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## Recognition Has a Nationality: How Power, Color, and Credibility Shape Organizational Quality Management

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### Abstract

*Recognition and credibility are nothing more than niceties in any given workplace. They are currencies that drive facilitation and safeguarding of employee morale and organizational break/bound shifts of effective systems of quality management. Employees who feel they are appreciated and recognized for their direct contributions appreciate more encourage innovation, and rally organizational goals more. However, in many organizations around the world, particularly in the developing and transitioning economies, the ideal remains the desired. Here and now, recognition is more often than not about systemic inequities and deficiencies of power, country of passport, color of skin, immigration, managerial favouritism and, in general, the equity of recognition. This paper examines the systemic inequities of management, loss of employee motivation, and gaps in the systems of quality management, caused by practices of appropriation of credit, exertion of authority, and power of identity. We take a mixed approach in order to create a broad perspective. We juxtapose the hard quantitative data of a time-lagged survey, analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), with qualitative auto-ethnographic narratives, and the global workforce statistics. Our findings present recognition injustice as a strong predictor for psychological damage, work disconnection, and turnover intention. Conversely, consistent ethical leadership along with transparent and fair human resource systems reinforces a strong mitigating effect. From this research, we offer a significant contribution to the HRM literature regarding recognition injustice as an issue of structural injustice, as opposed to being an issue of manager incivility, an inter-personal issue, or an issue of systemic incivility within the organization. We conclude with an imperative: Organizations and regulators need to move away from ambiguous ideas and implement regulatory, defensible, evidence-based recognition structures that, in an ethical and quality assurance framework, make recognition governance a standard for operational compliance.*

**Keywords:** Recognition injustice; Credit theft; Power abuse; Ethical leadership; Structural Equation Modelling; Auto-ethnography; Nationality bias; Quality management; HRM; Structural violence; Psychological safety; Workplace discrimination; Global inequality; Managerial favoritism; Employee disengagement

### Introduction

Consider the scenario of working for months on an important task. It requires devotion outside of work hours, as well as the solution of multiple complex issues, the development of key contributions, and the achievement of great success for the company. On the day of the achievement celebration, the manager goes up to the microphone, takes all the praises (with no

mention of the company's name), and recognizes only a few of one's "collaborators." Your name is completely absent. Your contributions have been obliterated from existence and credited to the work of others. Such situations, and many others like it, occur too often. This is a workplace nightmare scenario for millions of employees around the world. Organizational recognition should be a lot more than "free pat on the back" and "thank you" email. It is a real currency, and a workplace real value as professional capital is a currency that determines who gets the visibility, who becomes upwardly mobile on the org chart, who gets important assignments, who no longer feels like an impostor, and most importantly, who belongs. When recognition is distributed and fairly balanced, it delivers a positive euphoric effect for a workplace that struggles to survive. The workplace praise oxygen. It tells people that they have a value and that they have aligned their contributions to the mission of the company. This is important as it inspires sustained performance. Innovation and improvement initiatives that depend on employee engagement and constructive, open-ended dialogue exemplify the trust that glue constructive dialogue establishes between employees and management. Certainly, there is a systems-wide approach there that is central to the foundation of a quality management system. But, as is the case with the vast majority of businesses, schools, and NGOs working under an unequal and inequally distributed global power system, the majority of these operational systems are not fair within their own internal structures. While positive system recognition is often distributed to the employees at the top of the system, from a clearly defined and protected position of authority, system recognition is often earned through arbitrary power mechanisms such as favouritism, friendship, a perceived prestige from a Western nationality, biased skin color, and the palpable, economic vulnerability of a work-permit employee. The stories of work re-evaluation reported by employees, from the bottom juniors to the top senior professionals, are remarkably homogeneous and parallel. They work on a project idea and are then excluded from their work on that project. Their suggestions are dismissed as being "unexperienced" or "not how we do things around here!" and their name is not even included on the front page, or even on the case study, or even on the research report, and they suffer the indignity of not being included in a report or research paper on which they wrote a substantial share of the work. Those forms of acts of exclusion are in themselves forms of erasure. They are acts of idea appropriation where a supervisor steals from one of their subordinates. They bring about silencing, whereby employees do not talk for fear of retaliation. They enforce forced silence, whereby one simply accepts the job's unfairness to keep the job. The job threats here can be severe: losing employment, damaging evaluations, blacklisting an entire industry, and for migrant employees, the terrible fear of deportation. The outcomes are extensive and go way beyond individual feelings. At the workplace, it poisons the entire work culture. At the university, it poisons the pursuit of knowledge. For the person facing it, the impact is deeper. There are no escaping mechanisms like for the frustrated employees in an economic high, in plenty of ways like immigration scholars in particular visas, or employees in a small industry monopolized. This trap does not create a frustration, but a chronic state of erosion of drive and professional value, and even severe psychological issues like anxiety and depression. The author suggests that the consequences are not the result of a few "bad apples" in management. Instead, the author suggests that recognition injustice is a relational outcome of the structural and cultural formations of the organizations operating in a system of oppression on a global scale. We claim that the credibility of a worker is put through a lens of bias in which people feel and see the worker to hold trust, responsibility, and recognition, and thus, bias credibility. The foundational social science lens reveals that the Global South employees, non-Western, or racialized/employees of minorities backgrounds, have to continuously prove their competence,

