2018

The Influence of Social Context on Perceptions of Racism

Thaïs Kelly
Concordia University - Portland

Follow this and additional works at: https://commons.cu-portland.edu/commpsychotheses

Part of the Community Psychology Commons

CU Commons Citation
https://commons.cu-portland.edu/commpsychotheses/11

This Open Access Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Theses & Dissertations at CU Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in MA Community Psychology Theses by an authorized administrator of CU Commons. For more information, please contact libraryadmin@cu-portland.edu.
The Influence of Social Context
on Perceptions of Racism

Thaïs Kelly

Concordia University- Portland
Abstract

This study explored how accurate people’s perceptions of racism are compared to the reality of experiences of racism and how social context influences those perceptions, specifically looking at the variables race, highest level of education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and neighborhood intergroup contact. The research design followed Graham, Nosek, and Haidt’s (2012) quantitative model. Participants were randomly assigned to complete two out of three possible surveys: Landrine, Klonoff, Corral, Fernandez, and Roesch’s (2006) General Ethnic Discrimination Scale (GEDS) answered as oneself, answered as a “typical white person,” or answered as a “typical person of color.” Participants also responded to measures on the other social context variables to allow for an analysis of how the social context factors influenced people’s perceptions of racism as a problem. Due to a sample that was not fully representative of non-white participants, conclusions were only discussed for white participants. Thirty-five percent of white participants predicted people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race, and that perception was influenced exclusively by whiteness. Eighteen percent of white participants predicted that white people are treated unfairly because of their race, and both whiteness and level of education influenced that perception.
Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge several people, without whom I may not have completed this emotional rollercoaster of a project:

Thank you to the residents of Portsmouth, Laurelhurst, and Woodlawn in Portland, Oregon for taking the time to participate in my survey and/or for (mostly) not getting too annoyed at the participation flier posted to your doorknob.

Thank you to my professors, Reed Mueller and Kris Kuhn, for reading this beast and for your continuous support and guidance.

Thank you to my advisor, Bryant Carlson, for the hours you dedicated to being my soundboard, for your patience as I scattered my thoughts in the form of sticky notes and loose papers all over your desk and office, for your guidance in helping me consolidate and refine those thoughts, for the unwavering confidence you somehow have in me, and for always making me feel welcome and understood.

Thank you to my cohort-mates and friends, Stephanie Lam and Tito Vasquez, for sharing in this journey with me, for listening to me and letting me vent, for sending me helpful links and articles, and for sharing meals and beers/Shirley Temples with me.

Thank you to my partner, Travis Booher, for listening to hours and hours of my thoughts on this project, for walking in the rain and cold every weekend for months with me to post participation fliers, for bringing me lattes while I worked, and for your constant love and support through both the highs and lows.

Thank you to my family, Joyce Kelly and Sandi Leavitt, for instilling in me a sense of curiosity, a need to do good for others, a meticulous eye for grammar, and that Leavitt-stubbornness to see anything through to the end.
Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... 2
Acknowledgments ............................................................................................................................ 3
Chapter One: Introduction ................................................................................................................ 7
  Definition of Terms ......................................................................................................................... 9
  Statement of the Problem .............................................................................................................. 11
  Purpose of the Study ....................................................................................................................... 12
  Research Questions ....................................................................................................................... 13
  Rationale of the Study .................................................................................................................... 14
    Lack of Research ......................................................................................................................... 14
    Lasting Inequality ....................................................................................................................... 15
    Increased Focus on Racism ......................................................................................................... 16
  Significance of the Study ............................................................................................................... 18
  Nature of the Study ....................................................................................................................... 19
  Assumptions .................................................................................................................................. 19
Chapter Two: Literature Review ..................................................................................................... 20
  Contemporary Racism ................................................................................................................... 20
    Definitions of Race and Racism ................................................................................................. 20
    Three Levels of Racism ............................................................................................................... 21
    Reverse Racism .......................................................................................................................... 26
  Lack of Perception ......................................................................................................................... 27
  Denial of Racism ............................................................................................................................ 27
SOCIAL CONTEXT AND PERCEPTIONS OF RACISM

Colorblind Racism .................................................................................................................. 28
Mediating Factors to Perceptions of Racism ......................................................................... 29
Race ........................................................................................................................................ 29
Racial Identity Relevance ........................................................................................................ 30
Intergroup Contact ................................................................................................................ 31
Education Level ..................................................................................................................... 32
Socioeconomic Status ........................................................................................................... 32
Perceptions Affect Social Action ............................................................................................ 33
Analysis of the Intersection of Literature and Perceptions of Racism .......................... 34

Chapter Three: Method ........................................................................................................ 35
Design ...................................................................................................................................... 35
Participants ............................................................................................................................ 37
Sampling Procedures ............................................................................................................ 38
Sample Size .......................................................................................................................... 40
Measures ............................................................................................................................... 40
Procedure .............................................................................................................................. 43

Chapter Four: Results .......................................................................................................... 50
Research Question One .......................................................................................................... 50
Comparison One .................................................................................................................... 50
Comparison Two .................................................................................................................... 50
Research Question Two ........................................................................................................ 51
Comparison One .................................................................................................................... 52
CHAPTER 1

The Influence of Social Context on Perceptions of Racism

Prior to the latter half of the seventeenth century, people in the United States were classified based upon origin—racial classifications had not yet entered the early American consciousness (Allen, 1997; Smedley & Smedley, 2005; Smedley, 1998). Race was invented consciously and deliberately following Bacon’s Rebellion in 1676 (Allen, 1997; Smedley, 1998). In the rebellion, servants and poor freedmen united together in an ultimately unsuccessful revolt against the colonial elite. To prevent any future collaboration and rebellion, colonial leaders sought to create division amongst the underclass. At this point in history, “African servants were vulnerable to policies that kept them in servitude indefinitely, and European servants had the protection of English law”; therefore, “colonial leaders developed a policy backed by new laws that separated African servants and freedmen from those of European background” (Smedley, 1998, p. 694). As the eighteenth century progressed, colonial leaders continuously passed laws to benefit the poor, white freedmen and to further restrict the rights of Africans (Allen, 1997; Smedley, 1998). Thus, racial classifications were not naturally conceived; colonial leaders pointedly and purposely crafted policies that placed Africans in permanent slavery (Allen, 1997; Smedley & Smedley, 2005).

By the Revolutionary era, race as a social classification was solidified into the American consciousness: Africans were newly referred to as “colored” or “negro” and Europeans were referred to as “white” (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). This shift marked the beginning of a deep-rooted and persistent racial imagination in the United States;
blackness became juxtaposed to whiteness, and through this juxtaposition, human value was assigned based on perceived phenotype. The stratification of people along racial lines serves two primary purposes. First, racial stratification serves as a means for ruling elites to maintain power and protect class interests (Wright & Rogers, 2015). Second, slavery presented the post-Revolutionary War America with a profound moral dilemma: A country founded on principles of liberty, equality, and freedom simultaneously endorsed the enslavement of millions of people (Smedley & Smedley, 2005; Wright & Rogers, 2015). To reconcile this contradiction, and to protect an economy dependent on slave labor, white Americans fabricated racial ideologies that demoted Africans to subhuman status (Smedley & Smedley, 2005; Wright & Rogers, 2015).

Fundamentally, race remains a social construction created and used by the ruling class to rationalize the systems of oppression and exploitation that benefit the elite class and maintain the status quo (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Wright & Rogers, 2015). As Omi and Winant (1994) stated, “although the concept of race invokes biologically based human characteristics (so-called ‘phenotypes’), selection of these particular human features for purposes of racial signification is always and necessarily a social and historical process” (p. 55). Given this distinction between social and biological categories, Omi and Winant (1994) proposed the following definition of race: “Race is a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies” (p. 55). With this definition in mind, race only continues to carry significance because racism persists as a problem in American society (Kloos et al., 2012).
Racism is deeply engrained in the United States’ history and signifies the intersection between racial classification and oppression (Wright & Rogers, 2015). A country founded on the premises of liberty and opportunity was also founded on the genocide and displacement of Native Americans and on the slave labor of African Americans. Permeating the country’s policies and practices, the effects of such entrenched inequality and injustice have persisted past emancipation, past the Civil Rights Act, and past the election of the nation’s first black president. While racism has commonly been considered in terms of overt discrimination and individual acts of prejudice, contemporary racism has shifted to not only encompass those personally mediated acts of racism so common in the past, but to also include institutional, symbolic, and aversive forms of racism as well (Camara, 2002; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004). In contemporary society, persistent racial inequality not only negatively affects racial minorities personally through discrimination, but also systemically through unfair and unequal access to economic, educational, housing, and employment opportunities. While racism is an apparent problem, additional research is necessary to determine how people perceive racism, to expose any potential gaps in awareness, and to identify the social factors impacting and maintaining those deficits.

