

The Equity Lens Map: Factor Analysis & Validation

Executive Summary

The Equity Lens Map (ELM) is a survey tool used by Beloved Community as a companion to the Equity Audit. It is an individual assessment that identifies where team members are on their journey to leading equity in their organization. The ELM is not an employee climate survey. It is not about organizational needs or attitudes towards the organization (though its data can have implications for both). It is aimed at the person-level and designed to help organizations build effective, differentiated talent practices for team members at every level of the organization to advance diversity, equity and inclusion.

This white paper reports on the psychometric development and validation of the survey. The goal is to describe the frameworks used to develop the tool, its history of development and statistically evaluate how well the tool does its job.

Methodology

- The initial survey was developed to measure aspects of the seven domains of leadership competencies that are aligned with Beloved Community's diversity, equity and inclusion standards and indicators.
- During pilot testing, an initial survey of 176 items was narrowed down to 53 items.
- These 53 items were tested with 1,075 employees of 30 non-profit organizations, most of them in the educational field.
- Results were put through a Exploratory Factor Analysis, reliability analysis and criterion validation analysis (comparing results between groups and with similar surveys).

Results

- Two of the survey items did not meet commonly accepted statistical criteria for surveys such as these, so were removed. This left the final ELA with 51 items.
- Of the seven domains of leadership competencies, the ELA did a good job of measuring five. Two of the domains are not well measured by the ELA and will need other types of assessment. Results suggest those two domains are best analyzed using more qualitative approaches due to the nature of their content.



- The final ELA showed high reliability according to modern standards. That means
 that if the same person took the same survey different times, they would likely
 give similar responses.
- The final ELA showed good validity when compared to similar surveys in the field. Similarities and differences between the ELA and other surveys made sense according to the framework and circumstances of the surveys.

Conclusion

The ELA is a reliable and valid survey tool for measuring five of the seven domains of the Equity Lens Map. The other two domains will need to be assessed in a different manner. The survey and its associated framework's emphasis on the individual fills a gap in the DEI literature by providing a measure of personal engagement and perspective to an organization's DEI culture.



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INTRODUCTION

Beloved Community is a non-profit consulting firm focused on implementing regional, sustainable solutions for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Through individualized and personalized support, Beloved Community fosters open lines of communication and realistic plans to create and implement tangible, measurable systemic change at work, at home, and in schools. Our approach is universal, achieving results for organizations in the not-for-profit sector, hospitality, school administrations, affordable housing, healthcare and beyond.

Our work includes one-on-one coaching through our Equity Audit Tool and Equity Lens Map (ELM), capacity-building services that ensure historically excluded people have real access and opportunity to live vibrant, productive lives, and building communities of practice through regional and national DEI cohorts.

This report describes the Equity Lens Map tool and its psychometric validation. The tool was tested with over a thousand employees of non-profits around the USA and put through a series of statistical methods (exploratory factor analysis) to test whether it measured what it was intended to measure.

"The missing link in many diversity programs is the evaluation process" (Mor Barak, Cherin & Berkman, 1998, p. 100). By being transparent in our process for the development of the ELM, we hope to model the behavior that goes into all rigorous scientific research and DEI discussions. Like all survey instruments, the ELM has its limitations, and we will describe both where it met our goals and areas where it did not.

Culturally Relevant Evaluation (CRE) reflects that both cultural background and cultural context are critical to evaluation practice (Hood, Hopson & Kirkhart, 2015). CRE has two essential components: responsive evaluation and culturally responsive assessment. The Equity Audit is an example of the former and the ELM of the latter. We recognize that every evaluation's methodology is at its root a cultural product and its processes are cultural acts (Symonette, H., Miller, R. L., & Barela, 2020). As such, we have the responsibility to both name and interrogate our cultural backgrounds and biases. The central team that worked on this project includes those who identify as cis-het white male of settler background; straight, cisgender, white



woman; Black, lesbian, bilingual mama; cis-het woman, mixed-race, 2nd gen Cuban American; queer, mixed-race 2nd gen Filipina American. Our values are that people are the greatest unit of change, everyone has an obligation to make personally relevant change and that the default systems in our country are designed to segregate. Geographically the project staff are distributed around the country, but the organization's headquarters is in New Orleans, LA., USA.

