

Experiences of Racism Among Students of Colour at the University of Ottawa



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Executive Summary

This study investigates the prevalence and impact of racial microaggressions on Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) students at the University of Ottawa (uOttawa), revealing critical implications for institutional policy and support services. Racial microaggressions, often subtle yet pervasive, contribute to significant psychological distress among students, negatively impacting their mental health and sense of belonging on campus. This report details findings from a survey of uOttawa BIPOC students, highlighting the frequency of microaggressive experiences, their association with mental health challenges, and the coping mechanisms students employ.

Key Findings

1. Prevalence of Racial Microaggressions

BIPOC students at uOttawa frequently encounter racial microaggressions, including assumptions about foreignness and legitimacy as Canadians. Similar findings were reported in a comparable survey conducted at the University of Connecticut, indicating a widespread cross-national issue across academic institutions. The experience of exclusion in spaces like classrooms and fraternity/sorority houses was common, reinforcing feelings of marginalization and alienation.

2. Mental Health Impact

Exposure to racial microaggressions was significantly correlated with symptoms of racial trauma, depression, and anxiety. This illustrates how the repetitive nature of these experiences leads to psychological harm, challenging students' sense of safety and worth. A high level of ethnic identity, rather than serving as a protective factor, appeared to intensify the impact of racial microaggressions.

3. Coping Strategies and Challenges

Social support from friends and family emerged as the most commonly used coping mechanisms. However, a significant portion of students reported minimal use of institutional mental health resources, reflecting potential concerns about accessibility and cultural sensitivity within these services. A smaller number used harmful approaches, such as skipping classes or self-harm. The reluctance to seek formal support underscores the need for improved trust in uOttawa's support systems.

4. Campus Climate and Community Perception

Many students felt pressured to minimize aspects of their racial or ethnic culture to fit in, suggesting a need for more inclusive campus practices. Over three-quarters of students were unaware of the university's procedures for reporting racial

discrimination, highlighting a communication gap that limits access to remediation and support.

Recommendations

To address these findings, uOttawa should implement the following:

- **Anti-Racism Training**

Implement comprehensive empirically-supported training programs for all students, faculty, and staff to increase awareness of racial microaggressions and other forms of racism and foster a more inclusive campus climate. These programs can include courses, webinars, seminars, and town halls tailored to specific groups. Workshops should focus on allyship, bias awareness, and real-life scenarios, ensuring consistent and ongoing engagement.

- **Enhanced Reporting and Support Procedures**

Develop clear, accessible reporting channels for discrimination incidents. Reporters should feel confident in their ability to utilize designated offices such as the Human Rights Office (HRO). These offices must maintain a centralized database to track incidents, analyze trends, and share results quarterly with university leadership and student organizations. This ensures transparency and accountability. Efforts should also be made to build trust in these resources by addressing common student concerns, including fears of retaliation, confidentiality breaches, or dismissal of complaints.

- **Cultural and Community Spaces**

Establish cultural centers, affinity groups, and mentorship programs that provide safe spaces for BIPOC students to express their identities and receive peer support. Stronger community spaces can celebrate diversity and encourage open dialogues about race and identity. Additionally, uOttawa can consider fostering the development of fraternities and sororities focused on diverse identities, creating opportunities for students to build supportive networks and strengthen their sense of belonging.

- **Culturally Competent Mental Health Services**

Employ more BIPOC counselors within campus health services to build trust and offer culturally relevant support. Counseling services at uOttawa should evaluate their capacity to meet demand, addressing wait times and ensuring equitable access for

BIPOC students. Counselors should also receive specialized training in racial trauma treatment.

- **Increase BIPOC Representation Among Faculty and Leadership**

Take deliberate steps to recruit, hire, and promote more BIPOC scholars into both academic and leadership positions. Increasing diversity within faculty and administrative roles ensures that the university better reflects the communities it serves and provides students with role models who share their lived experiences. Attempts should include target goals and measurable outcomes.

- **Continuous Data Collection and Evaluation**

Conduct regular formal assessments of the campus climate, focusing on experiences of racial discrimination and the resolution of incidents of racial discrimination. Data collection should include feedback on whether complainants feel their cases were handled fairly and satisfactorily. This information should be publicly reported to foster accountability and continuous improvement.

This study underscores the need for uOttawa to strengthen its commitment to inclusivity and support for BIPOC students. By implementing these recommendations, the university can create a campus environment where all students feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Racism can take many forms, including explicit racism as well as subtle or covert racism, such as microaggressions (Williams et al., 2020, 2022). Efforts to address and reduce racism must target both explicit or discrete acts of racism, as well as the more subtle and insidious forms of racial bias that even well-meaning people with anti-racist values and intentions may perpetuate (Haeny et al., 2021a). Over the past few decades, there has been a consistent effort among psychologists to understand the psychological processes behind discriminatory behavior (Haeny et al., 2021b), such as implicit racial bias (Greenwald et al., 2009), aversive racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004), racial colourblindness (Neville et al., 2013), and racial microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007). This study focuses on the experiences and impact of racial microaggressions on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) students at the University of Ottawa.

Racial microaggressions can be defined as “deniable acts of racism that reinforce pathological stereotypes and inequitable social norms” (Williams, 2020a, p. 4). The term microaggressions was first coined by psychiatrist Chester Pierce in 1970 to refer to apparently minor but truly damaging and denigrating put-downs and indignities experienced by African Americans. Following a long silence in the academic community, Sue and colleagues (2007) brought renewed interest to the study of microaggressions. Building on Pierce’s (1970) definition, they defined microaggressions as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color” (p. 271). They also stressed that “perpetrators of microaggressions are often unaware that they engage in such communications when they interact with racial/ethnic minorities” (p. 271).

1.1 Mental Health Implications of Racism

Research has shown that long term and consistent exposure to racial microaggressions can lead to detrimental health outcomes, particularly among BIPOC (Nadal et al., 2014; Sue et al., 2019). Microaggressions have been found to cause stress (Torres et al., 2010; Williams, Printz, & DeLapp, 2018; Williams et al, 2021), anxiety (Banks, et al., 2006; Blume et al., 2012), depression (Hudson et al, 2012), PTSD (Dale & Safren, 2019; Williams, Printz, Ching, & Wetterneck, 2018; Williams et al., 2021), and physical ailments, such as hypertension and impaired immune response (Abrahamowicz et al., 2023; Paradies et al., 2015).

One study even found that everyday microaggressions can have a larger negative impact than major discriminatory events (Luo et al., 2012). Studies have shown that greater exposure to this type of covert racism may also contribute to negative affect, absence of self-control, low self-

esteem, internalized racism, self-doubt (Nadal, 2014), as well as feeling a lack of belonging or acceptance (O’Keefe et al., 2015). As a result, microaggressions can put individuals at higher risk for suicide-related thoughts or actions (Farahani et al., 2022; O’Keefe et al., 2015).

Although much of the microaggression research to date has been done in the United States, racial microaggressions are an international issue. For example, data from six Western European countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden) showed that non-Muslims hold negative attitudes toward the headscarf worn by Muslim women (Helbling, 2014). A study by Burdsey and Randhawa (2012) documented racial microaggressions experienced by Asian British players in English men’s first-class cricket. Miller and colleagues (2020) surveyed White adoptive parents and adopted adolescents of colour in France about their experiences with prejudice and found that 63% of the adopted adolescents interviewed were upset by rude or racist comments made by strangers. Many studies to date have documented the experiences of BIPOC Americans studying abroad (e.g., Goldoni, 2017; Talburt & Stewart, 1999; Willis, 2015). Willis (2015) writes about the racial and gender microaggressions encountered by Black American women on study abroad programs in the British Isles, the Mediterranean, and West Africa. In Canada, Houshmand and colleagues (2019) described racial microaggressions experienced by Indigenous and Black Canadians in Montreal and their coping strategies.

Although Canada is a multicultural and tolerant country, racism, sexism, and other forms of inequality are still present in our society and fuel the ongoing economic, political, and social subjugation of BIPOC and other marginalized groups in this country (Bailey, 2016; Maynard, 2017; Perry, 2015). Some scholars have even argued that the endorsement of multiculturalism in Canada has served to uphold White supremacy by “disguising and insulating Canada’s racial hierarchies and obscuring the state’s role in failing to address – even proactively re-creating – the material conditions of Black suffering” (Maynard, 2017, p. 51). Due to the lack of a centralized government database of racial information, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) conducted a study investigating police-involved fatalities between 2000 and 2017 and found that Black and Indigenous peoples are disproportionately killed by police (Marcoux & Nicholson, 2018).

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Table 1.1. Terminology

Race	A Western caste system based on skin shade, physical features, and presumed ancestry. Defined by governments and societies, not individuals.
Ethnicity	Designating shared cultural, social, or national characteristics, such as language, traditions, customs, religious practices, and/or historical experience. Malleable and self-defined, not necessarily defined by physical characteristics, rather cultural factors; two people of a different race can share the same ethnicity.
Racism	A system of beliefs (racial prejudices), practices (racial discrimination), and policies that operate to advantage those with historical power, which is White people in most Western nations, including Canada.
Structural racism	A method of maintaining the power of White people by creating policies, laws, or procedures that primarily benefit them. Commonly involves areas such as employment, criminal justice, education, health care, or political representation.
Internalized racism	When people of colour believe it is better to be White and have negative opinions about themselves, sometimes in the form of conscious or unconscious self-hatred, and other people of colour due to their racial or ethnic identity.
Aversive racism	A form of prejudice felt by those who publicly support racial equality yet they still endorse implicit racist thoughts and behaviors behind closed doors or in ambiguous situations.
Micro-aggressions	Microaggressions are small, commonplace acts of discrimination which display hostility or negative attitudes towards people from marginalized groups. Microaggressions are often covert and can be either intentional or accidental
Whiteness	Whiteness is a socio-political construct, relating to the development of a White race and its associated culture. This phenomenon is linked to a system of privileges and benefits that are exclusively available to those who are considered White. It is not a biological or genetic classification but rather a social category that is largely determined by skin colour. This classification is reinforced through various means such as government policies, media representation, and decision-making power in institutions such as corporations, schools, and judicial systems. White is not an ethnicity and is sometimes referred to as Caucasian, which is an outdated term.
BIPOC	BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and people of colour and is intended to create solidarity between communities of colour through centering experiences of BIPOC, while also recognizing that not all people of colour experience racial injustices in the same way. Also POC (people of colour).

1.2 Purpose

Given the wide acceptance of Canada as a diverse egalitarian society and the dearth of race-based data, it is necessary to conduct research to understand the experiences of BIPOC in many sectors of society. While universities often market themselves as inclusive spaces, this claim frequently masks deeper issues, as myths about the absence of systemic racism and racial microaggressions on campuses persist. These misconceptions hinder meaningful progress toward equity, diversity, and inclusion, creating environments that fail to adequately support BIPOC students (Strauss et al., 2022). Here we focus on the experience of uOttawa students to better understand their on-campus experiences with racial microaggressions. We sought to determine if: 1) BIPOC students will experience more racial microaggressions on or off campus, 2) BIPOC students who have experienced more racial microaggressions will have a lower sense of community, 3) racial microaggression will result in a worse campus experience, and 4) racial microaggressions will result in worse mental health.

Chapter 2: Method

2.1 Participants and Procedures

This survey received approval from the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board (Ethics Number: H-02-21-6658). Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement, following a detailed explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and potential benefits. Data was collected over a 12 month period from October 2021 to October 2022.

Of 651 participants in our study, 14 were excluded for completing the battery too quickly (less than 12.3 minutes), 58 participants for not answering truthfully, 9 for answering the questionnaire twice, and 167 for identifying as White, as it was explained up front that the survey was only for BIPOC. After applying these exclusion criteria, we were left with a total of 403 diverse participants for the final analysis (Nepton et al., 2025). See Table 2.1 for demographic details.