**Definition of Terms**

For this study’s purpose, the following terms and definitions are provided for understanding the context in which they are used.

*Institutional racism.* Institutional racism is, “structural, having been codified in our institutions of custom, practice, and law so there need not be an identifiable
perpetrator” and affects, “access to goods, services, and opportunities of society by race” (Camara, 2002, p. 1212).

*Intergroup contact.* The extent to which individuals both have the opportunity to interact with and do interact with members of a different race.

*Non-white participant(s).* A participant that is either Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; not a white participant.

*Perception of racism.* An awareness or recognition of both isolated incidents and systemic manifestations of racism.

*Personally mediated racism.* The most commonly considered definition of racism, consisting of both prejudice and discrimination (Camara, 2002).

*Person/People of color.* Non-white person/people.

*Race.* “A concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies” (Omi & Winant, 1994, p.55).

*Racism.* “A system (consisting of structures, policies, practices, and norms) that structures opportunity and assigns values based on phenotype” (Jones, 2002, p. 9).

*Racial identity relevance.* The extent to which people identify with their own racial group.

*Racial group membership.* The racial classifications used by the U.S. Census Bureau: white, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

*Racial majority.* white people (individually or collectively).
Racial minority. Non-white people (individually or collectively).

Reverse racism. Anti-white prejudice and discrimination.

Social context. Conceptualized through the following predictor variables: race, racial identity relevance, neighborhood intergroup contact, level of education, and socioeconomic status.

White participant(s). A participant that is white; not Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

Statement of the Problem

A lack of awareness or recognition of racism as a problem for racial minorities in the United States negatively affects racial minorities, race relations, and anti-racism efforts and interventions. Only in recent decades in American society have people so openly begun to endorse egalitarian values and to extend those ideals to include racial minorities (Wright & Rogers, 2015). However, as racism is increasingly viewed as unacceptable on the surface and the legal system increasingly supports racial equality, racism as a lasting problem tends to be understated. The denial of racism, discrimination, and prejudice is both common and frequent in contemporary society (Augoustinos & Every, 2007; Nelson, 2013; Todd, Bodenhausen, & Galinsky, 2011). This often takes the form of colorblind racism, which is, “the idea that race is no longer a central factor in determining the life chances of Americans” (Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2011, p.191). Colorblind attitudes turn a blind-eye to the prominent role race still plays in stratifying
opportunity and access in America, and through such lack of awareness, colorblind attitudes serve to defend and justify racial inequalities (Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2011).

Prior to the 1960s, racism in the United States existed through overt, legalized, state-enforced acts and systems of discrimination (Wright & Rogers, 2015). In contemporary society, however, racism has shifted to now incorporate subtle, aversive forms of oppression (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Pearson, Dovidio, & Gaertner, 2009). While old-fashioned was easily detected, contemporary racism is more difficult to perceive as racism now occurs institutionally, informally, privately, and unconsciously (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Wright & Rogers, 2015). Individuals may encounter increased difficulty in recognizing racism as a problem for racial minorities in contemporary society, and this difficulty may be compounded by centuries of justification and normalization of racial stratification. Nevertheless, any difficulty people may encounter does not negate the reality that racism remains to be a defining social issue in the United States.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the influence of social context on perceptions of racism, specifically looking at how variables such as race, education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact affect an individual’s awareness of racism. Additionally, this study aimed to add to the existing body of literature and to provide participants with the opportunity to engage in meaningful internal dialogue about racism as a problem for themselves and for others in the United States. This study has the potential to add to the existing literature regarding:
majority group versus minority group perceptions of racism; the influence of intergroup contact, formal schooling, and income on perceptions of racism; and the intersectional power of various mediating factors on perceptions of racism. The study may be disseminated in various forms to increase awareness among community members.

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate how accurate people’s perceptions of racism are compared to the reality of experiences of racism and how social context influences those perceptions, specifically looking at the variables race, highest level of education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and neighborhood intergroup contact. This study aimed to identify the extent to which each of the five social context variables predicts an individual’s perception of racism as a problem both for people of color and for white people. The research questions for this study were:

1. How accurate are people’s perceptions of racism compared to the reality of experiences of racism?

2. Who is more accurate in their predictions- white participants or non-white participants?

3. How do the social context variables influence the perceptions people have of racism as a problem for people of color?

4. How do the social context variables influence the perceptions people have of racism as a problem for white people?
Rationale of the Study

There were several convincing reasons to conduct this study. First, only in recent decades has racism shifted from the overt, legalized practices and systems of discrimination of the past and toward contemporary manifestations of racism. Therefore, contemporary racism is a relatively new area of study that requires additional and ongoing research. Second, the legacy of discrimination in the United States along with lasting structural inequalities and discriminatory practices continue to pose barriers to racial minorities’ success and well-being. Lastly, a resurgence in white nationalism, the legitimization of the radical right, and a rise in hate groups and hate crimes in recent years require increased focus on racism and racial inequality.

Lack of Research

The Civil Rights Movement officially came to a close in 1968, marking an end to legalized, state-enforced racism. Since then, increases in anti-discrimination laws and policies have contributed to some decreases in overt, old-fashioned racism (Wright & Rogers, 2015). This is not to say, however, that the significance of racism has decreased, but to suggest that racism now takes different forms. Racism continues to manifest in overt acts of discrimination, and in addition, racism also persists institutionally, subtly, covertly, aversively, privately, symbolically, implicitly, unconsciously, and colorblindly (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Lueke & Gibson, 2014; Wright & Rogers, 2015). Contemporary racism has only existed in the literature in recent decades and racism as it exists in the twenty-first century is a newer area of study still. To
effectively address racism as a modern problem, additional research is necessary to
determine how racism operates and manifests in modern times.

Research has identified race (Banfield & Dovidio, 2013; Branscombe, Schmitt,
and Schiffhauer, 2007; Liao, Hong, & Round, 2016; Nelson, Adams, & Salter, 2012;
Nelson et al., 2013; Perez, Fortuna, & Alegria, 2008; Salvatore & Shelton, 2007; Wright
& Rogers, 2015), racial identity relevance (Banfield & Dovidio, 2013; Branscombe et al.,
2007; Perez et al., 2008), intergroup contact (Allport, 1954; Nteta & Greenlee, 2013;
Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Tropp, 2007), level
of education (Beck, Mijeski, & Stark, 2011; Perez et al., 2008; Taylor & Mateyka,
2011; Wodtke, 2012), and socioeconomic status (Brondolo et al., 2009; Perez et al., 2008)
to each have individual effects on a person’s perception of racism. However, researchers
have yet to fully examine the relationships and intersections that exist between these
predictor variables and that impact the causal connections between social context and
perceptions of racism. To fully understand how perceptions of racism are formed and
maintained, researchers need to look at the ways an economically advantaged, educated,
white person perceives racism differently than an economically disadvantaged,
uneducated, white person (for example). Each social context variable adds an important
layer of exploration and the interaction between variables offers a deeper understanding
of perceptions of racism.

**Lasting Inequality**

The United States has a legacy of racism and discrimination and the lasting
effects of that legacy result in persisting inequalities in every realm of life for people of
color in this country. People of color face discrimination and inequality with regard to housing (neighborhood segregation, quality, discrimination in renting or buying, and discriminatory lending practices), education (disparate funding, disparate disciplinary practices, disparate access to quality resources, and disparate placement in or availability of college-ready courses), the economy (employment rates, income and wage differentials, discrimination in hiring, disparate occupational mobility, and the wealth gap), the justice system (police brutality; racial profiling; and disparate rates of arrests, incarceration, and capital punishment), and in political representation (“racial gerrymandering, multimember legislative districts, election runoffs, annexation of predominantly white areas, at-large district elections, anti-single-shot devices”, and voter identification laws all limit the election of officials of color, and electoral politics limit influence when people of color are elected to office (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p.39). Until American society no longer poses barriers to people of color’s success and well-being, there is more work to be done.

