed a qualitative method to examine the common narratives that constitute resistance, or discursive barriers, to diversifying the faculty body. Consequently, they were able to recommend a series of specific counter-narratives or constructive alternatives to directly engage reluctance, reticence, or resistance expressed by committee members through five key stages in the faculty hiring process: drafting the job description, constituting the search committee, assessing the CV, conducting the interview, and making the hiring decision (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

While there is a growing body of literature on the underrepresentation of women and racialized faculty in academia, as well as the biases and barriers that play a role in such gender and racial equity gaps, this paper aims to contribute to the relative dearth of literature on promising practices to advance equitable faculty hiring practices that are effective in increasing and sustaining gender and racial diversity among the professoriate in the Canadian context.

Methodology

The research sought to answer the question of whether and how an institutional faculty hiring policy that has codified a set of EDI "best" practices can be effectively deployed by search committees to foster more equitable hiring processes and diverse hiring outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

In the university environment, the search committee is an organizational, administrative construct that brings together a select group of (mostly) faculty members within a mixed but primarily collegial, technocratic, and bureaucratic governance model to assess and recommend the hiring of peers. The search committee members, therefore, exercise their individual and collective leadership to recruit organizational talent. Thus, at its core, this is a study to understand aspects of both individual and organizational behaviour that influence social justice goals—in this case, the equitable hiring of a diversity of faculty. This research is informed by both a critical race feminism standpoint and a theory of individual and organizational identity formation toward social justice. As a racialized cisgender woman and a senior equity administrator in higher education, these two critically-oriented epistemological frameworks are integral to my personal and professional worldview.

Critical race feminism, as a theory of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), is a theoretical framework that focuses on the intersection of racial and gender discrimination that produced wholly different experiences of marginalization for women of colour (Wing, 1997), which are often masked when examining gender bias and discrimination separately from racial bias and discrimination. The theory of individual and organizational identity formation toward social justice (Capper, 2019) links individual and organizational capacity to the goal of advancing social justice. According to Colleen Capper, "the social justice identity development of an educational setting will always be limited by or open to possibility by the social justice identity development of the leader" (p. 219). These conceptual frameworks support the use of a mixed-methods research design to uncover subjective perceptions and experiences of study participants and to critically analyze both individual responses and group trends through a lens that acknowledges the profound systemic influences of relations and structures of power that operate to reinforce or dismantle social inequities in higher education.

Study Design

The research was designed as a case study within a Faculty of Science in a research-intensive Canadian university where I served as a senior equity administrator. As this university began to accelerate efforts to broaden the compositional diversity of its faculty body, it launched a revised faculty hiring policy, which codified sixteen EDI "best" practices. The Dean of the Faculty of Science was among the early adopters of the new policy; thus, a case study was designed to examine the processes and outcomes associated with twenty-three academic searches conducted between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2020, across several of the Faculty of Science's departments.

Using a mixed-methods survey design, the study sought to answer the research question by (1) analyzing the self-reported perceptions of the search committee members, including identifying any differences that emerged across gender and racial identity of committee members, and (2) analyzing the self-reported experiences of the longlisted candidates, including new hires. The surveys included fixed-choice response options, using a five-point bipolar Likert scale, to enable quantitative analysis. The scale included the following options: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The surveys also included open-ended questions to allow for more in-depth narrative responses and to enable qualitative analysis. Participants were invited to answer a voluntary self-identification questionnaire, thereby enabling an analysis of any difference in participant perceptions and experiences across federally designated groups.

Study Sample and Participants

The case study approach necessitated a purposeful sampling strategy, whereby the eligibility of research participants was bound within the criterion of having been a committee member or a longlisted candidate for one of the twenty-three searches. Three groups of participants were identified to receive invitations to complete similar but tailored online surveys: all search committee members, all longlisted applicants excluding new hires, and all new hires. Among the invited participants, 38 search committee members participated, representing nine departments, and 60 longlisted candidates participated, including 13 who represented new hires.

Findings

Demographic Data

To contextualize the analysis and discussions of self-identification data and representation rates, particularly with regard to longlisted candidates and newly hired faculty members, it is important to establish the baseline representation of FDGs in the Canadian labour market across national, provincial, and local populations from which new faculty would be drawn. The Canadian Labour Market Availability (LMA) data subset under the National Occupation Code (NOC) assigned for university professors and lecturers is most relevant to this study. According to the 2016 Statistics Canada Census, as reported in the university's 2019 Employment Equity Census Report, women represent 44.0%, 43.1%, and 44.9% of the university professors and lecturers in Canada, Ontario, and the Hamilton region, respectively. For racialized persons, the proportions are 21.1%, 25.1%, and 22.7%, while Indigenous peoples represent 1.4%, 1.1%, and 0% of these populations. LMA data for persons with disabilities is not collected at the NOC or the municipal level. However, using the Professionals NOC to estimate LMA, persons with disabilities are estimated to represent 8.9% and 10.3% at the national and provincial levels. This paper focuses on the gender and racial representation.

Search Committee Members

Of the search committee survey respondents (n=38), four (13.8%) identified as racialized, 22 (75.9%) identified as White, and three preferred not to answer. Eleven respondents (37.9%) identified as women, 16 (55.1%) identified as men, and two preferred not to indicate their gender identity. None of the respondents identified as Indigenous. These data indicate that the gender representation of the search committees was on par with the representation of women in the Canadian LMA, suggesting an adequate level of inclusion of women within these hiring decision-making bodies. However, the data show a considerable gap in the representation of Indigenous and racialized persons on these search committees.