Table 2.1. Demographic Details

N	403
Age, Years, mean (SD)	20 (3.83)
Gender n (%)	
Cisgender Women	295 (73.2)
Cisgender Men	99 (24.6)
Nonbinary/Gender Fluid	9 (2.2)
Sexual Orientation n (%)	
Heterosexual	327 (81.1)
Bisexual	48 (11.9)
Homosexual (Gay or Lesbian)	8 (2)
Pansexual	1 (.2)
Asexual	5 (1.2)
Race/Ethnicity n (%)	
Asian	153 (37.9)
Black	126 (31.3)
Middle Eastern/North African	74 (18.4)
Latinx/Hispanic	6 (1.5)
Indigenous/Aboriginal	5 (1.2)
Multiracial	39 (9.7)
Survey Language n (%)	
English	341 (84.6)

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French	62 (15.4)
Year in University n (%)	
1st Year	220 (54.6)
2nd Year	117 (29)
3rd Year	39 (9.7)
4th Year	19 (4.7)
5th Year	6 (1.5)
Graduate School	2 (.5)
Immigration Status	
Born in Canada	176 (43.7)
Born outside of Canada	227 (56.3)

This study was administered entirely online with participants completing the battery of assessments on Qualtrics, in partial fulfillment of research participation requirements of university students taking introductory psychology courses. Although the survey was administered through the School of Psychology, a range of students from many departments participated, with psychology students representing only 15.6% of respondents.

Table 2.2. Respondent Majors

Major	Count
Biomedical Science / Biomed / Bio Med	69
Psychology / Psychologie	63
Health Science / Health Sciences	42
Nursing	36
Business Management / Admin / Marketing	24
Communication / Communications	14
Exploring / Undeclared	13
Business / Commerce (General)	13
Finance (within Commerce)	13
Computer Science / Software Engineering	11
Psychology Combined (Linguistics/French/Phil.)	10
Accounting	9
Criminology / Criminologie	7
Social Sciences / Service Social	7
Economics	6
Biology	6
Nutrition / Nutrition Sciences / Dietetics	6
Human Kinetics	5
Other (individual entries ≤ 4)	39

Students were asked, “What are the stressors that BIPOC students experience, and how can the University better support BIPOC students?” To that end, we distributed a survey to assess

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psychological symptoms of distress and racial stress and trauma, as well as perceptions and experiences regarding race relations and inclusivity at the university. This questionnaire also surveyed BIPOC students about their sense of inclusion and comfortability on campus. After consenting to participate in the study, each participant completed a short battery of psychological measures including measures to assess distress and racial trauma, quantify prior experiences with racism, as well as questions developed by the research team to assess comfortability on campus and in Ottawa. These responses have been coded for analysis. The total amount of time to complete this study was approximately 40 minutes, and occurred once in sequential order.

Chapter 3: Measures

The battery provided to participants first included a demographic questionnaire (Appendix A) to gather data on participants' race/ethnicity, gender identity, religious affiliation or beliefs, and socio-economic status, aiming to comprehensively capture the diversity and identities of study participants.

3.1 Investigator-developed questions

There were several investigator-developed sets of questions, which were drawn in-part from a similar initiative to understand the campus climate at the University of Connecticut (UConn; Csizmadia et al., 2020). The first set of questions (Perceptions of Campus Climate 1) aimed to investigate students' perceptions and experiences regarding race relations and inclusivity at the university. It assessed how problematic race relations are perceived to be on campus and queried students about the perceived welcomeness of BIPOC by faculty, staff, administration, and fellow students. Additionally, it explored whether students feel the need to minimize aspects of their racial or ethnic culture to fit in, their comfort level and confidence in reporting racial harassment or discrimination, and their awareness of formal procedures for handling such incidents. The questionnaire also includes open-ended questions to capture personal experiences and specific instances of racial dynamics in the university setting.

The second set of questions (Experience of Campus Climate 2), was included to better understand the experiences of racialized students at the university. It asked respondents to identify areas on-campus they avoid due to their race/ethnicity and describe personal incidents of racial discomfort or discrimination. The questionnaire also explored how stereotypical beliefs were expressed and instances where students' place at the university was questioned. Additionally, it elicited qualitative suggestions for improving diversity and inclusion on campus to provide insights to enhance the racial climate and inform policy improvements.

A checklist of potential coping strategies (Coping) was also included, informed by the literature about how BIPOC may cope with racism (e.g., Jacob et al., 2023). This survey asks respondents to select from a comprehensive list of coping mechanisms, such as talking to friends, seeking support from family, etc. The options range from healthy practices like relaxation exercises to harmful behaviors like substance use and self-harm.

3.2 Measures of racism and mental health

3.2.1 PANAS, Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

PANAS, Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson et al., 1988) is one of the most extensively employed tools for assessing mood or emotion. This concise questionnaire consists of 20 items, evenly split between 10 items gauging positive affect (e.g., excited, inspired) and 10 items gauging negative affect (e.g., upset, afraid). Respondents rate each item on a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 = Very Slightly or Not at all to 5 = Extremely, indicating the degree to which they have experienced the specified effect within a defined timeframe. The PANAS was specifically crafted to evaluate affect across various contexts, whether in the present moment, the past day, week, or year, or in a more generalized sense (on average). The generalized prompt was used for this study. Reliability for the Positive Affect Scale was $\alpha = 0.87$; for the Negative Affect Scale $\alpha = 0.90$.

3.2.2 Racial Microaggressions Scale

Racial Microaggressions Scale (RMAS; Torres-Harding et al., 2012) was used for assessing the prevalence of continual racial microaggressions. The prompts were changed to describe specifically experiences on the uOttawa campus. Comprising 32 items, respondents rated experiences on a scale of 0 (never) to 3 (often/frequently), with higher scores denoting more frequent encounters with microaggressions. The total scale encompasses six microaggression categories, closely aligned with Sue et al.'s (2007) taxonomy, involving experiences related to feelings of invisibility based on race, assumptions of criminality, eroticization, perceptions of being low-achieving or associated with an undesirable culture, feeling like a foreigner or not belonging, and instances of environmental omissions. Reliability for the total scale was $\alpha = 0.92$.

3.2.3 Racial Microaggressions in Higher Education Scale

Racial Microaggressions in Higher Education Scale (RMHES; Choi et al., 2021) consists of 14 items designed to measure the frequency of racial microaggressions encountered in higher education contexts. These include microinsults (e.g., experiences of offensive jokes related to race on campus), intellectual inferiority microaggressions (e.g., instances of feeling discouraged in academic pursuits due to race), and invisibility microaggressions (e.g., feelings of exclusion on campus due to race). Respondents indicated how often they experienced each type of racial microaggression over the past year using a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (never) to 5 (once a week or more). We selected 7 items from the original scale for inclusion in our study,

specifically addressing experiences of racial microaggressions on campus. These items are: feelings of isolation due to race, encounters with offensive language or jokes related to race, instances of harassment (emotional, verbal, or physical) because of race, experiences of not being taken seriously in classes, discouragement in pursuing academic goals, and perceptions of intellectual inferiority due to race. The selection of these 7 items was based on a careful consideration of relevance to the specific context of our study to comprehensively capture the most salient experiences of racial microaggressions reported by participants in our higher education setting. Each selected item directly reflects prevalent forms of racial microaggressions that have been reported in our institution, ensuring that the scale is both concise and pertinent to our research objectives. This focused approach allows for a clearer and more targeted assessment of racial microaggressions experienced by our study participants, while maintaining robust psychometric properties as indicated by the scale's good reliability (Cronbach's alpha of .84). For the purposes of this study, we calculated a total score as a continuous variable (e.g., Choi et al., 2021). A higher total score corresponds to more experiences of racial microaggressions. The Cronbach's alpha for the total scale was $\alpha = 0.84$.

3.2.4 General Ethnic Discrimination Scale

General Ethnic Discrimination Scale (GEDS; Landrine et al., 2006) was used to measure the enduring effects of ethnic discrimination on individuals, focusing on the frequency of these experiences and the resulting stress over their lifetimes. Participants were asked about the recurrence of unfair treatment in various contexts due to racism over their entire lives and the level of stress caused by each of these experiences. The scale consists of 18 items, with higher values indicating a greater frequency of discriminatory incidents or higher levels of stress. For this study we used only item 18, which asks about how different the respondent's life would be had they not experienced the 17 different types of discrimination listed on campus on a six-point scale.

3.2.5 The Perceived Cohesion Scale

The Perceived Cohesion Scale (PCS; Bollen & Hoyle, 1990) is a 6-item scale that assesses a person's sense of cohesion and belonging in a group or community, which has shown strong reliability and validity in previous research. The items were reworded in relation to student experience at the university, to assess connections to the larger campus community specifically. The scale authors encourage test administrators to adapt the test items to their specific needs. We included four items from the scale, specifically, "I feel like a member of the uOttawa community," "I am happy to be in the uOttawa community," "I am enthusiastic about the uOttawa community," and "The uOttawa community is one of the best in the nation."

Participants responded to items on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). We calculated the total score and used it as a continuous variable (e.g., Choi et al., 2021). The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was $\alpha = 0.92$.

3.2.6 The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale-Revised

The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale-Revised (CESD-R; Eaton et al., 2004) was used to measure the impact of depressive symptoms due racialization within the uOttawa campus environment in an adapted version of the scale (e.g., Choi et al., 2021). Items include depressed mood and physical and cognitive symptoms of depression, such as, "Lost interest in coursework" or "Felt lacking of energy and strength," that the respondent may "have felt as a result of any racial experiences you may have had as a member of the university community." Participants responded to the 12 items using a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (none of the time) to 5 (all of the time). The scale showed a high reliability (Cronbach's alpha of .96). We used the total score for analysis (range 0–72), with higher scores reflecting greater depressive symptoms.

3.2.7 Racial Trauma Scale-9

Racial Trauma Scale-9 (RTS-9; Williams et al., 2022) is a validated short version of the Racial Trauma Scale (RTS), developed to assess the intensity of racial trauma symptoms in individuals of colour. It comprises three components, totaling 9 items, namely (1) Lack of Safety, (2) Negative Cognitions, and (3) Difficulty Coping. Participants are instructed to evaluate the extent to which they have been affected by each experience using a 4-point scale, ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 4 (Extremely). The overall RTS-9 score is determined by summing the scores across all items, with a potential range of 9 to 36. The RTS-9 was developed and tested with diverse ethnoracial populations with excellent reliability. Cronbach's alpha for our sample was $\alpha = 0.88$.

3.2.8 Police and Law Enforcement Experiences of Harassment

Police and Law Enforcement (PLE; English et al., 2017) Scale is a psychometric tool developed to assess individuals' perceptions and experiences of police interactions. It evaluates dimensions such as trust, fairness, and procedural justice in encounters with law enforcement. The scale is designed to capture both positive and negative experiences, providing insights into how people view the legitimacy and effectiveness of police practices within their communities. Through qualitative interviews and quantitative analyses, the researchers identified key themes and formulated a concise 5-item, single-factor measure that captures these discriminatory experiences. Before being administered the five items, each participant responded to a filter question "Have you had any experiences with police or law enforcement in the past 5 years?"

Items were scored on a 6-point Likert-type scale that assessed the frequency of the reported experiences, that included “Never,” “Once in a while,” “Sometimes,” “A lot,” “Most of the time,” and “Always.” Scores range from 5-30. For this study, respondents were asked about their experiences on campus, in the surrounding urban area, and in general. Prompts were modified to include campus security as well as police. Cronbach’s alpha for our sample was $\alpha=.86$, indicating adequate internal consistency.

3.2.9 Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM-12; Roberts et al., 1999) has been validated in adolescents of various ethnic and racial groups, as well as a nationally representative sample of African American and European American adults, ages 18–35, with excellent reliability (Williams, Duque, Wetterneck, Chapman, & DeLapp, 2018). The 12-Items were scored from 1 to 4, with higher numbers corresponding to greater agreement of items. Because some studies find that those with stronger ethnic identity cope better with racism, the MEIM-12 was explored as a potential moderator of distress due to racialization. Cronbach’s alpha was $\alpha = 0.91$.

Chapter 4: Analysis Plan

To test our hypotheses, we used a multi-faceted approach with various statistical analyses, all performed using SPSS version 29.0.2.0 for Macbook (SPSS Science, Chicago, IL).

First, we employed Pearson correlation coefficients to examine the strength and direction of relationships between experiences of racial microaggressions (measured by RMAS and RMHES) and several psychological variables, including racial trauma symptoms (RTS-9), positive and negative affect (PANAS), and the sense of belonging among people of colour (PCS). This analysis aimed to understand how these factors are associated. We also correlated the year in school (i.e., first, second, etc.), and experience of microaggressions and racial trauma to examine if students' academic progression was associated with more exposure to racial microaggressions or higher impact from these experiences.

Next, we used the PROCESS macro to investigate the moderating role of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM). This analysis tested whether ethnic identity influenced the relationships between racial microaggressions and both racial trauma symptoms and affective states (positive and negative). We hypothesized that a strong ethnic identity might buffer or amplify the psychological impact of racial microaggressions.

