

**Discrimination Experienced by Immigrants, Visible
Minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in St. Thomas-Elgin
County**

**An Empirical Study by the St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration
Partnership**

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Summary

This report provides insight into the discrimination experiences of immigrants and visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in St. Thomas and Elgin County and supports the development of evidence-based anti-discrimination initiatives at the local level. A representative survey ($N = 407$) was conducted in March 2021 to examine the extent and context of discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in the St. Thomas-Elgin area in comparison to people who are not members of these groups (white non-immigrants). The survey also investigates the supposed basis for this discrimination, who is perpetrating these acts of discrimination, and the specific forms of discrimination that are taking place. Additionally, the survey examined how individuals respond to these experiences of discrimination, including how they cope with discrimination, and how that impacts their feelings of acceptance and welcome in the community.

A methodological strength of this research was the use of random digit dialing, ensuring relatively representative samples in substantial numbers of immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples for the study. For the majority of the analysis, immigrants and visible minorities were combined because of the substantial overlap between these two groups in the region and to simplify the recruitment process. We acknowledge that not all immigrants in the St. Thomas-Elgin area are visible minorities, and not all visible minorities in the St. Thomas-Elgin area are immigrants. In our Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, 46.2% of respondents were both immigrants and visible minorities.

Looking at the results of the survey and comparing across groups, nine out of ten Indigenous Peoples reported experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin in the last three years, compared to about seven out of ten Immigrants & Visible Minorities, and three and a half out of ten for White Non-immigrants. Immigrants & Visible Minorities perceived their experiences of discrimination as based on ethnocultural factors related to different minority group statuses (e.g., race or skin colour, ethnicity or culture, and accent). For the Indigenous Peoples group, the top factors were similarly based on ethnocultural factors (indigenous identity, physical appearance, race, or skin colour). In contrast, perceived factors for the White Non-immigrants tended to perceive their experiences of discrimination as based on more universal factors (e.g., age, physical appearance, income level).

On average, Indigenous Peoples reported experiencing discrimination in more contexts (8.4) than Immigrants & Visible Minorities (4.75) and White Non-immigrants (1.45). For the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, contexts for discrimination that were most frequently indicated included when applying for a job or promotion, when attending school or classes,

when interacting with neighbours, and when attending social gatherings. The Indigenous Peoples group most frequently included contexts of discrimination while using libraries, community/recreational centres, arenas, while attending social gatherings, when applying for a job or promotion, and when participating in a club, meeting, or organization.

When asked the specific types of discriminations that were experienced from a list provided, respondents in all three groups were most likely to indicate experiences of microaggressions, such as inappropriate jokes, derogatory language, and verbal abuse. All three groups also reported significant numbers of verbal threats.

When asked of the people committing the acts of discrimination, all three groups indicated the individuals were middle-aged, White, and equally male and female.

For the Immigrants and Visible Minorities and the white non-immigrant groups, respondents reported that experiencing discrimination was more likely to lead to feelings of discouragement, exclusion, and powerlessness rather than shame. For the Indigenous Peoples group all four feelings, discouragement, exclusion, powerlessness, and shame were prevalent. On average, respondents in all three groups also reported experiencing anxiety and depression to some extent because of their discrimination experiences. Of note, however, Indigenous Peoples tended to experience more negative emotions and psychological distress than respondents in the other two groups. To cope with their discrimination experiences, respondents reported using both active and passive coping strategies, with a greater tendency to use passive coping strategies. Indigenous Peoples tended to use active coping strategies more often than respondents in the other two groups.

Finally, feelings of acceptance and welcome in the St. Thomas-Elgin area were experienced more by individuals that rarely or did not experience discrimination. In fact, of these individuals the Indigenous Peoples and Immigrants and Visible minority respondents reported higher rates of feeling welcome than the white non-immigrant group. Of the individuals that experienced discrimination more regularly, immigrants and visible minorities felt slightly less welcome than the Indigenous Peoples.

Overview

This report describes the results of a representative survey (March 2021, $N = 407$) examining discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities¹, and Indigenous Peoples in St. Thomas and Elgin County Region.

This survey was conducted to compliment the large-scale national surveys on discrimination conducted in Canada (e.g., Environics Institute, 2010; Ibrahim, 2018), and to allow for a better understanding of experiences in communities outside of the large metropolises. This study and report examines local experiences of discrimination within the St. Thomas-Elgin area. Gaining insight into these experiences is crucial as a basis for developing anti-discrimination evidence-informed initiatives 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 build more welcoming, caring, and inclusive communities, and would mitigate the harmful negative impacts of experiencing discrimination. Developing anti-discrimination initiatives would support the St. Thomas-Elgin area to become a more welcoming region 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 the following sections we provide background and context for the need for this research and describe the results of the survey.

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.

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 or systemic 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 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 toward immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples illustrate 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). At the same time, microaggressions², such as 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;

² Microaggression is defined as a brief derogatory or hostile verbal, behavioral, or situational treatment that may target members of minority groups (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2020)

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 walking in the streets, using public transit, frequenting stores and restaurants, working in their workplace, learning in educational settings, accessing health care, engaging with the police and criminal justice system, attempting to rent places to live, and 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 eliminate 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. Victims develop mistrust of and a lack of confidence in institutions, and experience 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.

St. Thomas and Elgin County

St. Thomas and Elgin County Geography

Elgin County is located in Southwestern Ontario along the shores of Lake Erie. It comprises 6 municipalities and the town of Aylmer. Elgin County is bordered on the South by Lake Erie with a 120 km coastline. Covering a span of 1845 km² with a population of 50,069 (2016 census data), it is considered a rural community with a population density of 27.1 persons/km². St. Thomas is located within the bounds of Elgin County and is a single tier municipality separate from the County. The city has a population of 38,909 with a population density of 1092.1 persons/km² (2016 census data).

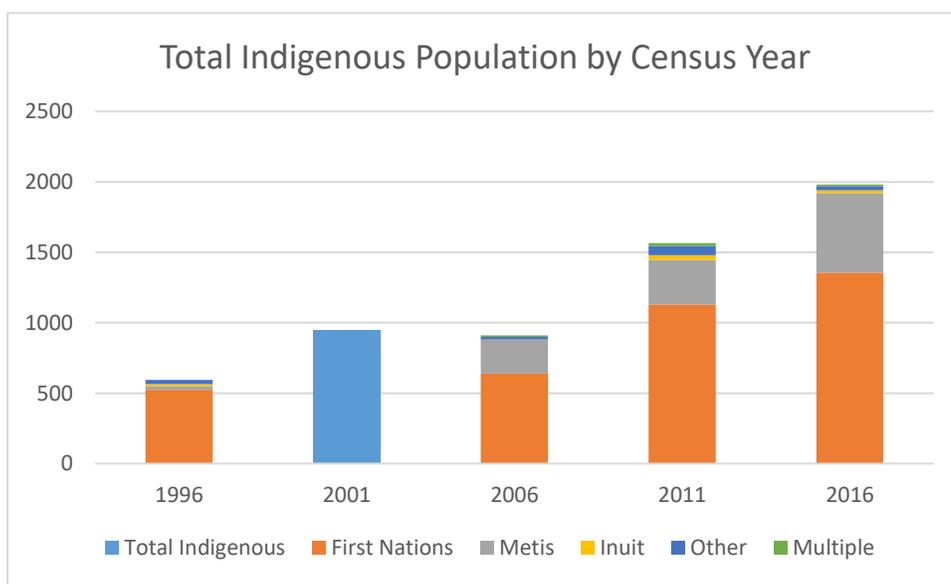
Indigenous Peoples in St. Thomas and Elgin County

Elgin County and St. Thomas are situated on the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples included in the Upper Canada Land Surrenders, specifically Treaty 2, 1790 and Treaty 3, 1792. It is the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and the Attawandraan Neutral Peoples. In the 2016 census, 3120

individuals reported Aboriginal identity. Of that group, 2485 identified as First Nations, 25 as Inuit, and 655 as Métis.

There are currently no established and formalized indigenous reserves or bands located within the boundaries of Elgin County; however, the Munsee-Delaware

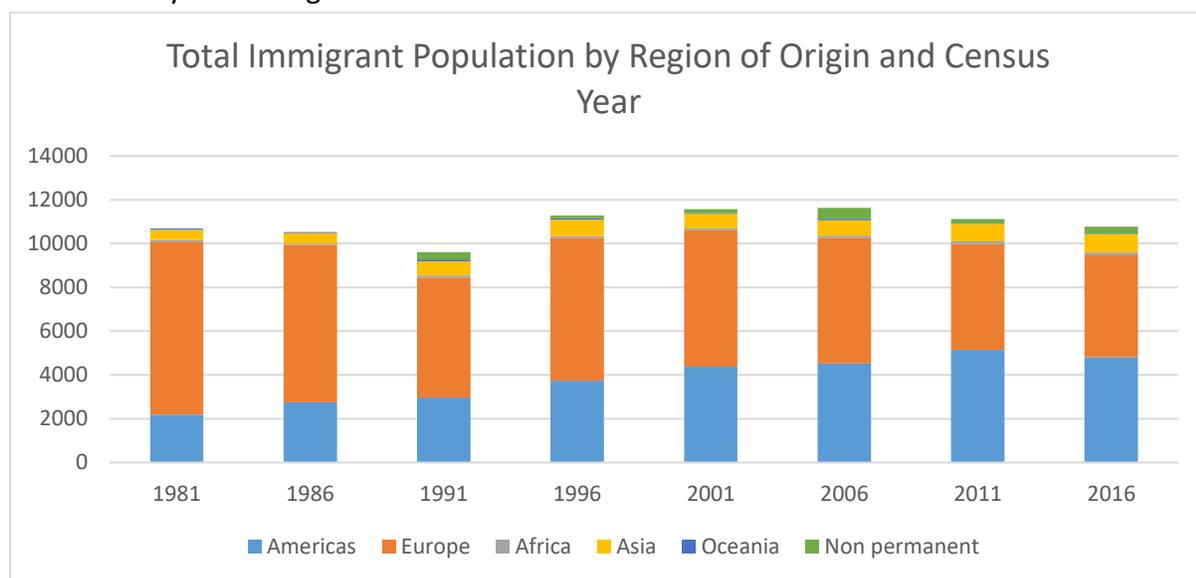
First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, and Oneida Nation of the Thames all lie on



the northern border of the County. Although there has been a steady increase of Indigenous Peoples living in St. Thomas and Elgin, there are no formalized Indigenous groups or Friendships Centres in the region.

Immigrants, Newcomers and Visible Minorities in Elgin and St. Thomas

The number of Immigrants in St. Thomas and Elgin has remained relatively steady since 1981. Historically, immigrants originating from the Americas and Europe have made up the large majority of immigration into the region, with the number of immigrants from the Americas has been steadily increasing.



