

Discrimination Experienced by Immigrants, Visible Minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in Niagara Region

**An Empirical Study by the Niagara
Local Immigration Partnership**

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Executive Summary

This report provides insight into the discrimination experiences of immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in Niagara region in order to support the development of evidence-based anti-discrimination initiatives at the local level. To this end, a representative survey (N = 853) was conducted in March 2021 to examine the extent and context of discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in Niagara region, in comparison to people who are not members of these groups. The survey also investigated the presumed basis for this discrimination, who is perpetrating these acts of discrimination, and whether specific forms of discrimination are taking place. In addition, the survey examined how individuals respond to these experiences of discrimination, including how they cope with discrimination and feel about it, and their more general feelings of acceptance and welcome in the community.

A methodological strength of this research was the targeting of substantial numbers of immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples for inclusion, and the recruitment procedure that used random digit dialing, ensuring relatively representative samples. Immigrants and visible minorities were combined for the majority of analyses because of the substantial overlap between these two groups in Niagara region (though we of course acknowledge that not all immigrants in Niagara region are visible minorities and not all visible minorities in Niagara region are immigrants). In our Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, over 75% of respondents were both immigrants and visible minorities.

The results show that approximately 8 out of 10 Indigenous Peoples and 6 out of 10 Immigrants & Visible Minorities reported experiencing discrimination in Niagara region in the last three years compared to about 5 out of 10 respondents in the comparison White Non-immigrants group. Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples perceived their experiences of discrimination as based on ethnocultural factors related to different minority group statuses (e.g., race or skin colour, indigenous identity, ethnicity or culture). In contrast, comparison White Non-immigrants tended to perceive their experiences of discrimination as based on more universal factors (e.g., gender, age, physical appearance, income level).

On average, Indigenous Peoples reported experiencing discrimination in more contexts than Immigrants & Visible Minorities, and Immigrants & Visible Minorities reported experiencing discrimination in more contexts than White Non-immigrants. In both the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and the Indigenous Peoples group, contexts for discrimination that were most frequently indicated included at their job (e.g., from supervisors, co-workers, clients), while attending social gatherings, and while using public transit (e.g., buses, trains or taxis). For Immigrants & Visible Minorities, top contexts also included when interacting with neighbours,

and in a store, bank, or restaurant. For Indigenous Peoples, top contexts also included when applying for a job or promotion, while using public areas (e.g., parks and sidewalks), when looking for housing, when interacting with the police, and when applying for a program or benefit.

In terms of specific types of discrimination that were experienced, from the list provided, respondents in all three groups were most likely to indicate inappropriate jokes, derogatory language, and verbal abuse. Furthermore, in all three groups, respondents identified perpetrators as male and female, although males were mentioned more often than females. Also, perpetrators were most commonly reported to be middle aged and White.

In all three groups, respondents reported that experiencing discrimination was more likely to lead to feelings of discouragement, exclusion, and powerlessness than shame. On average, respondents in all three groups also reported experiencing anxiety and depression to some extent as a result of their discrimination experiences. To cope with their discrimination experiences, respondents reported using both active and passive coping strategies, though they tended to use passive coping strategies more. This was particularly the case among respondents in the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group as well as the White Non-immigrants group. Finally, in all three groups, those who had experienced discrimination reported lower feelings of acceptance and welcome in Niagara region than those who had not experienced discrimination.

Recommendations for counteracting this discrimination focus on three areas. First, it is important to promote an environment that encourages victims of discrimination to report their experiences. Only experiences that are acknowledged can be addressed. Second, the findings suggest that it is important to help victims of discrimination to use effective coping strategies so that they do not internalize the discrimination that they experience. As a primary focus of the recommendations, the third recommendation focuses on strategies for preventing and counteracting the discrimination reported in Niagara region. These strategies should take into account the findings of the current research in terms of the context and nature of discrimination in Niagara region, as well as the research literature on effective anti-discrimination strategies. In this way, Niagara region can work toward becoming a more welcoming community in which all groups are treated with respect, and discriminatory treatment becomes an exception rather than an everyday occurrence for members of certain groups.

Discrimination Experienced by Immigrants, Visible Minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in Niagara Region

An Empirical Study by the Niagara Local Immigration Partnership

Overview

This report describes the results of a representative survey (March 2021, N = 853) examining discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities¹, and Indigenous Peoples in Niagara region. Although there have been a number of previous large-scale national surveys on discrimination conducted in Canada (e.g., Environics Institute, 2010; Ibrahim, 2018), small sample sizes at the local level have precluded the ability to examine results of these surveys for specific communities outside of the large metropolises. The study described in this report fills this gap by examining local experiences of discrimination within Niagara region. Gaining insight into these experiences is crucial as a basis for developing anti-discrimination evidence-informed initiatives for the community that target where discrimination is occurring, who is most likely to be perpetrating and experiencing discrimination, and how to reduce its negative impact. These anti-discrimination initiatives would help make Niagara region a more just and equitable community, and would protect its residents from the harmful negative outcomes that experiencing discrimination can produce. Additionally, relationships between people of different groups would be improved as a result of anti-discrimination initiatives, making Niagara region a more neighbourly community. Furthermore, anti-discrimination initiatives would help make Niagara region a more welcoming community that could attract, integrate, and retain diverse individuals, an integral part of Canada's strategy to sustain the economy (Government of Canada, 2020; Morency et al., 2017).

The study described in this report examined the extent and context of discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in comparison to people who are not members of these groups, whether specific forms of discriminations are being experienced, the presumed basis for this discrimination and its perpetrators, and how targets of discrimination respond to these experiences (how they cope with those experiences and feel about them). In

¹ This report uses the term 'visible minorities' as utilized by Statistics Canada (2020a). However, we acknowledge that in the current discourse, the term racialized persons may be preferred in public discussions of the findings. Indigenous Peoples are not included in this category.

the following sections we provide background and context for the need for this research, describe the results of the survey, and provide recommendations that are informed by these results.

Discrimination

Discrimination refers to inappropriate and unfair treatment of people simply because they belong to certain groups. Discrimination includes both negative behaviour toward a member of another group based on their group membership, and less positive behaviour toward them than toward a member of one's own group in comparable situations (Dovidio et al., 2010). Discriminatory treatment can occur as a result of cultural understandings, policies, and practices that deny members of certain groups equal treatment, referred to as institutional discrimination (Dovidio et al., 2010). For instance, European understandings, policies, and practices related to governance, land ownership, and education have resulted in significant mistreatment and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples throughout Canada's history, the impact of which still persist today (Neylan, 2018). Additionally, immigration related policies and practices have historically denied or made it difficult for people from visible minority groups to enter Canada (Dench, 2000). These examples of unfair treatment towards immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples describe how institutional discrimination can become a systemic form of mistreatment experienced by people who belong to certain minority groups.

Discrimination also occurs between individuals. At an individual level, discrimination refers to behaviour that disproportionately favours or provides an advantage to people belonging to some groups while disadvantaging or harming people belonging to other groups (Dovidio et al., 2010). Discriminatory behaviour can be overt or take more subtle forms. Overt forms of discrimination are clearly recognizable as unfair, are generally viewed as unacceptable, are often unlawful, and are for the most part intentional (e.g., verbal and physical assault; Jones et al., 2016). Subtle forms of discrimination (e.g., being avoided or ignored, inappropriate jokes; Jones et al., 2016) can appear as though they are harmless, can be viewed as acceptable, are typically lawful, and are more likely to be seen as unintentional. Therefore, people may experience discrimination in a variety of ways: through institutional systems as well as through overt and subtle discriminatory behaviour perpetrated by individuals.

Discrimination in Canada

In Canada, immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples tend to experience discriminatory behaviour on an individual level, and unequal access to employment, housing, education, and private and public services on a more systemic level (Environics Institute, 2010; Environics Institute for Survey Research, 2019; Esses, 2021). These experiences are based on a variety of factors including their ethnicity, race, and religion, factors which typically do not

disadvantage their native-born White counterparts. Furthermore, they experience discrimination across a variety of settings as they attempt to engage in day-to-day life such as when walking in the streets, using public transit, frequenting stores and restaurants, in the workplace, in educational settings, when accessing health care, when engaging with the police and criminal justice system, when attempting to rent places to live, and when travelling across borders and through airports (Environics Institute for Survey Research, 2019; Nangia, 2013; Novac et al., 2002). A recent national study revealed that the majority of Indigenous (53%) and Black (54%) Canadians have personally experienced discrimination based on their race or ethnicity, with South Asian (38%) and Chinese (36%) Canadians, and Canadians of other racialized groups (32%) also reporting experiences of discrimination (Environics Institute for Survey Research, 2019).

Discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples has unfortunately been on the rise over the last decade. For instance, hate crimes (criminal offenses motivated by hate that target specific populations such as particular ethnic, racial, and religious groups) have been increasing. Data collected by Statistics Canada reveal that approximately 2,000 hate crimes in Canada were noted by police in 2019, a marked increase from the approximately 1,200 noted in 2013 (Moreau, 2021). Of the hate crimes reported in 2019, most (46%) were motivated by hate based on race or ethnicity, followed by a large portion (32%) motivated by religion. The data also reveal that the most common types of hate crimes being committed include general mischief, uttering threats, and assault. Additionally, the data reveal that Black and Jewish people are the targets of most hate crimes, while Indigenous youth are the youngest population to be victims and to sustain injuries from the incidents. Furthermore, the data reveal that hate crimes targeting Arab or West Asian populations, the Black population, and Muslims are on the rise. These hate crimes tend to occur in public spaces such as the street or parks, educational and religious institutions, and commercial businesses (Moreau, 2021).

Hate-based behaviours are also prevalent on social media. A recent study conducted for the Canadian Race Relations Foundation revealed that Canadians are concerned about hate speech occurring online and would like to see more being done to address the issue (Abacus Data, 2021). In that study, racialized people were found to experience online hate more so than non-racialized people. Results of that study also revealed that online hate was occurring in the form of offensive name calling, racist comments, comments inciting violence, and threats of physical harm. Similarly, data collected by Statistics Canada reveal that online hate crimes tend to target Muslim, Jewish, and Black populations and tend to occur in the form of uttering threats, public incitement of hatred, and harassment (Moreau, 2021).

Immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in Canada also experience everyday discrimination as they attempt to build secure lives. In the context of employment, immigrants

who do not have English sounding names, who are religious minorities (e.g., Muslim), and who are visible minorities (e.g., Black, South Asian), are given fewer opportunities to interview for jobs, and when they do interview, they are evaluated less favourably than Canadian-born applicants (Esses et al., 2014; Oreopoulos, 2011). Similarly, the results of a large-scale Canadian survey conducted by Statistics Canada revealed that immigrants tend to experience discrimination at their places of work and when applying for a job or a promotion (Ibrahim, 2018). Immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples also experience discrimination when attempting to secure housing. A study conducted by researchers in collaboration with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation found that immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples tend to be denied access to rental units by landlords more often than White Canadian-born people (Novac et al., 2002). Additionally, high-profile incidents highlight Indigenous Peoples' experiences of discrimination when attempting to access health care. Recently, one Indigenous woman fell victim to demeaning racial slurs, swearing, and neglect from hospital staff and ultimately passed away in their care (Shingler, 2020).

There is also evidence of systemic injustices and disadvantage experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in Canada. For instance, many immigrants are admitted into Canada based on their skills and credentials; however, after they immigrate, their foreign credentials and experience are often not recognized by employers and they often do not qualify for licensure from Canadian regulatory bodies (Ertorer, et al., 2020; Ng & Gagnon, 2020). That lack of recognition leaves immigrants unemployed or underemployed (i.e., in jobs for which they are overqualified), particularly if they are visible minorities (Esses et al., 2007; Ng & Gagnon, 2020). Rooted in a long history of oppression, Black and Indigenous populations tend to be disproportionately overrepresented in the criminal justice system, have poorer economic and health conditions, and lower educational attainment (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015; United Nations Human Rights Council, 2017). Canada's historical Indian residential school policy physically removed Indigenous children from their homes and families in an attempt to remove their Indigenous cultures and assimilate them to European ways of thinking and being, and included experiences of psychological trauma and physical harm, resulting in substance abuse, poor family dynamics, violence, and self-harm passed down over generations (Loppie et al., 2014; Palmater, 2014).

A recent Statistics Canada survey (2020b) revealed that immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples reported experiencing more discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic than the average reported incidents by all respondents. Again, these incidents were often based on race, ethnicity, and culture. Most incidents of discrimination experienced by these groups occurred when frequenting a store, bank, or restaurant, while at work or when applying for a job, and when walking on sidewalks or at parks. The COVID-19 pandemic has also resulted in

increased anti-Asian discrimination in Canada. The Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter received 1,150 reports of racist attacks targeting the Asian community between March 2020 and February 2021 (Kong et al., 2020). Of the incidents included in the analyses (643 incidents reported between March 2020 and December 2021) most occurred in public spaces, parks, streets, or sidewalks, and in grocery stores and restaurants in Ontario and British Columbia. Most incidents took the form of verbal and physical assaults, unwanted physical contact, as well as being coughed at or spit on. A qualitative analysis of the reported incidents revealed that many of these attacks were perpetrated in a blatant and ruthless manner, were instigated by blame for the COVID-19 pandemic, targeted vulnerable people (the elderly and youth), and caused severe physical and psychological harm. The COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted the rise of Islamophobia in Canada. Recently, the media has covered alarming forms of discrimination against Muslims including brutal physical attacks (e.g., a Muslim woman wearing a hijab having a gun shot at her; Baig, 2021). These findings reveal how experiences of discrimination can increase in frequency and severity in response to contextual factors, and how the specific groups that become targets of discrimination can vary, leaving them vulnerable to and unprepared for the negative consequences of such experiences.

Correlates and Consequences of Experiences of Discrimination

Experiences of discrimination leave victims feeling as though they are not welcome and do not belong in the community, are associated with mistrust of and a lack of confidence in institutions, and are associated with poor physical and mental health. For instance, discrimination has been found to be associated with a lower sense of belonging to Canada among immigrants and visible minorities (Painter, 2013; Reitz & Banerjee, 2007). Results of a recent study conducted by Statistics Canada (2020b) suggest that experiences of discrimination are also associated with mistrust and less confidence in institutions. In that study, experiencing discrimination was associated with less trust in the court system among Indigenous Peoples. Similarly, experiencing discrimination was associated with less confidence in the police among Black respondents.

Discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples has also been associated with poor physical health and psychological distress (Currie et al., 2012; Spence et al., 2016; Williams et al., 2003). For instance, Spence and colleagues (2016) found that experiences of discrimination were associated with stress among a community sample of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Similarly, in a qualitative study, Currie and colleagues (2012) found that Indigenous university students in Canada described experiencing distress including frustration, helplessness, and hopelessness because of experiences of discrimination. Additionally, in a large-scale review of empirical research on the impact of discrimination, Williams and colleagues (2003) found strong evidence suggesting that experiences of

discrimination are associated with psychological distress including depression and anxiety among immigrants and visible minorities.

There is also some evidence to suggest that discrimination is associated with psychological distress through different ways of thinking about and responding to those negative experiences (Noh et al., 1999, 2007; Noh & Kaspar, 2003). For instance, perceptions of exclusion, powerlessness, shame, and discouragement can intensify the association between discrimination and psychological distress (Noh et al., 2007). These negative outcomes of discrimination can therefore make it difficult for immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples to enjoy a healthy, happy, and satisfying life.

Niagara Region

The study described in this report was conducted to examine everyday experiences of discrimination in Niagara region, located in Southwestern Ontario. Niagara region comprises 12 local municipalities, stretching from Fort Erie, Niagara Falls, and Niagara-on-the-Lake, to Grimsby and West Lincoln. The region is home to a bustling tourism industry, booming agriculture industry, diverse manufacturing sector, and a burgeoning tech sector (Niagara Economic Development, 2021). Niagara region is known for its historical sites, wine country, festivals, recreational opportunities, and natural and man-made wonders (e.g., Niagara Falls, Welland Canal).

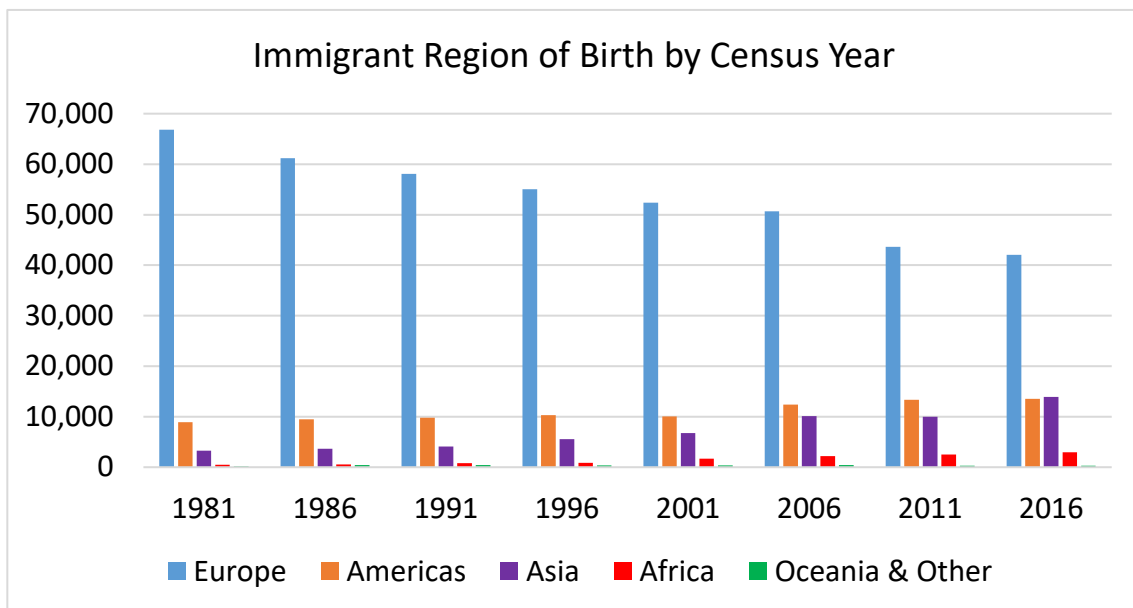
Niagara Region's Sociocultural Context

Niagara region is the original Lands of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Peoples. It was later occupied by British settlers in the late 1700s, and shortly after also became home to Black residents, most of whom escaped slavery from the United States (Henry, 2010). During the late 1800s and early 1900s, non-British immigrants and Indigenous Peoples were sought out by the growing agriculture and canning industries in Niagara region as seasonal sources of labour (Patrias, 2016). In the late 1960s, federal government programs and legislation, such as the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program and changes to the Immigration Act (1967), made it possible for more non-European immigrants to enter Canada. Therefore, the cultural composition of the region, like in the rest of Canada (see Banting & Kymlicka, 2003; Boyd & Vickers, 2000), has become more culturally diverse.

The 2016 Census indicates that the total Niagara region population is approximately 450,000 people (Statistics Canada, 2017). Niagara region continues to be home to approximately 12,000

Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit)² (Statistics Canada, 2017). The Niagara region population also comprises approximately 73,000 immigrants and approximately 40,000 visible minority group members (Statistics Canada, 2017). The immigrant population in Niagara region born outside of Europe has been increasing, with most immigrants born outside of Europe being born in Asia, in countries such as the Philippines, China, and India, and in the Americas, in countries such as Colombia, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago (Statistics Canada, 2017). Niagara region's visible minority population has also been increasing, with the largest visible minority groups in 2016 being Black, South Asian, Chinese, Latin American, and Filipino (Statistics Canada, 2017).

