RESEARCH ARTICLE

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at the Workplace Mohammad Imrozuddin

Mohammad Imrozuddin [1]

Abstract

Identifying how a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce can aid in achieving business objectives aligned with the company's strategy is the next step in the process. The organization must set specific goals related to DE&I based on the company's strategic objectives. For example, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) had a goal as part of their 2014-2020 overall strategic plan to "Make VA a Place People Want to Serve."1 As part of this goal, increasing diversity index scores is one of the agency's performance indicators. Because its clients are becoming more diverse, the agency is responding by embracing a more diverse and inclusive workforce to better serve the population. Specific diversity goals were created to recruit more white and Hispanic males as well as Hispanic females after a comparison with the available labor market. Another example might be around a business goal to create more innovative products an employer can introduce quickly to surpass the competition. To do so, the employer wishes to increase innovation in the research and development (R&D) teams. One way to accomplish this goal could be to build cultural competence and inclusive decision-making within the team through training, which could more effectively harness existing team diversity and capitalize on diverse ideas.

1.INTRODUCTION

Diversity: It refers to the diverseworkforce covering a multitude of different characteristics like race, culture, gender, sexuality and experience. At its heart, it's about welcoming different worldviews to the business.

Inclusion: It is when all the employees feel like they belong to the company, that they have the opportunity to voice their opinions, that they don't feel excluded on the basis of their identity, and that they see themselves reflected in the company values.

Equity: It refers to the policies instituted that support diversity and inclusion in the company. It's about recognising that each individual is unique, and accommodating their needs properly. By acknowledging the structural imbalances in the company, a tangible, real-world solutions are discovered.Equity-first businesses go through a consistent process of redressing the balance of opportunity. It's a matter of recognising that certain groups are subject to advantages, and vice versa — whether that's gender pay gaps or biased onboarding practices — and taking direct, sustained action.[1]

2.Developing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)

Employers use diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) initiatives for both compliance obligations and to increase the overall bottom line with a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce. The following phases are required to develop a DEI initiative:

1. Data collection and analysis to determine the need for change.
2. Strategy design to match business objectives.
3. Implementation of the initiative.
4. Evaluation and continuing audit of the plan.
5. Procure and Buy-in Support
6. Implement the initiatives
7. Communicate the initiatives
8. Measure & disseminate outcomes
9. Review and Adjust

Step 1: Compile Data

Employers must first know what their workforce looks like compared with the labor market, and if there are inequities based on demographics. By capturing data on employee demographics, an employer is better able to understand the diversity of its employees and equity of its internal practices and identify any areas of concern or trends. Historically, these data have included federal and state protected categories; however, recent trends indicate that other factors, such as personality type and thinking/learning style, may also be of value, though perhaps harder to find national comparative data for. If so, an employer may have to track its own data on these categories over time and determine what need for change may exist. Demographic data may include the following:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Ethnicity/national origin.
- Family status.
- Gender.
- Gender identity or expression.
- Generation.

Top 10 Companies interms of Diversity at workplace in 2021 by Forbes

Rank	Name	Industries	Employees	Year founded
1	JLL	Business Services & Supplies	28,020	1783
2	Booz Allen Hamilton	Professional Services	26300	1914
3	Quicken loans	Banking and Financial Services	15,600	1985
4	University of Alabama, Birmingham	Education	23000	1969
5.	Fidelity Investments	Banking and Financial Services	41329	1946
6.	SAS Institute	IT, Internet, Software & Services	6908	1976
7.	University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences	Education	10000	1879
8.	Boston Scientific	Health Care Equipment & Services	17000	1979
9.	Aflac	Insurance	4712	1955
10.	Interpublic Group (IPG)	Media & Advertising	54000	1930

Source: Forbes list 2021

- Language.
- Life experiences.
- Organization function and level.
- Personality type.
- Physical characteristics.
- Race.
- Religion, belief and spirituality.
- Sexual orientation.
- Thinking/learning styles.
- Veteran status.