**Increased Focus on Racism**

According to some polls, recent years have seen an increased focus on racism and an increase in both hate groups and hate crimes. The Pew Research Center (2017) found that the number of Americans that view racism as a big problem (as compared to somewhat of a problem, a small problem, or not a problem) has increased from 26% in 2009 to 58% in 2017. Conversely, while 26% of people surveyed in 2009 reported racism is a small problem or not a problem, in 2017 only 12% of people reported racism is a small problem or not a problem.
Donald Trump’s then candidacy in 2015, and now presidency in 2018 has coincided with resurgence in white nationalism, the legitimization of the radical right, and a rise in hate groups and hate crimes. The Southern Poverty Law Center (2018) identified 954 active hate groups nationwide in 2017, over 600 of which align with some form of white supremacist ideology. The rise in hate groups marked a 4% increase from 2016 and the second consecutive year of hate groups on the rise. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (2018), neo-Nazi groups saw the largest growth—from 99 to 121—and anti-Muslim groups rose for the third year in a row, suggesting the rise of a new generation of white supremacist groups more closely aligned with the alt-right movement. The Southern Poverty Law Center noted that “the overall number of hate groups likely understates the real level of hate in America, because a growing number of extremists, particularly those who identify with the alt-right, operate mainly online and may not be formally affiliated with a hate group” (para.7).

The Southern Poverty Law Center (2018) also reported a national rise in hate crimes and noted that in 2017 men associated with the alt-right injured 43 people and killed 17 people. In the month directly following the 2016 presidential election, there were an estimated 1,094 bias-related incidents; the largest count of incidents occurred the first day following the election and over one-third of the incidents directly referenced Trump or his campaign (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016). White supremacy not only persists in America, but also thrives within the current social climate and under the current administration.
Significance of the Study

Exploring how social context influences perceptions of racism is important to aid anti-racism and social justice efforts. Those in positions of power are often the dominant voices in defining and discussing social issues (Caplan & Nelson, 1973). In the United States, fair skin denotes a status of power, and as such, white citizens are in position to define racism without the input of minority groups (DiAngelo, 2011). This becomes highly problematic for anti-racism and social justice efforts when problem definition is taken into account: How a problem is perceived and defined impacts the ways in which that problem is addressed (Kloos et al., 2012). Given that differences in social context lead people to perceive racism differently, or to have varying levels of awareness, this study has the potential to identify and discuss the gap to support future anti-racism interventions and efforts.

This study has the potential to identify key focal points in raising awareness about racism. By including five elements of social context (race, racial identity relevance, intergroup contact, level of education, and socioeconomic status) and examining the intersection between elements, this study may help future awareness efforts to focus their interventions on the most pertinent areas.

Revealing people’s perceptions of racism could help to involve dominant racial groups as allies in anti-racism efforts. According to Liao et al. (2016) and Salvatore and Shelton (2007), majority group members are less attuned to subtle forms of discrimination than minority group members. Similarly, Nelson, Adams, and Salter (2012) found that dominant racial group members perceive less discrimination, both in
isolated incidents and systemic manifestation, than minority group members. Duplicating these findings and understanding how majority group membership intersects with other elements of social context could aid in the involvement of majority group members in anti-racism efforts.

Nature of the Study

The research design employed for this study was a descriptive, non-experimental design, following Graham, Nosek, and Haidt’s (2012) quantitative model. Participants were randomly assigned to complete two out of three possible surveys: Landrine et al.’s (2006) General Ethnic Discrimination Scale (GEDS) answered as oneself, answered as a “typical white person,” or answered as a “typical person of color.” This design allowed for an assessment of the accuracy of people’s perceptions of racism compared to the reality of experiences of racism. The surveys also included measures on the other social context variables (race, highest level of education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and neighborhood intergroup contact) to allow for an analysis of how the social context factors influenced people’s perceptions of racism as a problem.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in this research study:

1. Participants provided honest responses on the surveys.
2. Participant anonymity was maintained throughout the study.
3. Racism is a problem in American society.
4. Perceptions of racism can be quantitatively measured.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

There are various descriptions and definitions of racism in current research; however, across the literature, researchers acknowledged the need for a distinction between definitions of contemporary and antiquated racism. Working with modern definitions of racism, the current research on perceptions of racism focuses on a lack of perception in majority group members, mediating factors to perceptions, and the effects perceptions of racism have on social action.

Contemporary Racism

Within the literature on contemporary racism, researchers distinguished between the related concepts of race and racism, defined three separate levels of racism (personally mediated, institutional, and internalized), discussed variations within personally mediated racism, and reviewed the concept of reverse racism.

Definitions of race and racism. Race is a social construction that carries practical significance only through the ongoing processes of racialization (Bonilla-Silva, 1997) or racial projects (Omi & Winant, 1994). Omi and Winant (1994) defined race as a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies…although the concept of race invokes biologically based human characteristics (so-called ‘phenotypes’), selection of these particular human features for purposes of racial signification is always and necessarily a social and historical process.

(p.55)
Garcia and Sharif (2015) asserted that race and racism are distinct social constructs: “Race is a social construction with no biological basis, whereas racism refers to a social system that reinforces racial group inequity” (p.28). Through racialization, value and significance are ascribed to otherwise meaningless social classifications, and certain racial groups are categorized according to the racial hierarchy (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). As an example, Garcia and Sharif explained, “being Black (a race category) does not tell us much about one’s health risks. However, being Black in America (a racially stratified society) has negative implications…” (p.28). Race is only a meaningful construct because the relevance and practical implications of racism in American society (Kloos et al., 2012).

Jones (2002) offered a contemporary definition of racism that is commonly accepted across the literature: “A system (consisting of structures, policies, practices, and norms) that structures opportunity and assigns values based on phenotype” (p. 9). Racism simultaneously disadvantages communities and people of color and advantages white individuals and communities (Jones, 2002). Both Garcia and Sharif (2015) and Bonilla-Silva (1997) agreed that racism thoroughly saturates American society, whether people are conscious of its power and pervasiveness or not. Discussing the negative consequences of racism, Jones added that racism, “undermines realization of the full potential of the whole society through the waste of human resources” (p.10).

**Three levels of racism.** Establishing a framework for conceptualizing this system, Jones (2000) subdivided racism into three levels: institutional racism, personally mediated racism, and internalized racism.
**Personally mediated racism.** Personally mediated racism is often the most commonly considered definition of racism (Jones, 2002). Personally mediated racism can be intentional or unintentional, includes both acts of commission and omission, and evidences as lack of respect, suspicion, devaluation, scapegoating, and dehumanization (Jones, 2000; Jones 2002).

**Discrimination and prejudice.** In defining personally mediated racism, Jones (2000) suggested personally mediated consists of both prejudice and discrimination. Prejudice means, “differential assumption about the abilities, motives, and intentions of others according to their race, and discrimination means differential actions toward others according to their race” (Jones, 2000, p.1212-1213). Similarly, Feagin and Eckberg (1980) defined discrimination as “actions or practices carried out by members of dominant racial or ethnic groups that have a differential and negative impact on members of subordinate racial and ethnic groups” (p.1-2). Feagin and Feagin (1986) suggested that acts of discrimination range from the obvious to the subtle.

**Explicit and implicit bias.** In the literature on personally mediated racism, researchers acknowledge that prejudice can exist both explicitly and implicitly. Implicit bias refers to “automatically activated negative associations with an outgroup” (Son Hing, Chung-Yang, Hamilton, & Zanna, 2008, p.972). Conversely, explicit racial bias occurs consciously and inside awareness (Pearson et al., 2009). Pearson et al. (2009) found that while the majority of white Americans did not appear to be prejudiced on measures of explicit bias, a similar number of white Americans did appear to hold implicit racial bias when assessed with measures of implicit associations. Explicit views
are often unrelated to implicit biases (Hofmann, Gawronski, Gschwendner, Le, & Schmitt, 2005; Pearson et al., 2009; Rudman, 2004), and tend to load on separate factors (Cunningham, Nezlek, & Banaji, 2004).