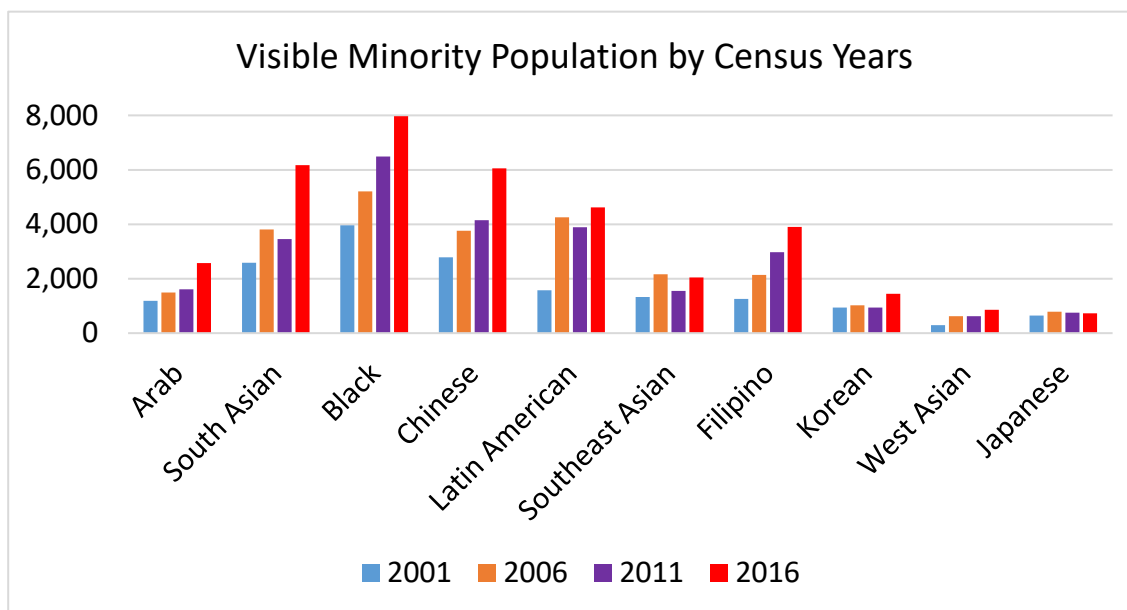
Region of Birth for Immigrants Residing in Niagara Region (Niagara Regional Municipality Census Division) by Census Year from 1981 to 2016.



Source: Statistics Canada (1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2013, 2017).

² This number for the Indigenous population is likely vastly under-estimated, however, because of incomplete enumeration in the census (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Visible Minority Population in Niagara Region (Niagara Regional Municipality Census Division) by Census Year from 2001 to 2016.



Source: Statistics Canada (2002, 2006, 2013, 2017).

Discrimination in Niagara Region

Recent media coverage has highlighted local incidents of discrimination experienced by members of some minority groups. For instance, a visible minority woman and her husband experienced several instances of discrimination after moving to Niagara region (Johnson, 2020). These experiences ranged from subtle discrimination such as being stared at while grocery shopping to explicit incidents such as being told the previous owners of their newly bought home would not want immigrants living there, and having authorities unnecessarily called on them (Johnson, 2020). A Black family has also reported being threatened at their home (Hutton, 2021). In that incident, a woman reported finding a letter in her mailbox threatening her and her daughter's lives. In another incident, a Black woman had racial slurs yelled at her when she was simply out for a walk with her dog (Forsyth, 2021). Yet another Black woman reported having racial slurs yelled at her while she was driving her car (Langley, 2021). In that instance, the perpetrator, despite being criminally charged for his behaviour, proceeded to send threats and additional racial slurs to the victim over social media, which left her fearing for her safety (Langley, 2021). Racial slurs in the form of graffiti derogating Black people have also been identified by Niagara region residents (Benner, 2019).

Incidents of discrimination have also been reported in the employment realm in Niagara region. For instance, a Black woman described a recent experience of discrimination in seeking

employment in Niagara region, based on her non-English sounding name (Singh, 2020). She and a White friend with an English sounding name conducted an experiment to highlight this issue. She explained that both applied for the same job and that she included work experience on her application, whereas her friend did not. Nonetheless, the White person with the English sounding name was given the job without an interview, whereas the Black person with the non-English sounding name did not receive a call back. Immigrants also report experiencing difficulty accessing equitable employment in Niagara region. In one study, immigrants in St. Catharines identified issues over relevant credentials and experience, inadequate access to transportation, language barriers, difficulty engaging with the education system, and mental health issues such as feeling isolated, not having a sense of belonging to the local community, and depression as barriers to employment (Ajandi & Neamitz, 2017).

Similarly, Indigenous Peoples also report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region. The leadership of an Indigenous community organization recently reported an increase in racism, threats, and harassment toward Indigenous Peoples in Niagara region (Ellis, 2020, March 3). One Indigenous man reported being racially insulted and brutalized by a police officer in Welland (Edwards, 2020). Results of one study reveal that Indigenous Peoples are also experiencing racial profiling in Niagara region, including being falsely accused of stealing in grocery stores, with employees following them and attempting to search their bags, and racist comments and stereotypical assumptions made by potential employers during job interviews (Jewell et al., 2018).

Discrimination has also been reported on school campuses in Niagara region. For example, an Indigenous woman recounted being called a racial slur by her teacher when she was 16 years old, and her brother being teased by his peers in school for having a Mohawk haircut (Niagara This Week, 2019). More recently, in a series of consultations focusing on human rights, students at Brock University reported experiencing discrimination in the classroom, hearing course instructors make racist stereotypical comments toward Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians, and Muslims, and being unfairly accused of plagiarism (Brock University's Human Rights Task Force, 2017). These students perceived racism as being normalized and observed a lack of cultural competence on campus. Additionally, these students felt discouraged, alienated, and that their mental health and academic success were compromised as a result of experiencing discrimination on campus. During consultations, faculty also reported discrimination. Racialized female faculty members reported experiencing harassment from White male students. White female faculty members also reported experiencing harassment from students when teaching course content on immigration and racism. Additionally, faculty members reported that the university was not adequately implementing its employment equity policy as it relates to hiring faculty from equity designated groups, and indicated that their concerns over these poor hiring

practices had been denied, silenced, and disregarded, and that individuals were harassed when voicing these concerns.

It is clear that incidents of discrimination are occurring in the day-to-day lives of immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in Niagara region. A key player in efforts to counteract racism and discrimination is the Niagara Local Immigration Partnership (NLIP). The NLIP was founded in 2008 and is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. It is one of over 80 Local Immigration Partnerships now operating across the country with the goals of improving coordination of services to facilitate immigrant settlement and integration, facilitating community knowledge sharing and local strategic planning, and promoting more welcoming communities for newcomers. As such, the NLIP works to create a welcoming and inclusive sociocultural environment including through various anti-racism and anti-discrimination initiatives. The study described in this report is part of the NLIP's anti-racism and anti-discrimination work to promote a more welcoming community in Niagara region.

Study on Experiences of Discrimination in Niagara Region

Although there is evidence that discrimination takes place in Niagara region, and indeed experiences of discrimination in Niagara region are being brought to light through the media, a comprehensive understanding of these experiences is lacking. Such an understanding is crucial for effective evidence-informed anti-discrimination initiatives to be developed. Thus, the goal of this study was to systematically examine discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples (in comparison to individuals who do not belong to these groups) in Niagara region through a representative survey conducted in March 2021. The survey examined who is experiencing discrimination, in what contexts, on what basis, who is perpetrating these acts of discrimination, and whether specific forms of discrimination are taking place. The study also examined how immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples respond to these experiences of discrimination (coping strategies and feelings of psychological distress), and associated feelings of being accepted and welcomed in the community.

A community sample of Niagara region residents was recruited to take part in the study, including people who identify as (a) immigrants or visible minorities (Immigrants & Visible Minorities group), (b) Indigenous (Indigenous Peoples group), and (c) residents who do not identify with any of these groups (comparison White Non-immigrants group). The immigrants and visible minorities were combined for our target numbers and for the majority of analyses because of the substantial overlap between these two groups in Niagara region (though we of course acknowledge that not all immigrants in Niagara region are visible minorities and not all visible minorities in Niagara region are immigrants). Where possible, analyses were conducted in which

we separated immigrant-visible minorities, immigrant-not visible minorities, and visible minorities-not immigrants.

Forum Research Inc., a market research firm, was retained by the Niagara Local Immigration Partnership to recruit participants, administer the survey, and collect the data. The research was conducted through random digit dialing of phone numbers in the region, and if individuals then qualified to participate and agreed, they were sent the link to the online survey via SMS text message or email. Targets of 300 Immigrants & Visible Minorities, 200 Indigenous Peoples, and 300 White Non-immigrants were set, and the final sample included 423 Immigrants & Visible Minorities, 163 Indigenous Peoples, and 267 White Non-immigrants. This ensured a relatively representative sample of participants within each of the three groups. The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete, and was available in both English and French. Ethics approval for this study was obtained from Western University's research ethics board.

The survey included questions about whether respondents had experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly in the past three years in different contexts (e.g., in a store, bank, or restaurant; when applying for a job or promotion), the presumed basis of this discrimination (e.g., race or skin colour, status as an immigrant, accent, gender), whether the respondents had experienced specific types of discrimination (e.g., inappropriate jokes, verbal abuse), and who the main perpetrators of this discrimination were (gender, age, race or ethnicity). One question asked respondents whether their experiences of discrimination have changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey also asked how people coped with (active and passive coping) and felt about (powerless, shame, excluded, discouraged) their experiences of discrimination, and their psychological distress (anxiety and depression) in response to discrimination in the past three years. Questions about how accepted and welcomed participants felt in Niagara region at the present time were also asked. Finally, a set of demographic questions were included. The survey was based on established measures where available, with the language adapted to plain language (for full details on the measures, see the Appendix).

Profile of Respondents

Immigrants & Visible Minorities reported speaking languages other than English more and reported more diverse religions than Indigenous Peoples and White Non-immigrants. Immigrants & Visible Minorities also tended to be more highly educated. Despite this, Immigrants & Visible Minorities, and Indigenous Peoples, reported lower annual household incomes than White Non-immigrants. Additionally, White Non-immigrants tended to be on average quite a bit older, more likely to be female, less likely to be employed, and to have resided in Niagara region longer than Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples.

In terms of the specific characteristics of Immigrants & Visible Minorities, members of this group were most likely to be Christian, Muslim, Hindu, or have no religion. They were most likely to be East Asian and Southeast Asian, South Asian, Black, or other/multiple ethnicities. Over 80% were not born in Canada. When immigrant status and visible minority status were separated, 76% were both immigrants and visible minorities, 18% were non-immigrant visible minorities, and only 5% were immigrants but not visible minorities. Most of the immigrants entered Canada as economic immigrants, and the majority were now citizens of Canada or permanent residents. Close to 55% had been in Canada 10 years or more.

Respondent Demographics

	Immigrants & Visible Minorities (N = 423)	Indigenous Peoples (N = 163)	Comparison White Non-immigrants (N = 267)
Gender			
Female	45.2%	45.4%	58.4%
Male	52.7%	53.4%	40.1%
Non-binary and other	1.4%	0.6%	0.8%
No response	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%
Age			
	Range: 18-81 Average: 39 years	Range: 19-67 Average: 34 years	Range: 18-80 Average: 49 years
18 to 24 years	13.9%	12.9%	7.9%
25 to 35 years	30.3%	37.4%	13.1%
36 to 50 years	33.3%	41.1%	28.1%
Older than 50	18.2%	7.4%	46.1%
No response	4.3%	1.2%	4.9%
Language(s) Most Often Spoken at Home			
English only	29.6%	60.1%	92.9%
English and another language	35.7%	31.3%	4.1%
Another language only	33.8%	8.0%	2.6%
No response	0.9%	0.6%	0.4%

Employment Status

Employed full-time/part-time/self-employed	72.1%	68.7%	56.9%
Other employment (includes unemployed, retired, student, homemaker, and other)	17.5%	24.5%	39.3%
Multiple employment statuses	10.2%	5.5%	2.6%
No response	0.2%	1.2%	1.1%

Education Level

Secondary/high school and less	10.6%	43.6%	28.8%
College/vocational training	19.1%	33.7%	36.7%
University undergraduate degree	43.7%	18.4%	19.5%
University graduate degree and Professional degree	25.8%	2.5%	14.6%
No response	0.7%	1.8%	0.4%

Annual Household Income

Less than \$45,000	32.2%	57.1%	28.5%
\$45,001 to \$80,000	40.9%	25.8%	31.8%
\$80,001 and more	22.5%	14.1%	27.7%
No response	4.5%	3.1%	12.0%

Years Living in Niagara Region

	Range: 0-72 Average: 11 years	Range: 1-57 Average: 22 years	Range: 0-80 Average: 29 years
Less than 5 years	35.2%	7.4%	12.0%
5 to 10 years	29.3%	12.3%	15.0%
10 to 20 years	22.2%	31.3%	10.9%
Longer than 20 years	13.0%	49.1%	61.8%
No response	0.2%	0%	0.4%

Religion

Christian	30.3%	28.8%	54.3%
Traditional/Spirituality	6.4%	40.5%	6.4%
No religion (atheist or agnostic)	12.8%	19.6%	32.6%
Other religion (includes Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Mennonite, Muslim, Sikh, and other) and multiple religious categories	50.4%	10.4%	6.7%
No response	0.2%	0.6%	0%

Sense of Belonging to Religious Group(s)

(Scale of Very Weak = 1 to Very Strong = 5)

Average: 3.31	Average: 3.32	Average: 3.35
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Religion of Immigrants & Visible Minorities

Christian	30.3%
Muslim	21.0%
Hindu	12.3%
Buddhist	8.0%
Sikh	6.9%
No religion (atheist or agnostic)	12.8%
Other religion (includes Baha'i, Jewish, Mennonite, Traditional / Spirituality, and other) and multiple religious categories	8.5%
No response	0.2%

Race/Ethnicity

White	4.5%	0%	97.8%
First Nations, Métis, or Inuk (Inuit)	0.7%	94.5%	0%
Visible minority, other, and multiple races/ethnicities	94.8%	5.5%	2.2%
No response	0%	0%	0%

Sense of Belonging to Racial/Ethnic Group(s)

(Scale of Very Weak = 1 to Very Strong = 5)

Average: 3.49	Average: 3.43	Average: 3.98
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Race/Ethnicity of Immigrants & Visible Minorities

South Asian	29.8%
East Asian and Southeast Asian	27.9%
Black	15.1%
White	4.5%
Other (includes Arab, Indigenous, Latin American, West Asian, or other) and multiple races/ethnicities	22.7%
No response	0%

Born in Canada

Yes	18.4%
No	81.6%
No response	0%

Immigrant & Visible Minority Status

Immigrant visible minority	76.1%
Non-immigrant visible minority	18.4%

Immigrant non-visible minority	5.4%
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No response	0%
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Immigrants: Status Upon Arrival to Canada

Economic class immigrant	27.2%
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Family class immigrant	18.8%
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Temporary worker	25.5%
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Temporary student	19.7%
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Other entry class	8.7%
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No response	0%
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Immigrants: Current Immigration Status

Canadian citizen	52.2%
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Permanent resident	25.2%
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Other status (temporary resident, protected person, refugee claimant, undocumented, other)	22.3%
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No response	0.3%
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Immigrants: Years living in Canada Range: 0-72
Average: 14 years

Less than 5 years	24.1%
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5 to 10 years	22.0%
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Longer than 10 years	53.9%
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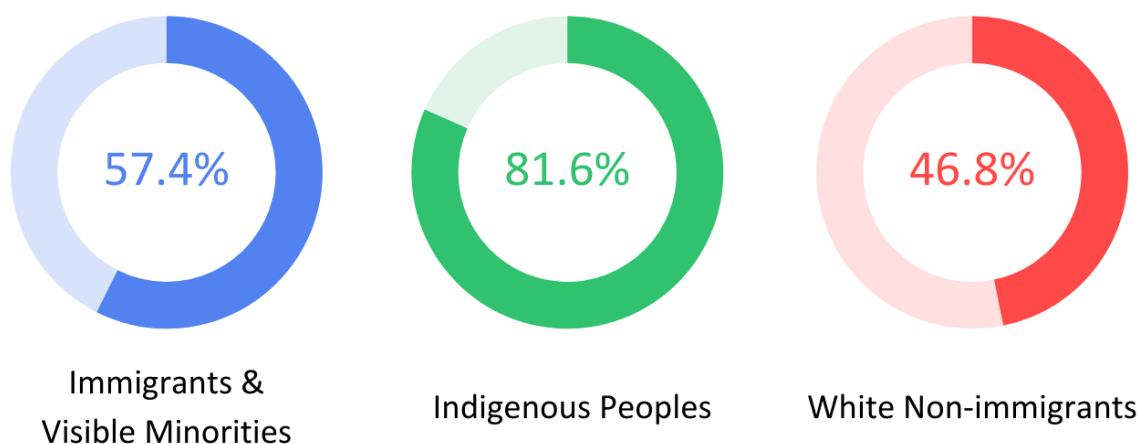
No response	0%
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Experiences of Discrimination

To what extent have Immigrants & Visible Minorities, Indigenous Peoples, and comparison White Non-immigrants experienced discrimination in Niagara region in the past three years?

A substantial percentage of respondents experienced discrimination in one or more contexts in Niagara region over the last three years, with Indigenous Peoples especially likely to have experienced discrimination.

Percentage of Respondents Who Have Experienced Discrimination in One or More Contexts in the Past Three Years



Within the three groups, to what extent do experiences of discrimination differ as a function of demographic characteristics?

The role of gender

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and in the Indigenous Peoples group, females were slightly more likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region than males. In the White Non-immigrants group, the likelihood of experiencing discrimination in Niagara region did not differ by gender.

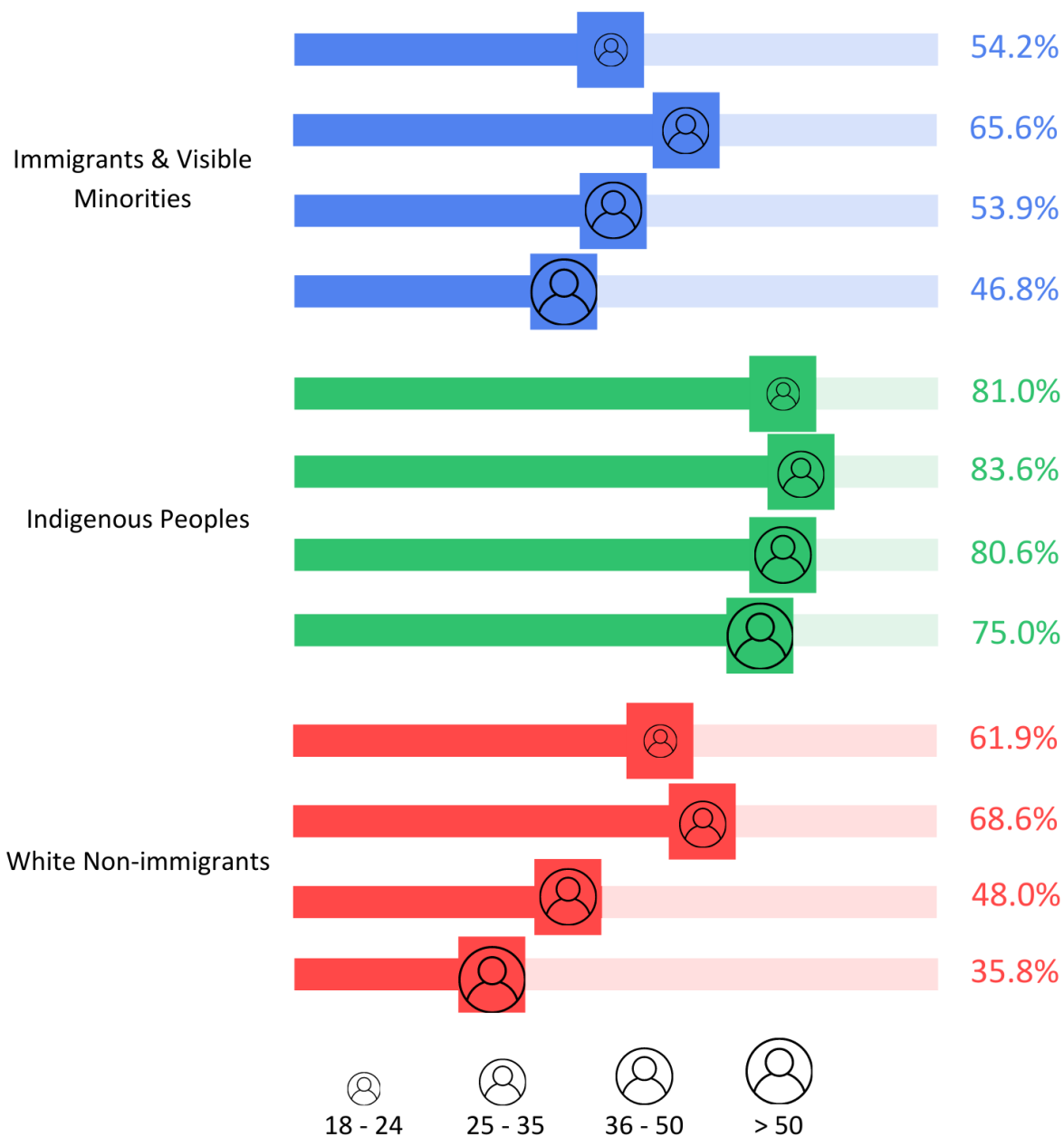
Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Gender



The role of age

In all three groups, younger respondents were more likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region than older respondents.

Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Age

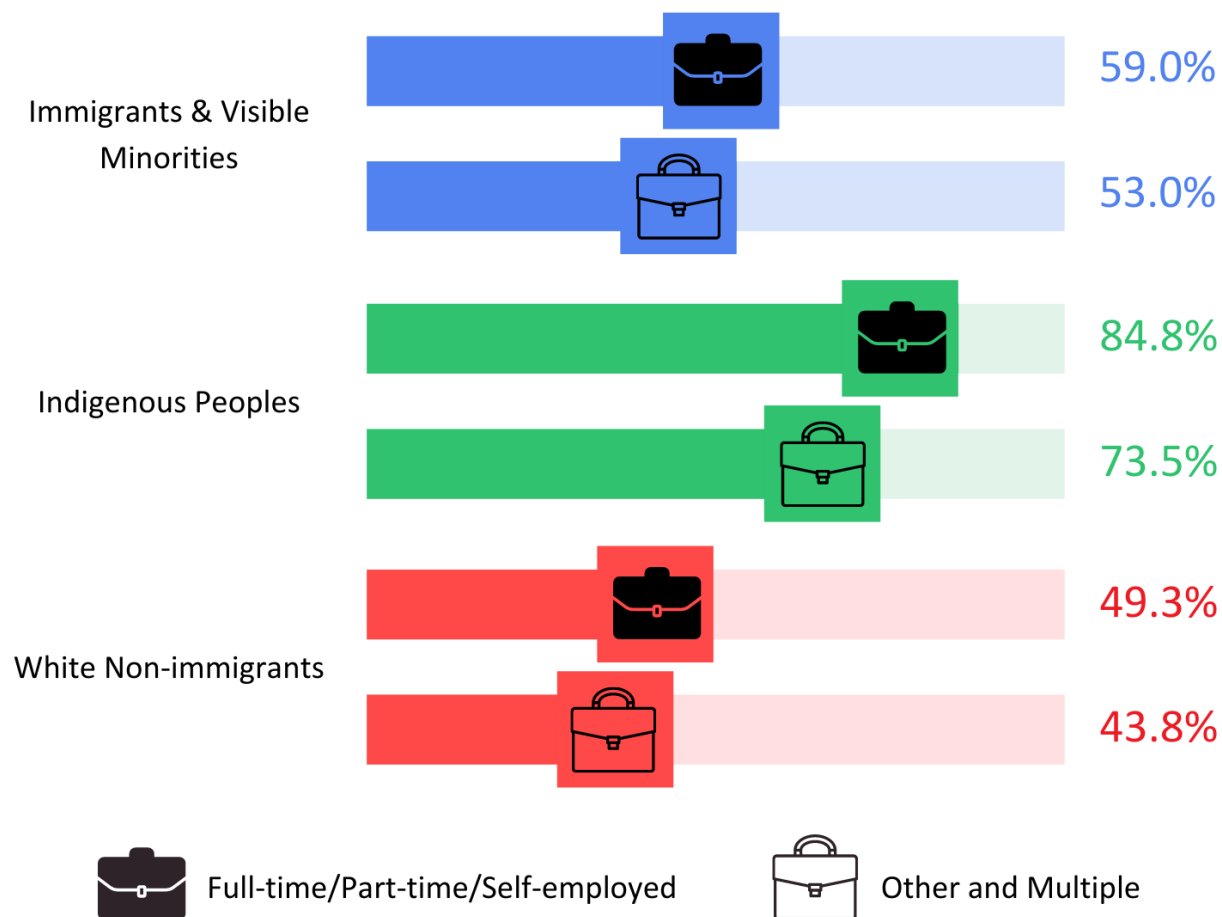


Note: Due to the small cell size, the finding for Indigenous Peoples aged 51 years old and above is suggestive only.

The role of employment status

In all three groups, full-time, part-time, or self-employed respondents were more likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region than those with other and multiple employment statuses.

Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Employment Status



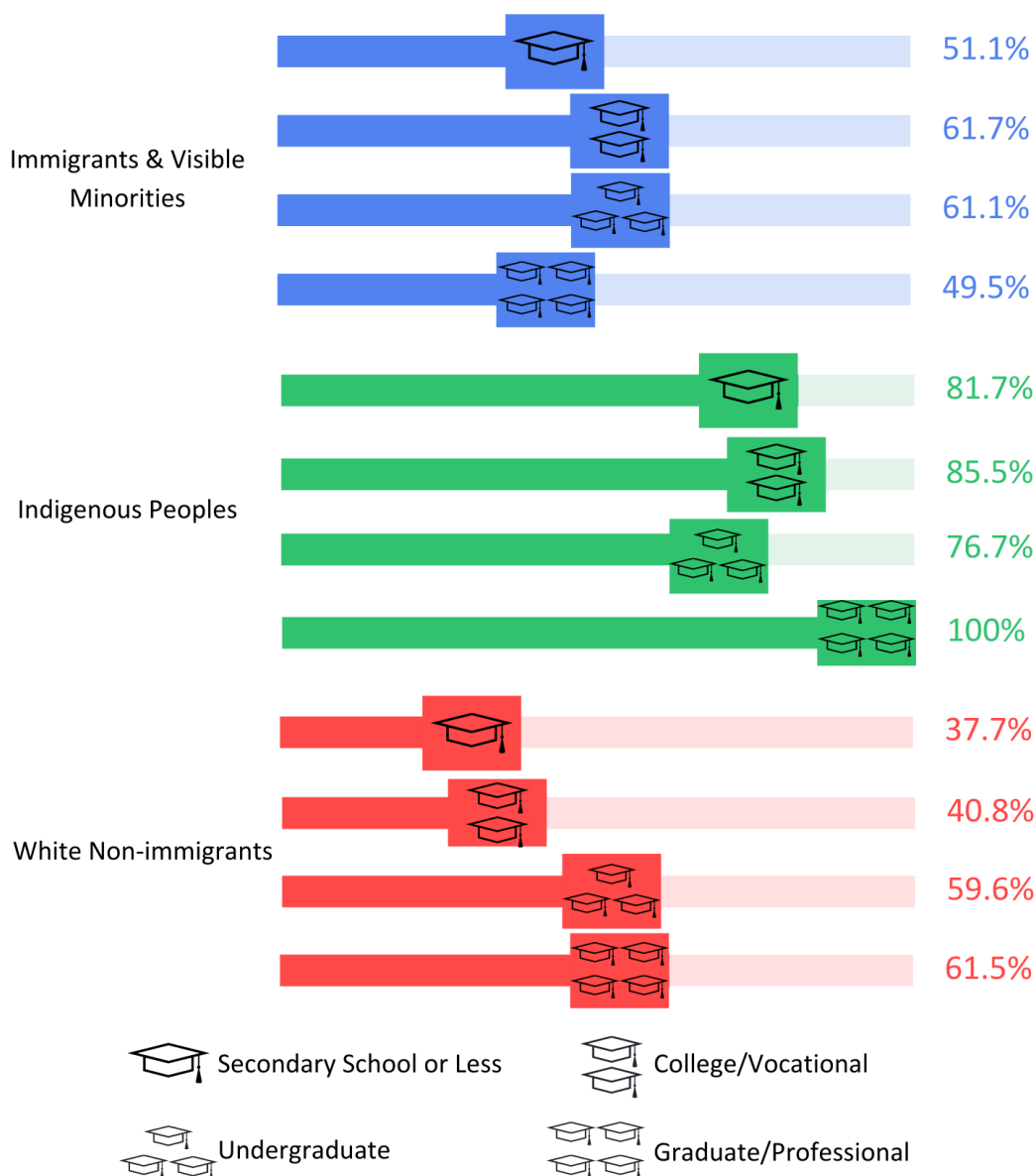
Note: The “Other and Multiple” employment status category includes people who indicated that they are unemployed, retired, students, homemakers, or other, as well as people who indicated more than one employment status (e.g., homemaker and retired).

The role of education level

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, those with college or vocational education and undergraduate university degrees were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in

Niagara region. In the Indigenous Peoples group and in the comparison White Non-immigrants group, those with graduate and professional degrees were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region.

Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Highest Level of Education

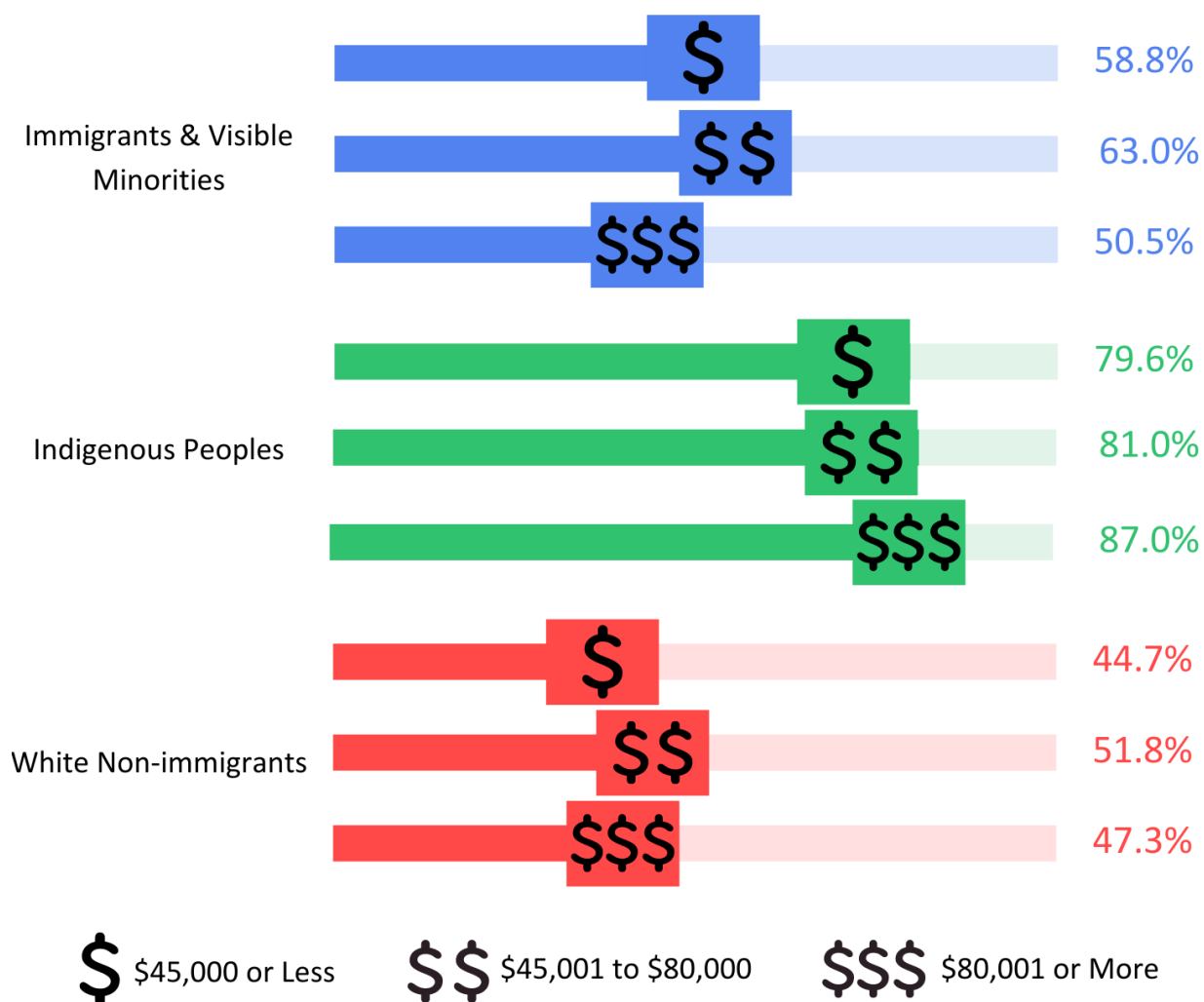


Note: Due to the small cell size, the finding for Indigenous Peoples with a graduate/professional degree is suggestive only.

The role of annual household income

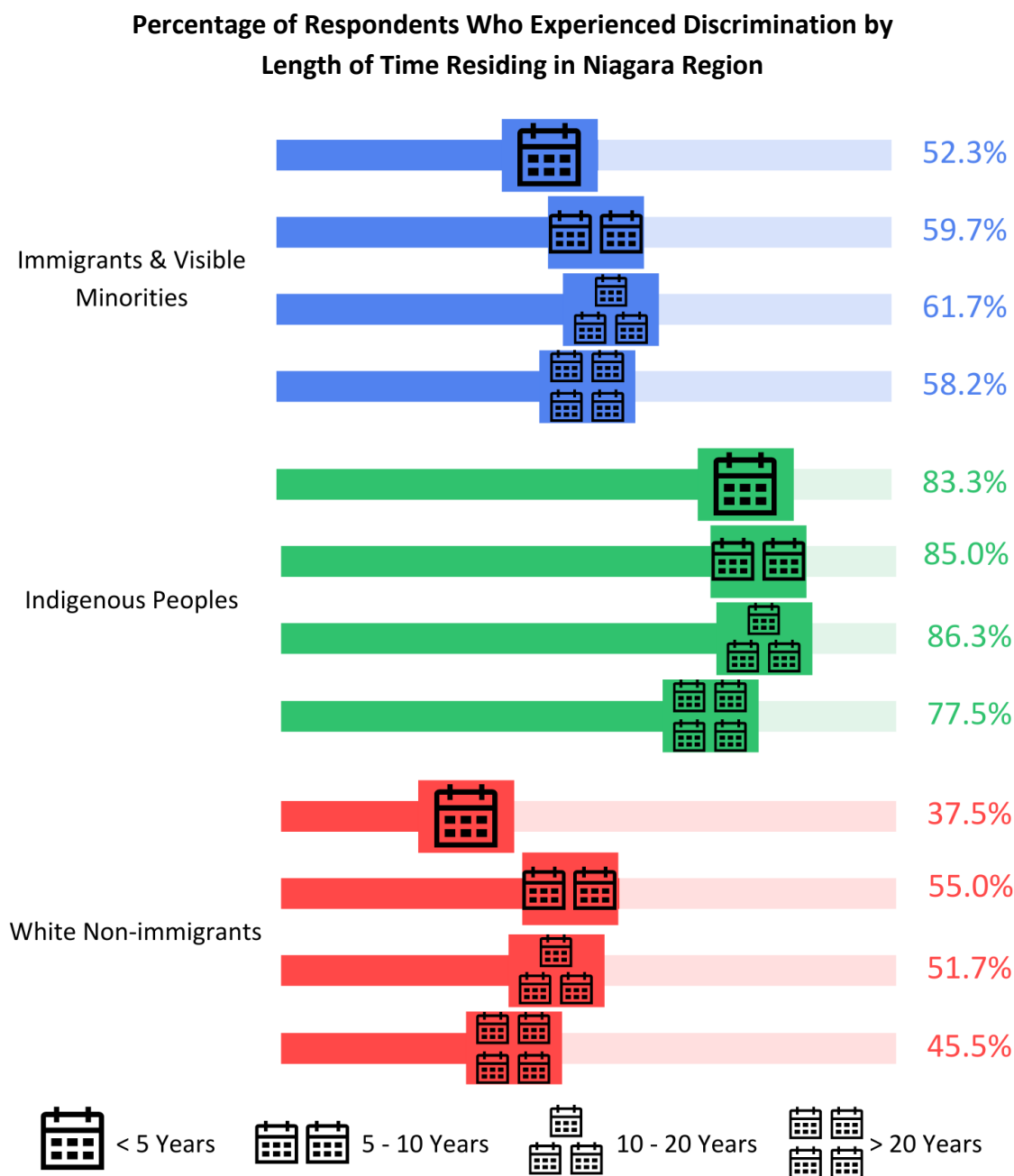
In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and in the comparison White Non-immigrants group, those who earned between \$45,001 and \$80,000 annually were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region. In the Indigenous Peoples group, those with the highest household income were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region.

Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Annual Household Income



The role of length of time residing in Niagara region

In all three groups, those who have lived in Niagara region for 5 to 20 years were more likely to have experienced discrimination in the past three years than those who have lived in Niagara region for less than 5 years and more than 20 years.

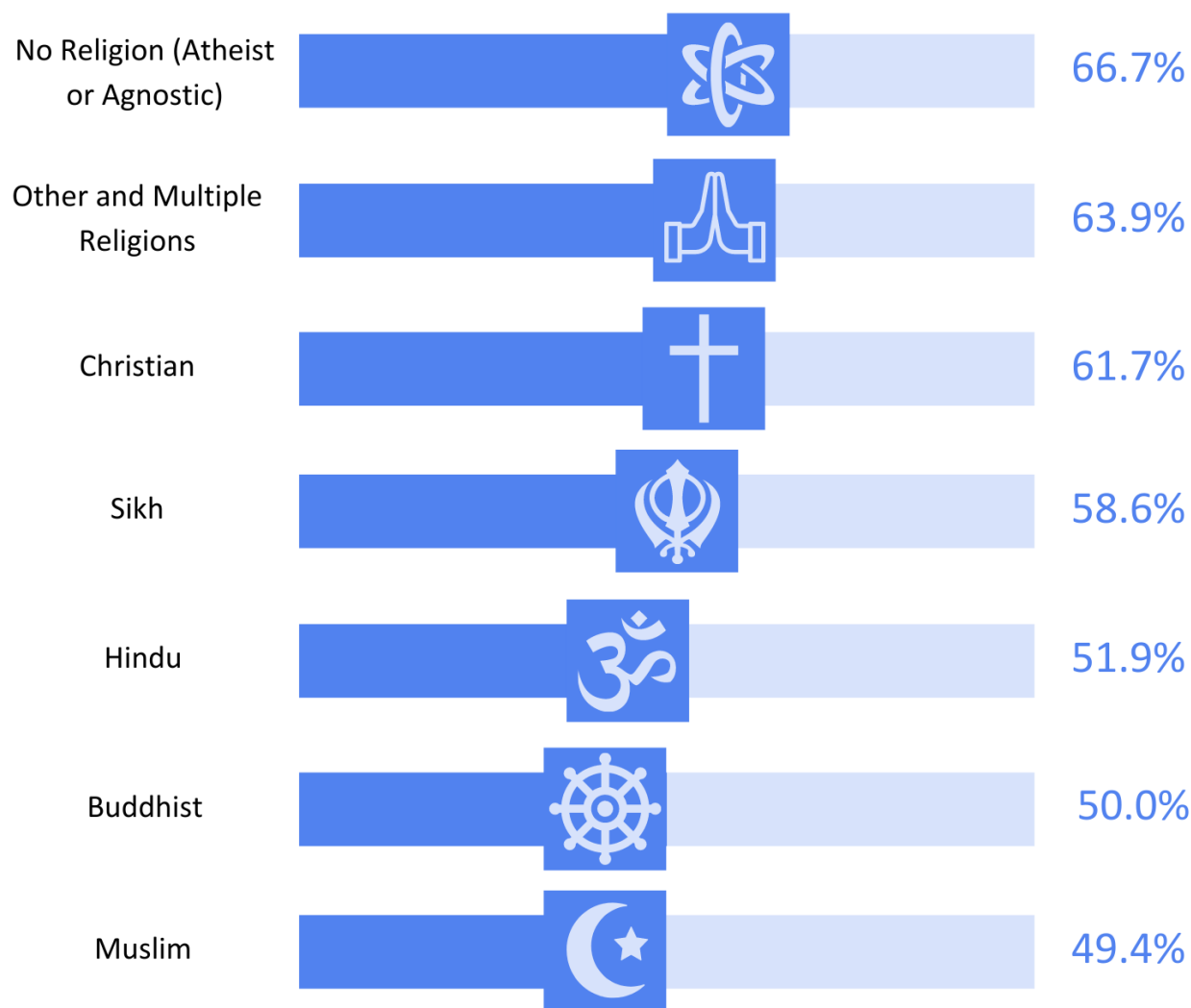


Note: Due to the small cell size, the finding for Indigenous Peoples who have lived in Niagara region for less than 5 years is suggestive only.