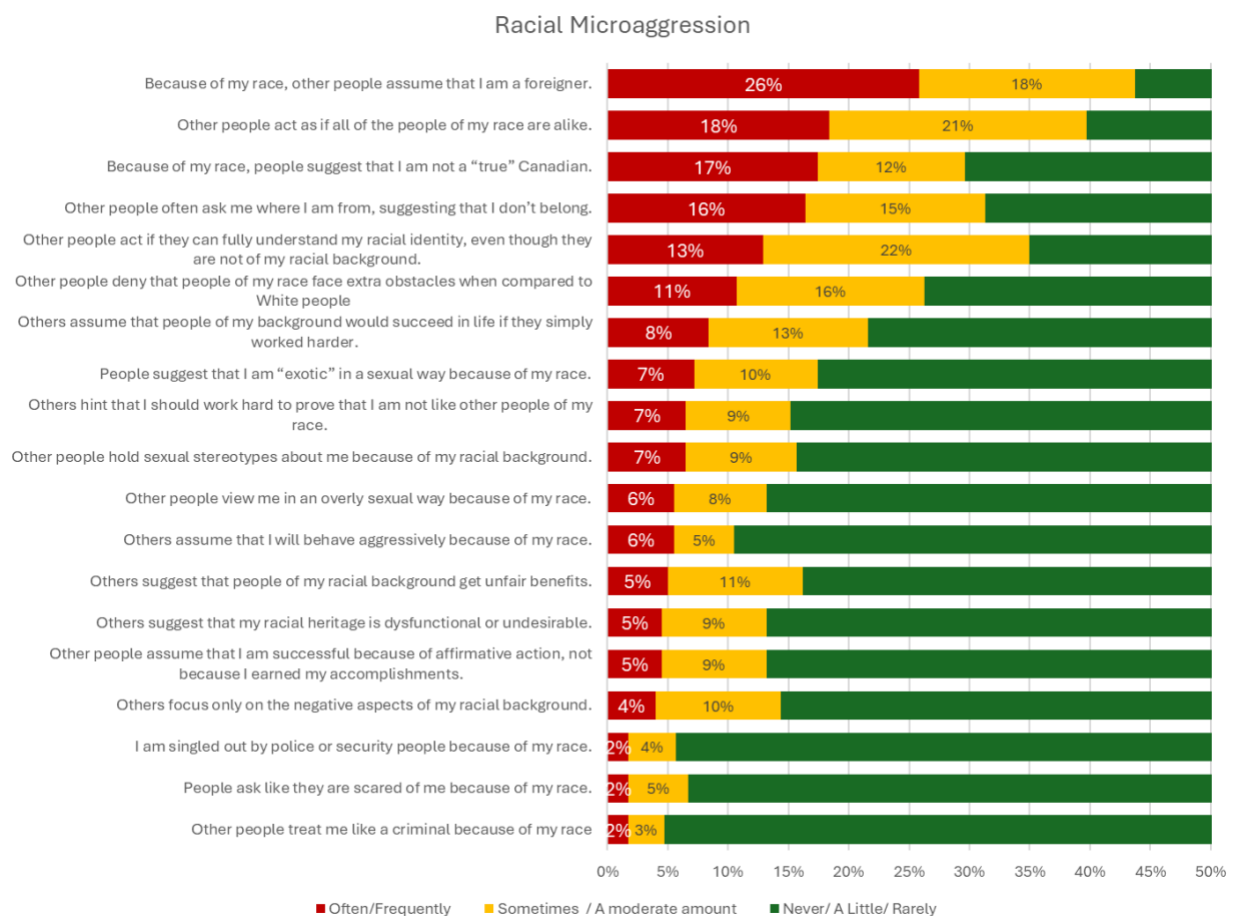
Finally, we conducted a one-way ANOVA to explore whether students' racial identification was associated with different experiences of racial trauma symptoms and microaggressions. This test aimed to determine if racial identity influenced the extent of these experiences.

Chapter 5: Results

5.1 Descriptive Findings

The various types of racial microaggressions experienced by students on campus and the percentage of students who reported experiencing each type with different frequencies is reported in Table 5. The items endorsed most strongly include: When I interact with authority figures, they are usually of a different racial background, I notice that there are few people of my racial background on the TV, books, and magazines, Because of my race, other people assume that I am a foreigner, Because of my race, people suggest that I am not a “true” Canadian, Other people often ask me where I am from, suggesting that I don’t belong.

Figure 5.1. Racial Microaggressions



Note: The scale items are ordered according to how often a statement was answered with Often/Frequently. Only the top 19 out of a total 32 questions are depicted.

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

Table 5.1. Racial Microaggressions on the uOttawa Campus (RMAS)

	Racial Microaggression	Never/A Little/Rarely	Sometimes/ A moderate amount	Often/ Frequently
1	Because of my race, other people assume that I am a foreigner.	56.4%	17.9%	25.8%
2	Because of my race, people suggest that I am not a “true” Canadian.	70.4%	12.2%	17.4%
3	Other people often ask me where I am from, suggesting that I don’t belong.	68.8%	14.9%	16.4%
4	Other people treat me like a criminal because of my race	95.3%	3%	1.7%
5	People act like they are scared of me because of my race.	93.3%	5%	1.7%
6	Others assume that I will behave aggressively because of my race.	89.6%	5%	5.5%
7	I am singled out by police or security people because of my race.	94.3%	4%	1.7%
8	People suggest that I am “exotic” in a sexual way because of my race.	82.7%	10.2%	7.2%
9	Other people view me in an overly sexual way because of my race.	86.8%	7.7%	5.5%
10	Other people hold sexual stereotypes about me because of my racial background.	84.3%	9.2%	6.5%
11	Other people act if they can fully understand my racial identity, even though they are not of my racial background.	65.0%	22.1%	12.9%
12	Other people act as if all of the people of my race are alike.	60.3%	21.3%	18.4%
13	Others suggest that people of my racial background get unfair benefits.	83.6%	11.2%	5.2%
14	Others assume that people of my background would succeed in life if they simply worked harder.	78.5%	13.2%	8.4%
15	Other people deny that people of my race face extra obstacles when compared to Whites.	73.7%	15.6%	10.7%
16	Other people assume that I am successful because of affirmative action, not because I earned my accomplishments.	86.9%	8.7%	4.5%
17	Others hint that I should work hard to prove that I am not like other people of my race.	84.9%	8.7%	6.5%
18	Others suggest that my racial heritage is dysfunctional or undesirable.	86.8%	8.7%	4.5%
19	Others focus only on the negative aspects of my racial background.	85.6%	10.4%	4.0%

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

20	Others prefer that I assimilate to the White culture and downplay my racial background.	78.2%	13.4%	8.4%
21	I am mistaken for being a service worker or a lower-status worker simply because of my race.	91.4%	6%	2.7%
22	I am treated like a second-class citizen because of my race.	90.5%	6%	3.5%
23	I receive poorer treatment in restaurants and stores because of my race.	91.6%	6.9%	1.5%
24	Sometimes I feel as if people look past me or don't see me as a real person because of my race.	85.6%	9.9%	4.5%
25	I feel invisible because of my race.	85.6%	9.7%	4.7%
26	I am ignored in school or work environments because of my race.	90.6%	6%	3.5%
27	My contributions are dismissed or devalued because of my racial background.	90.5%	6.2%	3.2%
28	When I interact with authority figures, they are usually of a different racial background.	42.6%	24.8%	32.5%
29	I notice that there are few role models in my racial background in my chosen career.	55.8%	21.1%	23.1%
30	Sometimes I am the only person of my racial background in my class or workplace.	63.2%	18.4%	18.4%
31	Where I work or go to school, I see few people of my racial background.	61.8%	22.6%	15.6%
32	I notice that there are few people of my racial background on TV, books, and magazines.	54.1%	19.4%	26.6%

Note: Never, A Little, and Rarely were combined into one category. Sometimes and A Moderate Amount were combined into another category. Often and Frequently were combined into a third category. N = 403.

When examining day-to-day microaggressions, the most common microaggressions included being assumed to be a foreigner (#1, 2, 3) and lack of representation (#28, 29, 32).

Table 5.2 compares microaggressions on the uOttawa campus to the environment in the city of Ottawa in general. For all items, the experience of racial microaggressions was significantly less on-campus than off-campus. The largest difference appears to be in the category of being part of a Low-Achieving/Undesirable Culture, meaning that students felt more valued on campus than off. This was also true for students in each ethnoracial group for total RMAS score (Table 5.4) and for the subscales (not shown).

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Table 5.2. Racial Microaggressions on the uOttawa Campus compared to the City of Ottawa

Scale	On Campus Mean (SD)	In the City Mean (SD)	Difference Score Mean (SD)	Significant difference (t)
RMAS Total	23.00 (18.14)	30.55 (19.58)	-7.55 (10.57)	-14.34**
Foreigner/Not Belonging (1-3)	3.36 (2.93)	4.15 (2.83)	-0.78 (1.58)	-9.93 **
Criminality (4-7)	1.18 (2.23)	1.99 (2.78)	-0.81 (1.73)	-9.43 **
Sexualization (8-10)	1.64 (2.45)	2.46 (2.81)	-0.81 (1.86)	-8.78 **
Low-Achieving/Undesirable Culture (11-19)	6.46 (6.40)	9.35 (6.74)	-2.89 (4.14)	-14.02 **
Invisibility (20-27)	3.52 (4.9)	5.09 (5.46)	-1.58 (2.96)	-10.69 **
Environmental/Lack of Representation (28-32)	6.84 (4.23)	7.51 (4.27)	-0.68 (1.81)	-7.49 **

Note: Racial Microaggressions Scale (RMAS), For t, df=402. **p<.001

Table 5.3. Racial Microaggressions in Higher Education Scale (RMHES)

Question	Never	Less than once a year	A few times a year to once a month	A few times a month or more
1 I have experienced feelings of isolation on this campus because of my race	61.8%	17.6%	13.7%	7.0%
2 I have experienced someone using offensive language on this campus because of my race	70.5%	15.1%	12.1%	2.2%
3 I have experienced someone making offensive jokes to me on this campus because of my race	69.7%	15.6%	9.2%	5.4%
4 I have experienced harassment (emotional, verbal, or physical) on campus because of my race	83.4%	11.7%	3.2%	1.7%
5 I have experienced not being taken seriously in my classes because of my race	80.9%	8.7%	8.2%	2.2%
6 I have experienced discouragement in pursuing my academic or educational goals because of my race	78.2%	11.7%	8.2%	2.0%
7 People have made me feel intellectually inferior on this campus because of my race	76.2%	11.7%	8.2%	4.0%

Note: N = 403

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Table 5.3 presents the frequency with which BIPOC students encountered racial microaggressions on campus from the RMHES, indicating that while a majority of students report never experiencing each listed form of racial mistreatment on campus, a substantial minority have faced microaggressions to varying degrees. Feelings of racial isolation were the most frequently reported experience, with nearly 40% of respondents indicating some occurrence. Offensive language and jokes were also relatively common, with about 30% of students reporting such incidents. More overt forms of discrimination—such as harassment, being dismissed in class, academic discouragement, or being made to feel intellectually inferior—were reported less frequently but still affected approximately 15–24% of students, highlighting the ongoing presence of racial microaggressions in academic settings.

