WHITE NEPOTISM: INTERROGATING "CORPORATE CULTURE" IN THE
TORONTO CENSUS METROPOLITAN AREA LABOUR MARKET

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Abstract

This research project examines systemic forms of racism that limit the employment chances of racialized workers in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) labour market. Through a situated analysis of racialized workers, institutional actors, and public policies, I explore the nuances of racialized individuals' encounters with discriminatory hiring practices and job promotion procedures that exist in the labour market. Through the perspectives of racialized workers' lived experiences, and by bringing into question the employment practices of hiring managers and human resource personnel, this project addresses the following key questions: 1) How do racialized workers negotiate their movement through places of employment in the Toronto CMA? 2) How might we understand the operation of racism in hiring practices and what are the mechanisms under which it remains institutionally entrenched? This research critiques the organizational cultures of private companies that are configured as spaces of whiteness.

Dedication

To those who do not believe racism is still very alive and present in the Canadian landscape.

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I never fathomed that I would ever attempt entering graduate school let alone finish a Master's thesis. This journey is just the beginning to rekindling my passion for doing my part to help break down and reengineer social structures consisting of hegemonic power dynamics that promote hate and violence. I have been very fortunate to be surrounded by people who are always inspiring, supporting, and believing in me that allowed me to excel in this program and with this project.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Context

Many prominent Canadian companies and crown corporations are making it a point to boast about the diversity[1] of their organizations ("Canada's Best Diversity Employers" n.d.). Through the commission of internal reports and the setting of broad goals, these firms have taken initiatives to enhance diversity awareness. Despite the perceived goodwill of these initiatives, racialized workers are still excluded from prominent roles in the upper echelons of both the private and public sectors. Although these initiatives appear to be a beacon of progressive change in relation to diverse representation, there is still much work to be done. In the private sector, the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), one of Canada's most prominent financial institutions, released a recent report entitled: *RBC Diversity Blueprint 2012- 2015*. This report makes a solid case that diversity and inclusion should be at the forefront of its business practices while offering its own vision of diversity that would engage a wide range of employees from entry level to upper management positions (Royal Bank of Canada, 2015). However, upon examination of RBC's board of directors and executive officers, the majority of these people are predominately white and male ("Executive Officers - RBC," n.d.). In the public sector, our newly elected Prime Minister Justin Trudeau chose several new parliamentary cabinet ministers, which in his words "represents

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[1] According to Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2002), "diversity" refers to a number of points of difference among people that are not limited to gender, age, place of birth, ethnicity, culture, education, physical ability, social class, religion, sexual orientation, language, citizenship status, personal style and attributes (2002, p.13). For a further discussion see Abu-Laban, Y., & Gabriel, C. (2002). *Selling diversity: Immigration, multiculturalism, employment equity, and globalization*. University of Toronto Press.

Canada". The new cabinet appointments consist of more females and racialized bodies that have historically been held by older white male members of parliament.

On the surface, it may appear that the Canadian public sector is finally realigning with its perceived multicultural image but one does not have to look too far to observe that the cabinet appointments did not include any Black members of parliament. Moreover, all the leaders of Canada's major political parties are white males apart from Elizabeth May who is still white. Despite the attempt to diversify positions that have normally excluded racialized individuals, we still see the absence of racialized people from prominent roles in the upper echelons of both the private and public sector. Clearly, there is still much improvement needed to rectify the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in upper management positions within these prominent places of employment. So, I pose the question, why is there an underrepresentation of racialized workers in the private sector when Canadian companies are consistently boasting about diversity initiatives and Canada has such strong language around promoting multiculturalism and employment equity (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982; Multiculturalism Act, 1988; Employment Equity Act, 1995)? What has diversity come to mean in these spaces of employment?

To better contextualize the concept of "white nepotism" I would like to refer to one of this research project's respondents, a retired engineer named Roy who was born in India but arrived in Canada in his early twenties. He explains that most people who held management positions in the engineering sector were family members of the owners or upper management. Roy's observation could be seen as a form of nepotism[2] ; where a pervasive phenomenon of family connections is a

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[2] For a further understanding and detailed discussion around the study behaviour in work organizations from the perspective of scientific psychology please see Jones, R. G. D. (2012). Nepotism in Organizations. New York: Routledge.

major determinant of who may be hired or promoted to maintain family ties within an organization (Jones, 2012). It is apparent that the same types of favouritism or preferential treatment towards family members can play out similarly regarding race and ethnicity, where people in positions of power will consciously or subconsciously promote those who best resemble themselves in managerial positions.

In the following thesis, I reveal how 'white nepotism' and the consolidation of white supremacy exists in these spaces that are said to promote an environment of multicultural diversity and equity. The thesis suggests that what we are witnessing instead is the perpetuation of the "able-bodied (white) male" standard[3] that has been the gold standard for hiring and promotions (Connell, 1995). 'white nepotism' embodies a similar selection process for hiring or promotions used in respect to conventional forms of nepotism where family ties are substituted with ethnicity and race and its ties to upper management and/or company owners that are predominately white. This research makes a case that 'white nepotism', a racial form of exclusion is excluding racialized individuals from coveted jobs and upper management positions because they do not embody the traits of a long standing 'family' member within the organization. Employment equity may bring more ethnically and racially diverse individuals into public organizations; however, due to 'white nepotism' these individuals may find it extremely hard to have access to upward mobility within any organization where upper management consists of mainly white individuals.

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[3] R.W Connell (1995) refers to this "able-bodied (White) male" standard as hegemonic masculinity. She goes into great detail about the characteristics of this form of systemic discrimination. Hegemonic masculinity is the most privileged and rewarded form of masculinity. It can be described as being male, White, heterosexual, wealthy, one that shows no emotion, is assertive and aggressive. These attributes are highly valued and set the bar in relation to male dominance. For a further discussion please see Connell, R.W. (1995) 'The social organization of masculinity', in R.W. Connell, Masculinities, pp. 67-86. Cambridge: Polity Press.

1.2 Research Objectives

This research examines the covert and systemic forms of racism that limit the employment chances of racialized individuals in the Canadian labour market. Through a situated analysis of racialized workers, institutional actors, and public policies, I examine the nuances of racialized individuals' encounters with discriminatory hiring practices and job promotion procedures that exist in the private sector in the city of Toronto, Canada. Through the perspectives of racialized workers' lived experiences, and by bringing into question the employment practices of hiring managers and human resource personnel, this project addresses the following key questions: 1) How do racialized workers negotiate their movement through the Canadian labour market? 2) How might we understand the operation of racism in hiring practices and what are the mechanisms under which this occurs?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This research project examines the covert and systemic forms of racism embedded within private sector of the labour market that limit the employment opportunities of racialized individuals in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). Through a situated analysis of racialized workers, institutional actors, and public policies, I review hiring practices and job promotion procedures that exist in the private sector of the labour market that perpetuate systemic forms of racism.

The significance of this research is threefold: First, by examining racialized individuals' access to employment, their challenges with the validation of their credentials and qualifications, and their earnings gaps and mobility within the labour market, this study informs public policy

and further improves our knowledge on issues of inequality relating to private sector employment in Canada. The various ways in which the Canadian government has historically attempted to address these barriers were through policies and legislative instruments such as Employment Equity Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Multiculturalism Act. Although, these policies appear to be progressive, the central issue lies in their implementation and, indeed, their efficacy in combating systemic racism in the labour market.

Second, this research also helps to sensitize hiring agents and human resources departments on the need to eschew racism in their employment practices. Many individuals involved with the hiring and promotion of employees in their organizations may be unaware of systemic forms of racism that exist within company policies and practices. Lastly, this research provides racialized individuals with the opportunity to name and voice their concerns about racism and racial microaggressions encountered in their places of employment.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

In the next chapter (Chapter 2), I begin to unpack the theoretical underpinnings of racism in the workplace and describe the theoretical tools I draw on for this research project. This chapter offers an overview of how various scholars have attempted to challenge and/or explain issues of racism that may in/directly relate to employment on a systemic basis. I unpack how Canada's history as a white settler colonial state has steered the discourse about issues of race, diversity and culture in Canada. Drawing on this body of literature, I connect how some of the theoretical concepts offered help us to understand what is transpiring in places of employment, notably the private sector in the contemporary workplace. I conclude this section by proposing that, in general, private sector places of employment in the Toronto Metropolitan Area labour market are created

and maintained as 'white' spaces, allowing systemic forms of discrimination to flourish. By examining the discriminatory barriers of entry and navigation for racialized individuals within these 'white' spaces, we can still see that reconfigured forms of control that still perpetuate racial discrimination in the Canadian labour force.

In Chapter three, I describe the methodological approaches I deploy in this study, and move on to explain the reasons why I chose the area of study to be based in the Toronto Metropolitan Area. I then describe the methodological tools I employed and discuss literature which inform this research process. I also provide a demographic breakdown of respondents interviewed in this study and how I procured interviews with both racialized employees and recruiting agents. I close this chapter by addressing my subject position that lay bare the multiple privileges and challenges experienced while undertaking this project and outline the methodological and ethical dilemmas encountered.

In the fourth chapter entitled, *Racialized Encounters*, I explore the multiple forms of racism that respondents have faced that relate to their entrance and/or navigation within private sector workplaces of employment in the Toronto Metropolitan Area. This chapter focusses more on clandestine forms of racism experienced by respondents. Even the respondents could not confirm, prove, nor sometimes admit if their interactions with hiring agents or superiors were in fact racist encounters. It is these encounters that I connect with interviews from hiring agents in the next chapter to see if there is any validity to people's feelings whether or not they have fallen victim to racism.

Chapter five entitled, Organizing Racism/Work argues that private places of employment in the Toronto CMA perpetuate spaces of whiteness from which racialized employees must

negotiate. These 'white' spaces within places of employment perpetuate a fundamental racial encounter. I demonstrate, through my interviews with hiring agents, how whiteness and dominance exist in employment practices that produce a particular knowledge around race. Through the hiring agents' narratives, this chapter illustrates how forms of racism not only exist in covert or systemic forms but can and is at times very overt in some organizations. Combining these narratives with that of the racialized applicant or worker. I closely examine systemic scripts of whiteness and racist practices of everyday racialized encounters in multiple private sector organizations. I also reveal how organizations still manage to not defy policies regarding equity, but how they manage to meet the targets needed to appear compliant with the appearances of having a diverse workforce. Issues such as the racial stratification of labour and the contemporary precariousness of contract work are avenues of how organizations incorporate racial and ethnic diversity. These strategies are grounded in a colonial history that continues to operate in the present within organizational structures.

Lastly, Chapter Six denotes the conclusion of this thesis. My concluding thoughts summarize the implications of this study and discuss the possibilities for future research arising out of the particular constraints or questions delineated in this thesis. A central aspect of this discussion encourages an ongoing critique of white supremacy, which I argue, continues to be embedded in the Canadian cultural fabric, thus extending itself to organizational structures where places of employment in the private sector are not immune. I conclude by trying to push the boundaries of multiculturalism and to consider its seduction by promises of equitable racial and ethnic prosperity. This research is an attempt to make visible the racism that many privileged white Canadians appear to think is an issue of the past, when in reality it has and continues to be an immense contributor to the fabric of the Canadian national psyche.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

Overall, I have adopted a conceptual framework through a critical anti-racist lens by linking Canada's history as a white settler colonial state to systemic forms of racism that are perpetuated in the current Canadian labour market. First, I will explore some of the geographic literature that theorizes the roles of race and ethnicity in relation to the manifestation of discrimination that have been historically embedded in the Canadian employment landscape and how this perpetuates Canada as being a space of whiteness (Kobayashi and Peake 2000; Peake and Ray, 2001; Ray and Preston, 2009). This section will also problematize the concept of multiculturalism and how it plays out in Canadian society. Second, through a multiscalar approach, I explore how whiteness is translated and projected in the Canadian labour market and highlight its impact on racialized bodies on national, local and individual scales (Smith and Ley, 2008). I will use a mix of geographic and critical race theory to assist in framing the research questions pertaining to the "white spaces" from which racialized minorities negotiate on almost a daily basis. I aim to demonstrate specifically how whiteness operates in and through organizational culture within places of employment[4]. By examining racialized individuals' access, validity of credentials and qualifications, as well as earnings gaps within places of employment, I will be in a better position to conceptualize the "white spaces" which racialized individuals must negotiate on almost a daily basis. These three avenues will demonstrate how whiteness operates

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[4] Carol Agocs (2001) refers to Organizational culture as socially constructed shared patterns of informal social behaviour that are heavily influenced by dominant groups for further discussion see Agocs, C., & Jain, H. C. (2001). Systemic racism in employment in Canada: Diagnosing systemic racism in organizational culture. Toronto: Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

in the systemic makeup of the labour market. Finally, I engage with the literature that analyses how the Canadian government has attempted to address these barriers through initiatives such as the *Report on the Commission on Equality in Employment* (1984), *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and *The Multiculturalism Act* that have often been deployed to understand the notion of difference in the Canadian labour market. A brief analysis of the promises and limitations of how these policies address the forms of discrimination experienced by racialized individuals will also be provided.

2.2 Critical Anti-Racism

In this paper, I deploy a critical anti-racist lens to draw out the links between race and social difference on the one hand, and relations of power on the other, within the Canadian landscape. Drawing on the work of George Dei & Gurpreet Johal (2005), they suggest that this lens allows for the analysis of how different levels of power (notably around race, gender, sexuality, ability etc.) intersect with one another and provide a more detailed understanding of oppressive relations. This framework offers a wide spectrum that allows movement between different scales that can range from local interpersonal relationships to larger systemic structures that are involved in the progression of these issues. They further suggest that through an anti-racist framework, one can examine how historical and social factors rooted in racist relationships of power have been reinforced in the Canadian context. This is central to understanding how racism operates at both the individual and structural levels in Canada. In this project, I have drawn on Dei's (2008) understanding of anti-racist practice by capturing and critiquing "…the 'real/everyday' politics, socio-material realities and the formal and the informal institutional practices and resistances engaged by subjects. Our methodological approaches must look simultaneously at forms of

external and internal colonial and oppressive relations and practices" (p.143). This framework has allowed me to trace and theorize the spaces of whiteness that exist at an institutional level, but has also enabled me to link the hegemonic relations of power to places of employment in the Canadian labour market and other institutions.

2.3 Spaces of Whiteness in Canada

Race is a social construction, a human contrivance used to frame and rationalize hierarchical divisions between population groups in the modern world" (Baldoz, 2011, p.8). Racialization sets the stage for pointing out specific groups for unequal treatment based on real or imagined phenotypical features (Li, 1999). More importantly, it is the process of turning physical differences into social markers and, typically, enforcing them in a regime of oppression that gives race its significance. Moreover, racialization has also been described as an individual's tendency to "see oneself, one's past, present, and future, through the colour of one's own skin" (Bissoondath, 2002, p. 94). Miles (1989) rejects the analytical validity of the notion of race and instead prefers the term racialization. He himself employs the concept of "racialization" to refer to "those instances where social relations between people have been structured by the signification of human biological characteristics in such a way as to define and construct differentiated social collectivities" (p. 75). Racialization also refers "to the historical emergence of the idea of "race" and to its subsequent reproduction and application" (p. 79).

There are multiple ways to compare and contrast different discourses of how issues of race can be interpreted. Through these interpretations, it is important to make a distinction between how racism is structurally embedded versus how it is embodied in social structures of society. Critical race scholars who have led the charge in implicating the state in racist and/or exclusionary

acts (Bannerji, 2000; Galabuzi, 2006; Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007) are useful to this research project, in that it I am able to map out the connections between the state and racial exclusions and examine how they manifest conceptually, theoretically, materially and spatially through places of employment. Price (2010) addresses the intersection between embedded structures of whiteness through critical race theory and how whiteness is embodied using critical geographies of race. She asks us to be mindful of the differences between the two schools of thought and how they intersect with one another. Before we can attempt to negate racialized discourses, we must understand how deeply structured and embedded white supremacy is in our colonial histories, economic institutions and political structures that continue to have a bearing on the present.

Several scholars have traced the existence of racism in Canadian society to different historical events involving racialized groups in Canada. They have further examined and theorized how these encounters with racism operate in the contemporary moment (Agnew, 2007; Bannerji, 2000; Mensah, 2010; Razack, 2002). Examining the work of Himani Bannerji (2000), she argues that the labour market acts as a barrier for racialized individuals because Canada itself is constructed as a 'white' nation thereby discriminating against racialized bodies in its social, political and economic spheres. To illustrate this point further Bannerji states the following in her earlier work:

"Canada" then cannot be taken as a given. It is obviously a construction, a set of representations, embodying certain types of political and cultural communities and their operations. These communities were themselves constructed in agreement with certain ideas regarding skin color, history, language (English/French), and other

cultural signifiers - all of which may be subsumed under the ideological category "white." (2000, p. 64)

The problematic stereotypes that are created about racialized groups in Canada contribute to the social construction of a vision of whiteness that permits white Canadians to maintain a specific place of privilege. One might ask, how do we understand and theorize this notion of whiteness and how does it operate in Canadian life and society? Sherene Razack (2002) offers a historical and spatial analysis of how Canadian society and its laws were founded on the foundations of a 'white settler society'. She describes how mythologies of Canada's origins paint a picture of white European settlers as the 'bearers of civilization' and that people of colour came to this country after most of its development transpired. This myth promotes the idea of a Canadian national identity rooted in a systemic racial hierarchy that promotes Whiteness and excludes racialized bodies. It is through these national mythologies where European settlers become the bearers of civilization. This process is deeply connected to the Canadian landscape and largely informs the racialized hierarchies that situate White settlers as fundamentally national subjects. Razack further argues that these myths are a very spatialized and although it can differ at times, each of these narratives prop up White European settlers as being entitled to this land and uses the governing structures to make this law. Razack's work speaks to Doreen Massey's (1991) concept of the power geometry in time-space compression where Massey states:

> For different social groups, and different individuals, are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows and interconnections. This point concerns not merely the issue of who moves and who doesn't, although that is an important element of it; it is also about power in relation to the flows and the movement. (p. 25)

It is the production and reproduction of the White narrative that permit White settlers to assert themselves as overseers of the nation. It is these individuals who maintain positions of power that can organize their space that sustain unequal social relations and in turn use these relations to shape racialized spaces. Through social and political means, they can then determine who can and cannot legitimately belong to the nation. Exposing the association between racialization and space is critical to analyse space as a site of power relations. White Canadians obtain senses of selves through the construction of rigid boundaries that establish specific spaces as places reserved for national subjects. It is through this cycle of knowledge production that further outlines the boundaries as a space that is inhabited by the racial 'other' (Razack, 2002).

Speaking to the significance of place, I would like to refer to the concept of "geographies of whiteness" discussed by Audrey Kobayashi and Linda Peake (2000). They bridge Critical race theory and geography by suggesting that place contextualizes the construction of race and the nation, generating geographically specific ideologies of racism and nationalism. Certain places assume more powerful than others by restricting or controlling spatial access.   This research specifically explored the hiring methods for upper management jobs in the Toronto CMA and how these methods restrict access and movement in these places of employment for racialized people. I looked at organizations in sectors such as banking/finance, communications, information technology (IT), insurance, marketing, pharmaceutical, and various types manufacturing as primary sites of struggle that perpetuate racism or as potential sites of change. According to Kobayashi and Peake, spatial interpretation needs to consider "Empty Spaces", that result from silence, exclusion, and denial, and that serve as a basis for reproducing normative whiteness.

Veninga (2009), while drawing on Judith Butler's theory of performativity, suggests that a bridging of geography and critical race theory rather than solely focusing on place suggests how the material body matters in relation to how racial categories are constructed and reproduced. These categories are "produced through the repetition of performative acts which are embedded in discursive regimes of power and knowledge" (p.116). In addition to examining the "empty spaces" that exist in places of employment in the Toronto CMA labour market, this research study also explores how these spaces relate to the material body and performances of racialization. Through an in-depth qualitative analysis, I aim to pinpoint the nuances by exploring racialized individuals' experiences entering and/or manoeuvring in the labour market and simultaneously interrogating the methods used within the employment practices.