New Orleans was founded upon an Indigenous place known as "Bulbancha", which means "the place of other languages" in the Choctaw language. This has been a place of trade, inhabitation, and cultural interaction for Indigenous Nations for several centuries. This has been a place in which Indigenous and African Peoples have been trafficked, enslaved, and discriminated against. We honor those who have fought for justice here and have fought against the process of colonization of these lands, and strive to play our part in continuing that fight.

Many Indigenous Nations dwelled in and regularly visited Bulbancha, including, but not limited to, the Houma, Biloxi, Chitimacha, Choctaw, Tunica (TOON-ica), Atakapa-Ishak (Ah-Tah-KUH-Paw ee-SHAK), Natchez, Washa, and Chawasha. Indigenous Peoples still live in this area and Indigenous Nations have made a lasting contribution to area culture. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the people of these Indigenous communities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many published instruments for measuring aspects of equity in professional organizations. However, we have not identified any publicly available surveys that focus on nonprofit organizations and center the individual. Most instruments are developed by consulting firms and other private organizations that see their instruments as proprietary and therefore are not available to the public (ex: Gallup's Q12, the Qualtrics Employee XM and Gartner's Inclusion Index). Also, what we did find tended to focus on the organization level rather than the person level. That is, they are more interested in employee opinions of the organization rather than an employee's individual experiences and feelings. For example, the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), the most prominent affiliate organization of human resource professionals in the United States, has a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion survey they recommend to their membership (SHRM, 2021). It contains 25 questions, 18 of which contain the word "company" or "management" in them, and only two contain the word "I". Organizational climate is an essential aspect to measure, but it overlooks individual aspects of DEI, so any analysis or plan based on climate surveys alone would not have the complete picture. The closest survey to the ELM that we could find was the Inclusion and Belonging Assessment (IBA), which measures how 7 DEI practices are related to 12 DEI outcomes (Creary, Rothbard & Scruggs, 2021). The IBA has many person-level measures that center the individual. Corporate social responsibility is the belief that corporations have an obligation to society and not just financial stakeholders



(Jones, 1980). But a review of 43 survey instruments measuring CSR found only one with a social equity component (Latif & Sajjad, 2018). This suggests that equity has not yet become a common goal of social responsibility movements in the corporate sector. Non-profits have recently begun to elevate the importance of DEI, but at an even slower rate than the business community (Pompey, 2021). Survey instruments like the ELM can help fill that gap and support system-level and industry-wide change.

Beloved Domains of Leadership Competencies

Through a process of discussions with staff and three external experts in the fields of diversity, equity and inclusion, Beloved Community developed seven domains of leadership competencies that reflect measurable properties aligned with their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Standards and Indicators. The indicators are designed to help organizations build effective, differentiated talent practices for team members at every level of the organization to advance diversity, inclusion, and equity.

They include:

- Self-Awareness: Awareness of social identities and bias in personal and professional lives.
- Understanding Interpersonal & Institutional Bias (hereafter: Understanding): Understanding of interpersonal and institutional bias in the workplace.
- Interrupting Interpersonal & Institutional Bias & Discrimination (hereafter: Interrupting): Interrupting bias and discrimination as it occurs in the workplace.
- Self-Education and Allyship: Understanding, initiative, and experience with thoughts and behaviors associated with learning to be an ally and acting in allyship. Allyship has different connotations and definitions depending on the context it is used. In this case we define being an ally as supporting a person or people with an identity marker that one does not share.
- Internalized White Supremacy (hereafter: White Supremacy): Awareness of the social structures and norms established by a white-dominant society and the effects of these structures and norms has on an individual's bias towards BIPOC and the beliefs and actions that sustain the structures of racism.
- Internalized Oppression (hereafter: Oppression)*: Beliefs we hold about our own marginalized identities.
- Fatigue*: Many members of marginalized identities experience fatigue as a result of feeling the responsibility of advocating, often alone, on behalf of their identity group.