while their peers holding privileged nationalities seem to enjoy a presumption of legitimacy. The goal of this study is to unravel the complex and damaging relations while promoting the need of recognition as a primary negative organizational justice, ethical leadership, and sustainable quality management.

### Literature Review

**Recognition and Organizational Justice: The Foundation of Fairness.** We can look to organizational justice theory to understand why injustice such as not receiving proper acknowledgment affects employees so negatively. Picture justice as a three-legged stool: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. If one plug fails, the employee's perception of fairness collapses. Distributive justice, for example, concerns the fairness of outcomes: "Did I not receive the bonus, promotion, or credit that I deserve based on my contributions?" Procedural justice concerns the fairness of the outcomes processes: "Were the criteria to receive the bonus implemented consistently, with no bias?" Finally, interactional justice, concerns the way an employee is treated through the process with regard to civility: "Was I treated with courtesy and my concerns, if any, heard?" Injustice recognition, unfortunately, violates all three pillars. There is distributive injustice when an employee who worked on a project and, as a result, it is a reward (recognition) taken away. It would be a wonder to see the case as a poor process and not a paradox to see a poor distributive case. Perhaps an employee has no clear guidelines for recording contributions to a project, or if such a guideline does exist, managers overlook it. This leads to a credit assignment process that is foggy and likely based on favoritism. Lastly, to ignore or take someone's contribution is disrespectful. It means you don't matter enough for your contribution to be recognized. That is a violation of interactional justice. Research, stemming from Greenberg, shows that when employees notice injustice, they lose faith in the organization. Their commitment diminishes, their readiness to go the extra mile reduces, and their engagement in counterproductive behaviors, from total withdrawal to sabotage, increases. So, unjust recognition is not a small issue for HR, it is a deep rupture in the relationship between the employer and employee and it destabilizes the entire work atmosphere. **Power, Authority, and the Mechanics of Credit Appropriation.** Why is the theft of credit so common? The answer lies in the nature of power and its distribution in the organizational hierarchy. Ashforth and Anand's research about the "normalization" of unethical behavior can be applied here. In many organizations with stratified structures and weak checks-and-balances (for example, certain family-owned businesses, some academic departments, and organizations in high power-distance cultures), a dangerous norm can develop where the upper echelons of the hierarchy believe they are entitled to the rewards of the work done by those below. It is not uncommon for a manager to take a junior analyst's brilliant proposal, pitch it to senior management, and present it as a "team effort," while claiming credit for the majority of the work, and subsequently receive the promotion or bonus. In a scenario like this, the junior analyst knows that speaking up could jeopardize their career, and so is expected to remain quiet. Behavior may become 'normalized'; it's all part of the culture. The manager may justify it: 'I'm the face of the team,' 'I gave them the opportunity,' 'This is how you get things done at this level.' Subordinates, in turn, may come to expect it; stealing their ideas becomes an unofficial tax for climbing the career ladder. In cultures that disregard questioning authority, this mechanism becomes even more of a taboo. The system is self-perpetuating: power creates the opportunity to steal credit; a successful credit theft gives even more power. Recognition becomes a way to show control; it ensures that power, entitlement, and success is funnelled to the top of the hierarchy, regardless of the talent and effort that is actually present. **Nationality, Color, and the**