Despite the steady number of immigrants moving to the region, immigrants make up a smaller

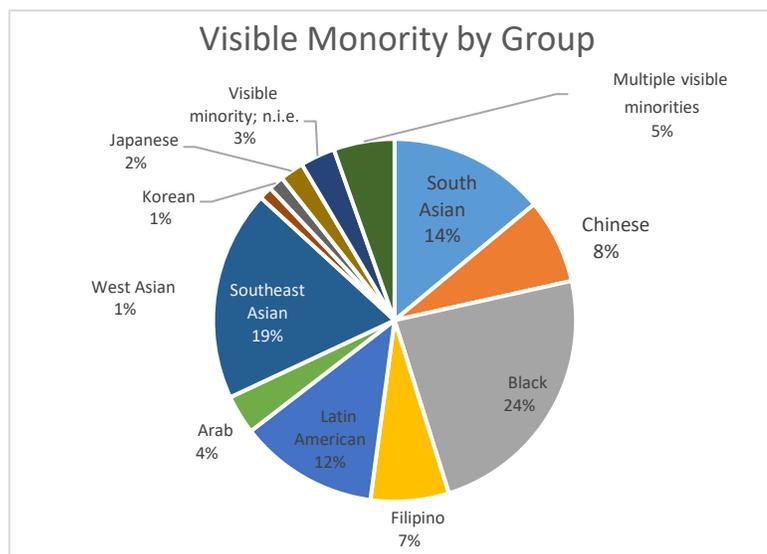
		St. Thomas (3550 people)	Elgin County (6915 people)	Ontario
Immigrants In proportion to total population		9%	14%	29%
Immigrant group in proportion to total immigrants	Before 1981	57%	46%	28%
	1981 to 1990	17%	16%	13%
	1991 to 2000	10%	17%	22%
	2001 to 2010	11%	14%	25%
	2011 to 2016	5%	7%	12%

proportion of the community when compared to the total population of immigrants in Ontario. St. Thomas (9%) has just over 1/3 of the proportion of immigrants than Ontario, with more than double settling

before 1981. While Elgin County has a larger proportion (14%) of immigrants than St. Thomas, it

still has less than half in contrast to the proportion seen in Ontario (29%). In general Elgin has seen more immigration growth year over year, mainly experienced in the east of the County.

Though not all visible minorities are immigrants, taking into consideration the lower levels of immigrants and the regions of origin of those individuals, the visible minority representation is still expectedly low. In the 2016 Census, 2,585 individuals in Elgin County identified as visible minorities or only 2.95% of the population. More visible minorities can be found in St. Thomas (4.3%) of the population than in Elgin County (1.9%). These numbers are much smaller when contrasted with neighbouring London (19.8%) and Ontario (29.3%).



To further explore the visible minorities, the largest groups of those minorities are Black (24%), Southeast Asian (19%), South Asian (14%) and Latin American (12%).

St. Thomas and Elgin Community

To better understand the St. Thomas and Elgin regional demographics, it is important to consider the wider provincial figures.

Compared to Ontario, the age demographics of the region present an interesting picture. St. Thomas and Elgin have both a larger proportion of youth under the age of 15 and have a slightly older median age. The smaller population in the 15 to 34 years means there are fewer individuals available to enter the workforce.

	St. Thomas	Elgin County	Ontario
0 to 14 years	18%	20%	16%
15 to 34 years	22%	22%	26%
35 to 64 years	41%	41%	41%
65 years and older	19%	17%	17%
Median Age	42.5		41.3

Education, Income, and Industry

The main industries vary slightly across the region. St Thomas's main industries include Manufacturing (18%), Health Care (14%), and Retail (12%), where Elgin County's main industries include Manufacturing (17%), Health Care (11%), Agriculture (10%), and Construction (10%).

To better understand dominant industries the location quotient measures a regions industrial specialization relative to a larger geography through simple ratios, that is, a location quotient above 100 means there are more jobs in a specific industry as a proportion of the workforce compared to a larger region. When comparing the industries in the region to Ontario, some location quotients stand out. The agriculture industry is almost seven times higher in Elgin County; additionally, higher proportions of the workforce are found in Manufacturing (168.4),

	Percent of Industry			Location Quotient	
	St. Thomas	Elgin without St. Thomas	Ontario	St. Thomas	Elgin without St. Thomas
Agriculture; forestry; fishing and hunting	1%	10%	1%	76.0	693.5
Mining; quarrying; and oil and gas extraction	0%	0%	0%	17.1	46.9
Utilities	1%	1%	1%	90.9	89.6
Construction	6%	10%	7%	89.1	143.8
Manufacturing	18%	17%	10%	183.4	168.4
Wholesale trade	3%	3%	4%	70.3	84.1
Retail trade	12%	9%	11%	107.8	79.4
Transportation and warehousing	5%	7%	5%	115.1	141.2
Information and cultural industries	1%	1%	3%	49.2	46.1
Finance and insurance	3%	2%	5%	57.3	44.2
Real estate and rental and leasing	2%	1%	2%	83.3	50.7
Professional; scientific and technical services	4%	%	8%	49.1	40.1
Management of companies and enterprises	0%	0%	0%	44.8	22.3
Administrative and support; waste management and remediation services	6%	4%	5%	116.2	87.6
Educational services	6%	5%	8%	83.2	66.8
Health care and social assistance	14%	11%	11%	132.5	101.5
Arts; entertainment and recreation	2%	2%	2%	75.2	72.1
Accommodation and food services	8%	5%	7%	109.4	74.2
Other services (except public administration)	4%	5%	4%	103.9	116.6
Public administration	4%	4%	6%	64.0	65.4

Construction (143.8), Transportation (141.2) and Other Services (116.6) when compared to Ontario. In St. Thomas industries that are more prevalent include Manufacturing (183.4), Health Care (132.5), Administrative and Support (116.2), Transportation (115.1), Accommodations and Food Service (109.4), Retail (107.8), and Other services (103.9)

The education attainment in St. Thomas and Elgin County show significant differences compared to Ontario. Elgin County has a much higher proportion of population with no high school diploma or equivalency (Elgin with 21%, St Thomas with 13%, and Ontario at 10%). Additionally, St. Thomas and Elgin have a lower prevalence of university education at a bachelor or above (20%). However, both communities have a significantly more residents with a college certificate.

Educational attainment, individuals aged 25 to 64 years			
	Elgin	St. Thomas	Ontario
No certificate, diploma, or degree	21%	13%	10%
Secondary (High) school diploma or equivalency certificate	27%	31%	24%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	8%	8%	6%
College or other non-university certificate or diploma	30%	35%	25%
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	2%	1%	2%
University certificate; diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	12%	12%	32%

Discrimination in St. Thomas and Elgin

Currently, the region does not have a location to report discrimination. There have been some instances recorded by local media that range from alleged systemic discrimination, outright racist motivated attacks, and recognizing the changing tide for standing up against hate.

In 2013, racial profiling charges were laid against the OPP in a case that saw 100 migrant workers subjected to providing DNA samples in response to a local sexual assault case. The investigation of this incident is currently being tried in a Human Rights Tribunal. This investigation led to an arrest and subsequent conviction; however, 54 of the 100 screened individuals are seeking restitution (St. Thomas Times Journal, 2014). The main applicant of the charge describes the event: “The whole process made me feel a way. It made me feel sad, it made me feel defeated, it made me feel humiliated” (Global News, 2021).

This is not the first incident from the region that led to a Human Rights Tribunal. In 2017, a local family was attacked amid racial slurs. The perpetrator, an individual from Toronto, violently attacked a family including a 13-year-old boy who were speaking Spanish in a mall parking lot. The attacker accused the family of being ISIS terrorists. While the perpetrator was not from the region, the ripple effects were seen across the community (St. Thomas Times Journal, 2017). Ultimately, the Ontario Ombudsman office deemed the incident was not a hate crime.

The murder of George Floyd incited widespread reaction across the United States that also trickled into St. Thomas. A local teen was inspired to find her voice and speak up about her experiences of discrimination in local elementary and secondary public schools. (St. Thomas Times Journal, 2020). This student's public demonstration brought awareness to the struggle of racialized youth and the slow shifting culture in our community.

As St. Thomas and Elgin County become more diverse there is an increased need to be more intentional in policies that shift the culture of this historically white community. The St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership (STELIP) works to address issues of discrimination and racism to build a more welcoming, caring, and inclusive community. In order for the work to be successful there needs to be wide community buy-in and support.

Study on Experiences of Discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County

This report provides insight into the discrimination experiences of immigrants, visible minorities³, and Indigenous Peoples in St. Thomas-Elgin County in order to support the development of evidence-based anti-discrimination initiatives at the local level. To this end, a representative survey was conducted in March 2021 to examine the extent and context of discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in St. Thomas-Elgin County, in comparison to people who are not members of these groups. 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 survey 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County (though we of course acknowledge that not all immigrants in St. Thomas-Elgin County are visible minorities and not all visible minorities in St. Thomas-Elgin County are immigrants). Where possible, analyses were conducted in which we separated immigrant-visible minorities, immigrant-not visible minorities, and visible minorities-not immigrants.

³ This report uses the term 'visible minorities' as utilized by Statistics Canada (2020). 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.

Forum Research Inc., a market research firm, was retained by the St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 148 Immigrants & Visible Minorities, 140 Indigenous Peoples, and 150 White Non-immigrants were set, and the final sample included 186 Immigrants & Visible Minorities, 103 Indigenous Peoples, and 118 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 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. Additionally, White Non-immigrants tended to be on average quite a bit older and less likely to be employed compared to the other two groups. In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group as well as the Indigenous Peoples group, there were more female respondents than male respondents. In the comparison White Non-immigrants group, the gender breakdown was more balanced.

In terms of the specific characteristics of Immigrants & Visible Minorities, members of this group were most likely to be Christian, have no religion, or have other/multiple religions. They were

most likely to be East Asian and Southeast Asian, South Asian, or other/multiple ethnicities. Approximately 73% were not born in Canada. When immigrant status and visible minority status were separated, just over 46% were both immigrants and visible minorities, 27% were non-immigrant visible minorities, and 27% were immigrants but not visible minorities. Approximately 40% of the immigrants entered Canada as family class immigrants and a third as economic immigrants. The majority of immigrants were now permanent residents or citizens of Canada. Close to 70% had been in Canada longer than 10 years.

Respondent Demographics

	Immigrants & Visible Minorities (N = 186)	Indigenous Peoples (N = 103)	Comparison White Non-immigrants (N = 118)
Gender			
Female	58.6%	55.3%	50.8%
Male	39.8%	43.7%	48.3%
Non-binary	0.5%	0.0%	0.8%
Other	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%
No response	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Age			
	Range: 18-85 Average: 42 years	Range: 18-70 Average: 38 years	Range: 21-84 Average: 57 years
18 to 30 years	25.3%	17.5%	4.2%
31 to 40 years	25.8%	48.5%	11.9%
41 to 50 years	18.3%	22.3%	15.3%
Older than 50	26.3%	9.7%	63.6%
No response	4.3%	1.9%	5.1%
Language(s) Most Often Spoken at Home			
English only	74.7%	92.2%	93.2%
English and another language	18.3%	2.9%	5.1%
Another language only	5.9%	4.9%	1.7%
No response	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%

Employment Status

Employed full-time/part-time/self-employed	61.3%	78.6%	45.8%
Other employment (includes unemployed, retired, student, homemaker, and other)	34.9%	16.5%	47.5%
Multiple employment statuses	3.2%	1.9%	5.1%
No response	0.5%	2.9%	1.7%

Education Level

Secondary/high school and less	19.9%	47.6%	38.1%
College/vocational training	17.2%	24.3%	30.5%
University undergraduate degree	32.8%	23.3%	16.1%
University graduate degree and Professional degree	28.0%	3.9%	14.4%
No response	2.2%	1.0%	0.8%

Annual Household Income

Less than \$45,000	22.0%	18.4%	19.5%
\$45,001 to \$80,000	28.0%	38.8%	29.7%
\$80,001 and more	42.5%	39.8%	35.6%
No response	7.5%	2.9%	15.3%

