

Anti-Racism Report

September 2021 – December 2021



THE IMMIGRANT
EDUCATION SOCIETY



Centre for
Newcomers



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CALGARY



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Department of Research and Program Development

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Disclosure Statement

The authors of this research and evaluation report are paid through the Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) funding.

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Acronyms

CENC	Calgary East Zone Newcomers Collaborative
CFN	Centre for Newcomers
FCSSAA	Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta
ISC	Immigrant Services Calgary
ISOs	Immigrant-Serving Organizations
TIES	The Immigrant Education Society

Data Codes for Interviews

FG-Number	Focus group with the interview sequence
I-Number	Interview participant with the interview sequence

Section 1: Executive Summary

This document presents the results of the research portion of the Empowering Communities Together Anti-Racism Initiative led by The Immigrant Education Society (TIES), the Centre for Newcomers (CFN), Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC), and the Calgary East Zone Newcomers Collaborative (CENC), generously funded by a grant from the Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA).

This report describes the pandemic context from which this initiative addressing racism in Calgary emerged, the theoretical and conceptual framework employed in the analysis, and the methodology followed in collecting data. It discusses survey, interview, and focus group data gathered from the implementation of a series of newcomer self-defence sessions organized by CFN, and the feedback and outputs from an anti-racism online event titled the 'Unconference' organized by ISC.

Research for this report examined experiences of racism from clients of the proponent agencies and found they can be grouped into 5 broad themes: (1) Intergroup Hostility and Stereotyping, (2) Language and Racism, (3) Workplace Discrimination, (4) Racial Biases in Education, and (5) Sexual Harassment and Public Safety. Discussion of these themes using the input of Unconference participants yielded avenues for action through the consideration of individual identities and their agency in spaces of interaction with diverse groups. The series of recommendations emerging from this report centre on considering how peoples' diverse intersecting identities interact in public, workplace, educational, and virtual spaces. Actions to be taken against racism in the community start with an understanding of our roles within these interactive spaces, whether we are influential over that space, or play a more marginal role. Policies, practices, and interventions can provide resources, training, and action-taking in ensuring a balance within those spaces so that the expression of marginalized identities is not suppressed or abused.

Section 2: Context

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light the many inequalities and inequities faced by members of immigrant, newcomer, and racialized communities. Pandemic hardships experienced by a wide segment of the population has led some to scapegoat these groups, placing blame on their cultural practices and ethnic backgrounds for the rise and spread of the virus in Alberta. Incidences of racism and discrimination have been documented across the media, leaving community members feeling fearful and insecure.

To respond to acts of racial discrimination brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, various community organizations have launched anti-racism action plans that invite the general public to revisit and deliberate on issues that affect immigrant, newcomer, and racialized communities. However, in order to develop anti-racism action plans that more effectively address some of its root causes, an understanding of individual experiences with racism throughout different spaces of interaction is needed. Using the concepts of “intersectionality” and “spatial agency” helps ground this understanding. The former addresses how people’s multi-layered identities overlap to create different forms of discrimination and privilege (Sisson Runyan, 2018), while the latter foregrounds the physical and social environments that shape how such roles and identities interact.

To contribute to the growing number of anti-racism initiatives in Calgary, three organizations - Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC), the Centre for Newcomers (CFN), and The Immigrant Education Society (TIES) - came together to continue the conversation and work on anti-racism efforts in the city. The organizations introduced two events that shed light on race and racism in the city. The first was a series of self-defence sessions organized by CFN and facilitated by martial arts experts in the community. These weekly workshops provided key lessons and tools to empower immigrant, newcomer, and racialized communities to deal with potential physical and mental harm from individuals who engage in racist behaviours toward them.

During the self-defence sessions, the research team from TIES distributed surveys and subsequently conducted individual and group interviews to understand participants’ experiences of racism. Data from the interviews were used to set the stage for the second event: the Empowering Communities Unconference facilitated by ISC. For the 24 November 2021 event, participants drove the content and flow of the subject. Participants from academia, government, industry, and the general public gathered online and were provided with real-life situations of racist experiences drawn from the earlier interviews conducted for this study. They were tasked to react, reflect, and define actions on a series of scenarios presented to them. The main goals of the six-hour online event were (1) to delve deep into participants’ experiences of racism and (2) to develop action items and plans in order to create responsive and relevant anti-racist practices.

This report synthesizes key findings and analysis from the anti-racism work in Calgary described above. The intent is to provide exploratory questions and discussion for policymakers and practitioners to understand how identities and notions of spatial agency affect broader anti-racism initiatives.

Section 3: Conceptual Framework

This research draws on the concepts of intersectionality and spatial agency to explore how multiple identities across different environments trigger social, cultural, and economic advantages or disadvantages as they interact with each other.

3.1. Intersectionality

Intersectionality examines race, gender, and class as distinct social categories that produce social inequality (Collins and Bilge, 2016). It is also an analytical tool used to understand “the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences” (Collins and Bilge, 2016, p. 2). A typology of three distinct intersectional approaches includes (1) intercategorical complexity, (2) intracategorical complexity, and anticategorical complexity (McCall, 2005). “Intercategorical” explores multiple structures and variations in the intersections of individual identities. “Intracategorical” underlines the importance of giving voice to particular social groups underrepresented and situated in complex and oppressed social contexts. “Anticategorical” is a system-centred model that views social life as complex and fluid and incomprehensible if viewed only through the lenses of existing analytical categories. These approaches illustrate the multi-dimensional capacity of individuals’ social life and events, and their broader connections within the social sphere.

Anti-racism studies address how intersectional identities can trigger different forms of discrimination and privilege (Sisson Runyan, 2018). In light of the scholarship, five notable areas have been identified. These five include (1) structural biases in transition to work and workplace participation (Kyeremeh et al., 2021; Liu, 2019), (2) xenophobia and micro-aggressions in community and public safety (Guo and Guo, 2021; Olasunkanmi-Alimi, 2021), (3) multifaceted oppression in accessing social resources (Monchalin et al., 2020; Nguyen et al, 2020), (4) racism in environmental contexts (O’Mahony and Clark, 2018; Waldron, 2020), and (5) vulnerable experiences in the education system (Bailey, 2016; Liu, 2017). To address and alleviate these discriminatory experiences, many community-based organizations have organized various anti-racism initiatives which include, but are not limited to, anti-racism research work, anti-racism and cultural diversity training, the formation of EDI (equity, diversity, and inclusion) committees, and the hiring of pertinent anti-racism specialists (Cho and Kurpierz, 2020; Denis et al., 2021).

Intersectionality offers three key advantages for this research. First, it recognizes that diversity within social groups is ignored when exploring the complexities of individual identities and group identities. Second, it positions the marginalized experiences of people of colour and other social groups at the centre, thus linking them to the broader discourse of analysis. Third, it demonstrates how social inequality manifests in the interconnected domains of power and systemic institutional relations. Intersectionality seeks strategies and actionable items that illustrate the needs of achieving racial justice, recognize and respect difference, advocate community empowerment, and promote social equality and social change in post-pandemic times in Calgary and beyond.

3.2. Spatial Agency

The spaces in which people (and their intersectional identities) occupy can affect the way race and anti-racism initiatives are perceived and received. Spaces are more than the tangible objects and settings (i.e., the physical attributes) that define and shape an individual's experience with specific places. They are “*produced* through the establishment or refusal of relations” (Massey, 2009, p. 17, emphasis in original), implying they are socially constructed. Spaces are constantly being built and rebuilt from the cultural norms, the economic activities, and the

political values that individuals and/or groups bring into them (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 2009). Under this logic, spaces are not politically neutral; they involve issues of power where racism can occur. For example, the perceived dominant individual (e.g., the colonizer, the racist, etc.) can use one or several of their intersecting identities (e.g., culture, language, religion, and/or socio-economic status) to control physical and social spaces they occupy, while the person discriminated against (e.g., Indigenous, local, or victims of racism) is perceived to have little or less control over the objects and processes situated within the same spaces (Nash, 2004).