**Credibility Deficit** Aspects such as race, class, and gender play a central role in Acker's analyses of injustice in relation to identity. Organizational workplaces are gendered, racially divided, and class structured and mirror the injustices of society. Acker's idea of 'inequality regimes' helps in understanding the interlocking processes, practices, and assumptions that reinforce the bases of inequalities. For example, Acker and Syed peers suggest that, if and whenever, diversity is acknowledged; it is recognized (mostly) in relation to power—asymmetrical relational contexts). A highly recognized and influential (albeit problematic) paradigm, in this regard, is that which espouses the idea of 'social construction of reality'. The absence of power (and the monopoly of social construction) becomes externalized through social and operational segregation (whether along the lines of race, ethnicity, geography, religion, or something else). For example, in some contexts, a meeting may be dominated (and privilege accorded to) a participant from the Global North (particularly North America and Western Europe) and their ideas on account of their accent (and passport). In contradistinction, a participant from the Global South (particularly South Asia and the Middle East and Africa) may be highly 'credibility-deficient' (and their ideas accorded significant skepticism and questioning) and may be required to provide endorsement from a Global North (Western) participant for their ideas to be taken seriously. Support is permitted for some team members because of the success of the team, but detriment is only permitted for some members and thus reaffirming some lower, unproven their beliefs. This bias creates a recognition economy with clear tiers. Value is determined by the standing of the contributor, rather than being a function of the contribution itself. Employee A (from an overrepresented nationality) gets credit for the idea. Employee B (from an underrepresented nationality) brings the same idea to the table, but no one notices, and it is later ascribed to someone else. This is frustrating for Employee B, but more damaging is the unrecognized systemic failure in the organization. The organization is stating that no problems is closing the idea. This means high levels of systemic failure. This does more than bias the organization to failure, but it also forces a significant amount of labour, or the idea, for the individual to prove their worth and demonstrate their value. **The Human Cost: Psychological and Behavioural Consequences.** There is an extensive literature coverage on job burnout. I will reference some of Maslach and Leiter's work. I will describe the implications of Chronic Recognition Injustice. What is the stress of job and burnout? What is emotionally the hardest part of work of seeing what you've done go unrecognized? Consequently, employees attempt to protect themselves via cynicism. It renders them emotionally detached to the point where they think nothing they do matters. In most cases the result is chronic stress, depression, and anxiety. People shrink themselves, what is termed as "silenced behaviour" occurs. Employees observing that when they speak up they get punished, as a result, submit to voluntarily absent themselves therefore appear to be present, absent in mind, and fully disengaged—a state known as "quit and stay," in which the most direct consequence for the organization is an increase in turnover intention. The emotional, and psychological contract binding the employee to the organization is absolutely dismantled when the correlation between effort and fair recognition is obliterated. Those who have the psychological contract will exit, resulting in a departure of people to fill positions with their talents. The most long-lasting impact of an organization is to an individual employee. A reconfiguration of personality and orientation towards work can occur from enduring recognition injustice. An employee who is engaged, proactive, and innovative, can slowly transform into an individual who is withdrawn, risk averse, and self protective. The organization does not merely resign itself to losing a happy worker, rather, it is converting a potential leader and innovator into collateral damage. This is not a loss for the individual alone, it is also a considerable setback for the system to lose the ability to develop and maintain a resource. This

is a direct contradiction of any assertion of true quality management, which is reliant on the optimum use and growth of the people involved, as it severely limits the organization's human potential.

### **Auto-Ethnography and Global Evidence: The Human Story and the Big Data Picture the Lived Experience: An Auto-Ethnographic Account**

