Anti-Racism Asset Mapping: Red Deer, Alberta

Report

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in partnership with the Red Deer Local Immigration Partnership

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Anti-Racism Asset Mapping Research

We respectfully acknowledge that the data analyses and writing of this report took place on Treaty 7 land, the traditional territory of the Blackfoot, Tsuu T'ina and Stoney Nakoda peoples, and that the central Alberta region we studied falls under Treaty 6, traditional Métis, Cree and Saulteaux territory.

About the Anti-Racism Asset Mapping Study

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Funding

Ethics
This research received ethics approval from the Red Deer Polytechnic Research for research involving human participants.

Executive Summary

As Canada's population becomes increasingly ethnically diverse with new immigrants being settled outside of the major metropolitan hubs, an understanding of the availability, or lack thereof, of anti-racism assets in small centers like Red Deer is timely. By utilizing a mixed-method approach that encompassed an online survey and semi-structured interviews, and by applying the asset-mapping concept, our research sought to answer the following three questions:

1. What are the experiences of racism among Red Deerians?
2. What tangible and intangible anti-racism resources are available to Red Deer citizens?
3. What anti-racism resources are underutilized, used, or lacking in Red Deer?

One hundred and sixty-four individuals responded to the online survey. There were 17 semi-structured interviews conducted, 11 with Indigenous and racialized individuals and 6 with local service providers. We identified five themes, including suggestions solicited from participants. The suggestions from interview participants, many of whom are most affected by acts of racism or have deep knowledge about the condition of racism and assets available, are valuable in efforts to shape a more inclusive Red Deer community.

This report describes the survey results and outlines the five themes that emerged from the interviews. The five themes are (i) the general situation of racism in Red Deer, (ii) experiences of racism, (iii) coping strategies, (iv) anti-racism assets available, and (v) suggestions made by participants.

The situation of racism in Red Deer has improved over the last few decades. However, participants made it clear that Red Deer lags behind larger metropolitan areas in addressing racism and fostering inclusivity. While overt racism is on the decline, covert racism and microaggressions are still frequently encountered. The survey data showed that only 31% of racialized participants felt welcome most of the time.

Experiences of racism have caused participants to change the way they present themselves, hindered their career progression, and caused deep emotional burdens. Because most individuals experience microaggressions instead of hate crimes, participants felt that they could not turn to the police for assistance because these acts of racism do not necessarily constitute criminal activity. There is a reluctance to involve the police over racism unless the person has experienced physical harm or felt that their safety was seriously threatened. Nevertheless, when they do report to the police, they are often told to pursue justice through other channels, such as human rights tribunals.

Fourteen percent of the total survey participants accessed some kind of support, but many others felt that accessing support was not applicable. Either they did not feel the need to access support or were unaware of any formal support available. The interview participants who experienced or witnessed racism turned to friends and family for support. Participants emphasized the importance of receiving support from someone who has had similar experiences as them, and consequently, most victims rely on informal social networks such as family and

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friends for support. Many interview participants do not know if there are anti-racism resources, apart from family and friends, that are available to them.

Despite this, participants were able to identify a wide range of tangible and intangible anti-racism assets available in Red Deer. These included inclusive spaces like cafes and churches. Indigenous support networks were recognized as strong anti-racism assets, along with organizations and agencies, such as immigrant settlement service provider organizations, which frequently work with racialized immigrants. Individual citizens who stand up to racism when witnessing acts were identified as very powerful assets.

This report demonstrates that there are anti-racism assets available in Red Deer. Nevertheless, as suggested by participants, there is a need for improved marketing of these assets. Support information should be readily available and easy to find, preferably with a helpline. Differences in demographics must be addressed in marketing these resources to ensure anti-racism assets serve everyone. Participants voiced the importance of capitalizing on social media, with attention to generational differences; for instance, older adults are more familiar with Facebook. Several interview participants called for the centralization of resources into one space, where related supports are in one building, which increases the ease of access and promotes collaboration among service providers. Representation of racialized voices at decision-making tables is also crucial.

To improve inclusivity within Red Deer, there needs to be a sufficient understanding of the availability and usage of anti-racism assets currently available. This report contributes to this understanding and provides the basis for further anti-racism efforts in making Red Deer a welcoming and inclusive community.

Introduction

This research aims to understand the nature and availability of anti-racism resources, or assets, in Red Deer. It is preceded by a racism survey conducted, where 27.5% of respondents indicated that racism in Red Deer was a lot worse than in other places in Canada (RDLIP 2021, 16).

Racism is a contested concept (Doane 2006). In this research, we adopt the definition of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (2023), which defines racism as "a belief that one group is superior to others performed through any individual action or institutional practice which treats people differently because of their colour or ethnicity. This distinction is often used to justify discrimination." Anti-racism, within this context, is "an active and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism." (Canadian Race Relations Foundation 2023).

Lightfoot, McCleary, and Lum (2014, 59) state that "asset mapping is the process by which the community identifies individual, associational, institutional, economic, physical, and cultural assets." It focuses on assets available in a community rather than deficits. Asset-based community development (ABCD) strategies have been used for community development and building capacity within communities for decades. Asset mapping is integral to ABCD strategy and has been used within community practice in the social work field for some time, but asset

mapping as a research tool has rarely been utilized (Lightfoot et al. 2014, 59). In this research, we use an asset-mapping technique to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of racism among Red Deerians?
2. What tangible and intangible anti-racism resources are available to Red Deer citizens?
3. What anti-racism resources are underutilized, used, or lacking in Red Deer?

To answer these questions, the Red Deer Local Immigration Partnership (RDLIP), in partnership with Sociology researchers from Red Deer Polytechnic, conducted a survey and interviews with informants who have a deep understanding of the availability, or lack thereof, of anti-racism resources in Red Deer. The Canadian Race Relations Foundation funded the research as part of the anti-racism program of RDLIP.

Methods

To collect comprehensive information about experiences of racism and anti-racism assets in Red Deer, we used a mixed-method research approach that comprises an online survey and in-depth semi-structured interviews.

The online survey was conducted from May to September 2023; it focused on experiences of racism and the usage of anti-racism resources in Red Deer. 146 participants of diverse backgrounds completed the online survey, which was widely publicized in local news outlets (Red Deer Advocate 2023) and circulated through Red Deer Polytechnic's newsletter e-Connected. Access to the survey was available to anyone with the URL link. The survey starts with demographic questions of participants and continues with participants' direct or indirect experiences of racism and their coping strategies. Subsequently, questions were asked targeting participants' knowledge of anti-racism assets or where they can turn to for support when necessary. SPSS software was then used to assist in analysis, and then data was stratified in ways that were relevant to the study. Primarily, the data was stratified by ethnicity, categorizing individuals as either 'white' or 'non-white, as the whites are the dominant ethnic group in Red Deer.

Table 1: Demographic of On-Line Survey Participants, *N* = 146.

Gender Identity	Female	73%
	Male	25%
	Other	2%
Age	Under 18	2%
	18-29 years old	49%

	30-39 years old	17%
	40-49 years old	15%
	50-59 years old	5%
	60+ years	11%
	Prefer not to say	1%
Ethnic Identity	**White**	64%
	Indigenous	4%
	South Asian	1%
	Chinese	2%
	Black	6%
	Filipino	10%
	Arab	2%
	Latin American	3%
	Southeast Asian	1%
	West Asian	1%
	Other	4%
	Prefer not to say	2%
Time of Residency	**Less than 6 months**	12%
	6 months to 1 year	7%

	1-2 years	8%
	2-5 years	9%
	More than 5 years	53%
	I'm not sure	1%
	I do not live in Red Deer	10%
Educational Attainment	**High School**	15%
	Some college/university	37%
	Diploma	17%
	Bachelor's Degree	16%
	Master's Degree/Higher	13%
	Prefer not to say	2%

To delve deeper into the issue of racism and to obtain a personal understanding of the availability, or lack thereof, of anti-racism resources in Red Deer, we conducted in-depth interviews with 11 Red Deer residents who have lived experiences of racism and information about anti-racism assets in Red Deer. Table 2 provides a basic demographic summary of the 11 participants.