Aversive and symbolic racism. Related to explicit and implicit bias, are the concepts of aversive racism and symbolic racism. Symbolic racism and aversive racism are similar in that they both suggest a conflict between a person’s outward denial of prejudice and simultaneous implicit racial biases (Pearson et al., 2009). Sears and Henry (2003) defined symbolic racism as:

   A political belief system whose content embodies four specific themes: the beliefs that (a) Blacks no longer face much prejudice or discrimination, (b) Blacks’ failure to progress results from their unwillingness to work hard enough, (c) Blacks are demanding too much too fast, and (d) Blacks have gotten more than they deserve. (p.260)

According to Sears and Henry (2003), “the term symbolic highlights both symbolic racism’s targeting Blacks as an abstract collectivity rather than specific Black individuals and its presumed roots in abstract moral values rather than concrete self-interest or personal experience” (p.260). Symbolic racism is based on Whites’ concern that Blacks do not live up to American ideals of individualism and is often related to “Whites’ opposition to racially targeted policy proposals” as those policies further threaten values of self-reliance (Sear & Henry, 2003, p.260).

Hodson, Dovidio, and Gaertner (2004) noted that symbolic racism typically characterizes the attitudes of political conservatives, which contrasts with aversive
racial, which, “represents a subtle form of bias typically expressed by well-intentioned, liberal, well-educated individuals” (p.120). Dovidio and Gaertner (2004) added that, “the aversive racism framework focuses on biases of people who are politically liberal and openly endorse nonprejudiced views, but whose unconscious negative feelings and beliefs get expressed in subtle, indirect, and often rationalizable ways” (p.7). According to Pearson et al., (2009), Whites that ascribe to aversive racism “find Blacks ‘aversive’, while at the same time find any suggestion that they might be prejudiced ‘aversive’ as well” (p.317).

In accordance with the above distinctions between symbolic and aversive racism, Pearson et al. (2009) suggested that the, “near universal endorsement of the principles of racial equality as a core cultural value” contributes to the prevalence of aversive racism (p.314). Dovidio and Gaertner (2001) added that aversive racism has gained prevalence due to the changing laws prohibiting overt discrimination, thus leading to a conflict between explicit and implicit racial attitudes. De Franca and Monteiro (2013) also acknowledged the impact of egalitarian principles; asserting that aversive racism extends to children, and that as people age they become more attuned to anti-racism normative pressure to act according to egalitarian principles.

In a meta-analysis of 31 studies on aversive racism, Aberson and Ettlin (2004) concluded that Americans are equally influenced by egalitarian norms and entrenched racial biases. Further, Aberson and Ettlin (2004) found that when egalitarian norms were ambiguous, African Americans received worse treatment that white Americans, yet when egalitarian norms were pronounced, African Americans received better treatment than
white Americans. Lastly, Dovidio and Gaertner (1998) warned that although aversive racism may be subtle, the consequences are as severe as those of blatant racism, having drastic effects on racial minorities’ lives.

**Institutional racism.** Institutional racism is, “structural, having been codified in our institutions of custom, practice, and law so there need not be an identifiable perpetrator” and affects, “access to goods, services, and opportunities of society by race” (Jones, 2000, p. 1212). Institutional racism evidences itself through material conditions and access to power (Jones, 2002). Material conditions include education, housing, employment, medical facilities, and clean environments (Jones, 2000). Concerning access to power, “examples include differential access to information (including one’s own history), resources (including wealth and organizational infrastructure), and voice (including voting rights, representation in government, and control of the media)” (Jones, 2000, p. 1212). According to McGary (2012), institutional racism “reproduce[s] patterns of racial discrimination without the intentional contributions of the dominant racial groups” (as cited in Gines, 2014, p. 80).

**Internalized racism.** Jones (2000) defined internalized racism as, “acceptance by members of the stigmatized races of negative messages about their own abilities and intrinsic worth” (p.1213). Internalized racism evidences itself as an embracing of whiteness, self-devaluation, resignation, helplessness, and hopelessness (Jones, 2000; Jones, 2002). Building on Jones’ framework, Paradies (2006) suggested that internalized racism takes two forms: internalized dominance and internalized oppression. Internalized dominance is the “incorporation of attitudes, beliefs or ideologies about the inferiority of
other racial groups and/or the superiority of one’s own racial group” and internalized oppression is the “incorporation of attitudes, beliefs or ideologies about the superiority of other racial groups and/or the inferiority of one’s own racial group” (Paradies, 2006, p.151-152).

**Reverse racism.** A growing trend expressed in the literature is the notion that white individuals experience reverse racism, or anti-white bias. Norton and Sommers (2011) asserted white individuals believe, with increasing frequency since the 1950s, that whites are victims of discrimination and that anti-white racism is becoming a larger problem than anti-Black racism. Interviews conducted with white college males supported this claim; Cabrera (2012) found themes of white victimization and minority privilege. Furthermore, Norton and Sommers (2011) suggested that whites now view racism as zero-sum: Decreases in anti-Black discrimination are matched with increases in anti-white discrimination. Wilkins, Wellman, Babbitt, Toosi, and Schad (2015) as well as Wilkins and Kaiser (2013) agreed with Norton and Sommers (2011) in that an increasing number of whites believe themselves to be victims of racial discrimination. Furthering research into the zero-sum claim, Wilkins et al. (2015) found that whites were more likely to endorse zero-sum beliefs when thinking about increases in discrimination against whites and were less likely to endorse zero-sum beliefs when thinking about decreases in discrimination against Blacks.

Research on racism also considered the endorsement of the United States’ status hierarchy, which stratifies opportunity and access to resources in favor of those at the top (Wilkins & Kaiser, 2013). White individuals who believed the United States’ status
hierarchy to be legitimate were more likely to advocate for the racial victimization of whites (Wilkins & Kaiser, 2013). Furthermore, believing in the legitimization of the United States’ status hierarchy was positively related to white individuals’ tendency to react positively when confronted with a white person who claimed to be a victim of anti-white bias (Wilkins, Wellman, & Kaiser, 2013).

**Lack of Perception**

Trending across the literature on perceptions of racism, researchers are discussing the negation of perceptions amongst majority group members. These negations range from outright denial that racism exists to colorblind racism, which is, “the idea that race is no longer a central factor in determining the life chances of Americans” (Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2011, p. 191).

**Denial of racism.** Researchers agree throughout the literature that denial is a key feature of contemporary racism. Augoustinos and Every (2007) and Nelson (2013) both asserted that the current racial discourse largely contributes to the denial of prejudice, discrimination, and racism. Augoustinos and Every (2007) suggested that the construction of racial discourse enables individuals to deny racism and that people are, “framing their talk in such a way as to inoculate themselves from possible charges of prejudice” (p. 126). The ambivalence of contemporary rhetoric serves to justify existing inequalities and also serves to preserve the self-image of majority group members, in a culture that more frequently endorses egalitarian values. Expanding on this idea, Nelson (2013) proposed that these discourses of denial occur on both the individual and
in institutional levels. Also in agreement, Todd, Bodenhausen, and Galinsky (2011) confirmed that the denial of racism is common and frequent in contemporary society.

**Colorblind racism.** Within the literature exploring perceptions of racism, researchers acknowledged the presence of a colorblind approach used by white people to deny the existence of racism. Bonilla-Silva and Dietrich (2011) defined colorblind racism as whites’ denial that race governs an individual’s opportunity, and they further proposed that colorblindness defends and justifies racial inequalities. Bonilla-Silva (2014) detailed four central frames to colorblind racism—abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, and minimization of racism—all of which white people use to explain racial matters. The first frame, abstract liberalism, “involves using ideas associated with political liberalism (e.g., equal opportunity…) and economic liberalism (e.g. choice, individualism) in an abstract manner to explain racial matters” (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 76). For example, whites using choice to explain segregation while ignoring the multitude of institutional practices leading to segregation, or whites using equal opportunity and meritocracy to explain their opposition to affirmative action while ignoring both the underrepresentation of minorities in good jobs and schools and the additional barriers minorities face to access good jobs and schools (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). The second frame, naturalization, “allows whites to explain away racial phenomena by suggesting they are natural occurrences” (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 76). For example, explaining that segregation is natural because people gravitate toward others that are like them (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). The third frame, cultural racism, “relies on culturally based arguments such as ‘Mexicans do not put much emphasis on education’ or ‘blacks have too many babies’
to explain the standing of minorities in society” (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 76). Lastly, the minimization frame “suggests discrimination is no longer a central factor affecting minorities’ life chances” (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 77).

