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THE JACKIE ROBINSON DYNAMIC FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN FACULTY AT THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS AND ELITE PREDOMINATELY WHITE INSTITUTIONS (PWIs) THAT TEACH CYBERSECURITY AND TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The incredible strength and bravery of Jackie Robinson in breaking the color barrier in Major League Baseball is remembered and admired by many. However, the difficulty of his journey is often underestimated. As the Black Lives Matter movement has become more prominent, African-American faculty members at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) face their own trials similar to Robinson's. The need for psychological safety in the workplace from their colleagues and organizational leadership has never been more critical. They experience isolation, alienation, and inequality as faculty and potential professionals in cybersecurity and technology fields. This paper explores those dynamics through the concept of Jackie Robinson's journey.

KEYWORDS: Faculty diversity, equity, allyship, workplace psychological safety, inclusion, Black Faculty in Technology, African-American Cybersecurity Faculty

1. Introduction

The significance of diversity and inclusion within national infrastructure security should be considered, as their efficacy in protecting this key asset is fundamental. An increase in workplace diversity and inclusion offers further prospects for greater psychological safety, as it would enhance the capacity for understanding security risks and vulnerabilities and allow an organization to learn from and avert past missteps while creating more strategic security protocols. Despite this reality, however, minorities are vastly neglected in the cyber security landscape, with only 9% of those qualified for the field being Black, 8% Asian, and 4% Hispanic (Allen, 2022).

In recent years, the need for a diverse workforce in cybersecurity has become increasingly evident. As the demand for cybersecurity professionals continues to rise globally, the need for qualified African-American cybersecurity professionals and faculty to help develop the next generation of African-American cybersecurity professionals has become urgent (Allen, 2022). The global demand for cybersecurity professionals is increasing with the prevalence of cyber threats and attacks

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(Allen, 2022). This growing demand is in the private and public sectors and all industries. Unfortunately, African-Americans are underrepresented in nearly every technology field, and cybersecurity is no exception (Allen, 2022).

Given the shortage of critical cybersecurity skills and the lack of African-American professionals in the field, colleges, and universities must develop and foster the next generation of African-American cybersecurity professionals. The impact of higher education institutions on the development of African-American cybersecurity professionals is multifaceted. African-American faculty in higher education plays a critical role in helping to produce the next generation of African-American cybersecurity professionals. African-American faculty provide a level of understanding and cultural competency essential for promoting diversity in technology. These faculty members provide a unique perspective and set of experiences that can help inform students' understanding of the challenges they may face as they enter the world of technology and cybersecurity.

In addition to a deep understanding of the challenges African-American students may face in the tech industry, African-American faculty also provide insights into the opportunities available in the field. However, to make an impact, they must be hired and represented at the most prestigious and elite Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) in the U.S. but often function in a professional world where they are first or the only ones at their universities.

Jackie Robinson is remembered as the first African-American to break the color barrier in Major League Baseball. His courage and strength in the face of intense racism, hostility, and discrimination inspire many. However, the difficulty of the journey he undertook is often overlooked. As the new push for diversity and the Black Lives Matter movement has experienced increased focus and visibility, African-American faculty members at most prestigious and elite Predominately White Institutions (PWIs), especially males, are experiencing their own level of a Jackie Robinson experience and require workplace psychological safety from their co-workers and their organizational leadership.

African-American faculty members are underrepresented in higher education, particularly in PWIs. In 2018, African-Americans made up just 4.7% of all faculty at PWIs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Additionally, African-Americans are overwhelmingly concentrated in the lowest professoriate ranks, with only 1.2% of Black faculty members holding the highest rank of full professor (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). This results from the long history of exclusion and segregation of African-Americans in higher education and institutional racism in higher education institutions. This lack of representation is particularly problematic as it perpetuates a culture of marginalization and exclusion of African-American faculty members.

African-American faculty members often face unique challenges when they are the first and only faculty members in a PWI setting. As the first and only faculty members in a predominately white institution, African-American faculty members are often thrust into a situation in which they are expected to represent not only themselves but also their race, gender, and other identities (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Evans & Moore, 2015; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2020). This can be daunting and lead to isolation and alienation (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Evans & Moore, 2015; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2020). As such, it is essential to examine the challenges and dynamics that African-American faculty members experience in this context and to identify potential solutions for addressing these issues.