Table 2: Basic Demographic Information of Red Deer Citizens Interviewed

Residents	*Gender	Ethnicity	Highest Education
P1	F	Filipino	Postsecondary
P2	M	Sudanese	Postsecondary
P3	F	Caribbean	Master's
P4	F	Filipino	Bachelor's
P5	F	African	Doctorate
P6	Two-Spirit	Indigenous	Postsecondary
P7	F	Zimbabwean	Master's
P8	M	Canadian	Postsecondary
P9	F	Black	Postdoctoral
P10	M	Chinese Canadian	Bachelor's

P11	Other	Turkish	Master's	

Note:
F = Female
M = Male

Concurrent with the online survey, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of six local community service providers who often work with Indigenous and racialized peoples. They are Care For Newcomers, Catholic Social Services (Settlement Support), City of Red Deer, Community Legal Clinic, Francophonie Albertaine Plurielle, and the Red Deer Native Friendship Society. Table 3 provides a summary of their main services.

Table 3: Service Providers in Red Deer Interviewed

Organization	Main services
Care for Newcomers	Immigrant settlement and integration programs such as English as a second language (ESL), youth settlement support, community resources and referrals, cultural education and awareness, and employment connection.
Catholic Social Services (Settlement Support)	Assists immigrants and refugees in learning about their new community, including information about health care, housing, immigration, and schools for children.
City of Red Deer	Provides a wide range of municipal services.
Community Legal Clinic	The Community Legal Clinic provides free and confidential legal information, advice, and advocacy in a positive, inclusive, and supportive environment.
Francophonie Albertaine Plurielle Central Alberta	Provides services in French for the reception, establishment and re-establishment of French-speaking newcomers in Central Alberta, and promotes the diversity and social, economic and cultural inclusion of Francophones.
Red Deer Native Friendship Society	Cultural programs and services in health, family preservation, traditional parenting, homelessness prevention, Cyber School, youth programming, education, and cultural connections for all people of all age groups.

Qualitative data was drawn from semi-structured interviews with members of the public (n=11) and service providers (n=6). Qualitative data analysis was conducted using Nvivo software, which primarily helped with the categorization of data, making patterns and themes more easily identifiable. All researchers gained familiarity with the interview contents through transcripts of the recordings, then decided on the five themes, which formed the basis of this report: (i) The general situation in Red Deer, (ii) experiences of racism, (iii) coping strategies, (iv) assets available, and (v) suggestions made by participants.

The research obtained ethical approval from the Red Deer Polytechnic Research Ethics Board. All research interviewers completed the Course on Research Ethics (https://tcps2core.ca/welcome) and obtained certification before conducting research interviews. To protect the privacy of research participants, all data in this report are anonymized, and only

aggregate survey data are included. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, and interview transcripts were given to research participants to confirm the accuracy of the information provided and ongoing consent. Each interview research participant was given a grocery gift card of $10 as an appreciation for their sharing of valuable knowledge and experiences with us.

## Results & Discussion

Quantitative Data

The survey results provided us with a host of quantitative data. Questions were asked to get a sense of who the survey participants were by asking for gender identity, age, and ethnic identity. We were interested in knowing how long participants have lived or worked in Red Deer, along with their highest educational attainment. Some questions targeted an individual's sense of belonging in the community, along with their level of community involvement. The final questions targeted participants' knowledge of anti-racism assets or where they can turn to for support when necessary. In presenting the quantitative results, we stratified some of the results by ethnicity, categorizing individuals as either 'white' or 'non-white.'

The survey results provided an understanding of who the participants were. 73% identified as female, in contrast to 25% identifying as male. Only 2% of participants did not identify as either female or male and chose 'other'(see Figure 1). The majority of participants were 18-29 years of age, with the next highest percentage being 17%, attributed to the age bracket 30-39 years. Interestingly, only 5% of participants were 50-59 years old, but 11% indicated they were 60 years of age or older (see Figure 2).

Figure 1: Gender Identity

Figure 2: Age
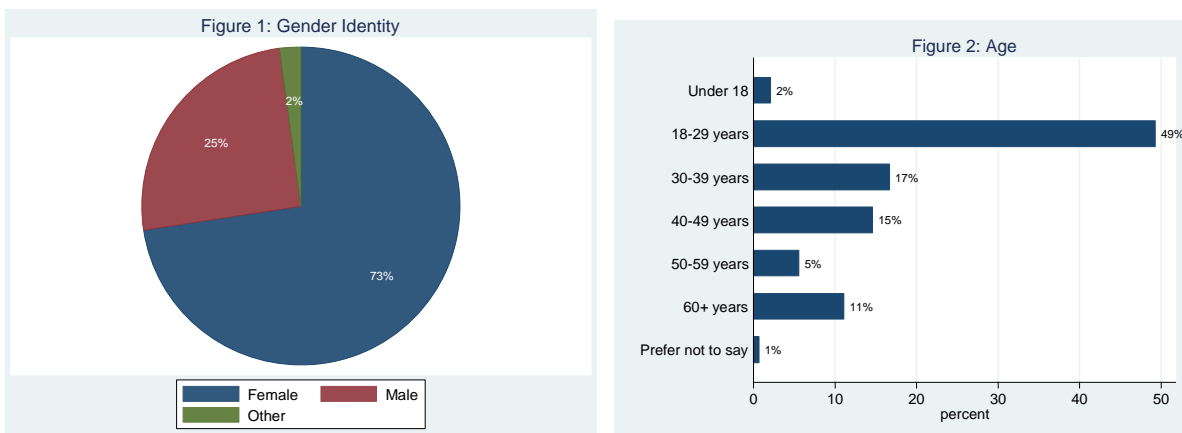
The majority indicated their ethnicity as White, with 64% of participants identifying as such. 10% identified as Filipino, with the rest of the participants spread out in single-digit percentages among various identities (see Figure 3). As regards the highest level of educational attainment, 37% stated they have taken some college or university courses, but outside of that, there was little variation in percentage between participants whose highest educational attainment was a high school diploma compared to those that had a master's degree or higher, and those with some kind of education between those two (see Figure 4). 53% of respondents indicated that they lived or worked within Red Deer for more than 5 years, with the next leading

result signifying that 12% have for less than 6 months. Of note, 10% indicated that they did not live in Red Deer at all.