Immigrants and visible minorities: The role of religion

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, those with no religion and those with other and multiple religions were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region.

Percentage of Immigrant and Visible Minority Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Religion

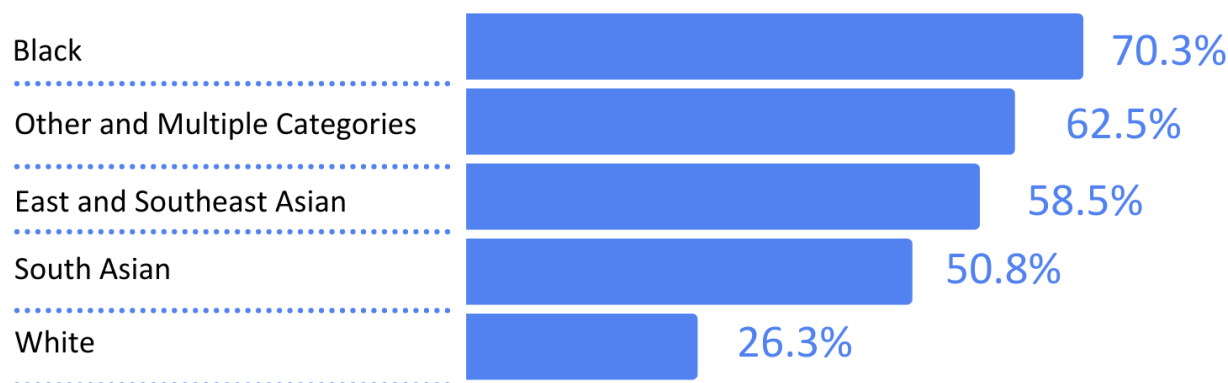


Note: The “Other and Multiple Religions” category includes people who indicated their religions as Baha’i, Jewish, Mennonite, Traditional/Spirituality, or other, as well as people who indicated more than one religion (e.g., Christian and Hindu).

Immigrants and visible minorities: The role of ethnicity/race

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, Black respondents were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region.

Percentage of Immigrant and Visible Minority Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Ethnicity/Race



Note: “Other and Multiple Categories” includes people who identify as Arab, Latin American, West Asian, Indigenous, or other, as well as people who indicated more than one category (e.g., White and Latin American).

Immigrants and visible minorities: The role of immigrant and visible minority status

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, non-immigrant visible minorities were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region.

Percentage of Immigrant and Visible Minority Group Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination as a Function of their Immigrant and Visible Minority Statuses



Immigrants: The role of current immigration status

Of the immigrant respondents, those who were Permanent residents were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region.

Percentage of Immigrants Who Experienced Discrimination by Current Immigration Status



Note: The “Other Immigration Status” category includes temporary residents, protected persons, refugee claimants, undocumented, or other.

Immigrants: The role of length of time in Canada

Of the immigrant respondents, those who had lived in Canada for between 5 and 10 years were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in the past three years in Niagara region.

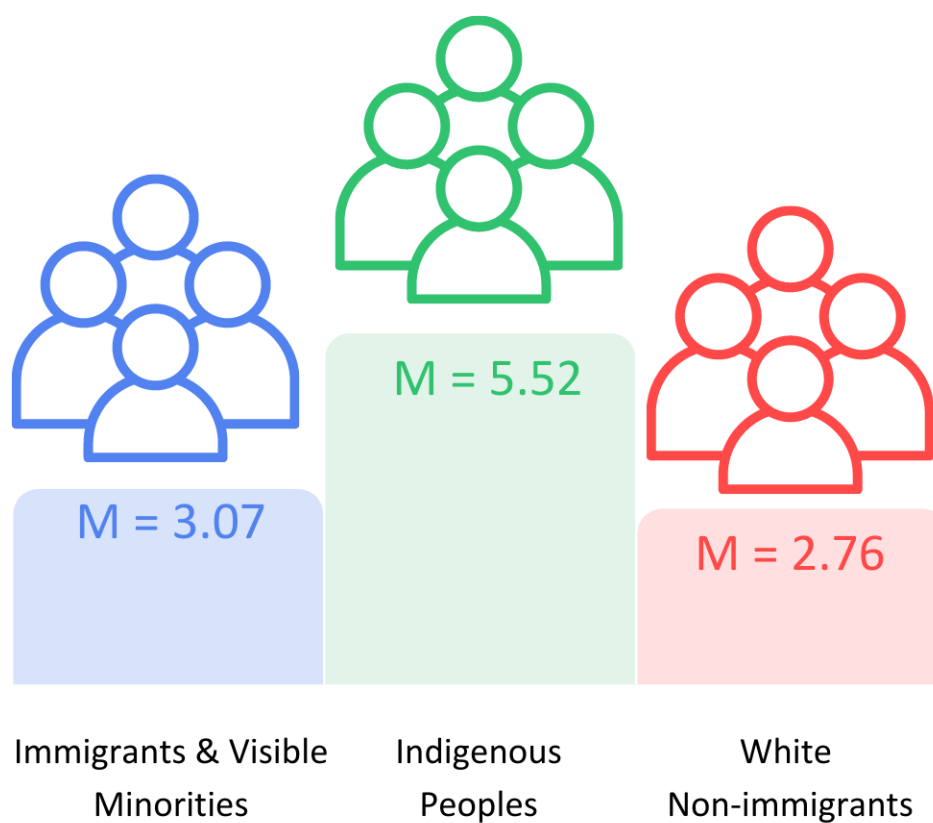
Percentage of Immigrants Who Experienced Discrimination by Length of Time in Canada



In how many contexts is discrimination being experienced?

The survey included a list of 16 contexts in which respondents might be experiencing discrimination, including an other category to capture any contexts not included. On average, Indigenous Peoples reported experiencing discrimination in more contexts than Immigrants & Visible Minorities and White Non-immigrants.

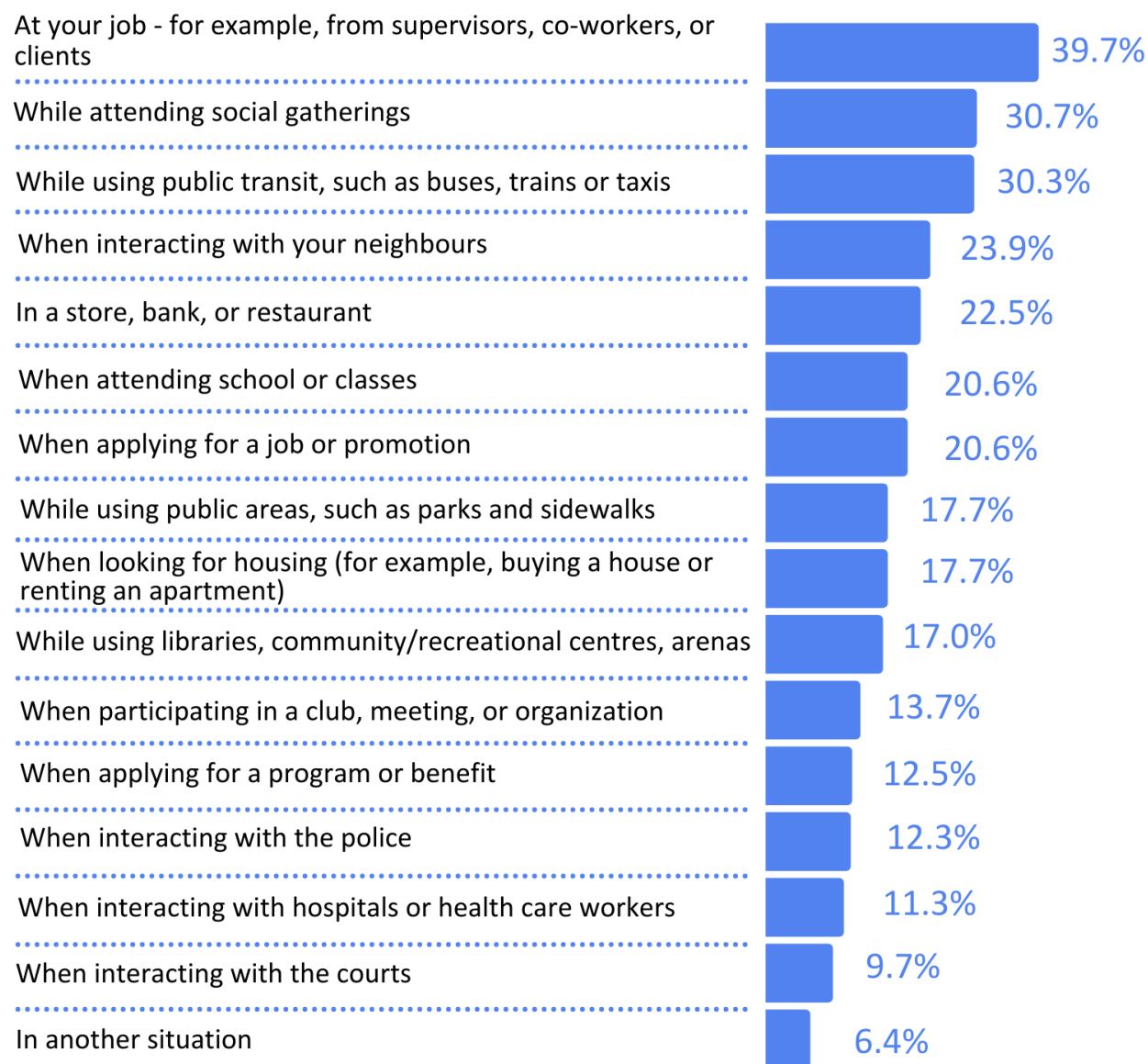
Average Number of Contexts in Which Respondents Experienced Discrimination in the Past Three Years



In what contexts is discrimination being experienced?

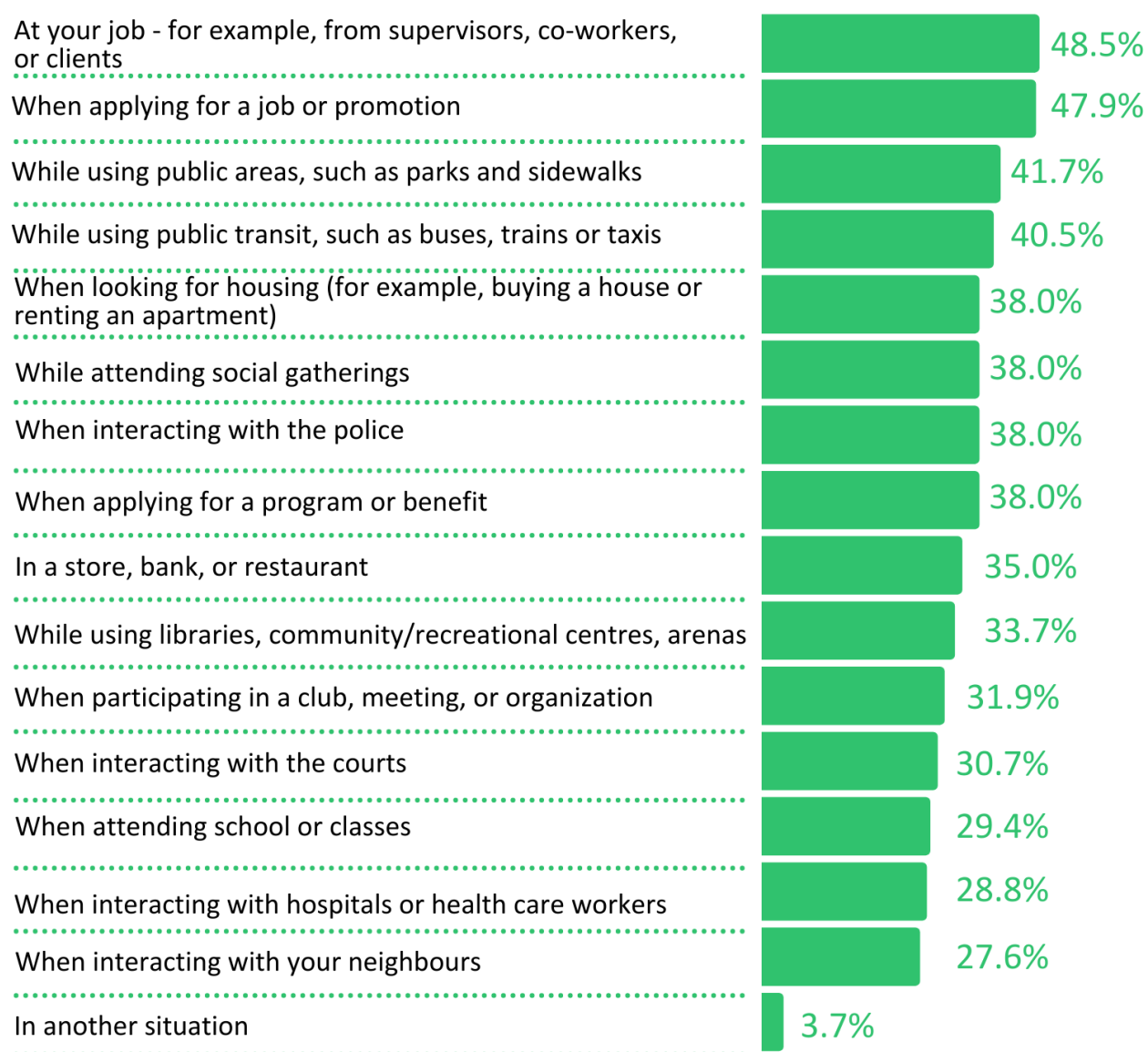
Overall, Immigrants & Visible Minorities are most likely to experience discrimination in Niagara region at their job, while attending social gatherings, while using public transit, when interacting with their neighbours, in a store, bank, or restaurant, when attending school or classes, and when applying for a job or promotion.

Immigrants & Visible Minorities: Contexts in Which Discrimination Occurred



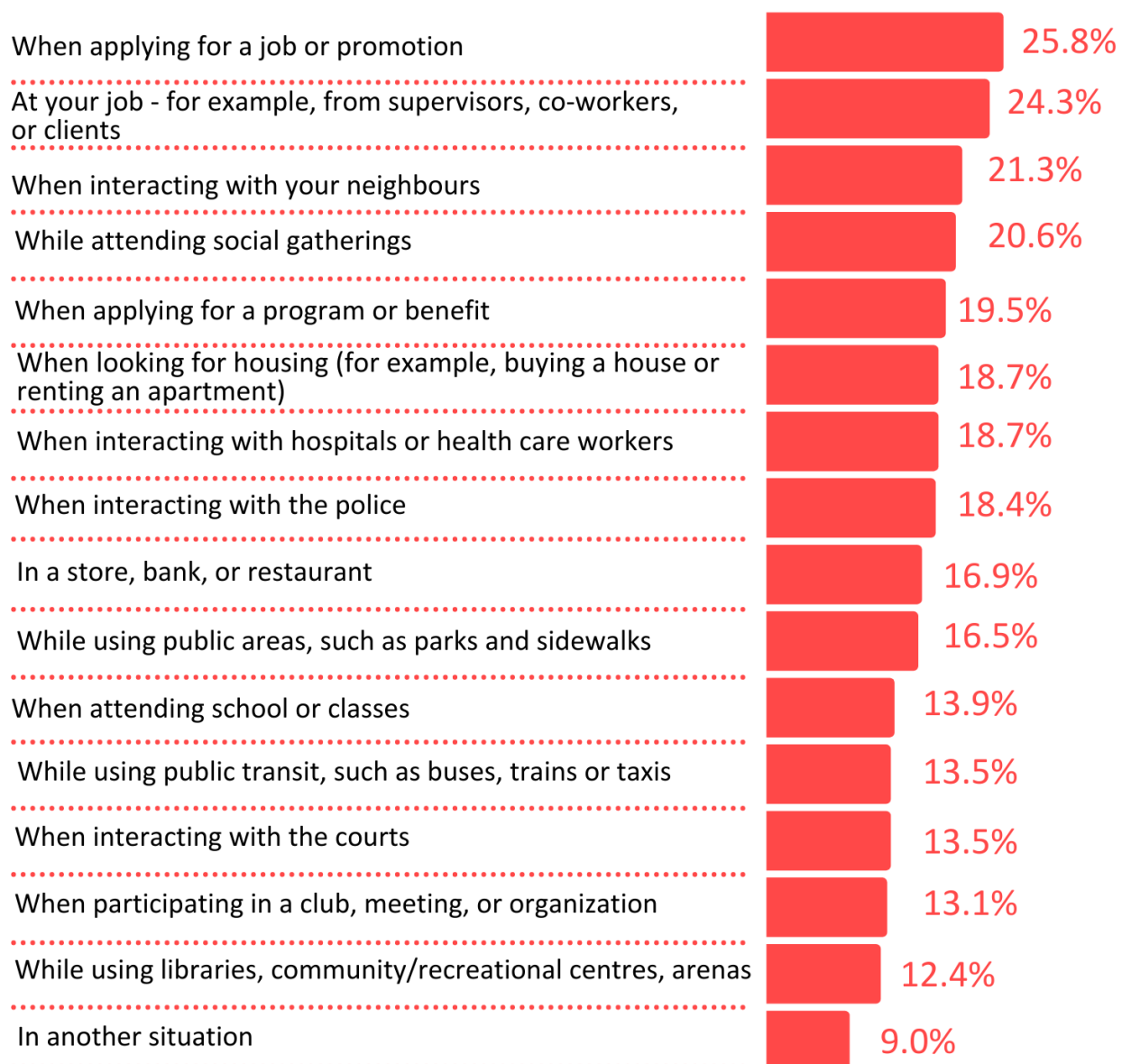
Overall, Indigenous Peoples report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region in many contexts. They are most likely to experience discrimination in Niagara region at their job, when applying for a job or promotion, while using public areas such as parks and sidewalks, while using public transit, when looking for housing, while attending social gatherings, when interacting with the police, and when applying for a program or benefit.

**Indigenous Peoples:
Contexts in Which Discrimination Occurred**



Overall, White Non-immigrants are most likely to experience discrimination in Niagara region when applying for a job or promotion, at their job, when interacting with their neighbours, and while attending social gatherings.