The challenges of being a faculty member in a PWI have evolved. In the past, African-American faculty members were often excluded from PWIs and relegated to historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). However, in recent decades, African-American faculty members have gained access to PWIs, although they still need to be more represented in these institutions. As a result, African-American faculty members in PWIs often find themselves in the position of being the first and only African-American faculty member in their department or institution.

In order to examine the challenges and dynamics experienced by African-American faculty members in PWIs, several significant theories apply. Intersectionality is a framework that examines how race, gender, and other identities intersect and impact our lives (Berger & Guidroz, 2010). This framework is beneficial for examining the experiences of African-American faculty members in PWIs, as it allows us to recognize the unique challenges and dynamics they face due to their multiple identities (Berger & Guidroz, 2010).

The intersectionality of race and gender is an important concept when discussing the experiences of African-American faculty members in PWIs. The intersectionality theory posits that different forms of oppression, such as racism and sexism, are inextricably linked and cannot be understood in isolation (Berger & Guidroz, 2010). This is particularly relevant for African-American faculty members in PWIs, who often find themselves in the position of being both Black and female, and thus face the combined effects of racism and sexism. This has led to several unique challenges for African-American faculty members in PWIs, such as being seen as either too Black or too female to succeed in their departments or institutions.

2. The Problem Statement, Significance, and Method

African American faculty members at PWIs often face discrimination in the form of lower salaries, fewer promotion opportunities, and fewer resources (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Evans & Moore, 2015; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2020). Furthermore, African American faculty members were significantly less likely to be promoted to higher ranks than their white counterparts and were often paid less. (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Evans & Moore, 2015; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2020). This disparity in pay and promotion opportunities suggests that African American faculty members at PWIs face discrimination based on race (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Evans & Moore, 2015; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2020). This paper explores those dynamics through the context of Jackie Robinson and previous social science literature and the lived experiences of African-American faculty that have worked at universities ranked as the best national universities by U.S. News and World Reports.

2.1. Social Identity Theory

The social identity theory (SIT) posits that individuals form a sense of identity based on group membership (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). This identity is based on the perception of similarity between the individual and the group and the perceived difference between the group and other out-groups (Abrams & Hogg, 1988).

When Jackie Robinson entered Major League Baseball, he entered a sport heavily dominated by white players and fans. As an African-American, he was seen as different and was immediately viewed with suspicion and hostility. This is explained by SIT, which suggests that individuals form a sense of identity based on group membership (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). As an African-American, Robinson was an out-group member in the White-dominated

baseball world. This resulted in him being viewed as different and experiencing hostility from white players and fans.

African-American faculty members at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) often experience a similar dynamic when they or the first, the only, or a member of a small few faculty in their departments at elite and prestigious colleges and universities.

2.2. Social Exchange Theory

The social exchange theory (SET) posits that interpersonal relationships are based on exchanging rewards and costs. This exchange of rewards and costs is based on the perceived value of the rewards and costs (Ahmad et al., 2023).

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2.3. Group Polarization Theory

The group polarization theory (GPT) posits that group discussion increases the intensity of the group's beliefs (Koudenburg et al., 2019). This is because group discussion and a sense of community allow individuals to share and reinforce their beliefs, increasing the intensity of the group's beliefs (Koudenburg et al., 2019).

When Jackie Robinson entered Major League Baseball, he entered a sport heavily dominated by White players and fans. As an African-American, he was seen as different and was immediately viewed with suspicion and hostility. This is explained by GPT, which suggests that group discussion increases the intensity of the group's beliefs (Koudenburg et al., 2019). As an African-American, Robinson was seen as different, and this difference was reinforced and intensified through group discussion. This resulted in him being viewed with suspicion and unfriendliness as the group's beliefs were intensified through discussion.

African-American faculty members at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) often experience a similar dynamic when they or the first, the only, or a member of a small few faculty in their departments at elite and prestigious colleges and universities.

2.4. Scapegoating Theory

The scapegoating theory (S.T.) is a widely accepted sociological theory that helps explain the complexities of group behavior around how in-group members and out-group members interact socially (Cohen & Schermer, 2002). The theory posits that groups often choose an individual or group to blame for issues, problems, and concerns (Cohen & Schermer, 2002). This individual or group is seen as responsible for those issues or concerns and is often targeted with hostility and discrimination (Cohen & Schermer, 2002).

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being targeted with antagonism and discernment.

African-American faculty members at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) often experience a similar dynamic when they or the first, the only, or a member of a small few faculty in their departments at elite and prestigious colleges and universities.