Multiple resources are available to capture these data. Some employers may already have much of this information available in their HRIS system from affirmative action plans and EEO reporting obligations. However, most employers will need to survey their workforce through voluntary self-identification to obtain additional data such as religion and sexual orientation. It may be challenging to gather diversity data from employees initially, especially when employees are unsure of how the data will be used or if there is general distrust of leadership in an organization. If this is the case, an employer may want to use a third party or survey technology to capture information that will be reported in aggregate without identifying information.[2]

In addition, it would be useful to gather information about the current company culture regarding DE&I. Again, surveying employees can help shed light on their perception of the company in relation to encouraging and appreciating DE&I in the workplace. See Diversity Survey.[3]

Nontraditional differences such as personality traits or life experiences can also be measured. Employers can conduct personality testing of the workforce or include open-ended questions on employee surveys to collect information regarding life experiences or other information employees may want to share about themselves.[4]

Step 2: Identify Needs and/or Areas of Concern

Once data are collected, from underrepresented or problematic areas can be identified. To do so, employers should begin with a high-level review of demographics such as age, sex and race representation and equity, and then continue to drill down by location, department, position, etc. Identification of problem areas can include questions such as:

- Is management full of older white males?
- Do black females make less than their white counterparts?
- Does the accounting department tend to hire only females?
- Have promotions been limited for those with English as their second language?
- Are employees at the West Coast branch more ethnically diverse than their East Coast counterparts?

Additional information gained from employee surveys can help identify other areas of concern. Employee attitudes on culture may or may not match the survey results. If they do match, then the employer has a clearer path to what change is needed; if not, the organization may wish to conduct employee focus groups to better understand the disconnect. In addition, if results indicate little to no diversity in sexual orientation or religion, for example, it is possible that individuals don't have trust in the organization to divulge such personal information. As suggested in the previous step, employers may need to outsource the data collection or use other means to collect data anonymously.

Step 3: Address Policies or Practices affecting DE&I

Employers must determine if there are the barriers impeding the employment, opportunity or inclusion of individuals from different demographic groups.

Organizations should consider if any policies or practices need to be eliminated or adjusted. Some examples to start with include:

- **Employee referral programs:** Studies show that although employee referral programs can be an excellent sourcing solution, they often result in "like me" referrals, where employees refer candidates of the same race, religion, national origin or other class. This can lead to adverse impact and claims of illegal discrimination; it can also thwart DE&I initiatives. Employers may need to limit the use of employee referrals or consider other sourcing options to supplement the referral program.
- **Unconscious biases:** Are there certain departments that are underrepresented in relation to the labor market? Is it possible that the hiring manager is selecting individuals based on biases against certain groups? If a particular manager's department is significantly less diverse, equitable or inclusive than other departments, a review of the practices of that particular manager may be warranted.
- **Company culture:** Apparent preferences toward pro-life, traditional marriage and other aspects often associated with religious beliefs can repel candidates of differing beliefs or lifestyles. An annual Christmas party and recognizing only Christian holidays in a workplace can unintentionally send a message that only Christian employees are welcome. Employers must consider holding a holiday party instead and provide floating holidays that employees may use for the multitude of religious observances.
- **Political preferences:** An employer with political signs and/or messages on its property may discourage individuals with different viewpoints from applying. A bumper sticker on an employee's car supporting a candidate who differs from a manager's choice can affect the manager's perception of the employee, as well as the manager's decisions regarding pay, performance and promotion. An employer must consider how political preferences may be creating a disadvantage for applicants as well as current employees and remove those barriers by physically removing political messages in the workplace and/or training the workforce about respecting differing opinions. The organization must take appropriate disciplinary action when employees, including supervisors or managers, are intolerant of differences.

Step 4: Identify Business Objectives

Identifying how a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce can aid in achieving business objectives aligned with the company's strategy is the next step in the process. The organization must set specific goals related to DE&I based on the company's strategic objectives. For example, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) had a goal as part of their 2014-2020 overall strategic plan to "Make VA a Place People Want to Serve."1 As part of this goal, increasing diversity index scores is one of the agency's performance indicators. Because its clients are becoming more diverse, the agency is responding by embracing a more diverse and inclusive workforce to better serve the population. Specific diversity goals were created to

recruit more white and Hispanic males as well as Hispanic females after a comparison with the available labor market.

Another example might be around a business goal to create more innovative products an employer can introduce quickly to surpass the competition. To do so, the employer wishes to increase innovation in the research and development (R&D) teams. One way to accomplish this goal could be to build cultural competence and inclusive decision-making within the team through training, which could more effectively harness existing team diversity and capitalize on diverse ideas.