Years Living in St. Thomas-Elgin County

	Range: 0.2-68 Average: 15 years	Range: 0.8-67 Average: 26 years	Range: 0-72 Average: 30 years
Less than 5 years	26.3%	5.8%	12.7%
5 to 10 years	19.4%	16.5%	12.7%
10 to 20 years	27.4%	19.4%	12.7%
Longer than 20 years	25.8%	57.3%	61.0%
No response	1.1%	1.0%	0.8%

Religion

Christian	37.1%	46.6%	60.2%
Traditional/Spirituality	5.4%	19.4%	5.1%
No religion (atheist or agnostic)	22.0%	14.6%	28.0%
Other religion (includes Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Mennonite, Muslim, Sikh and other) and multiple religious categories	35.5%	19.4%	6.8%
No response	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Sense of Belonging to Religious Group(s)

Average: 3.39

Average: 3.64

Average: 3.51

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

Religion of Immigrants & Visible Minorities

Christian	37.1%
No religion (atheist or agnostic)	22.0%
Hindu	10.8%
Muslim	9.7%
Other religion (includes Baha'i, Buddhist, Jewish, Mennonite, Traditional / Spirituality, Sikh and other) and multiple religious categories	20.4%
No response	0.0%

Race/Ethnicity

White	17.2%	0.0%	97.5%
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First Nations, Métis, or Inuk (Inuit)	7.5%	82.5%	0.0%
Visible minority, other, and multiple races/ethnicities	75.3%	17.5%	2.5%
No response	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Sense of Belonging to Racial/Ethnic Group(s)

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

Average: 3.27

Average: 3.50

Average: 3.97

Race/Ethnicity of Immigrants & Visible Minorities

East Asian and Southeast Asian	25.8%
South Asian	22.0%
White	17.2%
Black	8.1%
Other (includes Arab, Indigenous, Latin American, West Asian, or other) and multiple races/ethnicities	26.9%
No response	0.0%

Born in Canada

Yes	26.9%
No	73.1%
No response	0.0%

Immigrant & Visible Minority Status

Immigrant visible minority	46.2%
Non-immigrant visible minority	26.9%
Immigrant non-visible minority	26.9%

No response	0.0%
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Immigrants: Status Upon Arrival to Canada

Family class immigrant	39.7%
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Economic class immigrant	33.8%
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Temporary resident (temporary foreign worker, work visa or student)	8.1%
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Other entry class (includes resettled refugee, refugee claimant, temporary resident on visitor visa, undocumented, other)	18.4%
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No response	0.0%
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Immigrants: Current Immigration Status

Canadian citizen	74.3%
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Permanent resident	18.4%
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Other status (includes temporary resident, protected person, refugee claimant, undocumented, other)	7.4%
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No response	0.0%
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Immigrants: Years living in Canada Range: 0.17-72
Average: 21 years

Less than 5 years	14.7%
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5 to 10 years	15.4%
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Longer than 10 years	69.1%
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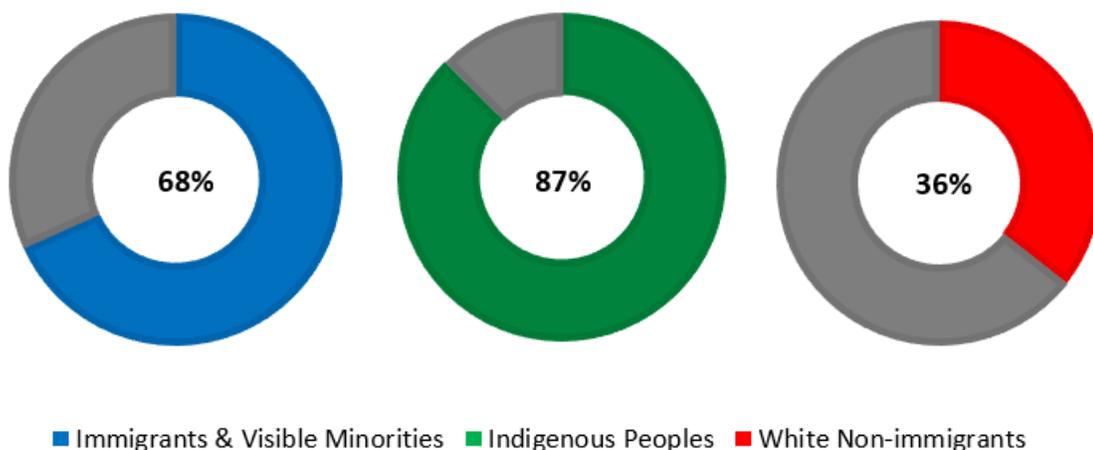
No response	0.7%
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Experiences of Discrimination

To what extent have Immigrants & Visible Minorities, Indigenous Peoples, and comparison White Non-immigrants experienced discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County in the past three years?

In all three groups, a substantial percentage of respondents reported experiencing discrimination in one or more contexts in St. Thomas-Elgin County in the last three years. However, there were considerable differences between the three groups, with Indigenous respondents especially likely to report experiencing discrimination, followed by Immigrants & Visible Minorities.

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

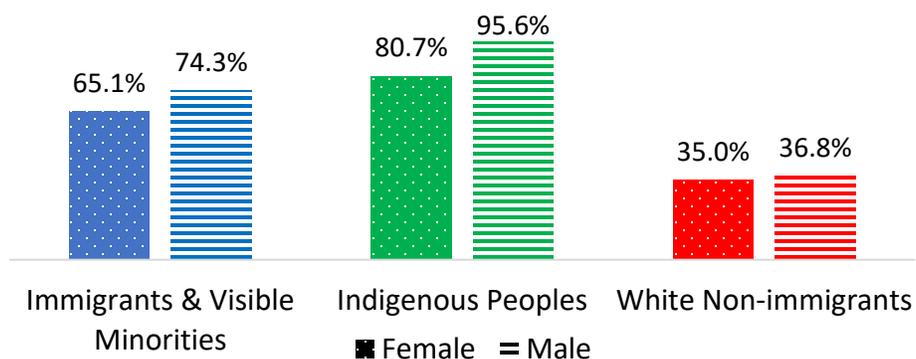


Within the three groups, to what extent do experiences of discrimination differ as a function of demographic characteristics?

The role of gender

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and in the Indigenous Peoples group, male respondents were more likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County than female respondents. In the White Non-immigrants group, the percentage of female and male respondents who reported experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County was very similar.

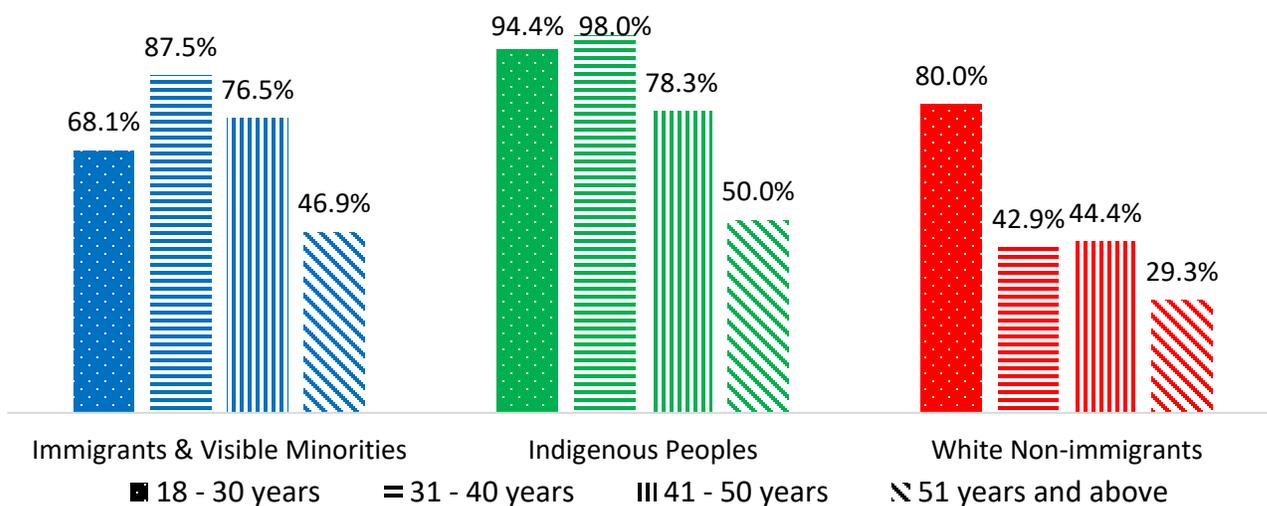
Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Gender



The role of age

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, respondents aged 31 to 40 years old were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County. In the Indigenous Peoples group, respondents aged 18 to 30 years old and 31 to 41 years old were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County. In the comparison White Non-Immigrants group, the youngest respondents were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County.

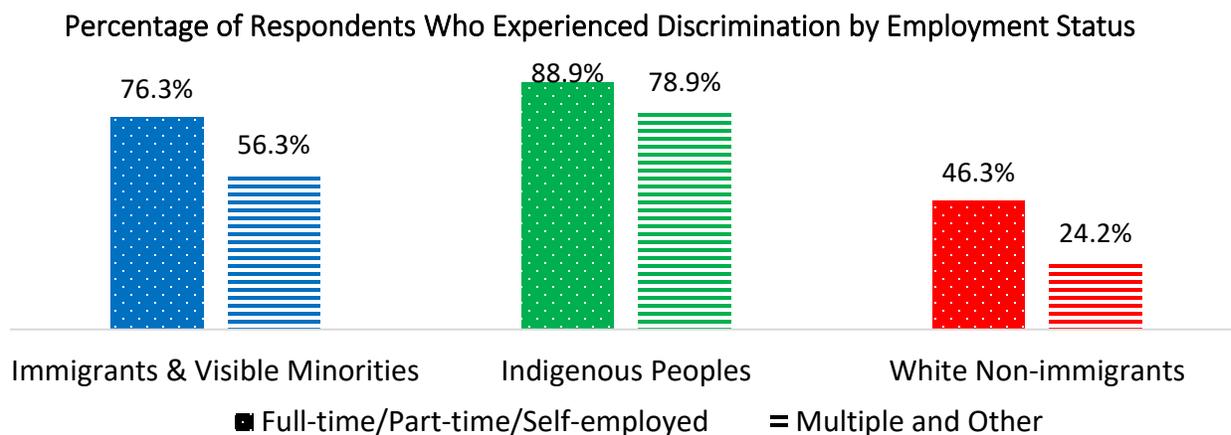
Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Age



Note: Due to the small cell sizes, the findings for Indigenous Peoples aged 51 years old and above and the findings for White Non-immigrants aged 18 to 30 years old and 31 to 40 years old are suggestive only.

The role of employment status

In all three groups, respondents who were employed (full-time/part-time) or self-employed were more likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County than respondents with other or multiple employment statuses.