Table 5.4. Mean Scores by Racial Group for Racial Microaggressions on the uOttawa Campus compared to the City of Ottawa

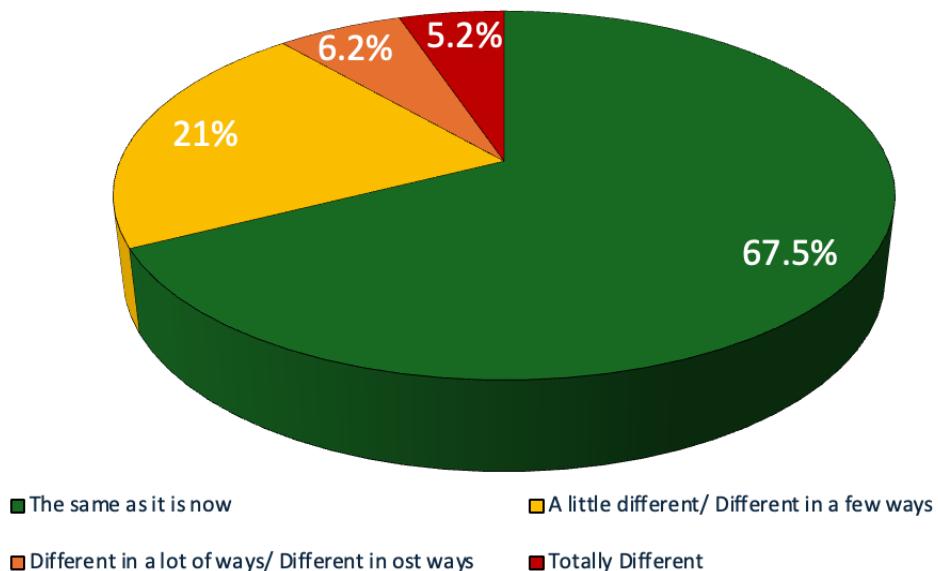
Measures	Asian N= 153		Black N=126		MENA N= 74		Multiracial N= 39	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
RMAS Total (uOttawa)	21.81	16.10	27.46	19.67	20.04	17.93	21.05	19.64
RMAS Total (City of Ottawa)	27.46	17.28	36.71	21.36	27.99	17.68	29.05	20.84

Note: Racial Microaggressions Scale (RMAS). N= 403

On the GEDS Question 18, participants were asked how different their lives would be if they had not been treated in a racist and unfair way at uOttawa in the past year (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2. General Ethnic Discrimination on the uOttawa Campus (GEDS) Q.18.

How different would your life be now if you had not been treated in a racist and unfair way?



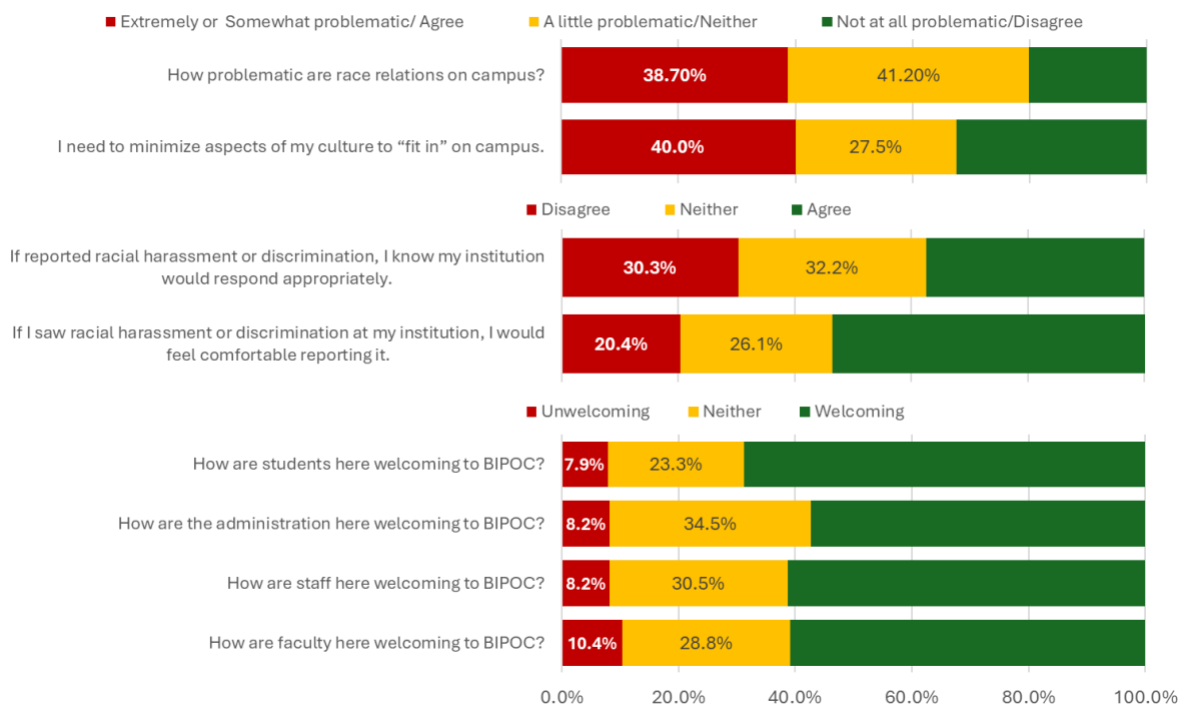
Note: Item responses ranged from *the same as it is now* to *totally different*. A little different and different in a few ways were combined into one category. Different in a lot of ways and Different in most ways were combined into another category. N= 403

In response, the majority (67.5%) indicated that their lives would be the same as it is now. Meanwhile, 21% of respondents felt that their lives would be "a little different" or "different in a few ways," 6.2% believed their lives would be "different in a lot of ways" or "different in most ways," and 5.2% indicated that their lives would be "totally different."

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Figure 5.3 illustrates how BIPOC students find race relations on campus. Most find the students, administration, staff, and faculty welcoming to BIPOC. However, most also noted that they feel race relations on campus are problematic. Most did not feel comfortable reporting discrimination, nor were they confident in a useful response.

Figure 5.3. Race Relations on Campus Overview



EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

Table 5.5 illustrates perceptions of campus climate regarding race relations and the inclusivity experienced by our sample.

Table 5.5. Perceptions of Campus Climate 1

Question	Extremely or Somewhat problematic	A little problematic	Not at all problematic
1 How problematic are race relations on campus?	38.7%	41.2%	20.1%
Question	Welcoming	Neither	Unwelcoming
2 To what extent are faculty at my institution welcoming to Black and Indigenous persons and people of colour?	60.8%	28.8%	10.4%
3 To what extent are staff at my institution welcoming to Black and Indigenous persons and people of colour?	61.3%	30.5%	8.2%
4 To what extent are members of the administration at my institution welcoming to Black and Indigenous persons and people of colour?	57.3%	34.5%	8.2%
5 To what extent are students at my institution welcoming to Black and Indigenous persons and people of colour?	68.7%	23.3%	7.9%
Question	Agree	Neither	Disagree
6 I feel that I need to minimize aspects of my racial/ethnic culture such as language, clothes, and ways of interacting in order to be able to “fit in” to the culture of my campus.	40%	27.5%	32.5%
7 If I were to experience or witness racial harassment or discrimination at my institution, I would feel comfortable reporting it to a faculty, staff, or administrator.	53.6%	26.1%	20.4%
8 If I were to report racial harassment or discrimination at my institution, I am confident that my institution would respond to it appropriately.	37.5%	32.3%	30.3%
Question	Yes	No	
9 I know my institution's formal procedures for handling incidents of racial/ethnic discrimination/bias.	26.6%	73.4%	

Note: The categories extremely problematic and somewhat problematic were combined into one category, as were very welcoming and somewhat welcoming, somewhat unwelcoming and very unwelcoming, strongly agree and agree, and strongly disagree and disagree. N = 403

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

Table 5.6. Experience of Campus Climate 2

	Question: What are some places ON-CAMPUS where you feel uncomfortable and/or avoid due to your race/ethnicity	% Feel Uncomfortable	% Avoid
1	Ottawa Transportation	27.5%	11.9%
2	Fraternity/ Sorority	25.6%	33.7%
3	Academic Department	23.1%	11.4%
4	Athletic Facilities	23.1%	13.2%
5	Classroom	22.3%	8.7%
6	Student Health	22.3%	10.2%
7	Admission	22.1%	11.2%
8	Financial Aid Office	22.1%	11.7%
9	Instructor's Office	20.1%	11.9%
10	Residence Halls	20.1%	14.1%
11	Libraries	19.6%	9.7%

Note: The data are ranked from highest to lowest based on the percentage of students who feel uncomfortable in these locations. N = 403

Table 5.6 depicts locations on campus where BIPOC students at uOttawa feel uncomfortable and avoid due to their race or ethnicity. Notably, local transportation and fraternal organizations made students most uncomfortable, with over a third of students avoiding fraternal organizations. However, the percentage of students feeling uncomfortable was relatively high for all locations.

Moreover, our analysis revealed a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.11$, $p = 0.03$) between the number of places avoided and the experience of microaggressions (measured using the RMAS), where students who experienced more microaggressions were more likely to avoid campus locations.

The RTS-9 has a cut-off score of 15 for clinically significant symptoms of racial trauma. Students scored high, with Black students having the most scores above the cut-off (77%), followed by Asian students (65%), multiracial students (64%), and MENA students (60%).

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

Table 5.7. Percent of Respondents Endorsing Each Item as a Means of Coping

Question: How do you cope with racial discrimination?	Percent	RTS-9 (r)
1 Talking to friends	84.4%	0.09
2 Assumed that the person(s) were ignorant	61.3%	0.21**
4 Getting support from family	51.4%	0.11**
8 Finding distractions (e.g., work, video games, social media, youtube etc.)	49.6%	0.28**
9 Educating self (e.g., seeking out more information about racism)	39.5%	0.16**
6 Limiting exposure to racism (e.g., signing off social media)	32.3%	0.29**
18 Dismissed or ignored the incident	31.5%	0.19**
13 Physical exercise	30.5%	0.12**
3 Blamed the media (in any way)	26.1%	0.18**
7 Religious or spiritual practices (e.g., prayer)	24.8%	0.17**
16 Cried about the incident	23.1%	0.37**
14 Relaxation exercises, meditation, yoga, etc.	21.8%	0.12**
15 Activism	19.1%	0.13**
5 Talking to a therapist or counselor	16.9%	0.02
17 Educating perpetrators	14.9%	0.04
21 Change in eating habits (e.g., overeating, binge eating or not eating)	11.7%	0.21**
31 Self-blame	10.4%	0.24**
26 Verbal aggression against perpetrator(s)	9.7%	0.12*
24 Made use of campus resources (e.g., Cultural Centers, Academic Achievement Center)	8.9%	-0.05
10 Disengaging in class(es)	7.9%	0.12*
23 Got involved in campus activities	7.7%	0.03
28 Ruminating	6.2%	0.15**
25 Made use of health resources	5.7%	-0.03
11 Skipping class(es)	4.7%	-0.23**
29 Took on leadership roles in student organizations	4.7%	-0.05
19 Drinking/alcohol use	4.2%	0.16**
30 Considered leaving the university	3.5%	0.14**
22 Change in sexual activities	3.2%	0.10*
20 Substance use	3.0%	0.16**
32 Self-harm (e.g., cutting or injuring self)	1.7%	0.16**
12 Dropping course(s)	1.5%	0.18**
33 Contemplated or attempted suicide	1.2%	0.06
27 Physical aggression against perpetrator(s)	1.2%	-0.03

Note: The strategies are listed from most to least frequent coping strategies used. Each item is shown on the right with its correlation to the Racial Trauma Scale (RTS-9). N = 403

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

Table 5.7 presents various coping strategies employed by BIPOC students at uOttawa when faced with racial discrimination. The most frequent strategies (utilized by over 50% of respondents) were talking to friends, assuming perpetrators were ignorant, and getting support from family. Notably, approaches involving violence and aggression toward self or others were least utilized, as was dropping classes.

“I felt very emotional while filling out the survey and going through the emotions of how it felt in these situations. I had to take a break halfway through and I ended up crying and feeling the anxiety all over again.”

–4th Year Student in Health Science

Because people of colour are racially profiled at higher rates, we asked students about their experiences with law enforcement and campus police. We examined the mean scores of the PLE by ethnoracial group, as shown in Table 5.8. While mean PLE scores across racial groups were relatively consistent, Black participants reported the highest levels of harassment on campus, followed closely by participants identifying as Multiracial and Middle Eastern/North African. Asian participants reported the lowest mean scores. Results are graphically shown in Figure 5.4.

Table 5.8. Mean Scores by Racial Group for Police and Law Enforcement (PLE) Harassment Scale

Measure	Asian N= 137		Black N=114		MENA N= 67		Multiracial N= 33	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
PLE (In General)	5.28	1.45	5.54	2.38	5.49	1.87	5.67	1.85
PLE (Ottawa Region)	5.04	0.28	5.40	2.09	5.43	1.93	5.24	0.97
PLE (uOttawa Campus)	5.01	0.17	5.19	1.97	5.09	0.73	5.06	0.35

In examining the total PLE scores with a paired samples t-test, participants reported experiencing significantly more harassment in general than on campus (In General PLE=5.51, SD=1.97; uOttawa Campus PLE=5.08 SD=1.11; $p<.001$), and significantly less on campus than in the larger Ottawa metro region (Ottawa Region PLE=5.23, SD=1.45; $p<.001$).