^{*} Note: When deployed as part of the Equity Audit, the items associated with Oppression and Fatigue are only given to those who self-identify as BIPOC, women and/or LGBTQ.



CONTEXT

Beloved Community is a non-profit consulting firm focused on implementing regional, sustainable solutions for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Central to our services is the Equity Audit, a free-for-everyone, online tool to help schools (including both K-12 and higher education institutions), non-profits, for-profits and governmental agencies assess their institutional practices. The focus of our model is that people change systems, so the emphasis is placed on individual coaching. The Equity Audit itself is aligned with 12 standards (4 each for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) and nearly 200 indicators used to measure strengths and gaps with each standard¹.

The Equity Lens Map (ELM) is a companion tool to the Equity Audit. It is an individual assessment that identifies where team members are on their journey to leading equity in their organization. The ELM is not an employee climate survey. It is not about organizational needs or attitudes towards the organization (though its data can have implications for both). It is aimed at the person-level and designed to help organizations build effective, differentiated talent practices for team members at every level of the organization to advance diversity, inclusion and equity. With the understanding that people change systems, the ELM is a tool that provides trend data on how well people are poised to lead that change.

Pilot Testing

Initially, Beloved staff assembled a survey item pool with 176 items on a 5-pt Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Two rounds of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), item discrimination and reliability analysis reduced the 176 items to 88 and then ultimately to 53 (Hernández & Ballester, 2021).

METHODS

Adults were recruited via an e-mail sent to employees of about 30 non-profit organizations that have engaged Beloved Community to help improve equity in their institutions. All of the organizations were in the early, first phase of the Equity Audit and collecting employee perceptions. The organizations were widely heterogeneous, but the largest group (though not the majority) were K-12 educational institutions.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a common technique used to identify and define the number of dimensions of a newly developed scale (Latif & Sajjad, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). It looks for latent dimensions that exist among collections of individual items but that

¹ https://www.wearebeloved.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-standards



cannot be measured accurately by any single item (Field, 2009). We applied EFA to our data to look for latent dimensions and then used the framework to interpret the meanings of the dimensions. We used Cronbach's alpha to test reliability and internal consistency. For construct validity, we looked at scores among demographic groups to measure the scale's ability to predict differences among those groups.

Data were collected from 1,075 adults. About 58% self-identified as White, 31% as Black or African American, 5% as Asian and 6% as other or mixed race. When asked separately, 9% identified as Hispanic or Latinx. About 94% were raised in the United States, 69% were native English speakers and 25% spoke a language other than English. They identified as 76% female, 24% male and <1% non-binary/third gender. This gender ratio is similar to that of the non-profit sector in general. One study organized by the 2009 Obama White House found 73% of non-profit employees in the United States identify as female (Seliger & Shames, 2009).

Responses were recorded into integers on a 5-pt ascending scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Software used includes Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. Composite scores for each factor were computed by averaging all of the items assigned to that factor. Differences between demographics were explored using descriptive statistics and ANOVAs with statistical significance set to p = .05.

Equity Lens Map Exploratory Factor Analysis

The 53 items retained after pilot analysis were put through an EFA with the varimax rotation to look for latent factors. The data passed commonly accepted guidelines for the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant, with a p-value = .000, reflecting suitability for an EFA (Table 1). Principal components analysis (PCA) was used because we ultimately wanted to identify composite scores for each factor. One item had a discrimination index below 0.3 and another had a negative correlation (rxy = 0.30) with one of the factors, so these two items were removed, leaving 51 items. Of them, seven did not load onto any single factor so they were also omitted to leave a final list of 41 items. Inspection of the scree plot revealed an inflection point at seven factors, with the cutoff eigenvalue = 1.5 and 41% of the variance explained (Figure 1; Table 2). This seven-factor solution was preferred due to the scree plot cutoff and also the fact that they are closely, but not perfectly, aligned with our theoretical underpinnings (the eight leadership competencies). Overall reliability was a = 0.89 with reliability of individual factors ranging from a = 0.70 to a = 0.86. After reviewing the factors with other researchers and our staff who developed the initial framework, we determined that two of them were not strongly aligned enough with the seven competencies. They are not included in the final Equity Lens Map but we include them in the tables for this report for completeness. That leaves 32 items for the final survey.