Miraftab (2004) extends the politics of space by highlighting *invited* and *invented* spaces. *Invited* spaces rest on formal and pre-planned programs where background information, participant selection, and knowledge dissemination are defined and applied by particular authorities or institutions – a vertical, top-down tactic to designing and deploying a particular activity. *Invented* spaces are informal in scope and are established from a common set of citizen-driven socio-political interests. These spaces are generally supported by grassroots movements and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) whose horizontal, bottom-up approach differs from invited spaces. Recognizing how spaces are designed is important in the planning of a multicultural (or anti-racist) city (Qadeer, 2015). Physical spaces can reinforce stereotypes and “spatial agency” in dominant groups (Maass et al., 2009). Likewise, social spaces can allot greater agency in groups possessing power, limiting the same in those with more marginalized identities or roles. However, Schneider and Till (2009) argue that social space is dynamic and its production is a continuous process. The consideration of physical environments and social spaces can be useful in anti-racism efforts in that it provides a springboard for practical application. Recognizing who has power and who does not in spaces where people meet and interact allows planners, policymakers, and practitioners to consider what aspects of the context and environment need to be altered (Tam, 2015, 2018, 2019) in order to create equitable and safe spaces.

The conceptual framework of intersectionality and spatial agency plays an important role in the context of anti-racism efforts in Calgary spearheaded by ISC, CFN, and TIES for two key reasons. First, it provides a conceptual foundation to unpacking and understanding experiences of racism across different spaces, either physical (from the self-defence workshops provided by CFN) or virtual (from the Empowering Communities Unconference hosted by ISC). Second, it brings attention to physical attributes and overlapping social identities which help design equitable spaces for those participating in anti-racism works. Combining these theoretical concepts, the agent effects change by empowering others to ‘take control’ over their environment, to make it participative rather than opportunistic, proactive rather than reactive (Schneider and Till, 2009).

The following sections will delve further into race and racism in Calgary, and provide exploratory questions and discussion for policymakers and practitioners to understand how identities and space affect broader anti-racism initiatives.

Section 4: Methodology

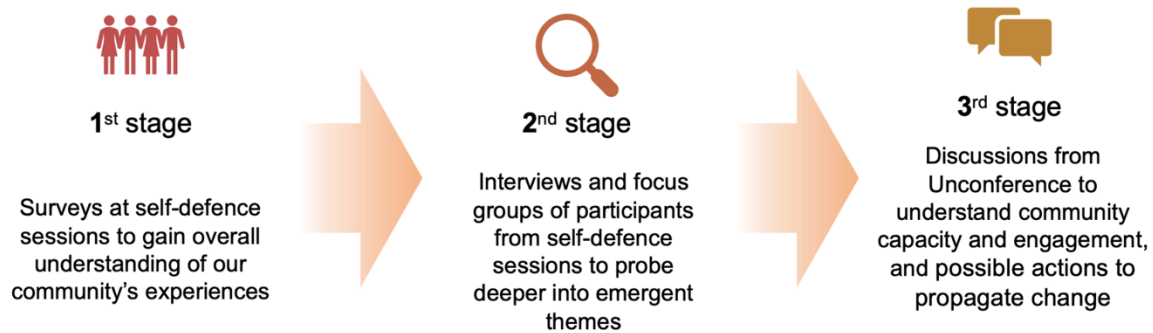


Figure 1. Research Stages.

4.1. Grounded Theory

The data gathered for this research draws on an exploratory grounded theory approach in conjunction with practical action research. Grounded theory is a process of iterative, cyclic, and interactive investigation used to move from collected data towards a theory proposing explanatory relationships between major categories of the data (Glaser and Strauss, 2017). Practical action research involves collaborative work between researchers and practitioners to identify potential problems along with their underlying causes and possible actions to propagate change (Schmuck, 2006).

This project started with quantitative data collected via in-person survey. Results from these provided the basis for key themes and issues that were further probed in subsequently collected qualitative data. The first stage involved surveys distributed during the CFN-facilitated self-defence sessions, from which participants were recruited for further interviews and focus groups. The data from these was analyzed and five key themes emerged. These themes were used to inform the next stage of the project where participants discussed and developed action items. Each stage of the data gathering process was informed by its predecessor, with the last stage of the project designed with practical action in mind.

4.2. Methods

Surveys consisting of 18 questions were collected from participants across 14 self-defence sessions hosted by CFN. Additionally, an ethnographic observational method was employed by researchers at these sessions to provide context for the survey data (Baker, 2006). They collected field notes and commented on similarities and differences between each session. A total of 206 surveys were collected from 28 August to 5 November 2021.

Participants were also asked about their willingness to participate in a more in-depth qualitative interview/focus group regarding racism and discrimination in Calgary; 26 participants consented to participate in the project for a total of 18 interviews and three focus groups. Interviews and focus groups were conducted in a semi-structured format and centred around two key questions: (1) Have you ever witnessed or been the victim of discrimination in Calgary? (2) What are some suggestions you would give to immigrant-serving organizations to provide related programs to tackle racism and discrimination in Canada? The first question sought to unpack and understand the participant's experiences or observations with racism and discrimination. The second question endeavoured to gain some insight into racialized minorities' ideas about actionable anti-racism strategies to drive change.

Five themes from the interviews/focus groups were analyzed and introduced at the Empowering Communities Unconference facilitated by ISC on 24 November 2021. The five themes were:

1. Hostility and stereotyping
2. Language and racism
3. Workplace discrimination
4. Racial biases in education
5. Sexual harassment and public safety

The six-hour online 'unconference' event included participants from academia, government, industry, and the general public. They were tasked to identify, react, reflect, and devise possible actions to propagate change in response to real-life situations of racism from racialized communities in Calgary.

This research also adheres to guidelines set in the tri-council policy statement¹ on the ethical conduct for research involving humans (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2018).

¹ The Tri-council policy statement on the ethical conduct of research involving humans is detailed here: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2018.html

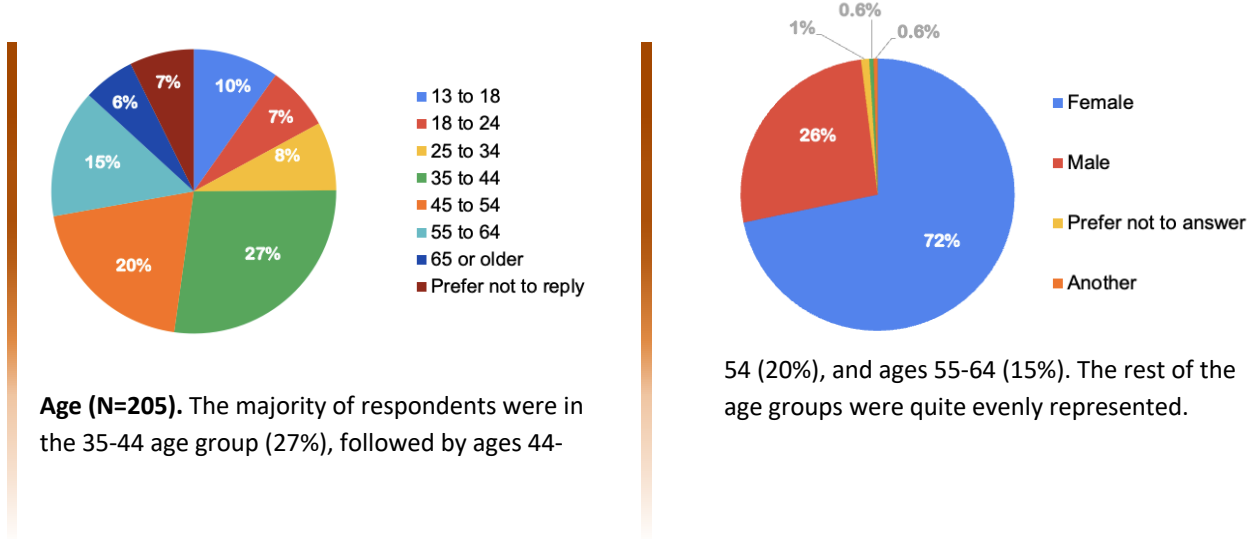
Section 5: Self-Defence Sessions

Facilitated by CFN, the self-defence sessions were the starting point of the data collection for this research project. These sessions came to light as a way of building self-belongingness and bolstering confidence among members of immigrant, newcomer, and racialized communities experiencing discrimination in Calgary. Hate crimes in Canada have been steadily increasing in the past few years with ethnic- and race-motivated hate crimes almost doubling from 884 cases in 2019 to 1,594 cases in 2020 (Statistics Canada, 2020). Mediating factors contributing to the increase in racially-charged crimes were exacerbated by the effects COVID-19 had on perceptions of blame, and the ongoing backlash and criticism directed towards racialized minorities (see Elias et al., 2021; Esses and Hamilton, 2021; Human Rights Watch, 2020; Reny and Barreto, In press; White, 2020).