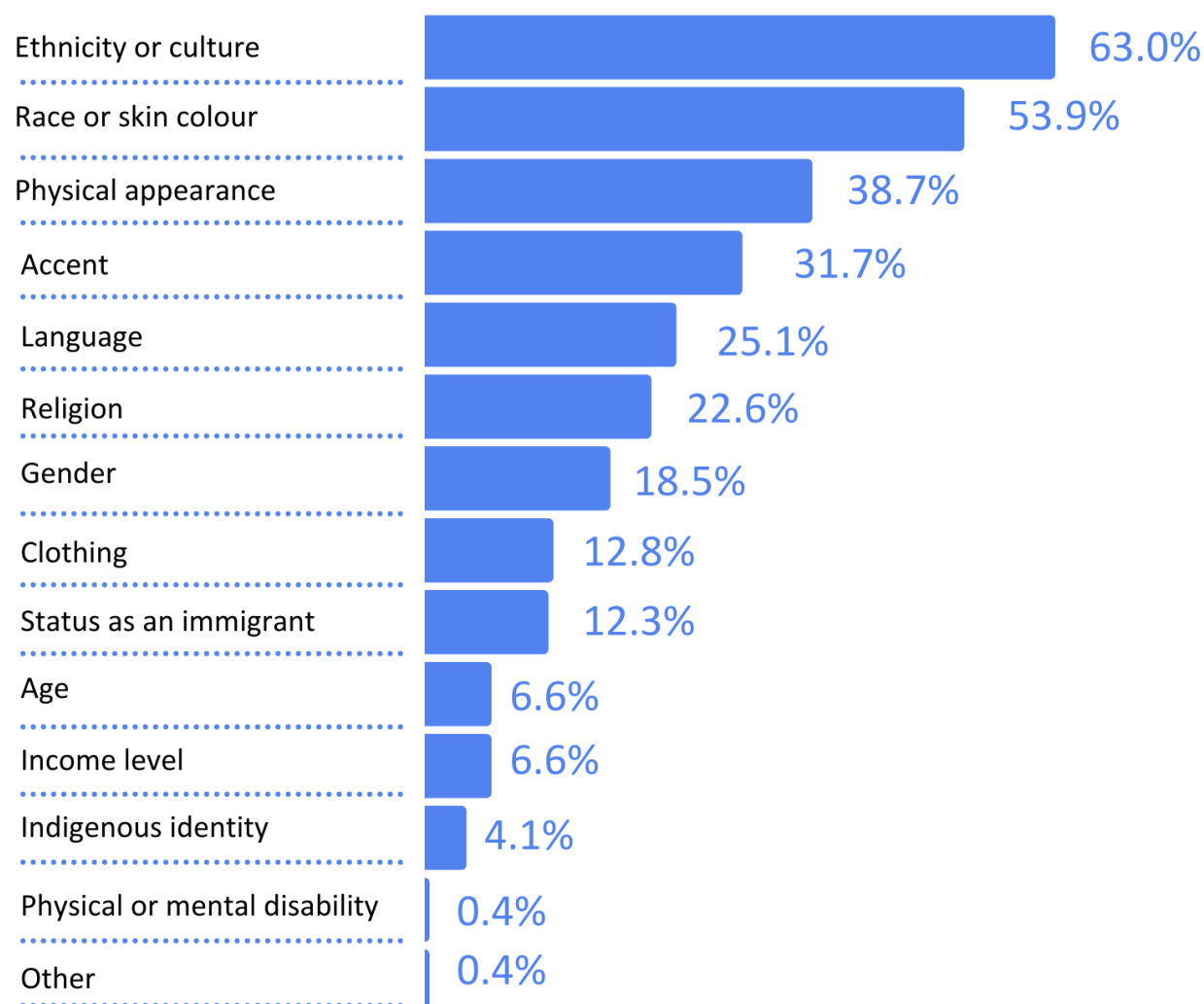
**White Non-immigrants:
Contexts in Which Discrimination Occurred**



What are the presumed bases of experiences of discrimination?

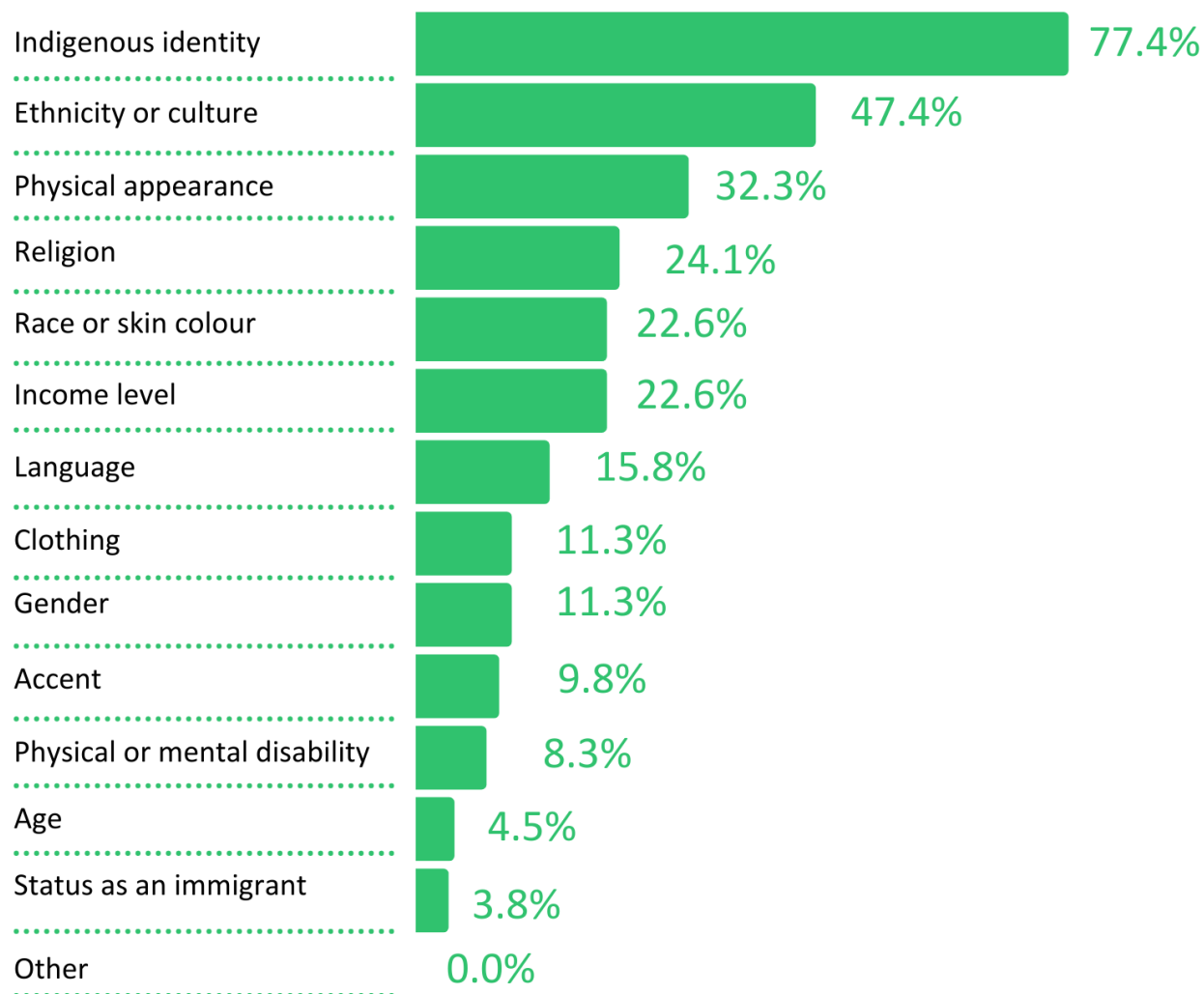
Those people who reported that they have experienced discrimination in at least one context in the last three years were asked to indicate what they thought the main reasons were for their experiences of discrimination (respondents could choose more than one reason). Immigrants & Visible Minorities were most likely to indicate that the discrimination that they have experienced is based on their ethnicity or culture and race or skin colour, followed by physical appearance.

Immigrants & Visible Minorities Who Had Experienced Discrimination: Percentage Who Indicated Each Basis for Discrimination



Indigenous Peoples were most likely to indicate that the discrimination that they have experienced is based on their indigenous identity and ethnicity or culture, followed by physical appearance.

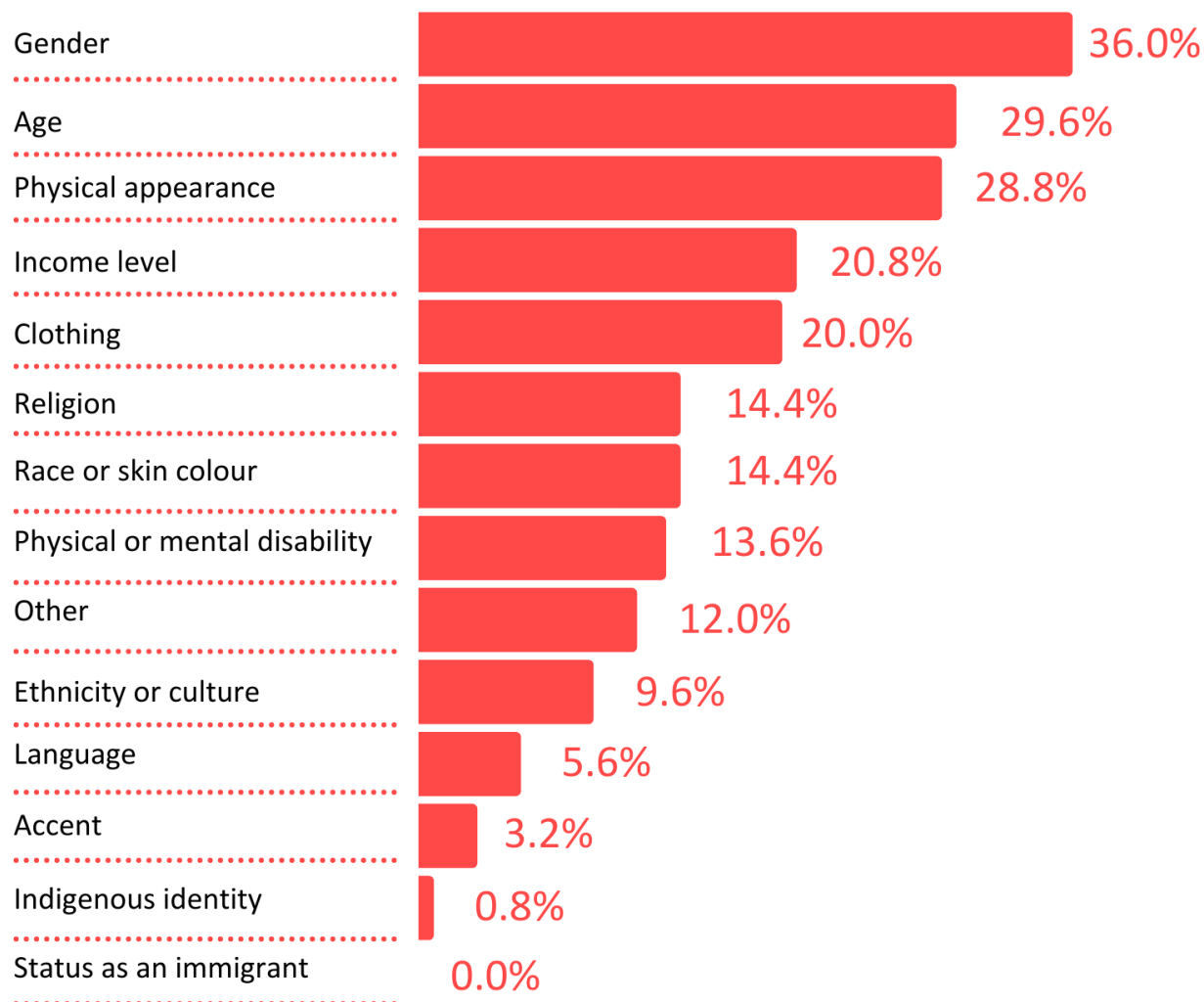
**Indigenous Peoples Who Had Experienced Discrimination:
Percentage Who Indicated Each Basis for Discrimination**



Note: A few respondents in the Indigenous Peoples group selected 'status as an immigrant' as one of the bases of their discrimination experiences. It is possible that these respondents perceived themselves as 'immigrants' in Niagara even though they were born in Canada. Alternatively, this is attributable to random error in responding.

White Non-immigrants were most likely to indicate that the discrimination that they have experienced is based on their gender, age, and physical appearance, followed by income level and clothing.

**White Non-immigrants Who Had Experienced Discrimination:
Percentage Who Indicated Each Basis for Discrimination**



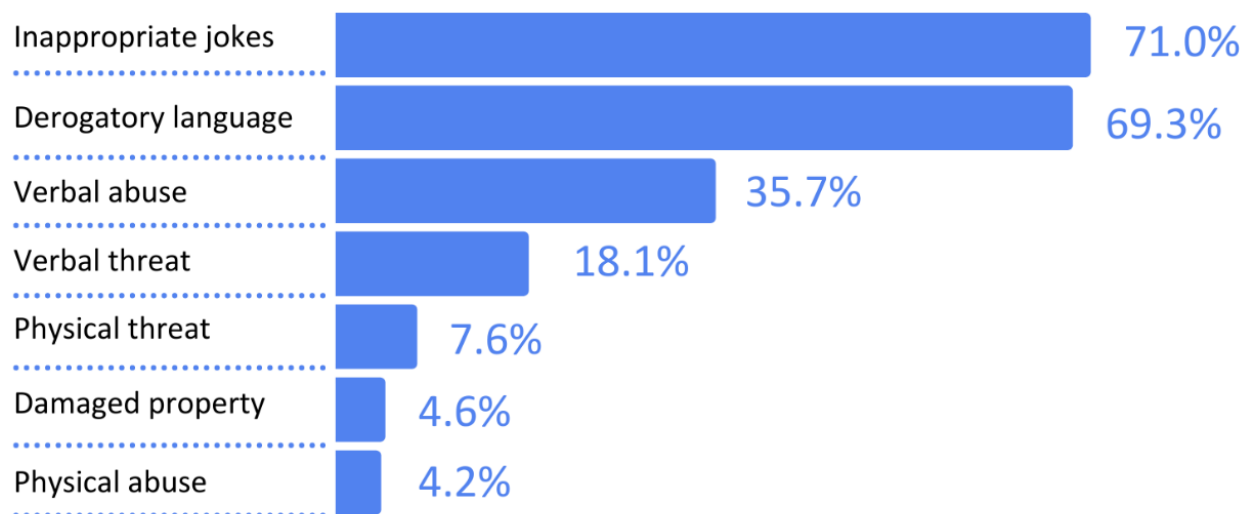
These results suggest that Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples perceive their experiences of discrimination as based on ethnocultural factors related to different minority group statuses, such as race or skin colour, indigenous identity, and ethnicity or culture. In contrast, comparison White Non-immigrants tend to perceive their experiences of discrimination as based on more universal factors such as gender (largely driven by female respondents of

whom 41.7% reported discrimination based on gender as compared to 24.5% of males), age, and income level.

Are specific types of discrimination being experienced?

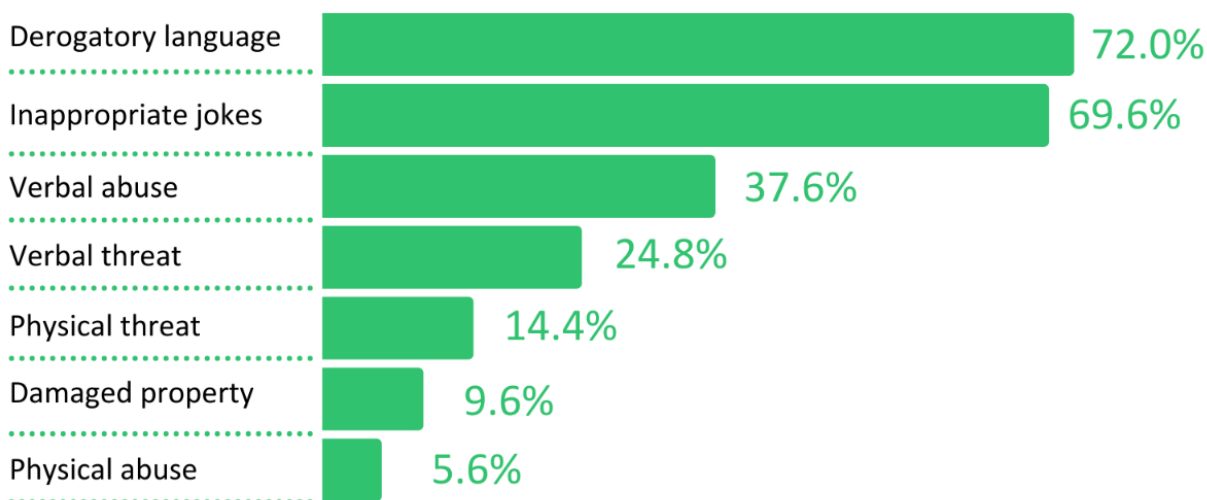
Those people who reported that they have experienced discrimination in at least one context in the last three years were asked to indicate whether they had experienced specific types of discrimination (respondents could choose more than one type). Immigrants & Visible Minorities were most likely to report that they had experienced inappropriate jokes and derogatory language, followed by verbal abuse and threat.

Immigrants & Visible Minorities Who Had Experienced Discrimination: Percentage Who Had Experienced Each Type of Discrimination



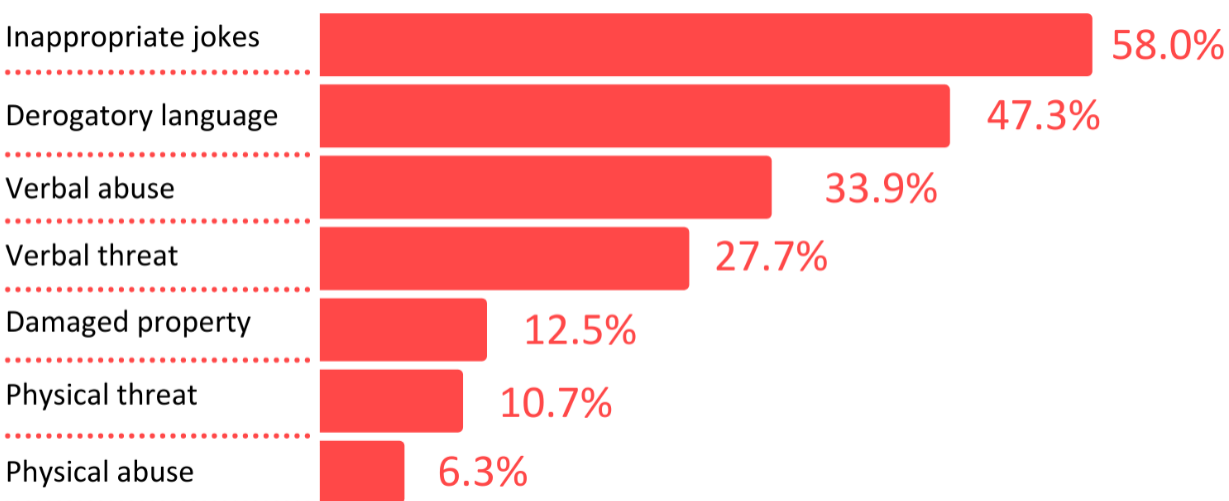
Indigenous Peoples were most likely to report that they had experienced derogatory language and inappropriate jokes, followed by verbal abuse and threat.

**Indigenous Peoples Who Had Experienced Discrimination:
Percentage Who Had Experienced Each Type of Discrimination**



White Non-immigrants were most likely to report that they had experienced inappropriate jokes and derogatory language, followed by verbal abuse and threat.