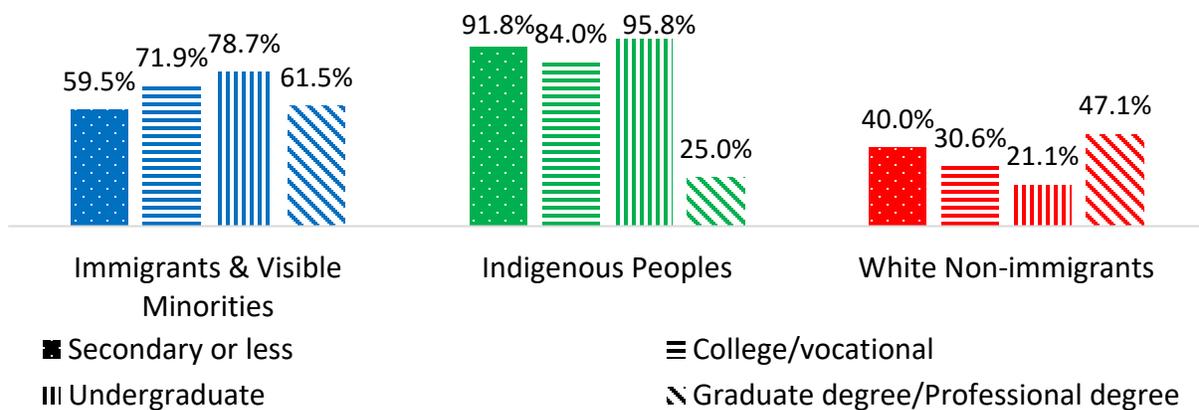


Note: The “Other and Multiple” employment status category includes people who indicated that they are unemployed, retired, students, homemakers, or other, as well as people who indicated more than one employment status (e.g., homemaker and retired).

The role of education level

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and the Indigenous Peoples group, those with an undergraduate degree were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County. In the comparison White Non-immigrants group, respondents with a graduate degree/professional degree were most likely to report experiencing discrimination.

Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Highest Level of Education



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

The role of annual household income

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, respondents with an annual household income above \$80,000 were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County. In the Indigenous Peoples group, respondents with an annual household income between \$45,001 and \$80,000 were slightly more likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County than respondents in the other two income categories. In the comparison White Non-immigrants group, respondents with an annual household income of \$45,000 or less or above \$80,000 were slightly more likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County than respondents with an annual household income between \$45,001 and \$80,000.

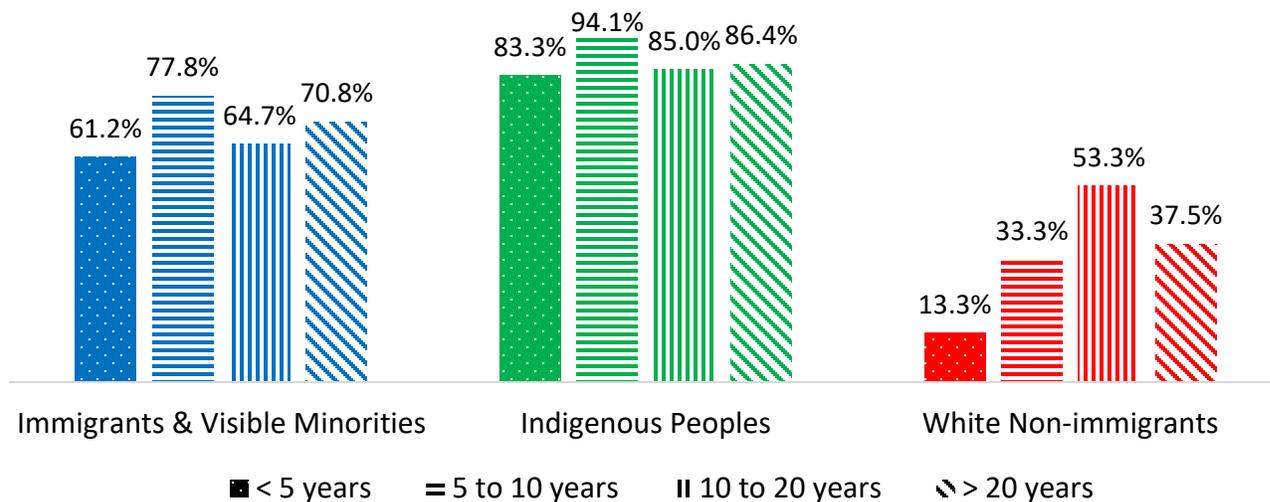
Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Annual Household Income



The role of length of time residing in St. Thomas-Elgin County

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and the Indigenous Peoples group, respondents who had lived in St. Thomas-Elgin County between 5 and 10 years were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County. In the comparison White Non-immigrants group, respondents who had lived in St. Thomas-Elgin County between 10 and 20 years were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County.

Percentage of Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination by Length of Time Residing in St. Thomas-Elgin County

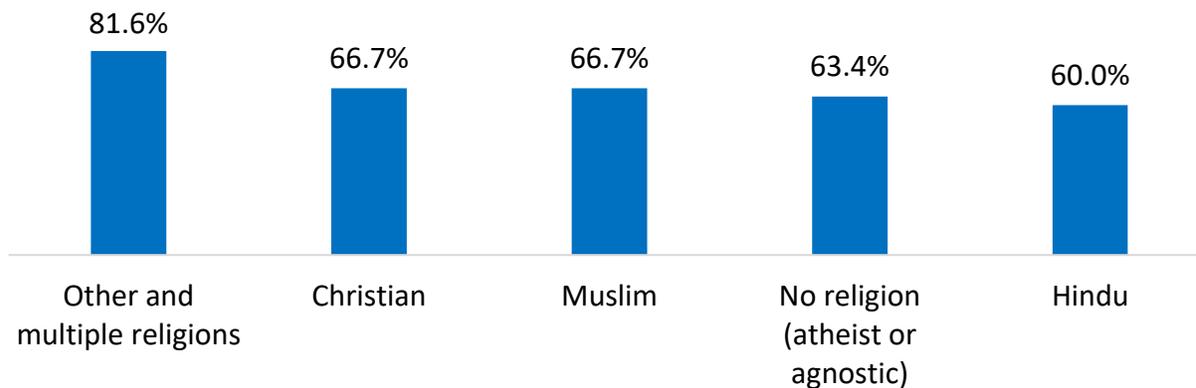


Note: Due to the small cell size, the findings for Indigenous Peoples who had lived in St. Thomas-Elgin County under 5 years are suggestive only.

Immigrants and visible minorities: The role of religion

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, those with other or multiple religions were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County, followed by Christians and Muslims.

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

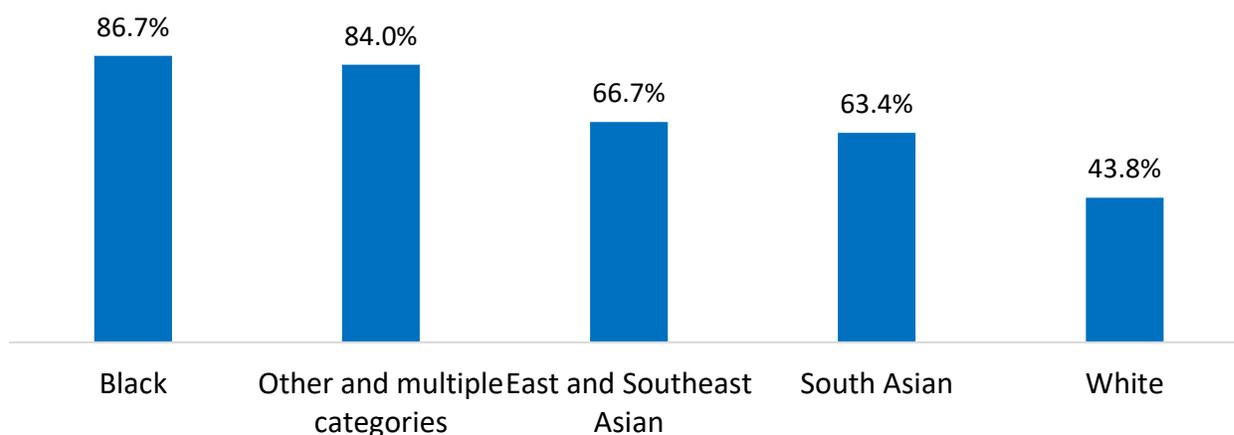


Note: The “Other and Multiple” religions category includes people who indicated that they are Baha’i, Buddhist, Jewish, Mennonite, Traditional / Spirituality, Sikh, or other, as well as people who indicated more than one religion.

Immigrants and visible minorities: The role of ethnicity/race

In the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, Black respondents and respondents with other or multiple race/ethnic categories were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County. At the same time, Whites were least likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County.

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

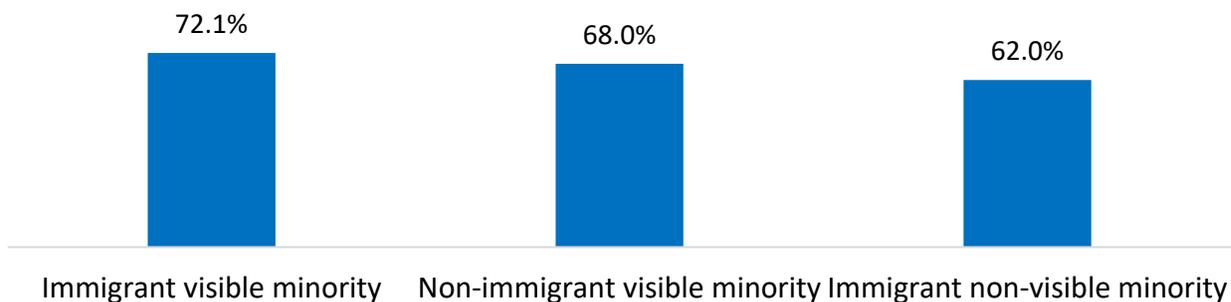


Note: The “Other and Multiple” category includes people who indicated that they are Arab, Indigenous, Latin American, West Asian, or other, as well as people who indicated more than one race/ethnicity.

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

In the Immigrant & Visible Minorities group, immigrant visible minorities were most likely to report experiencing discrimination, closely followed by non-immigrant visible minorities.

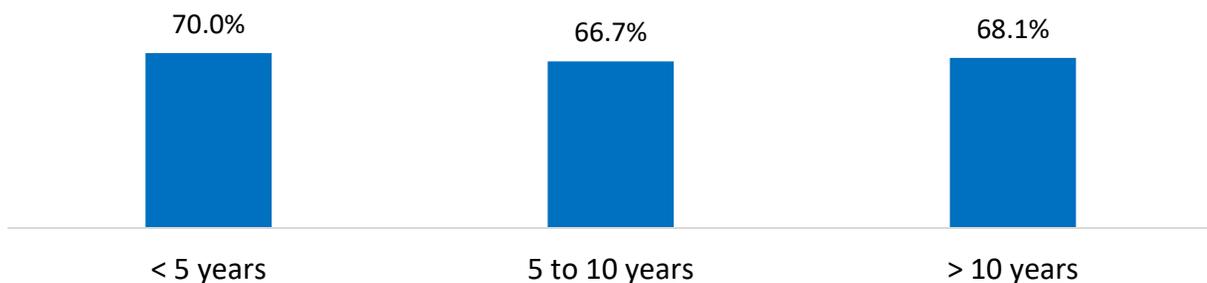
Percentage of Immigrant and Visible Minority Group Respondents Who Experienced Discrimination as a Function of their Immigrant and Visible Minority Statuses



Immigrants: The role of length of time in Canada

Of the immigrant respondents, recent immigrants (< 5 years) and more established immigrants (> 10 years) were slightly more likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County in the last three years than those who had lived in Canada between 5 to 10 years.