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

Figure 5.4. Police and Law Enforcement (PLE) Harassment Scale Scores by Racial Group

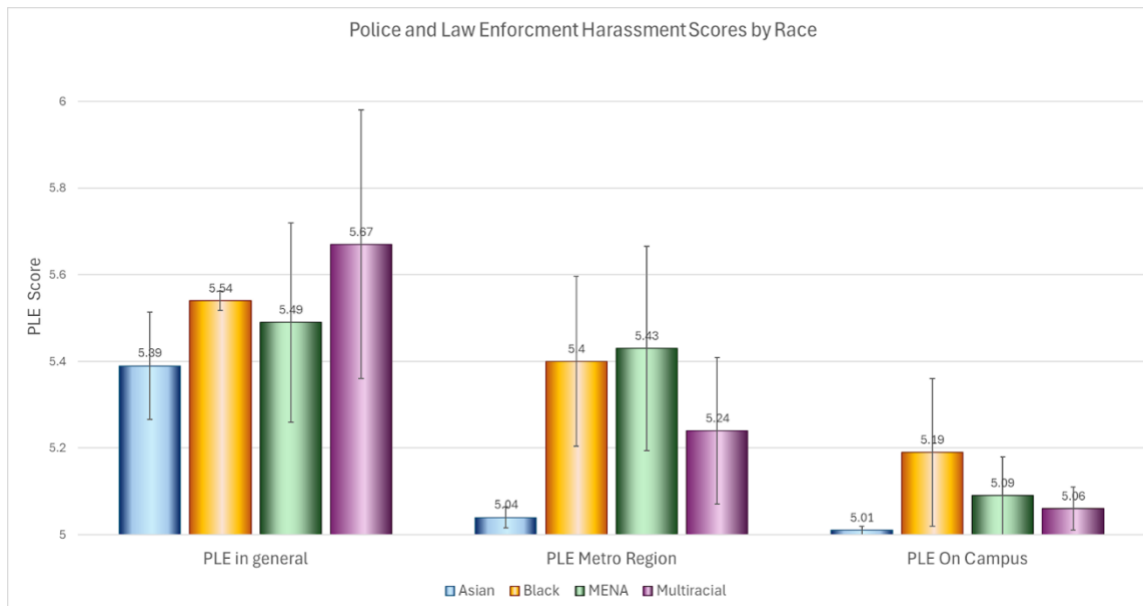


Table 5.9. Mean Scores by Racial Group and Gender for Police and Law Enforcement (PLE) Harassment Scale

Measure	Gender	Asian			Black			MENA			Multiracial		
		Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
PLE (In General)	Male	5.53	1.57	40	5.89	2.35	19	6.81	3.56	16	6.30	2.21	10
	Female	5.34	1.76	95	5.46	2.39	94	5.08	0.27	51	5.25	1.22	24
PLE (Metro Region)	Male	5.02	0.15	42	5.85	2.11	20	6.70	3.62	17	5.44	1.33	9
	Female	5.04	0.32	99	5.28	2.04	98	5.00	0.00	51	5.17	0.82	24
PLE (On Campus)	Male	5.00	0.00	43	5.00	0.00	20	5.33	1.41	18	5.00	0.00	10
	Female	5.02	0.20	102	5.22	2.08	102	5.00	0.00	52	5.08	0.39	26

In examining the scores, by gender we find that males were much more likely to have experienced harassment than females off-campus. On campus, females are more likely to report harassment, however rates are low on campus overall. Notably, no Asian, Black, or Multiracial males, or any MENA females, reported any instances of harassment by campus security police (5 is the lowest score on the PLE).

5.2 ANOVA Between Groups for Validated Measures

We conducted a one-way ANOVA to determine if race is associated with varying experiences of racial microaggressions and racial trauma symptoms among students at uOttawa. We compared Asian, Black, MENA, and Multiracial groups, omitting Indigenous from the ANOVA due to the small sample size.

The overall model revealed a significant effect of race on the experience of racial microaggressions as measured by the RMAS, $F(3, 388) = 3.596, p = .014, \eta^2 = .027$. Bootstrapped pairwise comparisons conducted to further examine race relations revealed that students who identified as Black reported significantly higher experiences of racial microaggressions compared to Asian and MENA students ($p = .013, .015$ respectively).

Furthermore, the model revealed a significant effect of race on the experience of racial trauma symptoms as measured by the RTS-9, $F(3, 388) = 2.793, p = .04, \eta^2 = .021$. Bootstrapped pairwise comparisons conducted to further examine race relations revealed that students who identified as Black reported significantly higher experiences of racial microaggressions compared to Asian, and MENA students ($p = .024, .011$ respectively).

Table 5.10. Mean Scores by Racial Group

Measures	Black N=126		MENA N= 74		Asian N= 153		Multiracial N= 39	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
RMAS	27.46	19.67	20.04	17.93	21.81	16.10	21.05	19.64
RTS-9	19.62	6.35	17.22	6.29	17.95	6.10	17.92	6.62
CESD-R	22.65	12.98	19.59	11.70	24.07	13.92	21.15	12.52
RMHES	14.39	11.69	11.74	9.91	12.95	8.86	13.11	10.13
PCS	13.25	3.76	14.20	3.34	13.99	3.61	13.82	3.40

Note: Table includes Black, Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) (Non-White), Asian, Multiracial students. Racial Microaggressions Scale (RMAS), The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale-Revised (CESD-R), Racial Microaggressions in Higher Education Scale (RMHES), Racial Trauma Scale-9 (RTS-9), The Perceived Cohesion Scale (PCS). N= 403.

5.3 Correlational Findings

The correlational analysis examined the relationships between racial microaggressions at uOttawa, racial trauma symptoms, positive affect, and negative affect, as shown in Table 5.10. The strongest correlations were between racial trauma symptoms and the experience of racial microaggressions, indicating that repeated exposure to these subtle yet pervasive acts can significantly heighten trauma responses. Similarly, depressive symptoms were also positively associated with microaggressions, reflecting the substantial psychological burden of racism. This finding aligns with prior research and underscores the serious mental health risks facing marginalized students.

In contrast, we found a somewhat surprising pattern when it came to positive emotions. Despite the robust links between microaggressions and negative affect, positive affect did not show any significant relationship with racial microaggressions.

Table 5.11. Correlations between Measures of Racism and Mental Health Indicators

Measure	RMAS (uOttawa)	RMHES
Perceived Cohesion Scale	-0.27**	-0.30**
Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale-Revised	0.30**	0.38**
Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (positive subscale)	0.01	0.05
Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (negative subscale)	0.21**	0.29**
Racial Trauma Scale-9	0.48**	0.41**

Note: The Perceived Cohesion Scale (PCS), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale-Revised (CESD-R), Racial Trauma Scale-9 (RTS-9). N= 403. ** p < .05

Because negative affect has been hypothesized to be a salient factor in reports of microaggressions and discriminatory distress (Lilienfeld, 2017), we controlled for this in a subsequent analysis, which evidenced only small differences. As such, we can be confident that findings are not better explained by personality features such as neuroticism.

Participants scoring at or above the cut-off of 15 on the RTS-9 indicates the likely presence of clinically-significant racial trauma symptoms. By ethnoracial group, many students of colour meet this criterion, including 65.4% of Asian heritage students, 77.0% of Black students, 80.0% of Indigenous students, 59.5% of MENA students, 83.3% of Latin American students, and 64.1% of multiracial students.

Further, we conducted a correlational analysis to examine the relationships between the year in school (first year, second year, etc.) and associations with experiences of racial trauma

symptoms and racial microaggressions at uOttawa. This analysis was aimed at understanding whether students' academic progression was associated with more exposure to racial microaggressions or higher impact from these experiences. However, there were no significant correlations, $p > .05$, indicating that students' year in school was not related to their experiences of racial trauma symptoms and racial microaggressions.

5.4 Moderation Analysis

Moderation analysis was performed to examine the effect of ethnic identity on the relationship between the experience of racial microaggressions, and mental health outcomes, specifically positive and negative affect and racial trauma symptoms.

Results revealed that the interaction between uOttawa campus-based racial microaggressions (RMAS) and ethnic identity (MEIM) was not significant for positive affect ($\beta = -0.001$, $SE = .002$, $p = .65$), negative affect ($\beta = 0.04$, $SE = .003$, $p = .14$), or racial trauma symptoms ($\beta = 0.04$, $SE = .002$, $p = .81$). This indicates that ethnic identity did not moderate the relationship between racial microaggressions and mental health outcomes in this study. In other words, having a strong ethnic identity neither buffered nor exacerbated the psychological impact of racial microaggressions on students' mental health.

However, the interaction between the RMASs and the MEIM was significant for cumulative depression scores (CESD-R). The overall model was significant, $F(3,399)=14.143$, $p<.001$. The significant interaction ($\beta=0.008$, $t(399)=1.98$, $p=.048$) indicates that ethnic identity moderates the relationship between racial microaggressions and depression. This moderation effect was significant across all levels of ethnic identity (low: $\beta=-7.47$, $p=.0004$; moderate: $\beta=0.89$, $p<.001$; high: $\beta=6.89$, $p<.001$). Rather than serving as a protective factor, ethnic identity appeared to exacerbate the depressive symptoms associated with racial microaggressions.

These results imply that students who identify with their ethnic background and take pride in it did not show significantly better coping abilities in dealing with racism on campus compared to those with lower ethnic identity levels. This indicates that ethnic identity may not play a protective role in buffering against the adverse impacts of experiencing racial microaggressions, in BIPOC uOttawa students.

Additionally, moderation analysis was conducted to examine the effect of ethnic identity on the relationship between the RMHES and outcomes. There were no significant interactions between the RMHES and MEIM for positive affect ($\beta = -0.0005$, $SE = .005$, $p = .92$), negative affect ($\beta = 0.003$, $SE = .005$, $p = .56$), racial trauma symptoms ($\beta = -0.003$, $SE = .004$, $p = .42$), or depression ($\beta = 0.004$, $SE = .008$, $p = .61$).

5.5 Qualitative Findings

In addition to the structured survey responses, participants were given the opportunity to share qualitative feedback in response to open-ended, investigator developed questions. These insights provide valuable context for understanding the broader patterns observed in the quantitative data.

Reactions to Use of the N-word by a uOttawa Professor (Q1)

When asked how they felt about the incident in which a professor used the N-word, many students expressed strong negative emotions such as “angry,” “disgusted,” or “disappointed.” One student stated, “I felt shocked that this was tolerated at an institution like uOttawa.” Others conveyed disbelief or confusion. A small number expressed resignation, with one noting, “Not surprised—just another example of how normalized racism can be in academia.” These comments underscore how such incidents, even when addressed post-facto, can contribute to a larger sense of mistrust toward institutional commitment to anti-racism.

Reactions to the Skateboarding Student Being Carded by Campus Security (Q2)

Students responded to this incident with a mix of anger, fear, and frustration. Responses included words such as “unsafe,” “angry,” and “disheartened.” One participant commented, “It made me feel like I couldn’t fully trust the people who are supposed to keep us safe.” Another added, “I felt unsafe and fearful on campus.” These reactions reflect the broader context in which racialized students interpret such events—not as isolated incidents, but as part of a systemic issue of over-policing and racial profiling on campus.

Reactions to Use of Racial Slurs in Zoom Classes (Q3)

Students overwhelmingly condemned the use of racial slurs by other students during Zoom sessions. Many used terms like “frustrated,” “mad,” and “ashamed.” One student remarked, “The students are being racial and not friendly at all—I felt shame for them.” Another wrote, “They are just immature... in a Zoom meeting? That is not the place.” These statements show how digital learning environments are not immune to racism and how unmoderated online spaces can become new sites of harm.

Reactions to the University’s Response to the BIPOC Student Sit-In (Q4)

Student feedback regarding the university’s response to the December 2020 sit-in was mixed. While some expressed appreciation—“I was happy the students were fighting back,”—others felt the university’s actions were insufficient or performative. “I was not aware of the response” was a recurring response, suggesting limited communication or visibility of the university’s stance. One student expressed a more critical view: “It felt like damage control more than a genuine effort to support students.”

Awareness of uOttawa Activities to Address Racism (Q5)

When asked whether they were aware of any programs or initiatives at uOttawa that address racial or ethnic discrimination, most students responded negatively. Responses such as “No,” “Not really,” or “Sorry, no” were common. A number of participants expressed frustration, with one student noting, “I think every activity is useless because the university itself is not interested in these issues.” Another echoed this sentiment by stating, “Not enough is done. They say a lot, but I don't see real change.” These comments suggest that even where programs exist, they may not be visible or perceived as effective by students. The responses indicate a significant communication gap and signal a need to better publicize and promote anti-racism efforts across the campus.

