Unpacking Systemic Racism Within Educational Leadership

Authors : Henry Lee, Daniel Shiu

Abstract : Educational organizations are currently exploring ways to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), and this is now evident within the K-12 school system, universities, and teacher unions. These organizations have been creating and implementing new EDI specific policies. Their goal is to provide the framework and supports needed to establish EDI into the organizational culture. However, the implementation of EDI policies does not always lead to the intended outcomes. The purpose of this paper is to explore some factors regarding why the implementation of EDI policies within educational organizations can be problematic. This includes how Whiteness is replicated, promoted, and celebrated in educational leadership. How Whiteness and White supremacy are operationalized by BIPOC leaders within educational spaces, and how EDI specific training fails to understand the different training needed for both IBPOC (Indigenous, Black, People of Colour) and non-IBPOC leaders. This paper also addresses the model minority myth and how this informs and guides IBPOC identity and leadership within a predominately White dominant leadership in education.