Step 5: Procure Buy-in and Support

For the DE&I initiative to succeed, senior level buy-in and support are vital. Senior management must understand the business case for DE&I initiatives, with direct links to the company's strategic goals. It is helpful to identify a senior-level champion who can be tasked with visible support of the initiative and ultimately responsible for keeping the program "alive."

Another task is to identify how management will be held accountable for supporting and engaging in the DE&I initiatives. Examples of manager expectations include ongoing dialogue with staff regarding DE&I, training for team members, and holding direct reports accountable for their individual actions related to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace.

An optional but recommended step is to create a diverse committee of employees from all levels with visible leadership presence and support. The committee is tasked with implementing the goals defined in the previous step and promoting DE&I in the workplace. The employer should provide the committee with a clear mission, defined budget and expectations/performance indicators. Diversity committees meet regularly and are typically tasked with the following:

- Promoting training and events to bring awareness to DE&I in the workplace.
- Engaging co-workers in DE&I conversation and training.
- Reviewing and developing policies and procedures that will promote workplace DE&I.

In the absence of DE&I committee,employer can designate responsibility for the above tasks to management or consider hiring a DE&I specialist to run the program.

Step 6: Implement Initiatives

Examples of DE&I initiatives are changes in policies and practices, staff training, targeted recruiting, and employer-sponsored DE&I awareness events for employees. The employer must develop an action plan to implement these initiatives by setting realistic goals and starting with the elements that have the greatest business value or that are readily achievable to build momentum for the initiative.

Below is an example of an action plan:

- **Initiative:** Build R&D team cultural competence and inclusive decision-making to ensure the team can more effectively harness existing team diversity and capitalize on diverse ideas.
- Responsibly: SVP R&D, Director R&D
- **Action items:** Cultural awareness and competency training, team-building exercises, ongoing dialogue

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regarding diversity and inclusion with R&D team one on one as well as during team meetings.

- **Timeframes:** Culture awareness and competency training: within 6 months; team-building exercises: annual staff retreat and monthly meetings; ongoing dialogue: as needed and ongoing during staff interactions and meetings.

Step 7: Communicate the Initiatives

Employers must identify different stakeholders and design messages for each stakeholder to inform, educate, engage or empower as appropriate. People vary in how they understand messages, and it is important for each person to receive an ongoing stream of communications about the initiatives. The communication plan should incorporate executive presentations and all available media, including social media. Newsletters, intranet and e-mail can also be successful communication tools. The organization should use metrics and success stories to connect the DE&I efforts to its own goals and strategic plan.[5]

Step 8: Measure and Disseminate Outcomes

It is imperative to measure the results of the DE&I initiatives that have been implemented. Outcomes such as increased representation of identified groups and improved employee survey scores should be captured. Other measurements, such as improved employee retention, and public recognition, such as employer awards or social media accolades, can also indicate how an employer is performing in its DE&I initiatives. Although some efforts may seem intangible, there are measures that can indicate the success levels of such action items. If DE&I training is implemented to increase retention, participant retention can be tracked over time, and participants can be surveyed to determine if training was a factor, and how much so, in their continued employment.

The results of the initiatives should be communicated at all levels to demonstrate the return on investment and value-add to the organization. Communication tools can include infographics for senior leadership meetings and public affairs, memos to staff, and company website videos for potential candidates.

Step 9: Review and Adjust

DE&I initiatives are not static, and an ongoing review of the workforce and a response to changing needs are necessary. The employer must establish procedures for periodic review of DE&I initiatives and goals. After a DE&I initiative has been implemented for a period of time, the employer should resurvey employees regarding their perceptions of the company's efforts. Periodically, an organization may need to start at step 1 again and collect data to refocus its DE&I program.