To counteract the negative experiences of these racialized groups, interventions such as CFN’s self-defence sessions, were implemented with the intention to teach important life skills and strengthen minority group identification. The latter was realized by having self-defence sessions separated in accordance with ethnic group membership to strengthen in-group identification among participants in each session. In accordance with Branscombe’s Rejection Identification model (see Branscombe et al., 1999), perceived discrimination has a negative impact on well-being, but highly identifying with one’s minority group serves as a buffer towards these negative effects. If an individual identifies more with their in-group, this has protective effects and is correlated with positive effects on well-being. The following results show the responses from the surveys gathered at each self-defence session.

5.1. Demographic Breakdown

This section details who the self-defence session participants were, their age, gender, language, formal immigration status as well generational self-affiliation as immigrants.

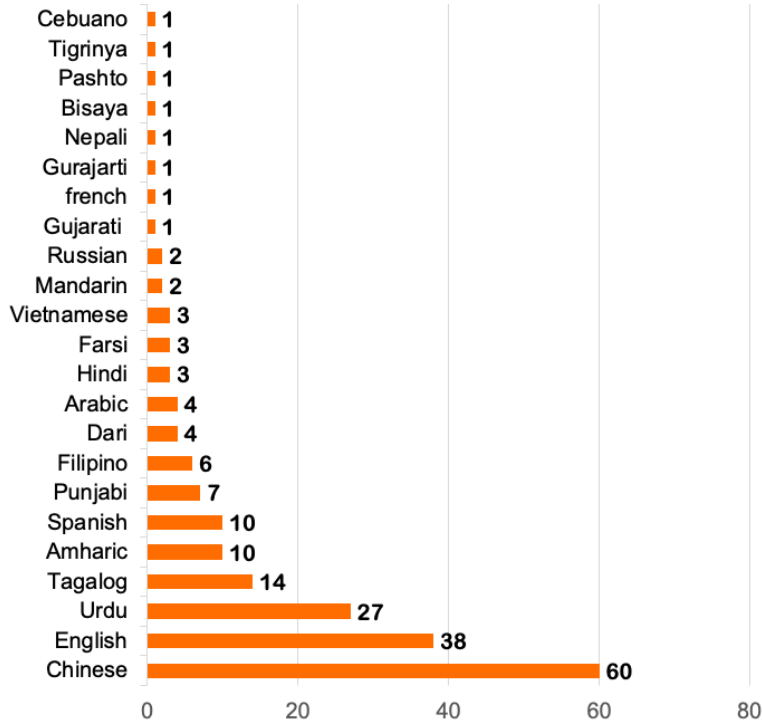


Age (N=205). The majority of respondents were in the 35-44 age group (27%), followed by ages 44-

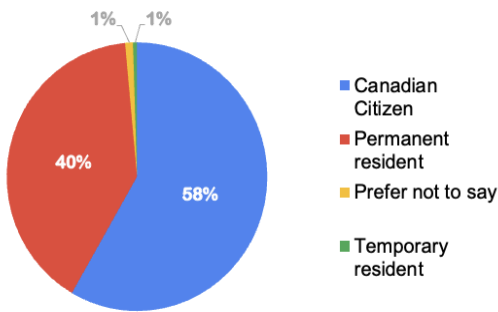
54 (20%), and ages 55-64 (15%). The rest of the age groups were quite evenly represented.

Gender (N=205). Respondents overwhelmingly identified as female (72%), with 26% identifying as

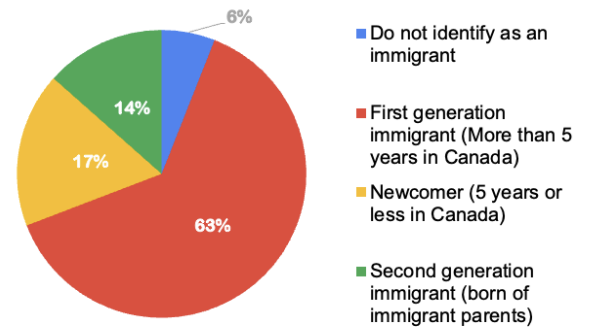
male, and 0.6% selecting other



Language (N=205). The majority of survey respondents were first-language Chinese speakers (n=60), followed by English (n=35), Urdu (n=27), Tagalog (n=13), Spanish (n=10) and Amharic (n=10).



Generational Status (N=201). The majority of respondents were first-generation immigrants (83%), followed by 17% newcomers, 14% second-generation immigrants and 6% not identifying as an immigrant.



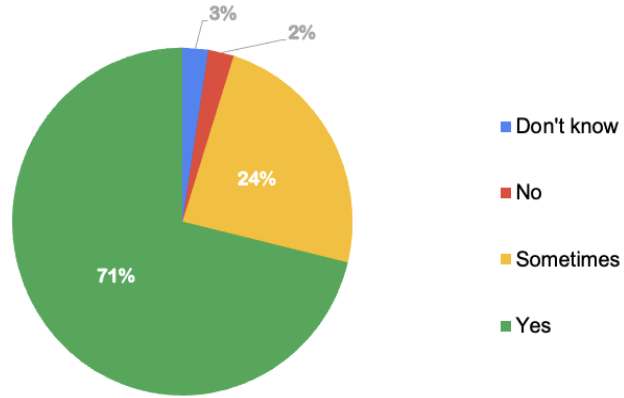
Immigration Status (N=204). 58% of respondents were Canadian citizens, while 40% of the rest were Permanent residents, and 1% were temporary residents.

5.2. Survey Data

The following details the participants' responses to the survey questions. For each summary of responses, a selection of qualitative explanations gleaned from the participants' answers is provided for context.

Do you feel safe in Calgary? (N=205)

The majority of respondents (71%) stated they felt safe in Calgary, while 21% said they sometimes felt safe, 3% didn't know, and 2% did not feel safe.



Why or why not?

Sometimes:

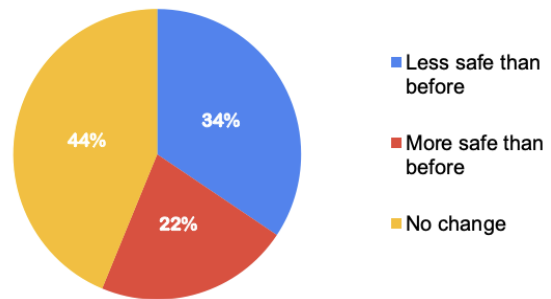
- A lot of news shows that Asians are targets of racism.
- Worse than Eastern Canada (NB).
- I have heard that there were thieves around. People have guns and I am afraid those people will be racist against Asians.

Yes:

- Because my community is very supportive.
- Low theft rate, very secure.
- Policemen do a good job!
- Very peaceful, friendly people.
- I feel safe in Calgary because I trust the police department to help when needed.
- Because of the frequent martial arts programs I attend

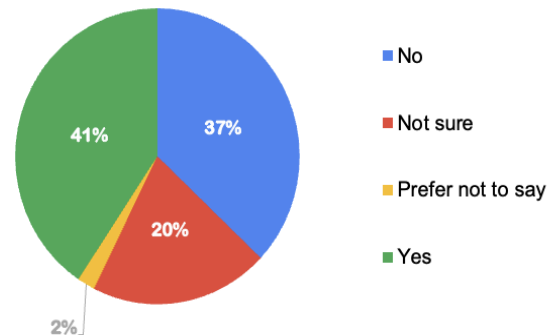
Thinking over the past year, do you feel: (N=192)

44% felt no change in safety, 34% feel less safe than before, and 22% feel safer than before.



Have you ever witnessed or experienced discrimination in Calgary? (N=197)

41% stated they witnessed or experienced discrimination in Calgary, 37% states they did not experience any discrimination, 20% weren't sure, and 2% preferred to not respond.



What do you think the government can do for your safety?

- Have more training and education available.
- Hope the government can promote anti-racism more broadly.
- Implement more measures against racism.
- Improve CTrain station safety.
- More police, faster reaction, police sometimes are not safe.
- More strict laws and combat discrimination and racism on the organization level.
- Stop Asian hate.
- Answer the phone immediately 911, best in Mandarin

Are there any laws or specific things that need changing?