This suggests a need to continue to examine and remove barriers to diversifying the racial composition of search committees to enhance the diverse perspectives that can be brought to bear on the assessment of a diversity of candidates for faculty positions.

Longlisted Candidates and New Hires

There were 60 longlisted candidates who participated in the survey, among whom 13 were successful new hires. With respect to gender and racial diversity, 30% (n=18) of longlisted candidates self-identified as women, and 13.3% (n=8) identified as racialized. Thus, the representation of women and racialized faculty in the longlist was below what was reported in the Canadian LMA data regionally, provincially, and locally. However, when reviewing the gender and racial diversity of the new hires (n=13), gender diversity improves by 8.4 percentage points to 38.4%, while racial diversity declines by 5.6 percentage points to 7.7%. None of the new hires were racialized women–they represented 3.3% (n=2) of the longlisted.

Search Committee Member Responses

Removing the undecided responses, Table 1 lists the sixteen hiring practices that search committee members (SCM), on average, reported were most effective in advancing EDI in faculty searches, provided in rank order from the most effective to the least effective.

Table 1

SCM Perceptions of Effectiveness of EDI Intervention – Excluding Undecided Responses

Hiring Practice to Advance EDI	Hiring Phase	% of SCM	Rank Order
casting a wide recruitment net	recruitment	96.9	1
constituting a diverse search committee	preparation	89.3	2
training the search committee members	preparation	88.5	3
discussing evaluation criteria and potential biases or barriers	assessment	86.2	4
considering EDG gaps in the diversity of the professoriate	selection	84.6	5
taking “second looks” at FDGs within the zone of excellence	assessment	81.5	6
integrating EDI contributions in evaluation criteria	assessment	80	7
documenting the search process in a summary report	selection	78.3	8
integrating EDI into interview questions	assessment	77.3	9
assignment of an equity advisor	preparation	76.7	10*
signaling EDI commitments in the job ad	recruitment	76.7	10*
reporting on appointments and the application of EDI practices	selection	75	12
reviewing the gaps in diversity (department, faculty, and institution)	preparation	70.4	13
requesting the submission of an EDI statements from applicants	recruitment	68.8	14
inviting completion of a diversity survey for applicant self-id data	recruitment	56	15
creating a structured and consistent reference letter protocol	selection	50	16

Note: *denotes a tie in the ranking

Table 2 provides the rating and rank order calculated with undecided responses intact.

Table 2

SCM Perceptions of Effectiveness of EDI Intervention – Including Undecided Responses

Hiring Practice to Advance EDI	Hiring Phase	% of SCM	Rank Order
casting a wide recruitment net	recruitment	82	1
discussing evaluation criteria and potential biases or barriers	assessment	75	2
constituting a diverse search committee	preparation	74	3
integrating EDI contributions in evaluation criteria	assessment	73	4
training the search committee members	preparation	68	5*
assignment of an equity advisor	preparation	68	5*
signaling EDI commitments in the job ad	recruitment	68	5*
considering EDG gaps in the diversity of the professoriate	selection	66	8*
taking "second looks" at FDGs within the zone of excellence	assessment	66	8*
requesting the submission of an EDI statements from applicants	recruitment	65	10
reviewing the gaps in diversity (department, faculty, and institution)	preparation	56	11
documenting the search process in a summary report	selection	54	12
integrating EDI into interview questions	assessment	51	12
reporting on appointments and the application of EDI practices	selection	45	14
inviting completion of a diversity survey for applicant self-id data	recruitment	41	15
creating a structured and consistent reference letter protocol	selection	27	16

Note: *denotes a tie in the ranking

On balance, the aggregate results suggest that the codified practices are perceived to be effective in advancing inclusive excellence in faculty hiring. Removing the undecided responses, three-quarters of the strategies were perceived to be effective by 75% or more of the respondents. Nearly half of the strategies were perceived to be effective by over 80% of the respondents, and none of the interventions received less than a 50% endorsement. Leaving the undecided responses intact, the rank order shifts slightly. The top-ranked and bottom-two ranked interventions maintain their positions. The notable ratings of interventions discussed in the subsequent sections shift but maintain their sequence relative to one another, except for the selection phase intervention related to considering diversity gaps in the professoriate, which falls but remains in the top half of the rankings. As will be discussed in the subsequent sections, a trend emerges where women and racialized respondents tend to provide more undecided responses than men and white respondents. The findings also show little disagreement on the effectiveness of the interventions among racialized search committee members, with some disagreement expressed in relation to two practices: creating a structured reference letter protocol and reporting on EDI practices in the appointment process.

The following sections describe the survey findings in more detail. Notable results are described in sections organized according to the four search process phases: preparation, recruitment, assessment, and selection. Responses to the closed-ended Likert scale survey questions are expanded on, where possible, with relevant samples of narrative responses to the following open-ended question:

- What aspects of the search process did you find were most helpful to advancing the above-mentioned inclusive excellence goals?

Preparation Phase

The proportion of search committee respondents who affirmed preparation phase interventions is as fol-

lows: (i) assignment of an equity advisor—76.7%, (ii) constituting a diverse search committee—89.3%, (iii) training the search committee member—88.5%, and (iv) reviewing the gaps in the diversity in relation to the department, faculty, and institution—70.4%. Constituting a diverse search committee and assigning an equity advisor were found to be most effective, in that order.