Figure 3: Ethnic Identity

Figure 4: Highest Educational Attainment

Figure 5: How long have you lived or worked in Red Deer?
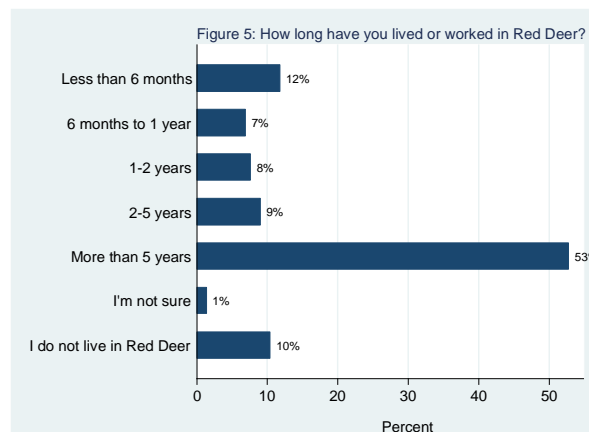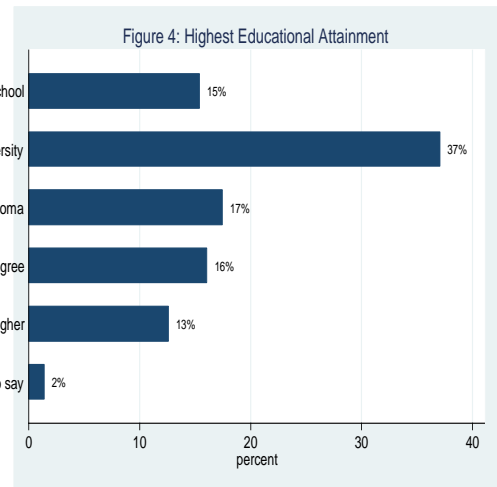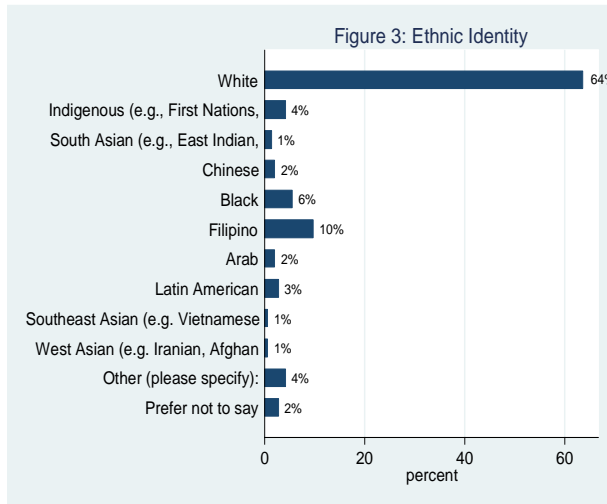
Most participants indicated they felt welcome or belong in Red Deer, with 64% indicating 'always' or 'most times.' However, 30% indicated either 'sometimes' or 'not always,' and 5% almost never feel welcome or as if they belong (see Figure 6). When we stratified the data by 'white' and 'non-white,' it became apparent that while 52% of those who were 'white' felt welcome most of the time, only 31% of those who were 'non-white' did. This is in reverse to those identifying that they always feel welcome, with 10% more 'non-whites' indicating so as compared to 'whites.' Also, 8% of 'non-white' participants indicated that they almost never feel welcome, which contrasts with only 4% of those who are 'white' (see Table 4).
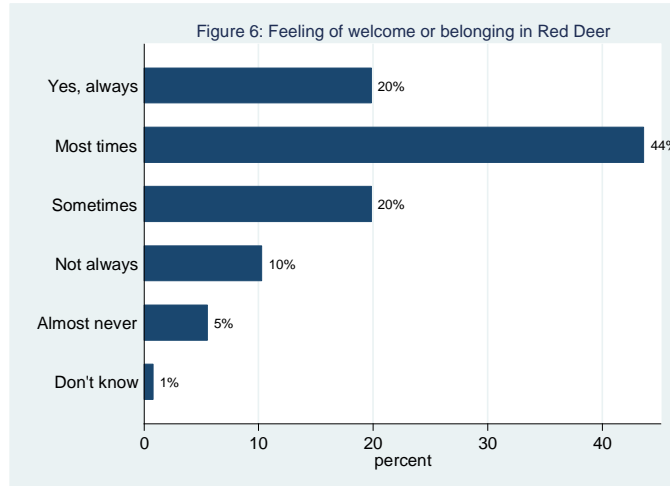
Figure 6: Feeling of welcome or belonging in Red Deer

Table 4: Feeling welcome or having a sense of belonging (%)

Ethnic Identity	Always	Most times	Sometimes	Not always	Almost never	Don't know
White	16	52	17	10	4	1
Non-White	27	31	25	10	8	0

Despite this, a smaller percentage of 'non-white' participants either experienced or witnessed acts of racism at some point in their life than those identified as 'white.' While 55% of White participants indicated that they have, only 34% of 'non-white' participants did (see Figure 7). Of significance was the percentage of 'non-white' participants that indicated that they were unsure if they had experienced or witnessed an act of racism, which was over double compared to those who are White (see Table 5).
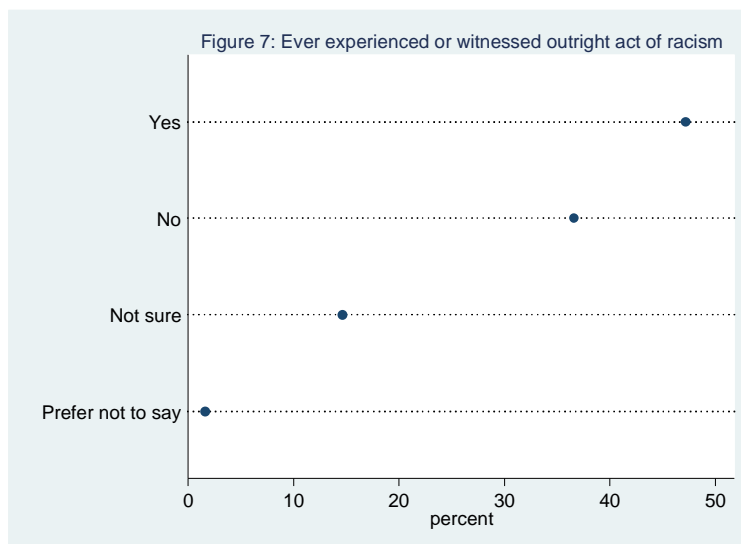

Figure 7: Ever experienced or witnessed outright act of racism

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Table 5: Ever experienced or witnessed outright act of racism (%)

Ethnic Identity	Yes	No	Not sure	Prefer not to say
White	55	34	11	0
Non-White	34	40	21	4

While 58 individuals, or just under 50% of the total survey participants, shared that they did experience or witness an act of racism, only 14% accessed some kind of support afterwards. When asked what type of support accessed, 16 people indicated a friend and 8 indicated family. This formed a formidable majority, but others indicated social media, law enforcement, a religious leader, a community member, or counselling as other support tools they utilized (see Figure 9).

Figure 8: Access to support

Figure 9: Type of support accessed
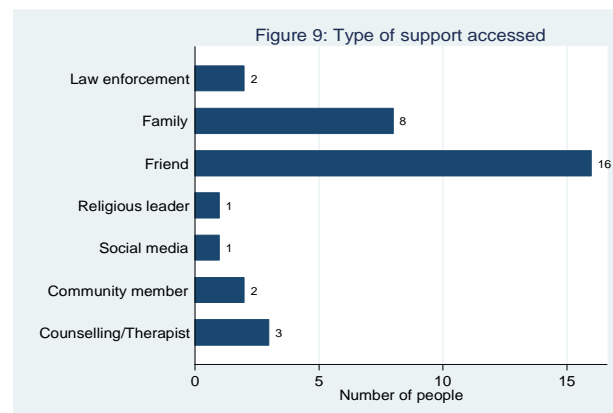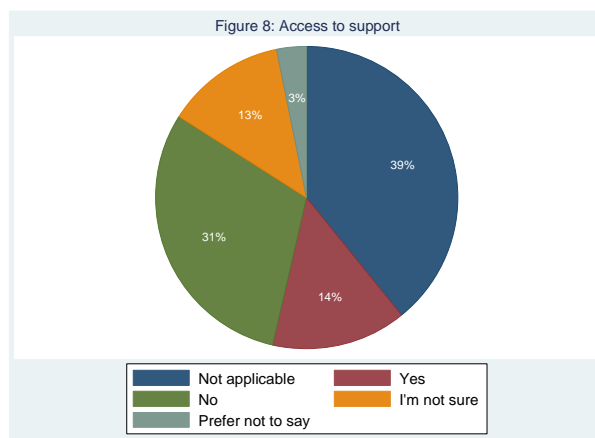
Participants were asked about involvement in specific events and campaigns, such as Alberta Culture Days, Community-Power of One, Proud to be Your Neighbour, Black History Month, Cinco de Mayo, and also their participation in a welcoming and inclusive community network. Black History Month was the only option where more participants participated in than not, but it was still only by a small margin; 48% versus 44% respectively. When separated by ethnicity over half of White participants took part in Black History Month, but only approximately 41% of 'non-white' individuals did. About 7% 'non-white' participants indicated they were unsure of whether they took part in Black History Month, which leaves 52% having indicated explicitly that they did not participate.
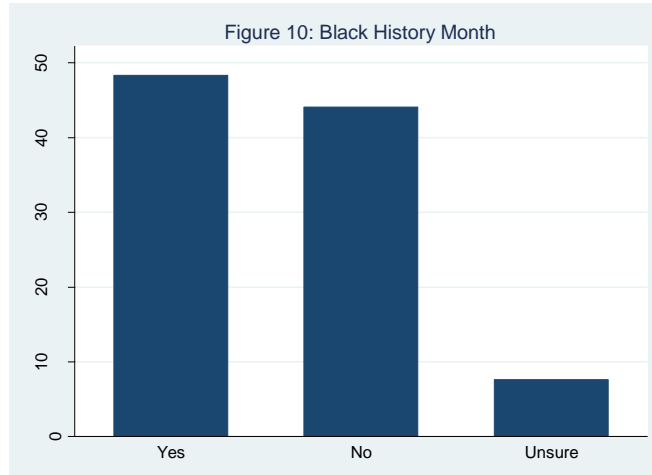
Figure 10: Black History Month