Strategies to promote& strengthen Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the workplace.Some of the key diversity and inclusion strategies of Bersin by Deloitte's diversity and Inclusion framework and other research include the following:
Creating a focus and strategy at the CEO/COO/CHRO level
Assigning a top executive, the responsibility for leading and sponsoring the diversity and inclusion program

1. Creating behavioral standards and holding leaders accountable for results
2. Training people at all levels on topics like unconscious bias
3. Integrating diversity and inclusion strategies in recruitment, performance management, leadership assessment, and training
4. Creating employee networks (e.g, employee resource

groups, community outreach groups)
5. Holding your company accountable to compete and win in external award programs
6. Accepting and honoring multiple religious and cultural practices
7. Strengthening anti-discriminatory policies
8. Reporting goals and measuring progress
9. Creating an externally visible scorecard to measure progress including metrics for recruiting, promotion rates, compensation levels, turnover, participation in ERGs, and supplier diversity
10. Be aware of unconscious bias

Understanding bias and building awareness is a first step towards real change. According to Associate Dean and Director of Office of Inclusion, Belonging, and Intergroup Dialogue at Stanford University Mohammad Bilal, there are a couple of different forms of bias. The first is unconscious bias, which can include associations or feelings of bias that may be hidden underneath the surface. Bilal explained to the audience at INSIGHTS 2020 that unconscious biases do not necessarily align with our conscious beliefs or declared beliefs, which means unconscious biases are even more important to pay attention to.Leaders can be start addressing this helping employees understand how individuals are impacted by unconscious bias, and what actions continue to reinforce biases. One way to build awareness and address unconscious bias is to encourage every employee to review, question, and analyze their own personal biases and assumptions.

Bilal underscored the importance of leaders and employees keeping a thought journal to process their own biases. Recording instances of stereotyping as they occur will help people become more aware as they start to make those biases more conscious. This will help people observe when they begin to stereotype individuals so they can refute and replace biases.

To learn more about unconscious biases and to assess your own, you can visit Project Implicit to complete an Implicit Association Test.

13.Communicate the importance of managing bias

Cultural humility is to another way to leaders and employees can manage bias and foster more inclusive environments. This concept involves remaining curious and humble about cultural differences. Bilal emphasizes the importance of understanding that no one is an expert, but is on a continuous learning journey when it comes to respecting and embracing other people's experiences and realities. Becoming culturally competent, Bilal adds, is a lifelong practice.

One way organizations can help employees manage their own bias is by leveraging technology and training that provides guidance on actions for moving forward. Joelle Emerson in Harvard Business Review suggests that a concern with diversity or unconscious bias training and teaching is that people can become defensive, and using technology can help alleviate that concern.

"Training can be designed to reduce defensiveness by explaining that we don't have unconscious biases because we're bad people – we have them because we are people," she explains. The article adds that internal bias training is an effective way to inspire change and higher understanding

amongst employees, citing Google's internal training findings as one example.

14.Promote pay equity

Managers must level out the playing field and provide fair opportunity for each employee. Organizations can leverage analytics to identify which employees are underpaid for similar roles or responsibilities. For example, people analytics can help managers pinpoint any pay gaps that may exist within their team, and leaders can assess patterns within various departments to get to the root of underlying issues. This insight can help identify patterns or trends that may exist where certain groups of employees like people of color, for example, are being underpaid within certain areas of the business.

15.Develop a strategic training program

Diversity training helps employees understand how cultural differences can impact how people work and interact at work. It can cover anything from concepts of time and communication styles to self-identity and dealing with conflict. Diversity training that is offered as optional tends to be more effective than that which is made mandatory.

Companies should also focus on training that's relevant to their specific organization and employees, and that aligns with their broader diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and identified challenges. In addition to using internal resources, partnering with a consultant can help leaders build customized training programs for both the organization as a whole, as well as those that are function-specific.It's critical that leaders are clearly communicating why training is taking place, problems you're trying to solve, and what comes next. This will help keep people motivated and also help them understand how the learnings tie back to broader company goals.

16.Acknowledge holidays of all cultures

One way to a build awareness of diversity and foster greater inclusivity is to be aware of and acknowledge a variety of upcoming religious and cultural holidays. When closing out a team call or meeting, if the audience isn't too large, ask how people what their plans are to celebrate the holiday. Use your company's intranet to help employees become aware of and keep track of multicultural religious or holiday celebrations. Be respectful of these days when scheduling meetings, and understand that employees have different needs that may require flexibility.

17.Make it easy for your people to participate in employee resource groups

In a Wall Street Journal article, LinkedIn's Rosanna Durruthy discussed leveraging employee resource groups (ERGs) as an opportunity to grow and develop talent, and help managers learn from these groups in a safe space. ERGs help build a culture of connection and belonging. Building on this, in addition to leveraging ERGs, employers can make it easy for all employees to participate, whether it be creating a differing pay code for easy time tracking for ERG meetings, or asking employees to share initiatives or projects the ERG is focused on. Provide a toolkit or guidelines that employees can follow to encourage them to set up a new ERG.