“I am aware of these initiatives, and [they're] great. However, there should be more done to tackle systemic racism and not only verbal racist discrimination that we see or hear about. We should be addressing all the barriers that BIPOC students face, and [it's] necessary that the university understands that.”

– 4th Year Student in Health Science

External Recommendations for uOttawa (Q6)

When asked if they had seen effective anti-racism initiatives elsewhere that uOttawa should consider implementing, most responses again indicated a lack of knowledge or experience: “No,” “Not that I can think of,” and similar responses were prevalent. However, several students offered thoughtful suggestions based on their observations at other institutions or workplaces.

“Any activity, program or initiative, while they may have good intentions, does not make a large enough impact that I notice a difference in my daily life or even on campus. It's a lot of talk but not enough action.”

– 2nd Year Student in Management

Recommendations included:

- Mandatory anti-racism and equity training for faculty, staff, and students
- Increased representation of BIPOC in leadership and faculty roles
- Improved support networks for racialized students, such as mentoring programs and

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

culturally affirming mental health services

- More visible and frequent cultural celebrations and recognition of racialized communities on campus

These suggestions have been incorporated into the recommendations section of this report (see Chapter 7) to ensure student voices are reflected in the proposed changes.

“I think every activity is useless because the university does not want to solve this kind of problem.”

– 2nd Year Student in Anthropology

Chapter 6: Discussion

The University of Ottawa has taken great efforts to ensure an equitable and inclusive university environment for everyone. For example, uOttawa has implemented various diversity and inclusion initiatives, support programs for BIPOC students, and policies aimed at reducing discrimination on campus. The University of Ottawa is one of 17 Canadian universities that have endorsed the new Dimensions charter to address systemic barriers and improve equity, diversity and inclusion in post-secondary education (Government of Canada, 2019). Despite these efforts, the results of this study indicate that BIPOC students continue to face significant challenges related to racial microaggressions and negative experiences with campus climate, both on and off campus.

Findings suggest that racial microaggressions are prevalent and significantly affect the mental health and academic experiences of racialized students.

6.1 Prevalence and Types of Racial Microaggressions

Racial microaggressions were found to be prevalent for BIPOC students at uOttawa, with some types of microaggressions more common than others. Many respondents shared that their race or ethnicity led to assumptions about their foreignness or legitimacy as Canadians. Over half reported being perceived as foreigners, and nearly two-thirds noted being questioned about their status as "true" Canadians. These findings are aligned with existing literature on the pervasive nature of racial microaggressions in academic environments, where such experiences can reinforce feelings of exclusion and otherness (Galán et al., 2023; Nadal et al., 2014; Sue et al., 2007). Many felt that their race caused others to assume they were lazy or unmotivated, and that the extra obstacles they encountered due to being non-White was ignored. This sort of stereotyping by faculty can result in unmerited lower grades from BIPOC students.

These findings are supported by collateral data from a site visit at uOttawa from the Canadian Psychological Association. A team of three senior psychologists visited the school and interviewed students and faculty as part of its reaccreditation procedures for the clinical program, which was directed or co-directed by Dr. Elisa Romano from 2020 through 2024. They summarized the following feedback from graduate students:

“Detailed descriptions were provided of microaggressions, demeaning remarks, unfair evaluations and retaliation following the reporting of concerns that contribute to what was characterized to us as a culture of fear amongst the students. Students told us that the program ... has not provided adequate protection, safety and support for BIPOC students and that EDI initiatives were performative, without addressing the issues. The

site visit team heard detailed descriptions of discriminatory behaviour from faculty members in the program directed towards 2SLGBTQQIA+ students and those from other marginalized groups, including antisemitism.” (CPA Accreditation Site Visit Report, dated 12-20-2024)

Among the most frequently endorsed items in our survey were those that would be classified as environmental microaggressions due to a lack of representation. This included items such as “When I interact with authority figures, they are usually of a different racial background” and “I notice that there are few role models in my racial background in my chosen career.” This speaks to the alarming lack of professors and other leaders of colour who are visible in the academic milieu. This disparity is particularly problematic for students, as it makes it hard for them to imagine having academic careers due to a lack of role models, contributing to disparities in the diversity of graduate students. This speaks to an urgent need to increase the diversity of the faculty and leadership in line with the greater diversity of the study body.

“The discrimination isn't always blatant, but it still carries the same weight. It's something I saw a lot throughout high school but wasn't expecting when I came to university. A professor could mistake the same 3 Black girls in her 30-person class for the whole semester and still blame it on 'not being good with names'. Even representation in teachers is so hard to find.”

–1st Year Student in Psychology

Students of colour frequently felt that their race contributed to their exclusion from campus spaces, which was a theme that emerged from the similar survey conducted at the University of Connecticut (UConn survey; Cszimadia et al., 2020). Classrooms and social environments, such as fraternity and sorority houses, were often perceived as unwelcoming or uncomfortable. Classrooms and social environments, such as fraternity and sorority houses, were often perceived as unwelcoming or uncomfortable. This may be because these spaces are traditionally associated with dominant cultural norms that exclude BIPOC students. For instance, fraternity and sorority houses often carry a legacy of exclusivity and privilege, which can make BIPOC students feel like outsiders. Similarly, classrooms may reflect a lack of diversity in both student and faculty demographics, leading to environments where BIPOC students feel marginalized or invisible. The lack of representation and cultural understanding in these spaces likely contributes to the perception that they are more unwelcoming than other areas on campus. Interestingly, the experiences reported by students at uOttawa were very similar to those in the UConn survey. In both studies, many students expressed discomfort or chose to avoid fraternity and sorority houses altogether, reinforcing the sense that these spaces are often exclusionary. The consistent findings across institutions emphasize the need for more

inclusive environments, especially in social spaces that should cultivate belonging instead of alienation for racialized students. Creating fraternities and sororities that prioritize social justice and the experience of racialized students may be one way to address BIPOC exclusion from these spaces.

When comparing the experiences of BIPOC students on the uOttawa campus to those in the broader city of Ottawa, a similar pattern of racial microaggressions emerges, though the intensity appears slightly less pronounced on campus. Students generally felt that while the university provided some level of insulation from the most overt forms of racism, subtle forms of exclusion and stereotyping were still prevalent both on and off campus. For example, students often encountered assumptions about their identity or faced discomfort due to their race, both within academic settings and in the city at large. However, campus spaces were perceived as somewhat more controlled environments, whereas the city presented additional challenges in public spaces and interactions with authority figures. This comparison highlights the fact that while universities like uOttawa aim to create inclusive environments, students still encounter a broader societal context of racial bias, complicating their sense of belonging both on and off campus.

6.2 Campus Climate and Perceptions

The study also explored perceptions of the racial campus climate at uOttawa. A significant proportion of students perceived race relations on campus as problematic, with over a third reporting them as extremely or somewhat problematic. Furthermore, while faculty, staff, and administration were generally perceived as welcoming, there remains a notable minority who found these groups unwelcoming. This resonates with the notion that despite institutional efforts to foster diversity and inclusion, there are still underlying racial tensions that need to be addressed (Williams, 2019). Indeed, research suggests that even if most of the campus community is welcoming, if a large minority is unwelcoming, it can have a negative effect on the overall climate for marginalized students (Campbell & Brauer, 2021).

“Three students made racist remarks... I expected the teacher’s assistants to react, but they did nothing... it showed me that, in fact, those best placed to defend themselves are unfortunately the people who are themselves part of the ethnic group concerned.”

– 2nd Year Student in Psychology

Notably, a large number of students felt that they needed to minimize aspects of their racial or ethnic culture to fit into the campus culture. This indicates a pressure to assimilate, which can

further alienate students and hinder their sense of belonging. Moreover, almost three-quarters of students were unaware of their institution's formal procedures for handling incidents of racial discrimination, suggesting a gap in communication and support mechanisms for those experiencing racism.

“It is very hard for some people to take initiative in terms of reporting incidents as we are afraid that it might have a negative impact on us (such as reporting a professor). So it is the university's responsibility to give the correct education to their professors and staff.”

– 2nd Year Student in International Management

The UConn survey similarly found that students of colour often felt uncomfortable in various campus settings. The pressure to assimilate, particularly in classrooms, often contributed to a lack of belonging, a theme consistently reported in both our study and previous research on racial microaggressions in academic institutions (Choi et al., 2021; Settles et al., 2019). Furthermore, a substantial portion of UConn students were unaware of formal procedures for reporting racial discrimination, much like uOttawa students who also felt that institutional responses were inadequate.

6.3 Impact on Mental Health

The results reveal a significant correlation between experiences of racial microaggressions and racial trauma symptoms, indicating that frequent exposure to racial microaggressions is associated with increased racial trauma symptoms. This may be because microaggressions, though subtle and often dismissed as minor, accumulate over time and reinforce harmful stereotypes, constantly reminding individuals of their marginalized status. These repeated experiences of invalidation, exclusion, or discrimination can cause psychological harm, as they challenge a person's sense of safety, worth, and identity, ultimately leading to trauma. This finding is consistent with prior research that has documented the harmful psychological effects of racial microaggressions, including anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms (e.g., Canel-Çınarbaş & Yohani, 2019; Sue et al., 2019; Torres et al., 2010; Williams, 2018; Williams, Printz, & DeLapp, 2018; Williams et al., 2020; Williams et al., 2021).

Moreover, the study found that a higher sense of belonging was negatively correlated with both racial microaggressions and racial trauma symptoms. This suggests that students who experience fewer racial microaggressions and trauma symptoms are more likely to feel a sense of belonging at their institution (Williams et al., 2020). Microaggressions may diminish a sense of belonging because they serve as constant reminders that BIPOC students are perceived as

outsiders. When students face exclusion or invalidation in social or academic settings, they may feel unwelcome or disconnected from the broader campus community. This undermines their ability to feel accepted or valued, which is crucial for building a strong sense of belonging at an institution. This aligns with the broader literature indicating that a supportive and inclusive campus climate is critical for the well-being and academic success of racialized students (Choi et al., 2021).

This is consistent with the UConn survey, where students reported depressive symptoms and trauma directly linked to the racial microaggressions they encountered on campus. In both the UConn survey and our study at uOttawa, students reported feeling excluded or uncomfortable in classrooms at identical rates, with 31% of students in both studies either feeling uncomfortable or actively avoiding classrooms due to racial microaggressions. Classrooms, which are meant to be spaces for learning and intellectual growth, were instead frequently experienced as environments of exclusion and invisibility by students of colour. This sense of marginalization contributed to significant psychological distress, highlighting a broader trend across institutions. Despite efforts to create inclusive spaces, students of colour continue to encounter barriers that impact their mental well-being.

6.4 Coping Strategies

The coping strategies employed by BIPOC students in response to racial discrimination varied widely, with the most common strategies being talking to friends, assuming the perpetrators were ignorant, and getting support from family. These findings suggest that students primarily rely on social support networks to cope with the stress of racial discrimination, which is consistent with previous research (Cénat et al., 2022; Clark et al., 2014; Henry, 2017; Jacob et al., 2023; Williams et al., 2021; Strauss et al., 2022). While social support appeared to be a primary source of coping, very few students sought help from mental health professionals or utilized institutional resources. This could be due to several factors, including a lack of cultural competence among mental health providers, concerns about confidentiality, or a belief that institutional resources may not be trustworthy or adequately address the specific challenges faced by racialized students. Students may also fear that their experiences of discrimination will be minimized or invalidated by those who lack an understanding of the systemic nature of racism. Not all coping mechanisms were adaptive, as many students shared “crying about the incident,” “self-blame,” and “verbal aggression.” A smaller number reported skipping classes, considering dropping out of uOttawa, substance abuse, and self-harm.

The UConn survey revealed similar patterns. Talking to friends was the most common coping strategy, with over half of students using this approach. However, the use of institutional

resources, such as counseling or therapy, was minimal, reflecting concerns about the accessibility and trustworthiness of these services (Fournier, 2022; Williams et al., 2024). This reluctance to engage with campus resources points to the need for improving awareness and confidence in mental health support systems among racialized students.

6.5 Ethnic Identity and Its Moderating Role

Interestingly, the moderation analysis revealed that ethnic identity did not significantly buffer the relationship between racial microaggressions and mental health outcomes. This contrasts with some literature suggesting that a strong ethnic identity can serve as a protective factor against the negative effects of racism (Farahani et al., 2022, Forrest-Bank & Cuellar 2018, Williams, Duque, et al., 2018). One possible explanation for this discrepancy is that the context of the university environment may create additional pressures that outweigh the protective benefits of ethnic identity. The lack of a moderating effect might also suggest that ethnic identity, while important for personal and cultural affirmation, may not be sufficient on its own to counteract the pervasive and systemic nature of racial microaggressions in academic settings.