While 82 % of men found assigning an equity advisor an effective strategy, only 50% of women found this strategy effective. Similarly, 82% of men found committee training an effective strategy, while only 45% of women found this strategy effective.

Several committee members felt that assigning a designated equity advisor, whose role it is to raise EDI considerations, was helpful as long as responsibilities were made clear to the committee. As one racialized committee member of unknown gender identity remarked, "…ensure that the role of the equity advisor and expectations of the search committee with respect to EDI policy re-hiring are clearly explained to the search committee."

There were a considerable number of comments related to training—with mixed reports on whether it was found to be helpful. For context, all committee members completed the required 1.5-hour implicit bias training workshop, 89% completed a 3-hour equitable recruitment training session, and 13% completed the 2-day equity advisor training program. Several committee members commented that the training offered helpful baseline knowledge to raise awareness of inclusive excellence, understand the approach to EDI in search processes, and recognize implicit biases. However, there were a few comments calling for more focus on skill-building and better use of time to ensure the training is most effective, especially for leaders. One white woman commented on the need for more practical skill-building in training:

> I found the EDI training we received as a committee to be a bit heavy on the "why this is important" and thin on "how to ensure this is an equitable process". I remember we didn't get a lot of advice/recommendations on practical aspects of the interview process and didn't have much time at the end to discuss any questions. I would recommend revising the agenda for these training sessions to have more time for discussions on how to frame and ask questions, what can and cannot be discussed, etc.

Another committee member remarked on the need for more education for the Chair: "I participated in job searches in 2018-19 and 2019-20, and there was a big difference in how the Chair led the committee, especially with respect to EDI issues." Other committee members expressed concerns with the availability and quality of demographic data for gap analysis. One white committee member suggested a need for "better comparative data on EDI than is available from StatsCan, that is actually relevant for our searches, which are not restricted to the local area, but rather are worldwide." Another male committee member said the following about the need for better data:

> Access and integration of more comprehensive data about equity seeking groups, in addition to the gap analysis provided by the EIO. For example, data about the availability of candidates in the area of the search, as opposed to general labour market data.

Recruitment Phase

The proportion of search committee respondents who affirmed recruitment phase interventions is as follows: (v) signaling EDI commitments in the job ad—76.7%, (vi) casting a wide recruitment net—96.6%, (vii) inviting the completion of a diversity survey to collect applicant self-identification information—56%, (vii) requesting the submission of a statement of EDI contributions from applicants—68.8%.

One of the greatest differences across the gender identity of the respondents was related to the question of signaling EDI commitment in the job advertisement. While 88% of men found this to be an effective strategy, only 45% of women agreed. Similarly, one of the greatest differences across the racial identity of the respondents was related to the question of casting a wide recruitment net: 88% of white respondents perceived this to be an effective strategy, compared with 60% of racialized respondents. When analyzing responses across genders, casting a wide recruitment was viewed as effective by men (83%) and women (86%). A noticeable difference exists between racialized and white respondent perceptions

of the effectiveness of collecting self-identification data and requesting an applicant EDI statement: 80% of racialized respondents felt that self-identification data and EDI statements were effective strategies, while only 40% and 60% of white respondents thought self-identification data and EDI statements were effective strategies, respectively.

Several committee members felt there was limited time to sufficiently reach out to cast a wide recruitment net to attract a diversity of applicants. One committee member suggested a "longer search timeline to enable members of the department to contact potential applicants and encourage applications [remarking that] casting a wider net takes time." Another reiterated the need for a greater commitment of time for a more effective recruitment process:

> The most effective way to improve our diversity is to have a wider pool of applicants. This requires actively searching out potential applicants who will increase our diversity. This is also the hardest thing to do, as it requires a major commitment of time before the search even officially begins.

There were also several comments about the applicant's EDI statements, with some committee members feeling the statements were helpful and others less clear about their usefulness. One committee member felt the EDI statement was valuable in getting a general sense of the applicant's commitment to inclusive excellence, though less helpful in determining whether the applicant had the capacity to action the inclusive excellence intentions in the role:

> I think that asking candidates to provide an EDI statement is useful for getting a sense for how committed they are to inclusive excellence in going forward, but does not necessarily enhance inclusive excellence in the position for which they are applying - but laying the foundation for greater awareness and advocacy in moving forward is important!

In contrast, another committee members felt "the inclusion of an EDI statement from the candidates was unclear in how it factored into the selection process [as] many were similar in content."

There were also affirming comments about the usefulness of applicant self-identification data, however, one committee member highlighted a caveat about the limitations of this data when the response rates are low:

> The current process of inviting completion of a Diversity Survey to collect applicant self-ID information seems lacking. My experience is that uptake is relatively low amongst applicants (~10% completion rate) which hinders the information that can be gleaned from the survey to inform the search.

Assessment Phase

The proportion of search committee respondents who affirmed assessment phase interventions is as follows: (ix) integrating EDI contributions in evaluation criteria—80%, (x) discussing the details and weighting of evaluation criteria and potential biases or barriers—86.2%, (xi) taking "second looks" at FDGs within the zone of excellence—81.5%, and (xii) integrating EDI into interview questions—77.3%.

While white respondents perceived strategies in this phase to be more effective than their racialized peers, the difference was made up entirely in undecided responses.

A number of committee members discussed the value of the applicant evaluation rubric. One committee member remarked on the benefit of pre-established evaluation criteria in guiding a consistent process:

> I found the establishment of criteria for assessing applicants the most useful. It provided a clear pathway for assessment and focussed discussion on these criteria. However, the criteria were not rigid, and did allow members to assess the applicants based on their view of excellence. This set of criteria provided an even process compared to previous search committees I participated in.