Racialized people that have immigrated to Canada since its inception are seen as those who do not fit into the White Canadian narrative. A key component of this narrative that is often erased from the national imaginary is the simultaneous colonial takeover of Aboriginal lands. Both Agnew (2007) and Razack (2002) point out that these racialized bodies are identified as 'Third World migrants' that are seen in Canada's national story as immigrants being attracted by the generosity of White Canadians and perceived as a burden rather than being instrumental and on equal footing in the development of Canada's social and economic spheres. Peter Li (2003) furthers this discussion by speaking to Canada's discourse of immigrant integration. The White Canadian national identity is also reinforced by Canada's discourse of immigrant integration. This discourse preserves the expectation for immigrants to conform to a specific White Canadian standard because to stick to one's own cultural beliefs and customs from their country of origin would deviate from this expected norm.

Although Canada's cultural framework can be understood to advocate tolerance of immigrants in general, maintaining cultural difference that appears outside of the mainstream goes against the realities of the Canadian discourse of integration. We can see how this discourse is further reinforced by racist immigration policies that Canada has adopted since its inception. Joseph Mensah (2010) offers a chronological account of these policies in great detail from blatantly racist characteristics of the Immigration Acts of 1906, 1910 to the more covertly discriminatory undertones of the immigration point system Canada used in the latter part of the century that assisted in preserving the myth of a White Canada. He outlines many early immigration policies that promoted Canada as a White society by favouring the acceptance of White immigrants while restricting racialized groups from living in Canada. Mensah, goes on to describe a shift to more 'colour-blind' policies that may have removed the racist language, but still echo their racist intents. As Mensah demonstrates, the shift from White European to racialized immigration was not caused by a genuine want for racial unity, but rather to adhere to international pressure and internal demands of the Canadian labour market.

2.4 Conclusion

It is important to unpack how Canada's history as a white settler colonial state has steered the discourse about issues of race, diversity and culture in Canada. A Race-cognizant anti-colonial framework that is underpinned by the following concepts: Discourse, power, knowledge and Subjectivity which takes into account how a racial state like Canada produces and reproduces particular racialized discourses that make racial privileging and exclusions possible. Furthermore, it also reveals what discourses racialized workers have access to and therefore appropriate, accommodate or resist. Based on the various arguments put forth by various scholars, I argue that the myth of a White Canada currently pervades the structure of the Canadian labour market. I

consider how this historicized logic feeds into forms of racism that manifests in a variety of ways for racialized groups in the contemporary labour market. In what follows, I analyse the literature that exists about racialized individuals' access to the labour market, the impacts on how credentials and qualifications are viewed by employers and finally, illustrate the wage gap that currently exists between racialized bodies and their White counterparts to further explore how this myth of a White Canada is entrenched in how we conceptualized the labour market alongside the opportunities for racialized others.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

In what follows, I begin by examining scholarly work that addresses the experiences of racialized people in the Canadian labour market. Broadly, I ask how does race factor in our understanding of the Canadian labour market? To date, I have encountered and drawn upon a significant body of qualitative research that speaks specifically to the experiences of racialized groups in the Canadian context (Agnew, 2007; Bannerji, 2000; Galabuzi 2006; Kelly, 2006; Mensah, 2010; Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007). There has also been an extensive body of quantitative work, mostly based on national census data or from large scale surveys, assessing how market trends and social capital can impact the intensity of discrimination faced by racialized bodies in the Canadian labour market (Agocs, 2002; Baker & Benjamin, 1997; Bauder, 2005; Li, 2001; Oreopoulos, 2011; Reitz, 2007; Ryan et al., 2009; Tastsoglou & Preston, 2012)[5]. Racism in the Canadian labour market can be shaped by different variables, such as the role of social capital, social networks and spatial mobility to name a few (Nanavati, 2009)[6]. These variables also intersect with the multiple identities attributed to racialized groups that are echoed in distinct

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[5] Abella (1984) defines discrimination as a means of limiting opportunity due to attributed rather than actual characteristics. Although most of the authors I draw from in my theoretical framework may use the term racism I may use the term discrimination interchangeably because much of the literature about the labour market will use the term discrimination to explain both racial and ethnic inequalities in the workplace. I do not want to discount the theoretical significance of the other terms.

[6] Pierre Bourdieu theorizes about three forms of capital in relation to class: Cultural, Political and Economic. Cultural capital discusses the way one's speech, actions and bodily presence relate to dominant societal norms. Economic capital can refer to the financial wealth one has access to. Economic capital works interchangeably with cultural capital in that it can be increased with the more economic capital one gains and vice versa. Social capital refers to the resources available through networks of relationships with others, which can also translate into access to cultural and economic capital. For a further discussion see Bourdieu, P. (1986). The Forms of Capital. In John Richardson, Ed. *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. New York: Greenwood Press, pp. 241-258.

cultural, ethnic, gendered and other behavioural attributes that can act as barriers for each individual's involvement in the labour market. Many of the barriers faced by racialized groups exist because these variables may not necessarily be compatible with the "Canadian values" that are engrained in the Canadian labour market (Bauder, 2005; Li, 2003). It is important to recognize that many different combinations between these variables and barriers may produce very different outcomes and determine various levels of success among racialized individuals in the labour market. More importantly, racialized individuals have had to historically navigate and negotiate their way within the Canadian labour market, while facing adverse experiences that are wrought with various forms of discrimination. Based on much of the literature that relates to the discrimination faced by racialized bodies in the Canadian labour market, it becomes evident that success in this sector for each individual depends mainly on the forms of discrimination that are faced in the labour market and are often mitigated based on their access to economic, political and social capital (Andiappan et al., 1989; Brief et al., 2000; Mensah, 2010; Ryan et al.; Tastsoglou & Preston, 2012).

3.2 Manifestations of Discrimination in the Canadian Labour Market

3.2.1 Access to the Labour Market

Discrimination manifests itself through whiteness in several different ways in the Canadian labour market. The first issue I explore is racialized individuals' access to the labour market. It is widely conceded through Canada's discourse on immigrant integration that immigrants will experience an adjustment period before they are integrated into Canada's economy (Bauder, 2003; Li, 2003). Bauder (2003) challenges this notion of an adjustment period and puts forth what immigrants face in terms of "adjustment" is not natural or taken for granted phenomenon. He

suggests that immigrants are actively excluded from places of employment, by professional associations and the state. This idea resonates with a study conducted by Philip Oreopoulos (2011) in which he sent out thousands of resumes with foreign experience to various job postings. These resumes also featured individuals with South Asian, Chinese, and Greek names in comparison to English names. The purpose of his study was to explore the reason why skilled immigrants had a hard time accessing the labour market. Some key findings suggest that Canadian-born workers with English sounding names are more likely to get a call back from potential employers. Moreover, employers valued previous Canadian experience as opposed to foreign education and job experience and more importantly, employers significantly discriminate by an applicant's name, favouring the more English sounding name.

Although Oreopoulos (2011) does not acknowledge the dominance of whiteness in his study, a fair conclusion can be made that racialized individuals have limited access to the Canadian labour market due to legacies of the 'White settler colony' (Razack, 2002) and the implicit selection criteria. These forms of discrimination are not only limited to immigrant racialized groups, but are also faced by racialized Canadian-born individuals. As I explore in a later section, the continuous increase of income gaps between White European immigrants and both immigrant or Canadian born racialized people can ultimately suggest that there is inconsistency in access to employment opportunities based on racist structures within the labour market (Galabuzi, 2006). It would have been beneficial for Oreopoulos to examine why European names are more acceptable despite foreign education, qualifications and credentials. What makes them more appealing? What can be extrapolated from a resume that limits the access for racialized bodies? Although employers may not intentionally exhibit overt forms of racism, Oreopoulos' study reveals that people in racialized groups that do not possess an "Anglicized" name can find

themselves prevented from entering into the Canadian labour market through indirect[7] forms of discrimination. In addition, a company that prefers or expects 'Canadian experience' over foreign experience is essentially perpetuating discriminatory practices that will limit racialized individuals who have immigrated to Canada, while this does not necessarily apply to those who may be educated in Canada.

3.2.2 Validity of Credentials and Qualifications

Oreopoulos' study is also relevant because of the discussion he offers on the validity of credentials that racialized individuals possess not only in terms of their entrance into the Canadian labour market, but also with respect to what level they enter. Due to a lack of perceived "Canadian experience" many new immigrants arriving to Canada are excluded from many employment opportunities in the higher paid upper-labour market sectors (Bauder, 2003). For example, the all-too-familiar story of an immigrant who may have been an educated and experienced professional in their home country, yet when they arrive in Canada, they end up taking a low wage or entry level job because the education they have attained may not meet Canadian standards. The Canadian government's recognition of foreign credentials and qualifications is lacking one of the major obstacles for skilled immigrant workers. Abdur Rahim (2014) further validates Oreopoulos' findings by suggesting that employers will overlook immigrant job candidates because of the assumption that immigrants with foreign credentials are not high calibre enough to meet Canadian qualifications. As a result, the tendency is for employers to look favourably at potential candidates with Canadian work experience, as they are not familiar with the immigrant candidate's foreign experience and education. Furthermore, racialized immigrants' credentials gained through

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[7] I draw on Abella's (1984) definition of indirect discrimination which refers to the barriers which have a disproportionately negative effect on a group are just as discriminatory as those which directly give preference or exclude because of a person's group status.

education or job experience outside of Canada will receive lower financial returns than Canadians (Ferrer & Riddell, 2008). This means that for racialized immigrants who manage to gain access into the Canadian labour market, despite their non-Canadian qualifications, they may still face discrimination with respect to the level or type of work they may be hired for because of a devaluation of their foreign education and credentials.

Because of these barriers to employment, racialized immigrants have no choice but to change or downgrade their careers and experience resulting in a loss of social capital. Philip Kelly (2012) refers to this as a "pattern deprofessionalization and deskilling" (p.166). Kelly's earlier work focusing on Filipino healthcare workers found that individuals who were educated and experienced professionals that held prominent occupations in the Philippines such as accountants, nurses, and engineers had to downgrade to jobs such as data-entry clerks, personal support workers and machine operators in Canada. He further makes an observation that although Filipino immigrants may have higher education credentials than other racialized immigrant groups, they disproportionally on average make lower incomes. Although the problem is not gaining employment in Canada, rather what becomes evident is that specific racialized groups are type casted to specific sections of the labour market. Preston and Giles (1997) outline the variations of immigrant women's paid employment that are related to ethnic origin by examining a period of deindustrialization in Toronto. Data was procured solely through secondary data from Statistics Canada including Census information from 1981 to 1991. Although written more than 20 years ago, the article resonates with the present where many immigrant women remain marginalized in low wage jobs in personal service and goods producing sectors that have been traditionally and still are perceived as a point of entry into the Canadian labour market. Additionally, due to the precarious nature of these jobs, they also tend to be the first places of employment to be negatively

affected during economic downturns. What the aforementioned research highlights is how the discourse of immigrant integration rears itself in a very discriminatory manner. What previous research demonstrates is that no matter how good an individual's credentials or qualifications are, racialized immigrants may not be sufficiently "Canadian" to secure employment in their qualified fields and are furthermore, unfairly compensated in comparison to other White Canadians in the same jobs.

3.2.3 Earning gaps within the Canadian Labour Market

Much of the work that discusses earning gaps between White and racialized individuals tend to confirm the extreme inequalities that exist within the Canadian Labour Market (Boyd & Yiu, 2009; Galabuzi, 2006; Nanavati, 2009; Pendakur & Pendakur 2002; Swidinsky & Swidinsky, 2002). The discussion of earning gaps can be quite complex due to the various types of datasets used by different authors that specialize in different sectors of the racialized Canadian diaspora. The various authors focus on specific subsets such as racialized immigrant women, racialized immigrant men, and Canadian-born members of racialized groups regarding earning disparities. Overall, there is an overarching theme that wage inequalities are very common in the Canadian labour market for immigrant racialized groups. Swidinsky and Swidinsky (2002) use data from the *1996 Public Use Census Microdata File* on individuals to conduct an analysis that measures wage discrimination by racialized groups. Their findings indicate that there is not enough disparity between racialized groups and White Canadians to warrant deep concerns about racial divisions in society; yet, found that the immigrant and Canadian born Black working population, specifically Black males, encounter significant wage disparities compared to all other ethnicities, suggests that this disparity be further explored on its own. Pendakur & Pendakur (2002) show similar findings

using census data but have noticed a gradual increase of wage disparities over a longer period of time from 1971 to 1996 especially with Canadian-born racialized individuals.

So, what does this mean exactly? How do we understand these discrepancies? This data corresponds to the work of Joseph Mensah (2010) who examines how Black Canadians navigate Canadian society through a deep seated anti-Black racism. He states:

> The term "visible minority" is best conceptualized as a continuum: different groups are located at different positions, and they face varying degrees of discrimination and social distance, not only from one White majority but also from the other minority groups that constitute that continuum. While the relative position of the various visible minority groups (e.g., Chinese, East Indians, Blacks, etc.) along this continuum changes from time to time, Blacks have generally occupied the lowliest position, due to their legacy of slavery and their physical visibility... (p. 260)

Although I agree with the preceding statement and that the Black experience is profoundly distinct from other racialized experience. I argue that we must also consider the myth of a White Canada that is propagated that allows this pendulum to exist and contributes to how we understand wage disparities. It is also important to look at other factors that may mask forms of discrimination related to racialized pay disparities.

Grace-Edward Galabuzi (2006) suggests that earning gaps can be skewed regarding pay equity because depending on how the country's economy is performing, racialized individuals can still be caught in segregated labour markets within Canada where they can be victim to pay inequity of similar value. Racialized women, more specifically, are more prone to be excluded from secure,

well-paid jobs and are unable to alter their circumstances while being more prone to precarious forms of work (Wilson et al. 2011). This speaks to the racialized and gendered forms of marginalization and exclusion that exist in the present day liberal democracy we call Canada (Bannerji, 2000). Investigating how various markers of identity intersect alongside their lived experience in the Canadian labour market is central to understanding the wage gap that exists among citizens. These wage gaps provide an additional entry point to understanding racist structures in the Canadian labour market.

3.3 Canadian Policy Reviews and Statutes in Addressing Discrimination

Canada on many occasions in the past has been viewed as an international leader for addressing various forms of discrimination. Before Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau left office in 1984, he commissioned a report that was led by Judge Rosalie Abella (1984) to examine the discriminatory barriers towards women, racialized and disabled people that exist within the Canadian labour market and suggest effective ways of promoting employment equity for these groups. The document laid the foundation and developed the Canadian language around equity issues by coining the concepts of direct, indirect and systemic forms of discrimination. It also pointed out that certain groups have had restricted employment opportunities, little public visibility/influence and a limited range of options. While Abella offers an overall definition of discrimination, as discussed earlier, as a means of limiting opportunity due to attributed rather than actual characteristics, she goes on to detail the difference between direct and indirect discrimination. She describes direct discrimination as when an employee is denied opportunity or otherwise treated differently because of some characteristic which differentiates him or her from the workplace norm and indirect as how people's attitudes, beliefs, biases affect one's behaviour

towards an individual or group. She states that although both forms of discrimination are very apparent, there are underlying systemic forms of discrimination that exist. These can be characterized as the unintended built-in mechanisms which cause discrimination, seen as they follow the 'able-bodied White male' standard that has been the gold standard for hiring and promotions entrenched within the Canadian labour market. The report helped create the groundwork for the federal *Employment Equity Act* (1987) that was commissioned to tackle systemic forms of discrimination.

While the *Report on the Commission on Equality in Employment* was able to outline forms of discrimination experienced in the Canadian labour market, statutes such as the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Multiculturalism Act* were drafted to take action in building an anti-racism culture in the workplace as well as other state and social institutions (Galabuzi, 2006).   The *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* was to guarantee the rights and freedoms of Canadians within a democratic society. In the equality rights section of the Charter, it outlines that "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability" (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982).   The *Multiculturalism Act* officially sets out Canada's multiculturalism policy that offers all citizens to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage as well as promote the participation and give access to all individuals in all aspects of Canadian society. Both are designed to protect those who would like to bring forth cases of discrimination.

Andiappan, Crestohl and Singh (1989) examine the development of legal resolutions to racial discrimination claims in relation to places of employment in Canada. The authors address

specific racial discrimination cases reported in the Canadian Human Rights Reporter then lay out and examine three major issues pertaining to racial harassment: 1) employers' liability for their employees, 2) discriminatory actions and 3) human rights laws as remedies to racial discrimination in places of employment. The authors make a claim that the Canadian government has been effective towards offering remedies to racial discrimination in employment. However, it falls short to fully acknowledge the reasons behind the lack of the reporting of the many indirect forms discriminatory incidences that have not been brought into inquiry. Although these statutes offer outlets for individuals to make a discrimination claim, we must acknowledge, which individuals actually has the time and financial means to proper legal representation in order to pursue a claim. One must also take into account the lengthy process that is needed to follow through with a claim that can take away from the individual's ability to be employed through a potentially lengthy process.

Carol Agocs (2002) essentially conducts an audit of the gaps between Canada's employment equity legislation and how successful it has been put into practice from 1987-2000. Her findings indicate a critical disconnect between policy and practice. Employers are not implementing equity policies and because these violations are not being enforced, their failure to comply has no real consequence. Many of the organizations in the private sector that adopted employment equity programs stemming from the *Employment Equity Act* (1987) worked well in hiring White non-disabled women into management positions to meet equity quotas, but fell short in hiring a proportionate number of racialized individuals to labour market availability. Even in the public sector, a study conducted by Ryan, Pollock and Antonelli (2009) using census data from 1991 and 1996, suggests that the Canadian education workforce is far less representative of the current student populations. Furthermore, the proportion of educators that identify as racialized

are falling particularly in larger Canadian cities. The authors suggest that these trends can be linked to the discriminatory licensing and hiring practices that exclude racialized individuals who have completed their teaching education. In both the public and private sectors we can see how no matter how much legislation is imposed we still see disproportionate number of racialized people being excluded from entry into various places of employment.

One would think that the *Report on the Commission on Equality in Employment*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as well as the *Multiculturalism Act* were integral to helping the Canadian government identify key factors that cause discrimination in the labour market. However, Sunera Thobani (2007) suggests otherwise:

> Many scholars of immigration have pointed out that the elimination of overt racial distinctions in immigration policy and citizenship during the 1970s was a pragmatic response to changing global economic conditions that had less to do with idealistic commitments to a cultural utopia and more with the country's growing need for labour. While I agree with this analysis, I also argue that in addition to these changes, the adoption of multiculturalism helped stabilize White supremacy by transforming its mode of articulation in a decolonizing era. (p. 146)

Although government policies on the surface appear to be inclusive, Thobani goes further to suggest that concept of multiculturalism preserves the values of hegemonic masculinity through the reconstitution of whiteness that facilitates a more socially and politically acceptable form of White supremacy. To validate Thobani's views, all one must do is look at the majority of White individuals that hold the highest positions of power in the Canadian public and private sectors.

The intentions behind government policies and initiatives are very important to racialized groups within the Canadian labour market because although it appears on the surface that the Canadian government is moving in a progressive manner, there are still systemic forms of discrimination that are still very much engrained in our social fabric. Mensah (2010) offers a more balanced critique on the integration of multiculturalism in the Canadian landscape. Although he reveals some of its pitfalls, he suggests that multiculturalism has been generally beneficial for supporting Blacks and other racialized groups to overcome racial barriers to allow them full involvement in Canadian society. As much as I would like to share this optimism, it is important to look at the barriers that keep the concept of multiculturalism from moving forward as a positive force for the weakening of discriminatory sentiments in Canadian society. Although the concept of multiculturalism has put racial and ethnic discrimination on the map, we must also engage with its limitations. It is important to now concentrate our ethical resources in to renouncing the normative White myth that encompass structures like the labour market that perpetuate all forms of intersectional inequalities[8].