Apfelbaum, Norton, and Sommers (2012) also recognized the prevalence of colorblind attitudes, noting that these attitudes exist on interpersonal, educational, organizational, legal, and societal levels, and further suggested that colorblindness acts as an obstacle to intergroup relations. On the legal level, Omi and Winant (1994) suggested those who adopt a colorblind approach may openly support egalitarian policies, yet “covertly manipulate racial fears in order to achieve political gains” (p. 58). Agreeing with Bonilla-Silva and Dietrich’s (2011) definition of colorblind racism, Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, and Hart (2008) conceptualized colorblind attitudes as, “the unawareness of racial privilege, institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues” (p. 8). In a study on campus climate, people with higher levels of colorblind attitudes were found to perceive the racial-ethnic campus climate more positively than those with lower levels of colorblind attitudes (Worthington et al., 2008).

**Mediating Factors to Perceptions of Racism**

Across the literature, researchers are discussing the various factors that affect an individual’s perception of racism. Common themes include: racial group membership, racial group identification, intergroup contact, education level, and socioeconomic status.

**Race.** Researchers agree that majority or minority racial group membership affects an individual’s perceptions of racism. Liao, Hong, and Rounds (2016) and Salvatore and Shelton (2007) both found that majority group members are less attuned to
subtle forms of discrimination than minority group members. Similarly, Nelson, Adams, and Salter (2012) conducted a study in which they found that dominant racial group members perceive less discrimination, both in isolated incidents and systemic manifestations of racism, than minority group members. Additionally, Wright and Rogers (2015) suggested many white Americans believe racial discrimination no longer affects people’s lives.

**Racial identity relevance.** The literature suggests that group identification affects an individual’s perceptions of racism. Branscombe, Schmitt, and Schiffhauer (2007) suggested that when white racial identification was high, thoughts of white privilege increased white individuals’ legitimizations of racial inequalities; however, when white racial identification was low, thoughts of white privilege decreased those legitimizations. Nelson et al. (2013) conducted a study that yielded similar findings: white individuals who scored higher on measures of racial identification were less perceptive to systemic manifestations of racism than white individuals who scored low on measure of racial identification. Rather than focusing on white racial identification, Perez, Fortuna, and Alegria (2008) looked at perceptions of discrimination amongst Cubans and Latinos and found a negative correlation between ethnic identification and perceived discrimination. Banfield and Dovidio (2013) looked at whether a common group identity amongst majority and minority group members would affect perceptions of racism. The study found that focusing on national identification (as Americans) as a common identity amongst black and white individuals reduced white individuals’ perceptions of discrimination against black individuals (Banfield & Dovidio, 2013).
**Intergroup contact.** Intergroup contact has long been discussed as a mediating factor to acts of prejudice and discrimination. Allport’s (1954) intergroup contact theory suggested that under certain conditions, intergroup contact amongst majority and minority group members reduces prejudice. One meta-analysis of over 500 studies on intergroup contact theory concluded that intergroup contact reduces prejudice through mediating factors such as enhanced knowledge about the outgroup, reduced anxiety about intergroup contact, and increased empathy and perspective taking (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). A second meta-analysis of 515 studies on intergroup contact also found that intergroup contact reduces prejudice through the above-mentioned mediating factors and further concluded that the decreased prejudice generalized from the individuals involved to the outgroup as a whole; the decreased prejudice was universal across nations, ages, and genders; and indirect contact can also reduce prejudice (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011).

While in agreement that intergroup contact helped reduce prejudice overall, Tropp (2007) found that interracial contact led to increased closeness for majority group members, but was less impactful for minority group members. When looking at the racial views of white youth who came of age during Barack Obama’s presidential campaign and election, Nteta and Greenlee (2013) found that increased contact contributed to improved racial views. With regard to perceptions of racism, Cabrera (2012) found that white college-aged males who had experienced high levels of racial segregation before and during college were less likely to report noticing racism.
Education level. The literature suggests that education mediates an individual’s perceptions of racism. Beck, Mijeski, and Stark (2011) and Wodtke (2012) both noted that an advanced education positively affects awareness of racism and discrimination. Similarly, Taylor and Mateyka (2011) noted that white individuals with college degrees are less likely to hold negative racial attitudes than white individuals without a college degree. Perez et al. (2008) looked at perceptions of discrimination amongst Latinos/as and found that respondents who completed some college or graduated from college reported more racial discrimination than those who had only graduated high school. This trend continued: High school graduates reported more discrimination than those who did not graduate high school (Perez et al., 2008). Conversely, Nteta and Greenlee (2013) found that educational attainment had little influence on the racial views of white youth who came of age during Barack Obama’s presidential campaign and election.

Socioeconomic status. Research also notes a relationship between socioeconomic status and perceptions of racism. Perez et al. (2008) studied Latino perceptions of discrimination and found a positive correlation between income and reports of discrimination. Brondolo et al. (2009) noted that while all individuals regardless of income level reported racism, lower levels of socioeconomic status predicted higher lifetime experiences with racism and also more past-week discrimination. Meanwhile, higher levels of socioeconomic status predicted greater levels of discrimination in the workplace (Brondolo et al., 2009).
Perceptions Affect Social Action

Researchers are discussing the ways in which perceptions of racism affect social action. Saguy, Dovidio, and Pratto (2008) found that minority group members had greater desire to discuss power (motivated by the desire to change group-based power relations) than majority group members, and majority group members had greater desire to discuss commonalities amongst racial groups; these findings were especially strong amongst members who highly identified with their respective racial group. Nelson (2013) suggested that denial of racism reduces the scope for anti-racism efforts.

In regard to collective action, Mallet, Huntsinger, Sinclair, and Swim (2008) noted that when majority group members are able to take the perspective of minority group members, those in the dominant group were more likely to take collective action against hate crimes targeting the minority group. Relatedly, Banfield and Dovidio (2013) found that when majority group members were asked to focus on a common group identity (Americans) between majority and minority groups, white individuals were less likely to protest discrimination compared to when they were asked to focus on a dual identity (common American identity and separate racial identity).

Researchers also looked at how perceptions of racism affected support of racial policies. Rabinowitz, Sears, Sidanius, and Krosnick (2009) found that high scores on a measure of symbolic racism strongly predicted respondents’ opposition to policies designed to help African Americans, while symbolic racism only weakly predicted respondents’ opposition when there was racial ambiguity as to the policies’ targeted recipients. In regard to redistributive policies, Lowery, Knowles, and Unzueta (2007)
asserted that white privilege threatens white self-image, and individuals whose self-image was less threatened, and who reported lower racial group identifications, were more likely to support affirmative action. Wodtke (2012) found that while individuals with higher levels of education were more aware of racial discrimination, they were not more likely to support affirmative action, but were more likely to be in favor of race-specific job training. Plaut (2011) suggested that perceptions of reverse discrimination have negative effects on anti-discrimination policies, including affirmative action, employment discrimination, and disparate impact.

**Analysis of Intersection of Literature and Perceptions of Racism**

In terms of designing a study on perceptions of racism, the literature supports the idea that social context is influential in shaping an individual’s awareness of racism. Recent research in this area suggests that factors such as race, racial identity relevance, intergroup contact, level of education, and socioeconomic status may all impact an individual’s perceptions of racism. This study sought both a replication and extension of current findings. By directly investigating the influence of social context on perceptions of racism, and including the social context variables the literature suggests to be most influential, this study aims to determine the extent to which each of the six social context variables (racial group membership, racial group identification, intergroup contact, level of education, and socioeconomic status) predicts an individual’s perception of racism.
CHAPTER 3

Method

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate how accurate people’s perceptions of racism are compared to the reality of experiences of racism and how social context influences those perceptions, specifically looking at the variables race, highest level of education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and neighborhood intergroup contact. This study aimed to identify the extent to which each of the five social context variables predicts an individual’s perception of racism as a problem both for people of color and for white people. The research questions for this study were:

1. How accurate are people’s perceptions of racism compared to the reality of experiences of racism?
2. Who is more accurate in their predictions—white participants or non-white participants?
3. How do the social context variables influence the perceptions people have of racism as a problem for people of color?
4. How do the social context variables influence the perceptions people have of racism as a problem for white people?