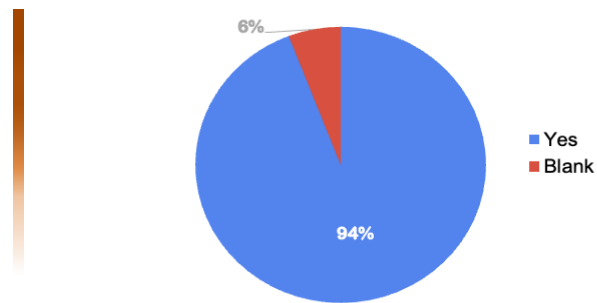
- Enhance laws to protect women and kids.
- I don't have much awareness of the laws but would like to learn.
- Ban fire guns.
- We need to make specific laws for hate and racial crime.
- Set secure law policies, publish the criminals.

What would you like to see from the Calgary Police Services for your safety?

- Help those who don't understand English
- More visibility
- More police patrol in the community
- Enhance their presence at community events when possible.
- Better judgement skills
- Apartment homeless-feeling unsafe
- More patrolling in dark areas sometimes in Parks or Bus stops
- More policing on discrimination

Did you find the training helpful? (N=206)

Majority (94%) stated the training was helpful, while the rest (6%) left the question blank.



5.3. Summary of Survey Findings

The majority of the participants (71%) perceive Calgary to be “relatively safe”, while 34% and 24% feel “somewhat safe” and “are not sure”, respectively. In contrast, some of the participants (34%) feel “less safe than before”, while others (41%) indicated they have either experienced or witnessed discrimination in Calgary. Also significant is the proportion (20%) that express uncertainty in having experienced or witnessed acts of racism, or who prefer not to speak out about it (2%). In qualitative answers, participants expressed fear of an increase in hate crimes in Calgary, and were concerned about their safety. Overall, the majority of the participants (94%) found the sessions helpful. A generational discrepancy was theorized with more recently arrived immigrants likely to feel safer than second generation immigrants, who have been in Canada for a significant number of years. This is further detailed in the subsequent analysis below.

5.4. Observations and Field Notes

The self-defence sessions (summarized in Table 1 as observations and field notes) were separated into two parts; an empowerment talk followed by self-defence training and techniques. While the empowerment talk became a

rallying point for participants, some of the sessions did not acknowledge race, racism, and discrimination. This led to a lack of understanding regarding the purpose of the self-defence sessions, which was intended to teach vulnerable populations how to protect themselves in race-motivated attacks and other similar situations. Nevertheless, the empowerment talk emphasized strength and empowerment through awareness and self-defence, with other talks focusing on disabling attackers and escaping harassment and violence.

In a session where the empowerment talk was delivered by a police officer to South Asian women, they encouraged the women to report hate crime incidents even if the outcomes do not result in an arrest or other forms of police action, such as an investigation. The officer then alluded that the reports could be used for statistical reasons to form a case that claims that something has to be done towards the rise of hate crimes in Calgary. However, there was one empowerment talk that mentioned safety and racist behaviours (see Ethiopian men in Table 1). The talk was held with an advanced level of English proficiency, resulting in confusion among participants. The language barrier presented itself as an issue in other sessions, such as for Latina and Ethiopian women. In the former session, it affected their engagement and participation as the workshop progressed. In the latter session, one of the participants relied on a translator. In both cases, limited knowledge of the English language restricted participants' understanding of the self-defence contents and techniques, limiting their abilities to communicate with instructors and volunteers.

For some participants, being surrounded by individuals who were of the same gender and language group facilitated in creating supportive and welcoming spaces. Furthermore, it was a way to respect cultural and religious protocols, separating men and women in accordance to, for example, Muslim teachings and principles. Based on participant observations, many of the participants felt timid to be around unfamiliar people at the beginning of each empowerment talk. But upon realizing they were surrounded by individuals who had similar anti-racial or immigration experiences, an unspoken bond was formed and participants became fully engaged in the session.

Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Chinese men	28 August 2021	John G Diefenbaker High School	21
The focus was on empowering participants through self-defence awareness. There were no discussions about racism or experiences of racism.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Chinese women	4 September 2021	Diefenbaker High School Playground	45
As most participants had relative low English proficiency, it could be more beneficial if language support was provided throughout the session.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
South Asian men	12 September 2021	Village Square - Calgary Public Library	6
Many of the participants were part of families that attended other sessions that were synchronous.			

Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
South Asian women	12 September 2021	Village Square - Calgary Public Library	22
There was emphasis on escaping dangerous situations. The Police Liaison Officer encouraged women to report hate crime incidents even if they do not rise to the level of an arrest or police action.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Pakistani women	12 September 2021	Pakistani Canada Association Calgary	23
We did not attend this session but received surveys that were administered by the Centre for Newcomers on our behalf.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Ethiopian men	18 September 2021	TIES Whitehorn Building	8
Safety and racist behaviours were discussed in a very high-level language. As a result, some participants were unable to fully engage and participate in the session.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Latina women	2 October 2021	Saddletowne YMCA	6
The talk focused on women's empowerment, protecting themselves in dangerous situations, and gender and cultural differences. The language barrier affected participation and engagement in the session.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Filipino men	2 October 2021	Saddletowne YMCA	9
For the entire session, there was no discussion of racism and racist behaviour.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
YW Calgary Women	6 October 2021	YWCA Calgary	15-20
The talk emphasized harassment and violence towards women and focused on female empowerment; it did not include an introduction to domestic abuse or discussion of racism.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Filipino women	9 October 2021	Saddletowne YMCA	10
Empowerment talk focused on providing women with the encouragement to defend themselves.			

Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Ethiopian women	9 October 2021	Saddletowne YMCA	2
There was a language barrier between one of the participants and the instructor; the second participant would translate for the other.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Women	16 October 2021	Akram Jomaa Masjid	16
The session placed emphasis on escaping dangerous situations.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Mixed group	2 November 2021	Village Square	9
The instructor explained that we can only control ourselves and our actions but have the capacity to influence others and their actions.			
Session	When	Where	No. of attendees
Immigrant-serving organization employees	5 November 2021	Village Square	43
There was emphasis on fighting the attacker when needed.			

Table 1. Observations and field notes of the self-defence sessions facilitated by CFN.

5.5. Discussion

While participants expressed an eagerness and enthusiasm for the self-defence sessions, it might be noted that such an intervention is a less common approach to anti-racism. Initially it may seem to contradict more conventional anti-racist strategies that address intergroup contact. According to a scoping review of 37 studies on anti-racism interventions by Hassen et al. (2021), interventions that are meant to improve interactions between racist and racialized groups in a postulated contact space must ensure that (1) the groups have equal status in the contact situation, (2) there is no competition between groups in the contact situation, (3) groups should have superordinate goals in the situation, and (4) the contact situation must be moderated by authorities. Considering none of those conditions were met by the self-defence sessions can be attributed to the fact that they involved only one group – potential subjects of racism - which, moreover, was separated into ethnic or linguistic profile. In addition, issues of race and racism were not always discussed in the sessions, with a greater emphasis on defending against or escaping from a violent attacker, which in the subtext, was the racist. Given also the fact that most modern acts of public

racism are more verbal than physically violent, the immediate utility of the sessions may be brought into question, particularly since the sessions also did not offer tools for verbal “self-defence.”

However, when the sessions are considered in the context of spatial agency, they gain more utility and relevance. Many of the interventions considered by Hassen et al. (2021) tend to target perpetrators of racism, attributing sole agency for change on those who possess power in the racist encounter. Because the target audience for such interventions are racialized groups, the sessions did not seek to evoke change but rather level the balance of power in a contact situation. Many immigrants were eager to gain the confidence to defend themselves despite generally feeling safe in Calgary. There is a growing sense of inevitability that they will experience racist acts despite feeling relatively safe. Conceptually, learning self-defence in the context of an anti-racism initiative is one avenue to instill a sense of control within immigrant participants that they may carry forward in their mindset as they interact publicly with others they may feel are potential racists. While change via conventional anti-racism interventions focuses on having participants from mainstream social groups reassess and reconsider their views, for persons who are more reluctant to embrace change, it falls on the racialized individual to take action on those who are reluctant. As is noted by Pedersen et al. (2005), change is impossible without consequences.

While this section of the report discussed the quantitative results and nominal indications revealed by the surveys, a more qualitative analysis exploring the data more in-depth is conducted subsequent sections.

Section 6: Interviews and Focus Groups

Interviewees and focus group participants were drawn from survey respondents from the Self-Defence sessions who expressed a willingness to speak in greater depth with a researcher from our team. Our interviews and focus group findings are characterized by participants' experiences of racism and discrimination in different spatial contexts, including public safety, language biases, community living, and labour market participation. For the discussion occurring at the 'Unconference', we focused on practical perspectives regarding participants' racism encounters. Guided by intersectionality as our theoretical framework, this section offers an inquiry into how racialized immigrants' lived experiences are constructed by their intersectional identities within different contact spaces. We do not aim to demonstrate the complication of racialized immigrants living and working conditions in the local society. Rather, our goal is to highlight the need to call for institutional actions and social change for racialized communities through the individual narratives and lived experiences captured in this study.