It has been shown that government policies put in place to contest these forms of discrimination have not been sufficient in their effectiveness or implementation. In outlining the origins of why discrimination exists in Canada, we can see reconfigured forms of control that still perpetuate discrimination in the Canadian labour force. A key factor that is under researched is the effects of workplace culture in relation to discriminatory hiring practices. Agocs (2002)

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[8] Michael Brown (2006), a queer theorist, speaks to incorporating intersectionality into geographical research suggests that it is fine to focus on individual social identities. One of his main questions is, how many and which intersections do we include? As I am not going to ignore other intersectionalities in this study, I do see race as a major function and contributor into workplace oppression. In the end it is about challenging heteronormativity in the labour market that will benefit all oppressed social identities. For a further discussion please refer to, Brown, M. (2012). Gender and sexuality I Intersectional anxieties. *Progress in Human Geography*, *36*(4), 541-550.

suggests that the lack of workplace culture as part of the Employment Equity compliance review process is systemic and that there should be further research exploring this avenue. Although much of the quantitative research reviewed can offer us a generalized overview of some of the issues at hand, it is imperative to further this research and obtain personal accounts to achieve a more nuanced view of how racialized Canadians navigate the several manifestations of discrimination in the Canadian labour market. This qualitative appoach is important to substantiate and compliment current research that focuses more on quantitative data gathered from census data. More importantly, increased qualitative research can give voice to those experiencing some of the most significant obstacles embedded within the Canadian labour market.

3.4 Scale

To get to the root of systemic labour market inequities, it is important to establish how scale will be defined in this project. The perception of scale in geographic literature is quite vast. Marston, Jones, and Woodward (2005) offer a thorough history of how the concept of scale in human geography has transformed over the years and bring into question hierarchal understandings of scale. There is a further suggestion that adopting new ways of conceptualizing scale to existing concepts is not a viable option. The authors offer a hefty critique that adding on to vertical notions of scale "cannot be resolved by integrating them with network formulations" (p.422). With a heavy emphasis on promoting a flat ontology, they offer an alternative to scalar imaginaries that focuses on places where social relations emerge. Although I agree that local agents can have the potential to aid in disrupting capitalist discourse, there is a gross underestimation of how much strength and intensity of the social and political mechanisms in place that continually perpetuate inequitable capitalist forms of production specifically in places of

employment. Neil Smith, cited in the same article, elaborates on the dialectic character of capitalism and how it shapes social reproduction. Scale allows us to engage with the relationship between the discontinuous and contradictory character of capital within spaces between scales. Marston et. al (2005) make a strong case that a flat ontology can offer an ideal way of moving away from looking at social spheres through a hierarchal lens, but the reality is that we live in a global capitalist system that perpetuates an economic structure that thrives on hegemonic and violent forms of exploitation.

In order to counter these forms of oppression, it is vital to critically examine the different mechanisms that exist at many different scales that propagate place-based forms of oppression. Smith and Ley (2008) discuss the importance of place at multiscalar constructions and experiences of poverty in Canada's gateway cities by looking at different levels of scale at the national, provincial, municipal that further relate to the workplace. They stress the importance of spatial mobility in relation to employment that can distinguish inclusion from exclusion in these spaces. They make the connection that places at different scales can propagate limited access to services that could help racialized individuals connect to mainstream opportunities. To mitigate these inequities, they further suggest multiscalar, place-based interventions that can improve the inclusion of racialized individuals in relation to the labour market. I will deploy a critical anti-racist lens to draw out issues of race and social difference in relation to power within spaces of employment. Drawing on the work of George Dei & Gurpreet Johal (2005), they suggest that this lens allows for the analysis of how different levels of power (notably around race, gender, sexuality, ability etc.) intersect with one another and provide a more detailed understanding of oppressive relations. This framework offers a wide scope that allows movement between different scales that can range from local interpersonal relationships to larger systemic structures that are

involved in the progression of these issues. They further suggest that through an anti-racist framework, one can examine how historical and social factors rooted in racist and colonial relationships of power have been reinforced in the Canadian context. This is central to understanding how racism operates at both the individual and structural level in Canada. This framework allows me to trace and theorize the spaces of whiteness that exist at an institutional level, but also enables the linking of hegemonic relations of power to places of employment in the Toronto CMA labour market.

3.5 Conclusion

Exploring the geographic literature in/directly related to labour market experiences of different racialized groups in Canada has led to a plethora of questions that have helped frame this research study. I contend that corporate places of employment in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area labour market are created and maintained as 'White' spaces, allowing systemic forms of discrimination to flourish. Barriers throughout the employment process restrict racialized individuals from entering these "White" spaces even though they match or surpass the expected qualifications. If by chance, racialized individuals gain entry, there exists a different series of discriminatory barriers that limit their upward movement within these spaces. In briefly outlining the origins of why discrimination exists in Canada, we can see reconfigured forms of control that still perpetuate discrimination in the Canadian labour force. The reason why I have chosen to strike a connection between geographic and critical race theory is that together they offer a more nuanced critical, interdisciplinary perspective. Further, I purposefully use this hybrid approach because it allows me to incorporate the voices of racialized scholars and citizens that tend to be scarce in geographical literature and Canadian life more broadly.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Methodological Framework

The central objective of this study is to better understand how racism continues to flourish and further entrench itself amidst employment practices within the private sector organizations in the Toronto CMA labour market. Among other things, the study seeks to better understand the barriers and obstacles faced by racialized individuals when attempting to gain employment or navigating private sector organizations and how these organizations conduct their employment practices. Organizations can use different methods to recruit, train and promote their employees. This study focusses on two main methods that involve the use of a human resource department and contracted recruitment agencies for their employment needs. Both methods serve the same purpose to keep the organization fully functionally employed; however, as I found there were different nuances and strategies with respect to the accountability of decisions made from internal and external hiring agents. Because recruitment agencies are an external entity from an organization, they appeared to divert accountability of preliminary decisions made by the recruiting company. Because of this reason, it was important to form a separate set of additional questions that speaks to these nuances.

This study conducted 22 qualitative in-depth interviews to procure the necessary data. With the assistance of two different interview guides (Appendices A & B), the questions in these qualitative interviews were semi-structured with individuals who reside in the Toronto CMA. The study used a twofold process in the attainment of pertinent information: The first phase involved interviewing ten racialized workers in order to better understand the adjustment each individual has had to make in order to enter and navigate within different industries. The interviews began

with background questions followed by probing questions seeking information about various labour market related experiences with ample opportunity for the respondents to provide extensive personal narratives. In order to capture a variety of different experiences, respondents ranged in categories of age, sex, religion, ethnicity, that have previously worked, currently seeking work, or are employed in the private sector. Also, a fair mix between those born inside and outside of Canada was important to compare and contrast the two experiences. The second phase of data procurement involved interviewing five hiring managers or human resource employees and five employees from recruiting agencies regarding the procedures they use in the hiring process. In both cases, interviews were conducted either in person, over the phone, over Skype or Facetime, and were digitally recorded with the respondents' consent. The following chapter provides further detail on the scope of the project, data collection, data analysis and the limitations I have faced throughout the data procurement process.

4.2 Area of Study

The choice of the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (Figure 4.1.) as the site of study was influenced by the fact that it is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse cities in the world. I wanted to demonstrate that even in a diverse metropolitan area such as the Toronto CMA, racism is very much alive and flourishing in private places of employment. On the surface the Toronto CMA may epitomize Canada's all accepting multicultural rhetoric with the population as racially and ethnically diverse as it is, but it is very evident that racism is still entrenched in a variety of organizational structures within this space. With regards to spatial movement, many of the respondents in relation their places of employment spanned across multiple cities within this area. It was important to capture an area that would encapsulate people that work and live within this

geographic space as to allow for more congruent future comparisons to Census data. For example, if someone lives in an outer suburb city such as Brampton, they may work in the Toronto downtown core, similarly we may have someone living in Toronto proper but working in an outer suburb such as Vaughn. Regarding their procedures to procure applicants, many of the recruiting companies would cast their recruitment web and have clients throughout the different municipalities in the Toronto CMA.
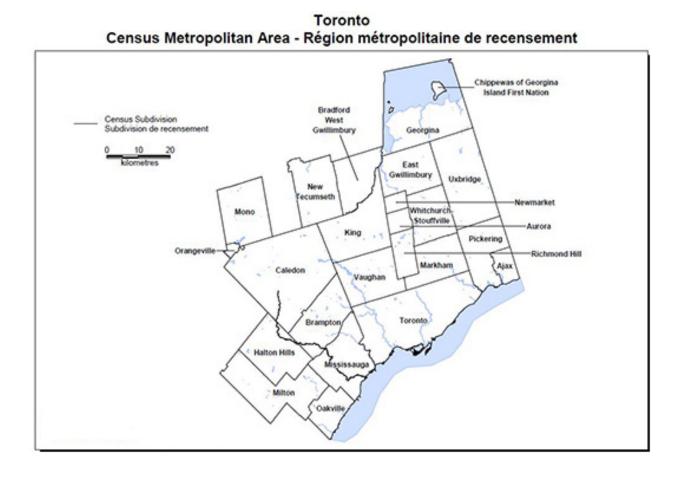

Figure 4.1. Map of Toronto Metropolitan Census Area. Source: 2011 Census of Canada

4.3 Data Collection Methods

For the procurement of primary data, I conducted one-on-one, semi-structured interviews in order to obtain more nuanced accounts of respondents' personal experiences in the Canadian labour market. In some cases where face-to-face interviews were not possible due to time constraints, logistical purposes or convenience for the respondent, interviews were conducted either over the phone, or over Skype or Facetime and were also digitally recorded with the respondents' consent. Participants were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix E), indicating their involvement was voluntary and that they would be able to withdraw from the research project at any time. For the interviews that were not conducted in-person, verbal consent was attained after reading them the contents of the consent form. After each interview, I transferred the digital file and encrypted it on a USB stick that I kept locked in a filing cabinet at my home.

Having two main sets of participants, I had somewhat different approaches for each group. When interviewing racialized workers, I would begin the interview by asking the respondents about their personal profile in order to get a sense of how they chose to identify themselves. I would continue by asking about their credentials and experiences and their experiences regarding labour market entrance, and their current employment status and goals and details about their workplace environment. After I felt that I had built a positive rapport with the participant, I would ask more directed questions about specific forms of discrimination they may have faced in previous or current workplace settings. Although a list of interview questions served as a guide (Appendix A), the flexible interview format allowed the exploration of key themes that surfaced during the conversation. It was important to allow the respondent an opportunity to voice their experiences in the way they saw fit. Further, I would end each interview by thanking each person,

asking them if they had any more thoughts they would like to add and if they had any questions for me regarding the research. I reassured the participants that their information would be confidential and that their names and places would be protected with pseudonyms. I provided opportunities for the participants to read over their transcripts and let them know that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

The second set of participants, I refer to in this study as 'hiring agents', is a combination of individuals that work for recruiting agencies or staff involved in hiring, training or promotion of employees within their own organizations. The interview questions with hiring agents were very similar except for the ones that pertained specifically to recruiting agency personnel (see Appendix B). At the beginning of each interview, I felt it was important to share with the respondent that I have had extensive experience in matters that specifically pertained to employment practices. Being a senior manager with different companies for 18 years enabled me to see how racism has manifested in the employment practices. From my unique vantage point, I constantly encountered implementation of racism from the top down whether they were (un)intentional and/or covert/overt. While conducting the interview, I would refer sometimes to my own experiences of when I thought ethnic or racial biases entered in my own hiring or promotion practices that I later expand on in the positionality section of this chapter. As for the hiring agents, I would use the interview questions a guide as to keep the fluidity of the interview and allowed the respondent the opportunity to add any pertinent details that they felt were important in order to keep a good rapport with them. The positive flow of these interviews was crucial to getting the unabridged versions of what they had to say, so much so that I found myself having to laugh or go along with racist or sexist rhetoric that the respondent would share. This form of deception was conflicting for me, but something I felt was necessary to further solicit

behind the scenes forms of discrimination that would not be privy to the public or in company policies.

4.3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

At the beginning of each interview, I gave each respondent an overview of the research project and the criteria of the questions I would be asking them. For those individuals that have or were currently procuring employment, I mentioned how these questions would revolve around their past and/or present experiences in navigating employment processes with organizations in the private sector of the Canadian labour market.

For those who were involved in the decision making regarding employment practices, I would also give an overview of the project and the criteria of the questions I would ask them with more emphasis on specific hiring practices. For example, I used more conservative language such as discrimination or unfair treatment in referring to concepts that related to racism and sexism in order to limit the potential defensiveness this might elicit among participants. This often aided in my ability to attain a more raw account of what they thought about their organizations' employment methods and practices.

There are overlapping questions between the different types of respondents in order to be able to cross check the opinions about employment practices that are in line with the major themes of this project between both racialized employment seekers and workers versus hiring agents. Table 4.1 outlines a sample of questions and approaches used in each phase to attain pertinent information that will contribute to the main research objectives. A question such as "Do you ever feel like you were able to use your race or ethnicity to your advantage or gain access to the

workplace?" that would be asked to racialized respondents would be reworded to "Do you ever feel like people are able to use their race or ethnicity to their advantage when seeking employment?" when asked to hiring agents. This allowed me to acquire different narratives about the same if not similar specific employment processes and allowed for cross referencing that would ultimately influence my analysis.

Table 4.1 Research Operationalization Chart

Research Objectives	Corresponding Questions	Approaches
Understanding how racialized workers navigate the Canadian labour market.	1. Do you feel that discrimination has ever had anything to do with you ever not getting hired anywhere? If so please give examples. 2. Can you tell me about how issues of race may have played out in the workplace? 3. What particular negotiations have you had to make in order to "fit in"? 4. Do you ever feel like you were able to use your race or ethnicity to your advantage or gain access to the workplace?	This information is collected through semi-structured interviews with racialized employees.
Understanding the operation of racism in hiring practices, and the mechanisms under which this occurs.	1. If you were to try to advise recruiters on how to recruit more diverse bodies into the workforce, what would you advise them? 2. Does your company have any diversity quotas you are expected to abide by? 3. How do your company hiring policies speak to issues of employment equity? 4. What are some of the tactics that you use to screen potential applicants before the interview process?	This information is collected through semi-structured interviews with hiring managers and racialized employees. Both will be cross-referenced with the pre-existing policies that exist to promote employment equity.

4.3.2 Participant Recruitment Process

I have used a mixture of conventional and unconventional methods to procure interviews for this research. I was specifically looking for individuals that worked in or were seeking work in organizations that garnered higher paying upper management positions. Conventional methods involved tapping personal networks via an email callout to people that personally may fit or know someone that fit the criteria I was looking for (Appendix C). The callout asked if they or anyone they knew felt that they were passed on a job or restricted from navigating upwards in their organization for reasons of discrimination (Appendix C). I also sent a second call out that related more to people who have held positions in a human resources department or recruiting agency that would be willing to discuss the employment methods that their organizations used both in the service or manufacturing sectors (Appendix D). Although I got a great response from racialized individuals wanting to share their experiences, I was not getting the responses I was hoping for in regards to hiring agents. Seeing how I was specifically looking for individuals working as employment agents for larger firms, I needed to go outside my personal networks. I attempted to call human resource departments and recruiting agencies that were linked to banking/finance, communications, information technology (IT), insurance, marketing, pharmaceutical, and various types of manufacturing sectors with no avail. Many people I spoke to would not participate for a range of reasons such as time constraints, and not wanting to divulge company information even though stringent confidentiality was offered.

As a way to expand outside of my personal networks I decided to try something that would be considered, in most academic spheres, a bit unconventional as a way of finding respondents. I had an idea that stemmed from an invitation to a close friend's birthday party that was being held

at a prestigious bar in downtown Toronto. This nightclub has a reputation for having high profile clientele that work in the sectors I was looking to study. After an hour upon my arrival, I found myself having a full discussion with three individuals about employment practices that involved individuals that worked in a human resource department, recruiting company and a project manager in three of the sectors I was seeking. After building a good rapport through this discussion, each individual agreed to an interview and created the conditions for a snowball sampling[9] because they also suggested other people they knew who would be willing to discuss the hiring and other employment methods of the organizations they work for as long as strict confidentiality was assured. I had similar success on two other occasions at similar types of venues.

4.3.3 Profile of Participants

I located 15 racialized individuals (7 female and 8 male) willing to participate in this research. It was important for this project to incorporate the narratives of people that identify as different races/ethnicities, genders and ages in order to offer a more intersectional analysis. I also wanted to compare and contrast if and how each person's employment experiences differ between people born in and outside of Canada. I purposefully attempted to procure such a varied sample of people in order to see what type of idiosyncrasies that may pertain to specific groups stand out in any way. Further, I specifically accepted people from different industries to get a different overview of how racism may play out in each one. Although there were many similar ways systemic forms of racism existed in each industry such as hierarchal forms of power imbalances,

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[9] A snowball sampling is a technique of procuring research respondents through access to the social networks of initial identified respondents For further discussion about snowball sampling please see Desai, V. & Potter, R.B. (2006). *Doing Development Research.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

each one had a unique way of how it was displayed in each workplace setting. The following table

(Table, 4.2) offers a brief overview of each of the participants. However, greater details are given

throughout this study as the results and analysis unfold.

Table 4.2 Overview of Racialized Respondents[1]

Name	Age	Gender	Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity	Country of Birth	Industry
Nana[2]	24	F	Black	Canada	Financial/ Insurance
Steve	28	M	South Asian	Canada	Pharmaceutical
Scott	39	M	Black	Canada	Airline
Dante	40	M	Black	Canada	Information Technology
Allan	50	M	South Asian	India	Pharmaceutical
Roy	72	M	South Asian	India	Engineering
Mona	44	F	Black	Canada	Manufacturing/Marketing
Julia	50	F	Black	Jamaica	Financial
Duc	35	M	Asian	Canada	Information Technology
Leroy	39	M	Black	Grenada	Banking
Hassan	31	M	South Asian	Pakistan	Information Technology
Sofia	37	F	South Asian	Canada	Insurance
Valarie	71	F	South Asian	Kenya	Electrical Engineer
Sandra	39	F	Black	Canada	Professional Services
Mary	42	F	Asian	Canada	Communications

Notes:

[1]To protect the anonymity of the interviewees, the names are altered and only the industry they work in are shown.

[2]This respondent chose to use her real name for this project in order to keep the context of specific parts of the interview intact.

The next set of participants I refer to as hiring agents, is composed of two different sections. The first section consists all of the people who are involved with internal employment processes within the company they work for (Table, 4.3). These positions can range from human resource personnel, managers, project managers and upper management such as vice presidents of specific divisions within their organization.

Table 4.3 Overview of Internal Hiring Agents[1]

Name	Age	Gender	Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity	Industry
Enrique	39	M	Latino	Information Technology
Rebecca	35	F	White	Insurance
Mona	44	F	Black	Marketing
Martha	34	F	White	Food Processing
Larry	47	M	White	Communications
Julia	50	F	Black	Finance
Laura	27	F	White	Fast Food Front Office

Notes:
[1]To protect the anonymity of the interviewees, the names are altered and only the industry they work in are shown.

Those who worked as recruiters that worked for external fulltime recruiting agencies are the other participants that are considered hiring agents in this project (Table, 4.4). The reasoning behind splitting them into sub categories is twofold: 1) Internal hiring agents are forced to follow company policies and procedures in relation to hiring and other employment processes and 2) the external hiring agents are mostly hired as intermediaries by companies. External hiring agents do not have to necessarily follow the policies and procedures of these companies they are hiring for,

creating a dynamic that distances the hiring organization from the initial screening process which very problematic in relation to equitable hiring practices.

Table 4.4. Overview of External Hiring Agents[1]

Name	Age	Gender	Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity	Industry
Martin	39	M	White	Manufacturing, Information Technology
Sunny	37	M	South Asian	Financial, Pharmaceutical, Manufacturing
Larry	37	M	White	Manufacturing, Information Technology
Duc	36	M	Asian	Information Technology
Maria	28	F	White	Financial, Pharmaceutical, Manufacturing

Notes:
[1]To protect the anonymity of the interviewees, the names are altered and only the industry they work in are shown.