Another committee member remarked on the benefit of setting evaluation criteria (and interview questions) to ensure a focus on bone fide job requirements and the process. They said, "Having the questions and evaluation criteria established in advance (and following a highly consultative process in arriving at these) was very beneficial in keeping us focused on the process and position needs." Committee members also affirmed the importance of the mindful deliberations that took place, with one respondent reflecting on the importance of an iterative discussion of EDI considerations:

> Several times as the search progressed, EDI considerations were front and centre and we had many reminders from our equity advisor about best practices. The overall experience emphasized that EDI needs to be considered at all stages and consciously, including with open and targeted discussions by the search committee." [white woman]

Another committee member made the following observation about the utility of the deliberations: "In the past two years I have participated on two faculty search committees and it has been the discussions among the committee members that have been most informative".

Selection Phase

The proportion of search committee respondents who affirmed selection phase interventions are as follows: (xiii) creating a structured and consistent reference letter protocol— 50 %, (xiv) considering gaps in the diversity of the professoriate with respect to FDGs—84.6%, (xv) documenting the search process in a summary report—78.3%, and (xvi) reporting on appointments and the application of EDI principles in practice—75%.

While considering gaps in the diversity of the professoriate was strongly affirmed as an effective strategy in the aggregate, women (86%) and white (72%) respondents tended to drive this affirmation, as compared to men (59%) and racialized (60%) respondents. In addition, a greater proportion of racialized respondents disagreed that a reference letter protocol (40%) and reporting on the application of EDI practices (20%) were effective strategies, as compared to 28% and 12% of white committee members. Similarly, a greater proportion of women disagreed that a reference letter protocol (43%) and reporting on the application of EDI practices (18%) were effective strategies, as compared to 14% and 12% of men. In contrast, women (64%) and racialized (60%) respondents responded strongly and affirmed the efficacy of documenting the search process in a summary report, as compared to men (53%) and white (52%) respondents.

Committee members affirmed the need for accountability through documentation of and reporting on EDI efforts. One respondent appreciated the need for documentation and reporting as a means to "ensure that the search committee feels supported with EDI guidelines but is also held accountable for following them." Another respondent asserted that a "follow-up with the committee chair and equity advisor (individually and together) after each search is conducted for an account/summary of search" would ensure accountability and transparency.

Additional Search Committee Member Reflections and Recommendations

Search Committee members were also asked the following open-ended questions to invite reflection on their learning about and recommendations for advancing inclusive excellence in faculty hiring:

- In what ways has your thinking or have your skills evolved with respect to understanding and advancing inclusive excellence as a consequence of your participation in the search process?
- What improvements would you suggest to future search processes to better advance the above-mentioned inclusive excellence goals?

There were many comments acknowledging enriched learning from the search experience and encouraging continued intentional work to promote EDI in faculty hiring. There were also some comments that reflected resistance to considering EDI in faculty hiring. I share several examples to demonstrate where there is work to do to engage more faculty in these goals.

Several search committee members did not welcome efforts to consider EDI as they viewed these in binary opposition to the pursuit of excellence—demonstrating the myth of the existence of a pure meritocracy persists in academia. One search committee member recommended returning to the "conven-

tional process, whereby we searched for excellence above all." Another committee member suggested that university administrators should "trust that faculty who are experts in the area of the search are best qualified to identify excellence." Yet another said, "There should be a focus on demonstrated scientific ability and potential of the candidate, irrespective of prejudice, including forced EDI criteria." One member shared their initial fear that EDI principles would erode commitments to excellence, though, in their final assessment, they admit that did not come to bear: "This search was scary because it seemed like excellence would be abandoned in the search for diversity, but in the end, we managed to hire the best candidate."

Other members expressed their feelings that efforts to address EDI in faculty hiring amount to tokenism. One asserted there should be a "focus on the position requirements, not checking off EDI boxes," while another said the following:

> I am feeling that the pendulum has swung too far towards 'counting the women' and 'token minorities', and I have felt that this was an irritation on more than one occasion this year. I have also picked up some irritation from women colleagues who don't want to be asked to do something because they are women."

Longlisted Candidate Responses

Longlisted candidates were asked the following open-ended questions:

- Please share whether and why you may or may not be comfortable sharing self-identification data collected during job application processes.
- Please share whether and how your perception of or experience with the culture and climate regarding EDI at the university factored into your decision to apply.

Comfort Sharing Self-Identification Information

Among the longlisted candidates, 27 answered whether and why they may or may not be comfortable sharing self-identification data collected during job application processes. Two-thirds of these respondents (66.7 %) affirmed their comfort providing self-identification information, several citing the critical importance of sharing this data to advance EDI priorities in the academy, with the caveat that confidentiality and the ethical use of data are forefronted.

Several white men and women shared their perspectives on self-disclosure and the possible implications of advantages or disadvantages in hiring. Three expressed comfort in disclosing with assurances of the proper use of the data in the hiring process. One candidate admitted feeling that they might be at a disadvantage by providing the data, though they support the goal of inclusion: "In my case, it's never going to be an advantage to provide such data, but I think the collection of these data is important to promote inclusive hiring. I always provide it when asked." Two candidates also expressed comfort in providing personal demographic data given assurances that it would not be used inappropriately to advantage or disadvantage candidates. One said, "As long as it's used responsibly and the best candidate for the job, regardless of background, is hired, I am very comfortable [with] self-identification being a helpful factor in hiring." Another said, "I am comfortable sharing this data because it is not supposed to be shared with the committee during the review and interview process, so it should not be used against me in any way."