The final Equity Lens Map items and factor structure are in Table 3. Composite scores were computed for each factor by taking the mean score for all items within the factor. Higher scores indicate more agreement.

Section Summary: We used a statistical process to put survey questions into groups of similar performing questions. By using multiple questions to measure a topic we get a more accurate response. For example, we know more about fatigue employees are feeling by asking these six questions rather than asking just one question. The process also allowed us to drop some questions that were not related to any of the competencies. As a result, our survey is slightly shorter and easier to implement without sacrificing accuracy.

DISCUSSION

The Equity Audit is a freely available survey developed and used by the Beloved Community as part of the Equity Audit process. It is a different type of employee DEI survey in that it centers individuals versus the organization. It was developed based on eight leadership competencies aligned with the Beloved Community's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Standards and Indicators.

Through previous pilot testing, the initial survey instrument was iteratively refined down to 53 items. In this final analysis, we further refined it to 32 items that can be grouped into five factors. Those factors align well with the Equity Audit's leadership competencies. However, two competencies are missing - White Supremacy and Internalized Oppression. Those competencies may be better measured using open-ended question formats rather than the Likert item format. For example, the Likert item "Sometimes, I think my colleagues of color exaggerate their experiences with racism in the workplace" was developed to measure the aspect of white supremacy related to the erasure or denial of structural racism. Our analysis suggests that the topic may be better measured by asking respondents to provide illustrative examples of when they have been involved in such situations (i.e., "Please describe a time when..."). Thus, in future Equity Lens Maps similar topics around white supremacy may be addressed within the ELM, either with open-ended survey items or other methods (interviews, focus groups, discussions, etc.). We plan to further develop and test both open-ended and Likert items to measure those two competencies (See Appendix A for a list of sample questions we are currently testing.). As with most quality instruments, this one will continually be refined and adjusted as our research reveals more and as societal understandings progress.

As part of our construct validity, we looked for differences between demographic groups. It has been challenging to find comparable studies. Most of the literature reports on climate surveys that look at things from the organizational level, and there is very little out there on person-



focused assessment. For example, Theofanos, Evans, Zwolak & Prettyman (2021) found that staff who are men at a non-profit engineering organization had more positive views of organizational support for diversity and inclusivity than women employees. In our study, the Bias factor has similar questions, but they are about *individual support* for DEI within the organization (ex: "I believe that our company must implement DEI strategies for it to be successful" and "I think prioritizing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our work is an important use of resources."). That could explain why scores from men are slightly lower than scores from women in our data (Figure 2). Another study of non-profit organizations found women managers tend to value diversity more than their men counterparts (Johansen & Zhu, 2016). On an organizational level, men may believe the organization is doing well and so are less worried about the importance of individually supporting DEI. This could have important implications for how they are trained, suggesting the need for more emphasis on the role of each individual in supporting DEI. In all other factors except Fatigue, respondents who are women tended to support DEI at a higher level. However, the differences were minor and the overall pattern among the factors between genders was the same (i.e. the highest and lower factors for both are the same)². Creary, et al. (2021) also found no statistically significant differences between responses from men and women among any of the seven practices of their DEI survey.

Our data shows more differences between races and ethnicities (Figure 3). The most significant difference is in Fatigue, where persons of color report much higher scores than staff who are White. Of the individual race/ethnicities, Black or African American staff report both the highest level of Fatigue and the highest level of Interrupting, meaning they were more likely to report speaking up. In Creary, et al. (2021) report, they found employees who are persons of color report higher engagement with speaking up to support DEI policies and diverse hiring practices than employees who are White. These differences make sense according to social identity theory, where group threats (ex: discrimination, microaggressions, etc.) make one's social identity more salient and important to personal empowerment and commitment to an organization (Wolfson, Kraiger & Finkelstein, 2011, p. 172).