Although there were ultimately three different groups of participants, there were times that individuals would fit the criteria for more than one group. There were a few instances racialized participants such as Mona and Julia have either presently or in the past held positions that involved decision making around hiring, promotions and firing for the company they worked for. In these cases, they were also included in both the category including racialized respondents and internal hiring agents. Each respondent had much to say about their navigation through places of employment as a racialized individual, but each of them were also able to give valuable insight into much of the hiring practices they were involved with when they worked for specific companies in their careers. Another respondent named Duc spent 5 years as a fulltime recruiter just before the company he is currently working with in the IT sector where he is not responsible nor involved in employment practices. Finally, there was also one case, in which the respondent named Larry

held high positions in the human resource departments for two different companies in the communications industry, but is now a fulltime recruiter in the IT sector.

Although the categories measured broad ranges and samples, their purpose is to explore how systemic forms whiteness is evident in multiple industries but also how we can understand how it operates differently in different places among different roles. It would have also been difficult to narrow this research project down to one specific industry because in many of my interviews with respondents said that they would have refused interviews out of fear of being singled out and thus affecting their own status within the company they currently work for. Some respondents were additionally worried that if they were singled out, it would impact any future employment opportunities in the same field. By looking at multiple industries, it also allowed me to compare and contrast the nuances of how racism operates between them. For these reasons, I chose to investigate multiple industries as opposed to just focusing on one specifically.

4.4 Data Analysis Methods

Each interview was recorded on a digital recording device which was transcribed verbatim and combined with the notes I took during an interview. The transcripts were coded using Nvivo Software to help identify reoccurring themes that I may have overlooked. From the narratives obtained for this project, I organized consistent themes that appear and connect them to both the accounts of racialized workers and hiring agents. I did this to not only to justify many of the negative racist impacts that racialized workers have hesitantly expressed due to not being able to directly name it, but to also in later chapters confirm these feelings with the accounts from hiring agents in the same or similar industries.

4.5 Positionality and Limitations

My subject position as researcher was a constant variable in shaping this research. Blair (1998) argues: "No matter what our good intentions, we cannot guarantee neutrality in our interpretations and analyses. This is because our histories and memories are shot through with gendered, classed, racialized, and other excluding understandings which give us our particular perspectives on the world" (p. 13). A critical anti-racist framework, in conjunction with an interlocking analysis of power, demands that researchers interrogate how their own subjectivity shapes and forms any research project (Lather, 1991; Reinhartz, 1992; Weedon, 1997). I consider the historical, social, and material conditions that make possible my own role in this project given this focus on reflexivity (Frankenberg, 2004). As such, I am driven to ask the difficult question: What kind of person am I, to be able to ask questions about how racialized subjectivity shapes the lived experience of individuals who were attempting to procure work in and navigate the Canadian labour market?

I am the son of immigrants from Europe. My dad came from Italy and my mother came from Malta shortly after the end of the Second World War. They described many unjust hardships that they faced based on their ethnicity when they first came to Canada that related to the ways they spoke with an accent and some of the foods they would eat. My parents would tell me stories of how they faced many of these ethnically charged overt aggressions daily. As a second generation Canadian[10] that passes as White, I have been able to benefit from my place of privilege as a White male that has allowed me to work and thrive in the private sector for 18 years. Before

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[10] I draw on the definition of second generation Canadian as children born of immigrant parents in Canada discussed in Breton, R., Isajiw, W. W., Kalbach, W. E., & Reitz, J. G. (Eds). (1990). *Ethnic identity and equality: Varieties of experience in a Canadian city*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

entering academia, I have held positions as upper management in the private sector. I was deeply involved and had much influence with much of the employment practices such as the hiring, training, promoting and firing or employees. Although I would consider myself to be socially conscious, there were many instances that I allowed both internal and external socially constructed biases to influence the many independent and group staffing decisions in these organizations that cut across racial, gender and class lines.

Stemming from an earlier research that I conducted where I asked members of the South Asian diaspora to share their experiences in navigating Canadian labour market, I was able to gain an understanding of the types of discrimination that were faced in places of employment. I needed to question my own positionality in relation to my respondents. Directly connected to the earlier question I posed, I contemplated how I can actually use my place of privilege to better understand why and how racialized individuals are still excluded from certain sectors of the labour market. Specifically, being positioned as a White male who was perceived as an insider within a corporate setting allowed me access to information that most women and researchers of colour would have not been privy to. I am not saying that anyone else would have been less successful in procuring information that divulges inequalities within the hiring methods, however my subject position allowed me to both procure specific higher profile informants and also put them more at ease to discuss more of the "behind the scenes" forms of racist practices that have been used when involving potential hiring candidates and current employees of colour. Especially if the organizational culture would be influenced by a culture of whiteness, I was in most part seen as "one of the boys". Many people I interviewed in positions of power that heavily influence the employment practices for/in the organizations they represented were much more candid with me because I was able to fit the profile of someone with whom they were familiar. Not all of these

respondents were White and male, but not being seen as a person who may have been personally subjected to racist employment practices, or appeared as someone who would not judge them on their discriminating actions whether they be overt or covert, allowed them to be much more candid in the later parts of the interview. Even though my position allowed for access to these informants, I still needed the time during each interview to build a positive rapport so I would begin by sharing some of my personal experiences from my past where I was not the most socially conscious person in some of my hiring practices. For example, I would tell them of a time, as a district manager for a prominent retail chain, that I purposefully hired an Asian person out of the pool of candidates because that store was consistently having problems balancing their cash register and that I needed to hire someone that was "good with numbers".   This tactic was successful in further softening any barriers to information that allowed me to elicit their own experiences involving racism in employment practices that they have been personally and/or indirectly involved with. Initiating the interview with more indirect questions about themselves and the organization as well as sharing my own personal experiences regarding discrimination in the workplace offered an effective way to progress to more direct questions that would allow me to learn about the circulation of whiteness and experiences around race within their organization.

In the following chapter, I present the data and analysis of this research study. I outline the narratives of racialized workers and reveal how they have experienced multiple forms of racism in regards to entering and navigating in private for profit organizations in the metropolitan Toronto labour market. Specifically, drawing on the hiring practices of these organizations coupled with the narratives of racialized workers, I will later explore how the employment practices used by these organizations are fraught with what I term *White Nepotism* that is an organizational culture imbedded within a culture of institutional whiteness.

Chapter 5: Racial Encounters

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the multifaceted encounters of racialized individuals within the private sector labour market in the Toronto CMA. It is important as an entry point into this project to get a sense of the issues regarding discrimination within these places of employment. In what follows, I reveal the narratives of individuals of different races and ethnicities working in multiple industries. What becomes salient to their experiences is the important way in which racism is present. Much research about discrimination is influenced by surveys and statistics which can bring initial light to these issues, but in order to get a more detailed analysis of how racialized individuals negotiate this terrain of whiteness, we need to hear the narratives of the people grappling with White supremacy in the labour market on a day-to-day basis. I am heavily influenced by the qualitative tradition, capable of placing human faces to numbers and statistics because it is only then that people in positions of power may become aware of their complicity in discrimination and the exclusion of racialized others. During the interviews, several themes emerged, such as not being able to prove that the person they were interacting with was being influenced by racist thoughts, being privy to microaggressions in the workplace, to not feeling that they have ever faced racism in their own experiences. Drawing on a critical antiracist framework, I tease out and attempt to identify tangible points of reference that I can use when comparing the narratives of hiring agents.

5.2 I can't prove they were being racist (The Look)

Throughout this project, I recognized that the experiences of racialized workers within the context of the labour were not isolated events, nor could they be divorced from historical

influences. Further, I came to understand that these racialized experiences were very similar to each other rather than individual outlier events. One of the most common phrases implied or explicitly mentioned by most respondents was a variation of this comment "I can't prove they were being racist, but…" This would come up many times, especially when there were issues that pertained to hiring or promotion. In the pool of respondents there were individuals who acknowledged that they did not have a standard anglicized name or common "Canadian" name. This is important because these individuals were concerned that they would not get accepted for an interview when applying or jobs. This concern is not altogether unfounded because Philip Oreopoulos (2011) conducted a study in which he sent out thousands of resumes with foreign experience to various job postings with South Asian, Chinese, and Greek names in comparison to English names. Some key findings validated that Canadian-born workers with English sounding names were more likely to get a call back from potential employers which could potentially account for why most of the respondents may have been called to be interviewed. Although this hypothesis may be utterly speculative, Oreopoulos' research supports this claim. One individual in particular, Nana, who identifies herself as being Black and of African descent was very aware of how her name could limit her own chances of getting an interview in the financial sector, so she admittingly changed her name on her resume to appear more "Canadian". She felt that it had helped get an interview with a large well-known investment firm. After an initial phone interview, she was asked to go in for an in person interview where in the end she did not get the job. When I asked her why she thought she may have not been successful in the job search, she responded with the following:

> **Nana:** *Honest and all I never confirm it, but I think, over the phone I don't necessarily, like my voice I've often been told that my voice does not match what I*

look like, so people will hear me over the phone and honestly I thought you were a White girl right? And they picture what you look like.

Michael: Did they actually say that when you walked in for the interview?

Nana: Not at this particular company, but you can see it in their faces. You know when you come in and they are like "Oh, you're Anna?"

Nana expresses how she is theorizing this 'look' she is receiving from a White dominated space. Fanon (1967) refers to 'the look' as the gaze that embodies "the movements, the attitudes, the glances of the other fixed me there" (p. 112). Describing the gaze's objectifying nature, he goes on to suggest, "Sealed into that crushing objecthood, the look imprisoned me" (p. 113). Even though Nana was not sure whether it was her race that made her the object of this White male gaze, she is made to feel objectified in that moment during the interview. We can see how the entrance of the Black female figure is received quite differently from what the employer's initial perceptions were of Nana from her voice on the phone and her name. In this instance, we see how her mere presence prompted, "a state of ontological anxiety, for it disturbs a particular 'look'" (Puwar, 2004, p.39). In light of the anti-Black sentiments we have witnessed in regards to carding and anti-Black police violence that is still very present in Toronto, the Black individual is seen by the dominant as rooted in other negative places separate from respectable space, while whiteness remains unmarked. Puwar explains the idea of "disorientation" that hiring agents and upper management are experiencing when processing highlights of the "space invader" status of racialized candidates in privileged occupational positions:

The claims 'Black bodies' make on institutions by occupying spaces they are not expected to be in are constantly challenged by a look which abnormalises their presence and locates them, through the workings of racialized framings, belonging elsewhere. It is important to note though, that the Black body is fixed by a White gaze, the White gaze itself is disoriented by the close proximity of these foreign bodies. Their very presence as 'equal' members rather than as service staff, who take up a different rhythm in the occupation of space, challenges the ways in which racialized bodies have been characterized and fixed…there is a disturbance of a certain order. A racialized episteme has been interrupted. (Puwar, 2004, p.42)

In places of employment we see how this racialized episteme is constantly upheld by operations of whiteness. Ahmed (2000) examines these operations of whiteness through the concept of strangeness as how and when individuals are constituted as "Other" or when they appear to be "out of place" in institutions and nations. She suggests that "strange bodies are precisely those bodies that are temporarily assimilated as the unknown within the encounter: they function as the border that defines both the space into which the familiar body… cannot cross, and the space in which such a body constitutes itself as a home" (p. 54). In various contexts and more specifically in the context of the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area labour market what becomes obvious is that through the apparatus of "the look" or White male gaze, the racialized job applicant such as Nana is rendered outside of her legitimate space and her "movement dictated by tacit rights of occupancy" and as such "cannot simply be" (Nelson, 2008, p. 40). This is particularly instructive, because the making of dominant subjects in spatial terms is contingent on how differently marked subjects take on different meanings through their ability to enter and remain in certain spaces. As

Nelson (2008) argues, bodies must be read against the "backdrop of their geographies" in order to understand who belongs and who does not (p. 4).

Alternatively, other racialized respondents with "non-ethnic" sounding names would experience "the look" manifested in a different way. For example, some respondents were questioned if they have any other names that take precedent or would be questioned regarding their "real name". During the first couple of minutes in an interview for a position in the finance department for a pharmaceutical company, Steven was asked, "Is [Steve] short for something? Is there another name you prefer to go by? Because you can feel free to use your official name here with no fear of being judged if you choose to do so because we are an equal opportunity employer". Although employers may not intentionally exhibit overt forms of racism, Oreopoulos' study explains that people who fit a particular understanding of what a non-Canadian looks like, that do not possess an 'anglicised' name, can find themselves excluded from entering into specific private sector places of employment and/or upward movement within these spaces. In Steven's case, what may look like an attempt by the employer to be ethnically inclusive or tolerant; however, what we are witnessing is that the assumption made by the employer implies that Steven's name does not belong to him. Steven thought that the interviewer may have made this assumption because he exclaimed that "…*my last name appears to be South Asian looking, I'm sure that is why she asked me that*."

Similarly, another respondent named Allan who was born in India but does not have a name that "sounds Indian" also faced similar reactions to his name:

> *As soon as I got off the plane everyone was literally like, 'Oh, you don't have an Indian name.' …even now people say 'You don't have an Indian name, I would have*

never guessed that you were from India.' Or I also get the question 'How long have

you been living in this country?' Because of my last name I was asked time and time

again, where am I from... Not because of my colour, but because of my last name...

I do get those looks and even now in my current job I'll have clients walking in or an

inspector questioning me about my last name... instead of saying 'Hey you're brown,

where did you get this name?', rather they'll just ask you "where are you from".

Even though Steve was born in Canada and Allan was born in India, each person faced similar types of discrimination regarding their names. In all three cases, it appears that hiring agents conducting the interviews, coworkers, clients or superiors had pre-conceived notions about their candidates based on their physical attributes and names. Although the participants could not say for certain, it is evident that racial and ethnic stereotypes were at play precisely because they were marked as other in the dominant nation imaginary

Ethic markers of difference and or accents are not the only indications of a person's racial or ethnic identity. A recent study by Kang, DeCelles, Tilcsik, and Jun (2016) examines how racialized individuals will attempt to "whiten" certain items on their resume in an attempt to conceal any racial or ethnic cues in order to circumvent any anticipated discrimination they may encounter when attempting to enter the labour market. These cues also include other items on one's resume such as previous employment or volunteer experience. This process can also go beyond the resume stage as displayed in the next example. In one of her phone interviews with a major insurance company Nana discusses one of the interactions she had with the person interviewing her which ultimately led to her divulging her ethnicity. It began as a conversation

about one of her past working experiences for a non-profit organization that conducts work in the Jane and Finch community in Toronto:

> *Nana: We went into discussions about the Jane and Finch area. It was random, it went right off from the interview itself about how things need to change and how to accommodate it. And so, from that it appeared to go very well, but still I never got a call back.*

> *Michael: Was there anything else you may have said that may have related back to your ethnicity?*

> *Nana: I'm pretty sure, and that is what I think back to...it came up within a conversation about ethnicity. But I did find out that he was actually from Trinidad and Tobago, that was his background. I was like cool, I have some friends from there. And then he's like oh where are you from? And I said I'm from Ghana, West Africa. Then he said that's cool I think I know some people from there as well. So I know for sure, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that I was Black. Do you know what I mean? It really didn't, but I am sure from that phone conversation he would have realized along the lines, obviously what my backgrounds was because I did openly tell him.*

In this occurrence Nana feels that despite the function of the phone as being a neutralizer that could eliminate or reduce markers of difference, she remained starkly noticeable because of her previous work experience. Although the interview was not conducted in person, the interviewer was still able to ascertain Nana's race and ethnicity. Although she felt that the interview went really well,

she was left hanging as to why she did not get a call back, even if they did not want to hire her. It not only left her with an uneasy sense of self-doubt about why she did not get hired but she could not also help to think that perhaps divulging her ethnicity, even though the interviewer was not White himself, was not given an in-person interview because she was Black. This uncertainty creates much frustration and can cause an individual much self-doubt and lead to the normalization of these forms of racism if repressed.

Unlike the uncertainty that multiple respondents faced, there were just as many that felt that they had never faced discrimination or racism themselves. Answers respondents gave regarding the question "Were there positions that you applied or interviewed for where you did not get the position?" garnered some very noteworthy answers. Although I will further explore this later in this chapter, I would like to highlight how covert forms of racism can even convince individuals that racism is non-existent. For example, during the interview with Allan, who was born in India and immigrated to Canada approximately 35 years ago, when asked if he has ever felt discriminated, he responded:

> *I have never felt in Canada that I was ever discriminated regardless for a job or anywhere I went publicly; in my friend's circle or did I ever feel that I was discriminated because of my colour or my accent or any other thing…I was never discriminated against in Canada.*

He strongly asserts multiple times throughout the interview that discrimination was clearly not his experience nor was it a factor for him in relation to gaining employment whenever he was interviewed for a job. Overt forms of discrimination may not be apparent in employment processes even through the experiences from the perspective of racialized candidates interviewed. These

"questionable" forms of racism are in fact explicitly reflected in all of the interviews with hiring agents as we will see in the next chapter *Organizing Racism.* Indeed, much of the uncertainty of racism taking place is indeed confirmed through the narratives of the hiring agents. Due to their positions of power over each of these prospective employees and the candidates' uncertainty about the employer's intent makes naming racism difficult. However, according to Ruth Frankenberg (2004), this is also how whiteness maintains its power – by remaining unmarked and unnamed allow hiring agents and other managers or employees in key positions to carry on with these subtle aggressions which will be explored further in the next section of this chapter.

5.3 Microaggressions

Canada is a world leader in having strong policies and statutes hindering racial and ethnic discrimination in all aspects of society, but there is no consent regarding their effectiveness (Beck et. al, 2002). Although all of those interviewed for this study did not personally make any official claims of discriminatory grievances, all have witnessed some form of discrimination faced by coworkers. We are not witnessing less discrimination; rather, it appears there is less conflict about issues of discrimination in the Canadian labour market (Reitz, 1998).

Individuals in this study admitted that they did not or would not report or confront coworkers or management about obtuse or subtle racist comments made in the workplace. When asked why, many responded that they felt uncomfortable doing so as it would severely change the working dynamics or that it would not be taken too seriously. Mary, who identifies as an Japanese Canadian female, states in relation to three different places of employment in both the public and private sector: *"...I would laugh off unintentional racist comments...I would not take it up due to potential repercussions"*. Similarly, Sofia, who identifies as a South Asian female, highlighted

that she did not want to call out their superior about a derogatory way he referred to an office holiday gathering as a "Chinese Gift Exchange" due to the potential negative ramifications that would ensue if it was reported. Although Sofia's boss' comment was discretely discussed between colleagues about how inappropriate the comment was, no one raised the issue on the comment because he happened to be a direct superior. In contrast to the above interviewees, Hassan suggests that he would feel comfortable confronting someone making a racist comment; however, he felt like he was able to do so because he held his position for a long time and felt a level of security in his job to do so. He goes on to suggest though, that if it was someone newer to the company they may find it harder to take up issues of discrimination.

There was also a consensus by most respondents that unless the discriminatory comment was extremely blatant they would not take it up with whoever made the comment. Although Canadian legal system has the avenues to report these events and potentially hold employers accountable, many are turned off by the bureaucracy and the length of time it would take to commit to following through with the complaint. When people look at how long previous cases involving Human Rights tribunals or civil lawsuits have been dragged on for, they are discouraged to embark on this lengthy journey. There are also worries about the reputation one would hold as a whistleblower that could potentially impact current and future employment opportunities (Beck et al., 2002; Reitz, 1998).

