Deconstructing Fake Equity: Lessons Learned from a Dominant Culture Institution

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Disclosure
Why This Topic is Critical

Generational Pyramid

Protected Family
## Disparities in Breastfeeding Rates!

### Percentage of Any and Exclusive Breastfeeding by Race/Ethnicity among Children Born in 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ever Breastfed</th>
<th>Breastfeeding at 12 months</th>
<th>Breastfeeding at 6 months</th>
<th>Exclusive breastfeeding through 3 months</th>
<th>Exclusive breastfeeding through 6 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>US National</strong></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanic</strong></td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Hispanic White</strong></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Hispanic Black</strong></td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Office of Diversity @ LSU, Twitter
“Race is not a factor in health outcomes. Racism is a factor in health outcomes.”

Clifton Kenon

#BFFem18

www.breastfeedingandfeminism.org
Own Your Lens
Irish
Italian
Cherokee

Female
She/Her/Hers

Heterosexual

Christian
Catholic

Chapel Hill
United States

20 Year Multiple Sclerosis Survivor

Mother
Wife
Sister
Daughter

Bias-Yes

Dago
Guinea
Wop
Mick

Understanding and accepting my privilege
Taking Action
Voices Heard

• Survey conducted from March to June 2018
• Social media/newsletter
• N: 103
• UNC-Chapel Hill IRB Approved
Comfort level verbally addressing issues of equity with colleagues

- Extremely comfortable: 42%
- Somewhat comfortable: 39%
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable: 6%
- Somewhat uncomfortable: 8%
- Extremely uncomfortable: 5%
Comfort level verbally addressing issues of equity with breastfeeding parents/clients

- Extremely comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable
- Somewhat uncomfortable
- Extremely uncomfortable

![Pie chart showing comfort levels](chart.png)
Comfort level providing lactation services to those who don’t share your CULTURE
Comfort level providing lactation services to those who don’t share your RACE/ETHNICITY

- Extremely comfortable: 77%
- Somewhat comfortable: 19%
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable: 2%
- Somewhat uncomfortable: 2%
- Extremely uncomfortable: 0%
Comfort level providing lactation services to those who don’t share your SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- Extremely comfortable: 79%
- Somewhat comfortable: 16%
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable: 3%
- Somewhat uncomfortable: 2%
- Extremely uncomfortable: 0%
Comfort level providing lactation services to those who don’t share your ABILITY/DISABILITY

- Extremely comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable
- Somewhat uncomfortable
- Extremely uncomfortable, 0%

Comfort level providing lactation services to those who don’t share your ABILITY/DISABILITY
Comfort level providing lactation services to those who don’t share your CITIZENSHIP

- Extremely comfortable: 100%
- Somewhat uncomfortable: 0%
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable: 0%
Comfort level providing lactation services to those who don’t share your LANGUAGE

- Extremely comfortable
- Somewhat uncomfortable
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Extremely uncomfortable, 3%
In a typical week, approximately how many instances of oppressive behavior do you witness in your place of work?

- 5 or more
- 2 to 4
- 1
- None
"At our hospital I see many women of color automatically assumed they are on WIC or nurses not giving the same effort to help them succeed in their breastfeeding journey."

During an activity among colleagues, in a period of downtime without clients or families present, a colleague nonchalantly talked about a common and completely incorrect myth about a particular race in a way that made it sound based on scientific research. Her stature and level of influence are such that, by saying that, she had the potential to influence and “educate” others.
A particularly challenging situation while helping a family was after providing them with the correct information and support to initiate and sustain breastfeeding, the birthing facility in which they delivered would not allow them to use any of the information given to them because of their race/ethnicity.
Allyship Discussion

• Who decides who is/is not an ally?
• What does it mean to be an ally?
• What makes a good ally?
• What is the goal of allyship? And whose goal is it?
• **Actor:** The actions of an actor do not disrupt the status quo. They do not explicitly challenge the pillars of racism and white supremacy.