Some other white candidates—both men and women—expressed reluctance to self-identify, citing concerns with possible bias and discrimination against dominant group identities influencing the hiring process and/or detracting from a focus on merit. One said, "I would not want to share self-identification data with the hiring committee as I would not want to risk unconscious bias impacting the hiring decision." Another said, "I want my hiring to be based on my merit as an educator, not on my self-identification data." A third said, "Self-identification data can contribute to negative bias for certain applicant groups and can simply result in displaced discrimination (albeit against groups that, historically, have not been discriminated against)."

One racialized man disclosed that he expected self-identification would do more harm to his hiring chances: "As a black man, my expectation is that self-identification is more harmful to me whether there are equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives or not."

A disproportionately higher ratio of women and racialized respondents reported comfort in sharing self-identification data (64.7 % and 17.6 %), as compared with men and white respondents. While a proportionate number of women, as compared to men, were among those who reported their discomfort sharing their demographic data, none of the applicants who reported discomfort sharing their demographic data self-identified were racialized.

Relevance of EDI Climate and Culture

Among candidates who participated in the survey, 32 answered whether and how their perception of or experience with the EDI culture and climate of the university factored into their decision to apply. The answers demonstrated that EDI matters were of great importance to a majority of the candidates seeking new faculty appointments, whether or not the EDI climate and culture of the university influenced their decision to apply. The answers also demonstrated that the majority of these candidates expected the university to address EDI and, therefore, were not surprised to see what they referred to as "standard" levels of integration and engagement of EDI practices and priorities in the faculty hiring process.

Several candidates appreciated and affirmed that an evident EDI culture and climate factored into the application or offer acceptance decisions. The following are relevant comments shared by different candidates:

- "It factored in greatly. I am dedicated to fostering inclusion, equity, and diversity in my classroom (a good chunk of my research is on stereotypes and prejudice and how to reduce it)."
- "My perception of the culture and climate of EDI at [the university] was positive and encouraged me to apply."
- "As a woman in science, this was important to me."
- "It did not factor into my decision to apply, but it did factor into my decision to accept the job offer." and
- "It was really encouraging to see that the culture and climate at [the university] places value on equity, diversity, and inclusion. It certainly makes me feel much better about working here."

A couple of candidates appreciated the amplification of an EDI culture and climate, though they suggested it did not factor into their application decisions. One said, "I liked that aspect, which I even mentioned in my cover letter. I very likely would have applied regardless, given location and the fit of the position." Another said, "My perception of [the university's] EDI culture was not a factor, although I do strongly feel about EDI issues."

It is relevant that three of the seven quotes above were sentiments expressed by white men and three by white women. In other words, an EDI culture and climate were not only important to gender and racially minoritized faculty, but a feature that a diversity of faculty were looking for.

Discussion and Insights

Search Committee Perspectives on the Efficacy of EDI Interventions

The average rating and ranking of the effectiveness of the sixteen EDI interventions by search committee members, the further disaggregated analysis across racial and gender identity of respondents, and the elaborations in the narrative commentary surfaced at least three interesting insights for discussion and further exploration. Before discussing these insights, it is important to note some notable differences in the responses of search committee members across gender and racial identity.

First, none of the racialized search committee respondents perceived that the EDI interventions were ineffective except for two interventions: creating a structured reference letter protocol and informal reporting on the application of EDI in the appointment process. In other words, any disagreement with all but these two interventions is entirely accounted for in the responses of white search committee members. This result may point to a general incongruence in the worldviews of the racialized and white faculty in this study *with respect to* what EDI practices work in the context of faculty hiring. This finding supports a studied intergroup dynamic described by Sue (2010) as a psychological dilemma he called a clash of racial realities, whereby "the racial reality of White [people] is very different from that of people of colour… [pointing to] the stark perceptual differences between these groups." (p. 44).

Second, generally, women and racialized search committee respondents demonstrate much higher undecided responses than men and white committee members, respectively. In some cases, the undecided responses of women and racialized committee members were as high as 25 percentage points and 56 percentage points greater than those of men and white committee members, respectively. I suggest that this may point to a 'healthy dose' of both cautious optimism and skepticism by minoritized faculty. The finding raised questions about whether a four-point bipolar Likert scale, eliminating the undecided option, or using a five-point unipolar Likert might be a better tool to use in the future.

EDI Training for Committee Members and Assigning an Equity Advisor to the Committee

In the preparatory phase, training is ranked as the third most effective practice to advance EDI in faculty hiring. This is an interesting finding in and of itself, as well as juxtaposed with the much lower ranking of the equity advisor intervention, which is in the bottom half of the rankings. Moreover, the higher ranking of the effectiveness of the training intervention is largely due to respondents identifying as men, while the lower ranking of the effectiveness of the equity advisor intervention is largely due to respondents identifying as white women. In their qualitative review of mechanisms deployed by universities to address inequities in the academy, Dua and Bhanji (2017) wrote that educational interventions "for faculty and departments were less successful… A few universities offered workshops for search committees, with disappointing results. Similarly, workshops offered to departmental faculty members tend to provoke resentment and have little success" (p. 222).