There is an acute connection to be made here between the inability to prove how racism manifests itself in the workplace described earlier and the some of the participants' reluctance to point and name racism or discrimination. The onus is always on the individual to prove that they were victims of racism. These instances are very hard, if not, impossible to prove but they do exist

and regularly occur. These examples of normalized daily experiences of discrimination are not new for people of colour and can be commonly referred to as racial microaggressions[11]. Another example of a racial microaggression mentioned earlier is evident in Steve's encounter with his potential employer encouraging him to use his "real name" because they were an equal opportunity employer. Even though the hiring agent had no ill intentions, she was unaware that she was involved in a behaviour that demeaned Steve and marked him as other. Although instances of microaggressions may be an attempt for White managers to try to make positive connections with their employees they are a reminder to racialized individuals that they do not fit the office norms. Leroy who identifies as a Black male that works at the head downtown office for one of Canada's established banks, shared that every time he passes one of the upper managers anywhere in the building:

> *He [manager] always feels the need to talk to me in patois. Now, I know he does this because I'm Black and wants to try to be friendly with me but of course… the funny thing is that he doesn't even realize that I'm Grenadian, not Jamaican. As annoying as it is, I play along because I know confronting him will not help me in any way to move up in the ranks.*

Even though there is an acute awareness of what is happening Leroy feels the reluctance to not say anything due to a fear potential repercussions that may limit his ability to get promoted. Even though people showed awareness of these microaggressions occurring there were many other

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[11] Derald Wing Sue (2010) describes racial microaggressions as an aversive form of racism that transpires below the level of awareness by sometimes well-intentioned people. For a further discussion of racial microaggressions see Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley.

instances where respondents did not even notice or admit certain actions were racist or demeaning in nature.

One issue that drew out many hidden microaggressions was when racialized respondents were asked if their expertise was valued in the workplace. Dante suggested that the IT engineers he has worked with on projects for in the past regularly talk down to him and assume that he does not know much regarding his area of expertise especially when approaching them with questions. When asked if they talk down to other employees, he said "*not as much but they have been around longer than I have…that's probably why.*" When I further pressed to see if he thought his race had anything to do with it, he immediately denied that racism played a factor, but also mentioned that it was something he could not prove. We come to see how a denial of racism becomes a common response when respondents were asked if race was at play during these encounters, but in a situation like this one cannot deny race is at play especially when he was the only person of colour at his workplace that was receiving very different treatment from his superiors.

Philomena Essed (1990) suggests that racialized individuals often deny the operations of racism and the experience of it that stems from the individual's attempt of self-preservation. It appears that this can be what is occurring with this denial of racism. Dante later in the interview reasons with me and adds that he does not deny racism exists in the workplace, but if he were to "cry racism" or play the "race card" with every encounter that he would never move up or get hired in any company. Scott, who identifies as a Black male that currently works as a business developer for a major airline went as far as saying, "*I actually detest when people are always playing the race card. If they put more energy into doing their job, well …then they would find more opportunities for advancement. I can't stand when people are always using it as an excuse!*"

Scott also admits that racism is very present in places of employment, but suggests it is a harsh reality that needs to be accepted and manoeuvred around in order to advance. Based on some of the interviewees it is evident how these daily racial encounters that are executed through microaggressions are perpetuated especially when the onus of proving their occurrence are the victims. When instances of racism occur, is always in the hands of the accuser. To avoid creating an uncomfortable work environment or a compromised relationship with coworkers and superiors, many racialized workers choose not to bring attention to the negative impacts of these microaggressions.

Microaggressions were not only limited to race and ethnicity; however, there were many examples where there would be intersecting forms of microaggressions that occurred in the workplace. In the airline manufacturing sector, Shelly speaks about how irritated she felt that there were many people who would second guess her judgment by going to another line manager to see if what she said was true about a directive or advice she had given about a particular job. Interestingly enough, she claimed it to be more of a gender issue, but I would also suggest that it is also important to consider the operations of anti-Black racism that is imbedded into an event like this. Ironically when I asked her if her race or ethnicity had anything to do with his actions she responded, "*It's because of his ethnicity and race (laughing), with an Indian person like him you can tell that he needs to be the authority of everything*". In this moment, we can see Mona, who identifies as Black, using a racial justification for this individual's crude actions. Further, Sandra who self-identifies as a Black female, faced a similar issue in one of her past sales jobs. She explains how happy she was when the company hired another Black person, but admitted that for some reason this new employee did not treat her well. She mentions that the new employee would constantly undermine her by going to her boss to confirm what she was explaining in the

context of the job. Sandra faced a daily barrage of gendered microaggressions not just from this employee, but when she decided to report the matter to her boss, she was asked if she was "being too sensitive". It is important in this situation to notice that an intersectional analysis is important because one may argue that this is Black on Black discrimination, but when Sandra suggested that the other women who happened to be White did not get the same treatment, it is enough to raise alarms about how gender and race work together to reinforce an unbalanced power dynamic. One cannot ignore the way race and ethnicity play out amongst different bodies of colour and how this can also contribute to the maintaining of hegemonic power dynamics within organizations that use markers such as race and gender that are reminiscent of similar colonial structures Canada as a nation was founded on.

5.4 "My Race or Ethnicity was Not the Reason I Was Passed up, it was because…"

All respondents interviewed, including most of the hiring agents, felt that discrimination did play a major factor for many racialized individuals entering their specific industry. However, approximately half of the racialized workers felt that they have not personally faced forms of discrimination regarding their own experiences. As I probed further to see whether or not the respondents felt that discrimination was a factor for them during the interview process or with company promotion opportunities, a majority of them felt as though discrimination was not a factor in the hiring process. As illustrated earlier in this chapter, Allan was very definite in his belief that he had never been discriminated against in a work setting and it was not until later in my interview with him does he comes to the realization that racism had indeed played a part in his labour market experiences. The revelation he had was not very common among many of the other respondents when faced with the same line of inquiry. Most of the racialized males interviewed were also

adamant that they did not face discrimination during the interview process because they were in a line of work that was in high demand and that it was important for these companies to find the right people to fill high skilled positions. Therefore, their perception was that racism did not play a role in the application and hiring process.

There seemed to be an agreement between most of the racialized respondents in this study centering on a denial of discrimination as it pertained to being hired for jobs they did not receive. One respondent named Roy who identifies as an Indian male is currently retired engineer who immigrated to Canada from India in his early twenties. Roy suggested that discrimination did not play a role in his field because: "*Being in a professional field, what they are looking for is qualifications and experience. So I was lucky to find suitable positions for my experience and qualifications…*" This statement is in line with the perceptions of other men in this study that appeared to be in some sort of high skilled technical field. Dante, who works in the IT sector and identifies as a Black male maintained that "*At my level, like a junior or senior position, we are more likely to get hired if we are qualified, than a White guy. Maybe, there are sometimes other factors that may be the reason why we would get hired…discrimination wise if I have the skillset I would be confident that I would get the job.*" Similarly, Duc who identifies as a Vietnamese male also suggested "*I'm usually a shoe-in for most skilled positions in IT because people think Asian guys are great at math and logic. Once they see my Canadian education and find out that I do not talk with an accent I'm asked when can I start (laugh).*" It is clear from these men's narratives, that they thought racism did not factor in their ability to attain a certain position in a company rather, it was based on the person's merit and qualifications even if "positive" stereotypes were applied.

It is suggested that a social desirability bias leads men to understate their tolerance of discrimination in public which may be the reason why the men in this study were quick to deny facing any discrimination in the hiring process (Kuran and McCaffery, 2008). Even though most women in the study were asked the same question about whether or not they thought race factored in many of their employment experiences, there was still a reluctance to admit that any forms of discrimination occurred during the hiring process. However, there seemed to be more of a pause and internal reflection to confirm their answer, followed by a justification as to why they may have not been hired for other reasons such as lack of experience in the field. But this was not always the case, social desirability factor in this study did not just pertain to the males, but also females. Mona, a female respondent in particular mentioned earlier, noted that the times she was passed up on positions and/or promotions at different organizations was due to her youthful appearance rather than her race, ethnicity or gender. Mona suggested that,

> *My experience is probably a lot different from what I've been told, I haven't really been discriminated against to my face…anyways not that I know of…maybe it was based on my assertiveness, or my lack of assertiveness. For this company I don't think it would have been because of my race. I know I have to work a bit harder to prove that I am worthy for them to have to listen to me. But this is based on age but not my race. It is because I look young that most of my past and present employers do not initially think I can do my job. I've always had to deal with this whenever I started a new job.*

Later, Mona went on to tell me of a manager that used to give her a very hard time in one of her previous jobs and even claimed that the crude interactions she faced at multiple organizations was

attributed to her "youthful look" and completely denied any instance of racial discrimination. When I pressed a bit further to suggest whether this interaction might potentially be racially and/or ethnically charged, she responded with "*Not to my face, but I'm still sure it was because of how young I look.*" As I cannot dispute Mona's perception of racism not being a factor with her experiences, examining this situation from an anti-colonial and anti-racism framework one would argue that race is always operating in experiences like hers.

As a White male I have to be cognizant and respectful of what she personally thought. It is instances like this that made me realize that I needed to use my privilege not to "whitesplain" people of colour on whether or not they are actually experiencing racism, but rather to gather experiences that I would argue are racially charged and place them in conversation with the narratives with hiring agents to see how race is operating in a more concrete way. That said, other complex and curious questions have risen out of my interviews with racialized workers. Why are racialized individuals denying the role of and racism in their own experiences? How is White supremacy in the labour market in the Toronto CMA concealing itself so well that racialized people are not perceiving it as at least a contributor to their own experiences? Whether they have been somewhat successful or not, these respondents saw equitable policies within the labour market as irrelevant. Without overstepping I think it is a very important to understand why racialized individuals are quick to dismiss their own qualifications and is a topic that could be investigated further., but it would be important for that investigator to be a person of colour because of the unbalanced power dynamic that can be brought by a White male like myself. I agree my presence as an interviewer did have drawbacks on some of the answers that many of the respondents had given because to admit that race was a factor in one's own experience would possibly be admitting that they do not belong.

There are many other examples where many respondents did not feel that they were passed up on a promotion within an organization because of their ethnicity, race or religion. When asked why Sofia felt like she did not get promoted to a higher level within a major insurance company that she worked for, she first stated that the other candidate for the position (who happened to be White and male) may have had more "on the job" experience and was "next in line" for the promotion even though she felt that she had higher credentials for the position. I believe what she meant by "on the job" experience is that the person who got promoted worked for this organization longer than her and thus perhaps possessed more seniority. It seemed that this organization seemed to value seniority over qualifications. Sofia also suggests that there was a clear plan as to who was going to fill the position before it became vacant. What makes this problematic is that when most of the respondents across the board were asked about the ethnic makeup of most of the people in management positions within their company, they either suggested or clearly stated that racialized individuals were extremely underrepresented in these positions and that they were mainly held by White men with a few White women on the odd occasion occupying these positions. Dante, who identifies as a Black male, held an IT technician position in a past job for a major Canadian bank that I will refer to as ABC he suggested: *"ABC bank was more multicultural, you would see Black managers you'd see more women…I'd never really got to deal with a lot of directors, to be honest, I only saw one or two and they were older White men with glasses (laughter), but in manager positions at ABC I would see way more women than people from different races."* Although this particular bank makes assertions of how diverse their organization is, it appears to lack an intersectional analysis in these diversity claims if the only people promoted to senior positions are White able-bodied females.

Another observation that can be made is that navigating certain racial barriers are normalized. For example, later in my interview with Dante, I asked the question if promotion would be difficult for him in a previous job and he responded:

Well with the previous company it wouldn't have been an issue. I have examples… there was a woman, she was Eastern European, she came in, she started after me and she went and did the certifications and she moved up. There was also a Black guy who came in, I think he started higher than me as an engineer. He left, did other courses then came back to the company in a higher position…that company was reward based. They did not care about the race, they just cared that if you got the certifications you got the job, we just need people to go out to the client…it doesn't matter who you are, if you are good and personable you got it. I felt with that company if you did go by the book it would work. At the bank I saw it happen the same way too, if you did the courses and proved that you were a learner, you would move up.

Although Dante's perception denies that racism is a factor in this instance, why did the Black male he was describing have to leave then come back? Why would his employer not invest and pay for training for this specific person? Similarly, Mona has aspirations for moving up in her field beyond a first line manger role, but does not feel like she has the ability to do so because of her lack of qualifications, but when asked if her company offers any form of training to help her advance she states that, "*There are only training funds for current positions…not necessarily for moving up…if I wanted to I was told I could leave and get those qualifications elsewhere. Then maybe I can be accepted in a higher position.*" I further pressed and asked if she has seen other people get

promoted without having to leave and come back and mentioned that most of the upper management worked their way up, the same ones she suggested earlier were mainly White with the exception of her direct manager who was brought in externally. Mona actually describes her current position as being in "the right place at the right time" and not the hard work that she put into her job. Just as the many of the earlier instances in this chapter where people did not feel like they were qualified for the job, we see another instance of self-deprecation when she was passed up for a management position when she said:

> *I'm not sure, sometimes…maybe it gets to the point where they just needed someone, but if it was for a manager position I probably wouldn't get it…but I don't know if it was because I'm not an eloquent interviewer or in that aspect where I would be put in a manager position. Or that I'm not that or I don't know I don't think I would have gotten the job, if it was a management position.*

This narrative reveals that Mona has this need to be grateful that she got anything in the first place. This is how systems of whiteness function, it not only offers White people super human confidence if they were to enter similar situations but can also convince people of colour that they are not worthy enough to enter these places of employment especially in positions of higher significance. The connection with Mona's experience can be made in this historical context, White colonial structures involved instituting an Orientalist[12] discourse in order to create a hegemonic relationship

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[12] Orientalism is defined as "a structured set of concepts, assumptions, and discursive practices that were used to produce, interpret and evaluate knowledge about non-European peoples" (p. 13). Orientalism is a framework on how Western society constructs and thus, views the East. It is through these constructions that Western society comes to "know" the East, but through this constructed knowledge also comes to know and construct themselves as dominant and civilized. The theory of Orientalism tries to help us understand why we have these fixed ideas of the East and who stands to benefit from these constructions. Although Said's work predominately deals with constructions of the East during the colonial period, his work is still relevant in understanding the construction of

that was accepted not only by citizens of the West, but also was bought into by those who were colonized. As Fanon (1963) described in his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, we see how colonized subjects also began to believe themselves as inferior because they also subscribed to Said's (1979) concept of Orientalism. Not only does Orientalism legitimize the conquest of the 'other', it also influences how the 'other' perceives itself and buys into becoming subjects of a colonial system of oppression. It is this same discourse that I argue that strips away the confidence of racialized people that does not only exist in the labour market, rather fostered from multiple institutions that they encountered beforehand such as education which I will explore in greater length in the next chapter. Rather than focusing on acquiring and improving the proper qualifications for the job, people of colour need to take on another form of racialized labour regime which involves having to perform a specific way to navigate these systems of whiteness.

5.5 Conclusion

The racial encounters discussed in this chapter demonstrates that there are complex journeys racialized individuals are forced to navigate entering and moving within particular places of employment. This chapter examined the many ways in which racialized individuals have experienced or witnessed different forms of racism in the Toronto CMA labour market. The first section of this chapter, I refer to as, I can't prove they were being racist but… or The Look, speaks to how many of the people I interviewed would encounter many situations during job interviews or in regards to promotions that they could not prove came from racial or ethnic biases of the decision makers of their fate in these particular organizations. These situations usually left many of the respondents not necessarily questioning whether racism was at play in the employment

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the 'other' within institutions in the postcolonial present. For a further discussion on Orientalism see Said, E. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.

process, but rather, it led to the self-interrogation of their own qualifications and abilities. This attributional ambiguity is what Crocker and Major (1989) suggest is a way for individuals to psychologically protect their self-esteem from the uncertainty that exists with events that occur because of prejudice. The concept of attributional ambiguity suggests the reason why most of the respondents denied ever being personally affected by racism in the workplace while at the same time admitting it exists and witnessing racist events taken place involving other racialized coworkers. The next section in this chapter entitled, Racial Microaggressions, discusses the inability of current human rights policies to adequately change a culture of unintended biases that are delivered through microaggressions. Many racialized workers did not necessarily want to take up these instances with coworkers or superiors out of fear of negative recourse or essentially not wanting to "rock the boat". These attitudes point to the inability of these White corporate structures to allow a safe space to have these conversations. This lack of a safe space stems from the power imbalances that do not necessarily allow people of colour to speak their mind when given the opportunity to do so. When asked if he felt comfortable speaking out about these encounters, Dante suggested that "You have to sugar coat it rather than be direct… maybe it is my personality but other [White] employees or managers seem to be able to speak out more freely." Without a safe space for dialogue, racial and gendered microaggressions will continue to permeate places of employment leaving racialized individuals with limited recourse. In the final section of chapter four, we see how attitudes grounded in a post-racial discourse of colourblindness exist and how racialized individuals who have successfully made it into positions of significance within larger companies do not necessarily deny the existence of racism, but suggest that people of colour need to be savvy about working around the barriers that exist, rather than looking at their elimination of such obstacles. This "pick up your bootstraps" mentality plays into a neoliberal

discourse that deflects the effects of racism onto the individual, thereby downloading the responsibility of racism onto those who are most affected by it. Overall, this first data chapter explored how racialized individuals experience and navigate racial and ethnic barriers in places of employment, but also showcased how many of these individuals felt they could not always empirically prove the operations of racism resulting in feelings of ambivalence and doubt.

Chapter 6: Organizing Racism/Work

6.1 Introduction

The available literature suggests that diversity in the workplace is something to be managed in order to yield economic benefits for companies (Cox 2001; Nour & Thisted, 2005; Siu, 2011; Thomas, 1991).   Whether it is to increase productivity or profits, one can argue that many large multinational corporations have adopted some form of diversity strategy in the Canadian labour market, not necessarily as a way to appeal to social justice advocates, but to conform to federal and provincial policy regarding workplace diversity.   Rather than proposing major structural changes, many of these companies adopt temporary measures that range from short term elements of employment equity or long-term diversity plans. These strategies that stem from popular and scholarly prescriptions for managing diversity can be seen as more of a "showcase" (Prasad, 1997, p.8). Prasad argues that organizations with efforts to implement diversity in the workplace will showcase the economic value, how management can effectively introduce diversity, and publicize 'successful' exemplars that offer positive accounts of how these firms effectively implemented diversity into their workspace.   Organizations will offer a positive spin on the work they do in order to diversify, but much of the structural forms of discrimination imbedded into the organizational structures are rarely explored.

All of the respondents in this study, whether it be the racialized workers or hiring agents, suggested that the more one looks at upper management and beyond in an organization, the less demographically diverse it becomes. This occurs because we are seeing the same structures of whiteness that are imbedded in the Canadian national identity permeating into the corporate culture of organizations. In this chapter, I will connect the everyday racism experienced by racialized

workers with the narratives of the hiring agents. These connections lend support that racism exists in more overt ways than we think, strategic stratified structures, and notions of the proper organizational 'fit' are still very present and continues to perpetuate structures of White supremacy in a very dynamic way within our current Canadian multicultural framework.

6.2 More Overt than Covert

Canada's multicultural landscape is quite appealing to many Canadians and many in the international community on several fronts. What makes Canada appealing to new racialized immigrants is the appearance of the opportunity to better themselves and the future of their children, while preserving the essence of their own culture without the fear of being judged. This is what I would argue is the dominant narrative that most Canadians and immigrants subscribe to, but in reality as the respondents' narratives reveal, discrimination is still very evident. Rather than this brand of racism mimicking that of our neighbors to the south, we, as Canadians, have donned what appears to be a more covert form of racism. After interviewing many of the hiring agents, I found that things were not as covert as most people thought. Rather there were many instances where very overt forms of racism are still at the core of the reasons racialized individuals are being excluded from many places of employment and upper management positions in the private sector.