• **Ally:** The actions of the ally have greater likelihood to challenge institutionalized racism and white supremacy. An ally is a disruptor and educator in spaces dominated by whiteness. Being an ally is not an invitation to gain brownie points, lead, take over, or explain.

• **Accomplice:** The actions of accomplice directly challenge institutionalized racism, colonialism, and white supremacy by impeding racist people, policies, and structures. Their actions are informed by, directed by, and coordinated with leaders who are black, brown, first nations/indigenous peoples, and/or people of color.

ADAPTED FROM: https://www.whiteaccomplices.org/
Allyship

“If you want to be an ally, you must believe our stories”

-Renee Graham, Boston Globe
Enthusiasm can take up space-stealing positive energy
White Savior Complex

• Fixing the community
• Confusing equality and equity
• The need to help out of guilt
• Apologies and tears with no action
Research Questions?

- Is it okay to research a community in the name of helping said community
- Who are the investigators
- Community engagement
- Using connections for research
- Asking to do research for another person's publication
- Participant pay
Communication

- Social media posts
- Emoji use in the name of solidarity
- Asking for pictures from communities of color
Self Reflection

- Have you ever:
  - Laughed at an inappropriate joke?
  - Told the joke?
  - Stood up to the joke teller?
Self Reflection

- Stories you choose to share with people of color
- Do you cry and apologize when you hear stories of oppression?
- Do you allow others to voice their story without interruption?
- Do you ten to walk away or shut down when things are uncomfortable?
- Do you stay silent?
- Are you “woke”?
- Are you seeking credit for being “woke”?
• Identifying differences involves putting the clinician’s and patient’s perspectives side-by-side

• Practicing cultural humility requires less emphasis on knowledge and a greater focus on fostering self-awareness, interpersonal sensitivity, an attitude for openness, and learning from differences

http://web.outreach-partners.org/resources/outreachconnection/171
Cultural Humility Requires:

• Openness to new people and new situations
• Appreciation of others and their differences and/or similarities
• Acceptance of the unfamiliar and the unknown
• Flexibility to adapt to new ways of thinking

http://web.outreach-partners.org/resources/outreachconnection/171
Choose cultural humility over cultural competence
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTELLIGENCE</th>
<th>EQUITY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRAINING</td>
<td>JOB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REASON</td>
<td>EQUITY</td>
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Institutional Journey
One and Done?

TRAINING

APPLYING AND EQUITY LENS TO ALL WORK

CONTINUAL REFLECTION

MEASURING PROGRESS
Application of an Equity Lens-EMPower

- Recruitment
- Coaching Team Preparation
- Group Learning
- State Calls
- Data Collection
- Individual Technical Assistance
  - Observation
  - Discussion/Interviews
Case Study

- 28 year old African woman in for 36 week prenatal appointment
- Speaks dialect of French
- Does not speak or read English
- States she is interested in breastfeeding but has no information
Think Outside the Box - Community Connections

- Public Health-WIC, Maternity Care Coordinators
- March of Dimes
- Largest Employers in the community
- Housing authority
- Faith

- Support group leaders
- Doulas/Community Health Workers
- Local media/journalists/bloggers
- Local photographer
THEORY OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE

- Precontemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Relapse
“We are learning to date you before we marry you because we really don’t do divorces—whether there is funding or not”

-Tikvah T. Wadley, AAS, CCE, CD, BDT
Self Reflection

“The Peacemaker”
-Gedion Nyanhongo
ACTION STEPS

➢ Be **willing** to do the hard work

➢ Step outside of **your** box

➢ **Listen** with an open mind

➢ Know your **place and space**

➢ Know your **bias**
While we strive to do this work TOGETHER, we must also do our own homework individually, as organizations and institutions!

Highly recommended reading: *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome* by Dr. Joy DeGruy
Action Steps

- React with a strong heart
- Self reflect-often
- Give with no expectations-add a place at the table, step away from tables to make room
- Fix your own house
- Nourish and nurture the future
- Resist the urge to walk away from the tough conversations
“How Can I Rise”
-Gedion Nyanhongo
Questions?

Source: US Breastfeeding Committee