I would suggest that any inefficacy is due to the pedagogical limitations of the often brief, one-off workshop modality, which is incongruent with the kind of reflexive and immersive affective, cognitive, and behavioural engagement that is required for the exploration of identity formation, socialization, and marginalized and advantaged social beings, and deeper learning across difference towards a more just society. The training for the SCM in this study was designed to manage expectations with respect to the realistically achievable learning outcomes in the three-hour training for all SCM and the day-long training for the equity advisor. The fact that training was cited as the most effective intervention in this study either challenges the broad narrative that EDI-related educational workshops are ineffective and/or says something about the level of 'unconscious incompetence' of training participants. In other words, either the training design and delivery were aligned with the learning objectives and outcomes and/or the participants' level of EDI competency was such that they could not recognize and, therefore, appropriately assess the quality of the training. The fact that, disproportionately, more men would drive the higher ranking of the training intervention is not entirely surprising. Minoritized persons, including women, by virtue of their lived experiences of inequities, generally tend to have a greater consciousness with respect to EDI issues and, oftentimes, a more nuanced and deeper view into what constitutes more meaningful change. It is plausible that women may not be ranking training as highly as men if women are more generally attuned to training as a less transformative tool for either individual or systemic change.

The training and equity advisor interventions are related in that they seek to enhance individual and group EDI competencies deployed through the search process, by internal and external means, respectively. The training intervention aims to *prime* individual competencies (primarily affective and cognitive), while the equity advisor intervention aims to *build* individual competencies (primarily behavioural) by engaging and modeling the application and, thereby, development of the heart set, mindset, and skillset required to more effectively advance EDI in search processes. It is curious that faculty who rank training highly would not also rank the assignment of an equity advisor relatively highly if they are focused on enhancing competencies in practice. However, the low ranking of the equity advisor intervention could indicate one or more of the following three plausible rationales: that the equity advisors were not as effective as they could be given the nascency of the program, which was developing at the same time that the new faculty hiring policy and study were launching; that individuals tend to overestimate their EDI competencies, so the need for an equity advisor was understated; that the faculty hiring cultural norms in many of the Science departments in the study were generally resist to any external committee members from the perspective of disciplinary expertise and, in many STEM disciplines, the equity advisor had to be drawn from outside the department. The fact that disproportionately more women would drive the lower ranking of the equity advisor intervention could also be explained by the greater expectation for this intervention's effectiveness correlated to a greater consciousness of what

meaningful change might look like—as mentioned above.

Casting a Wide Recruitment Net and Signalling EDI Commitments in the Job Ad

Casting a wide recruitment net—a recruitment phase strategy—was, by far, ranked as the top intervention of all sixteen EDI practices, while signalling EDI values and commitments in the job advertisement—also a recruitment phase strategy—ranked in the bottom half of the interventions. This is curious, as the job ad can be both a symbolic and substantive outreach tool for attracting minoritized applicants. Studies have shown that the EDI orientation and priorities of an organization are both implicitly and explicitly conveyed to prospective employees through the language used (or not used) in institutional vision and philosophy statements, which are frequently excerpted into job ads; these and other external cues in the organizational culture and climate send a strong signal to marginalized groups, whereby if they perceive their group identities or interests will be devalued in the organization, they may choose not to apply, they may leave their positions prematurely, and they may experience challenges to their psychic and mental health and wellbeing, which can influence their job performance (Sue, 2010).

There were several speculative narrative comments that indicate a belief that both the short hiring timelines and broader pipeline issues inhibited the diversification of the applicant pool, and it is both implied and expressed that this is the primary reason for a lack of diversity in both the longlist and among new hires. It can be argued that the respondents may be overstating the value of casting a wide recruitment net and understating the value of signalling EDI commitments in the job ad relative to other interventions.

The intervention related to signaling EDI commitments in the job ad garnered some of the greatest differences in committee members' responses across gender identity, with the proportion of men agreeing that this was an effective strategy being twice as large as the proportion of women agreeing. Women respondents drove the lower rating of this intervention. There were no narrative comments that could provide some more insight into this lower rating by women; however, it could be due to concern about the performativity of the job ad—that if the committed words in the ad do not match the demonstrated actions in practice, then the commitment is rendered as virtue-signaling rather than value-substantiating.

For the intervention related to casting a wide recruitment net, the proportion of white respondents who agreed this was an effective strategy was one and a half times greater than the proportion of racialized respondents who agreed. Racialized respondents drove the lower rating of this intervention. One might think that the likelihood of diversifying the pool of new hires would be greater when the pool of qualified applicants is diverse. However, this assumption is based on an imagined objectivity and focus on statistical probabilities that do not account for the very real subjectivity that manifests during the hiring process and which can result in the exclusion of excellent minoritized candidates regardless of their proportional representation among the qualified applicant pool. Scholars have cautioned against oversimplified arguments about a limited "pipeline' or pools of qualified candidates among women and/or racialized prospective faculty members (Wylie, 1995; Ramos & Li, 2017). I wonder if the perception that casting a wide recruitment net is the most effective strategy is, possibly, one of the subtle signs of the neoliberal ideology of equal opportunity and the myth of meritocracy. Such an ideology downplays, if not denies, the profound barriers to employment due to personally mediated biases and competencies of search committee members as well as the structurally embedded inequities and culturally predominant norms of "everyday" exclusionary practices within the academy. Instead, this worldview can slip into a deficit mode of thinking by excessively focusing on the idea of a lack of available qualified personnel "in the pipeline":

> While research on the actual availability of viable applicant pools must continue to be expanded through systematic data collection efforts, the 'pipeline' argument must be carefully interrogated as a form of active or passive denial of the multiple ways that individual biases and systemic inequities in hiring and tenure processes may continue to act as barriers to diversifying the professoriate. (al Shaibah, 2023, p. 104)