These racial encounters occur in both the internal and external employment recruitment and practices. One specific internal example that stands out speaks to the current culture of Islamophobia that exists in the West. An interview with Sarah, who worked as a consultant in a prominent financial institution revealed that, "*When we were screening through all of the different resumes...the ones with the Muslim sounding names were put directly in the no pile.*" As problematic as it is, Sarah, a self-identified Black woman was very upset about some of the racist

employment practices that she was privy to and also experienced herself on a very regular basis. She said that *"…the discrimination that she saw on such a regular basis was enough to make me want to leave…it was such a White boy's club that I knew I would never be considered an equal."* Even though Sarah navigated herself to a very prominent position, the constant mental labour being performed in such a toxic heteronormative environment was enough to take a chance to leave her high paying job and the profession altogether to pursue a doctorate in social work. It is a very difficult position for a woman of colour to work in such a heteronormative environment and expect her to partake in flagrant forms of discrimination. Sandra also faced a situation where in one of her previous jobs that she was involved in the corporate sales of goods. After having 3 unsuccessful hires who happened to be Black, she was upset that she heard other employees making comments like *"we shouldn't hire people like that"* openly in front of her. She followed up by expressing *"I just felt very uncomfortable in this environment and I eventually knew that I needed to leave"*. In both Sarah and Sandra's cases we see how taxing and traumatic it can be to work in an environment where they both felt complicit in an organizational culture that harboured very strong racial tropes about different people of colour. Sarah, explained the feeling best when she said:

> *After seeing the way my collogues disregarded many people based on their culture, how they spoke or how they looked… what would it take for them to think of me the same way? It was always something that was at the back of my head and just could not shake that feeling… in reality that is why I left, it just got too toxic there.*

Indeed, what would it take for her colleagues and superiors to use similar forms of racialized scrutiny on her? A non-racialized individual could not even fathom facing these toxic forms of

racial violence on a regular basis which adds another pillar of racial labour that needs to be performed by people of colour. With respect to accountability, how do these companies still manage to not have any complaints with human rights abuses? Nana goes on to suggest, "*I've searched for jobs by navigating automated job postings, but I really do think it is just for show because they have to do it legally even though they are already filled internally, specifically in the financial and retail sectors*".   In another example, Allan, the South Asian male who made it a point to suggest on multiple occasions he had a self-reflective epiphany about how racism has played a factor throughout his journey in the labour market had some interesting reflections with respect to types of experience. After being asked if he felt international experience was just as good as having Canadian experience, he began to reminisce about a position he applied for in the past where he was asked if he had a Canadian grade twelve education. He felt that he was denied a second interview specifically for this reason because the company expected him to "*...produce a certificate or school certificate...proof that I had a grade twelve education in Canada...*" At this point Allan pauses and has a moment of self-reflection for a few seconds and expresses the following:

> *Thank you for refreshing my memory, it was so minute and so small in my life, I chose to ignore it and chose to move on...point blank I was told by the hiring person that during the interview that I needed to produce a Canadian grade twelve diploma even though I had a Canadian college diploma.*

Although staunchly insisting that he has never been discriminated against before, Allan at this point retracts that he never faced discrimination during the hiring process. I was quite worried when this all came out because he just shared with me a very stressful moment that he has repressed

for many years. It was an uncertainty that did not appear at the time to him to be of a racist nature because how could he prove it? There is mental stress that one has to endure when faced with such a situation, but this is something that continues to manifest in multiple industries. Organizations that prefer or expect Canadian experience over foreign experience are essentially perpetuating discriminatory practices that will limit employment opportunities for racialized immigrants (Oreopoulos, 2011). Employers will overlook immigrant job candidates by assuming that immigrants with foreign credentials are not high calibre enough to meet Canadian qualifications just as directly witnessed in Allan's case.

All of the hiring agents interviewed in this research project openly admitted to favoring Canadian experience especially for any management type positions. Duc blatantly affirms that "*A foreign MA [Masters' Degree] is not valued here [Canada] for most positions, especially management positions. If we were desperate for good applicants, we might look at them for more entry level positions.*" In fact, other hiring agents suggested when it comes to entry level positions specifically in the manufacturing or IT sectors it was actually encouraged to hire candidates that were not "overqualified" out of fear of them leaving for the next best employment opportunity. Either way, there are negative connotations to hiring "overqualified" immigrant talent. Furthermore, immigrants' credentials gained through education or job experience outside of Canada will receive lower financial returns than Canadians (Ferrer & Riddell, 2008), which means that although immigrants may gain access into the Canadian labour market despite their non-Canadian qualifications, they may still face discrimination with regards to what level or type of work they may be hired for or alternatively type casted due to their unfamiliar credentials. This is also the case with other companies that appear to develop creative ways of avoiding any liabilities that involve issues of inequity.

Rebecca, the recruitment head for a major insurance company suggested that most of the important and upper management positions were almost always predetermined. "*I never understood why they kept asking me to bring in outside and/or internal potential candidates and conduct interviews for positions they would post and never hire any of them.*" I had pressed and asked her if her pool of candidates were diverse along racial or ethnic lines and she said that her bosses encouraged her to interview more diverse candidates. In my next question, I asked her about the racial or ethnic makeup of most of the people hired for these positions. Her response is as follows:

> *They are all White in one way or another. To be honest, my job is very stressful because in most of the cases I interview and put forward are rarely hired. It seems as though they already know who is going to fill specific positions. At times, I think that maybe I'm not doing my job well, but they keep reassuring me that I am doing a great job. I kind of think that they are using my department as a way to show that they have made attempts to be divers. How else can it be explained? Most of the positions we fill already seem to have someone who is already slated for that position. I feel as though my job exists to show that we are actually making attempt to be fair in our hiring?*

Rebecca brings up a very interesting and telling point regarding appearances of being diverse. It would seem that this company does offer an appearance of "attempting" to employ diversity into the upper ranks of their organization, but fall very short actually implementing it within its ranks. In all of these previous examples, these instances were not reported, as most toxic racial encounters do not get reported out of fear of repercussions. However, many other companies

have actually found a way to further distance themselves from the front-line screening through the use of external recruiting companies as a way to avoid any form of bad press or legal repercussions that may follow a complaint.

It appears that fulltime recruiting companies offer a kind of buffer between companies and prospective employees so that any potential human rights violations are kept away from the company that needs employees. In most instances, it appears that many companies that use recruiting agencies to hire new employees will not have their company names divulged until candidates move onto the next interview processes. Dante stated that when he was looking for jobs on online recruiting websites he found that, "…they would not post the company names listed on job postings, instead, they would be in the name of the Recruiting company's name online and only location of the potential place of employment would be shown." As a result, this strategy takes away any liabilities from the company seeking to hire if any candidates were to follow up why they were not successful in the hiring process. As mentioned earlier, many employers will look favourably at potential candidates with Canadian work experience, as Canadian employers are not familiar with foreign experience and education. Duc, who also happened to be a fulltime recruiter in one of his past jobs for IT firms implied that in this industry, "*Canadian experience is code for not wanting Middle Eastern people, they will make comments like: 'They want Canadian experience' or 'They won't fit with the culture we are creating in this company'.*" Although there is an acute awareness of racism taking place, Duc a racialized person himself is forced to adhere to the IT firm's wishes because of financial repercussions and obligations.

Martin a senior recruiter for a major recruiting company in the same field suggested that it was much more overt in his recruiting firm, "Our mantra here is 'Hire them young, White and

bright', because if we keep sending employers what they do not want, they won't use our company again… we are always competing with multiple recruiting agencies to fill these positions." Duc, also had similar sentiments regarding the harsh demands made by his clients he regularly recruited for. The following is an exchange I had with Duc on the issue:

> *Duc: In management positions...the people that I would put up... it wasn't really said outright or anything when I was meeting up with the company that was hiring. But I knew that in those positions if I set up interviews or sent them a resume or screened somebody that did not have Canadian experience or had a name that was difficult to say ethnically, they would not want to look at that person and lose faith in my recruiting abilities. So most of the time, to be honest, I would try to find candidates with pretty common types of names as far as Canadian, European or Caucasian names.*

> *Michael: So, if a candidate was superior in every way and their name sounded Middle Eastern for example, would you pass on this candidate knowing that the employer has been biased in the past?*

> *Duc: I wouldn't bother sending them at all. In the end, the company is paying you for a service so you can't sit there and say, that they were wrong while telling them who they should be hiring because you don't want to lose their business.*

> *Michael: Were any employers upfront about not wanting to hire specific types of people?*

Duc: Well there were multiple situations that it was both implied and/or outright said... For instance there was one time when a company was getting frustrated that it was taking too long to fill a position. They were looking for something very specific in regards to technical abilities...not a lot of those people exist. So, it was taking a while to find something so I started sending them more and more ethnic names that fit the technical criteria they were looking for even though I know this company had perceived preferences of who they have historically employed. I got a phone call after I sent my last batch of resumes to them. They said 'we don't think this is working out, you're sending us the resumes of people without Canadian experience or Canadian schooling and none of us can pronounce the names of the people you are sending us, so we are going to open it up to other agencies to do some recruiting for us as well.

We can see how there is a shifting of responsibility that involves economic repercussions for the recruiting company and the recruiting agent in justifying why they follow through with these hiring practices that are blatantly racist. In fact, these process that discriminate in regards to race and ethnicity actually work in the hiring agents favour because then they divert potential candidates that may not be qualified for the initial position they were attracted to but may instead be persuaded by the hiring agent to look at other positions that were available that they would better "fit". In most cases, these are entry level or manual labour positions. In the next section, I explore how instances like this are not only racist in nature but also perpetuate racially coded stratified structures within individual places of employment, sectors, and the labour market as a whole.

6.3 Stratified Structures

Racialized labour market stratification is something that is increasing through Canada's neoliberal restructuring. Racialized people tend to take up a majority of low paying precarious positions that do not offer decent living wage salary and job security (Galabuzi, 2006). This project looks at stratified structures not necessarily by sector, but rather how it operates within different sectors.

It was collectively agreed by most hiring agents that racialized people were more likely to be placed at entry level or low paying manual labour positions. This was common occurrence when companies had a front and back office composition where the front office was upper management and other office staff, and the back office included anywhere form shipping, manufacturing, or other assembly line production. When I asked all respondents if there were certain races and ethnicities that worked in specific departments in their workplace, several responses were received. Dante who currently works in IT for a car parts manufacturer said,

You see a lot more Asians in certain departments, like a lot more. Such as the warehouse …a lot of Asians work in the warehouse. And you see them as engineers as well as Indians…not as many Black guys but we are around. The GMs controllers and accountants are all White.

In the airplane manufacturing sector, Mona pointed out that, "*Machine shops are predominately male and White versus the assembly areas where workers are predominately female Filipino Asian*". Mona also reflects on a previous job with another electronics manufacturing company that Mona previously worked at; she suggested that it was like the United Nations in its

composition of the people she worked with. She added that "*the company even had different countries' flags hanging outside the building but when it came to the team leaders they were all White*". She also describes the marketing company that she worked for that she actually was in a position to recruit and hire new employees was very blunt about "*Most marketing companies are very White...from frontline managers to executive members.*" She adds that, "*Most of the Customer Service agents are predominately White females who are seen in general as better at sweet talking or soothing things over with customers and be the face of the company.*" Something can be said be said for positioning certain people to deal with customers as the "*face of the company*" because Nana felt she was personally affected by similar event at a legal office she volunteered for. This is how she puts it:

> *I had just finished university and was looking for a job in the legal field but nothing was really available. A family friend had just taken over a retiring lawyer's clients and needed help setting up her office so we mutually agreed that I would help her get organized as a volunteer until she was able to afford to pay me. I would go one or two times a week, while working at a part-time retail job and taking an LSAT prep course. So things got busy and I was not really able to make the two-hour trek to Scarborough. I thought that it was very odd that when she didn't have me helping her anymore she actually hired someone for the position fulltime. I think I know why she did it though...many of her clients tended to be older and Jewish and the woman she hired was also Jewish. I feel like she hired her to be the face of the office so that her clients would feel more comfortable. But it didn't feel fair that I was helping her out with the understanding that I would be hired in that same position once it became available.*

I bring up this narrative in this section because I feel Nana's experience speaks to a level of segmented labour that does not even get compensated for their work. Nana admitted that she had the privilege to be able to volunteer because she still lived at home with her parents, but what about other young professionals that need to work in order to pay for their life expenses? Although there is much literature in the Canadian context regarding this topic (Baines & Cunningham & Campey & Shields, 2014; Shede & Jacobson, 2015; Zhang & Zuberi, 2017), future research could be mindful to explore how race is intertwined with unpaid volunteer work and internships within the private sector. For the purpose of this study however, we see how Nana's work was appreciated when it was not compensated, but was left wondering why she was not good enough to receive adequate compensation and have secure employment even though she stated that she was given much praise about her work from her employers on a regular basis. This situation also speaks to anti-Black racism that exists within places of employment because even though the lawyer was Black she must have been concerned about how her new practice would be perceived by the existing clientele.

Some racialized respondents share how often they applied for a specific job or position, but then when they arrived for the interview they were diverted to other positions in sometimes the same company or in a recruiter's case other companies. Allan, Dante, Leroy, Nana, Sandra and Scott all thought it was odd that they were brought in for an interview for a specific position they applied for but the recruiter they met suggested other jobs they may be interested in instead. Although Dante admits that in his latest experience the recruiter suggested a better paying position at another company, it appears that something was happening that I thought I should ask the recruiters interviewed to offer some insight. Duc suggested that:

I was always directing candidates to positions I was more confident they would get hired for. I knew that certain companies I worked with had biases about who would be best for their company, so I didn't bother wasting the candidate's time pushing them for something I knew they would not get, rather I would help them prepare for positions that were more attainable.

Martin was unabashedly frank that if the person was not White or had a name that he could not pronounce that he knew they would be perfect for the manual labour jobs that were available in the multiple manufacturing plants he dealt with. He went on to say that these positions did not generate much revenue on their own but when a larger company needed multiple in one shot that it would be pretty lucrative for him. Larry on the other hand suggested that there were further issues for these lower level manual labour jobs when it came to women because some of his clients actually, "*...had more of a gender bias by indicating that they need a man to do the work...especially in the manufacturing sector.*" Maria's response had more of an intersectional twist specifically when she helps to place pharmaceutical representatives for major pharmaceutical companies. Known as pharmaceutical reps, they contact doctors to promote the latest pharmaceutical drugs that these doctors can prescribe or recommend to their patients. Maria told me that there is an expectation that these positions are filled by "*hot women that tend to usually look White.*" She explains that this has been the standard for positions like this and she does not usually recommend many other applicants that do not fit this mold "*unless they are very attractive*". One thing common with all of these cases is that there does exist certain biased that not only predicated on racial biases but also involves intersectional markers of identity that can limit and exclude racialized individuals from the higher paying and more prestigious jobs that are available.

It is important; however, not to limit the scope of exclusion for racialized individuals at the labour market level and further examine the other institutions that contribute to this exclusion. During some interviews, there were many links made to individual's prior education and how that, as an entity in itself, would limit racialized individuals from pursuing what they were interested as a future profession. Mona, for example. suggested that there were other career avenues that she would have liked to pursue such as counselling and human resources; however, when asked what has restricted her from doing so, she noted that it was "*the cost of education*". Although she did finish her undergraduate degree in kinesiology, she was limited to what jobs that she felt qualified for even in her own field of health. Her self-proclaimed "*lack of experience*" in essence made Mona an agent of racial stratification in lacking the self-confidence needed to enter into occupations within her field. Further, according to Maria, one of the fulltime recruiters interviewed: "*If a person had graduated from U of T Engineering two years ago but does not have any relevant work experience since then, it would definitely put up red flags for us.*" If racialized candidates were being denied access to specific jobs, it may become even harder to procure a position they were qualified in which they were not able to find employment right away. In Mona's situation, we see that the longer she works in an industry outside of her undergraduate education, the less chance she will be able to enter it especially as a woman of colour who are less likely to be in management roles within the Canadian healthcare system.

Maria, a fulltime recruiter, stressed the concept of relevant experience; thus, if that potential candidate needed to work in order to afford day to day living expenses this too would not entice recruiters or companies to hire these individuals because of the position they are employed at. It is almost as if it was a one-shot deal to get into the field one studies in before they become "tainted" in the hiring pool. Scott, who earlier in this chapter pointed out the complexities of

knowing about the need to network in school in relation to this comment from Maria, shows the realities of how potential employees may be excluded from places of employment. If this is the case with a new graduate who happened to be racialized enters this industry, think of the negative psychological effects this may have on an individual that after years of schooling they are not able to successfully participate in the industry they specifically went to school for. Scott, one of the previously mentioned respondents, admitted that:

> *They [school] teach you the material in a particular program that you are studying in some degree to prepare you for the workforce, but they don't prepare you on what you need to do to land the job that you are studying for. If you are not around the right people that can close that gap for you, you can end up being like a lot of people that study a particular program but they never end up working in it because life takes over that focus.*

He refers to "life" as being things that people may want to aspire to such as finding a home, starting a family that incur financial responsibilities that keeps one from taking risks to pursue a career in the field one goes to school for. There is one point that Scott makes that he alluded to in this quote regarding the importance of being around the right people to close that gap. Even though earlier in the interview he suggests that he was just not qualified and does not possess on the job experience, he did admit that there were classmates that happened to be White that found jobs right out of school. He suggested that most of these students already knew to begin networking while they were in school with professors who had connections to potential jobs or had a family acquaintance that managed to get them an opportunity right out of school. Scott insisted that if he

were to be able to go back to his school years that he now has the foresight to focus more on networking than his actual schoolwork.

I highlight Scott's experience in this chapter because there is a direct link to White males in upper class families who have access to the economic and social capital that give them direct access to the upper echelons of the private sector. According to James (1990), the relation to social class is a major barrier for people of colour in that:

> Evidence shows that because of inherent inequalities, in the social stratification system accessibility to certain careers is very strongly influenced by characteristics such as social class. Consequently, individual success or failure cannot be attributed to ability and efforts only, but also to position within Canada's social system, as well as society's attitudes toward ascriptive characteristics such as race and ethnicity. (pp.1-2)

Although Scott may think that he would have had a better opportunity to get into this exclusive network, echoing James, I would argue that by not being invited into this network speaks volume of how whiteness operates in multiple institutions and therefore affecting entry into others. While White males already have an entry into these networks, people of colour are expected to have to "work harder" to get into these exclusive spaces.

Dante's commentary about the banking industry echoes the same attitude when he suggested:

> *The banking industry is not a true representation of the rest of the corporate world,*
> *the bank is a little different. For them, diversity is a marketing tool. You can take it*

as a cynical view but it seems to be working and it is up to us to take advantage of

that. Even if it starts at a point of being disingenuous in order to increase their client

base at least it is a start. We will have to see in twenty to thirty years to see if it works

to increase diversity in the workplace.

Here we see that the onus of combating racism is dumped or offloaded onto the racialized individual to deal with, rather than on White people having to concede much of the privilege that they benefit from. It falls in line with the old right wing conservative adage that "people can and should pull themselves up by their own bootstraps", which I was shocked to hear was consistent with many of the attitudes that racialized respondents suggested others from their own communities need to do.

Looking back at Scott's experience is very common and one can argue that the racial and ethnic segmentation of the labour market that stems back to the education sector. Scott even admits that he was only one of two Black people in his program. This being the case, hiring agents for companies will have a preconceived bias about who may be the best person for the job not only with internal biases but reaffirmed with the optics or the "type" of graduates from education institutions. Scott further explained to me how hard it was to find a job in his field coming out of university. For a few years he took on positions as a sales agent at a car dealership and then worked as a club promoter. After a while, he attempted to make a few attempts to enter the IT field with different companies in different industries. He mentioned how it was his own persistence that he was able to obtain a few interviews with different companies. However, I noticed something common among most racialized workers in this study that can be outlined in what Scott suggested as to why he was not hired:

I think at the end of the day they appreciated my persistence and they liked my drive, it was just a matter of... I was applying for job that I knew I did not have the background experience in. The fact that they still gave me an opportunity showed me that there was something they had interest in but at the end of the day, I knew that I did not have the experience but I was hoping and anticipating that they would give me a chance still understanding that I did not have the experience.

Scott did a lot of work by going to many employment workshops that would give him the opportunity to get the foot in the door but yet was unsuccessful in procuring employment for reasons of what he deemed as not being qualified enough which was very common with other racialized respondents. The irony in all of this is that most hiring agents, when asked: "*What is more important, qualifications or fit?*" all hiring agents, whether internal or external recruiters, overwhelmingly agreed to 'fit' which in a way contradicts the "lack of experience" myth which will be discussed further in the following section.