Table 6: Black History Month (%)

Ethnic Identity	Yes	No	Not sure
White	53	39	8
Non-White	41	52	7

When looking at ethnicity, participation in the events is scattered. Along with Black History Month, White participants participated in a welcoming and inclusive community network in greater percentages than 'non-white' identified participants (see Tables 6 and 7). However, 'non-white' identified participants were more unsure about if they were participating in such a community.
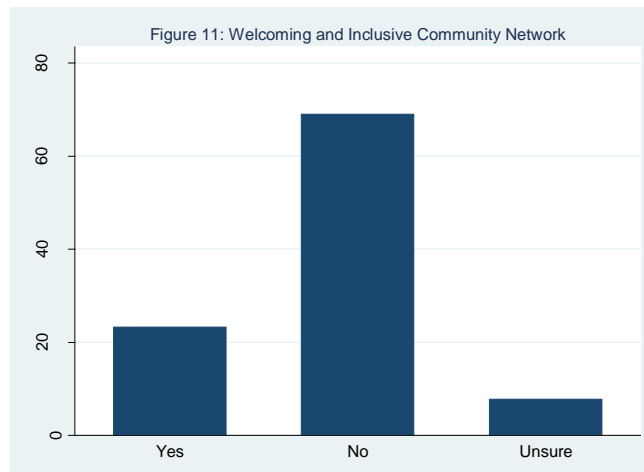

Figure 11: Welcoming and Inclusive Community Network

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Table 7: Welcoming and Inclusive Community Network (%)

Ethnic Identity	Yes	No	Not sure
White	27	67	6
Non-White	16	72	12

More 'non-white' participants took part in the Community Power of One campaign, but none participation for both White and 'non-white' participants was high; 89% and 80% respectively (see Table 8). There was also greater participation among 'non-white' identified participants in the Proud to be Your Neighbour Campaign than those identified as 'white'; 23% and 14% respectively (see Table 9). However, again, an explicit lack of participation was high among both groups.
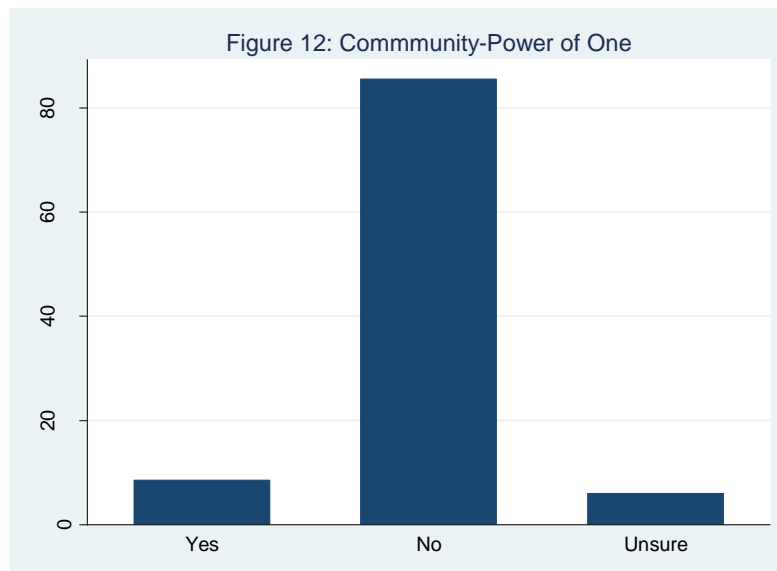

Figure 12: Commmunity-Power of One

Table 8: Community-Power of One (%)

Ethnic Identity	Yes	No	Not sure
White	4	89	7
Non-White	16	80	4

Figure 13: Proud to be Your Neighbour Campaign
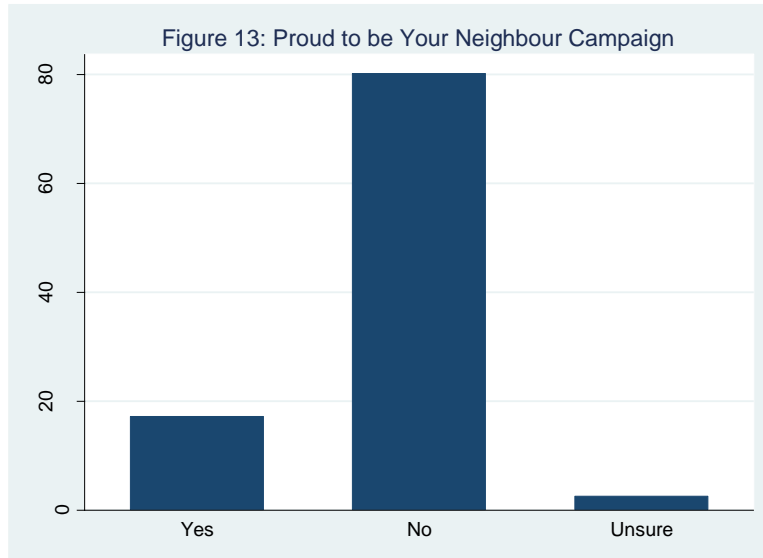
Table 9: Proud to be Your Neighbour Campaign (%)

Ethnic Identity	Yes	No	Not sure
White	14	84	3
Non-White	23	74	2

The rest of the given events were participated in nearly equally among the two ethnicity categories without any significant differences. Approximately 38% of White participants and 37% of non-White participants celebrated Alberta Culture Days, with little variance in the percentages of those that said no between either group (see Table 10). The same was seen with Cinco de Mayo, with approximately 27% of White participants and 28% of non-White participants partaking in celebrations, and little variance in the percentage of those who indicated no participation (see Table 11).
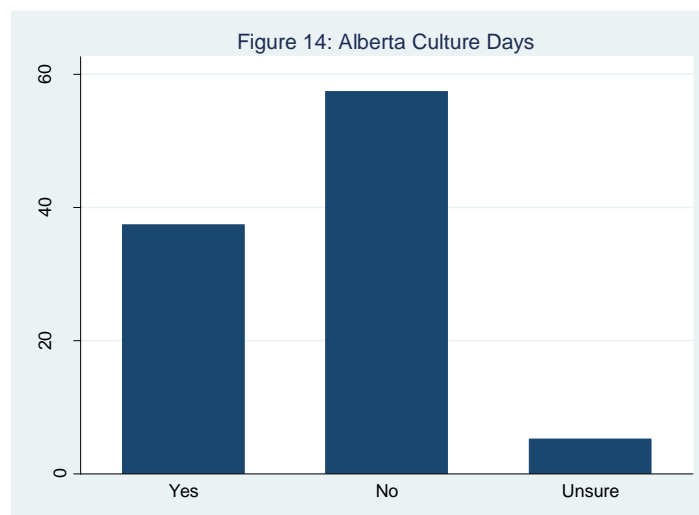

Figure 14: Alberta Culture Days

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Table 10: Alberta Culture Days (%)