Getting senior leaders on board is also critical. An executive and/or leadership sponsor can not only help to increase visibility, innovation, and awareness, but can also help align ERG activities with business goals. Additionally, commitments from senior leaders signal a wider, organizational commitment to improving diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.

3.Importance of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion(DEI)

1. Equity encourages cognitive diversity in decision-making

Enabling equity, in turn, allows to job satisfaction and employee engagement.

Without equity, even the most diverse company will have one-dimensional leadership team in charge of making decisions. Consider recent reports by the World Health Organization (WHO), which found that women comprise 70% of the global healthcare workforce, but there are "too few women" making decisions and leading the work.In other words, while the representation of women may be equal, their empowerment in terms of reaching leadership ranks through mentorships or male ally programs, for example, maybe missing.As a result, leadership teams do not have access to cognitive diversity, which enables varied problem-solving approaches. By taking measures toward workplace equity, you can ensure that a diverse team is responsible for the company's strategic direction, making it more agile and resilient.

2. Equity enables targeted upskilling for a diverse workforce

In a large workforce, you are bound to have varying levels of education, with employees coming from privileged, disadvantaged, and multiple other socioeconomic backgrounds. Without a strong focus on equity, the same learning and development (L&D) plan would apply to all employees. It is likely that, as a result, several talented individuals would fail to reach their full potential."When we give everybody the same thing, we not only risk boredom, but we also risk not giving everybody what they really need," says Ransom.

This is why the Center for American Progress introduced a framework titled Workforce Redesign for Quality Training and Employment in 2019, which aims to be "design for workforce equity." The paper mentions that women and people of color at all education levels make up the majority of the low-wage workforce segment, "regardless of suitability or earning potential."

Equity-focused training – bridging skill gaps caused by a disability, socioeconomic background, incarceration, non-English native origins, etc. – can make every worker future-ready and financially stable. The framework even calls employers of a specific size to contribute to a national Workforce Equity Trust Fund (WETF).Coupling equity with diversity and inclusion lets you identify skill requirements (like a digital literacy gap) and equip every individual with the skills they require to do their job optimally.

3.Equity drives engagement for specific employee demographics

The ideal employee experience will vary across employee groups and demographics.

To take a simple example, single mother may want to work remotely for at least three out of five days. This doesn't mean that remote working is a must-have policy for the rest of your organization. It just indicates that you are capable of giving an employee the facilities they need to do their jobs well.Elements

like the onboarding experience, communication, recognition, among others, can be tailored to unique employee needs, ensuring that everyone achieves a level playing field.

4.Equity prevents dissatisfaction, and ultimately employee attrition

When companies don't prioritize an equity along side diversity and inclusion, the quality of experience for minority groups suffers hugely. Everyone might be receiving the same experience – but certain groups do not derive the same level of satisfaction, owing to multiple demographic factors.

Consider a 2019 survey of 850 employees in tech. Only 10% of men said that their voices were sometimes subdued. In contrast, 20% of all respondents felt "actively subdued" in meetings, and all individuals falling in this 20% identified as Asian, Black or African American, Latinx, or Mixed Race. By working towards equity – for instance, asking different individuals from different groups to spearhead meetings – dissatisfaction could be curbed, ultimately bringing down employee attrition.

As Ransom notes, "Equity is harder because it requires more work from the organization and its leaders, but the cost of turnover is higher than the cost to drive great equity."

5. Equity equips the entire company to contribute to a shared mission

The diversity-inclusion-equity trio aims to help every employee contribute to a shared company vision.Let's say achieving "50% of women in leadership" is part of your mission statement for the next fiscal year. By proactively taking steps towards equity, companies would have a better chance of reaching this goal.Hiring managers would focus on recruiting female leaders, L&D professionals could outline leadership development tracks for women, and you could redesign your benefits package to support women across their career trajectory. This boosts your chances of reaching that 50% mark, ultimately gaining from the professional contributions of these women in the workplace."Organizations need to be open to trying different practices to reach outcomes. We shouldn't see it as a negative if somebody needs more skill development than others," suggests Ransom.