2.5. Loneliness

African-American faculty members in PWIs often face challenges regarding their research and teaching. For example, African-American faculty members may be asked to teach courses on race and racism, even if this is not their area of expertise, or may be discouraged from pursuing research on topics related to race and racism (Alexander & Moore, 2008; Evans & Moore, 2015; DeCuir-Gunby el at, 2020). Additionally, African-American faculty members at PWIs may be the only person of color in their department and thus may be expected to serve as the "unofficial diversity representative" for their department or institution Alexander & Moore, 2008; Evans & Moore, 2015; DeCuir-Gunby el at, 2020). This can lead to feelings of isolation, loneliness, and marginalization, making it difficult for African-American faculty members to succeed in PWIs.

The concept of loneliness has been widely discussed in the research literature but needs more coverage regarding race relations. Most definitions agree on the concept of loneliness resulting from social deficiencies. A cognitive theory of loneliness has been proposed, viewing loneliness as stemming from perceived social deficiencies, with cognitive processes playing an essential role in its experience (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007). According to Kerr and Stanley (2021), loneliness is a discrepancy between actual and desired relationships.

Loneliness, defined as a perceived lack of connection to others, is a phenomenon that can emerge regardless of individual characteristics such as gender, age, or personality (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007). It can manifest in increased shyness, anxiety, and fear, resulting in withdrawal and disengagement (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007).

Loneliness is not synonymous with sadness but is an absence of colleague interactions (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007). Loneliness and aloneness are distinct concepts; loneliness is the perception of being disconnected from others, while aloneness is the lack of someone to connect with (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007). It is possible to be surrounded by people and still feel isolated and lonely (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007).

When close ties are formed with others, rapport and affiliation are built, as seen in mimicry and stride-for-stride walking (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007). However, a lack of synchronicity can lead to ill will, betrayal, and fear, increasing loneliness and disengagement (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007). Loneliness can be a self-perpetuating cycle, and isolating work arrangements may further increase loneliness. Loneliness can manifest across three facets: intimate, relational, and collective, and an inability to perceive close relations in each facet can lead to emotional, social, and team withdrawals, respectively (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Dahlberg, 2007). The level of loneliness can vary, but its presence is real for African-American faculty when they are the first or the only ones at a PWI.

2.6. Community

African-American faculty members are underrepresented in higher education, especially at elite and prestigious PWIs. As a result, they often have to exist in workplaces without psychological safety and a sense of community. Communities provide social interdependence, togetherness, and a

sense of belonging (Burt, 2000; Bosky, 1996; Burroughs & Eby, 1998). The workplace community has evolved from scientific management's authoritative and bureaucratic management style to the social person era's focus on teamwork and collaboration to achieve results (Burt, 2000; Bosky, 1996; Burroughs & Eby, 1998). Creating and sustaining communities forms a bedrock for groups and organizations to discuss topics and agree on decisions (Burt, 2000; Bosky, 1996; Burroughs & Eby, 1998). Acceptance into a desired community provides numerous benefits, including satisfying relational and affiliative needs with team members, thus enhancing performance based on an enriched community perception (Burt, 2000; Bosky, 1996; Burroughs & Eby, 1998). Communities can also support and assist individuals in coping when struggling through challenging events in the workplace and life in general (Burt, 2000; Bosky, 1996; Burroughs & Eby, 1998). A reduced sense of community lowers engagement, commitment, and information flow and increases feelings of loneliness, thereby depleting motivations (Burt, 2000; Bosky, 1996; Burroughs & Eby, 1998).

2.7. Silence is Complicity

In the modern era, issues of race, racism, and discrimination in the workplace have become increasingly prevalent and an important topic of discussion. Central to this discussion is the idea that "silence is complicity" and that those who remain silent and bystanders about racism, microaggressions, and discrimination are complicit in perpetuating these issues (Diangelo, 2012). The concept of "silence is complicity" has been explored in various theoretical frameworks related to anti-racism (Diangelo, 2012; Wooldridge, 2019). For example, scholars have suggested that silence and a lack of accountability can be used to legitimize and normalize racism and discrimination in the workplace (Diangelo, 2012; Wooldridge, 2019). According to Diangelo (2012), silence functions as a form of implicit agreement with the status quo and as a form of passive resistance to change. In other words, silence and being a bystander can be used to perpetuate racism and discrimination in the workplace by actively or passively agreeing with the status quo (Diangelo, 2012; Wooldridge, 2019).