To begin with, we asked participants about their understanding of what racism meant to them. In light of participants' definition on racism, we summarize the following aspects:

- A form of bias towards certain social groups based on their ethnicities.
- Treating people differently and negatively because of their skin colours.
- Making assumptions and labelling certain ethnic groups.
- Verbal and physical harassment in the public sphere.

The above-mentioned definitions from our participants illustrate that racial differences are primarily understood to be traits and capacities, which result in the construction of hierarchies of social oppression. Further, these understandings emphasize how racialization can denote what is normal and natural, acceptable and desirable, superior and inferior. Thus, racialized social construction is subtle and can stifle immigrants' opportunities for social integration.

6.1. Physical Harassment and Public Safety

Ethnic discrimination has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak. Through different media reports and postings, we know that there has been a surge in racism and xenophobia across the country towards Asian Canadians, particularly those of Chinese descent. Our data echoes this as many participants reported such experiences. Particularly, senior racialized immigrants can have a higher likelihood of facing harassment. One respondent pointed out that he was physically abused and terrified at a CTrain station:

That person just came to me and was saying something to me, but I couldn't hear clearly [. . .] He then spat near me and said to me "go back to your country." People walked by, and nobody was willing to help. (FG-3)

In the same vein, an elderly female immigrant indicated that she was verbally abused when she was on a bus.

The person thought I was going to get close to him, and he [yelled] to me. "Don't touch me! You brought the virus to this country!" (I-7)

To react to this insecurity, participants indicated that they tried to avoid going to certain areas in Calgary because they felt unsafe. One male respondent said.

Since the pandemic, we have seen the news and we know the areas that are most likely to have harassment [in Calgary]. We tried never to go to those places. Because people think we are the COVID-19 virus carriers. (I-9)

The above incidents reveal that ethnicity is used to arbitrarily identify and blame those perceived as potential virus carriers. This echoes the survey results indicating a high percentage of respondents that feel safe in their community because they avoid going to places where racist actions against them may occur.

6.2. Racism in Linguistic Discourse

Language and racism are interrelated as racialized immigrants can be treated differently due to their inadequate language proficiency in their host society. Language can be a tool for communication as well as a trigger for racism (Kutoba, 2015). Additionally, it was observed some respondents struggled to identify incidents of racism, often assuming that the perpetrator was just stressed or under pressure from unrelated factors such as work or situation. In this section, we identify that language can be the driving factor for racism. Notably, participant responses suggest gaps in systemic, institutional responses to language barriers in healthcare facilities that can result in racially-charged encounters with racialized immigrants. A senior female immigrant noted that she had been treated unjustly when she was at an X-ray exam. This lady immigrated to Canada under the family class so that she does not speak English well. She explained,

The staff member at the clinic] said long sentences to me, and I did not know how to react. I expressed that I don't know the language [. . .] she lost patience and dumped all the garments on my face [. . .] I had to say sorry to her because I made her unhappy. (FG-3)

This situation resulted in a traumatic experience for the participant with the healthcare system. Instead of facing this dilemma again, she subsequently resorted to 'self-learning' to provide basic medical knowledge to herself and her family. When we asked if she could find a family doctor who speaks her language, she indicated this process was challenging and complicated as she did not know how to go about doing this.

Another participant underlined that his workplace did not allow employees to speak their own language.

Accepting this policy initially, the participant eventually began to question it:

We are talking about something personal. Why [we should follow this policy]? First of all, [we are talking about] experiences [that are] outside of work. Why should we speak in English? Why do [they] need to understand it? Maybe these other people are thinking that we are talking bad things about them. (I-13)

While it is recognized that in some contexts, such as in language learning contexts, English only policies are necessary, our participants' narratives reflect that racism is perpetuated by owners of power and is enacted by those who exercise power within a highly controlled space with a defined hierarchy, namely the workplace. Our next category underscores how racism can occur in the communal space.

6.3. Racial Experience in Communal Context

Interview and focus group participants also indicated that they encounter racism within their communities. One participant indicated that her neighbour, whose family was also from a racialized background treated them differently compared to Caucasian Canadians.

We bought a new townhouse and wanted to [build] a fence between our next-door neighbour. Supposedly, they should split the payment with us. They did that with the Caucasian neighbour but not with us [. . .] Their five-year-old kid threw stones at our backdoor and told us “My dad said we are not going to pay for the fence; We will do that with the White family but not with you.” (I-5)

The above narrative underlines that racism exists between racialized communities themselves, which is interwoven with the multiplicity of familial-based discrimination. To practice this ideological power, this participant’s neighbour posted the story on social media:

The parents posted a distorted story to our community Facebook and said this Asian immigrant family had no tolerance for a five years old kid [. . .] This rumour was horrible and people under that posting started to blame us. I had to upload back-and-forth communication messages we sent to their parents to show that it was their parenting problems, not us. Thanks for the evidence; Our community has understood the situation now. (I-5)

The second part of this example shows racism can transcend into the digital space, or cyber racism (Jakubowicz et al., 2017). The digital space is well known as a fertile ground where racism can demean or intimidate. For instance, one respondent expressed how cyberhate had proliferated on divergent social media platforms during the pandemic. He implied,

The public blames Asian immigrants or even calls it the Chinese virus.... Because some politicians mislead the audience in the online environment, many people follow [that] thinking and think Asian immigrants should be [held] responsible and apologize to society. (FG-2)

The foregoing quotations underline how racialized immigrants in Calgary experience racism in two communal spheres - the community as well as in the digital space in the form of cyber racism.

6.4. Workplace Discrimination in Labour Market

Racialized immigrants face assorted barriers in finding places in the Canadian labour market that match their educational and experiential backgrounds. Our data pinpoints that racialized operations can be embedded in the hiring process, which deskills, devalues, and denies immigrants’ educational and professional assets, resulting in social inequality.

One interviewee pointed out that her supervisor demoted her to count products in an inventory despite being experienced in more professional tasks. She said,

When the supervisor was appointed, this person started to downgrade my tasks and asked me to count products in our factory. I could do a lot more than that. I felt my value for this company was ignored. I heard from another co-worker that this supervisor dislikes my country and my culture. They think we are the silent people and will do whatever is assigned to us. (I-3)

In addition to the deskilling in the example above, the devaluation of racialized immigrants’ prior educational and professional paths was also reported by our participants. One of them stated,

I would never [have thought that] having a master’s degree in my country means nothing here. I have to go to a college to study for a diploma for two years. When applying for the program, it is ironic to know that I needed to use my high-school transcript for this application. I feel like my work and learning experience is irrelevant in Canada. (I-8)

Confronted with multifaceted challenges to participate in the labour market and seek employment appropriate to her educational and professional experience, this racialized immigrant had to adopt a “bottom-up” approach and find entry-level positions. However, she was questioned about her familial responsibility as an immigrant mother when she took on a frontline job.

The employer asked me if I have kids, and I said I have one child. He started to ask if having a kid would affect my work.... Later he said that he wanted to hire someone with less family responsibility. (I-7)

This aligns with another participant’s story, who indicated that he regretted emigrating to Canada. He never thought that the institutional and systemic devaluation triggers anxiety and stress because he needs to provide basic living expenses for their children and families.

6.5. Discussion

Immigration has supported Canada to become an economically prosperous and ethnoculturally diverse nation. However, our society endorsement of cultural difference as acceptable and desirable remains unfulfilled. Our data demonstrates that racialized immigrants encounter assorted barriers to integrating into Canadian society, including public safety issues, xenophobia, language barriers, and labour market discrimination, which are socially constructed in multi-institutional processes and multifaceted power relations, which are imbued with within different settings of spaces and environments, producing systemic and structural barriers that segregate, stratify, or marginalize racialized immigrants’ social participation. These findings have provided a basis for an evidence-based critical reflection on social practices, conditions, systems, and institutions that perpetuate racism within the community. The interview and focus group data has provided real-world and relevant examples of racism within our community in contexts and spaces where its members interact with each other. It must be within these spaces where action against racism should be taken.