Models and statistics can tell a part of the story, while the data and human experience tell the rest. To close this gap, this research study engages in auto-ethnographic reflection the utilization of personal experience as a means for understanding a cultural phenomenon — and juxtaposes this with the narratives in the stories derived from the in-depth interviews. These concepts of injustice are vividly and painfully illustrated. One such concept is a phenomenon, for lack of a better term, called the 'catastrophic reset.' One interviewee, whom we will refer to as Amir, worked for 15 years with a multinational engineering firm in the Middle East. Amir was a senior engineer who mentored countless other engineers and had an unblemished record for his entire career. His career, however, was erased due to a single, minor, internal calculation error that was discovered while preparing a massive project report, and was completely corrected prior to any impacts to external stakeholders. He was summoned for a meeting that was not for the purpose of coaching but for the purpose of reprimanding him. He was removed from the project leadership. Most devastating, he was ordered to complete the entire training process for his replacement, an expatriate from a Western country who was less experienced. There was a significant amount of symbolic violence here. His 15 years of experience, credibility, and trust meant nothing. The knowledge he possessed was still valuable to the company but the person that had accumulated that knowledge was irrelevant. The removal of such individuals often seems paradoxical, as they do not really participate in the processes at hand. For example, Sarah, a marketing expert in Southeast Asia, described having to build the entire creative strategy of a regional campaign. Upon winning a significant industry award, the firm's commemorative photograph included the country manager and the junior expatriate consultant who came on board in the last month. Sarah, who developed the central concept of the campaign, was neither in the photograph, nor in the press statement, and was awarded nothing as part of the winning team. Maria, a researcher from Latin America at a European university, had to watch as her name was relegated to the fourth author position on a paper, she had written the first draft of, after her senior professor decided his PhD student (from the host country) "needed the lead authorship for their career." A common thread in all these accounts is the pervasive fear that keeps people silent. It includes fear of losing one's job, fear of being retaliated against in a performance appraisal, fear of being labeled "difficult" or "non team player" which is common in the field for many migrant employees, and fear of losing their work authorization and being compelled to leave the host country. Fear perpetuates the systems of injustice. In this case, it compels people to comply and teaches workers to marginalize themselves, grinning while credits for their efforts are given to others. **The Global Scale: What the Numbers Tell Us.** The aforementioned subjective reality is not an illusion; it is hard, global data. Major workforce surveys show evidence of the crisis of recognition. Over and over, Gallup's State of the Global Workplace report shows a major employee feeling of being under appreciated. Over 60% of employees feel under appreciated and over 60% feel their contributions are disregarded. This is a global problem and it is an epidemic of disengagement. The OECD shows more granular data about the disengagement epidemic. Ethnic minorities and migrant workers report lower scores about being appreciated and being treated fairly, even given the same performance ratings and output metrics. This shows that the bias is in the perception of work and not in the work itself.

The business impact is serious. There is a correlation between low recognition and high turnover. Employees feel unseen are more likely to exit their jobs. Employees likely to exit their jobs are over 31% under appreciated employees and over 45% under appreciated employees. This leads to a huge loss in productivity and a massive financial problem in recruitment when it comes to knowledge intensive industries. Moreover, studies find that credit misappropriation and psychological safety, the belief that a team is safe enough to take interpersonal risks, are strongly negatively correlated. Teams that lack psychological safety do not innovate. They play it safe, conceal errors, and stagnate. Thus, the global evidence places recognition injustice not as a soft "people problem," but as a hard operational pathology that affects a company's talent pipeline, ability to innovate, and bottom line.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design: Capturing Cause and Effect**

The study employs a more complex quantitative survey design that is both times lagged and constructed to avoid common method bias, where survey response is potentially influenced by the respondent's emotional state by asking people questions at the same time. To avoid this issue, we obtained data in three separate waves, to capture how perceptions at one time influence feelings and intentions at a later time.

Time 1 (T1): Independent variables and mediators. Perceived workplace recognition justice ("Is credit given fairly here?") and ethical leadership of direct supervisors (supervisor\self "Does my boss act with integrity and fairness?")

Time 2 (T2 – 4 weeks later): Outcomes of psychological well-being. Scales for psychological distress (stress and anxiety) and work engagement (energy, dedication and absorption) are obtained.

Time 3 (T3 – another 4 weeks later): Outcomes of behavioural intentions. Turnover intention (retention "How likely are you to look for a new job?") and silence behaviour ("Do you withhold ideas or concerns at work?").

### **Participants**

The research participants included **312** employees from the middle and senior levels. They were from a variety of hybrid public sector (e.g., government ministries) and private sector (e.g., local and multinational companies) organizational structures in Pakistan. The sample included foreign employees working in Pakistan. The location of the study participants is crucial. As a developing economy having a complex colonial background and being an active player in the international labour market, Pakistan is a transitional economy, offering a micro study of the workplace global power relations, nationality-based stratifications, and local culture contiguities. There is a phenomenon of recognition injustice that can be studied within this context.