Alternatively, it could be that a third variable accounts for both higher ethnic identity and more discrimination. Students who are more racialized due to physical appearance (non-White features), cultural clothing, or having a foreign accent may be both more likely to have stronger ethnic connections and be more highly subject to racism. These relationships should be examined further in future studies.

6.6 Improvements in Campus Security

While concerns about campus climate persist, findings from this study suggest that uOttawa's campus security has improved in its interactions with BIPOC students. Importantly, there were no reports of harassment by campus security police from Asian, Black, or Multiracial males, as well as MENA females. This marks a shift from previous years, particularly in response to a high-profile racial profiling incident in 2019 that led to widespread criticism of security practices on campus (Ramlakhan, 2019).

Recent reforms, including bias-awareness training, improved accountability structures, and race-based data collection, may have contributed to this shift. As highlighted in previous research, campus security officers who receive comprehensive training on de-escalation, cultural competence, and anti-racism are better equipped to engage with racialized students in non-threatening ways. These measures appear to be fostering a more equitable and safer

environment for BIPOC students, illustrating the potential of targeted institutional interventions.

That said, continued oversight remains essential to ensure that these improvements are sustained over time. While this study provides encouraging findings regarding campus security, future research should assess whether these positive changes are consistently experienced by all racialized students and whether additional reforms may be needed.

Chapter 7: Targeted Implications for Policy and Practice at uOttawa

The findings of this study have significant implications for university policies and support services. The high prevalence of racial microaggressions and their association with negative mental health outcomes highlight the need for more robust and visible anti-racism initiatives on campus. Efforts to improve the campus environment must be intensified, with a focus on reducing racism broadly.

“There is clearly a huge disparity between students who have these experiences and the action taken by the university.”

–1st Year Student in Teaching French as a Second Language

7.1 Recommendations for Improving the Racial Climate at uOttawa

7.1.1 Representative Spaces

One of the most critical problems to be addressed is the lack of representation among the faculty and those in leadership roles. The university should prioritize hiring more BIPOC as professors at all ranks, and also ensure they are represented in leadership positions.

Additionally, there should be increased efforts to create inclusive environments where BIPOC students feel supported and valued. To that end, uOttawa can plan and create stronger community spaces that celebrate diversity, encourage open dialogues about race and identity, and provide mentorship specifically for students of colour. Additionally, establishing affinity groups and cultural centers can offer BIPOC students safe spaces where they feel understood and accepted.

7.1.2 Raising Awareness and Training

“I am aware that many institutions are adopting new training programs and changing university curriculums to include more open narratives and methods of teaching. There should be more awareness on BIPOC in academia and adhering to their comfort in teaching methods.”

–4th Year Student in Health Science

Training programs need to be implemented for students, faculty, and staff on recognizing and addressing microaggressions. This should be a multifaceted approach that includes courses, webinars, seminars, and town halls tailored to specific groups. For students, workshops on

allyship and bias awareness can be organized during orientation week. Faculty and staff can benefit from interactive sessions focusing on real-life scenarios, such as the Racial Harmony Workshop described below. Additionally, leadership training programs can ensure that administrators and department heads are equipped to lead inclusively and address incidents of bias effectively. These programs should be available on an ongoing basis to allow for consistent engagement.

“It will be really helpful to make seminars to introduce all the ethnicities and make students familiar with everyone.”

–1st Year Student in Biomedical Sciences

There are some excellent interventions that have been empirically shown to reduce microaggressions among students. For example, Williams and colleagues (2020) tested the Racial Harmony Workshop (RHW) with both undergraduates and medical students in two separate studies. These randomized trials employed a therapeutic model from social and contextual behavioral sciences based on functional analytic psychotherapy (FAP), a relational approach that emphasizes empathy and openness. Workshop exercises were informed by research on the importance of mindfulness and interracial contact involving reciprocal exchanges of vulnerability and responsiveness. The study documented improvements in observed emotional rapport and responsiveness, fewer microaggressions, decreased racism toward minoritized groups, and improved self-reported working alliance and closeness with the Black conversational partners in the study. The intervention for medical students was developed to ascertain if the RHW could improve interracial patient-provider relationship when racial issues were salient (Kanter et al., 2020). The intervention successfully decreased the students’ likelihood of expressing biases and negative stereotypes when interacting with standardized patients of colour in racially charged moments, such as when patients discuss past incidents of discrimination. This suggests that interventions that directly intervene to help improve responding in these moments can be beneficial in reducing racial microaggressions.

7.1.3 Reporting and Accountability

The university should ensure that all students are aware of the procedures for reporting discrimination and that these procedures are accessible and trusted by students. This was an area where the vast majority – almost three-quarters of respondents – expressed a lack of knowledge in terms of what to do or where to go when encountering racism. Students can report experiences of racial harassment or discrimination to the Human Rights Office (HRO) by submitting a "Case Resolution Request" form, either online or by contacting the HRO directly. The HRO serves as the primary resource for addressing complaints related to harassment and

discrimination and can guide students through informal or formal resolution processes as outlined in Policy 67a (Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination) (University of Ottawa, 2024).

“Ne pas laisser impuni les propos racistes sur le campus et les milieux de stages et tout autre acte susceptible d’être une source d’inégalité sociale sur le campus car cela amène à la répétition de ces événements et nuit au climat social sur le campus.”

–1st Year Student in Sciences Infirmières

Secondly, the university should enhance its data collection on race-based incidents to better understand and address the specific challenges faced by BIPOC students. This includes establishing a centralized database for reporting and tracking incidents of discrimination and harassment. Further, data should be collected to track outcomes of incidents to ascertain if they were resolved to the satisfaction of the victim. Such a database could be maintained by the Human Rights Office (HRO). Reports should be analyzed quarterly, with results shared with university leadership, student governments, and relevant campus groups to ensure transparency and accountability. Such data is invaluable for informing targeted interventions and measuring the effectiveness of implemented policies.

It would be important that students feel they can trust these offices if they need to make a report. Students may fear retaliation, dismissal of their concerns, or further marginalization if their cases are mishandled. They may also worry about confidentiality breaches or skepticism from staff members, which can discourage them from seeking institutional support. Addressing these fears through clear communication, visible advocacy, and consistent follow-up can improve trust. Ensuring the effectiveness of these mechanisms should be an ongoing priority.

7.1.4 Mental Health Services for Racialized Students

Finally, universities must make mental health services more accessible and trusted by racialized students. This could involve increasing outreach efforts, reducing stigma around seeking help, and ensuring that counselors are culturally competent and sensitive to the unique challenges faced by BIPOC students. Student counseling services can conduct periodic trainings for therapists on how to treat racial stress and trauma. The lead author of this report recently developed a treatment protocol that has been published into a therapist workbook called *A Clinician’s Guide to Healing the Wounds of Racial Trauma* (Williams, 2024). The university could ensure that all therapists are proficient in delivering this or a similar treatment to BIPOC students as needed. Additionally, this same faculty member delivered a racial trauma group to

distressed students in FSS following the George Floyd incident, and such groups could be made available to racialized students on an ongoing basis.

“The university should make an overall program and ask BIPOC students *once* what they would like to see and then implement that. They keep asking BIPOC students to relive their trauma and then they do nothing about it.”

–4th Year Student in Health Science

Additionally, increasing the number of BIPOC counselors is critical, as this can provide students with mental health professionals who share similar lived experiences and cultural backgrounds, thereby facilitating a greater sense of trust and understanding in the therapeutic process. Currently, uOttawa’s counseling services employ a total of 12 psychotherapists, 2 psychologists, 1 psychiatrist, 3 mental health intake officers, 2 Master’s in Counselling Psychology interns, and 1 Master’s in Social Work intern. Of these, 4 psychotherapists, 2 Master’s in Counselling Psychology interns, and 1 Master’s in Social Work intern identify as BIPOC. When students request psychotherapy services, their first step is an initial meeting with a Mental Health Intake Officer. During this appointment, the Intake Officer assesses their needs and asks about any preferences they may have regarding language, gender, ethnicity, culture, or affiliation with specific communities, such as a racialized community. Based on these preferences, students are matched with a psychotherapist who best aligns with their requirements. Wait times for appointments average 1 to 4 days for a Mental Health Intake Appointment and 1 to 2 weeks for a first psychotherapy session following intake, which highlights the urgent need for expanding capacity and ensuring more equitable access. By implementing these additions, uOttawa can ensure that more students of colour feel comfortable using the mental health resources available to them.

7.2 Summary of Actionable Recommendations for uOttawa

To effectively address the issues identified, uOttawa should consider implementing the following recommendations:

- **Establish anti-racism training programs** for students, faculty, and staff to increase awareness of racial microaggressions, teach ways to address them, and create a more inclusive campus climate.
- **Create and promote clear, accessible procedures** for reporting discrimination incidents and work to ensure that students can trust the reporting process will be helpful and not harmful or further traumatizing.

- **Enhance cultural and community spaces** by creating more affinity groups, mentorship programs, living groups, and cultural centers where BIPOC students feel represented and valued.
- **Increase the availability of culturally competent counselors and expand outreach for mental health services** targeted at BIPOC students, reducing stigma and building stronger trust in these resources through visible support from university leadership. Particular emphasis should be placed on hiring more racially and ethnically diverse counselors who can relate to the unique experiences of racialized students.
- **Conduct ongoing assessments of campus climate** by enhancing data collection on student racial/ethnic demographics and race-related incidents, along with tracking resolutions to ensure accountability and continuous public reporting of findings and improvement.
- **Increase BIPOC representation among faculty and leadership** by prioritizing the hiring and promotion of racially diverse scholars into professorial and administrative roles. This is essential to fostering a more representative and equitable academic environment where BIPOC students feel valued and inspired by diverse role models.

Chapter 8: Conclusion and Future Directions

This study underscores the significant challenges that BIPOC students at uOttawa face in navigating racial microaggressions and their effects on mental health and campus belonging. While social support networks are crucial for coping, there is a pressing need for institutions to address the systemic issues that perpetuate these microaggressions by multifaceted approach that includes improving campus climate, reducing racial microaggressions, and enhancing support systems (Williams, 2019; Williams, 2020b; Haeny et al., 2021a,b). By fostering a more inclusive campus environment and providing accessible resources, uOttawa can better support the mental health and academic success of all students.

This study should be replicated with a larger sample and more graduate students to ensure greater generalization across the whole of the student body. Future research should explore the effectiveness of different interventions aimed at reducing the impact of racial microaggressions. Longitudinal studies could also provide insight into how these experiences affect students over time, including their academic performance and retention rates. Potential pathways for our research in the future include: investigating whether BIPOC students perceive specific ongoing initiatives as beneficial or ineffective; exploring the creative and forward-thinking suggestions BIPOC students may offer to enhance existing initiatives and address gaps; assessing the recognition and acknowledgment of the university's endeavors by BIPOC students, with a focus on this study aimed at advancing and refining current anti-racist initiatives. Moreover, this research could be replicated at other universities across Canada to explore the experiences of microaggressions among BIPOC students in diverse academic settings. Universities can compare strategies to help ascertain what approaches are most effective.

“I appreciate such research being done on behalf of BIPOC students, as our experiences are often pushed to the side. I hope lots of good and change is the result of this study.”

–2nd Year Student in Nursing

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Appendix A: Demographics Questionnaire

We want to be able to best understand you, and the following questions help us get a better sense of who you are. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. We know that many of these categories may not fully capture the complexities of your individual experience.