Section 7: Empowering Communities

“Unconference”

Hosted online by ISC, the Empower Communities Unconference was the culmination of a focused study on the experiences of racism among immigrant, newcomer, and racialized communities in Calgary. The term “Unconference” was used to indicate that this was less of a traditional conference where knowledge was conveyed from the top-down. Rather, it functioned more like a focus group of participants who play key roles in the community, where their input on the experiences of their fellow community members, exemplified by representative cases of actual racist encounters, are considered and potential actions to address larger issues that produced them are articulated. The event drew on initial surveys from the self-defence sessions and interview data from the focus group interviews to engage attendees with actual experiences of racism by community members. The Unconference included approximately 40 participants from academia, immigrant-serving organizations, and municipal and provincial governments. The attendees list was carefully curated with consideration of what ideas, perspectives, and community roles they brought to the Unconference discussions.

The discussion points were separated into five different breakout rooms and included (1) intergroup hostility and stereotyping, (2) language and racism, (3) workplace discrimination, (4) racial biases in education, and (5) sexual harassment and public safety. Although the topics for each breakout room were diverse due to distinct identities, positionality, and spaces in which racism occurred, the discussions yielded similar experiences and action items. These discussions sought to consider new directions in which attending experts, policymakers, service providers, and community members could address existing and emerging issues with race and racism in Calgary.

Below is a summary of each theme, along with key discussion points and associated action items.

7.1. Themes and Discussion Points from Unconference

The table below (Table 2) presents a brief summary of the key discussion points that emerged during the breakout sessions. Participants were tasked to identify, react, and reflect on themes that are associated with real-life situations of racism from racialized communities in Calgary.

Theme 1: Intergroup Hostility and Stereotyping
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The meaning of Canadian culture is ambiguous and needs to be situated within a context that reflects Canada’s cultural mosaic identity.• There is a need to dismantle ideas associated with the bystander effect, which will create a welcoming environment for newcomers and immigrants to confidently adapt to Canadian society without fear. It will also demonstrate

advocacy towards anti-racism encounters.

- Collaboration with non-immigrant-serving organizations (ISOs) will not only broaden the audience for the implementation and utilization of anti-racism initiatives and policies, but also eliminate any forms of systemic racism within institutions.
- Ensure anti-racism information and resources are distributed in all mainstream organizations to confront people with their internal racial biases and increase awareness of racism as a prevalent issue.

Theme 2: Language and Racism

- Realize that accents disadvantages newcomers and immigrants as it perpetuates racial biases and stereotypes, which affects their opportunities and livelihood in Canada. Thus, it is imperative to dismantle the idea of accent reduction classes and enforce language training classes that involve the teaching of proper enunciation.
- The importance of providing anti-racism literature and resources in mainstream organizations that provide services to the community. They would guide the service providers on the proper conduct required to address language barriers and communication breakdowns.
- Implementing these resources in spaces would eliminate the feeling among immigrants and newcomers that they are the issue that needs to be resolved in those situations, which results in guilt and shame for who they are.
- Therefore, there is a need to eliminate the apologetic tendencies of victims of racial discrimination, as doing so exacerbates the issue of racialized experiences and downplays its seriousness.

Theme 3: Workplace Discrimination

- Recognize the potential of highly skilled and educated immigrants and newcomers to bring new perspectives and diversify the workplace.
- Employers tend not to hire racialized immigrants because of the first/last names on the resume. As a result, they would be filtered from the hiring process with no opportunity for an interview. Employers need to consider the applicants' skills and capabilities rather than their ethnic, racial, or cultural backgrounds.
- Racialized immigrants still lack access to social support from immigrant-serving organizations. As a result, they internalize and deal with the assorted barriers in their transition to work at an individual level.
- The notion of "luck": When a racialized immigrant has secured employment, people would say to them, "you are lucky." The notion of luck indicates that racialized immigrants finding jobs is uncommon, and structural barriers are embedded in the hiring process

Theme 4: Racial Biases in Education

- Education should include people's rights and what constitutes anti-racism policy, why it exists, and what these policies are there for. It may sometimes be difficult for this population to come forward in the first place.
- Ask vulnerable populations what they need to drive policy change. Bottom-up initiatives should be encouraged – need to hear from those who are most vulnerable first.
- Mobilizing research in better ways to reach those it is intended to reach and bringing these to a larger audience: Using art-based methods, having community forums, cultural exhibits of people's art and their stories
- Red tape makes it difficult to implement changes within organizations

Theme 5: Sexual Harassment and Public Safety

- Public awareness, support, institutional change, and holding relevant social actors accountable for their actions or lack thereof (e.g., perpetrators, governmental figures, employees who receive harassment complaints, etc.) has a significant impact in how an individual experiences perceives and sexual harassment.
- Immigrant women experience triple jeopardy in that they are a woman, a woman of colour and an immigrant, which increases their likelihood of racial harassment.
- Normalize talking about racially-motivated sexual harassment in confidential and welcoming spaces to encourage individuals to speak out about their experiences and file cases with the authorities.

- Recognize what agents of socialization perpetuate racist and stereotypical beliefs against vulnerable populations.

Table 2. A summary of key discussion points from the Unconference breakout sessions.

7.2. Action Items

The following table (Table 3) lists the action items the Unconference participants developed in response to the five themes that emerged from the previous data gathering:

Theme 1: Intergroup Hostility and Stereotyping
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More inclusivity and awareness in initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bring an intersectional lens to tackling racism as other identities (e.g., religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) overlap that exacerbate intergroup hostility and stereotyping ○ Continue conversations on anti-racism practices like the Unconference to include voices who are generally absent due to other commitments ○ Work with organizations who have little experience, but have expressed high interest, in assisting newcomers and immigrants settle into new environments (i.e., the police force and the military) ● Access to tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop newcomer services guide for mainstream organizations which lists all settlement service organizations and services for newcomers and immigrants ○ Provide more funding to support programs that will empower racialized communities to do more anti-racist work rather than funnelling finances back to other cultural or diversity training workshops that benefit non-racialized communities ● Educating people on their rights as it relates to experiences of racism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work closely with government and industry to develop policies that educate people on their rights in the workplace and in the broader community ○ Establish strategies to mitigate intergroup hostility and stereotyping between recent and established immigrants as it relates to cultural norms ● Resources for bystanders and their roles in public spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop public awareness campaigns (similar to those used in public transit) that informs the public on how to help victims in cases of intergroup hostility and stereotyping ○ Plaster bystander information posters in businesses and grocery stores
Theme 2: Language and Racism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather more knowledge for policymakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure multilingual participants can effectively participate in discussions such as these about racism – provide translators/interpreters to effectively get their views ○ Utilize grassroots organizations’ connection with local communities to reach individuals whose views are normally difficult to obtain ○ Provide mechanisms where immigrants and racialized community members are able to influence policymakers’ decisions about them and their communities ○ Include discussion about other marginalized groups such as gender diverse groups and other religious groups ● Provide resources and resource lists to practitioners and mainstream services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equip frontline workers and service providers with the repertoire to empathetically deal with communication breakdowns ○ Raise awareness to mainstream service providers about situations that could happen to newcomers and in interacting with newcomers

- Develop anti-racism efforts which move people away from the perception that immigrants need “accent reduction”, and problematize the notion in popular discourse that particular cultures are the “norm”
- Collaborate among organizations
 - Pool resources between organizations
 - Leverage the reach of multiple organizations to assess needs and execute broad based actions
 - Take the opportunity to work with groups in society that are not commonly seen to be partners in anti-racism training such as the military and the police force

Theme 3: Workplace Discrimination

- Multipoint solution is essential
 - Professional development training for employers is needed to promote workplace equity and inclusion in the hiring process
 - Transparency around hiring practices can be helpful for racialized immigrants to reinforce their skills when seeking employment. For example, there is a need to provide constructive feedback on why they did not get to the interview stage or why they are not able to get the work opportunities
 - Awareness is vital as many employers would not be aware of their practice in the hiring process.
- Develop critical thinking skills in youth
 - Building critical thinking skills for younger generation and planting seeds to their daily knowing, thinking, and doing provides a promising future
 - Parenting skills could be vital in fostering critical reflection to the younger generation and inform them that sameness and difference co-exist in various social settings
- Institutional-based policies can engender meaningful actions to deal with discrimination in workplace
 - Designing an assessment system to measure the effectiveness of anti-racism practice in the hiring process from an institutional viewpoint
 - It needs to demonstrate how institutions have been practicing EDI adopting a localized approach. This would generate influential impacts on society for all
- Individuals and pertinent communities need to talk and take action without fear
 - Funders would need to collect voices from the grassroots and revisit the notion of service quantity and service quality. A statistic-based measurement would not be feasible when dealing with individual stories and lived experiences. It would be beneficial if funders could revisit outcomes measurement pertinent approaches to comprehensively assess service outcomes
 - The idea of “do your thing, keep your head down, don’t rock the boat” has been widely learned from the racialized communities, especially those who are female immigrants. Racialized communities need to question this bias and how the organizational setting and culture perpetuate this bias
- Acknowledge that racism exists structurally and systemically
 - The need to reflect on the social locations of the self to better understand others
 - Discrimination is a social construct, and it needs to be deconstructed. Institutions need to come up with more positive societal building and together to form an inclusive community for all
- Implementation is key to holding the self to be accountable in the societal context. This requires individuals to establish a sense of responsibility in fostering social transformation