**Measurement Instruments and Reliability****Table 1. Measurement Scales and Reliability Statistics**

Variable	Construct Description	Sample Item	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Recognition Justice	Fairness in receiving credit for one's work	In this organization, people get credit for the work they actually do.	0.88
Ethical Leadership	Leader integrity, fairness, and ethical conduct	My supervisor listens to what employees have to say.	0.91
Psychological Distress	Stress, anxiety, and emotional strain	In the last month, I have felt nervous, stressed, or anxious at work.	0.86
Turnover Intention	Intent to leave the organization	I am actively searching for a job outside this organization.	0.83
Work Engagement	Energy, dedication, and involvement	At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	0.89
Silence Behavior	Withholding ideas or concerns	I withhold work-related suggestions from my supervisor even when I think they are good ideas.	0.79

**Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)****Measurement Model Validation****Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Fit Indices**

Fit Index	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
CFI	0.94	$\geq 0.90$	Excellent fit
TLI	0.92	$\geq 0.90$	Excellent fit
RMSEA	0.05	$\leq 0.08$	Excellent
$\chi^2/df$	2.31	$\leq 3$	Acceptable

**Structural Model Results****Table 3. Structural Path Coefficients**

Hypothesis	Path	Beta ( $\beta$ )	p-value	Result
H1	Recognition Justice $\rightarrow$ Psychological Distress	-0.42	< .001	Supported
H2	Recognition Justice $\rightarrow$ Turnover Intention	-0.37	< .001	Supported
H3	Ethical Leadership $\rightarrow$ Recognition Justice	0.51	< .001	Supported

**Discussion**

The results obtained from the metrics and testimonies of the employees lead to the conclusion that injustice of recognition operates as a measurable and detrimental toxin within the organization's bloodstream. It is not a deficiency in a "soft-skill" or a simple communication breakdown. It is systemic, and forecast psychological damage, the structural breakdown of the organization, and the absence of management by objectives. When the allocation of recognition is the result of power, and not of ethics, it becomes an engine for inequality. It teaches employees that recognition, visibility, and advancement have nothing to do with the work one does, but with social and professional connections, with one's look, and with one's place of

origin. It creates a culture of silence, where individuals observe, learn, and determine that the safest strategy is to 'keep one's head down.' The possibility of 'perverse incentives' is the most disturbing insight from the evidence collected. A 'high performing' manager is often perceived as someone delivering results when in fact, he or she is a master of credit collection and political control, and not... a true people developer. Such results are achieved at the expense of disempowered and silenced teams whose best work is being reclaimed by the leader. The current system encourages the short-term outcome that rewards irrational managerial practices which are detrimental in the future to the talent and innovation that the organization needs to foster. This is a dangerous cycle that is difficult to break. In addition, favouritism, social-networking and discrimination based on nationality within the evaluation process not only harms individuals, but also the entire evaluative system within the organization. The evaluation of performance becomes corrupted. This reinforces the phenomenon of the "professional persona": a person who is skilled in self-marketing and political maneuvering. It also, and even more severely, marginalizes the quiet, reflective contributors and true innovators. The organization is then not evaluating the presence of true competence or latent potential, but the ability to survive in an unfair system. For a system that claims to promote quality, this is a significant and possibly deadly flaw. Establishing a quality management system on a foundation of biased data and inequitable recognition is akin to building on sand.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

This research provides a solid and distinct mandate: organizations need to stop the antiquated practice of considering recognition as a discretionary, managerial, mood, and whim, or as some sort of symbolic ritual done during an annual award ceremony. Such practices are not just antiquated; they are structurally a menace. It is now a matter of basic recognition that recognition needs to be elevated to a core ethical principle and a key principle of sound management, and be governed by formal, clear, and enforceable mechanisms. When recognition is given on the informal "goodwill" of some individual leaders, it becomes discretionary, uneven, and extremely prone to favouritism, bias, and power abuse. Informality, in practice, is a reward for proximity to power rather than contribution, visibility over value, and compliance over creativity. The reputations of such organizations will foster long term risk of environments of silent exploitation. Over time, they cultivate a reputation—not always visible externally at first, but deeply felt internally—as environments of silent exploitation. Employees may physically present and fulfill their part of the contracts, but they emotionally and mentally detach themselves. This gives rise to 'organizational presenteeism' and this drain trust, discretionary effort, and creativity. The first to go are the most capable and ethically guided employees, meaning those with the most freedom and defined commitment to the projected mission. What remains is a strategically dangerous hollowed out workforce an innovation incapable, learning, and adaptive change unresponsive organization. The context is such that quality initiatives do not fail due to the wrong processes, but rather due to the uncovered human effort that such processes require. The impacts on Human Resource Management (HRM) are both profound and unavoidable. The function of HR cannot be viewed simply from a policy writing and a compliance driven perspective. It must now be the constructor of the frameworks of fairness, that builds and sustains systems that pro-actively prevent recognition injustice, as opposed to only being equipped to respond to it after harm has been done. Values statements, motivational posters, and symbolic declarations about "respect" and a "people-first culture" are unsupported systems and are, in fact, detrimental by hiding structural inequities with rhetoric. This more systemic change requires HR to forego temporary and symbolic practices in favour of systematic,