The mean scores of the various factors reveal strong ceiling effects for Bias with moderate ceiling effects for Self-Education & Allyship, Fatigue and Oppression This could result from the audience being employees of non-profits, which tend to be mission-driven and employ people passionate about their work. When they think personally, they have higher expectations for themselves and others. Note the three factors with the highest scores are related more to institutional aspects and commitments than personal ones. This may reflect how it is easier to talk about others than oneself. This is another reason why person-centered surveys like this

² The differences between genders for each factor mean was statistically significant, except for the Interrupt factor, according to *t*-tests. However, this is likely due in part to the large sample size as the effect size was very small, $n^2 = .03$.



have an important role to play in organizational DEI efforts. Had this been a pure climate survey, it may have shown only high scores.

CONCLUSION

"To build institutional capacity for diversity, institutions must start with an understanding of the extent to which various groups feel included and engaged." (Person, et al., 2015, p. 9)

As an example of a culturally relevant evaluation tool, the Equity Lens Map gives voice to the lived experiences of the staff of excluded communities. This survey version shows good reliability, validity and measures aspects of seven of the eight core leadership competencies developed by Beloved Community to support DEI in the workplace. The survey and its associated framework's emphasis on the individual fills a gap in the DEI literature by providing a measure of personal engagement and perspective to an organization's DEI culture. Combined with other measures and critical organizational discussions, it can provide vital data into the process of organizational change and advancing equity in the workplace.



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Table 1.

KMO Measure and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure		0.897	
of sampling adequacy			
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-square	16315.80	
	df	1225	
	Sig.	0.000	

 Table 2.

 Factor composite scores and characteristics.

	Bias	Allyship	Fatigue	Self Awareness	Interrupting	Factor 6*	Factor 7*
Cronbach Alpha	0.86	0.71	0.85	0.79	0.86	0.70	0.80
Mean	4.50	3.30	2.29	4.19	3.67	3.32	4.04
SD	0.54	0.84	0.86	0.64	0.79	1.22	0.84
Skewnes s	-2.1	-0.19	.30	-1.1	44	-1.3	73
Kurtosis	6.0	27	.01	1.4	13	2.1	.25

^{*}These factors do not map onto our theoretical framework so have been removed from the ELM. See manuscript for details.



Table 3.

Equity Lens Map factors and items

Factor	Item
	I see the value in professional development that focuses on topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion. (Bias_1)
	I think prioritizing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our work is an important use of resources. (Bias_2)
Understanding	I believe that, in order to be successful in my job function, it's necessary to implement DEI strategies. (Bias_3)
Interpersonal	I think it's important to have representative senior management in our company. (Bias_4)
and Institutional	I think that inclusion and equity are institutional issues that require organization-wide strategies. (Bias_5)
Bias (Bias)	I believe that our company must implement DEI strategies in order for it to be successful. (Bias_6)
	I need additional opportunities to practice advocating for people with marginalized identities. (Bias_7)
	I believe there should be a diverse coalition of individuals that are responsible for leading DEI at work. (Bias_8)
	I see the importance of discussing our social identities in the workplace. (Bias_9)
	I am willing to relinquish my own power, control, or airtime, to engage a truly equitable and inclusive community of collaborators. (Bias_10)
	I seek out coaching or mentoring support to reduce bias in my communication. (Tip: If this does not apply to your experience in your current
	organization, consider what you would do if this occurred.) (Ally_1)
Self-Education &	I seek out my own professional development on DEI. (Ally_2)
Allyship	I volunteer (uncompensated) to work closely with our HR team or committee on improving our strategy for diversity in hiring. (Ally_3)
(Allyship)	I consistently advocate for professional development in my team that focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion. (Ally_4)
(<i>r.i.iy</i> 0111 <i>p</i>)	I belong to work-sponsored affinity or employee resource groups for my marginalized identity markers (historically & systemically
	disempowered social identities). (Tip: If this does not apply to your experience in your current organization, consider what you would do if this occurred.) (Ally_5)
	I am often the only person to challenge biases, stereotypes and microaggressions. (Fatigue_1)
	I am tired of being the go-to person for diversity, equity and inclusion. (Fatigue_2)
Fatigue	It is becoming increasingly difficult to facilitate conversations and/or carry out diversity, equity and inclusion strategies in addition to my
	stated job duties. (Fatigue_3)
	People assume that because I have one or more historically marginalized identities that I am an expert on diversity, equity and inclusion.
	(Fatigue_4)
	I reflect on which identity markers are still most difficult for me to embrace in others (ie: race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.).
Self-Awareness	(Oppression_1)
	I am aware that my marginalized identities are connected to unearned disadvantages. (Oppression_2)