Theme 4: Racial Biases in Education

- Make sure environmental scans are incorporated and that everyone is involved
 - Work to identify gaps in vulnerable populations
 - Cultural sensitivity: Making sure teachers have enough training to ensure that new culturally diverse students feel welcome and supported
 - Teachers need to be aware of racism, stereotypes, and students’ stories to help students’ inclusion
- Disrupt transformative learning

- Using youth to disrupt the status quo and be a force of change
- Education should empower youth to be disruptive
- Study the policies in place to change and improve the following aspects:
 - Why these policies did not work
 - What would work
 - What are the repercussions
- Campaign on inclusive curriculum
 - Integrate racialized immigrants' intersectional identities and their life trajectories into related education practice
 - ISOs being the link between vulnerable populations and policy makers. Need to leverage this link for better diffusion of information
- Be able to monitor progress-performance indicators for the government
 - Monitoring whether or not the figures are doing what they promised to do/ what they are expected to do

Theme 5: Sexual Harassment and Public Safety

- Have more difficult conversations
 - Engage with those directly affected to create spaces for conversations to take place where people are to feel confident to talk about these sensitive issues
 - Examine why there is hesitancy to report sexual harassment cases, which has low report rates.
- Educate newcomers on their rights and how to deal with racism
 - Educating newcomers on how to recognize instances of sexual harassment and where to turn for support and information.
 - Utilizing social media to circulate public service announcements (PSA)
 - The education component should include other social actors (e.g., bystanders, employees in any workplace, etc.).
- Working with larger public entities to lead organizational change across sectors
 - ISOs should reflect on their role in the discussion of racism and determine effective action plans towards anti-racism.
- Policymakers and other government officials need to be engaged in racialized communities to know what actions would best address their needs.
 - When creating policies that involve racialized and vulnerable populations, have representatives from racialized and vulnerable populations part of the policy making process as they know what would best serve their communities.
- Involve more levels of government and hold them accountable
- Once anti-racism policies are in place, there should be periodic meetings with the policymakers, those who are in charge of putting the policy into action and representatives of the community that they serve to create transparency.

Table 3. A summary of action items based on the discussion points from the Unconference.

7.3. Analysis of the Discussed Themes

Prior to the breakout sessions, the concept of “safe spaces” was discussed to encourage participants to speak freely and openly about their experiences with racism, stereotypes, and discrimination without negative consequences. However, one participant described his perspective of the idea with the following statement:

“I’m not convinced it’s possible to create a safe space [. . .] I think we have an opportunity to begin to reframe how we facilitate and move [anti-racism initiatives] forward - specifically for the racialized people that we work with. Framing it as a safe space is the result of this [nice]

“culture” that Canada tries to claim that we have, and I don’t know that it’s possible to create a safe space. I know that there are elements of bravery [. . .] [Our organization has] begun to include principles of “brave space.” They invite curiosities; they encourage people to sit in their lived experiences to be vulnerable in this work.”

In light of that statement, it was observed that some attendees were less participative than others. When asked why, some explained the discomfort of discussing racial discrimination and associated action items among immigrants, newcomers, and racialized communities, as they are not part of the cultural and/or ethnic group being discussed. These participants also displayed their fear of overstepping and dominating the discussions as they considered the differences in power and privilege in the situation based on their race. For a brief moment, it presented the notion that the onus for developing anti-racism action items and policy was on racialized populations. However, the inclusion of non-racialized individuals in the Unconference allowed these individuals to see and hear what racialized people experience on a daily basis when it comes to racism, stereotyping, and discrimination. This aligns with what Hassen et al. (2021) saw as effective anti-racism interventions in their scoping review, where dominant and racialized groups are placed in the same interactive space to address issues of discrimination and vulnerability to it.

With minority, vulnerable, and immigrant populations making up a large portion of the participants in the Unconference, this provided racialized participants with the opportunity to engage freely not only in the main discussions, but also the virtual spaces in which the breakout sessions occurred. The blending of racialized and non-racialized participants resulted in the latter group becoming aware of their privileged position, as well as the nature of the space they occupy in the Unconference. Although the Unconference was an open space for collaboration regardless of cultural, economic, racial, or religious backgrounds, some racialized participants felt uncomfortable being around non-racialized individuals, which resulted in further reluctance to participate and contribute. The dynamics of the Unconference further demonstrated to the research team how spaces of interaction can frequently reflect perceived hierarchies between groups in society, and that participants in that interaction can take action to create more equitable and collaborative spaces.

7.4. Discussion

As each breakout group established open, safe, and “brave” spaces within which to interact, the following discussions emerged from the interactions:

The first breakout session on intergroup hostility and stereotyping discussed the meaning of “Canadian culture” and how the concept shapes the way(s) racial discrimination occur among newcomers, established immigrants, and local residents. According to the participants, “Canadian culture” has been largely defined by non-racialized individuals who occupy positions of power *within* and *across* cultural, economic, media, and political spaces. As some of the participants argue, this can pose problems for newcomers who are not readily familiar with Canadian laws and norms. This echoes the arguments of Safi (2010) that less exposure to institutions of the adopted country can hamper efforts to explain experiences of racism and inequity. In contrast, established immigrants and local residents are more likely to recognize and speak out against racial discrimination, in part due to their higher knowledge of citizenship rights (Reitz and Banerjee, 2007). In order to bridge differences and tackle intergroup hostility and stereotyping, collaboration is needed among policymakers, practitioners, and the public to design and deploy information awareness campaigns related to citizenship rights and anti-racism initiatives. According to the participants, these efforts must be highly visible and occupy spaces that enable cross-cultural education to occur (e.g., grocery stores, public transit, places of work, etc.).

The second discussion focused on language and racism. Language, as well as accents, is often the focal point in public encounters of racism, as was further evidenced by the experiences of this project's interview participants. What participants identified in this session aligns with what scholars have termed 'linguistic racism', where deviations from a normative form of a language is stigmatized and considered "less capable" in certain areas of life (Dovchin, 2020). In racist encounters described by this project's research participants, this typically starts with a breakdown in communication preceding frustration, acts of intolerance and/or verbal abuse. The Unconference participants suggested that addressing this in the community will involve getting support from grassroots organizations in gathering more knowledge from difficult-to-reach populations about how and where such encounters occur, and what is needed to counter them. This will allow policy makers to target resources and develop approaches that are relevant. The group also suggested that more training and resources need to be provided to a wider array of front-facing services in the city so that they have the tools to empathetically deal with communication breakdowns. Additionally, rather than a top-down approach, it is important that policy makers collaborate with and bring together various groups in the community to leverage connections, knowledge and resources.

The discussion on workplace discrimination paid attention to the analysis of how racialized immigrants confronted multi-faceted barriers in the Canadian workplace. This labour market participation has been shaped by power relations embedded in different spatial contexts that further filter them from accessing resources in the local labour force. Racism is not a static phenomenon; it overlaps with the concepts of class, culture, ethnicity, gender, and language. Rather than treating racialized immigrants as assets to the host country, their intersectional identities are questioned in the process of evaluating their employability in which their different backgrounds and skills become deficient, and devalued (Jetha, et al., 2021; Shields and Alrob, 2021). This valuation of immigrants and racialized populations is socially constructed by systemic, structural, and institutional dimensions, and can often develop into ideological formations that shape immigrants' work experiences and social participation in the Canadian labour market. The frequent result of this employment discrimination is employment precarity. The group expressed that the first step to resolving this is to acknowledge that these conditions exist and that they have led to a structural form of discrimination against immigrants and racialized populations. Multipoint solutions, from mere awareness, to hiring practices to workplace training is needed. Beyond that, the development and deployment of a more measurable form of assessment of workplace equity can be useful, compelling companies and organizations to move beyond expression to tangible action. From the perspective of racialized employees, they need to gain the confidence and repertoire through additional resources to advocate for themselves within these contexts. Finally, the group agreed that the youth play an important role in preventing the perpetuation of structural racism in the workforce.