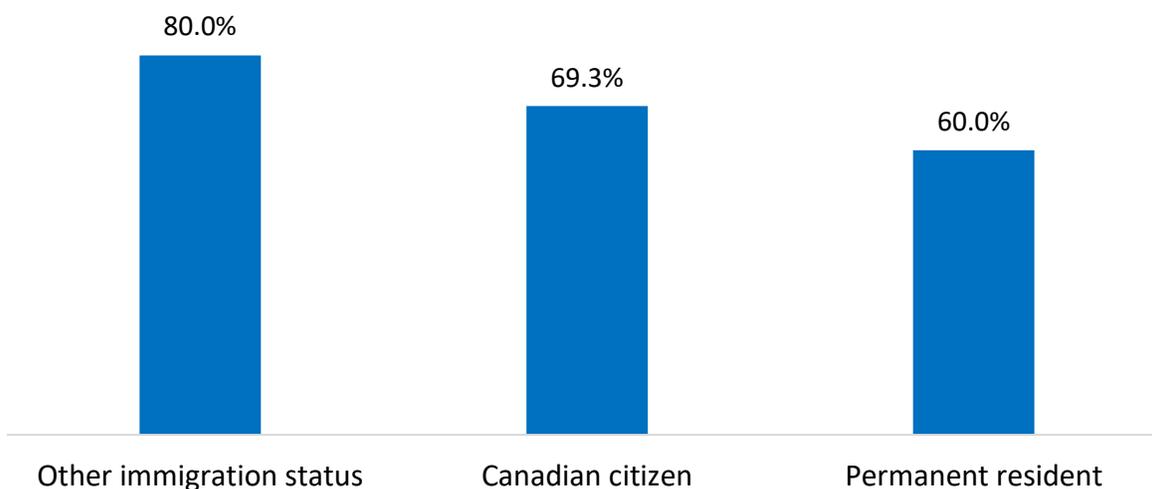
Percentage of Immigrants Who Experienced Discrimination by Length of Time in Canada



Immigrants: The role of current immigration status

Of the immigrant respondents, Canadian citizens and respondents with an “other” immigration status were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County in the last three years.

Percentage of Immigrants Who Experienced Discrimination by Current Immigration Status

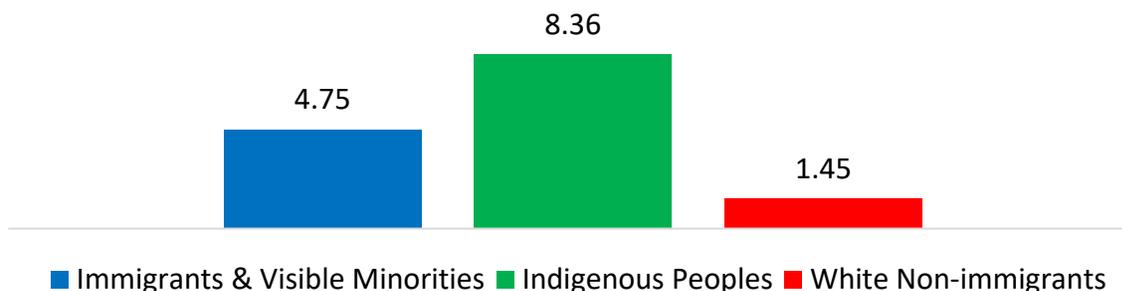


Note: The “Other immigration status” category includes protected persons, temporary residents, refugee claimants, and those who are undocumented. Also, due to the small cell size, the findings for immigrants with an “other” immigration status are suggestive only.

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, followed by Immigrants & Visible Minorities.

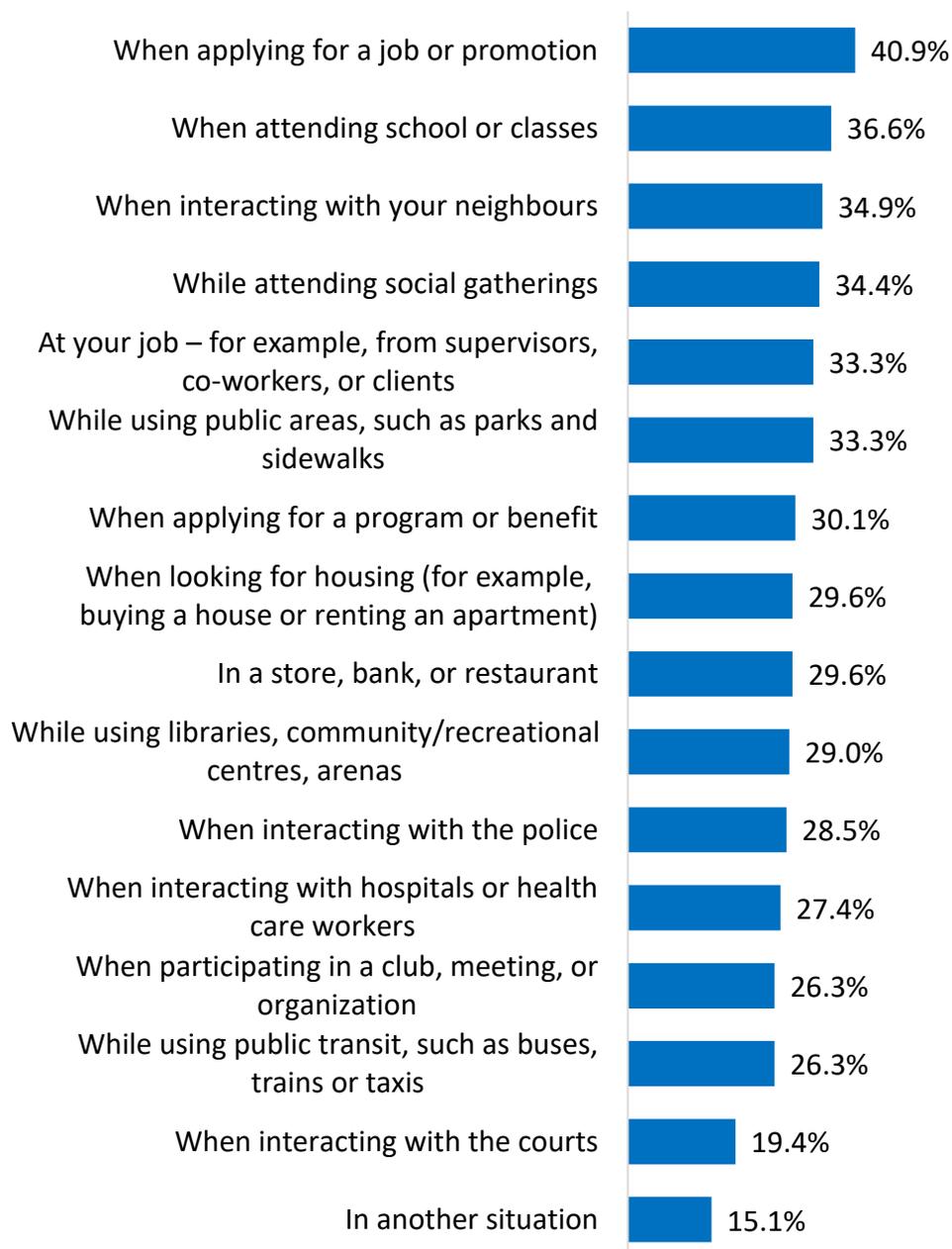
Average Number of Contexts in Which Respondents Experienced Discrimination in the Past Three Years



In what contexts is discrimination being experienced?

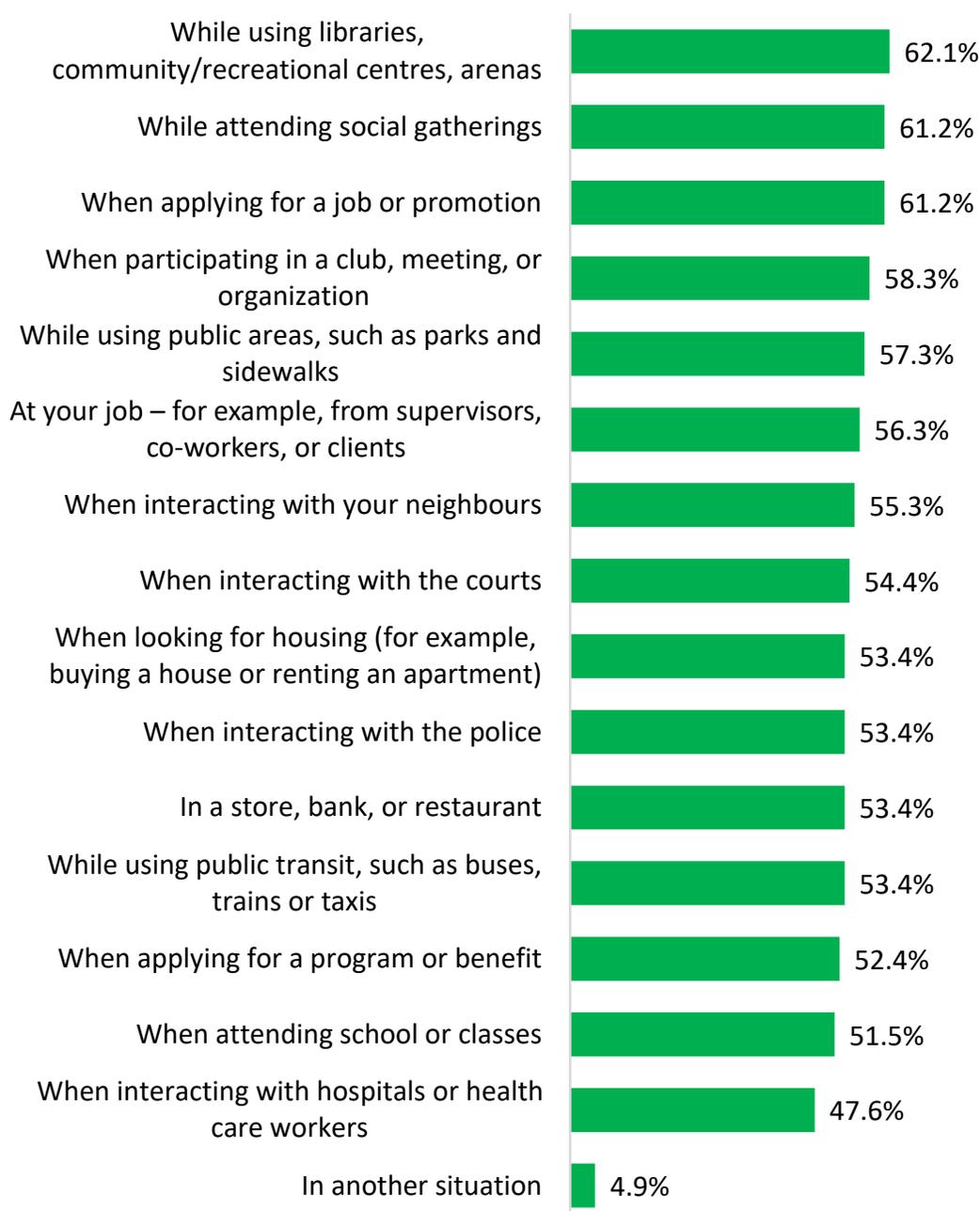
Overall, Immigrants & Visible Minorities were most likely to experience discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County when applying for a job or promotion, when attending school or classes, when interacting with their neighbours, while attending social gatherings, at their job (e.g., from supervisors, co-workers, or clients), and while using public areas (e.g., parks and sidewalks).