Similarly, scholars have suggested that silence and a lack of accountability can also be used to normalize racism and discrimination in the workplace (Diangelo, 2012; Wooldridge, 2019). Diangelo (2012) outlines that silence can be seen as a form of normalization, implying that these forms of oppression have become so normalized that they no longer need to be actively challenged. In other words, silence and functioning as a bystander can be used to normalize racism and discrimination in the workplace by implying that these forms of oppression are accepted and not worthy of challenge (Diangelo, 2012; Wooldridge, 2019). Studies have also found that non-minorities who remain silent and bystanders about racism and discrimination can be seen as complicit in perpetuating these issues (Premkumar et al., 2018; Nelson et al., 2011).

2.8. Representation Matters

Diversifying the technology workforce is becoming increasingly important as technology advances and continues to open the door to wider opportunities (Dillon et al., 2015). The lack of African-American faculty in technology fields is a major barrier to achieving this. Their presence as role models in the classroom and beyond can help inspire and engage African-American students and encourage those who may otherwise be discouraged by the lack of representation (Dillon et al., 2015). Understanding the impact of African-American faculty and the importance of their representation is essential for overcoming this barrier and

helping to shape a more diverse technology workforce for the future. Previous research on the importance of role models has found that they can positively impact students (Dillon et al., 2015). For African-American students, seeing faculty who look like them in the classroom has been cited as a motivator for success (Dillon et al., 2015).

The number of African-American faculty in technology fields still needs to grow. This has several negative effects, including a need for mentors and potential role models for African-American students and a missed opportunity to draw on the unique perspectives and experiences that African-American faculty bring to the table (Dillon et al., 2015). As the demand for technology professionals continues to grow, so must the number of African-American faculty, and universities must take a proactive approach to increase the diversity of their faculty.

The lack of diversity in the technology industry has severe implications for African-Americans regarding career development and the wider society (Dillon et al., 2015). With the inclusion of African-American voices and perspectives in the technology field, technology will likely be used and developed with consideration for the way it affects marginalized and underrepresented populations (Dillon et al., 2015). African-American faculty's perspective can help ensure that technology is used responsibly.

In addition, the presence of African-American faculty in technology fields can also have a beneficial effect on all students, regardless of race. Seeing African-American faculty in these roles acts as a reminder that these fields are accessible to everyone and can also help to raise general awareness of issues of inequality and access. Finally, African-American faculty can help promote greater inclusivity in the classroom, with research finding that diverse classrooms can often result in improved student outcomes (Dillon et al., 2015).

3. Methods and Findings

This study includes 12 participants that had more than one year of experience teaching computer science, management information systems, or cybersecurity at what is considered an elite or prestigious PWI. Universities Best National University Rankings in U.S. News and World Reports are classified as elite or prestigious as part of this study. All participants had a doctorate. Nine participants were African-American men, and three were African-American women.

One key question guided the research study and data collection process, and key themes were developed as a result of this question.

What dynamics have you experienced as an African-American faculty member at an Elite PWI?

The following themes are the results from the interviews:

●Isolation and Alienation (12 out of 12 participants mentioned this concept)

The participants in this study reported feeling isolated and alienated in their roles as the first and only faculty members in their departments. This was because they were often the only person of color in their departments, which made it difficult for them to find common ground with their colleagues and fit into the department's existing culture. Additionally, they felt their colleagues were often uncomfortable around them and did not understand their experiences. This resulted in feelings of isolation and alienation, making it difficult for the participants to feel connected to their colleagues and comfortable in their roles. It often feels like they are being excluded from conversations, not being taken seriously, and being left out of important decisions. The dynamics include feelings that there is a like there is a lack of support and recognition for their work. The dynamics feel that African-American faculty members' contributions are not

valued or appreciated. As a result, African-American faculty members become more withdrawn and less engaged in their work. They may also feel like they are given different opportunities than others in the workplace.

●Lack of support (9 out of 12 participants mentioned this concept)

Their colleagues were often unwilling to provide support or assistance when needed, making it difficult for them to succeed. Additionally, they felt that their colleagues needed to be more willing to engage in meaningful dialogue about issues that were important to them. This lack of support created a sense of frustration and led to feelings of isolation and alienation.

●Pressure to represent (12 out of 12 participants mentioned this concept)

Often African-American faculty constantly experience a feeling a sense of pressure to represent their race and gender in their roles as the first and only faculty members in their departments. This was because they were often seen as a symbol of diversity and were expected to act as a spokesperson for their race and gender. This pressure to represent created a sense of burden and made it difficult for the participants to feel comfortable in their roles.