auditable, and enforceable practices including, but not limited to the following: **1. Attribution Transparency.** There must be rules, in every organization, about how the assignment and communication of credit, whether for ideas, work, products, or outcomes, is documented. This must include contribution documentation, attribution logs, standardized frameworks, and clear expectations for recognition in discussions, syntheses, and communications, both internal and external. The more transparent a system is, the lesser the ambiguity, and the lesser the ambiguity, the lesser the likelihood of appropriation. **2. Reporting Options that Are Safe and Serve Protection of Anonymity.** Reporting options related to recognition issues, such as theft of credit, theft of ideas, and retaliatory exclusion, should provide case mechanisms that are genuinely safe. These should be independent, safe, and guarantee non-retaliation. Without psychological safety, the injustice remains invisible and self-perpetuating. **3. Incorporation of Fairness Metrics into Leadership Evaluation.** The evaluation of leadership performance must include fairness of recognition as measurable metrics. These may consist of credit allocation perceptions at the team level, high-attrition turnover among the performers, and creditable leadership inclusiveness feedback. Leaders who are unjustly rewarded in the work of others should face repercussions like they would for monetary and compliance issues. **4. Ethical and Bias-Aware Leadership Training.** The injustice of recognition is often caused by unconscious biases, hierarchical entitlement, and cultural assumptions about authority and intelligence. Therefore, the leadership development programs need to fill the gap in the absence of technical skills and include the ethics of power, the responsible use of power, and the recognition of the moral implications of power. Training should be ongoing, evidence-based, and directly tied to mechanisms of accountability. At a broader level, responsibility is not with individual organizations. Industry associations, professional bodies, and even international quality and standards organizations like the ISO, have a role to play. Just as standards exist for product quality, environmental responsibility, and information security, there is a case to made for formal standards or guidelines for ethical people management and fair recognition practices. Including criteria like these in the accreditation and certification process will prove that recognition justice is not a “soft” issue, but rather, a core principle of organizational quality and sustainability. In the global economy, recognition injustice is part of the larger fabric of labour inequality. It involves class, gender, race, nationality, and contractual precarity, and often exacerbates existing power asymmetries. The systematic denial of credit to certain groups as others receive visibility, authority, and rewards creates inequality on a global scale. Therefore, to combat this, the system must have structured inter-level efforts. From the individual manager who consciously determines to share credit, and to the organization that values fair systems, and the global community that advocates for changing ethical standards, will create the desired systemic change. In relation to modern organizational frameworks, the study presents an empirically proven adage: justice without recognition is an empty gesture. Its outcome is simply the wrapping of inequity within a veneer of professionalism. It may normalize injury through silence, but such a practice is injurious. It is also exploitative, though in a more sophisticated, and thus, more insidious, manner. It is possible to build organizations that are sustainable, innovative, and truly human, and that possess at the core of their being, genuine, and ethically grounded quality. To do so, we must dismantle the biased apparatus of credibility, and make the democratization of dignity central to our organizational development frameworks: where contributions are visible, where recognition is collective, and where human dignity is not determined by one’s proximity to decision-making authority. This is not an easy task. It is designed to confront oppressive structures, and it places the beneficiaries of such structures in a position of discomfort. It calls for unflinching moral resolve. The findings of this research, and the lived

experiences embedded within, have shown the high cost of inaction. It is important to note that organizations that do not act will not simply be 'talent divested' or 'reputationally challenged.' They will be delegitimized. In contrast, organizations that do choose to recognize justice will build the basis of a workplace culture that is more ethical, but also more robust, more innovative, and truly excellent.

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