Immigrants & Visible Minorities: Contexts in Which Discrimination Occurred



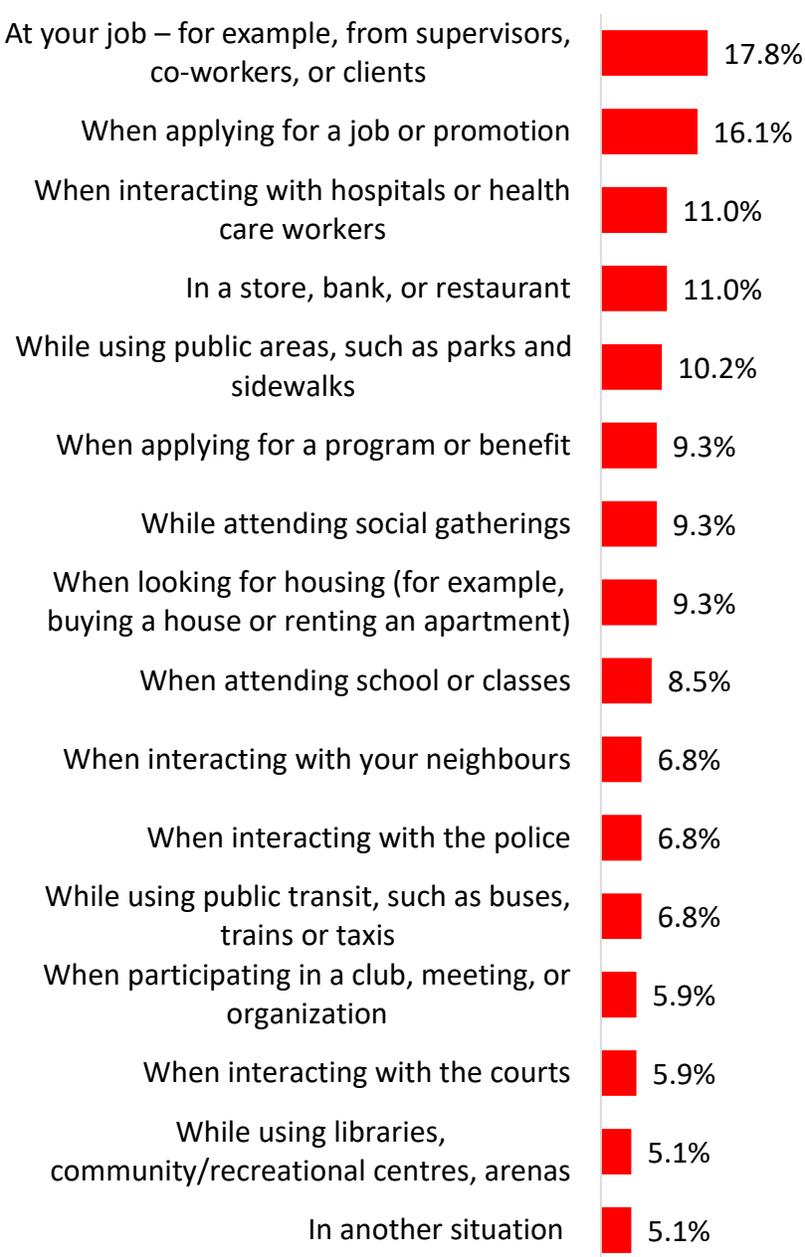
Overall, Indigenous Peoples reported experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County in many contexts. They were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County while using libraries, community/recreational centres and arenas, while attending social gatherings, when applying for a job or promotion, when participating in a club, meeting or organization, and while using public areas (e.g., parks and sidewalks).

Indigenous Peoples: Contexts in Which Discrimination Occurred



Overall, White Non-immigrants were most likely to experience discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County at their job (e.g., from supervisors, co-workers, or clients), when applying for a job or promotion, when interacting with hospitals or health care workers, in a store, bank, or restaurant, and while using public areas (e.g., parks and sidewalks).

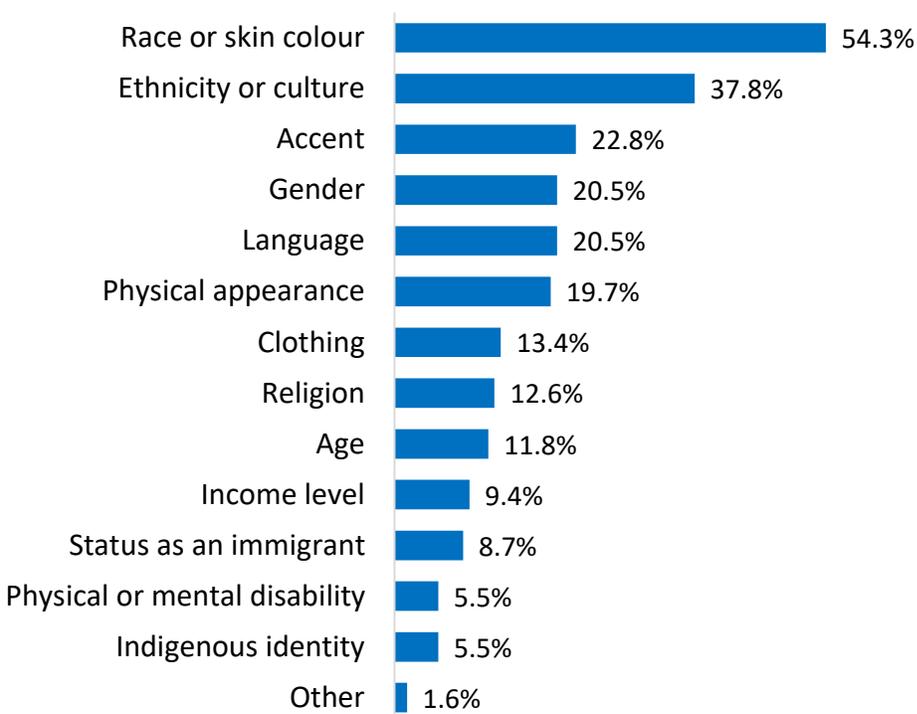
White Non-immigrants: Contexts in Which Discrimination Occurred



What are the presumed bases of experiences of discrimination?

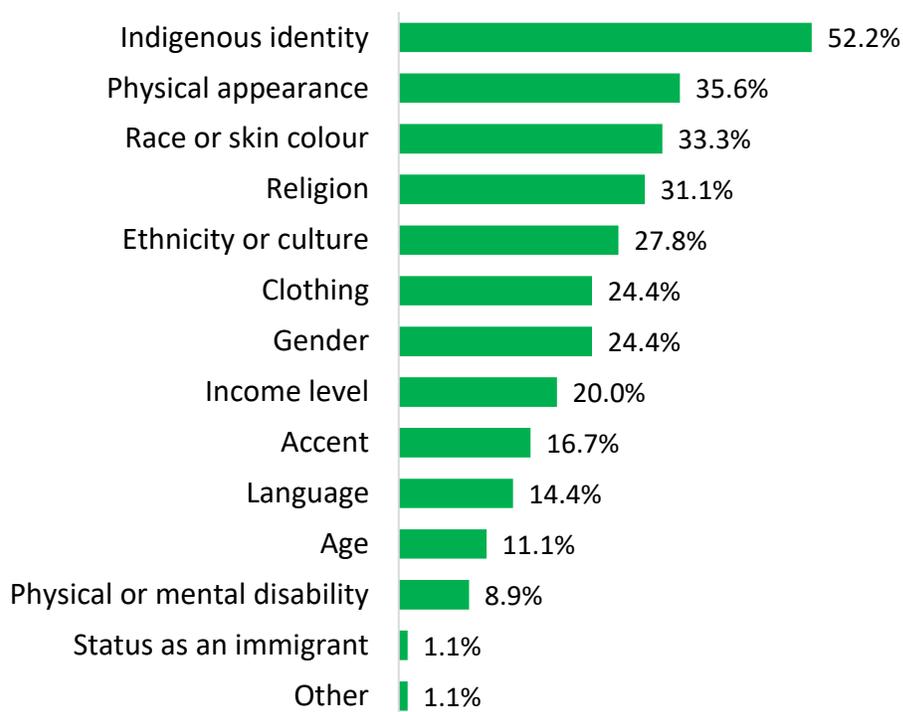
Those respondents who reported that they had experienced discrimination in at least one context in the last three years were asked to indicate what they thought the main reasons were for their experiences of discrimination (respondents could choose more than one reason). Immigrants & Visible Minorities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

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



Indigenous Peoples were most likely to indicate that the discrimination that they had experienced was based on their indigenous identity, their physical appearance and their race or skin colour.

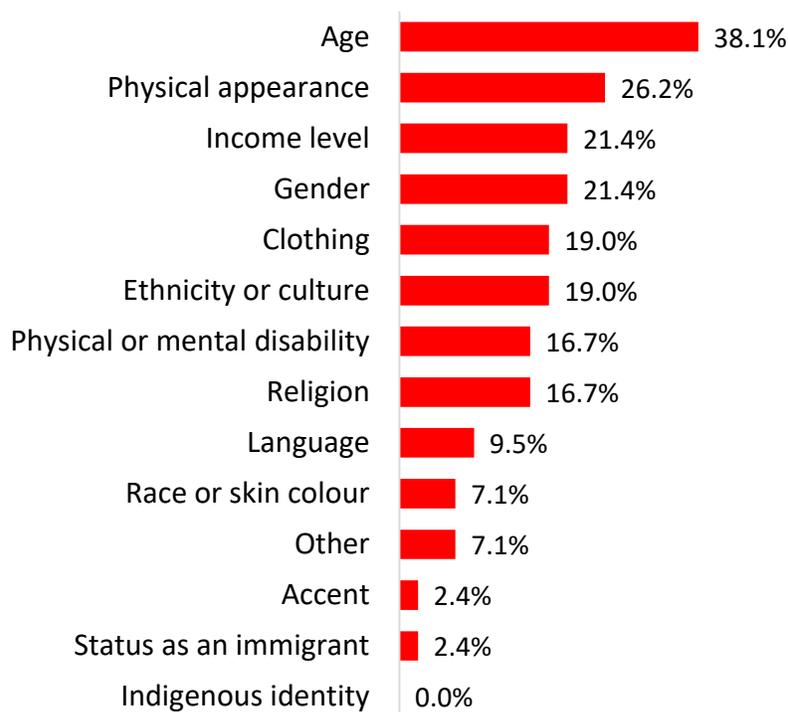
Indigenous Peoples Who Had Experienced Discrimination: Percentage Who Indicated Each Basis of Discrimination



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 an 'immigrant' in St. Thomas-Elgin County even though the respondents 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 had experienced was based on their age, physical appearance, income level and gender.

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



Note: A few respondents in the White Non-immigrants group selected 'status as an immigrant' as one of the bases of their discrimination experiences. It is possible that these respondents perceived themselves as an 'immigrant' in St. Thomas-Elgin County even though the respondents were born in Canada. Alternatively, this is attributable to random error in responding.