●Heightened visibility (12 out of 12 participants mentioned this concept)

They experienced several dynamics when they were their departments' first and only faculty members. These dynamics included a heightened sense of visibility, a need to be perfect, and a feeling of responsibility. These dynamics include a heightened sense of visibility in their roles as the first and only faculty members in their departments. They felt that they were constantly being watched and judged by their colleagues, which made them feel as though they had to be on their best behavior at all times. This heightened sense of visibility created anxiety, making it difficult for the participants to feel comfortable in their roles.

●Unrealistic pressures and expectations (11 out of 12 participants mentioned this concept)

Dynamics include an unfair need and intense pressure to be perfect in their roles. This was because they were often seen as a symbol of diversity and felt that any mistakes they made in teaching, course development, or other academic duties would reflect their race and gender. This feeling of needing to be perfect created a sense of pressure, making it difficult for the participants to feel confident in their roles. There was a sense of unrealistic pressures and expectations to represent their race and gender in a positive light. This feeling of responsibility created a sense of burden, making it difficult for the participants to feel relaxed in their roles. This pressure often manifested that any mistake or failure would be used to demonstrate that faculty of the same race and background need to be more talented and good enough to be here.

●No sense of kinship (12 out of 12 participants mentioned this concept)

Workplace kinship for African-American workers is the sense of camaraderie between co-workers of similar backgrounds. It is a feeling of connectedness, solidarity, and understanding between co-workers beyond the professional relationship. African-Americans have often felt isolated and misunderstood in the workplace, so this sense of kinship provides an atmosphere of support, validation, and inclusion often lacking in traditional corporate environments. It is a shared sense of community that helps to create a sense of belonging and comfort in the workplace. It also promotes collective success and helps foster a more positive work culture. In short, workplace kinship for African-American workers is a powerful tool for creating and maintaining a thriving and inclusive workplace.

●An absence of allyship (12 out of 12 participants mentioned this concept)

Faculty members discussed the existence of fake allyship concerning race and race relations for African-American faculty at elite PWIs as a significant problem. Websites, policies, and diversity statements mean nothing to people of color if the actions of those in the organization do not match up. Faculty members at these institutions will often outwardly express support for the African-American community but fail to take meaningful action to improve the experiences of African-American faculty members. This can include a lack of support for initiatives that seek to diversify the faculty, an unwillingness to challenge racism or discriminatory practices, or a failure to provide resources and support to African-American faculty members. Fake allyship can create a hostile environment and lead to a lack of trust from African-American faculty members. Non-minority faculty members at elite PWIs must show genuine commitment to making a difference in the experiences of African-American faculty members by actively engaging in meaningful dialogue, providing resources, and taking concrete action to support initiatives that promote inclusivity.

Allyship from non-minorities can be a powerful tool in the fight for racial equity at predominantly White institutions. Allyship can create an environment of understanding and support for African-American faculty members at PWIs, enabling them to navigate the unique challenges of working in majority-white institutions. Allyship can also help to challenge the status quo, providing an opportunity to recognize and address systemic racism that may otherwise go unnoticed. When non-minorities stand in solidarity with African-American faculty members and actively work to create an environment of inclusion and support, it can help to create a more equitable and just workplace. Ultimately, allyship from non-minorities can be a powerful force for positive change in PWIs, creating a more equitable and welcoming environment for African-American faculty and students.

●An absence of safe spaces and workplace psychological safety (12 out of 12 participants mentioned this concept)

Without safe spaces and workplace psychological safety for African-American faculty at PWIs, the workplace can feel like a hostile and oppressive environment. Faculty members may face blatant racism, microaggressions, and negative stereotypes. They may also feel constantly scrutinized, judged harshly, and not taken seriously. This can lead to feelings of isolation, anxiety, and fatigue. Without a safe space to speak openly about their experiences, African-American faculty may feel unheard and misunderstood and be unable to find the support they need to succeed.

4. Research Outcome

As a result of this research, a model has been developed from the results of the **Darrell Burrell Supervisory Workplace Psychological Safety Model that supports people of color and women** (Burrell, 2022). This model will provide a visual depiction of the actions that managers in non-minority groups should engage in to help create a culture of psychological safety for their minority employees, especially those that are African-American faculty members at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs).