6.4 The Fit

When interviewing hiring agents, I came across many contradictions regarding the ideal employee. Many of these agents would discuss the importance of qualifications and experience. This however was not enough for someone to get hired or excel in the company they worked for. Many of these hiring agents were supporters of filling promotions internally but in reality this is not how things have always panned out for people of colour. Based on the observations made by racialized respondents such as the situation Dante described regarding the Black male he saw having to leave the bank he worked for, upgrade his qualifications by working for another company and it was not until then he was able to come back in a higher paying position. We see this in the

earlier comparison in the conversation with Dante about a White female employee that made advancements within the bank she worked for without having to go outside the company she worked for to do so.   Whether it is a promotion or a new hire the interviews with respondents always began with the agreement that qualifications and experience is key to getting hired or moving up in a company.   Although qualifications and experience are important there are stipulations on where or what types are considered valuable to most companies.

Sunny is the owner of a corporate consulting firm that facilitates the hiring process and various employment strategies of businesses in multiple industries that help improve their employment processes. He suggests that:

> *After tracking responses to online ads through various sources, we screen the resumes which would involve us reading those resumes and certifying them against the criteria we are looking for. Now there's other factors we evaluate a resume on. Sometimes it's based on if it's easy for them to communicate; can you understand it? Are there any gaps in the resume? Do they have a consistent history? One of the big things a lot of people consider is if they worked in Canada for a long time? Do they understand the Canadian working culture? Were they educated here?*

From Sunny's narrative, it is evident that there is a particular candidate that is being sought after that would more or less exclude certain immigrants and seek more "homegrown" candidates.   I noticed that at each of the interview steps, Sunny stressed the importance of how they fit the Canadian working culture. This was done through phone interviews and if they passed the phone interview they would meet up for an in-person interview. "*With the face to face …we ask them questions that will give us a better idea of how they fit the Canadian working culture and the*

competencies needed for the role." We can see here how Sunny keeps bringing up key terms like "Canadian working culture" or "competencies" that appear to be racially coded for "young, White and bright" as Martin earlier suggested was his company's hiring mantra.

This type of scrutinizing of candidates does not only happen through recruiting firms. As mentioned earlier, Larry is currently a fulltime recruiter for IT and manufacturing industries but he also previously worked as a human resource manager for a major communications company. When describing to me what were the most important elements Larry had this to say in an exchange that we had:

> **Larry:** *The main requirements for employment are experience, education, proximity and a language requirement, English needs to be spoken and written properly. It is kind of an open-ended requirement because English can be spoken in a very diverse environment and still be satisfactory. So, if someone speaks with an accent it is not a deal killer but you have to genuinely understand what the person is saying.*

> **Michael:** *Would you say the process is different when hiring for upper management positions.*

> **Larry:** *Yes, all the above of what I just said in the last situation plus an extensive established track record. The great debate in HR is moving towards a more progressive management style that allows for people to make mistakes and learn from them. For example, do you want to hire the pilot who has already crashed a plane or hire the one who is going to crash the plane? But when I did recruitment for big companies they wanted to see perfection limiting who we can hire. What made it*

harder in the communications industry is that at the time I was recruiting they would ask for specifically Canadian experience. Now, that is seen as discriminatory language and because of this you will now see companies asking for local experience with a telecommunications company instead.

Even though there was room for flexibility for individual's language proficiency in entry level positions, it became much more apparent in the upper management sphere that Canadian experience was sought. This specifically limits specific individuals from entering these spaces. Even though a candidate with foreign experience may be more qualified, as Larry mentioned, it would be time consuming to verify and qualify a candidate's foreign experience. Larry's response attests to how racism within employment practices constantly evolve maintaining structural whiteness in places of employment by using one's grasp of the English language and Canadian experience as a marker to exclude racialized individuals. When I asked Larry if he felt there were any other parts of the hiring practices that he found unfair specifically to racialized candidates, he responded with the following:

Larry: Oh yes, see, we use a behavioral based questionnaire particularly in a large company. It was good because it gave you an idea what the applicant was all about with straightforward answers that would measure 'fit' and character which is really what you are after. There were questions like; Tell me when you've had a past project deadline? What did you do? What was the impact? What were the results? The thing is when you get into more complex stuff these questions only point out when projects went well. I don't want to hear about every single project that went well, I want to know about the projects that got screwed up and how you were part of fixing them.

The discrimination happened when the interviewer starts augmenting the questions because you do not feel that the candidate did not answer the way you wanted them to and there is no longer a standard basis as to compare the different candidates and would not allow them to really state their assets in the interview process.

Michael: *Were there ethnic or cultural groups that may have had a disadvantage with this process?*

Larry: *It would happen through communication skills…that is, your cultural ethic. Let's just say someone comes from India for example, actually my boss is from India (laugh)…their resumes are structured as though they are not in Canada yet, they haven't yet Canadianized themselves…that is a kind of form of discrimination in a way. At first I never thought of it but it has taken me a while to figure that out. It doesn't necessarily mean that if the person is not a fan of Hockey Night in Canada that they are a bad applicant, how high do you hold the bar of Canadianization? I know a lot of recruiters that hold that bar high because a lot of their customers ask them to do that.*

Duc also attempts to put a positive spin on this earlier comment by saying, "*Work experience will get them the interview, but their personality will get them the job*". No matter if the experience is first class, the hiring agent may have a negative preconceived notion about the person they are interviewing based on their race or ethnicity that is not accounted for when final decisions are made that can ultimately affect their ability to get hired.

While hiring agents or upper management may not consciously intend to discriminate when promoting others to management positions, it is still being done through both overt and covert methods. For example, Hassan explains that upper management positions in his organization were required to have 15 to 20 years of Canadian experience. Who is most likely to have that much Canadian experience? In this case, obviously new immigrants will have difficulty with upward mobility within their companies. It would be interesting to see if British or American experience currently or in the past would constitute for Canadian work experience. Does that mean that Hassan would have to wait ten more years until he is able to move past his current position within the company seeing how he has only five years of relevant Canadian work experience? How many years will it take for racialized individuals to hold the same upper management positions?

While some of the respondents felt like they would be able to successfully procure upward mobility within an organization or find another organization within the Canadian labour market, others did not share the same sentiment. In two cases, Sofia who identifies herself as a South Asian female and Nana, who, as mentioned earlier, chose to pursue opportunities with international organizations mainly because the barriers they faced limited their career goals with respect to prospective upward movement in the Canadian labour market. Both respondents were fortunate to have access to resources that could help them go beyond Canadian boundaries, but what about those who are recent immigrants who do not have similar highly developed Canadian credentials and work experience? Racial discrimination in employment does still exist and is deeply systemically engrained through organizational structures and processes, making it extremely difficult to identify (Beck et. al, 2002). I am sure there is much attention given to the success stories of those who have broken through discriminatory barriers, but it pales in comparison to the amount of new highly skilled immigrants who are disillusioned to the prospect of upward mobility,

let alone finding a job in their line of work (Oreopoulos, 2011). It is important for the Canadian government to explore further legal and social strategies in order to address the systemic barriers that are camouflaged by the illusion that Canada is an accepting multicultural society that offers equal opportunities to all, when in fact this is not the case. As I have highlighted previously, we only have to look at the representation in the upper echelons of the private sector in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area labour market.

Returning to what was discussed earlier in the previous chapter, can we say that "positive stereotypes" can be helpful for people of specific ethnicities or races? Going back to Duc's comments about his ability to be successful in hiring because he happens to be Asian that he is able to automatically command much respect in the place he currently works when he says,

I think a lot of people assume that I know what I am talking about when it comes to math or logic type of stuff because I am Asian [laughter]. They don't even know the difference between Chinese, Vietnamese or Japanese... they are just like, you're Asian so you must be right.

'Positive' stereotypes can be very problematic because it can limit racialized individuals to specific positions that are deemed suitable to their 'biological' or 'natural' abilities. In this instance, we see how his 'positive' stereotype about Asians may appear to be beneficial, but if one were to look at another position such as a leadership role, the Asian stereotype is not seen as a positive one. For example, when looking to fill a managerial position at her head office, Marlene, a vice president for a popular food chain said:

I hate to say it, but when my boss and I were interviewing the different candidates for the position... although the Asian ones looked more than qualified on paper, they did not really fit our company's culture. My boss also said that these candidates did not seem to possess strong leadership skills, so even if I did think one of them were qualified enough for the position, I was not going to go against my boss' wishes.

In this case, the president of the company already had an idea of what a specific fit for this particular position in the company would be. The concept of proper "fit" is not necessarily a top down distinction because as we can see, even employees who have managers that do not fit a specific mould can also have preconceived notions of whether or not specific people will be successful or not.

Mona, who appeared to be constantly struggling with gaining respect due to her "youthful appearance", made an interesting comment regarding someone they hired externally as a manager and her direct superior. "*The position is really broad and has a lot of people reporting into her in different areas so I'm not sure how successful she is going to be because it is very broad. I'm not sure she actually has the time to manage correctly.*" I then asked what the ethnicity of the person that was just hired and she responded with "Chinese". Now is it possible that many of the comments Mona made about the position being very broad in scope and questioning how successful the new manager would be based on the fact that she was either Chinese and/or female? This can appear to be a stereotype that shares an intersectional form of discrimination. Although it cannot be proven and Mona would probably not admit it, it needs to be addressed because the person in question is female and Asian and stereotypically both markers are not synonymous with having strong management skills. Mona's new manager not appearing to be the right fit is not

only coming from upper management but also frontline workers. One can see how a specific stereotype can be fed not only from upper structures but also from the bottom up in the hierarchal nature of organizations but also how structures of whiteness are constantly kept intact, making it very difficult to even begin to dismantle.

It is these same structures of whiteness that make it much easier for White candidates or employees to enter and excel because they fit a particular organizational culture. Although Duc suggested that it may be easy for him to procure employment in IT because he is Asian, because of his experience as a recruiter for 5 years of his career, he was able to make an acute observation within this sector, according to him:

> *Caucasians have an easier path to moving up in their organizations whereas Asian and South Asians have a more difficult path because they are seen as fitting into entry level or admin positions. It makes it harder for them to move into a more senior level, especially if they do not possess the language skills of someone who has been here their whole life.*

Most racialized respondents were very aware of the sacrifices that needed to be made in order to fit a particular company culture. They felt that they had to make adjustments amidst their own interests, routines or beliefs in order to fit into a specific company's culture. Hassan explained that many of the other staff members and managers for the IT firm he works for frequent a local restaurant that usually evolves into ordering alcoholic beverages during and at the end of the meal. He further observes that:

It doesn't bother me, even though my religion does not permit me to drink and I do not usually eat a big lunch, I still sit with them but I'll just stay to myself and eat a muffin or something. Like I said, it doesn't bother me but I know if I am going to move up in this company at all, I need to show my face at these events. You have to do what you have to do in order to fit in.

We see Hassan having to negotiate his own eating routines in order to fit in to this specific company's lunch routine and he does not seem to have a problem doing this. Questions remain though; how much of oneself does one have to give up in order to fit a company's culture and also, in Hassan's case, is this compromise that he makes good enough to be accepted? If he does not partake in the ordering of lunch and drinking of alcohol during these outings, will he ever be seen as "one of the boys" by his coworkers or management? In contrast, Larry the fulltime recruiter mentioned in the previous chapter, expresses that applicants are pushing back. As he puts it:

There are companies out there where many of the deals they make are across the table in bars or even strip joints. I've actually had a woman go through and getting hired as an administrative assistant at this one company that this stuff happens. Once she realized what the culture of this particular company was like she said 'NO WAY!' and chose not to work for them anymore.

Although Larry positions the woman candidate as having the autonomy to make the decision not to work for this specific company and that it is the company's loss. I argue however that if these forms of heteronormative cultures continue to exist, they will remain as normalized fixtures and carry on degrading and/or excluding specific individuals based on race, gender and any other social markers. Granting that this example does not specifically deal with race, we can see how

similar power dynamics work on an intersectional basis. In both examples, we see these same structures making specific individuals to accept and fit a specific mould, if not they are expected to stay complacent in an entry level position or encouraged to move on elsewhere. One can argue that business owners have the right to hire or fire who they please. But if larger companies corner the market in their specific industries, they will continue to dictate not just the culture of their own company but also other smaller firms in the same industry. Larry goes on to make an interesting analogy in that, "*Fit is more important because at the end of the day it is like a marriage…you are going to spend a lot of time with this person day in and day out, if you cannot work well together or collaboratively as a team, it doesn't matter how smart someone is, it is not going to work.*" The problem with this statement is that one partner in this marriage holds all of the economic strength that ends up dictating the rules of the marriage and that is why we need more than just policies and rather a reconfiguration of organizational culture in both companies and other prominent institutions.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter sought to validate most of the uncertainty that exists when addressing racism regarding the employment experiences of racialized individuals in the metropolitan Toronto area. The interviews with hiring agents and other upper level management that made key decisions for their companies confirmed what could not be 'proven' by racialized applicants or employees. In the first section of this chapter, *More Overt than Covert*, we see the blatant use of racism that is said to be non-existent in Canada's multiracial and multiethnic landscape. From employers directing applicants with certain ethnic sounding names to the "no" pile, to recruiters admitting that the employers that they do work for specifically ask for White applicants, we see a direct validation of the racialized individual's concerns with respect to the operations of racism during

hiring practices. Overwhelmingly, the narratives of hiring agents confirmed how race and racism operate in hiring practices. We further see how employers racialize specific jobs and/or skills and allow them to intuitively direct specific racialized individuals towards occupations and jobs that have stereotypically been held by similar groups in different industries and also within individual companies. This sentiment echoes the comments made by a Larry, a White male, that is a fulltime recruiter for both the manufacturing and IT sectors, when he suggests, "*A company that increases the hiring of racialized candidates into entry level or manual labour positions does not necessarily indicate a lessening of discrimination or that its labour force is truly diverse.*" In fact, many respondents who were working in or were recruiters for the IT sector agreed that this sector was one of the most diverse industries. However, Duc who worked as both a technician and a recruiter in IT, offers a perspective that exemplifies the context of this project:

> **Michael:** *Most people from the IT sector would say it is the most diverse industry out there, that is more accepting of race and ethnicity, do you agree with this statement?*
>
> **Duc:** *I do agree with what other people are saying, but that is saying something because if it is one of the most diverse industries, what is that saying about other industries? As diverse as the IT industry is, I feel we are still far away from breaking the barrier of race.*

Finally, in this chapter we see how hiring agents and upper management have preconceived notions of what type of employee exemplifies the best fit, but also how that particular "fit" actually trumps one's qualifications. It is important to see that this idea of the "fit" is based on a heteronormative mold that is predicated on ideas that stem from a White settler colonial discourse.

One of my initial points of this study was to sensitize and raise awareness among hiring agents and the need to eschew racism in their employment practices. I came to understand that many of the hiring agents are already very aware of how racism is constantly rearing its ugly head in the hiring, firing and promotion of employees. I worry that the awareness I wanted to create in sensitizing these hiring managers and recruiters was more of an exercise in cathartic conscience cleansing rather than creating an antiracist consciousness among them. From what I have analyzed, they are doing what they presume their boss or company wants in order to secure their own position in the company and stay employed. One's material self-preservation in a capitalist society is what is helping keep systems of whiteness imbedded in the cultures of organizations and institutions. As much as I believe in grassroots movements to abolish complex systems of power, there needs to also be some letting go of privilege from the top down. There is no timeline as to when and if a revolution to topple the capitalist system may occur and ultimately do away with exploitive methods of production, but even though if and when it arrives, it is still important to address the socially constructed inequities such as race that not only dominate in the current system but will also be very prominent if capitalism were to fall.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Implications

This thesis brings forth the harsh realities of how Canada's multicultural, 'colourblind', all-encompassing and accepting rhetoric is masking how racism still persists in private places of employment in metropolitan Toronto, undoubtedly the country's most diverse city. Throughout this work, I have argued that operations of whiteness that stem from a White settler colonial discourse are central to the organizational culture and structures of private sector places of employment that racialized individuals are forced to navigate. This research posits that racialized workers' insecure feelings of racial injustice are justified. The multiple responses of hiring agents that confirm that racism does not just periodically enter or simply exist as an anomaly, rather it is ubiquitous and not just in the covert ways most Canadians would think. There were multiple participants that admitted that they were directly told to avoid hiring or promoting individuals from specific races or ethnicities in addition to following internal racist biases when filling specific positions. We cannot ignore the real implications racism has on people of colour in places of employment, especially in Canada where we live behind the veil of an all accepting and accommodating multicultural narrative. In Toronto, seen as one of the most racially and ethnically diverse cities in Canada and globally, we cannot ignore the multiple ways racism is systemically rooted in its labour market, and how other institutions such as the education system, healthcare, and even security forces such as the police force and military are all connected in sustaining systems of White supremacy.

If we do not attempt to influence the CEOs, presidents, and other upper forms of managers to relinquish traditional ways of thought immersed in racist heteronormative attitudes, systemic

racism in prominent organizations will continue to perpetuate in the labour market and other Canadian institutions because most of the employees of these companies will only be doing what they think "the boss wants" in order to increase profit margins. This research is an attempt to sensitize hiring agents to their actions, but these agents are just a cog in a greater systemic form of racism imbedded in these organizational cultures of private companies that are configured as spaces of whiteness, and in doing so favoring and sustaining members of the "WHITE" family, not only physically and socially, but ideologically as well.

7.2 Final Thoughts

As much as this project may appear as a harbinger of doom and gloom, what this project does reveal is the everyday existence and the nuanced ways in which racism operates in the Canadian labour market, specifically in employment areas of the GTA. This is evident both in terms of what is experienced with respect to employees and how racism is consolidated by the gate keepers of the private sector. However, there also were some positive moments that do suggest that change is possible. Duc reflects on how the owner of the company he works for has shown some progressive steps towards social change:

When I was first hired the team was small and mainly Caucasian and European. I remember when I recommended someone who was South Asian that I met while taking a course at U of T who had a great work ethic but did not speak English very well. Based on my recommendation my boss hired him and ever since has been very impressed with what this employee has been able to accomplish in such little time. Now, my employer has opened the gamut to people with non-Canadian experience, but still wants Canadian schooling. I really feel that his attitude towards non-White

people has progressed, but I think it is because we work closely with him and he creates more of a team based environment rather than acting like the boss all the time.

Duc's testament speaks to more of a horizontal form of management that has very few levels of middle management that would normally create an alienated sense of hierarchal structure that usually makes upper management inaccessible and often times unapproachable. While Duc's narrative suggests an openness towards other races and ethnicities, because of the expertise they bring to the work place, he remains unconvinced with respect to schooling outside of Canada thereby reinscribing the idea and increased value of Canadian education at the expense of other forms of legitimate knowledge. Similarly, in my conversation with Dante he suggests:

> **Dante***: My Skills and expertise were valued to people that have a direct connection to me, but when I say that, say... in other places the higher decision makers might not have a connection to me. They may just know of you, they don't know exactly if they may hear, from word of mouth, how you're doing and what you're doing. But your opinion is not valued to them because of that; they don't see you at the same level. This is usually how it works in bigger companies or if you work offsite from the main company.*

> **Michael***: Would you say that in bigger companies that you encounter these problems more frequently than in smaller companies?*

> **Dante:** *Yes, when I think of my current position, my director works pretty close with us as a team.*

> *Michael: In comparison to previous companies you worked for?*

> *Dante: The previous company was probably smaller than this company, but I didn't work onsite. So, I didn't have interaction with the…I'd see the director and president only 3 times a year. At this place, I see the director every day. So, the director is there, he sees the work, he communicates on projects with me, and he asks me questions. It's valued enough in my opinion, but I do feel he will listen and take it in and generally appreciate the advice I have given.*

Both Duc and Dante's narratives suggest that there is some optimism within organizational structures that can potentially mitigate the occurrence or racism. Building off a more horizontal form of management, racial bias held by the owner seemed to be progressively broken down in Duc's company and can potentially be linked to the more direct social connections to upper management Dante explained that in the end would make him feel like a more valued employee, but also give him the confidence to confront management about issues he may face. Rethinking the size, scope, and layout of an organization is imperative to eliminating racism in the workplace. We need to ask; how can this be done outside of the obvious unsuccessful initiatives and policies that have already been implemented. We cannot sit still by asking racialized people to 'wait' for generational change to occur because the findings in this research demonstrate that not much has changed historically, in relation to racialized individuals accessing upper management positions in the private sector in Canada. Rather we still see through this project how racialized individuals are still facing much racism regarding entrance and mobility in places of employment but also alongside the existing racist biases and attitudes that exist from hiring agents and other upper management that make the decisions that ultimately decide the fate of employees.