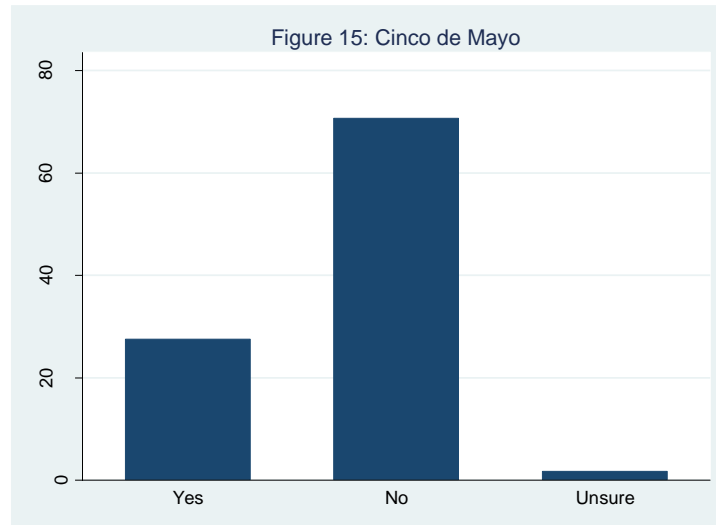| Ethnic Identity	Yes	No	Not sure
White	38	57	6
Non-White	37	58	5

Figure 15: Cinco de Mayo

Table 11: Cinco de Mayo (%)

Ethnic Identity	Yes	No	Not sure
White	27	71	1
Non-White	28	70	2

Along with this low percentage of participants that accessed support services after experiencing or witnessing an act of racism, 72% of participants did not have knowledge of physical spaces they could visit if after experiencing a hard situation or if they were feeling hurt (see Figure 16). For the 28% of participants that said they did know, the survey asked them what spaces they knew of. Several participants indicated local organizations such as the Central Immigrant Women's Association (CAIWA), the Care For Newcomers (CARE), Catholic Social Services, and others (see Figure 17). Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) was mentioned several times, with some individuals specifying the library, Indigenous student services, or counselling services.

Figure 16: Knowledge of physical spaces

28%

72%

No Yes
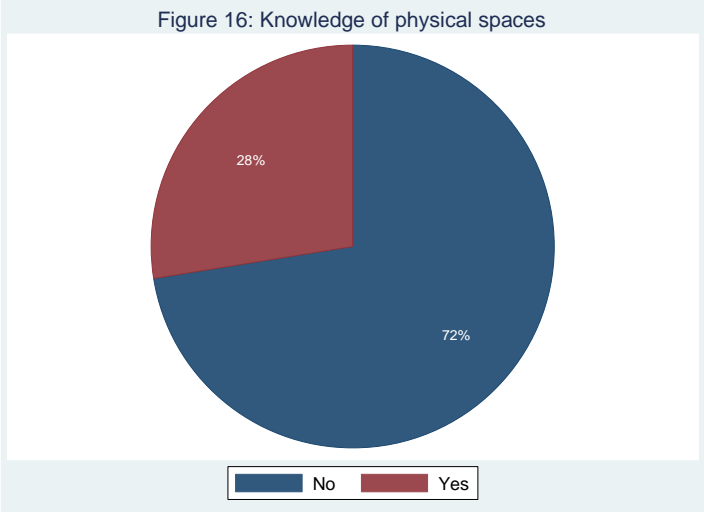
Participants lacked knowledge of organizations in Red Deer that have programs, services, or policies that are supportive of anti-racism efforts. However, of the 25% that indicated they did have knowledge, they mentioned organizations such as RDP, the Red Deer Native Friendship Society (RDNFS), CARE, Ubuntu, and many others (see Figure 18).

Figure 17: Knowledge of organization

25%

75%

No Yes

Figure 18: Organizations mentioned
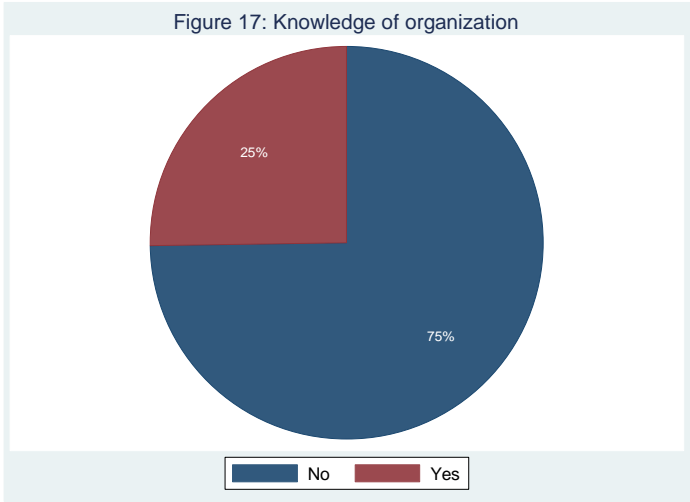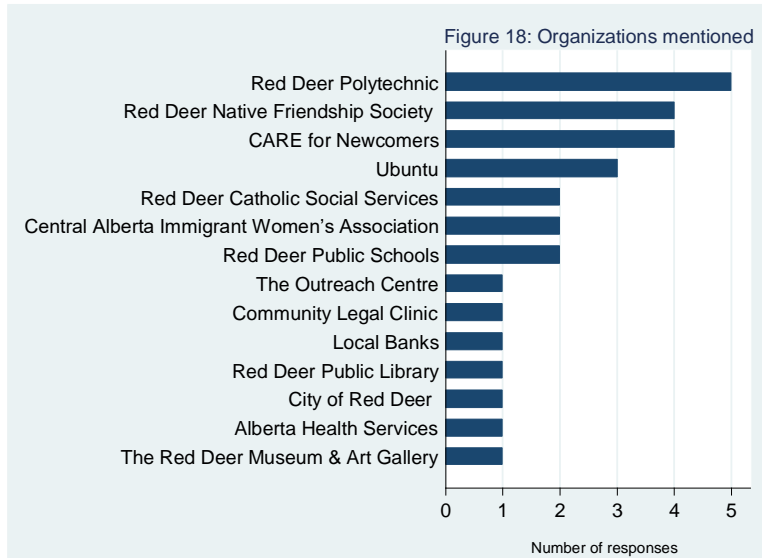
When asked about specific community leaders within Red Deer that are supportive of anti-racism efforts, only 17% of participants indicated that they did know any leaders (see Figure 19). When asked to share which leaders, names of City of Red Deer municipal leaders, postsecondary administrators and instructors, as well as local service provider employees and individuals who work within some of the organizations that participants identified as supportive of anti-racism efforts above were also mentioned.

Figure 19: Knowledge of community leader
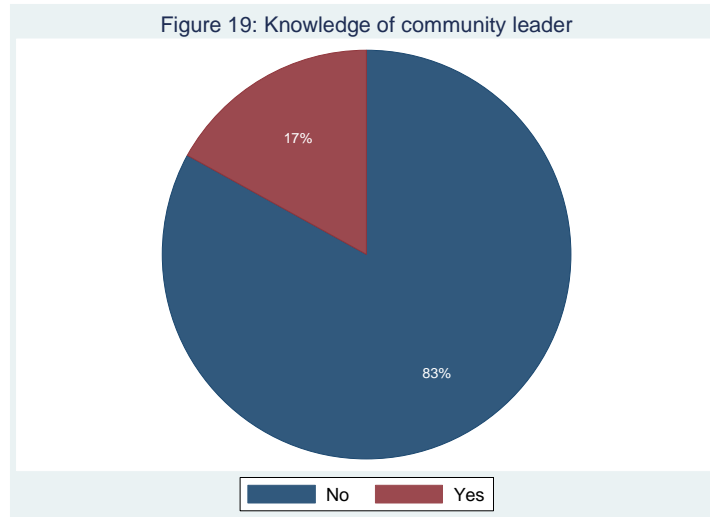
Qualitative Data

The researchers identified five themes. These themes are: (i) The general situation of racism in Red Deer, (ii) experiences of racism, (iii) coping strategies, (iv) assets available, and (v) suggestions made by participants. Within these themes exist numerous sub-themes. The results point towards an overall awareness of anti-racism assets in Red Deer, but a low engagement with

these resources. It appears that experiences of racism have improved over time. However, participants made it clear that racism is still pervasive, primarily in the form of microaggressions. Participants offered concrete suggestions on how to improve extant anti-racism assets, or proposed resources that do not currently exist.

