

# Racial Justice and Business Schools

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*Racial Justice at the intersection of Business and Society*  
*Critical Management Studies CMS*



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# Epistemic injustice

(Fricker 2010)

# 1992

I was here...



... while an African American female Professor based here at the time



Source: <https://images.app.goo.gl/DDcPS3UpWFsEIBjP9>

...was challenging how powerful actors “amassed a great deal of knowledge about one group [white males]” and generalized their theories across all groups (Nkomo, 1992)

# Self-discovery

Realizing that I am black and an African, and  
the experiences of people who look like me  
do not seem to matter to Business Schools

My/our scholarly voice is not legitimate

Black scholars across domains, academic institutions, geographical contexts and social backgrounds are marginalized as knowledge producers and disseminators: (e.g. Banks, 1984; Bell and Nkomo, 1999; Benschop and Brouns, 2003; Blake-Beard et al., 2008; Chisadza et al., 2019; Christian, 2017; Collins, 1999; Cox, 2004; Crichlow, 2017; Dar, 2019; Dei, 2014; Dei, 2018; Harding, 1974; Harlow, 2003; Hawthorne and Heitz, 2018; Hendrix, 2002; Morris, 2015; Mukandi and Bond, 2019; Nkomo, 2016; Proudford, 1999; Proudford and Thomas, 1999; Reddick, 2018; Settles et al., 2019; Shockley and Holloway, 2019; Stanley, 2006; Stewart et al., 2008; Thomas et al., 1999; Warmington, 2014; Wilder, 2013; Woodyard and Gadson, 2018)

# Epistemic injustice

## **Black researchers are not trusted:**

- This work is by Black people, about other Black people too, it's definitely **biased**
- I don't trust these people
- The second name sounds **strange**, I can't cite this, **no one will cite** a Black researcher any way

## **Black scholars' research themes on black social realities are ostracized:**

- This study has **no fit** with our journal
- The **framing**, not the topic is an issue for this top journal
- This study is **irrelevant** and **incomprehensible** (to white individuals and communities)
- Multiple rounds of manuscript revisions that yield **no publications**

## **Black research samples are trivialized:**

- Why did these Black people **conduct** interviews with **black women** in the UK or Africa only, it's not the entire world
- They should have compared their **Black samples** with White samples

## **Black educators are rejected by some students:** **contested authority**, not trusted and **harshly evaluated**

# One might ask:

If curriculum is so white (Contu 2018) and ‘the business school is racist’ (Dar et al. 2020), does this mean business schools are (unintentionally) reproducing potentially racist future professionals?

**Not only does epistemic injustice  
dehumanize black scholars and amplify black  
pain (see, Chowdhury 2019), but also, inflict harm upon  
broader society**



# **...what black, brown and white scholars might do to cultivate more inclusive Management and Organization Studies**

- **Collective intellectual activism by cross-racial coalitions**
  - **Comradeship**
  - **Example: The UCD Proudly Made in Africa Fellowship in Business and Development**

# References

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**Thank you for your attention 😊**