**White Non-immigrants Who Had Experienced Discrimination:
Percentage Who Had Experienced Each Type of Discrimination**

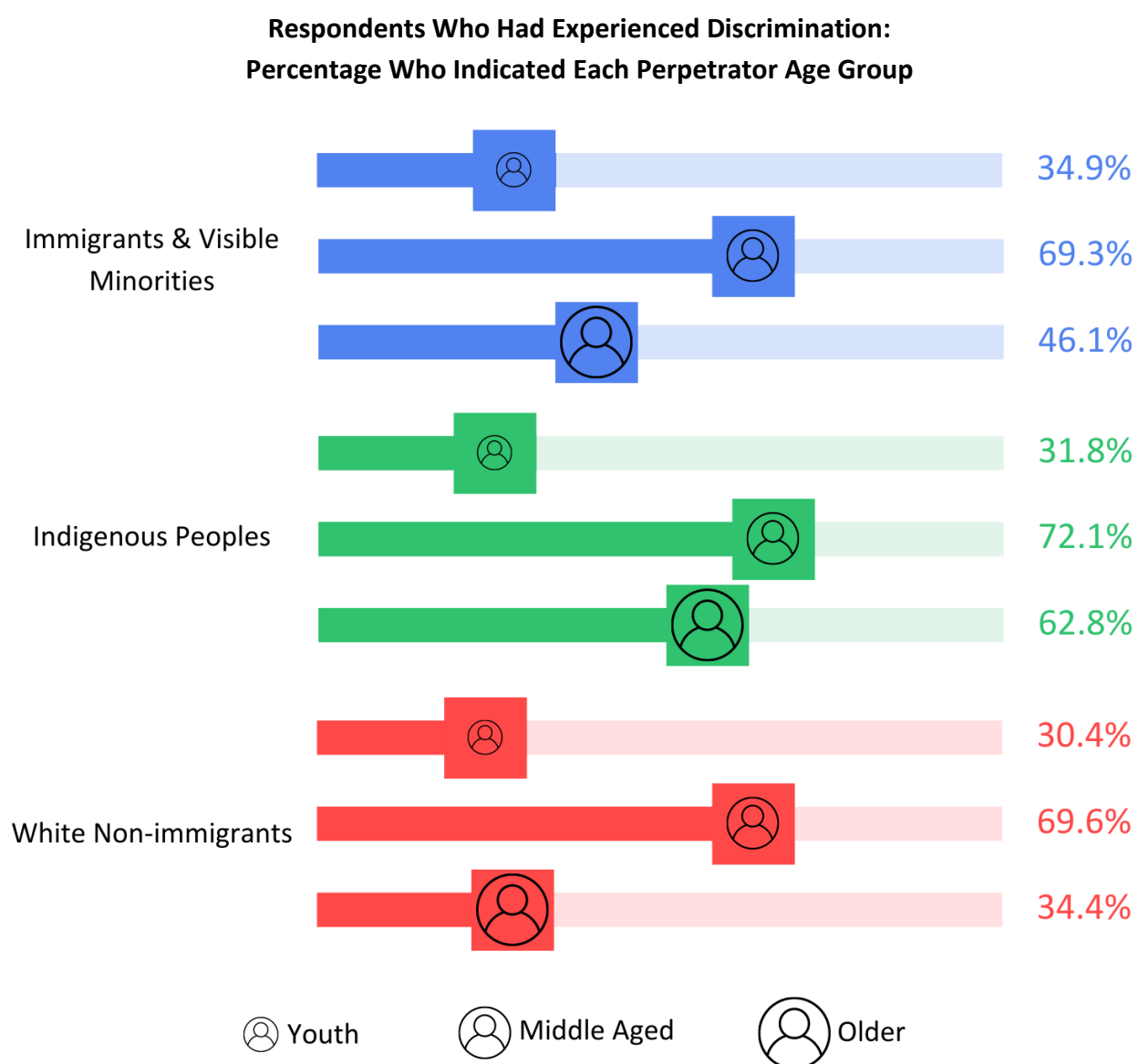


Who are the perpetrators of discrimination?

Those people who reported that they have experienced discrimination in at least one context in the last three years were asked to describe who generally discriminated against them, including perpetrators' gender, age, and race or ethnicity (respondents could choose more than one response for each category).

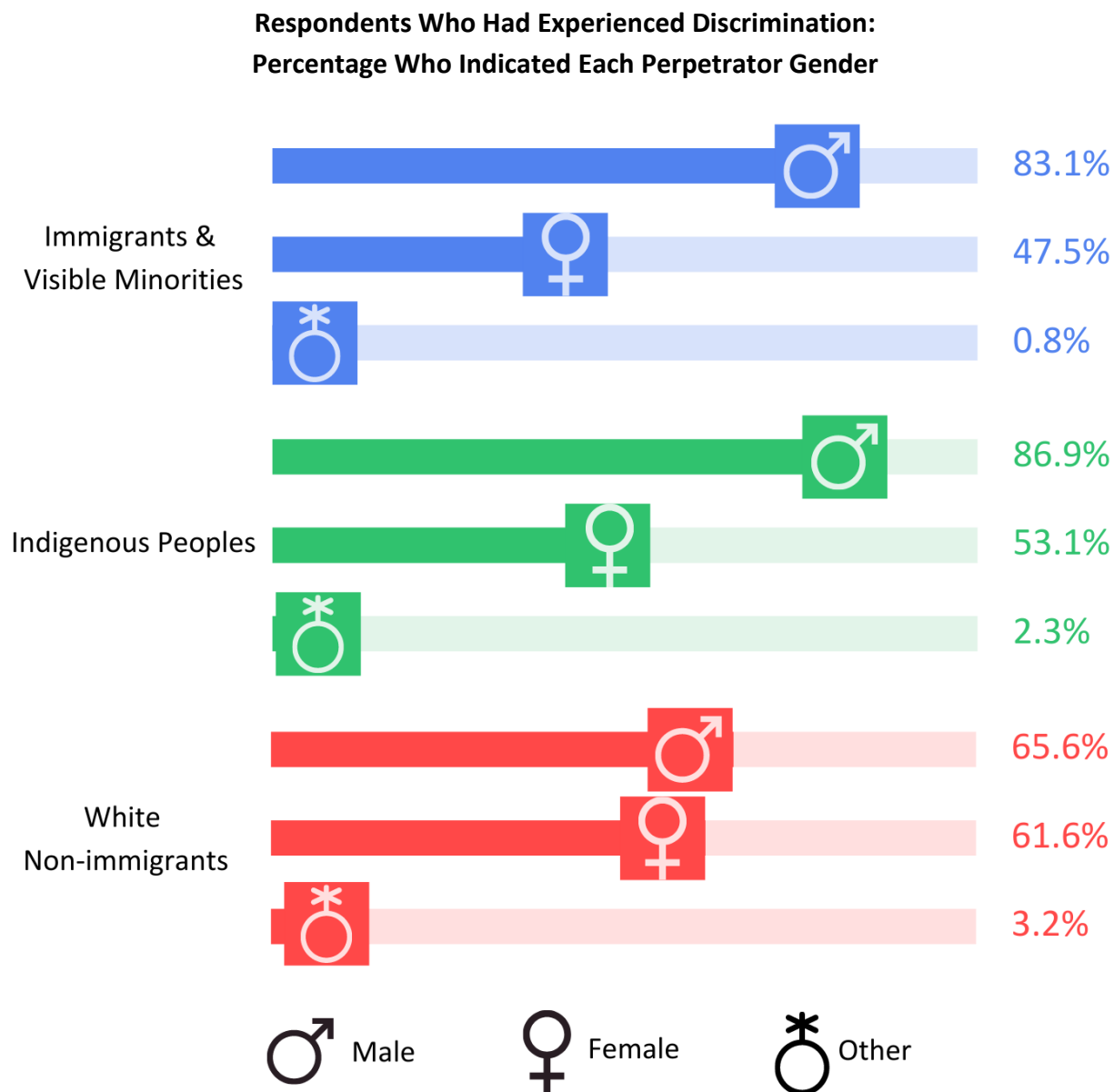
Perpetrator age

All three groups of respondents reported that perpetrators were most likely to be middle aged, followed by older people.



Perpetrator gender

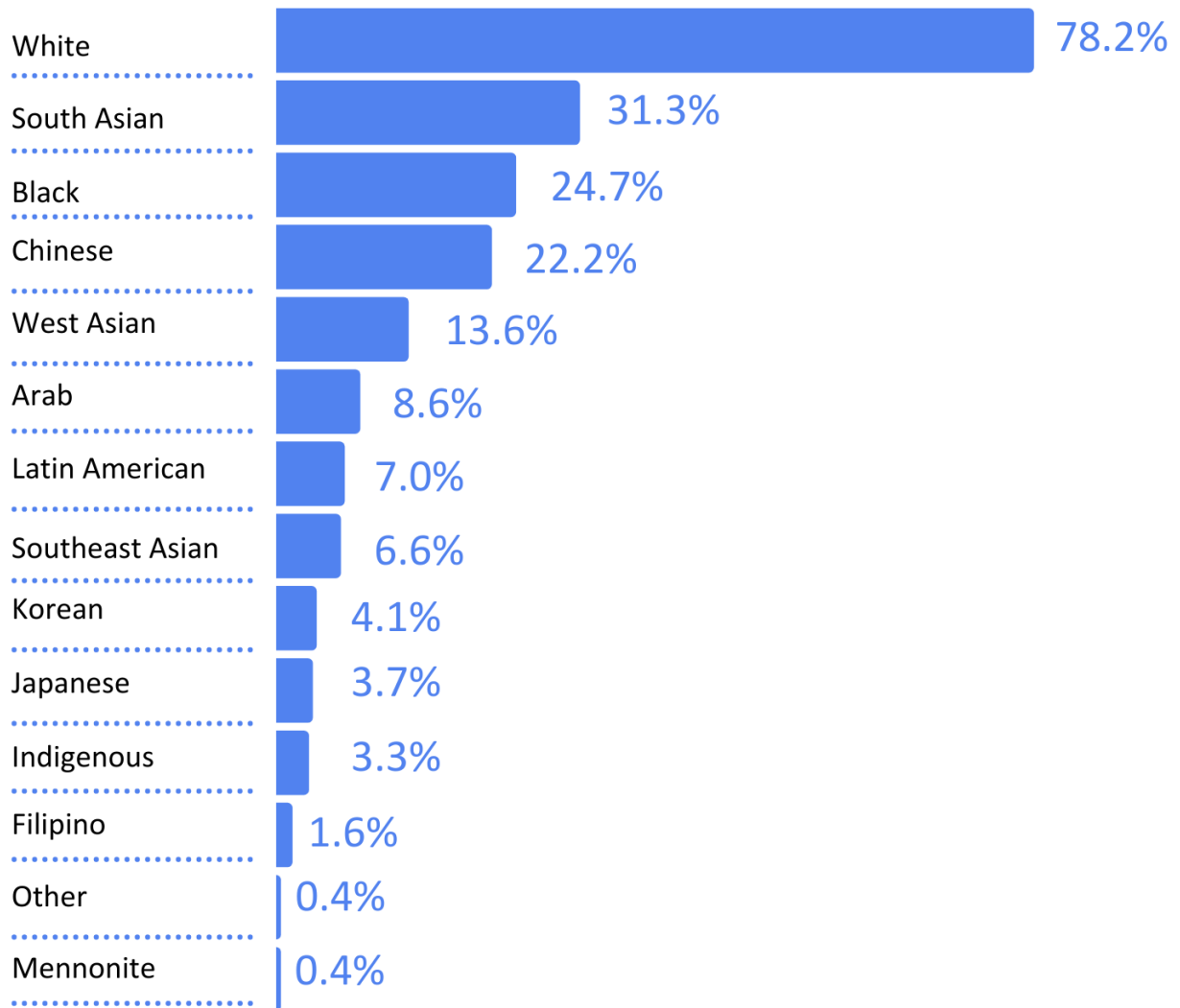
All three groups of respondents reported that perpetrators were more likely to be male.



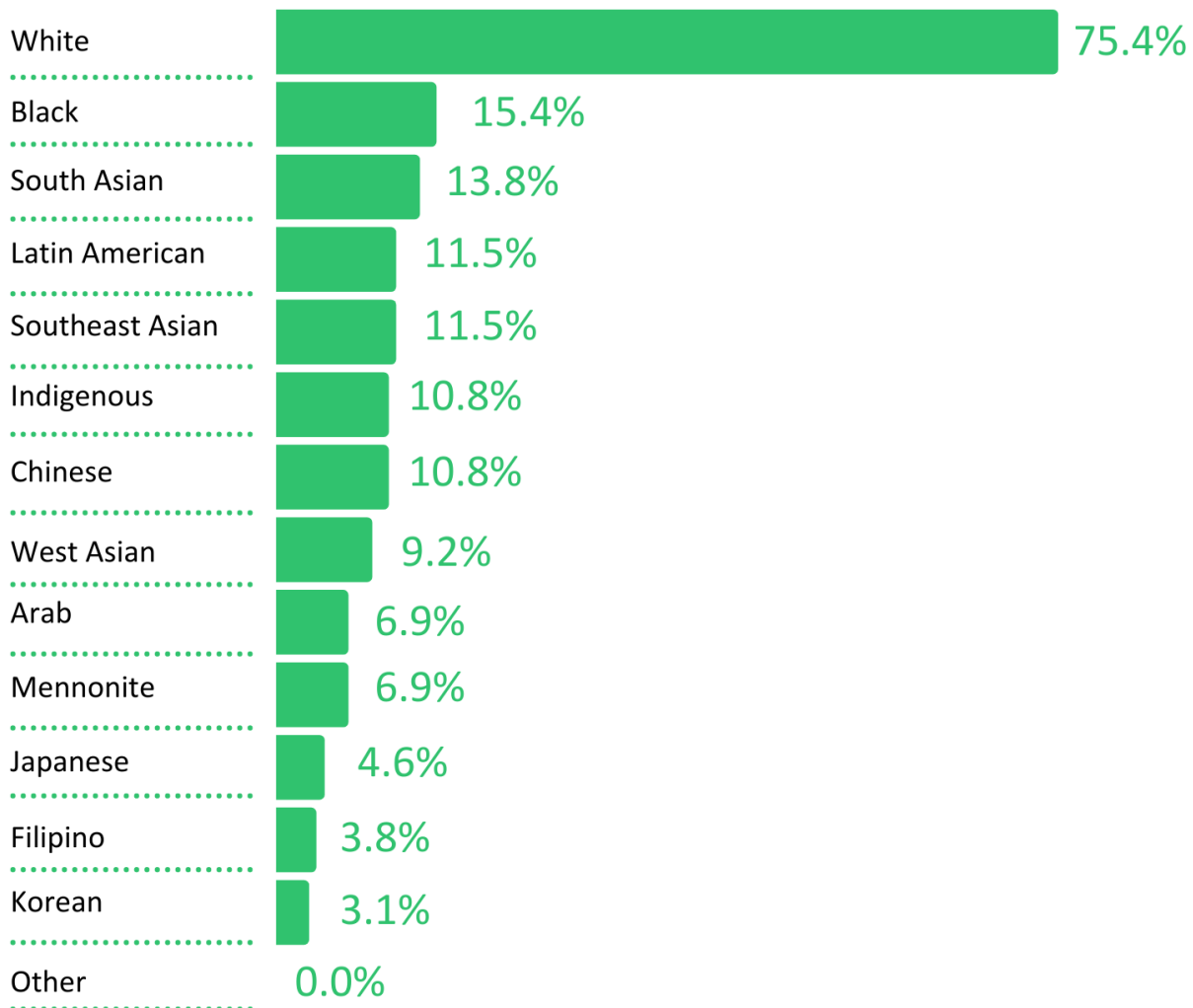
Perpetrator race or ethnicity

All three groups of respondents reported that perpetrators were most likely to be White.

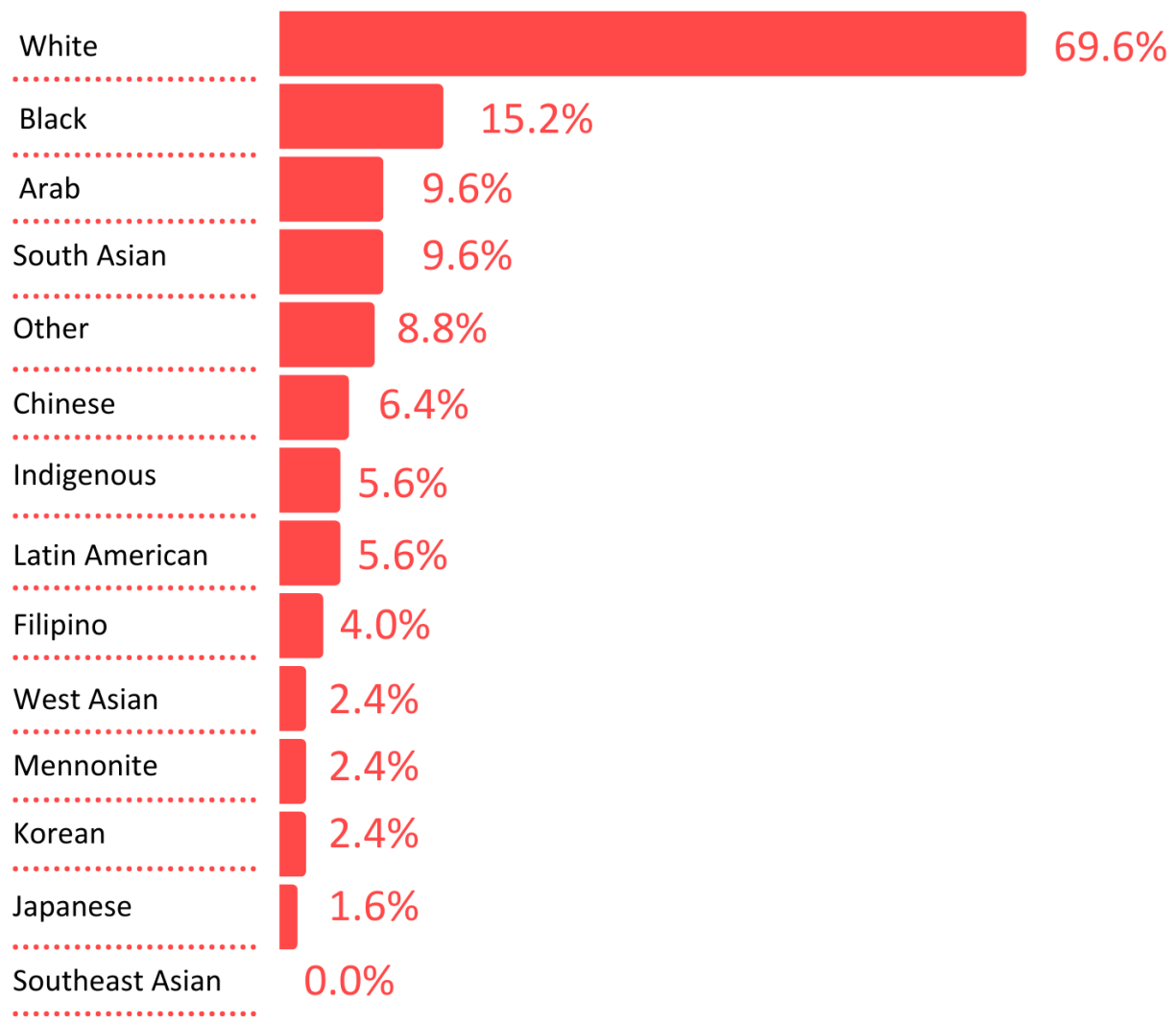
**Immigrants & Visible Minorities Who Had Experienced Discrimination:
Percentage Who Indicated Each Perpetrator Race/Ethnicity**



**Indigenous Peoples Who Had Experienced Discrimination:
Percentage Who Indicated Each Perpetrator Race/Ethnicity**



**White Non-immigrants Who Had Experienced Discrimination:
Percentage Who Indicated Each Perpetrator Race/Ethnicity**



Have experiences of discrimination increased or decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Those people who reported that they have experienced discrimination in at least one context in the last three years were asked to indicate whether their experiences of discrimination have increased or decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of all three groups reported that their experiences of discrimination decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic, perhaps attributable to the lockdowns which reduced the frequency of interactions with others. However, White Non-immigrants reported that discrimination decreased to a greater extent than Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples.