General Situation of Racism in Red Deer
Experiences of racism and people's perceptions of racism and inclusivity vary; however, there are consistent experiences among the participants that provide a clear picture of people's experiences with racism in Red Deer, along with how racism has changed over time.

As mentioned by P10, they have experienced discrimination in the past, specifically during their youth:

> More prevalent… in my younger years… [T]here are definitely points that you would be deemed as unacceptable today or would not be seen as being … welcoming and inclusive.

The community of Red Deer has transformed and is presently more inclusive, which signifies a favourable shift. P2 emphasized how the ethnic makeup of Red Deer has evolved significantly over time, and the city has become ethnically more diverse:

> Red Deer starts rough. It was not the same Red Deer as today. I remember in my years of 1999, 2000, there were not many people from different places that are not Caucasian.

P4 recognized contemporary cultural activities that exemplify the municipality's endeavours to adopt diversity. The participant conveyed longing for further development in diversity at the same level as more populous cities such as Calgary:

> Not to the extent that maybe I would want it to be, but I did see a couple of events over the past weeks. I think over downtown, there was this mixer for Cuban or Mexican, an event, or I don't know if it was a Spanish event as well, but they do have it. I mean, the city has it, but maybe not to the extent that other cities would like Calgary.

One of the service providers, S5, believed that the city has lagged behind some of the larger metropolitan areas by 10 years. She also highlighted the ongoing transformations and the new mayor's endeavours to effect change and potential areas requiring enhancement in Red Deer:

> I think there, there've been changes made, and I think the city and the new mayor are trying to make a difference …. He had stood up in front of the whole conference at the beginning, and he basically said, Red Deer is about 10 years behind some of the other bigger cities.

Many racialized immigrants are being settled outside the metropolitan cities and into rural places such as Red Deer (Ashton, Pettigrew, and Galatsanou 2016, 70; Kitchen, Williams, and Gallina 2015, 2). Considering where Red Deer is regarding inclusivity and support, P3 said, "We're setting [newcomers] up for failure before we even bring them in." Many have had their quality of life impacted upon settling in Canada because their professional credentials are not recognized,

resulting in them being sent "…to a community without giving the community the resources to support them" (P3). P5 said that while Red Deer is safe for minorities, it is not welcoming because there is "lots of resistance in professional employment." For S3, who has lived in Red Deer for more than 40 years, Red Deer has evolved and become more inclusive compared to 30 years ago when a racialized person "got on an elevator, people would look at you and get off. They would give you that look- the side eye. It was not safe to be of Colour here then," but "it is better now," although "we still know that Red Deer is [a place with] white supremacists."

Experiences of Racism
Participants shared experiences of direct and indirect, and mostly covert, racism. They emphasized the impact of racist microaggressions. For instance, P1 stated, "… people would say something about the shape of my eyes or my accent or things like those things, which wasn't necessarily positive I'd say, but nothing overtly aggressive as in telling me to go back to my country or something like that."

In a white-dominated community like Red Deer, racialized persons may experience inattention or even neglect at social functions, as relayed by S6, "My partner is Indian, and so on a regular basis he's like six foot four and people ignore him and talk to me [a white woman] .…Their microaggressions are taking place all the time…" The mention of the participant's Indian partner experiencing being ignored while people direct their attention to the white partner reflects a subtle yet impactful form of racism.

The traditional lack of representation in organizational roles reinforces racial occupational stereotypes. Working in a postsecondary institution, P3, who is an instructor, shared her experiences of being mistaken as a student, "…I also know that there are people who do not think that I'm an instructor because of the colour of my skin and they think maybe I'm a student."

These statements underline the need for increased awareness and education about subtle forms of racism. While overtly aggressive acts may be more easily identified and addressed, subtle and covert forms of racism can be insidious, contributing to a less inclusive and welcoming community. Acknowledging and challenging these microaggressions is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and respectful environment in Red Deer.

Claims of racism are often dismissed or downplayed. For example, after S5 pointed out the inappropriateness of a racist joke around her table at a social function, her tablemates retorted, "... 'Where's your British sense of humour?' So [the person is] poking at the fact that I'm from England too. So, it was a little bit insensitive. I wouldn't say it was outright racism, borderline …. I felt totally uncomfortable, and [later] everybody else was [carrying on] chatting… of course, excluding me… It's like, you are the problem… go home." This is a form of gaslighting where S5, who acted as an anti-racism advocate, was made to feel she was the problem. In a comparable vein, P5 shared how racism was not taken seriously: "I know if things happen in school with the kids, the teachers … would say they didn't see it." All these occurrences highlight the critical situation in Red Deer, which requires the city to address not only the explicit displays of racism but also the contemptuous attitudes that impede advancements toward a genuinely inclusive and compassionate society.

P9's experience was traumatizing. Her daughter was removed temporarily from her care on several occasions by human services agencies, which she attributed to racism against a Black woman, where "a lot of people don't believe black people." And when she confronted the agencies, "they weaponize their emotions against [her]." She implored that service agencies need to be equipped with cultural competency. Once, an agency suggested that she send her daughter to a friend's house. She was affronted because:

> [W]e just don't send our children away. We don't trust people around us. And why would I isolate my child from her black family to go send them off with some random white people? So, things like that. Understand culture, get to know culture. Believe people when they talk to you, listen to people, work collaboratively with them, and also be reflexive.

The experience of racism can take an emotional toll, as shared by S5 about a client, "… she was sharing in one of my sessions, and she said, every morning when I get up, I have to prepare myself, and she's preparing herself for the inevitable racism that's going to happen. And she said it's pretty much daily." It exposes the deep emotional burden that victims of prejudice in Red Deer endure. S5 provided a haunting account of a fellow human being who engages in a morning ritual of emotional preparation in anticipation of daily encounters with prejudice. For P9, dealing with children's services and other agencies has caused her mental health to "significantly deteriorate," and said she still has "to be here for my children."

Coping Strategies
For participants who did identify with having experienced racism, many of them shared the different ways in which they coped afterwards. These strategies were classified as the following sub-themes: (i) informal support, (ii) presentation of self, (iii) aggressive competitiveness, (iv) advocating for self and others, and (v) moving on. These strategies reflected internal and external coping processes that influenced where and how people received support, and how experiences of racism changed how they saw themselves in relation to others.

Informal Support
When asked how the participants coped with witnessing or experiencing racism, the responses were varied. From the survey data, 58 individuals, or just under 50% of the total survey participants, shared that they did experience or witness an act of racism. However, not many participants accessed support.

For the 33 individuals that did access some kind of support afterwards, when asked what type of support was accessed, 16 people, or almost 50% of them, indicated a friend and 8 indicated family. The qualitative data is in line with the survey results. A few interview responses also indicated the importance of informal networks, such as family and friends, as a means of coping after experiencing racism:

> It's a lot of just peer support. It's a lot of just finding people, finding people you get along with and finding people that can kind of support you if you need them in those moments. (P6)

P1 shared that, when necessary, they speak with their friends, and they did not recall ever going to "... a person of authority, like a counsellor or something." P10 emphasized their family's role in their ability to cope with experiences of racism by saying, "I think it's mainly … [by] having a strong family root."