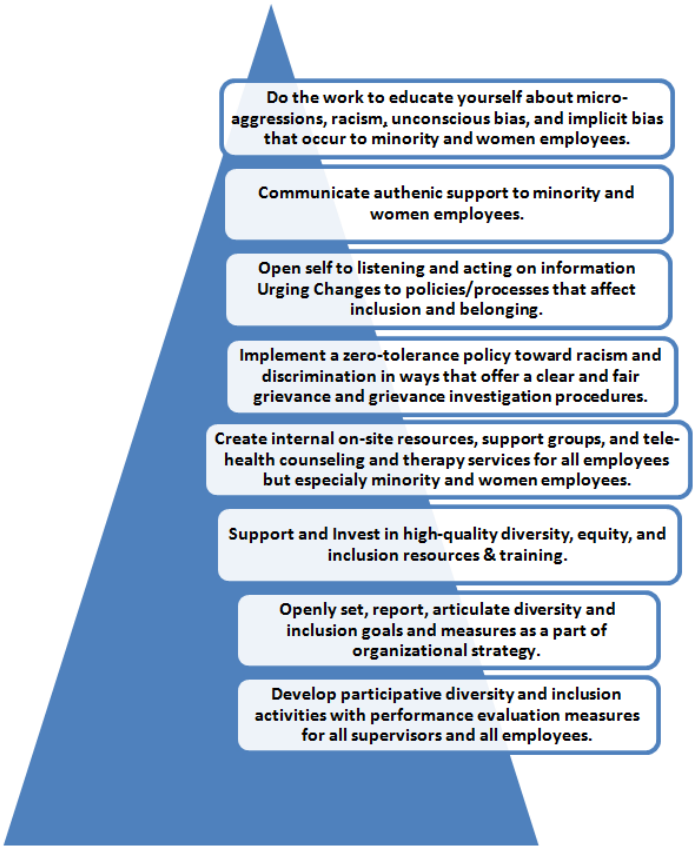

Figure no. 1: *Darrell Burrell Supervisory Workplace Psychological Safety Model that supports people of color and women (2022)*

5. Conclusions

A diverse and qualified cybersecurity workforce is critical, and African-American professionals have a unique and important place. Colleges and universities have a key role in helping to grow the next generation of African-American cybersecurity professionals. African-American faculty are essential resources for providing guidance and mentorship to ensure African-American students succeed in the field. By leveraging these resources, a more equitable and diverse cybersecurity workforce can be developed that is better positioned to address the global security challenges of today and tomorrow.

African-American faculty can help students navigate the complexities of the technology and cybersecurity industry by providing mentorship and guidance. Furthermore, African-American faculty can be instrumental in introducing African-American students to the various career paths available in technology and cybersecurity. As these faculty members have firsthand knowledge of the industry's landscape, they can provide invaluable guidance to African-American students needing access to the same resources or networks. However, African-American faculty must have safe workplaces to be most effective, especially when they often are the Jackie Robinsons in their universities.

Jackie Robinson was an African American baseball player remembered for his courage in breaking the color barrier of Major League Baseball (MLB) in 1947. He is also remembered for his resilience in loneliness, racism, hostility, and isolation (McCaffrey, 2020). Robinson was often the target of racial slurs, taunts, and other forms of

discrimination from fans and other players (McCaffrey, 2020). Additionally, Robinson was often excluded from team activities, such as dinners or team meetings, due to the *"unspoken rule"* that he should not be included (McCaffrey, 2020). Often many African-American faculty that are the first or members of a small few at their PWI face a similar workplace dynamic where they require workplace psychological safety.

First, creating a sense of psychological safety, belonging, and community for African-American faculty members in PWIs is essential. This can be done by creating a supportive environment where African-American faculty members feel comfortable and able to express themselves. Additionally, it is crucial to ensure that African-American faculty members are supported and provided with the resources and assistance needed to succeed in their roles. Finally, creating a culture of inclusion and respect in PWIs is essential. This means recognizing and respecting the multiple identities of African-American faculty members and creating an environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The findings from this study indicate that African-American faculty members in this context face a unique set of challenges and dynamics, including feelings of isolation and alienation, a lack of support from colleagues, a sense of pressure to represent their race and gender, a heightened sense of visibility, a need to be perfect, and a feeling of responsibility. These challenges and dynamics can make it difficult for African-American faculty members to feel comfortable and confident in their roles. The findings from this study also have many implications for how to address best the challenges and dynamics that African-American faculty members face in this context, which include creating a sense of belonging and community, providing support and resources, and creating a culture of inclusion and respect.

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