1. Name: _____
2. Do you currently live in Canada? Yes No (*Specify country*): _____
 If not, how long have you been living outside of Canada? _____
- 3a. Since you've been a student at uOttawa, how much of your time have you spent in the Ottawa area?
(*Participants will respond on a sliding scale from 0-100, where 0=none and 100=all*)
- 3b. Since you've been a student at uOttawa, how much of your time have you spent on campus?
(*Participants will respond on a sliding scale from 0-100, where 0=none and 100=all*)
4. What is your current age? (*please write in*) _____
5. Sex (e.g., male, female, intersex, etc.) _____
6. Gender (e.g., cisgender woman, cisgender man, transgender woman, transgender man, non-binary/gender fluid, queer, etc.) _____
7. What is your sexual orientation?
 Heterosexual Bisexual Gay or Lesbian Pansexual Asexual Not listed (*please specify, if you choose*)
8. With what religion or spiritual practice (if any) do you identify?
 Protestant Catholic Jewish Muslim Evangelical None Other (*please write in*): _____
9. What is the highest grade in school, year in college, or post-college degree work you have completed?
 8th Grade or Less
 Some High School
 High School Graduate or GED
 College or 2-Year Degree
 University Graduate (3 or 4-year degree)
 Graduate Degree
10. Are you currently a:
 Part-time student Full-time student Not a student
11. Are you currently involved in paid work?
 Not at all
 Working 1-20 hours per week
 Working 21-30 hours per week
 Working 31-40 hours per week
 Working over 40 hours per week
Please write in your occupation: _____
12. Currently, how would you describe the financial situation of you and your family?
 Routinely unable to purchase sufficient food or other basic necessities
 Occasionally unable to purchase sufficient food or other basic necessities
 Have enough money for the necessities
 Have more than enough money for necessities and some luxuries
13. What languages do you currently speak (*check all that apply*)?
 English French Other(s) (*please specify*): _____
14. What language is currently used in your home most of the time?
 English French Other (*please specify*): _____

Racial and Ethnic Background:

We're interested in getting a complete picture of your racial and ethnic background so that we can best serve you and ensure we are meeting our organizational goals of inclusivity. Because this information can be so

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complex, we are going to ask you several questions about your race and ethnicity in order to get as complete a picture as possible.

15. Although the categories listed below may not represent your full identity or use the language you prefer, for the purpose of this survey, please indicate which group(s) below best describes your **racial identification**? (check all that apply).

- Asian
- Black
- Indigenous/Aboriginal, Native in Canada (First Nations/Inuit/Métis)
- Middle Eastern, North African (Non-White)
- White
- Latinx/Hispanic (Non-White)
- Multiracial
- Not listed (please specify): _____

If Indigenous/Aboriginal, Native in Canada (First Nations/Inuit/Métis) is selected:

- Are you a Registered or Status Indian? YES____ NO____
- Do you belong to any of the following groups?
 - First Nations
 - Inuit
 - Métis
 - Group not listed (please specify): _____
- What is your primary Band affiliation? _____
- What is your primary Tribe/Nation affiliation? _____
- Are you a recognized member of this Band/Tribe/Nation? YES____ NO____
- Do you live on tribal lands, a reservation, or reserve? YES____ NO____
- Does any of your immediate family live on tribal lands, a reservation, or reserve? YES____ NO____

If Multiracial is selected:

Multiracial people can identify in various ways, sometimes in relation to specific racial heritage, sometimes as “multiracial,” or in other ways. Which of the following best captures how you primarily identify? (Please choose one).

- Primarily Asian
- Primarily Black
- Primarily Indigenous/Aboriginal, Native in Canada (First Nations, Inuit, Métis)
- Primarily Middle Eastern, North African (Non-White)
- Primarily White
- Primarily Latinx/Hispanic (Non-White)
- Multiracial generally - without reference to any particular group
- Groups not listed (please specify): _____

16. In your own words, what is/are your racial identification(s)? _____

17. How would YOU describe your skin color/shade?

- Very dark
- Dark
- Medium
- Light
- Very light

18. How often do people perceive your race accurately? (Please circle one)

(Participants will respond on a sliding scale from 1-5, where 1=Hardly ever perceived correctly and 5= Always perceived correctly)

19. Ethnicity or ethnic culture refers to patterns of ideas and practices associated with a group of people sharing a common history, geographic background, and/or language, rather than their racial background. It

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might include things like values, patterns of interacting, food, dress, holidays, or ways of seeing the world, yourself, or other people.

There are hundreds of different ethnic culture backgrounds within Canada – such as Arab Canadian, Jamaican, Plains Cree, European Canadian, Singaporean Chinese, etc. We are interested in the ethnicity that reflects your daily experience, which may be the heritage of your ancestors, if you continue to practice and identify with that heritage, but it may also be a more general Canadian or global/international ethnicity. **In your own words, with which ethnic group(s) do you most identify?** (may be different from race) _____

Family and General Background

20. Where were you born?

- In Canada
 Outside of Canada (Please specify what country): _____

If Outside of Canada (Please specify what country) is selected:

If you were not born in Canada, how old were you when you came to Canada? _____

Current Context

21. What is your current relationship status? (check one)

- Single
 Separated
 Married
 Divorced
 Civil Union
 Widowed
 Cohabiting
 Not listed (please specify): _____

22. Your year at uOttawa:

- 1st
 2nd
 3rd
 4th
 5th or more
 Graduate School

23. Elected Major/Program (If exploring, list as 'exploring'): _____

24. Do you live on campus? YES____ NO____

25. Are you a first-generation university student? (i.e. your parents did not pursue a post-secondary education in Canada) YES____ NO____

Questions About Recent Events on Campus

Please answer the following questions about racially charged events that have happened on campus.

1. The use of the N-word by a University of Ottawa professor (who was reinstated following the use of the racial slur) made me feel: _____

2. The incident at the University of Ottawa where a black student who had been skateboarding was carded, then handcuffed for hours where the security guard was reinstated following the incident, made me feel: _____

3. Recent instances of the N-word being used in online Zoom classes by students without a professor present made me feel: _____

4. The University's response to the recent (December 2020) sit in led by BIPOC undergraduate students made me feel: _____

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Questions About Possible Solutions to Racism on Campus

1. Are you aware of any type of activities, programs, initiatives, etc. at uOttawa that you think are beneficial in addressing racial or ethnic discrimination at the university? If yes, please provide details: _____
2. Have you seen any activities, programs, initiatives, etc. at any other university, organization, workplace, or any other setting, that you believe would be beneficial if this were implemented at uOttawa? If yes, please provide details: _____
3. Is there anything else you would like to add, related to racial/ethnic discrimination and your university experience, that was not addressed in the questions above? _____

Appendix B: PANAS

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then select the choice from the scale below next to each word. Indicate the extent you feel this way **IN GENERAL**.

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Extremely
Interested	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excited	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upset	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strong	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hostile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proud	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irritable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alert	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspired	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Determined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attentive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jittery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Active	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Afraid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix C: RMAS

Please answer the following questions based on your experiences in Ottawa and while at uOttawa.

1. Because of my race, other people assume that I am a foreigner...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

2. Because of my race, people suggest that I am not a "true" Canadian...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

3. Other people often ask me where I am from, suggesting that I don't belong...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

4. Other people treat me like a criminal because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

5. People act like they are scared of me because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

6. Others assume that I will behave aggressively because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

7. I am singled out by police or security people because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

8. People suggest that I am "exotic" in a sexual way because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

9. Other people view me in an overly sexual way because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

10. Other people hold sexual stereotypes about me because of my racial background...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

11. Other people act as if they can fully understand my racial identity, even though they are not of my racial background...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

12. Other people act as if all of the people of my race are alike...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often
In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

13. Others suggest that people of my racial background get unfair benefits...

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

14. Others assume that people of my background would succeed in life if they simply worked harder...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

15. Other people deny that people of my race face extra obstacles when compared to Whites...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

16. Other people assume that I am successful because of preferential treatment or quotas, not because I earned my accomplishments...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

17. Others hint that I should work hard to prove that I am not like other people of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

18. Others suggest that my racial heritage is dysfunctional or undesirable...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

19. Others focus only on the negative aspects of my racial background...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

20. Others prefer that I assimilate to the White culture and downplay my racial background...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

21. I am mistaken for being a service worker or a lower-status worker simply because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

22. I am treated like a second-class citizen because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

23. I receive poorer treatment in restaurants and stores because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

24. Sometimes I feel as if people look past me or don't see me as a real person because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

25. I feel invisible because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

26. I am ignored in school or work environments because of my race...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount
 Frequently/Often

27. My contributions are dismissed or devalued because of my racial background...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

28. When I interact with authority figures, they are usually of a different racial background...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

29. I notice that there are few role models in my racial background in my chosen career...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

30. Sometimes I am the only person of my racial background in my class or workplace...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

31. Where I work or got to school, I see few people of my racial background...

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

32. I notice that there are few people of my racial background on TV, books, local media, and featured online.

At uOttawa: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount Frequently/Often

In all of the Ottawa area: Never A little/Rarely Sometimes/A moderate amount

Frequently/Often

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM BY STUDENTS OF COLOUR

Appendix D: RMHES

Think about your experiences as a student of color on this campus. Please read each item and think of how often each event has happened to you during your time here at the university.

	Never	Less than once a year	A few times a year	About once a month	A few times a month	Once a week or more
1. I have experienced feelings of isolation on this campus because of my race.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I have experienced someone using offensive language on this campus because of my race.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I have experienced someone making offensive jokes to me on this campus because of my race.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I have experienced harassment (emotional, verbal, or physical) on campus because of my race.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I have experienced not being taken seriously in my classes because of my race.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I have experienced discouragement in pursuing my academic or educational goals because of my race.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. People have made me feel intellectually inferior on this campus because of my race.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix E: GEDS

The General Ethnic Discrimination (GED) Scale

18. How **different** would your life be now if you **HAD NOT BEEN** treated in a racist and unfair way?

	The same as it is Now	A Little Different	Different in a Few Ways	Different in a Lot of Ways	Different in Most Ways	Totally Different
a. In the past year at uOttawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. In your entire life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix F: PCS

Below is a set of questions about your sense of belongingness in the university community. Using the 5-point Scale below, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each Statement. Please be as open and honest as you can. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I feel like I am a member of the uOttawa community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I am happy to be in the uOttawa community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I am enthusiastic about the uOttawa community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The uOttawa community is one of the best in the nation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix G: CESD-R

The following questions ask about how you have felt as a result of any racial experiences you may have had as a member of the university community. Using the 6-point scale below, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you felt this particular way during your time here at uOttawa.

How much of the time have you...

	None of the time	Some of the time	Slightly less than half the time	Slightly more than half the time	Most of the time	All of the time
1. Lost interest in your daily activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Lost interest in your coursework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Felt lack of energy and strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Felt less self-confident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Had a bad conscience or feelings of guilt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Felt that this was not the right institution for you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Had difficulty in concentrating (e.g. when reading textbook or course materials)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Felt very restless	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Felt subdued or slowed down	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Had trouble sleeping at night	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Suffered from reduced appetite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Suffered from increased appetite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix H: RTS-9

Think about all the times when you have heard about, seen, or experienced racial discrimination. As a result of this, how bothered have you been by the following:

	Not at all	Slightly	Very Much	Extremely
1. Inability to stop moving.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Having difficulties connecting with other people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Feeling society is unfair to people like me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Reacting angrily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Avoiding certain situations or speaking to certain people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Feeling like I am not as good as others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Feeling like I cannot succeed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Finding it difficult to cope without food/alcohol/drugs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Worrying about my safety.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix I: PLE

1. Have you had any experiences with police, law enforcement, or campus security in the past 5 years?

	Yes	No	Do not know	Refuse to answer
a. at uOttawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. in Ottawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Only participants who answer “Yes” to the above filter question will complete the PLE scale. The PLE scale will not be administered for participants who answered with anything other than “Yes.” Participants who answer “No” for the filter question will have their responses coded as “Never” for the PLE items.

1. In the past 5 years, how often have police, law enforcement, or campus security accused you of having or selling drugs...

	Never	Once in a while / rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Most of the time	Always
a. at uOttawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. in Ottawa region?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. In the past 5 years, how often have police, law enforcement, or campus security pulled you over for no reason while you were driving...

	Never	Once in a while / rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Most of the time	Always
a. at uOttawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. in Ottawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. In the past 5 years, how often have police, law enforcement, or campus security been verbally abusive to you...

	Never	Once in a while / rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Most of the time	Always
a. at uOttawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. in Ottawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. In the past 5 years, how often have police, law enforcement, or campus security been physically abusive to you...

	Never	Once in a while / rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Most of the time	Always
a. at uOttawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. in Ottawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. In the past 5 years, how often have police, law enforcement, or campus security treated you unfairly because of how you dress...

	Never	Once in a while / rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Most of the time	Always
a. at uOttawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. in Ottawa?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix J: MEIM-12

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Indigenous, Black or African American or Caribbean Canadian, Chinese Canadian, Filipino, Lebanese Canadian, Hispanic or Latino, European Canadian or White, Italian Canadian, and many others. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be: (Fill in) _____

Check the box to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. To learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>