Design

The research design employed for this study was a descriptive, non-experimental design. To answer the first and second research questions, the study followed Graham, Nosek, and Haidt’s (2012) quantitative model. Participants were randomly assigned to complete one out of three possible surveys: Landrine et al.’s (2006) General Ethnic
Discrimination Scale (GEDS) answered as oneself, answered as a “typical white person,” or answered as a “typical person of color.” This design allowed for an assessment of the accuracy of people’s perceptions of racism compared to the reality of experiences of racism. The surveys contained explicit instructions explaining from which perspective to answer the survey. For example, “For the following questions, please indicate the frequency with which a typical white person/person of color would have experienced each situation both in the past year and in their entire life. Remember, instead of selecting your own answers, place yourself in a typical white person’s/person of color’s shoes and answer all questions as a typical white person/person of color.” When answering as oneself, participants reported their actual experiences with racism. When answering as either a “typical white person” or a “typical person of color,” participants reported their predictions about that racial group’s experiences with racism.

Participants also completed 13 survey items related to the five social context variables (race, highest level of education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and neighborhood intergroup contact).

To answer the third and fourth research questions, the responses from the GEDS for those who answered as a typical white person and those who answered as a typical person of color were each dichotomized into whether or not participants reported to believe white people/people of color are treated unfairly because of their race or not. Participants’ scores on each of the five social context variables were compared for those that reported people are never treated unfairly because of their race and those that reported people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race.
Dichotomizing variables is a contentious topic given the loss of nuance that comes with collapsing a scale into two binary categories. In this instance, however, dichotomizing the GEDS into two categories marked a naturally meaningful cutoff point: A score of 1 on the GEDS represented the response that white people/people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race, and scores 2 though 6 represented responses that white people/people are (with varying frequencies) treated unfairly because of their race. Further, although the GEDS scale originally ranges from 1 (never) to 6 (all of the time), within this sample 85% of GEDS scores were lower than 3 (sometimes) and the range of scores was 1 to 4.96.

**Participants**

A total of 531 surveys were either completely or partially completed (515 online and 16 on paper). Surveys with partial completion on the GEDS were omitted, leaving 483 total participants. Of the 483 participants, 404 identified as white (83.6%), 29 identified as Black or African American (6%), 29 identified as Hispanic/Latino (6%), 19 identified as Asian (3.9%), two identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (0.4%), and 0 identified as American Indian or Alaska Native (0%). The sample was not a perfect racial representation of the greater Portland community: Portland, Oregon is 78.5% white, 1.7% Black or African American, 11.7% Hispanic/Latino, 3.6% Asian, 0.3% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and 1.1% American Indian or Alaska Native (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). To create a sample size large enough to run statistical analyses, the racial groups Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander were collapsed into one category (people
of color/non-white participants). While doing so ignored the nuance of each racial group’s unique experiences, keeping the racial groups separate would not have produced a large enough sample size for statistical analyses.

With regard to highest level of education completed, 4 participants had completed some high school (0.8%), 14 had graduated high school or the equivalent (2.9%), 95 had completed some college (19.7%), 161 had a college degree (33.3%), 42 had completed some graduate level training (8.7%), and 166 had a graduate level degree (34.4%). College-educated people were overrepresented in the sample; 369 people had at minimum a college degree (76.6%) and 208 people had continued into graduate level education (41.2%). The average age of participants was 47 years old, with a range of 18 – 89 years. In regard to socioeconomic status, 46 participants made an average annual income under $15,000 (9.6%), 37 made $15,000-$24,999 (7.7%), 40 made $25,000-$34,999 (8.3%), 64 made $35,000-$49,999 (13.3%), 114 made $50,000-$74,999 (23.6%), 62 made $75,000-$99,999 (12.8%), 65 made $100,000-$149,999 (13.5%), 24 made $150,000-$199,999 (5%), and 28 made $200,000 or above (5.8%).

**Sampling Procedures**

This study utilized a maximum variation sampling method, targeting two of the most racially diverse Portland neighborhoods and one of the least racially diverse Portland neighborhoods to ensure a wide variety of participants. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), Laurelhurst, in Southeast Portland, is one of the least diverse neighborhoods at 91.6% white residents; Portsmouth, in North Portland, is one of the most diverse neighborhoods at 54.3% white residents; and Woodlawn, in Northeast
Portland, is also one of the most diverse neighborhoods at 55.4% white residents (as cited by The City of Portland, Oregon, 2016).

Population size was also taken into account in choosing neighborhoods from which to sample: Laurelhurst ranks third of the least diverse neighborhoods, Portsmouth ranks second of the most diverse neighborhoods, and Woodlawn ranks third of the most diverse neighborhoods; however, each of these neighborhoods hosts much larger populations than the first most or least diverse neighborhoods. For example, Northwest Industrial neighborhood is the most diverse (50% white), but only has eight residents, compared to Portsmouth’s 9,789 residents and Woodlawn’s 4,933 residents; Marshall Park neighborhood is the least diverse (94% white), but has 1,248 residents compared to Laurelhurst’s 4,633 residents (The City of Portland, Oregon, 2016).

Originally, the sample only included residents from the most diverse neighborhood, Portsmouth, and the least diverse neighborhood, Laurelhurst. However, upon saturation of those two neighborhoods, the sample was 86% white respondents, which was not representative of Portland’s racial demographics: Portland is 78.5% white residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). At this point sampling expanded to include the next most diverse neighborhood, Woodlawn. After saturating recruitment of the Woodlawn neighborhood, the resulting sample was 83.6% white respondents.

Purposive sampling from these three larger neighborhoods, with attention to representative quotas for race, was necessary to reach participants with diverse racial backgrounds, who may have varying degrees of contact with members of other races; a diverse sample was important given the study’s interest in the variables of racial group
membership, racial group identification, and intergroup contact.

Participants were invited to participate in the survey through a flier placed on their doorknob. The flier explained the purpose of the study, provided a link for the online survey, and provided instructions for obtaining a hardcopy survey. The return rate was approximately 4%. The recruitment flier can be found in Appendix A. Prior to beginning the survey either online or on paper, all participants read and signed an informed consent form. The participant consent form can be found in Appendix B.

**Sample Size**

At the study’s onset there was an additional fifth research question. The fifth question pertained to the collective and relative impact of the social context variables and I had intended to answer it using a path analysis. However, the data violated the assumptions of normality, homoscedacity, and linearity rendering a path analysis unsuitable. The sample size for the study was determined based on the original goal of a path analysis. Although there is a lack of consensus in the literature as to appropriate sample size for structural equation modeling (SEM), Weston and Gore (2006) recommended a minimum sample of 200 participants, and while Kline (2005) warned against an absolute minimum sample size, he conceded that N = 200 is typical of SEM studies.

**Measures**

Participants completed a 49-item survey that included 13 items related to the social context variables (race, highest level of education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and neighborhood intergroup contact) and 36 items related to
perceptions/experiences of racism. The survey can be found in Appendix C.

The variables race, level of education, and socioeconomic status each had one associated survey item. Race was operationalized through the racial classifications used by the U.S. Census Bureau: white, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Level of education was operationalized through the following stratification: some high school, graduated high school or equivalent, some college or additional training, college degree, some graduate training, graduate level degree. Socioeconomic status was operationalized based on average annual income.

Racial identity relevance was operationalized as the relevance of one’s racial identity as measured by Luhtanen and Crocker’s (1992) Private Collective Self-Esteem subscale of the Collective Self-Esteem Scale. The scale includes four items about racial identity and participants indicated the degree to which they agree with each item on a scale of 1 (strongly agree) to 7 (strongly disagree; $\alpha = .67$). A reliability analysis of the four items with this sample found $\alpha = .79$.