Average Change in Experiencing Discrimination During the COVID-19 Pandemic



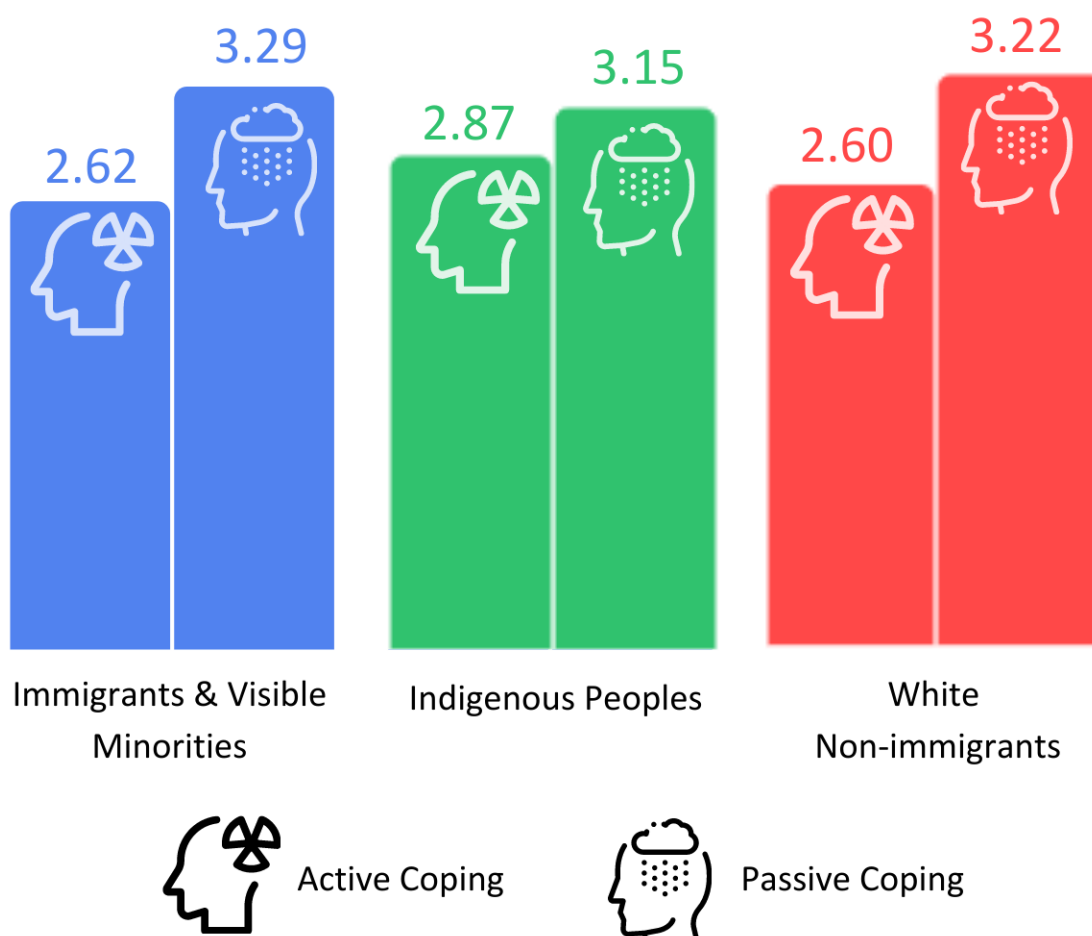
Note: Possible responses could range from much lower (-2) to much higher (+2).

Potential Coping Strategies and Emotions in Response to Discrimination

What coping strategies are used in response to discrimination?

Those people who reported that they have experienced discrimination in at least one context in the last three years were asked to what extent they engaged in 12 coping strategies in response to the discrimination, which were then combined into active (e.g., tried to do something about it) and passive (e.g., accepted it as the way things are) coping strategies. All three groups of respondents tended to engage in passive coping more than active coping, though both strategies were used to a considerable degree.

Average Use of Active and Passive Coping Strategies in Response to Discrimination

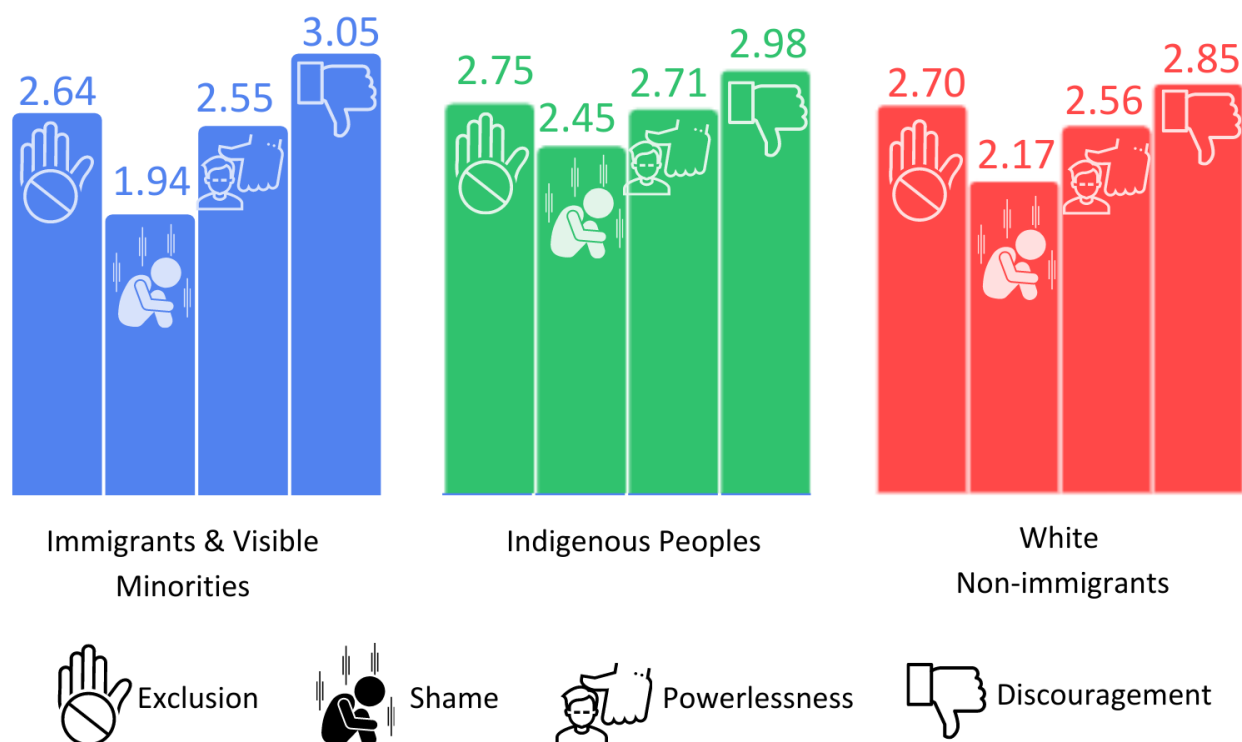


Note: Possible responses could range from never (1) to always (5).

What feelings are elicited by experiences of discrimination?

Those people who reported that they have experienced discrimination in at least one context in the last three years were asked to what extent they experienced 12 different feelings in response to this discrimination, which were then combined into exclusion (e.g., rejected), shame (e.g., ashamed), powerlessness (e.g., helpless), and discouragement (e.g., discouraged). All three groups of respondents tended to experience exclusion, powerlessness, and discouragement more than shame, though all emotions were experienced. Immigrants & Visible Minorities tended to experience discouragement more than the other two groups of respondents. Indigenous Peoples tended to experience exclusion, powerlessness, and shame more than the other two groups of respondents.

Average Feelings of Exclusion, Shame, Powerlessness, and Discouragement in Response to Discrimination

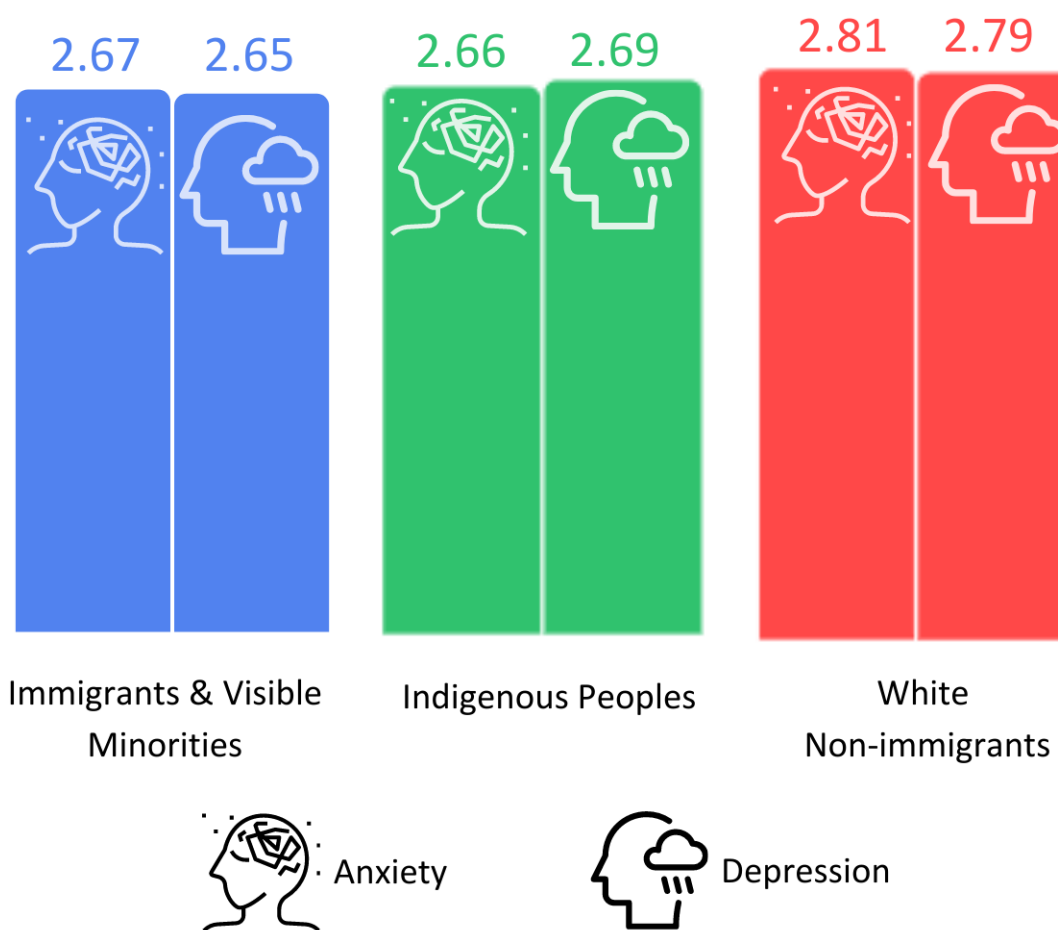


Note: Possible responses could range from never (1) to always (5).

How much psychological distress is experienced in response to discrimination?

Those people who reported that they have experienced discrimination in at least one context in the last three years were asked to what extent they experienced psychological distress in response to the discrimination across 4 items, which were then combined into anxiety (e.g., nervous, anxious, or on edge) and depression (e.g., down, depressed, or hopeless.). All three groups of respondents experienced some level of anxiety and depression, though White Non-immigrants were especially likely to experience both aspects of distress.

Average Experiences of Anxiety and Depression in Response to Discrimination

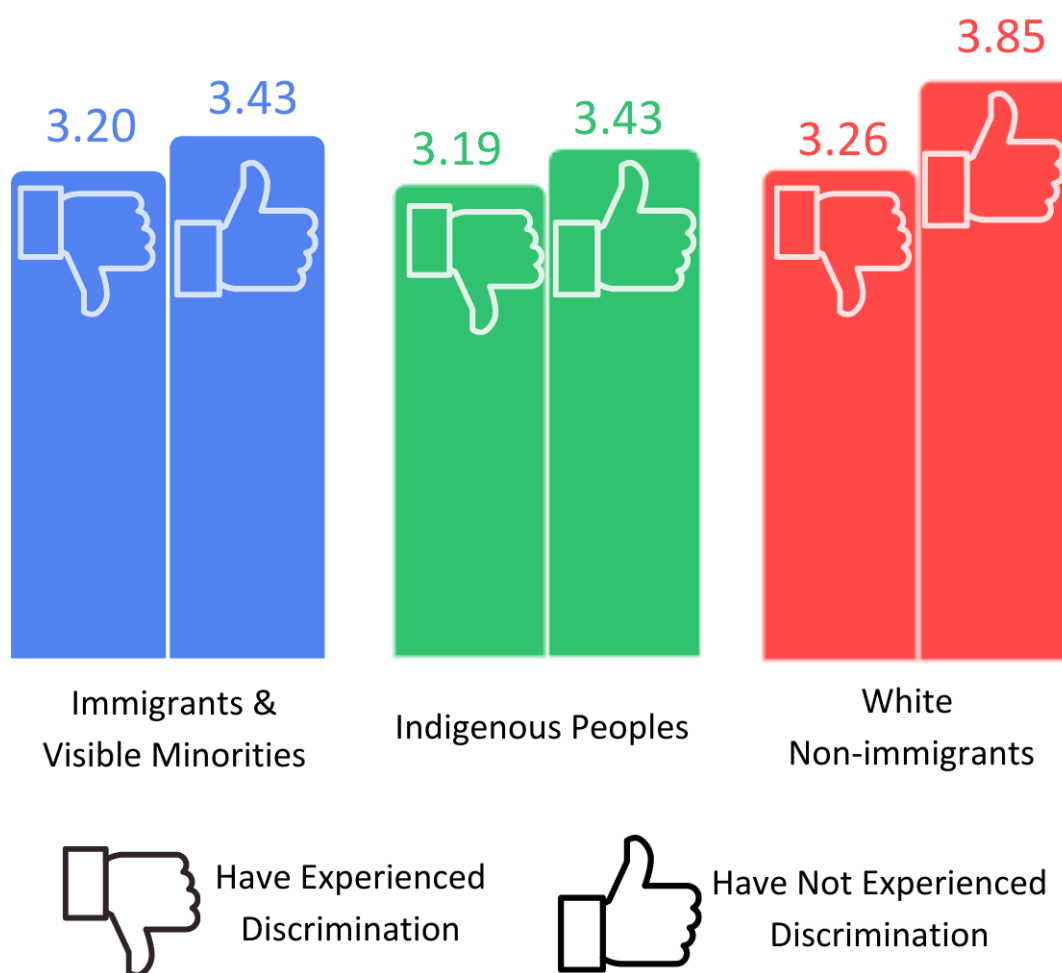


Note: Responses could range from never (1) to always (5).

Niagara Region as a Welcoming Community

All respondents were asked to what extent they felt accepted and welcomed in Niagara region at the present time using 5 items, which were combined. Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples tended to report a lower sense of acceptance and welcome in Niagara region than the comparison White Non-immigrants. For all three groups of respondents, those who had not experienced discrimination had a stronger sense of acceptance and welcome in Niagara region than those who had experienced discrimination.

Average Feelings of Acceptance and Welcome in Niagara Region



Note: Possible responses could range from not at all (1) to extremely (5).

Summary of Findings

Immigrants & Visible Minorities

Approximately 6 out of 10 respondents in the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group reported experiencing discrimination in Niagara region in the past three years. Younger and female respondents, respondents with college or vocational education and undergraduate degrees, and respondents earning between \$45,001 and \$80,000 annually were more likely to report experiencing discrimination. Also, for Immigrants & Visible Minorities ethnicity or race played a role. In particular, Black respondents were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region. Of note, visible minorities who are not immigrants were most likely to report experiencing discrimination, followed by immigrant visible minorities. In terms of specific characteristics of immigrants, permanent residents and those who had lived in Canada between 5 to 10 years were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in Niagara region.

Immigrants & Visible Minorities were most likely to experience discrimination at their job (e.g., from supervisors, co-workers, or clients), while attending social gatherings, while using public transit (e.g., buses, trains or taxis), when interacting with their neighbours, and in a store, bank, or restaurant. The most common bases for discrimination reported by Immigrants & Visible Minorities were their ethnicity or culture and race or skin colour. In terms of the types of discrimination experienced, Immigrants & Visible Minorities were most likely to experience inappropriate jokes and derogatory language, followed by verbal abuse and threat. Both men and women were identified as perpetrators of this discrimination, although males were mentioned more frequently than females. Also, perpetrators were most commonly reported to be middle aged and White.

Experiences of discrimination were more likely to produce feelings of discouragement, exclusion, and powerlessness than shame. On average, Immigrants & Visible Minorities also reported experiencing anxiety and depression to some extent as a result of their discrimination experiences. On average, they indicated using both active and passive coping strategies to deal with their discrimination experiences, although they tended to rely more on passive than active coping strategies. Of note, those who had experienced discrimination reported lower feelings of being accepted and welcomed in Niagara region than those who had not experienced discrimination.

Indigenous Peoples

In the Indigenous Peoples group, approximately 8 out of 10 respondents reported experiencing discrimination in Niagara region in the past three years. Younger and female respondents, more

educated respondents, and those who were primarily employed and had higher incomes were more likely to report experiencing discrimination. On average, respondents in the Indigenous Peoples group also reported experiencing discrimination in more contexts than respondents in the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and the White Non-immigrants group. Indigenous Peoples were most likely to report experiencing discrimination at their job (e.g., from supervisors, co-workers, or clients), when applying for a job or promotion, while using public areas (e.g., parks and sidewalks), while using public transit (e.g., buses, trains or taxis), when looking for housing (e.g., buying a house or renting an apartment), while attending social gatherings, when interacting with the police, and when applying for a program or benefit.

Indigenous Peoples reported that the main bases for the discrimination they experienced had to do with their indigenous identity and ethnicity or culture. In terms of the types of discrimination experienced, respondents were most likely to mention derogatory language and inappropriate jokes, followed by verbal abuse and threat. Similar to the other two groups, respondents in the Indigenous Peoples group identified perpetrators as male and female, although males were mentioned more often than females. Also, perpetrators were most commonly reported to be middle aged and White.

As for the other two groups, respondents in the Indigenous Peoples group reported that experiences of discrimination were more likely to lead to feelings of discouragement, exclusion, and powerlessness than shame. On average, Indigenous Peoples also reported experiencing anxiety and depression to some extent as a result of their discrimination experiences. Indigenous peoples reported using both active and passive coping strategies to deal with their discrimination experiences, although they tended to rely more on passive than active coping strategies. Of note, those who had experienced discrimination reported lower feelings of being accepted and welcomed in Niagara region than those who had not experienced discrimination.

Comparison White Non-immigrants

Approximately 5 out of 10 respondents in the comparison White Non-immigrants group reported experiencing discrimination in Niagara region in the last three years. White Non-immigrants were most likely to experience discrimination when applying for a job or promotion, at their job (e.g., from supervisors, co-workers, or clients), when interacting with their neighbours, and while attending social gatherings. White Non-immigrants reported that the main reasons for their discrimination experiences had to do with universal factors such as gender and age. Of interest, White Non-immigrants reported a greater decrease in discrimination experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic than respondents in the other two groups, perhaps due to limited social

interactions. Finally, White Non-immigrants also tended to report, on average, higher feelings of acceptance and welcome in Niagara region than the other two groups.

Methodological Strengths and Limitations

This research has a number of methodological strengths, as well as some limitations. In terms of a major strength, the respondents in our survey were contacted by phone through random digit dialing of phone numbers in the region, and if they qualified to participate and agreed, were then sent the link to the survey. This recruitment procedure ensured a relatively representative sample of participating individuals within each of the three target groups. This contrasts with many of the surveys being conducted to examine racism and discrimination across the country, which advertise their surveys publicly and then allow full self selection of respondents based on their interest in the topic, which can lead to extreme bias. That is, the random selection of potential respondents at the first stage of our recruitment reduced the probability of biased samples. The targeting of specific, relatively large, numbers of Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples based on their population sizes within the region also increased the representativeness of these samples, allowing us to reach conclusions that applied to these groups in general. We note, however, that the margin of error for Indigenous Peoples is a bit larger than for the other two groups, due to the smaller sample size.