	I am aware that my social identities (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc) and upbringing are connected to how I perceive others and my world. (Oppression_3)
	I have probably used culturally insensitive language at some point in my career. (Oppression_4) I believe in "both/and" thinking - there is room at work for "grey area." (Oppression_5)
	I address my colleagues when they use culturally insensitive language. (Interrupting_1)
Interrupting Interpersonal & Institutional Bias & Discrimination (Interrupting)	I am comfortable questioning my supervisors on DEI needs for groups who share my identity markers. (Interrupting_2)
	I am comfortable questioning my supervisors on DEI needs for under-represented groups and/or marginalized groups that don't share my identity markers. (Interrupting_3)
	I am comfortable even when my supervisor and I do not share identity markers. (Interrupting_4)
	When I observe microaggressions in the workplace, I am comfortable naming them with the parties involved. (Interrupting_5)
	When I observe stereotype threats in the workplace, I am comfortable naming it with the parties involved. (Interrupting_6)
	I am comfortable confronting bias language and behavior at work, even if it may cost me my job. (Interrupting_7)
	When voices of targeted or under-represented identities are not represented, I urge others to strive for inclusion before proceeding with decision-making. (Interrupting_8)

^{*}Reverse coded.



Table 4.

Factor loadings > .25.

Item	Factor	•			
	1	2	3	4	5
Bias_1	.73				
Bias_2	.73				
Bias_3	.64				
Bias_4	.58				
Bias_5	.63				
Bias_6	.74				
Bias_7	.39				
Bias_8	.69				
Bias_9	.54				
Bias_10	.45				
Interrupting_1		.72			
Interrupting_2		.39			
Interrupting_3		.44			
Interrupting_4		.33			
Interrupting_5		.88			
Interrupting_6		.88			
Interrupting_7		.73			
Interrupting_8		.44			
Self-Awareness_1			.49		
Self-Awareness_2			.65		
Self-Awareness_3			.76		
Self-Awareness_4			.73		.26
Self-Awareness_5			.63		
Fatigue_1				.61	



Fatigue_2	.82	
Fatigue_3	.77	
Fatigue_4	.61	
Ally_1		.57
Ally_2		.65
Ally_3		.62
Ally_4		.58
Ally_5		.24

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization; Rotation converged in 8 iterations.



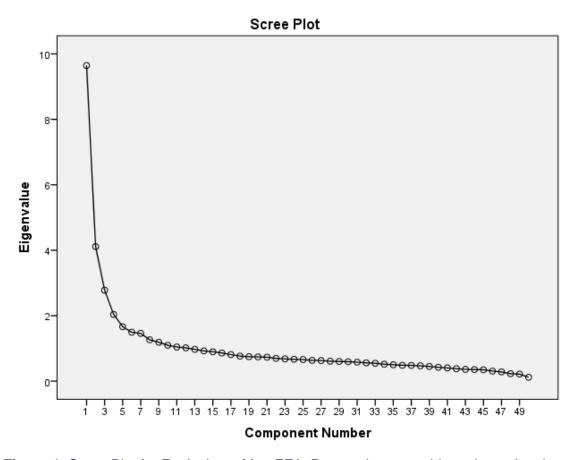


Figure 1. Scree Plot for Equity Lens Map EFA. Researchers use this to determine the total number of groups to which the survey questions can be assigned. The inflection point is generally the number that researchers use, along with other tools. In this case, we chose 7 as the total number of groups that exist within the ELM. However, two of the factors were not aligned with any of our theoretical frameworks so are not included in the final ELM.