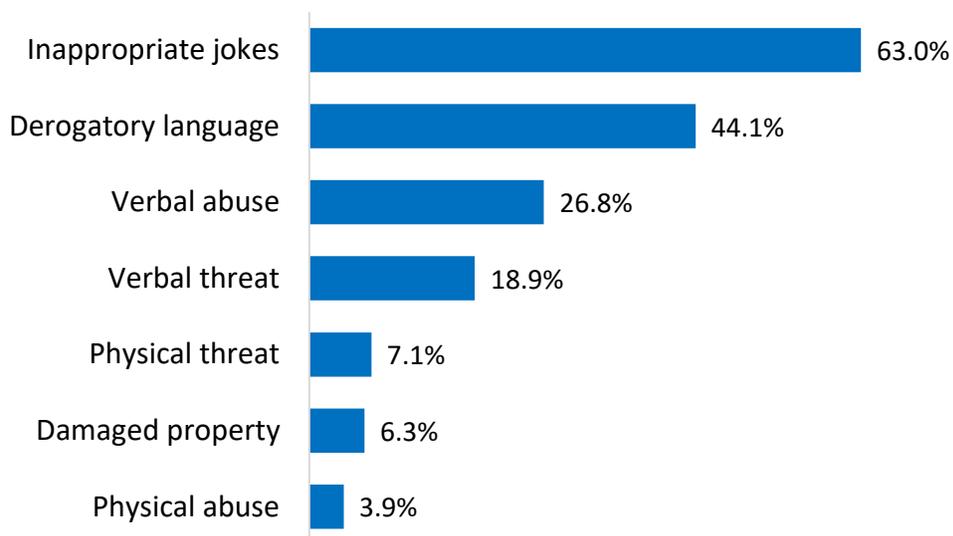
These results suggest that Immigrants & Visible Minorities and Indigenous Peoples perceive their experiences of discrimination as based on ethnocultural factors related to different minority group statuses, such as race or skin colour, indigenous identity, and ethnicity or culture. In contrast, comparison White Non-immigrants tend to perceive their experiences of discrimination as based on more universal factors, such as age, physical appearance, income level, and gender⁴.

⁴ Of the female respondents who reported experiencing discrimination, 19.0% indicated that they were discriminated against because of their gender. Of the male respondents who reported experiencing discrimination, 23.8% indicated that they were discriminated against because of their gender.

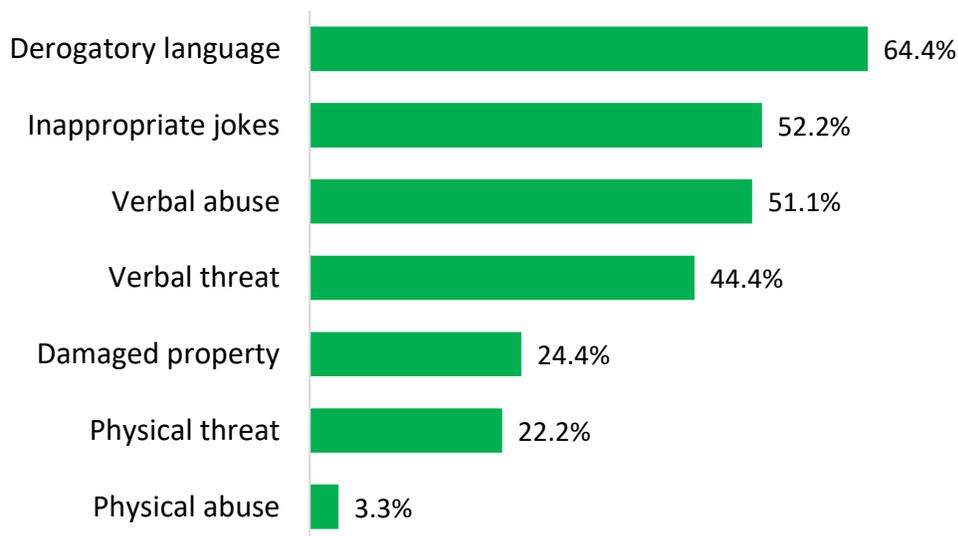
Are specific types of discrimination being experienced?

Those people who reported that they had 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). In all three groups, respondents most frequently reported experiencing discrimination in the form of inappropriate jokes and derogatory language, followed by verbal abuse and verbal threat.

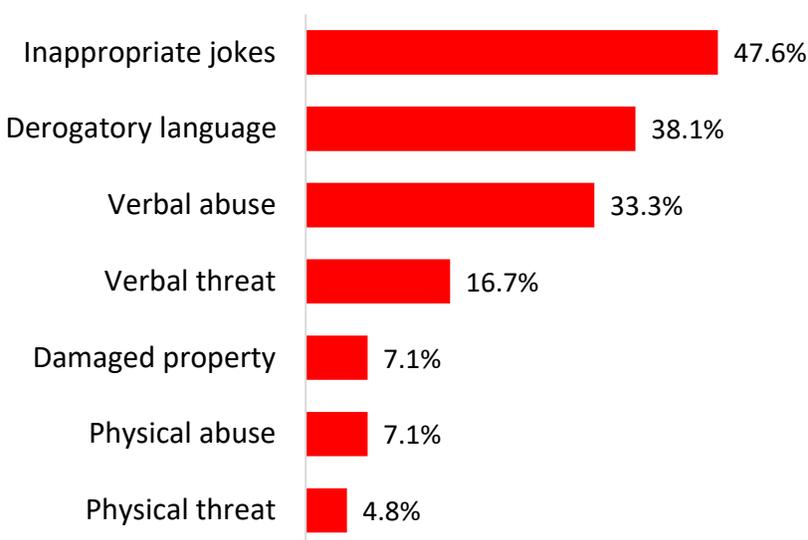
Immigrants & Visible Minorities Who Had Experienced Discrimination: Percentage Who Had Experienced Each Type of Discrimination



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



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



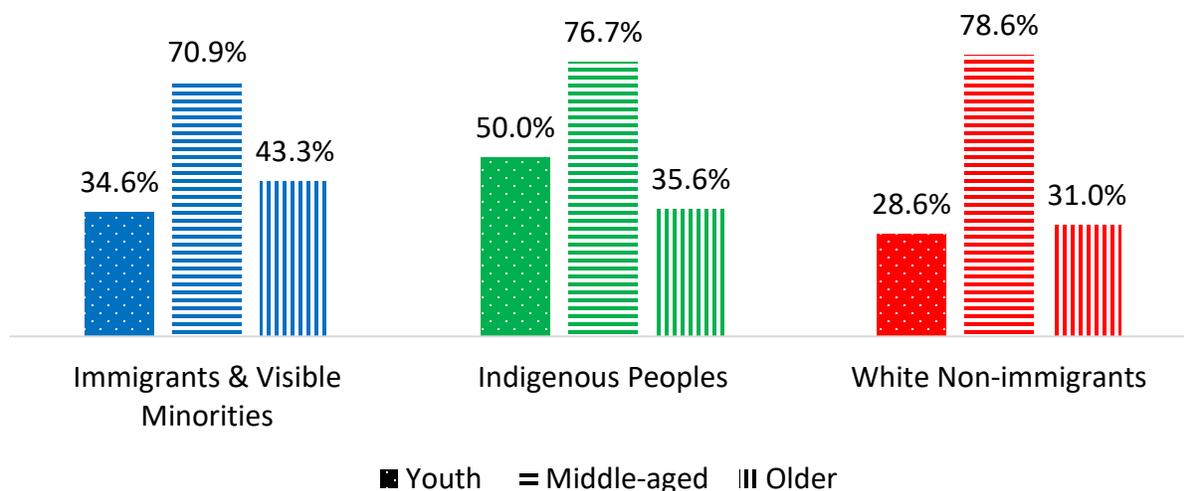
Who are the perpetrators of discrimination?

Those people who reported that they had 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

In all three groups, respondents were most likely to identify perpetrators as middle-aged individuals. The extent to which respondents in each group thought that perpetrators were young or older varied a bit. For example, among respondents in the Indigenous Peoples group, younger individuals were more likely to be seen as perpetrators than older individuals. In contrast, among respondents in the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group, younger individuals were less likely to be seen as perpetrators than older individuals. Finally, among respondents in the comparison White Non-immigrants group, young and older individuals were seen as almost equally likely to be perpetrators.

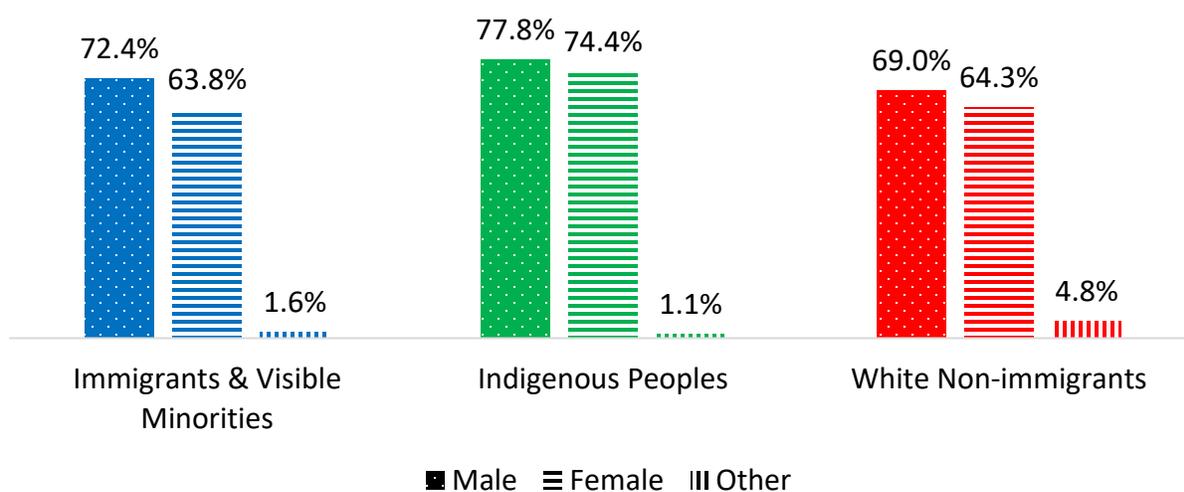
Respondents Who Had Experienced Discrimination: Percentage Who Indicated Each Perpetrator Age Group



Perpetrator gender

In all three groups, respondents indicated that perpetrators included both genders, although males were mentioned more frequently than females, especially in the Immigrant & Visible Minorities group.

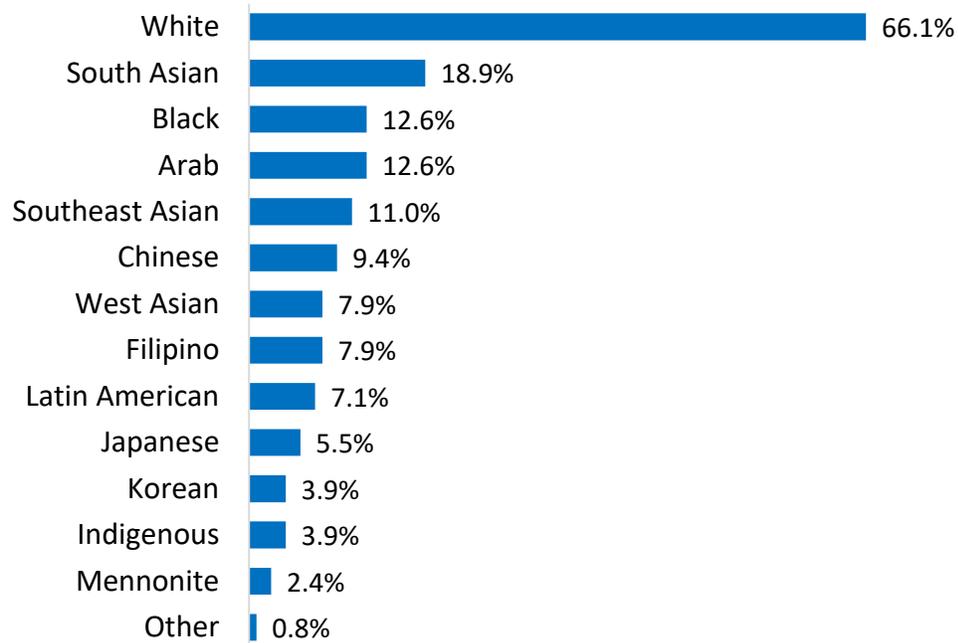
Respondents Who Had Experienced Discrimination: Percentage Who Indicated Each Perpetrator Gender