It begs the question of why many participants relied on peer or family support over professional support. One of the reasons is the benefit of confiding in a person who truly understands what the individual is going through because of shared experience, compared to a stranger, albeit professional, without this shared experience. P1 shared,

> I've always found it very helpful to speak with other people who share my experiences in this type of discrimination that we've noticed or faced or just been around…

One of the benefits of confiding in others with shared experiences is that victims feel safe in sharing their racist experiences:

> And you guys can have a conversation about [the experience] and feel more comfortable in a space where everyone can be a part of it. (P8)

Presentation of Self
Impacts of racism can cause hyper-vigilance in racialized minorities that leave them aware of how their clothing and mannerisms can impact how non-racialized people receive them at any given moment. This has been dubbed "self-censoring" (Sehra 2020).

One Black participant shared his experience of "self-censoring," by changing the way he presents himself through his choice of clothing. To avoid possible conflict with prejudiced community members, he stopped wearing clothing that people associate negatively with Black people:

> You see the way I'm wearing … the way I present myself, I don't wear a hoodie, simply because I don't want to be judged. The black person with a hoodie, a young male with a hoodie. It's not the same thing as young white male with a hoodie from the people's mind. (P2)

Staying Competitive
Coping strategies to racism can be psychological. One participant explained how experiences of racism are what led to the development of his competitive personality.

> So that's how I would cope. I mean, I wanted to excel in a lot of things to show people, show my family that it's not your ethnicity that matters. It matters how you push forward and you achieve goals and you make a good life for your family. (P10)

Advocating for Self and Others
Other participants confronted perpetrators of racism regardless of whether the racism was targeted towards them or others. P6 said, "Usually I [advocate] for other people more, but I also advocate for myself sometimes if I need to be." P10 said they "had no problem confronting

individuals," and that they understood that not everyone can confront discriminatory behaviour that's being directed towards them, "So I [P10] would stand up for those people too, because I understand some of the feelings and emotions that people go through when they run into those situations."

Moving on
Despite the availability and utilization of support, victims may not be able to overcome a negative experience of racism. Sometimes, all that victims can do is move on. When asked how she coped, P5 said she "just moved on. I just do what I can do. Yeah." One youth participant said:

> …but coping, sometimes you just got to, you got to live with it, sometimes you got to move on. Coping with it is tough because sometimes there's nothing you could really do…sometimes you just got to move on." (P8)

Assets Available
Participants could recognize a wide range of tangible and intangible assets available within the community. These included (i) inclusive spaces, (ii) community organizations, and (iii) citizen advocates.

Inclusive Space
Participants highly appreciate safe and inclusive spaces. Some of these spaces are informal. As P6 mentioned, "There's a café …. it's called the Runway Cafe, and it's downtown." P6 suggested the Runway Cafe as a possible gathering place for people to find support or establish connections, i.e., it can function as a community space.

Churches could have a significant impact on promoting inclusiveness. As P7 described, "...our pastor was very passionate about that. Even being Caucasian and having a congregation that has become diverse, he was very, very strong trying to break the barriers…" Religious institutions have the capacity to serve as spaces of support for individuals who are confronted with prejudice, as exemplified by the pastor's dedication to diversity.

Community Organizations
Indigenous support networks were emphasized by the interview participants as strong anti-racism assets. Specific agencies were mentioned, including the Red Deer Native Friendship Society, and Urban Aboriginal Voice Society. These organizations provide community spaces that can foster a sense of community and cultural affiliation among Indigenous people who are confronted with prejudice. As shared by P11, who is not an Indigenous yet received support, "The biggest support I found is with the Indigenous elders, they're so gentle and so full of wisdom that whenever I needed something, whenever I wasn't doing well, I find a much, much better support than a mental health counsellor sometimes can be." For those attempting to navigate the complexities of racism, the illuminating counsel of the Indigenous elders serves as a beacon of fortitude.

Community organizations can cultivate awareness and comprehension. One service provider (S5) stated, "I did a lot of promotion [educational work, as part of her job at the organization],

and especially in the schools at first, and then eventually branched out … workplaces or anywhere else, I really will go anywhere. That includes within the prison system. It includes any workplace." Community organizations, by way of education, can act as catalysts for societal transformation.

Lastly, one of the service providers emphasized the significance of advocacy activities. Proactively addressing prejudice on a systemic level is possible through engagement with organizations, legal groups, and city officials:

> …I had the opportunity to meet with Bruce, the deputy mayor, and I addressed the situation to him. So, we sat down with the [clients], myself and him, and then explained to him what is going on, what happened so that they can be aware that this is what is going on in the community. (S4)

Organizations make extra efforts serve their clients. One Indigenous organization accommodates the needs of users by having some programs in the evening: " … when our participants say, I can't get there, I need evening. So we do some of our programmes in the evening (S1).

Citizen Advocates
There are also individual anti-racist advocates in the community, as conveyed by P7 about an acquaintance, "… she's Caucasian, she stood up for me, she stood up for me, and she was just like, we can't treat somebody like this." People who stand up against racism can have a profound impact on the community. P2 said, "If you got some people who can stand [up] against what other people saying, then you will say okay, yeah, we're moving somewhere. But when these people [won't]… no one, no nobody tell anybody what you're doing is wrong then we still [have] a lot of work need to be done."

Challenges
Participants shared some of the challenges they faced in addressing the issue of racism. Among these are (i) a lack of awareness about resources and (ii) perceived limitations of law enforcement.

Lack of Awareness
Despite the assets mentioned above, not all participants were aware of them. Uncertainty is expressed by individuals regarding assistance, legislation, and organizational support: "I'm not very sure [what assets are available] because I'm not as aware of those spaces as I think I could be" (P1). P11, however, opined that little formal resources were available: "I don't think there's much, honestly. There are some organizations you can go to, but what kinds of supports they provide is still sort of unclear to me." This indicates that resources may be disconnected from those who require them. Better community engagement, educational campaigns, and enhanced communication are required to ensure everyone is well-informed of the necessary support.

Perceived Limitations of Law Enforcement
Other participants also shed light on law enforcement's perceived limitations when handling racism in Red Deer: "It's often that people don't go to RCMP because there isn't much to do unless it's a crime" (P11). There is a prevailing perception that law enforcement, particularly the

RCMP, might not be a resource for addressing racism unless they involve explicit criminal behaviour.

In another interview, the concern for the involvement of law enforcement is emphasized, "If I'm not bleeding, I'm probably not calling the cops" (P6). The individual is reluctant to contact law enforcement unless the circumstance is deemed critical, or a person faces an imminent danger. A reluctance to seek the assistance of law enforcement in non-criminal circumstances may result from the community's perception that they are predominantly responsive to criminal incidents, of which many racist acts would not be considered serious.

And when it comes to human rights cases, it takes years for a court case to resolve, as conveyed by S2, who provides community legal services to immigrants:

> And with lawyers that we have here, a lot of times, we don't refer to them because human rights cases can take up to thirty-six months to just get an answer. So, it's waste of time. By the time they wait for the court, the resolution of the incident has passed. So, the resolution they give us is still the same as the initial. So, we don't waste time on that. (S2)

Suggestions

To better understand the gaps in anti-racism resources within Red Deer, participants were asked about areas that need improvement. Suggestions from participants fell into two categories: (i) how existing anti-racism resources could be improved, and (ii) what anti-racism resource is needed but is missing.

Improving Existing Anti-Racism Assets
Given the range of anti-racism assets that are available in Red Deer, it is no surprise that there were many suggestions on how to improve resources that already exist.

(i) Education
Many participants emphasized that education needs improvement for the general public, within organizations, and among racialized immigrants.

Participants felt that a lack of understanding about racialized people breeds suspicion and contempt, as mentioned by P2, "... people are afraid of what they don't know." S5 shared a similar view, saying, "...educate people because sometimes people are not bad in their heart, it's just because they don't know" (S5).

More education for employers and employees within organizations was suggested. P2 said, "Educating more employers and private companies about these things and encouraging them to be more inclusive, empowering minorities to be able to succeed in this country. A small business, for example," while P6 focused on employee training by saying, " … employees …. should have to pass some form of anti-racism as well as LGBT Pro LGBT stuff. You have to be able to essentially pass [understand inclusivity] …. And if you don't pass it, then I guess you have more training you need to get done."