Diversity Gap Analysis and the Role of Self-Identification Data and EDI Statements

Considering the persistent gaps in the diversity of the professoriate during the selection phase of the search is ranked fifth among interventions, while the collection of applicant diversity data, which is arguably required to understand the diversity of the search finalists, is ranked as the second least effective intervention. It is notable that a disproportionately higher number of racialized SCM felt that, collecting self-identification data was an effective strategy as compared to white SCM, so white-identified respondents are driving the lower ranking of this intervention. This observation begs the question of how committee members expect to engage in conversations about increasing diverse representation of perspectives and lived experiences, as these relate to aligning and enhancing strategic academic priorities, when attempting to discern between more than one excellent search finalist, if they do not believe collecting self-identification data is an effective strategy. That said, it is plausible that while selection committee members may believe that closing diversity gaps in the professoriate is an important consideration when deciding between excellent finalists, the low scores on the self-identification question may reflect a lack of access to sufficiently helpful data or the nuanced capacity to utilize the available data in a manner that is perceived to effectively advance inclusive excellence.

Among the benefits of requesting applicant EDI statements is the possibility that applicants discuss their lived experiences, thereby volunteering self-identification information in a manner that relates their diverse identities and perspectives to academic and research goals. However, this intervention also received a low ranking—reported as the third least effective strategy. While racialized respondents overwhelmingly agreed that both collecting self-identification data and requesting an applicant EDI statement were effective strategies, a considerable proportion of white respondents disagreed. However, while a relatively small proportion of the women affirmed the efficacy of collecting self-identification data, a considerable proportion affirmed the efficacy of requesting an applicant EDI statement. This finding suggests that both women and racialized persons, generally, may be more attuned than men and white people, generally, to the value of EDI statements, including their potential to surface relevant lived experience information to augment and triangulate with self-identification data obtained from diversity survey responses and other information provided in the application materials. Despite calls for more data-informed EDI planning, decision-making, and cross-sector movements to improve the availability of demographic data—particularly ethno-racial workforce data—there was still significant disagreement from white men and white women, rendering both collecting self-identification data and using EDI statements among the lowest-ranked strategies. The narrative responses uncovered a lack of satisfaction with the comprehensiveness of the available demographic data and a lack of clarity on how to assess the submitted EDI statements, suggesting a need for more guidance in both of these areas.

Search Committee Reflections and Recommendations for Greater Efficacy

While there were several testimonies by search committee members acknowledging enriched learning from the search experience and encouraging continued intentional work to promote EDI in faculty hiring, there were notable revelations of resistance to the notion that EDI is integral to academic excellence. It is important to surface these perspectives to gauge where and to what extent these attitudinal and cultural barriers to advancing inclusive excellence persist.

Longlisted Applicant Perspectives

The study revealed that the majority of applicants affirm their comfort in sharing self-identification data through an applicant diversity survey. In fact, not only have many of these scholars normalized invitations to complete diversity surveys and submit EDI statements in the faculty hiring process, but they have also come to expect these and the integration of other EDI practices in contemporary university academic searches. These data conflict with anecdotal perspectives and projections that I have personally heard in the last five years from veteran faculty that focusing on EDI would repel excellent candidates and deter them from applying. This possible incongruence between the perceptions of early-career or emerging scholars seeking new employment in the academy and established professors who tend to have the strongest voice on search committees is an important observation to further study, as it could have great implications on the efficacy of search committees in relation to advancing inclusive excellence. Perhaps the sector is at an inflection point ahead of a more transformative culture shift on the horizon as

the new cadre of more EDI-acclimatized and fluent academics take up more senior ranks in the professoriate and become more influential on faculty hiring committees.

Generally, women and racialized applicants seemed to be most comfortable sharing self-identification data, though a considerable proportion of white men expressed comfort disclosing, and a few members of federally designated groups confirmed their preference not to self-identify. This is an important finding, as it is often assumed that those who do not self-identify are those representing dominant culture identities—white, settler, male, cisgender, heterosexual, and able-bodied. There are many reasons why individuals belonging to federally designated equity groups may choose not to self-identify, and this study demonstrated that variety in perspective and comfort in disclosing demographic information.

Diversity of New Hires

Extrapolating from the self-identification data that was volunteered, the study revealed the underrepresentation of gender and racial diversity in the longlisted candidate pools across the 38 search processes. As there was no self-identification data collected at the applicant stage, it is not possible to know the extent to which the screening of prospective applicants to arrive at the longlisted candidate pools resulted in the attrition of gender and racial representation and, perhaps importantly, whether that attrition matters. Oftentimes, applicant pools can include many who do not meet minimum credential and disciplinary qualifications, so counting these as viable applicants could skew self-identification data reports. A better indicator of the possible efficacy of EDI practices is to monitor the changes in gender and racial diversity between the longlisted, shortlisted, and new-hire pools. This study did not have the benefit of collecting information on the shortlisted/interviewed candidates; however, the data suggest that gender diversity improved from the longlist to the new-hire pool, but racial diversity declined, and no self-identified racialized women were among the newly appointed. This suggests that the EDI efforts made by and capacities of the search committees involved in this study may have contributed to advancing gender diversity in the professoriate but not to advancing racial diversity. This idea is supported by several studies demonstrating that, among the federally designated equity groups, the greatest beneficiaries of EDI interventions in the academy to date have been white women.