Canadian society prides itself on embracing and tolerating difference as part of its multicultural landscape. This is a view that is shared by White and racialized Canadians alike. Considering the increased views of Canadian exceptionalism in contrast to the crass and overt brand of racism and notions of assimilation that has typically characterized the United States, especially in light of the recent election of President Donald Trump it is important to note, Reitz & Breton's (1994) observation that historically "…Canadians are as much assimilationists as they are pluralists" (p.37). Despite Canada's self-proclaimed multicultural narrative and reputation amongst other nations, it has a historical legacy that constructs itself as a 'White' nation, historically discriminating against racialized bodies in its social, political and economic spheres (Bannerji, 2000; Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007). The labels and associations created about racialized bodies in Canada contribute to the social construction of a vision of whiteness that allows White Canadians to maintain a place of privilege, and the labour market is no exception (Bannerji, 2000). This vision of whiteness maintains a standard that is systemically imbedded into the structures of the Canadian labour market that only allows the inclusion of immigrants and racialized bodies if they conform to a White heteronormative standard. Although quite aware of the forms of racism existing in places of employment, most respondents admitted to not having a problem making the strategic moves necessary and the sacrifices one must make to fit in and partake in Canada's White narrative.

However, in doing so, these racial survival strategies completely contradict and debunk Canada's welcoming multicultural narrative. Respondents have shared instances where they not only had to change the foods they ate because of how it smelled and was foreign to others, but also had to adjust their regular eating habits, in addition to the clothing they would wear to work. While there were some examples where 'traditional' forms of dress and food were encouraged in the

workplace, it appears there was a fear of bringing too much unnecessary attention or causing too much controversy if they continued to do so. These are things that racialized workers can change and potentially adapt to, but what about the things they could not change about themselves? How do they bypass the indirect or systemic forms of discrimination that are not visible in plain sight through microaggressions or unseen unethical racist employment practices? To put it bluntly, how do they change their skin colour? There were individuals in this research study that felt like they managed to successfully navigate the Canadian labour market into high level management positions.

Valarie, an electrical engineer who identifies herself as South Asian, describes her success as being able to break through racial and gender lines not just because of government policies, but rather attributes her success to how well she was able to navigate the system; as she puts it:

> *If [White males in the field] did right, automatically they move forward. Where in my case nothing was automatic. Somewhere in my psyche, I have always resigned myself to this as a navigation you have to do, it was so ingrained in me…that it was about navigating the management and people around you. It just gets so engrained that you probably don't even realize that you see other people getting totally different treatment later on.*

In her opinion, initially the major barriers to overcome were not because of open forms of discrimination, it was more a case of finding ways to be included in training sessions that were hidden from her that would give her the tools and knowledge to gain a promotion as well as being hidden from superiors when waiting to receive acknowledgment for a completed task. She further states that:

Whenever I played a major role in a project, rather than getting individual accolades,
it would be addressed to the team as a whole. When it was other members of the
team, they were sure to get individual praise and acknowledgement.

Not only did Valarie have to worry about her job at hand, she also had to worry about the next steps she needed to take in order to survive, but also be mindful of her advancement in the organization as well. It was not until later in her life that she admits to reflecting on her career; that it was indeed discrimination that kept her from advancing quicker in her field. The other White males who predominately held managerial roles in the public sector did not have to put the same amount of time, energy and resources into their own preservation within places of employment. The constant bobbing and weaving that Valarie had to do, was not far from the constant personal negotiations other racialized workers have had to do as well. In most instances, this navigation is dangerously normalized which is evident in this excerpt from my interview with Scott:

I try not to use the race card even though I know it is there and exists. I really try not
to use it as the initial assumption…because I know as a Black male I'm going to have
to work ten times as hard as someone who isn't Black. Unfortunately, this is the
reality of things and it is not going to change.

Why should people of colour have to change their core practice, beliefs and dignity in order to gain access and progress into labour market? Although Valerie is retired and her account was 20 years ago, we still see the same racist practices and attitudes occurring in places of employment in the present day as seen through Scott's comment, which is homogenous with other comments

made by other racialized individuals interviewed. Maria, one of the fulltime recruiters introduced in the previous chapter admits that:

> *You consistently see especially in the auto parts manufacturing and food manufacturing companies that their manual laborers are visible minorities and the management is fairly White. You might have diversity with the odd clerical or support worker…so you can see it's changed, but it hasn't changed at the same time.*

Even though there are many current initiatives being developed by both corporate and government entities, there needs to be a reconfiguration of state policy that points out racism and discrimination in a very real way targeting the structural foundations of most organizations. It should not be piecemeal repairs or offer illusions of diversity, but rather a government led critical approach that incorporates not just the labour market but also forums such as education, health and housing that are interconnected with labour. There also exists a façade of equal opportunity with employment processes because as we see in Steven's experience of getting hired at the pharmaceutical company, that holds itself up as an equal opportunity employer, expressed how he got "*…chastised by his manager for not filling out that he was South Asian on the identity survey when I got hired.*" As a result, Steven's manager was upset because she expressed that Steven was supposed to fill her diversity quota. How legitimate are these policies if these are the attitudes that are garnered? It goes well beyond creating new policy in the labour market.

   While I advocate for an intersectional approach, it is important to start with issues of race and ethnicity because they have historically been the most under contested and most violent marker of oppression alongside gender since the emergence of colonial capitalist accumulation. Racialized individuals should not be confined to assimilation practices because as long as the

standard remains a "White" Canadian one, assimilation is ultimately self-defeating and racialized bodies will never meet this idea. We also see 'progressive' policies put in place on national, provincial, municipal and even at the organizational basis, but employers always find a way to also find ways around and in doing so mocking these policies. Enrique, a human resource manager for a midsized telecommunications company ironically suggested that, "*At the lower levels, minorities are safer at keeping their jobs during layoffs in order for companies to keep up diverse appearance.*" This statement is powerful from Enrique because what this means in his line of work is that employers can implement policy after policy to try to curb forms of discrimination from happening, but unless we completely deconstruct how whiteness is sustained in the fabric of an organization and in Enrique's case how diversity is being deployed, we will never make any positive change. Talk of diversity and inclusion can only go so far when working within a system that is based on the narrative of White settler colonialism. To quote Dei (2008):

> The more we speak of inclusion, the more we seem to leave things behind. So what does inclusion mean today? I believe and will assert that inclusion should not simply be about 'adding to what already exists'. I say this because what already exists is the source of the problem. Inclusion should mean redesigning, restructuring and beginning anew with everybody at the table: a fresh start. We must bring multiple meanings and interpretations to inclusion. (p. 140)

Based on the interviews I have conducted and the insights I have put forth, it is my hope that racialized workers do not have to take on a second form of labour, racialized labour – one that involves the intense pressure of manoeuvring systems and then having to explain this lived reality of racism they face on a daily basis. The intense pressure to fit a norm that stems from White settler colonialism, that continues to be presently rooted in the structures of the Canadian labour

market, is a hidden form of labour that comes at a high price for racialized individuals. The cost?

One's dignity and freedom to be who one wants to be, as well as having a truly inclusive seat at

the table.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions For Racialized Workers

PERSONAL PROFILE

1) How old are you?
2) Were where you born?
3) Where did you grow up?
4) How do you identify yourself?
5) Do you identify as Canadian?
6) What does being Canadian mean to you?
7) What is your religious background?
8) What prompted your move from _____ to Canada?
9) And how did you find Canada when you came? What city did you first settle in and are presently settled in?

CREDENTIALS AND LABOUR MARKET ENTRANCE

1) What level of education did you complete?
2) What institutions have you been formally educated in? Where are they located?
3) Did you have prior work experience outside of Canada? If so, what are some examples?
4) Are you currently in a job that is related to your education or any formal training?
5) Did you ever consider any other careers than that of your present one?
6) If so, what do you feel has restricted you from pursuing that avenue?
7) How did you find out about the positions you were hired/applied for?
8) Were there positions that you applied or interviewed for where you did not get the position? Please give examples.
9) Why do you think that you may not a have gotten the position?

EMPLOYMNET STATUS AND GOALS

1) What is your current working status?
2) How long have you been working in Canada?
3) What sector(s) have you worked in?
4) Have you worked at more than one place?
5) What job titles/positions have you held while employed?
6) Can you take me through a typical work day for you?
7) What are you goals and aspirations in your current job?
8) Do you have any set goals you hope to achieve outside of your current job?

9) Does your current place of employment offer on the job training? Please elaborate.

10) Do you feel that all employees have fair access to this training?

WORKPLACE EVIRONMENT

1) What stands out as your most memorable moment in any job setting?
2) What is your least memorable moment?
3) Would you say your experience overall has been a positive one?
4) Do you have good friends from past or present places of employment?
5) Can you describe to me the qualities of a good employee?
6) What are the qualities that are valued in a good employee?
7) Do you feel like you exemplify any of these values? How?
8) Was the knowledge and expertise that you brought to the workplace valued?
9) Did you feel like you had access to upward mobility within the company? Was promotion difficult?
10) Did you feel safe in your workplace environment?
11) Do you think you stand out in your current or past jobs? How?
12) Could you easily express yourself to your colleagues?
13) Do you ever feel like you had to hold back in any way? Staff meetings, colleagues, boss etc.

DISCRIMINATION IN RELATION TO THE WORKPLACE

1) Do you feel that discrimination has ever had anything to do with you ever not getting hired anywhere? If so please give examples.
2) What was the ethnic makeup of some of the companies you worked for?
3) Did you see any racially diverse people in those companies? If so what type of positions did they hold?
4) From your point of view, were there specific positions that were held by certain ethnicities?
5) Are there any stereotypes that exist in your workplace?
6) Did you ever feel like that you personally stood out in any way in relation to your race or ethnicity?
7) Did you ever feel like you were treated differently because of your ethnicity? How?
8) Can you tell me about how issues of race may have played out in the workplace? Personally or from what you witnessed with others such as colleagues or superiors?
9) Have you ever experienced any racism or any other forms of discrimination in the workplace?
10) Do you find that you are targeted in either a positive or negative way based on your race or ethnicity?
11) Have you ever experienced being stereotyped? How do you feel about this?
12) What does multiculturalism look like for you in the workforce?
13) What particular negotiations have you had to make in order to "fit in"?
14) Do you ever feel like you were able to use your ethnicity to your advantage or gain access to the workplace?
15) If you were to try to advise recruiters on how to recruit more diverse bodies into the workforce, what would you advise them?

Appendix B: Interview Questions for Hiring Agents

CREDENTIALS AND INDUSTRY SPECIFICS

1) What level of education did you complete?
2) What institutions have you been formally educated in?
3) How did you come to work in the recruiting field/ human resources?
4) Did you ever consider any other careers than that of your present one?
5) If so, what do you feel has restricted you from pursuing that avenue?
6) What would you consider to be the industry classifications for the companies you currently work or have worked for?
7) What are some of the job titles you held/hold in past and/or the present company you work for?
8) What are some of the rolls/job descriptions of your position?
9) How have these positions related to hiring new employees for any of these organizations?

HIRING SPECIFICS

1) Do/Did you have sole decision-making responsibilities relating to new hirings, or were you part of a hiring team? Please explain.
2) Can you walk me through the hiring process for an entry level employee?
3) Are there specific mandatory requirements for potential employees? E.g. education, distance travelled to work, skills, work experience, etc.
4) Is the process different when hiring for a more established position such as an upper management or a vice president position?
5) How do you weed out (narrow down) the pool of applicants through each part of the process? Eg from receiving a resume/1st interview/2nd interview etc.
6) Does your company ever conduct phone interviews? Please explain the circumstances of when this occurs.
7) Does your company conduct online/skype interviews? Please explain the circumstance of when this occurs.
8) Are there any parts of the hiring process you find fair/unfair to certain candidates? Why and how?
9) How would you describe the ideal candidate in relation to:
   Qualifications – Domestic vs. international
   Education- Domestic vs. International
   Experience- Domestic vs. International

PROMOTION AND SALARY SPECIFICS

1) Are you involved with the process of employee promotions to higher positions or different departments within our organization?
2) Can you walk me through the process of promoting an employee to a higher position or different department?

3) What are some of the job titles/positions you were involved with the promotion of an employee?
4) Does your current place of employment offer on the job training? Please elaborate.
5) Do you feel that all employees have fair access to this training?

DISCRIMINATION IN RELATION TO EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

1) What comes to mind about the concept employment equity? What are your views about employment equity?
2) Does your company have an official policy on employment equity? E.g. documentation, training manuals, website?
3) In your opinion, how important is diversity in your workplace to you/your company?
4) Do you find that there are specific jobs/positions/tasks that certain ethnic groups are better at than others? Explain.
5) Do you find that there are departments in your company that have workers belonging to similar ethnic groups?
6) What does "corporate culture" or "organizational culture" mean to you?
7) How would you describe your company's "corporate/organizational culture"?
8) How does one fit this "corporate/organizational culture"? Can someone adapt to it?
9) Is there room for change in your company's "corporate/organizational culture"?
10) Has your company not hired someone because they did not seem to fit this "corporate/organizational culture"? Please explain.
11) What were some of the attributes of the people that did not fit this "corporate culture? E.g. gender, race, ethnicity etc.
12) Have your views on a potential candidate not fall in line with your immediate supervisor/client or department manager you were hiring for? Any Examples?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR RECRUITERS

1) How do clients pay for your services?
2) Are there specific traits you would tell potential hires to adopt?
3) Are employers upfront about not wanting specific "types" of people for listed positions?
4) Have employers asked for specific ethnic or racial groups to fill specific positions?
5) Do clients ever ask for diverse candidates to fill positions? What are their reasons?

Appendix C: Request to Participate in Research (Racialized Individual)

Hello,

- Do you identify as a person of colour (Black, South Asian, East Asian, African Canadian, Middle Eastern, Indo-Canadian, non-White, mixed race, racialized)?

- Are you currently seeking employment or employed in the private sector within the Metropolitan Toronto Area?

- Are you interested in sharing your experiences regarding fair or unfair employment practices (e.g. Hiring, firing and/or promotions)?

If you have answered yes, to all of the above questions, I welcome the opportunity to speak with you. My name is Michael Fraschetti and I am currently a master's student in the department of Geography at York University.   I am currently involved in a research project entitled: *White Nepotism: Interrogating "Corporate Culture" in its Relation to Systemic Racist Employment Practices*. This project involves exploring the experiences of people of colour (Black, South Asian, East Asian, African Canadian, Middle Eastern, Indo-Canadian, non-White, mixed race, racialized) within the Metropolitan Toronto Area labour market.

I am currently looking for men and women who have sought employment or are currently employed in the private sector who would be interested in taking part in an interview that would take approximately one hour (to a maximum of 90 minutes). The interview will focus on your experiences in the labour market, successful accomplishments, barriers you have faced or currently face, your decisions to enter the industry you currently work in, how you identify yourself and how your involvement in the labour market has affected your identity. I am looking for volunteers who would be interested in sharing their experiences on these issues. The interview would be entirely confidential and we would use an alias when I transcribe the interview in order to conceal your identity.

If you are interested in participating in this interview, please feel free to contact me at the information below. If you have any further questions regarding this research study feel free to contact me to discuss the study in further detail. From that point, you will be able to decide for yourself if this is a study you would like to be involved in, from which we can decide where you would want the interview to be conducted at a time that is entirely convenient to you.

Please feel free to ask me any questions you may have regarding this research project. I can be contacted at: ████████████ .

I thank you for your time and consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Michael Fraschetti

Appendix D: Request to Participate in Research (Hiring Agents)

Hello,

- Do you work at a full-time recruiting company or in human resources or for a private company that resides in the Metropolitan Toronto Area?

- Are you currently or in the past been involved in the hiring, firing and promoting of employees for mid to upper level management for any private company in the Metropolitan Toronto Area?

- Are you interested in sharing your experiences regarding fair or unfair employment practices (eg. Hiring, firing and/or promotions)?

If you have answered yes, to all of the above questions, I welcome the opportunity to speak with you. My name is Michael Fraschetti and I am currently a master's student in the department of Geography at York University.   I am currently involved in a research project entitled: *White Nepotism: Interrogating "Corporate Culture" in its Relation to Systemic Racist Employment Practices*. This project involves exploring the experiences of full-time recruiters and human resource personnel regarding their past or present employers' employment practices within the Metropolitan Toronto Area labour market.

I am currently looking for men and women who have had any involvement in the hiring, firing and promotion of employees within any companies they have worked or recruited for in the past or present who would be interested in taking part in an interview that would take approximately one hour (to a maximum of 90 minutes). The interview will focus on employment practices that have either helped or excluded people of colour in relation to the company's culture and policies that are in place to improve or deter diversity in the workplace. I am looking for volunteers who would be interested in sharing their experiences on these issues. The interview would be entirely confidential and we would use an alias when I transcribe the interview in order to conceal your identity.

If you are interested in participating in this interview, please feel free to contact me at the information below. If you have any further questions regarding this research study feel free to contact me to discuss the study in further detail. From that point, you will be able to decide for yourself if this is a study you would like to be involved in, from which we can decide where you would want the interview to be conducted at a time that is entirely convenient to you.

Please feel free to ask me any questions you may have regarding this research project. I can be contacted at: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ .

I thank you for your time and consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Michael Fraschetti

Appendix E: Informed Consent Form

Date:

Study Title or Topic: Interrogating Corporate Culture in the Canadian Labour Market

Researchers: **Primary Researcher:** Michael Fraschetti, MA candidate,
     Department of Geography, York University
        Phone: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
        Email: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
        Supervisor: Joseph Mensah, Professor,
     Department of Geography, York University
        Phone: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
        Email: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Purpose of the Research: I have attempted to offer a historical context of why racial and ethnic forms of discrimination exist in Canada. Racism in Canada can be linked to systemic forms of control that are constantly changing and entrenched in the Canadian labour market. Using a series of questions, I am hoping to obtain personal accounts in order to achieve a more nuanced view of how racialized Canadians navigate through the several manifestations of racism that exist disguised through corporate culture in the Canadian labour market. The results of this study will be included in Michael Fraschetti's research paper for his master's thesis conducted at York University.

What You Will Be Asked to do in the Research: You will be asked questions that pertain to any information about your experiences within the Canadian labour market. Some examples include job procurement, upward mobility, and comfort within the workplace. The duration of the interview will be approximately 30-90 minutes.

Risks and Discomforts: I do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to answer any question or choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the *[treatment you may be receiving] [nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researcher]* nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. If you decide to stop participating, you will still be eligible to receive the promised pay for agreeing to be in the project. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher or York University. Should you decide to withdraw from the study; all data generated as a consequence of your participation will be destroyed.

Confidentiality: The interview will be taped with a recording device for reference purposes

only. All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and, unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. The electronic recordings and transcribed hardcopy data will be saved on a password protected laptop and will be safely stored in a locked facility. Any transcribed interviews will be locked in a filing cabinet located in the same facility. Only the researcher will have access to this information. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law. All interviews will be deleted off of the laptop immediately upon completion of the written report for the project. An electronic copy will be stored on a password protected USB key will be archived in a locked safe within my house indefinitely with the permission of the interviewee to be used for future research related purposes. If the interviewee declines, I will delete the audio and digital transcription immediately after the report for the research project is completed.

Questions about the Research: If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact the researcher, Michael Fraschetti, MA candidate in the department of Geography, at ███████████████ email: ███████████ or the supervisor, Joseph Mensah at ███████████████████, email: ███████████. The program office may also be contacted at (416) 736-5106 or email: gradgeog@yorku.ca

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5thFloor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in the study on *Interrogating Corporate Culture in the Canadian Labour Market* conducted by *Michael Fraschetti*. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Participant

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Researcher