The rights of vulnerable members were the concern for S5, who recognized some immigrants may not understand their rights and do not dare to question mistreatments by their workplace superior: "And [in the home country] you do not challenge your boss…And I think we can teach people that. It can be different here. It's supposed to be democratic, supposed to be egalitarian. So, teach them (new immigrants) what that means…And give them some power" (S5).

(ii) Adequate funding
Many participants consider adequate anti-racism funding important. P2 emphasized the need to empower anti-racist organizations, "so that they can do the work that needs to be done." He explicitly mentioned the issue of funding, making it clear that these organizations are being created here, "but they're going nowhere because they don't get funding from anything." P3 believes current supports are inadequate because "they don't have the funds to provide the services."

(iii) Information
A participant voiced that if someone is experiencing racism, information on where to locate supports needs to be accessible. While not explicitly placed contextually in the realm of empowerment, what this participant is suggesting is exactly that – empowering individuals to navigate an experience of racism in a way that is meaningful to them, and that is only possible when the individuals have all information available to them, "…they have to know who to turn to, to find what sort of supports are available for them" (P10).

(iv) Engagement
Participants saw a need for increasing engagement with anti-racism resources among younger and older generations. Social media as a way to market anti-racism resources was mentioned by participants; however, P1 recognized that variation in platforms would be necessary to reach different age groups: "…if the organization has wanted to showcase themselves more towards an older generation, then they should probably go through things like Facebook, especially I think for the younger generation, anywhere else …"

However, P8 felt that other methods may be necessary to connect with youth. While "programs have changed their way to try to engage youth," and are utilizing social media platforms used by youth, P8 felt that youth engagement in these programs is still falling short.

A participant made an important point on how engaging the older generation is crucial:

> … for younger people, they usually already have their own group of friends that they can go to and talk to about these types of things .… It's just, in my opinion, harder. For people who are older. (P1)

However, while distinct efforts are needed to target generational differences, there is also a need to connect the generations with each other. P8 says, "I think getting adults more engaged, especially with the youth. I think adults are looking from the outside, they're not really engaged with the youth at all."

(v) Recognizing Internal Heterogeneity

Making information, support, and resources available to all individuals could be challenging. Accessing these can be impacted by cultural background. One service provider participant recognized that cultural differences, even within an ethnic group, can influence which spaces individuals are occupying, which has the potential to exclude them from resources that are only available in those spaces:

> …someone was telling me, "From my cultural or my ethnic or religious point of view, our people don't go to the recreation centres." And then I was talking about this to somebody else, and they were like, oh, well, we see people from that ethnic group all the time. (S5)

S6 shared a similar view that it is not adequate to understand individuals from the same ethnic group in one singular way. She explained why doing so is problematic:

> So, until you're willing to sort of say, actually, I don't know who we're representing, I don't know who's here and who's not, and try and figure it out and go and listen to those people, then we're not actually serving our community. (S6)

Another participant, P7, exemplified this comparable point:

> I am Black African…Originally from Zimbabwe. I know people call us Africans. I hate it. I want to be called Zimbabwean…Because Africa is so diverse, and we are very different.

S6 suggested that when improving access to information and increasing engagement with assets, it is important to keep in mind the internal heterogeneity of any ethnic group because sub-ethnic differences may impact how people receive information and how they engage with resources.

(vi) Creating Diversity
Some of the complications that can come from a lack of cultural understanding can be overcome by increasing representation within decision-making circles. Participants called for increased representation of ethnic minorities to improve and develop anti-racism assets. P6 stated that if an organization "works with diverse people groups, [it] should have a diverse staff." P5 said, "We need to be represented on the decision-making tables." P2 pointed out the benefits of diversifying the ethnic representation of a workplace and said, "When you see yourself being represented, I think it will work more into [supporting racialized victims]. [T]hat could be an asset itself." One service provider was able to effectively use diversity to achieve one of her aims. From work-related research she conducted:

> …there were over 30 quotes from [diverse ethnic individuals] in it. So, it was like the community voice. I was just representing it. And so those things are like, well, we can't say no to what the community tells us. I'm like, no, you can't. (S6)

Creating New Resources
Some participants proposed resources that do not yet exist but that they felt would have a significant positive impact in supporting victims of racism in Red Deer.

(i) Helplines
A helpline to ease service accessibility was suggested by multiple participants but looked different to each one. For one participant, it looked like, "...a helpline where people go and volunteer and if someone calls and then you just talk to the person" (P4). The other participant, service provider (S5), suggested a 1-800 number that would make reporting acts of racism easier.

(ii) A Public Safe Space
Many participants expressed the need for a publicly funded safe space, to support victims of racism. Comfort is fundamental to this secure environment, as expressed by P1, "… definitely somewhere that they [victims] can, a place where they can talk about it comfortably," a safe space where people feel free to candidly share their experiences.

P11 suggested the forming of a support group, where group members meet "once a month… can be quite powerful." A collective fortitude is fostered by this sense of community, which not only validates individual experiences but also reinforces the notion that individuals are not alone in their struggles. P2 proposed a similar space, which resembles Alcoholics Anonymous in its approach to program design with structured support such as facilitated dialogues, information sessions, and guest lectures, where people can "talk about… experience, without any fear of talking about it" (P2)

Additionally, P6 emphasized that it "is really important and something that could be super, super valuable…" to have a dependable figure, such as a trained facilitator, counsellor, or community leader, in facilitating the creation and running of the safe space. This person assumes the role of a guiding light, providing individuals with encouragement and reassurance to communicate their thoughts and feelings candidly and without hesitation.

(iii) A Centralized Space
From what participants shared, anti-racism supports and resources are disconnected from one another enough that it becomes difficult for individuals, especially newcomers, to navigate. While many are already located close to each other by occupying spaces downtown, P6 said that "it's not very feasible" to leave individuals to navigate between supports independently, and "...it's ignorant to assume that [knowing how to navigate this is] common sense."

P6 asks, "...why don't all the organizations just come together," in a bid for a centralized support system where all agencies operate within one building. They argue that the benefit would be twofold. First, this would allow the agencies to "...support each other in whatever thing is needed" (P6). Secondly, it makes navigating anti-racism support less complicated for those needing services. P6 explains that if this is made a priority by the city to allocate a space large enough to centralize support, "I find that would be so much more supportive for so many people, and they would probably feel listened to by the city."

P5 wished for the same thing, and said this would, "… put all our things [support services] visible like any other governmental place that we have here." Many government places house relevant supports within the same building – the courthouse being an example, where accessing free counselling services is just a matter of going to the second floor of the courthouse. Bringing

together the anti-racism supports into one space would make access more equitable for all individuals needing their services.

Conclusion

By utilizing asset-mapping techniques, this research identifies a range of existing assets and gaps in care and offers suggestions for rectifying these gaps. Racism is still a prominent issue in Red Deer. It is a positive sign that overt racism is becoming less common, but microaggressions persist. Microaggressions occupy a complex space because oftentimes they do not constitute criminal activity, and can be hard to prove to have happened, limiting opportunities for recourse against perpetrators.

Many anti-racism assets exist within Red Deer, but many are underfunded and underutilized. A call for centralizing supports was made by multiple participants. This would allow for better networking among the supports, providing an opportunity for resource sharing to alleviate the impacts of underfunding. Having a centralized location would allow those in need of support to find everything they would need in one location, decomplexifying support access.

Participants were able to offer a range of suggestions on how to improve inclusivity in Red Deer. The importance of educating people was discussed. Individuals who confronted racism head-on were seen as powerful and impactful anti-racism assets, and educational programs that teach people how to navigate confronting racism need to be made more widely available to Red Deer citizens. Racism can sometimes stem from fear, so creating cultural competency within the general population would be a protective factor against that.

Red Deer has become more diverse and is making concerted efforts to fight racism. The identification of anti-racism assets, and enrichment of these assets, are important steps towards the goal of making the city a welcoming and inclusive community.

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