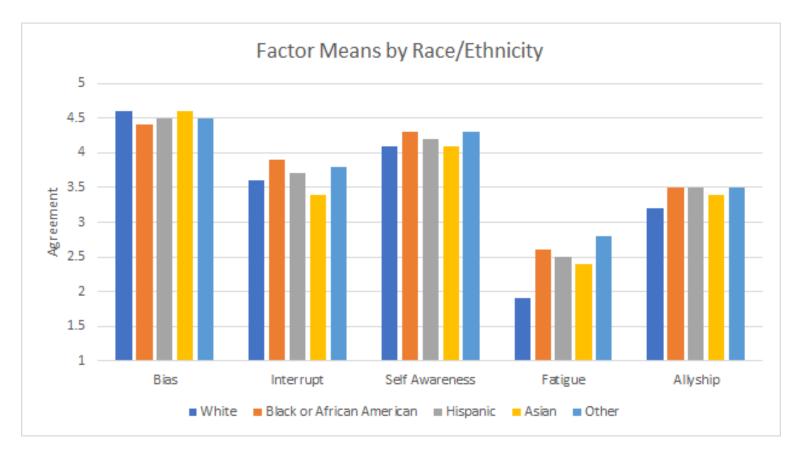


Figure 2. Factor means by race and ethnicity. All differences were statistically significant.



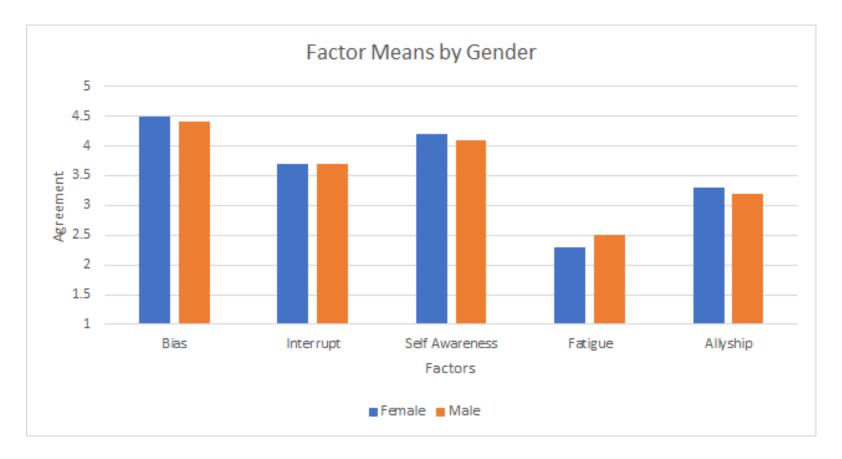


Figure 3. Factor means by gender. Sample sizes for non-binary options were too small for analysis. All differences were statistically significant except for Interrupt, however effect sizes were very small.



Appendix A

These are questions being tested for the next iteration of the ELM. They are tentatively described as belonging to a factor labeled "Personal Learning". This will be tested against and compared with the current factor labeled "Self-Education & Allyship".

I have engaged in self-work about my gender identity.
I have engaged in self-work about my sexual orientation.
I have engaged in self-work about my race and ethnicity identity markers.
I am able to recognize bias in my own communications.
I am aware that stereotype threat exists in the workplace.
I have reflected on how stereotypes have affected me at work.
I have reflected on how stereotypes have affected my colleagues at work.
I am able to name how systems of oppression and privilege show up in my work.
I am able to name how systems of privilege and oppression show up in my personal life.