Nonetheless, because participation was voluntary, it is likely that interest in the topic had some influence on whether or not eligible individuals participated, leading to some inevitable potential biasing of the samples. This was particularly evident for respondents in the White Non-immigrant group who tended to be older and more likely to be female than a random sample would suggest. Having a White Non-immigrant group was of importance, however, in providing an understanding of the experiences of discrimination of the specific groups of interest – Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples – in comparison to members of the majority group in the region, and was further enhanced by analyses by specific characteristics such as gender and age.

An additional strength of this research was the use of validated, established measures where available, and the focus not only on whether respondents had experienced discrimination, but a detailed profile of the contexts of this discrimination and its potential consequences. This provides a rigorous evidence-base for the development of future strategies for reducing discrimination in the region.

Some may suggest that a limitation of this research is that it is based on self-reports of discrimination by those who are purported to experience it, rather than observations of objective discrimination. Though it is indeed the case that our research depends on self-reports by victims

of discrimination, we would argue that understanding the lived experiences of immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous peoples in our community, including their experiences of discrimination, is essential as we work toward promoting a more welcoming community in which all can contribute and thrive.

Another possible limitation of the research is that, with one exception, we combined immigrants and visible minorities into one sample for the purpose of the analyses. This decision was based on the fact that there is considerable overlap between these two groups in Niagara region and, indeed, in our Immigrants & Visible Minorities sample over 75% of respondents were both immigrants and visible minorities. We did, however, examine the separate effects of immigrant status and visible minority status on the likelihood of experiencing discrimination.

Finally, it is important to note that because we set targets for the three groups of respondents for this research, the three groups can not be combined to examine overall levels of discrimination in our community. That is, we can reach conclusions about each of the three groups of respondents and compare them, but cannot combine the three groups to reach overall conclusions irrespective of the groups to which individuals belong. To do so would require weighting of the samples, which is beyond the scope of the current research.

Recommendations

Our recommendations are organized into three categories as follows:

#1: Promote an environment that encourages victims of discrimination to report their experiences

The study revealed that a substantial proportion of respondents had experienced discrimination in the last three years in Niagara region. This was particularly the case among Indigenous Peoples, with 8 out of 10 Indigenous respondents indicating that they had experienced discrimination. This finding is in stark contrast to the findings from the Police-Reported Hate Crime in Canada 2019 report by Statistics Canada (Moreau, 2021), which found that of all hate crimes reported in 2019, only 2% targeted Indigenous Peoples. This suggests that many discrimination experiences go unreported, raising the question of why this might be the case. Experiences of discrimination may go unreported because they do not meet the legal threshold of a criminal offence or due to a lack of trust in the system or fear that the incidents may not be taken seriously (Hate Crimes Community Working Group, 2006; Mitchell, 2021; Sterritt, 2020; Sultan et al., 2021). It is also the case that in many communities it is not clear to whom one should report discrimination incidents, particularly if they do not seem to be severe enough to be criminal offences. As such, it is important to create an environment that encourages victims of discrimination to come forward

and report their experiences through the public provision of resources and locations in which this discrimination can be reported. For example, the Coalition of Muslim Women Kitchener-Waterloo has set up an online reporting tool for people who experience or witness discrimination (<https://reportinghate.ca/>). Similarly, EliminateHate has set up an online reporting tool for people to report such incidents in various languages (<https://www.eliminatehate.org/fileareport>). Only experiences that are acknowledged can be addressed.

#2: Help victims of discrimination to use effective coping strategies

The current study found that respondents relied on both active and passive coping strategies to deal with their discrimination experiences, although they tended to rely more on passive coping strategies than active coping strategies. This was particularly the case among respondents in the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, as well as the White Non-immigrants group. According to past research, active coping strategies and coping strategies that are problem-focused tend to have more positive effects on individuals' mental health (Chao, 2011; Dijkstra & Homan, 2016; Polanco-Roman et al., 2016; Taylor & Stanton, 2007). At the same time, it is important to note that there is no coping strategy that is effective in all situations (Blum et al., 2012; Suls & Fletcher, 1985).

In terms of discrimination experiences that are based on race, past research also suggests that the use and effectiveness of coping strategies may depend on the victims' gender (Liang et al., 2007), their ethnicity (Noh et al., 1999; Noh & Kaspar, 2003), their acculturation or ethnic identification (Kuo, 1995; Yoo & Lee, 2005), and personality traits (Roesch et al., 2006). This suggests that it is important to provide mental health supports to victims of discrimination that help them engage in those coping strategies that are most effective for their specific characteristics and circumstances.

#3: Engage in effective initiatives to prevent and reduce discrimination

Overall, many respondents in the current study reported experiencing discrimination in Niagara region. This was particularly the case for Indigenous Peoples, and among the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, non-immigrant visible minorities, Black respondents, immigrants who were permanent residents, and immigrants who had lived in Canada between 5 to 10 years. These discrimination experiences tended to be more prevalent in certain contexts. Across all three groups, two contexts were among the top most frequently mentioned contexts. These contexts included at their job (e.g., from supervisors, co-workers, or clients) and while attending social gatherings. Among Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples, these contexts also included while using public transit (e.g., buses, trains or taxis). For Immigrants & Visible Minorities, top contexts for experiencing discrimination were also when interacting with their

neighbours and in a store, bank, or restaurant. For Indigenous Peoples, top contexts for experiencing discrimination were also when applying for a job or promotion, while using public areas (e.g., parks and sidewalks), when looking for housing, when interacting with the police, and when applying for a program or benefit. This suggests that anti-discrimination initiatives should focus on these particular contexts, developing common strategies across groups for settings such as employment settings and social gatherings, which tend to be common contexts of discrimination across groups, and for Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples, on public transit. Targeted strategies for combatting the discrimination that Immigrants & Visible Minorities experience when in a store, bank, or restaurant and when interacting with their neighbours, and that Indigenous Peoples experience while using public areas, when looking for housing, when interacting with the police, and when applying for a program or benefit should also be developed.

The current study also found that both males and females were identified as perpetrators of discrimination, although males were mentioned more frequently than females. Perpetrators were also most commonly reported to be middle aged and White. These findings suggest that if anti-discrimination initiatives are to be effective, it will be particularly important to include these groups in this programming.

In terms of specific types of discrimination experienced, from the types examined, inappropriate jokes, derogatory language, and verbal abuse were most frequently mentioned by all three groups. These findings suggest that anti-discrimination initiatives in Niagara region would do well to specifically target these forms of discrimination, which may at times be discounted as unimportant areas of discrimination to counteract.

To reduce discrimination effectively, it is important to adopt a multilevel approach. In other words, anti-discrimination initiatives should address the individual perpetrators of discrimination (e.g., by changing attitudes and behaviors), bystanders (e.g., by providing them with the tools to intervene effectively), and organizations/systems (e.g., by changing policies and practices). By using such an approach, a long-lasting reduction in discrimination is more likely to be achieved. Furthermore, anti-discrimination initiatives should be the result of a collaboration of various community agencies in order to eliminate duplication of effort and resources. Anti-discrimination initiatives should also be evidence-based and evaluated through short-term and long-term criteria. Indeed, we recommend the development of a toolkit of strategies for reducing discrimination within the community, that can be tested, fine tuned, and utilized by a number of stakeholders in Niagara region.

One of the most commonly used interventions to reduce prejudice and discrimination is diversity training (Bendick et al., 2001; Paluck et al., 2021). Diversity training typically aims to increase awareness of bias and understanding of how it affects behaviour. However, there is only limited research examining the causal impact of diversity training on reducing discriminations (for exceptions, see Chang et al., 2019; Kalev et al., 2006; Moss-Racusin et al., 2016). Also, when diversity training is evaluated, the interpretation of the results is often challenging. This is because diversity training is a broad, heterogeneous set of practices that can incorporate many different types of content (e.g., awareness of bias, various individual level strategies to reduce bias) and use various formats (i.e., lecture, video, group activities). For this reason, diversity training evaluations often lead to inconsistent results and do not offer information on the specific strategies that are effective or ineffective to reduce discrimination.

In terms of effective anti-discrimination initiatives, psychologists have developed several empirically-based discrimination reduction interventions (Dixon et al., 2012; Paluck & Green, 2009; Paluck et al., 2021). The goal of these interventions is to reduce people's prejudice and/or use of group-based stereotypes. The assumption behind these interventions is that by changing people's attitudes, one will also change their discriminatory behaviour. A review of the psychological literature on discrimination reduction interventions points toward the following strategies: increasing intergroup contact, countering stereotypes, encouraging perspective-taking, and finding common ground. In the following paragraphs, we focus on these strategies because they have the most empirical support in the literature and because they are often included as components of diversity training.

With respect to intergroup contact, hundreds of studies across disciplines over the last 70 years have investigated the benefits of establishing contact between people who have different social identities (e.g., race or religion) or backgrounds (e.g., immigration status; De Coninck et al., 2020; Dovidio et al., 2017; Lemmer & Wagner, 2015; Schroeder & Risen, 2016). In order to be most effective, contact between members of different groups should meet several conditions, which are considered optimal but not essential (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). In the contact situation, the different groups should have equal status and work interdependently towards achieving a common goal. The contact should also take place in a setting that is guided by social norms that promote and support equality among groups. The main reason why increasing intergroup contact works is because it creates an environment which forces individuals to cooperate with each other regardless of their group affiliation. Once individuals start to cooperate with each other, they no longer see each other as members of different groups but as members of the same group working toward the same goal. A meta-analysis of over 500 studies noted that research "conclusively show[s] that intergroup contact can promote reductions in intergroup prejudice" (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, p. 751).

Another strategy to reduce discrimination is to counter stereotypes (Dasgupta & Greenwald, 2001; Kawakami et al., 2000; Kawakami et al., 2007; King & Ahmad, 2010; King et al., 2006; Singletary & Hebl, 2009). Stereotypes are major drivers of discrimination. To counter stereotypes means to present someone with information that is inconsistent with the stereotype that the person holds. This can take many forms. For example, one option is to present someone with images of a person who is counter-stereotypical. Another option is to ask someone to read about someone who is counter-stereotypical. Yet another option is to meet someone in person who defies stereotypes. Research suggests that when people have information that directly contradicts stereotypes, they are less likely to be prejudiced and engage in discriminatory behaviour.

A third strategy to reduce prejudice and discrimination is perspective-taking (Batson et al., 1997; Finlay & Stephan, 2000; Vescio et al., 2003). Perspective-taking refers to the active consideration of another person's psychological experience (Dovidio et al., 2004). According to Todd et al. (2011), perspective taking helps to reduce the automatic expression of racial biases without "simultaneously decreasing sensitivity to ongoing racial disparities" (Todd et al., 2011, p. 1). This strategy is supported by research investigating the long-term effects of perspective-taking (Broockman & Kalla, 2016; Todd et al., 2011).

The final strategy to reduce prejudice and discrimination that has support from the psychological literature is to find common ground. Finding common ground refers to finding something in common with a person from another group. This could, for example, be a common activity or experience, value, preference, identity, or background. This strategy has also been called creating a "common ingroup identity" or "superordinate identity" in the psychological literature (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). This strategy builds on Social Identity Theory and the idea that people have a preference for members of their ingroup (Turner et al., 1979). By finding common ground, people broaden the circle of others who they consider to be ingroup members. In other words, by viewing people from other groups as ingroup members due to a shared common ground, people show the same "ingroup" preference to those people they previously viewed as "outgroup" members. Research suggests that the strategy of finding common ground can be effective to reduce prejudice and discrimination (e.g., Cortland et al., 2017; Riek et al., 2010).

As stated earlier, to produce long-lasting results, it is important not only to change the attitudes and behaviour of individual perpetrators of discrimination, but also to implement anti-discrimination strategies that support bystanders who wish to become allies, and to address discriminatory policies and practices at the organizational and system levels. In terms of bystanders, the literature suggests that bystanders will often not intervene in discriminatory situations because they are not sure whether discrimination is taking place and/or are not

confident that they have the skills to intervene effectively (Collins et al., 2021). Thus, if potential bystanders are trained to identify incidents of discrimination and how to react effectively, that is, if they believe that their actions have a high probability of success, they are more likely to intervene (Collins et al., 2021).

Organizational and system level strategies to counteract discrimination are also required. Making social justice a central value at all levels of one's organization is the first step in this process. This requires not only the hiring of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID) specialists, but the commitment and actions of leaders who hold high rank and privilege to ensure long-lasting change (Collins et al., 2021; Ruggs et al., 2011). It also requires an examination and possible adjustment of organizational policies and culture, as well as training of all members. This may involve diversity training that leverages knowledge of effective anti-discrimination strategies, as discussed earlier. Policies and practices within organizations that require examination include recruitment, selection, placement and promotion procedures, as well as workflow policies and practices. Identity-conscious staffing policies (as opposed to identity-blind policies) are recommended, as well as formal policies that prohibit discrimination in any form (Ruggs et al., 2011). At the system level this may involve a review of all relevant policies and programs through an anti-discrimination lens in order to dismantle those that are discriminatory.

Utilizing a variety of these strategies, Niagara region can work toward becoming a more welcoming community in which all groups are treated with respect, and discriminatory treatment becomes an exception rather than an everyday occurrence.

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Appendix: Survey on Experiences of Discrimination in Niagara Region

The next questions are about your experience with discrimination in the past 3 years (or in the time you have lived in the Niagara region area if that time is less than 3 years).

In that time, how often have you experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly by others in the Niagara region area in the following situations.

1. While using libraries, community/recreational centres, arenas.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

2. While using public areas, such as parks and sidewalks.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

3. While using public transit, such as buses, trains or taxis.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

4. In a store, bank, or restaurant.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

5. When applying for a job or promotion.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

6. At your job – for example, from supervisors, co-workers, or clients.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

7. When interacting with the police.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

8. When interacting with the courts.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

9. When attending school or classes.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

10. When looking for housing (for example, buying a house or renting an apartment).

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

11. While attending social gatherings.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

12. When interacting with your neighbours.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

13. When participating in a club, meeting, or organization.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

14. When interacting with hospitals or health care workers.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

15. When applying for a program or benefit.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always Does Not Apply

16. In another situation that you were not asked about – Please describe that situation:

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

17. You indicated that in the past 3 years you have been discriminated against or treated unfairly by others in the Niagara region area.

What do you think were the main reasons for this discrimination or unfair treatment? (You can choose more than one.)

- Your Indigenous identity
- Your race or skin colour
- Your ethnicity or culture
- Your status as an immigrant
- Your religion
- Your language
- Your accent
- Your gender
- A physical or mental disability
- Your income level

- Your clothing
- Your physical appearance (not including skin colour) such as weight, height, hair style or colour, jewelry, tattoos and other physical characteristics
- Some other reason

18. In the past 3 years, have you experienced any of the following specific forms of discrimination or mistreatment? (You can choose more than one.)

- Inappropriate jokes
- Derogatory language
- Verbal threat
- Verbal abuse
- Physical threat
- Physical abuse
- Damaged property

19. Generally speaking, were those who discriminated against you:

(You can choose more than one.)

- Male
- Female
- Other gender

Were they:

- Youths
- Middle aged
- Older

Were they:

- Arab
- Black
- Chinese
- Filipino
- First Nations, Métis, or Inuk (Inuit)
- Japanese
- Korean
- Latin American
- Mennonite
- South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)
- Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai)
- West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan)
- White

Other (Please specify)

20. During the COVID-19 pandemic, on average how much have your experiences of discrimination or mistreatment changed? During the pandemic have they been:

Much Lower Somewhat Lower About the Same Somewhat Higher Much Higher

21. In response to being discriminated against or treated unfairly in the past 3 years in the Niagara region area how often did you do each of the following?

a. Tried to do something about it.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

b. Accepted it as the way things are.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

c. Ignored it.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

d. Told yourself they were ignorant.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

e. Worked harder to prove them wrong.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

f. Felt that you brought it on yourself.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

g. Talked to someone about how you were feeling.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

h. Reminded yourself of your rightful place in Canada.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

i. Expressed anger or got mad.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

j. Prayed about the situation.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

k. Avoided situations where it could happen again.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

l. Felt that it was something about them and not you.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

22. In response to being discriminated against or treated unfairly in the past 3 years in the Niagara region area how often did you feel ...

a. Unwanted

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

b. Rejected

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

c. Helpless

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

d. Weak

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

e. Intimidated

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

f. Puzzled

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

g. Stupid

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

h. Foolish

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

i. Ashamed

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

j. Frustrated

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

k. Discouraged

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

l. Humiliated

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

23. In response to being discriminated against or treated unfairly in the past 3 years in the Niagara region area, how often were you bothered by the following problems?

a. Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

b. Not being able to stop or control worrying.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

c. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

d. Little interest or pleasure in doing things.

- Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

24. How much do you feel that you are accepted in the Niagara region area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

25. How much do you feel welcome in the Niagara region area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

26. How much do you feel a sense of belonging to the Niagara region area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

27. How much do you feel recognized as part of the Niagara region area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

28. How much do you feel safe in the Niagara region area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

29. What is your gender?

- Female
 Male
 Non-binary (e.g., gender fluid, queer)
 Other (Please specify) _____

30. What is your age? _____

31. Were you born in Canada?

- Yes
 No

32. What was your status when you first arrived in Canada?

- Immigrant - Economic Class (Skilled Worker, Canadian Experience Class, Provincial Nominee Program, or Business Programs)
 Immigrant - Family Class (Sponsored Spouse, Sponsored Parent or Grandparent, or Other Immigrant Sponsored by Family)
 Resettled Refugee (Government Assisted, Privately Sponsored, Blended Visa Office-Referred Program)
 Refugee Claimant (or Asylum Seeker)
 Temporary Resident - Student on Student Visa
 Temporary Resident - Temporary Foreign Worker including Agricultural Worker or Live-In Caregiver
 Temporary Resident - In Canada on Visitor Visa
 Temporary Resident - In Canada on Work Visa
 Person Without Status, Undocumented Individual
 Other

33. What is your current immigration status?

- Canadian Citizen
 Permanent Resident
 Protected Person
 Temporary Resident

- Refugee Claimant
- Undocumented
- Other

34. How long have you lived in Canada? _____(months)

35. How long have you lived in the Niagara region area? _____(months)

36. What language(s) do you speak most often at home? (You can choose more than one)

- English
- French
- Other (Please specify) _____

37. What is your current employment status? (You can choose more than one)

- Employed full-time (30 hours a week or more)
- Employed part-time (Less than 30 hours a week)
- Self-employed or own your own business
- Unemployed, looking for work
- Unemployed, not looking for work
- Retired
- Student
- Homemaker
- Other (Please specify) _____

38. How would you describe your ethnic or racial identity? (You can choose more than one)

- Arab
- Black
- Chinese
- Filipino
- First Nations, Métis, or Inuk (Inuit)
- Japanese
- Korean
- Latin American
- Mennonite
- South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)
- Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai)
- West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan)
- White
- Other (Please specify) _____

39. How would you describe your sense of belonging with other [group chosen] people?

- Very Weak Somewhat Weak Moderate Somewhat Strong Very Strong

[Repeated for each group chosen.]

40. With regard to religion, how do you presently identify yourself or think of yourself as being? (You can choose more than one)

- Baha'i
 Buddhist
 Christian
 Hindu
 Jewish
 Mennonite
 Muslim
 Sikh
 Traditional/Spirituality
 No religion (atheist or agnostic)
 Other (Please specify) _____

41. How would you describe your sense of belonging with other [group chosen] people?

- Very Weak Somewhat Weak Moderate Somewhat Strong Very Strong

[Repeated for each group chosen.]

42. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Less than elementary school
 Elementary school
 Secondary/high school
 College/vocational training
 University undergraduate degree
 University graduate degree
 Professional degree (e.g., Medicine, Law, Engineering)

43. Please indicate your approximate annual household income, from all sources, before taxes.

- No income
 Less than \$45,000
 \$45,001 to \$80,000
 \$80,001 to \$130,000

- More than \$130,000
- I prefer not to answer