In racial biases in education, our conversation focused on how Eurocentric, homogenizing, nationalistic discourses intend to normalize values, norms, and behaviours that are perceived as "different" or "other" from the dominant criterion. This analysis can inspire profound connection and critical reflection on who owns the knowledge and who exercises the power to stimulate respect for people, issues, and worldviews that co-exist across cultural and geographical borders in a globalized world. In this way, students and educators from racialized immigrant backgrounds can experience the school space as more relevant and meaningful, enabling them to locate their life trajectories within an inclusive learning space. To achieve this goal, the Canadian education system needs to challenge Eurocentric official Canadian school curricula and promote transnational and transcultural curricula that reject traditional, Eurocentric foundations of knowledge currently being circulated in the Canadian education context (Guo & Maitra, 2017). Thus, the role of education should address and embrace students' and educators' intersectional identities to integrate their transnational life trajectories into daily teaching and learning practice and establish a more inclusive and transformative learning environment for all.

The discussion of sexual harassment and public safety brought forward the notion that for immigrant women, vulnerability is produced through their citizenship status, gender, and race. In the labour markets, immigrant women

are racialized and exploited to the extent that they receive low wages compared to their non-racialized colleagues. They are also made to feel they would face possible deportation or other consequences if they resist authority or their employers' sexual advances (Villegas, 2019). Immigrant women often have no choice but to tolerate this inappropriate behaviour due to their limited employment opportunities (Villegas, 2019). This demonstrates a rationale as to why there is hesitancy to report sexual harassment cases. In addition to the fear of possible deportation, immigrant women are afraid of being labelled as sensitive and are subjected to the practice of victim-blaming. Discussions of accountability and the responses from bystanders and other social actors affect how an individual understands their racialization experience. To analyze what perpetuates racism in society, a thorough reflection on the impact of agents of socialization needs to be conducted. Agents of socialization, such as the media and peer groups, tend to silence racialized individuals to maintain their "othered" status in society (Villegas, 2019), whether or not the agents are aware of this. Finally, while participants realize this is a form of harassment for all individuals regardless of gender, ethnic, and/or religious background(s), speaking on such topics can trigger discomfort and fear due to the sensitive and/or traumatizing nature of the experience(s) for some individuals. Therefore, to develop effective interventions that address this, it is imperative to create and provide spaces where victims feel empowered and confident to speak about their experiences.

As this section highlighted, the Unconference invited participants to acknowledge and understand the roles and space(s) they occupy, as well as the power and privilege (or lack of it) they wield in social situations. Positionality, coupled with awareness, is crucial as it signifies whether or not an individual should participate in discussions they are invited in that focus on issues that do not directly concern them. The act of non-racialized participants to step back and allow other participants to take control of the space and use it to their advantage can be seen as a positive step forward in the coexistence of different races and advocacy towards the conflicts they encounter. As such, non-racialized participants can withhold any power and privilege they hold in society to render 'safe' the spaces where marginalized communities have difficulty entering and being heard to advocate for them on their behalf, such as educational and professional work spaces. Concurrently, racialized participants must take action, or be 'brave', to redefine spaces that disadvantage or oppress them, in order to ensure that they afford them the treatment and opportunity available to others with differing identities who share that space.

Section 8: Recommendations

Spaces where community members interact need to consider the intersectional identities of and the relationships between individuals of differing levels of power and influence. In considering these identities, such spaces of interaction (public, private, controlled, or uncontrolled spaces) must further consider who among participants might possess more influence and control. Policymakers, service providers, and others hosting those spaces may therefore configure them in that they counteract unbalances in power or influence. Marginalized individuals within those spaces must also recognize the power configurations within the spaces they enter, and gain the courage to take action to render the space safe and equitable for themselves and all participants of different identities. This combined approach of intersectional analysis and consideration of participants' spatial agency underpins the recommendations in this report.

The recommendations consider the spaces within which the five themes discussed at the Unconference (intergroup hostility and stereotyping; language and racism; workplace discrimination; racial biases in education; sexual harassment and public safety) can typically occur.

These are:

- Public Spaces
- Workplaces
- Education and programming spaces
- Virtual Spaces

In order to counteract discrimination, marginalization, and the abuse of various identities individuals may represent in the varied social contexts they interact in, potentially effective approaches might remove what empowers racists within such spaces of interaction:

Public spaces: Individuals from mainstream cultures may feel more cultural power over immigrants or individuals who are non-mainstream in public spaces. Additionally, immigrants' unfamiliarity with these spaces makes them particularly vulnerable. For racists, acts of verbal or physical aggression can occur since the aggressor (the racist) feels privilege and power to engage in actions that dictate and compel more peripheral or marginal identities to conform. Interventions to address this might:

- Counteract notions of normative identities and cultures in education and public discourse.
- Provide a repertoire to marginalized individuals that can counter acts of power and aggression in these spaces.
- Equip marginalized individuals with confidence and verbal tools to balance power in situations.
- Equip bystanders from mainstream cultures with the tools and repertoire to balance power within these contexts – i.e., neutralize racist action when it is witnessed.
- Equip a wider array of government, private service providers, and retailers with tools and repertoire to empathetically handle breakdowns in communication so that they do not devolve into racist incidents, as well as in providing an environment of inclusion and equality within their premises.

It is within this empowerment in a 'public' context where confidence-building activities such as the self-defense sessions introduced by the Centre for newcomers, is an effective intervention. Providing confidence to take action in a risk-laden situation relates to having the repertoire (or perceiving the possession of a repertoire) to take control of a marginalizing space is helpful to an individual such as a newcomer.

Workplaces: Establishing a workplace culture of diversity and inclusion can constitute the acknowledgement of the presence of structural forms of racism that can be perpetuated unconsciously. Workplaces can discriminate on various levels of identities, including gender, education, language, sexual orientation in addition to race and ethnicity. Organizations can redefine both virtual and physical spaces they possess to make them less discriminatory and marginalizing through action and policy.

- Use a multi-point approach within HR policy, workplace processes, and staff attitudes. This can involve training, resources, and revision of policies and processes.
- Consider measurable and incremental progress toward greater equity and inclusion to ensure a change in attitudes and practices.
- Train and equip staff members with tools and repertoire to counteract discriminatory behaviour when experiencing or witnessing it.

Education and programming spaces: As with workplaces, countering racism in learning spaces needs to begin with the recognition that they come with structures and practices that can discriminate and oppress marginal identities. It must also be recognized that being in the position of educator and educational institution comes with considerable power. The effects of racism at this level can be long-term and have societal impacts. As such, educators in both formal school contexts, as well as in training and continuing education contexts, must ensure their approaches balance their power allowing marginal perspectives of newcomers, minorities, and other individuals possessing marginal and marginalized identities to express themselves. As such action items include:

- Ensure the updating and revision of pedagogical approaches to account for marginal identities.
- Language limitations must be considered in adult programming to ensure language does not marginalize participation.
- More instructors and teachers should be individuals who possess marginalized identities.
- Empower young people to disrupt and transform current spaces to be more inclusive as well as learn to create such spaces themselves.

Virtual spaces: Such spaces are highly visual and oral. Facilitators of such spaces need to be aware of practices and formats that can render participants uncomfortable, more vulnerable, or marginalized. Virtual spaces also amplify the role of language, and similarly, facilitators need to account for individuals who are at such a disadvantage.

- Ensure virtual spaces accommodate varied visual and cultural images.
- Empathize with those who are uncomfortable sharing their image – allow them the safety of being unseen.
- Remove as many barriers to communication as possible, such as linguistic (provide interpreters) or oral (provide chat options to participate).
- Ensure that the technology used in the virtual space is accessible to participants. If not, make accommodations for those who may be more uncomfortable with the technology by providing support that allow them to participate, or to be present in person - if possible.

It is important to understand that spaces where people interact are not static and their production is continuing (Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 2009; Schneider and Till, 2009). Agency within these spaces is fluid, and often owned by certain participants, perhaps dictated by its creators but can be influenced by the intent of everyone occupying and participating in that space. According to Schneider and Till (2009), the agent is one who effects change through the empowerment of others. As such, a strategy in countering racism in the spaces within which we interact must have us recognize our agency according to our intersecting identities, understand the dynamism of that space, and render it empowering for everyone by rendering it safe for others and brave for ourselves

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