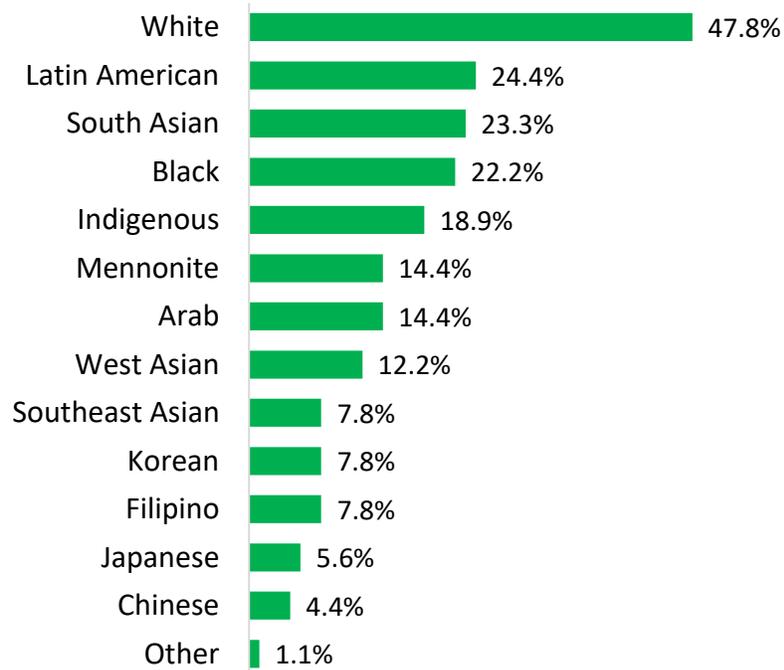
Perpetrator race or ethnicity

In all three groups, White individuals were seen as the most common perpetrators of discrimination.

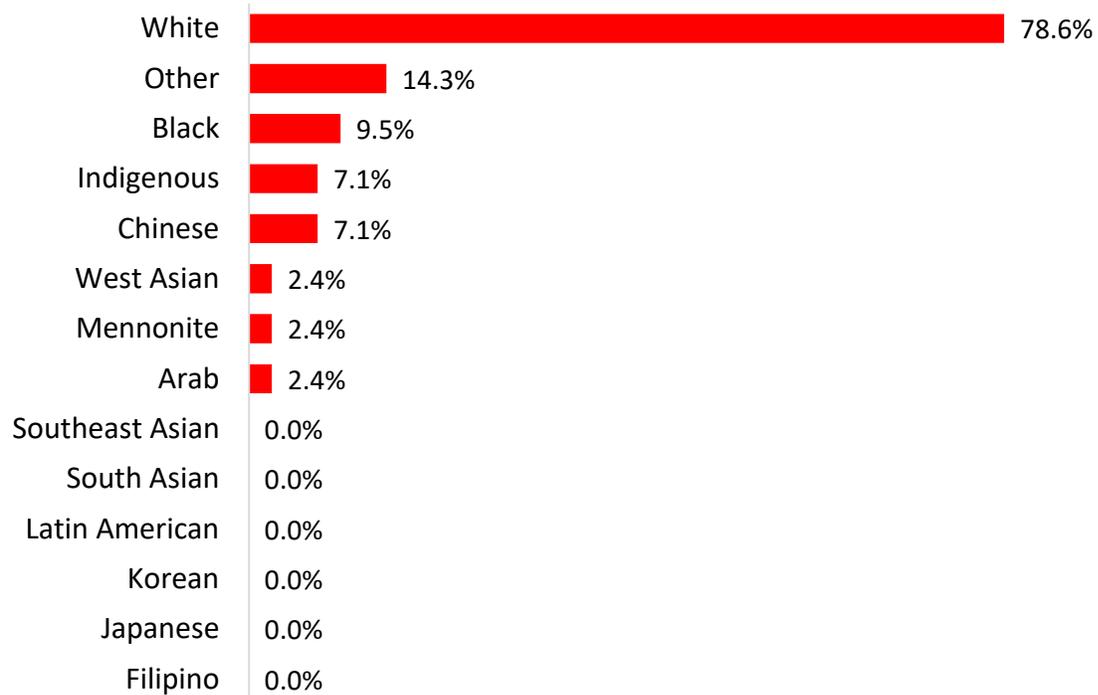
Immigrants & Visible Minorities Who Had Experienced Discrimination: Percentage Who Indicated Each Perpetrator Race/Ethnicity



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 had 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, respondents in the Indigenous Peoples group reported a larger decrease than respondents in the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and the White Non-immigrants group.

Average Change in Experiencing Discrimination During the COVID-19 Pandemic



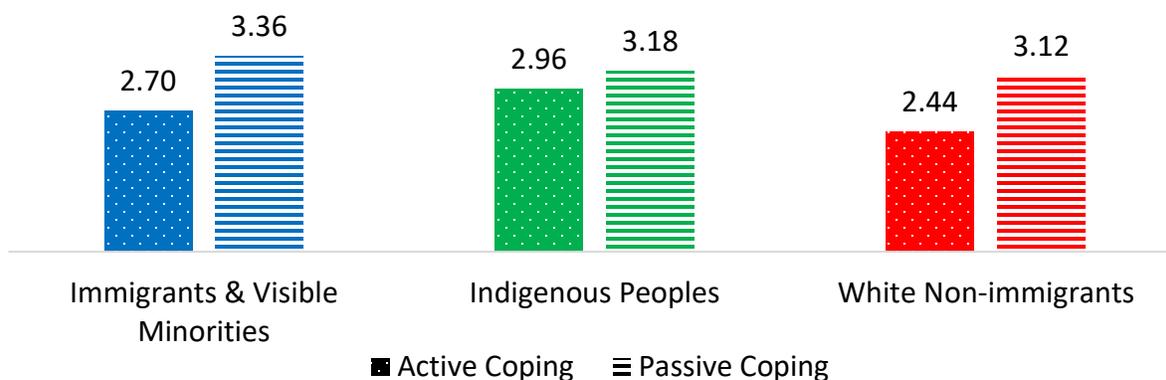
Note: Scale ranged from 2 = much higher to -2 = much lower.

Potential Coping Strategies and Emotions in Response to Discrimination

What coping strategies are used in response to discrimination?

Those people who reported that they had 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 reported engaging in both active and passive coping strategies to a considerable degree. Of note, although passive coping strategies were more likely to be used by all three groups, this differentiation between passive and active coping was especially evident for Immigrants & Visible Minorities and White Non-immigrants.

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 had 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). Respondents in the Immigrant & Visible Minorities group and the White Non-immigrant group tended to experience discouragement, exclusion and powerlessness more than shame, though all emotions were experienced. Respondents in the Indigenous Peoples group reported experiencing all emotions with similar frequency. They also reported experiencing these emotions more often than the other two groups of respondents.

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

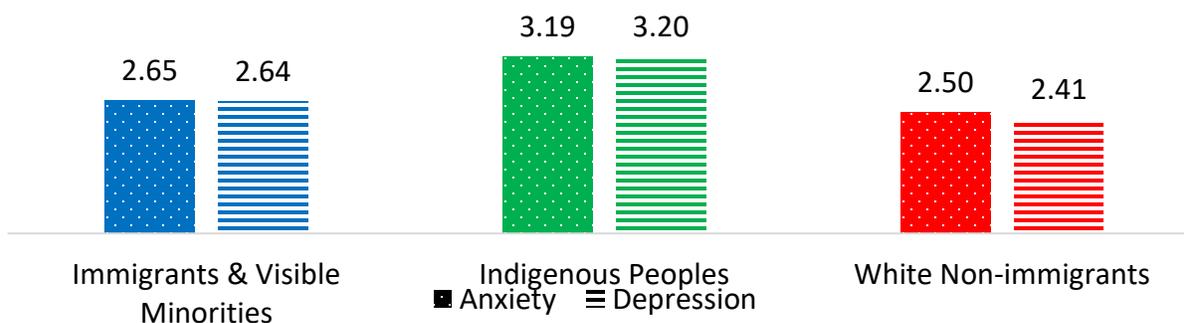


Note: Possible responses could range from never (1) to always (5).

How much psychological distress is experienced in response to discrimination?

Those people who reported that they had 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. However, those in the Indigenous Peoples group reported higher levels of anxiety and depression than those in the other groups.

Average Experiences of Anxiety and Depression in Response to Discrimination

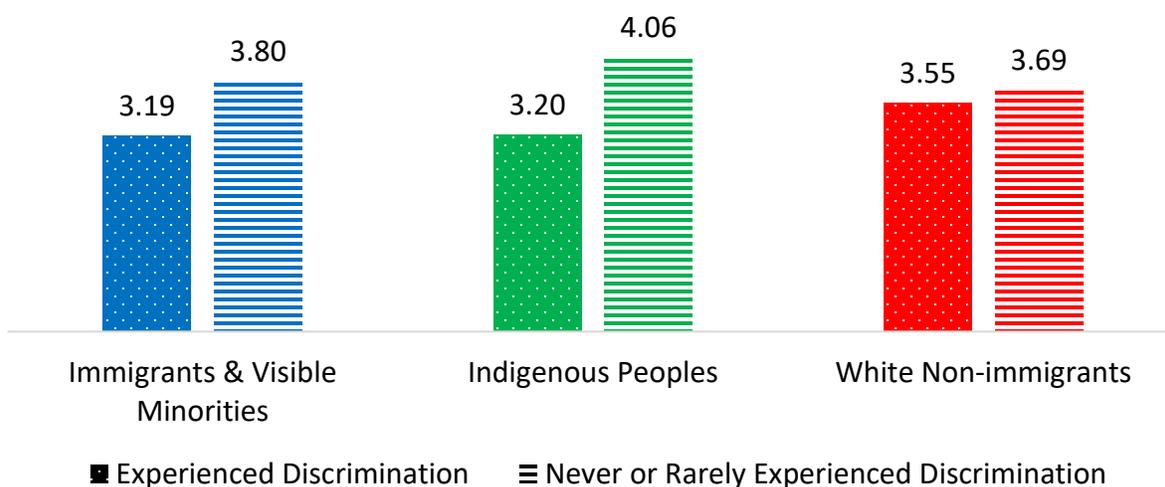


Note: Possible responses could range from never (1) to always (5).

St. Thomas-Elgin County as a Welcoming Community

All respondents were asked to what extent they felt accepted and welcomed in St. Thomas-Elgin County at the present time using 5 items, which were combined. On average, respondents in the White Non-immigrants group tended to have slightly stronger feelings of acceptance and welcome in St. Thomas-Elgin County than respondents in the other two groups. Respondents' discrimination experiences also seemed to play a role. In particular, in the Immigrants & Visible Minorities group and the Indigenous Peoples group, respondents who had not experienced discrimination had a higher sense of acceptance and welcome in St. Thomas-Elgin County than those who had experienced discrimination.

Average Feelings of Acceptance and Welcome in St. Thomas-Elgin County



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

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Appendix:**Survey on Experiences of Discrimination in St. Thomas-Elgin County**

The next questions are about your experience with discrimination in the past 3 years (or in the time you have lived in the St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

25. How much do you feel welcome in the St. Thomas-Elgin County area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

26. How much do you feel a sense of belonging to the St. Thomas-Elgin County area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

27. How much do you feel recognized as part of the St. Thomas-Elgin County area?

- Not at all Slightly Moderately Very Extremely

28. How much do you feel safe in the St. Thomas-Elgin County 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 St. Thomas-Elgin County 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