Research has shown many benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace:
• Higher revenue growth
• Greater readiness to innovate
• Increased ability to recruit a diverse talent pool
• 5.4 times higher employee retention

6. It is one of the most important keys to retention.

When employees don't feel that their ideas, presence or contributions are truly valued or taken seriously by their organization, they will eventually leave. A research on company culture shows that when employees trust that they, and their colleagues, will be treated fairly regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or age, they are.
• 9.8 times more likely to look forward to going to work
• 6.3 times more likely to have pride in their work
• 5.4 times more likely to want to stay a long time at their company

Having an inclusive workplace culture will not only help the company attract a diverse set of talents but also help

you retain the diverse talent you attracted in the first place. How has DEI advanced in recent years?

While the challenges of the pandemic and the social upheaval of the summer 2020 protests really brought conversations about DEI to the forefront, in reality, these issues have been discussed in many sectors for quite a while. Throughout the 2010s, dialogues around racial and gender equity, LGBTQI+ issues and media representation of underrepresented groups came to the forefront of cultural conversations around the world. As more Americans began to reckon with structural inequities throughout our society, businesses increasingly began to evaluate their cultures and practices with regard to these issues.In 2015, McKinsey published an influential study entitled "Why diversity matters," the findings of which show strong correlation between diversity and financial performance. Data from this study showed that companies with greater ethnic and racial diversity among staff performed 35% better than companies whose staff demographics matched the national average. Furthermore, companies with greater gender diversity performed 15% better than companies with less gender diversity. In 2018, a follow-up study entitled "Delivering through Diversity" was published.

For some companies, the push for diversity was directly related to the desire for socially conscious practices aligned with company missions and values. For others, diversity was integral to their business models and plans for growth, or simply a question of complying with regulation. The 2018 numbers showed that gender diversity was even more relevant in company performance, with gender-diverse companies performing 21% better than the national average. The study also found that ethnically and racially diverse companies had 43% higher profits. Nevertheless, the rate at which such companies outperformed the national average dropped slightly to 33%.The double bias is faced by Black women in the workforce, a group which is statistically underrepresented in executive and line functions. Black women face an especially hard path to a CEO role, with 65% of Black female executives in a staff role, as opposed to line roles. The higher one ascends in a company's ladder, the more precipitously diversity drops off. Needless to say, many companies seem to have missed the memo about the link between diversity and company performance.

According to U.S. Census data on the 2020 working population, it's at the support staff or operations level where racial demographics in the workplace most closely match U.S. demographics overall, although Latinx individuals make up just 10% of this tier of the workforce, compared to the 18.5% of the general population.

The percentage of white staff increases steadily at each level of the corporate ladder, finally representing 85% of executives. At the executive level the racial inequity is particularly significant: though13.4% of the total US population is Black, only 2% of executives are Black; 18.5% of the U.S. population is Latinx, but only 3% of executives are Latinx.

These numbers are striking, and illustrate the fact that inequality is deeply structural in the world of business and will take tremendous ongoing efforts to rectify.The percentage of Asian American and Pacific Islander workers is more consistent across different rungs of the corporate

ladder, and the disparity between corporate representation and AAPI demographics is less severe. AAPI individuals comprise roughly 6.8% of the population as of 2020, and have 8% participation at support staff level, 11% at the professional level and 8% at the executive level.

Many feel that these numbers don't exactly tell the whole story of the wide range of Asian American and Pacific Islander experience within the U.S. workforce. A major issue here is a lack of data disaggregation in these statistics and studies; there is a widespread tendency for researchers to lump individuals from many different AAPI ethnicities into one demographic category.

One project that aims to address this issue is AAPI Data, which disaggregated data on AAPI individuals, creating more specific data sets and analyzing of smaller demographics within the larger AAPI community. A data breakdown of poverty rates among different AAPI demographics in 2014 tells an important story of why it is important to disaggregate data related to these groups. Grouped as one, AAPI poverty rates from 2014 were 12.3%. However, the number varied greatly when broken down into smaller demographics. The Filipino American poverty rate was 6.5%, and the rate for Japanese Americans was 8.5%. Other groups had a significantly higher poverty rate, with 14.5% of Vietnamese Americans below the poverty line and 16.7% of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders falling below the poverty line.

This data also tells an interesting story that relates closely to DEI practices. We cannot attempt to rectify inequality within any system unless we are careful about the ways in which we approach data collection and think about demographic information.

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