In one such empirical study, Ramos and Li (2017) found that women in the professoriate and women who earned a doctorate are underrepresented when compared to the general population—by a difference of about 12 and 20% age points, respectively. However, when women in the professoriate are compared to women who earned a doctorate, "the underrepresentation disappears, and there is now an almost 8% age point greater representation of professors who are women than people with doctorates who are women" (p. 52). This finding was in stark contrast to what the data demonstrated for racially minoritized persons. Ramos and Li (2017) uncovered that "many of the [racially minoritized] groups that appear to be well or proportionally better represented compared to the general population are underrepresented when accounting for their respective pool of doctoral-level human capital" (p. 49). Their data also demonstrated that between 1991 and 2006, the extent of women's underrepresentation in the professoriate was considerably ameliorated, whereas the underrepresentation of racially minoritized faculty, over the same period, was exacerbated.

Conclusion and Implications

This paper discusses the findings of a case study designed to examine whether and how a university faculty hiring policy, which codified EDI practices in its procedures, influences more equitable hiring processes as well as more gender- and racially diverse hiring outcomes. A Faculty of Science in one research-intensive Canadian university was the analysis site. Using a mixed-methods survey design, the study sought to answer the research question by (1) analyzing the self-reported perceptions of the search committee members, including identifying any differences that emerged across gender and racial identity of committee members, and (2) analyzing the self-reported experiences of the longlisted candidates, including new hires. Informed by both a critical race feminism standpoint and a theory of individual and organizational identity formation towards social justice, this research sought to uncover subjective perceptions and experiences of study participants and to critically analyze both individual responses and group trends through a lens that acknowledges the profound systemic influences of relations and structures of power that influence social justice goals in higher education—in this case, the equitable

hiring of women and racialized faculty.

This research result suggests that the institutional codification of a suite of EDI practices to guide academic search committees may be a 'necessary but insufficient' prerequisite to effectively advancing inclusive excellence in faculty hiring. On balance, the data suggests that the codified practices are generally welcomed and found to be effective in fostering more equitable processes. However, while the deployment of these practices may have contributed to retaining gender diversity from the longlisted candidate pool to the new hires, their deployment did not appear to have the same effect on the racial diversity of new hires, which declined as compared to the longlisted candidate pool. The study revealed the need for committees to obtain greater clarification and competency to better deploy the following practices that require more nuanced EDI knowledge and skill:

- Better understanding the value of and empowering the assigned equity advisor to more successfully engage and build committee competencies in real time throughout the search;
- Better planning and time management to benefit from casting a wide recruitment net, including better understanding the value of and articulating authentic EDI commitments in the job ad, to maximize the diversity of the qualified applicant pool while attending to proactive bias mitigation and barrier removal strategies to retain as many qualified members of equity groups from the longlist to the shortlist; and
- Better understanding the value of and how to use record-level disaggregated and/or anonymously aggregated self-identification and lived experience information collected from applicant diversity surveys and EDI statements to monitor the diversity profile of the candidate pool through the search as well as to help discern between excellent finalists to close diversity workforce gaps

That said, the research results summarized above and the insights and implications synthesized below must be considered in light of the following limitations of the study. As a case study, the research is valuable in that it offers some insight into challenges and opportunities for fostering equitable hiring and diversifying the professoriate within STEM fields in a particular university context. Some of these learnings will be transferrable across other university and disciplinary contexts; however, comparative case studies would need to be conducted to discern which findings may be generalizable, transcending disciplines, and which may be more localized. There are also limitations to the value of the subjective self-reported method of assessing the effectiveness of the EDI interventions, as the consciousness and worldview of the respondent, in relation to social inequities, cannot be known or controlled. For instance, if respondents do not embrace the inclusive excellence paradigm, perceptions of efficacy may, in fact, be influenced by and reflective of predetermined biases and beliefs about the value of attending to EDI in hiring. Also, given the newness of the codified EDI interventions in the institutional faculty hiring policy and the tools developed to support the implementation of EDI practices through the search processes, it is unclear whether and how a lack of acculturation to the new policy and EDI practices in faculty hiring factored into the perceptions of search committee participants. Finally, the very small number of self-identified racialized women among both the search committee members and the longlisted applicants did not enable an intersectional gender and racial analysis of findings. This paper contributes to the relative dearth of literature on promising practices for advancing equitable faculty hiring practices that are effective in increasing and sustaining both gender and racial diversity among the professoriate in the Canadian context.

Notwithstanding the study limitation, this research revealed several insights, all of which are worthy of greater examination beyond the scope of this study but which, nonetheless, stimulated a complex discussion of the implications for fostering more equitable faculty hiring and diversifying the professoriate with respect to gender and racial representation, today and into the future. The first insight is that there are notable differences in perceptions of search committee members on the basis of gender and racial identity; these differences reveal a clash of racial realities that may have important implications on search committee intergroup dynamics and their effectiveness to advance inclusive faculty hiring. The second insight is that broad efforts to enhance equitable hiring practices for women and racialized faculty, among other federally designated groups, do not universally or similarly improve outcomes for these groups; in fact, while such efforts seem to influence gains made by women, the equity and diversity gaps seem to persist or widen for racialized faculty. The third insight is that there are some apparent incongruences between the perceptions of early-career or emerging scholars seeking new employment in

the academy today and established professors who tend to have the strongest voice on search committees; these incongruences should alert us to the implications of any inaccurate projections by the established professoriate, though the incongruences may be a hopeful signal of a more transformative culture shift on the horizon.

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