Intergroup contact was operationalized as the extent to which individuals have opportunity to interact, and do interact, with members of a different race in their neighborhood as measured by Sigelman and Welch’s (1993) four indicators of interracial contact. The original scale focused only on people who identify as Black or as white, but was modified for the purpose of this study to ask participants about interaction with people who are of any race different from their own. Items one and two asked participants about the racial composition of their neighborhood and local elementary
school using a scale from 1 (all white) to 5 (all people of color). Items three and four asked about the frequency of neighborhood interactions between adults and between children of differing races using a scale from 0 (no contact) to 3 (frequent contact). Sigelman and Welch found $\alpha = .82$ for black respondents and $\alpha = .86$ for white respondents on the four items. A reliability analysis of the four items with this sample found $\alpha = .56$. Low Cronbach’s alpha could be due to the failure of the sampling procedure to recruit accurate racial quotas.

Perceptions of racism and experiences of racism were operationalized using Landrine et al.’s (2006) GEDS, which includes 18 self-report items. The first 17 items asked about the frequency of an individual’s perceived experiences with racism during the past year and entire life on a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = Never; 2 = Once in a While; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = A Lot; 5 = Most of the Time; 6 = Almost All the Time). The last item asks participants to rate the extent to which their lives would be different without perceived experiences of racism on a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = The same as it is now; 2 = A little different; 3 = Different in a few ways; 4 = Different in a lot of ways; 5 = Different in most ways; 6 = Totally different). Landrine et al.’s GEDS also includes a separate measure of stress appraisal attached to each of the first 17 items; the appraisal dimension is not relevant to this study and was therefore excluded. Excluding the appraisal dimension did not alter the validity or reliability of the measure. Landrine et al. reported high reliability ($\alpha = .94$) and a reliability analysis with the current sample also found high reliability for each of the three survey variations: answered as oneself ($\alpha = .96$), answered as a typical white person ($\alpha = .97$), and answered as a typical person of
color ($\alpha = .99$).

**Procedure**

To answer the first two research questions (1. How accurate are people’s perceptions of racism compared to the reality of experiences of racism?; 2. Who is more accurate in their predictions—white participants or non-white participants?), an Excel spreadsheet with formulas that assumed unequal variances was used to compare means from each of the three variations of the GEDS (answered as oneself, answered as a typical white person, answered as a typical person of color) by calculating $t$, df, and $d$. The spreadsheet with formulas can be found online\(^1\). The comparisons showed how accurately participants’ predictions of a typical white person/person of color’s responses compared to the actual responses of both white respondents and non-white respondents.

In regard to the first research question (How accurate are people’s perceptions of racism compared to the reality of experiences of racism?), there were two comparisons:

1. White participants’ responses about their actual experiences of racism (GEDS answered as oneself) compared with all participants’ predictions of white experiences of racism (GEDS answered as a typical white person).

2. Non-white participants’ responses about their actual experiences of racism (GEDS answered as oneself) compared with all participants’ predictions of non-white experiences of racism (GEDS answered as a typical person of color).

In regard to the second research question (Who is more accurate in their predictions—white participants or non-white participants?), there were four comparisons:

\(^1\) https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KU46_eB4J6n9I6k91W40FkHNIb8AGJPfGZe6n1tM/edit?usp=sharing
1. White participants’ responses about their actual experiences of racism (GEDS answered as oneself) compared with white participants’ predictions of white experiences of racism (GEDS answered as a typical white person).

2. White participants’ responses about their actual experiences of racism (GEDS answered as oneself) compared with non-white participants’ predictions of white experiences of racism (GEDS answered as a typical white person).

3. Non-white participants’ responses about their actual experiences of racism (GEDS answered as oneself) compared with white participants’ predictions of non-white experiences of racism (GEDS answered as a typical person of color).

4. Non-white participants’ responses about their actual experiences of racism (GEDS answered as oneself) compared with non-white participants’ predictions of non-white experiences of racism (GEDS answered as a typical person of color).

To answer the third and fourth research questions (3. How do the social context variables influence the perceptions people have of racism as a problem for people of color?; 4. How do the social context variables influence the perceptions people have of racism as a problem for white people?), first the predictor and outcome variables were collapsed into fewer categories using meaningful cutoff points. Responses from the GEDS answered as a typical white person and the GEDS answered as a typical person of color were each dichotomized into whether or not participants reported to believe white people/people of color are treated unfairly because of their race or not. All responses of 1 (never) were kept as one category and all responses from 2 (once in a while) through the highest value, 6 (all the time), were subsumed into one variable.
Responses on the variables education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact were all collapsed from their original ordinal levels or scales into three-level ordinal variables. Education was collapsed from six levels to three levels at meaningful cutoff points: no college degree, a college degree, graduate level training and beyond. Socioeconomic status was collapsed from nine levels to three levels at meaningful cutoff points: average annual income of less than $35,000 a year, average annual income between $35,000 and $99,000 a year, and average annual income of $100,000 and over a year. Racial identity relevance was transformed just as Nelson et al. (2013) transformed the variable—from the original scale of 1 through 7 into three levels (low, medium, and high) with cutoffs ± 1 SD from the mean. Intergroup contact was transformed from the original scale of 1 through 10 into three levels (low, medium, and high) using cutoffs ± 1 SD from the mean.

To assess how the social context variables influenced perceptions of racism as a problem, chi-squares were used in two phases. In phase one, the proportions for each of the five social context variables were compared for those that reported people are treated unfairly because of their race and those that reported people are never treated unfairly because of their race. Next, the proportions for the variables education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact were compared against GEDS responses while controlling for race to assess whether any differences between groups were more heavily influenced by race or by differences in the other social context variables.
In phase two, 24 additional chi-squares were used to compare proportions for the variables education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact for subsets of the data (based on GEDS responses and race) alongside all other participants of that race. Extracting subsets based on their racial group—white or non-white—and whether they reported people are never/sometimes treated unfairly because of their race served two purposes. First, it allowed for a more precise analysis of where movement on the social context variables was taking place (i.e. with white participants or non-white participants, with responses of never or sometimes). Second, it allowed for a more accurate analysis of the non-white participants. Because non-white participants were underrepresented in the sample, the first phase of chi-squares did not include enough non-white participants to detect potential differences in education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact. Comparing each subset to all other non-white participants across these variables generated a larger comparison group. There were three comparisons for those that took the GEDS as a typical white person:

1. White participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race compared to all other white participants (on education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact).

2. White participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race compared to all other white participants (on education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact).
3. Non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race compared to all other non-white participants (on education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact).

4. The fourth comparison was not possible because there were only 7 participants in that group. It would have been: Non-white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race compared to all other non-white participants (on education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact).

There were three comparisons for those that took the GEDS as a typical person of color:

1. White participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race compared to all other white participants (on education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact).

2. White participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race compared to all other white participants (on education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact).

3. Non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race compared to all other non-white participants (on education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact).

4. The fourth comparison was not possible because there was only 1 participant in that group. It would have been: Non-white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race compared to all other non-
white participants (on education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact).

See Figure 1 for a visual depiction of the methodology.
Figure 1. Flow chart depicting the methodology used to answer each of the four research questions.
CHAPTER 4

Results

The results are presented in accordance with the four research questions of interest in this study. The first two research questions were concerned with whether people’s actual experiences of racism differ from the perception people have of experiences of racism, and the latter two research questions were concerned with how the social context variables individually impact perceptions of racism as a problem for both people of color and white people.

Research Question One

The first research question asked: *How accurate are people’s perceptions of racism compared to the reality of experiences of racism?* To answer this question, two comparisons of mean scores on the GEDS were calculated assuming unequal variances. On average, participants’ predictions overestimated the prevalence of actual experiences of racism for both white people and people of color. See Figure 2.

**Comparison one.** There was a significant difference between white responses about their actual experiences of racism (M = 1.22, SD = .27) and all participants’ predictions of white experiences of racism (M = 1.49, SD = .67; t (216) = 4.38, p < .001, d = .6). On average, participants overestimated white individuals’ experiences with racism.

**Comparison two.** There was a significant difference between non-white responses about their actual experiences of racism (M = 1.93, SD = .58) and all participants’ predictions of non-white experiences of racism (M = 2.44, SD = 1.11; t (56)
= 2.24, p = .03, d = .6). On average, participants overestimated non-white individuals’ experiences with racism.

![Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Figure 2.** Both white and non-white participants’ actual experiences of racism compared to the perception people have of both group’s experiences of racism. On average, participants overestimated in their predictions of both white people’s and people of color’s experiences of racism.

**Research Question Two**

The second research question asked: *Who is more accurate in their predictions—white participants or non-white participants?* To answer this question, four comparisons of mean scores on the GEDS were calculated assuming unequal variances. With regard to white people’s experiences of racism, non-white participants were the least accurate in
their predictions, overestimating the prevalence of white people’s experiences of racism. Although white participants also overestimated white people’s experiences of racism, the difference was not statistically significant. In regard to people of color’s experience of racism, non-white participants were the least accurate in their predictions, overestimating the prevalence of people of color’s experiences of racism. White participants were more accurate in their predictions than non-white participants, but still overestimated the prevalence of people of color’s experiences of racism. See Figure 3.

**Comparison one.** There was a significant difference between white responses about their actual experiences of racism (M = 1.22, SD = .27) and white participants’ predictions of white experiences of racism (M = 1.33, SD = .49; t (198) = 2.27, p = .02, d = .32). On average, white participants overestimated white individuals’ experiences with racism.

**Comparison two.** There was a significant difference between white responses about their actual experiences of racism (M = 1.22, SD = .27) and non-white participants’ predictions of white experiences of racism (M = 2.20, SD = .87; t (30) = 11.03, p < .001, d = 4.01). On average, non-white participants overestimated white individuals’ experiences with racism.

**Comparison three.** There was not a significant difference between non-white responses about their actual experiences of racism (M = 1.93, SD = .58) and white participants’ predictions of non-white experiences of racism (M = 2.38, SD = 1.12; t (62) = 1.95, p = .06). On average, white participants did not over- or underestimate non-white individuals’ experiences with racism.
Comparison four. There was a significant difference between non-white responses about their actual experiences of racism (M = 1.93, SD = .58) and non-white participants’ predictions of non-white experiences of racism (M = 2.79, SD = .98; t (37) = 3.75, p < .001, d = 1.23). On average, non-white participants overestimated non-white individuals’ experiences with racism.

![Graph](image)

**Figure 3.** Participants’ actual experiences of racism compared to the perception people have of experiences of racism. With regard to white people’s experiences of racism, both white and non-white participants overestimated the prevalence of white people’s experiences of racism, and non-white participants overestimated more in their predictions than white participants. With regard to people of color’s experiences of racism, non-white
participants overestimated the prevalence of people of color’s experiences with racism, and white participants did not over- or underestimate.

**Research Question Three: Predictions About People of Color**

The third research question asked, *How do the social context variables influence the perceptions people have of racism as a problem for people of color?* To answer the third research question, responses from the GEDS answered as a typical person of color were each dichotomized into whether or not participants reported to believe people of color are treated unfairly because of their race or not, and the variables education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact were each collapsed into three levels. For those on the GEDS who answered as a typical person of color, 69.33% (n = 163) of participants reported that people of color are treated unfairly because of their race and 30.67% (n = 163) of participants reported that people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race.

In phase one, chi-squares were used to compare the proportions for each of the five social context variables alongside GEDS responses. Because the chi-squares showed race was the only significant social context variable in regard to participants’ perceptions about racism as a problem for people of color, controlling for race was not possible. In phase two, additional chi-squares were used to detect more specific differences for both white and non-white participants.

**Phase one.** The chi-squares to assess whether the proportions for each of the social context variables for those that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race and those that reported that people of color are never treated
unfairly because of their race revealed a significant difference in proportions for race, but not for the other four variables.

**Race.** A chi-square test for independence (with Yate’s Continuity Correction) indicated a significant difference between the proportions of white participants and non-white participants and their perceptions of racism as a problem for people of color, $\chi^2(1, n=163) = 7.90$, $p = .005$, phi = .24. White participants were more likely to say that people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and less likely to say that people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race than non-white participants. See Figure 4.

![Figure 4](image)

**Figure 4.** Proportions of all participants, non-white participants, and white participants that reported people of color are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. White participants were more likely to say that people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and less likely to say that people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race than non-white participants.
**Education.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference between highest level of education and perceptions of racism as a problem for people of color, $\chi^2(2, n = 163) = 1.64, p = .44, \nu = .10$. The proportions of participants without a college degree, with a college degree, and with graduate level education and beyond were no different for participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race. See Figure 5.

![Education Bar Chart](chart.png)

**Figure 5.** Proportions of educational attainment levels for participants that reported people of color are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. There was no significant difference in educational attainment for participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race.
**Socioeconomic status.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference between socioeconomic status and perceptions of racism as a problem for people of color, $\chi^2 (2, n = 163) = 2.79$, $p = .25$, $\nu = .13$. The proportions of participants that made an average annual income under $35,000 a year, made an average annual income between $35,000 and $99,999 a year, and made an average annual income of $100,000 and above a year were no different for participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race. See Figure 6.

![Average Annual Income (SES)](chart)

*Figure 6.* Proportions of average annual income levels for participants that reported people of color are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. There was no significant difference in annual income for participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race.
Racial identity relevance. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference between racial identity relevance and perceptions of racism as a problem for people of color, $\chi^2(2, n = 162) = .18$, $p = .91$, $\nu = .03$. The proportions of participants that scored low, medium, and high on level of identification with their racial group were no different for participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race. See Figure 7.

![Racial Identity Relevance](image)

*Figure 7.* Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for participants reported people of color are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. There was no significant difference in racial identity relevance for participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race.
**Intergroup contact.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference between neighborhood intergroup contact and perceptions of racism as a problem for people of color, $\chi^2 (2, n = 160) = 5.01, p = .08, \nu = .18$. The proportions of participants that scored low, medium, and high on level of neighborhood intergroup contact were no different for participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race. See Figure 8.

**Figure 8.** Proportions of neighborhood intergroup contact levels for participants that reported people of color are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. There was no significant difference in level of neighborhood intergroup contact for participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race.
**Phase two.** In phase two, additional chi-squares were used to detect more specific differences for both white and non-white participants. The chi-squares reported below indicated no significant differences in proportions for the variables education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race (compared to all other white participants), nor for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race (compared to all other white participants). When assessing non-white participants who reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race (compared to all other non-white participants), a chi-square indicated a significant difference in education, but not in the other three variables. Non-white participants that reported people of color are treated unfairly because of their race tended to have completed more formal education than all other non-white participants. There was not a significant difference in education or the other social context variables, however, between non-white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants.

**People of color are never treated unfairly: White participants.** The chi-squares comparing proportions of white participants who reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants across education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact revealed no significant difference between the two groups.
**Education.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in highest level of education for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 403) = 1.14, p = .57, \nu = .05$. See Figure 9.

**Figure 9.** Proportions of educational attainment levels for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in highest level of education for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

**Socioeconomic status.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in average annual incomes for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 401) = 2.03, p = .36, \nu = .07$. See Figure 10.
Figure 10. Proportions of average annual income levels for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in average annual income for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

Racial identity relevance. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in racial identity relevance for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 399) = 1.99, p = .37, \nu = .07$. See Figure 11.
**Figure 11.** Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in racial identity relevance for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

**Intergroup contact.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in level of neighborhood intergroup contact for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, \( \chi^2 (2, n = 396) = 4.12, p = .13, v = .10 \). See Figure 12.
Figure 12. Proportions of neighborhood intergroup contact levels for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in level of neighborhood intergroup contact for white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

**People of color are never treated unfairly: Non-white participants.** A chi-square was not possible for this group because there was only 1 non-white participant that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race.

**People of color are sometimes treated unfairly: White participants.** The chi-squares comparing proportions of white participants who reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants across education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact revealed no significant difference between the two groups.
Education. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in highest level of education for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 403) = 1.82$, $p = .40$, $\nu = .07$. See Figure 13.

![Education](image)

Figure 13. Proportions of educational attainment levels for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in highest level of education for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

Socioeconomic status. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in average annual incomes for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 401) = .81$, $p = .67$, $\nu = .05$. See Figure 14.
**Figure 14.** Proportions of average annual income levels for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in average annual income for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

**Racial identity relevance.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in racial identity relevance for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 399) = .14, p = .93, \nu = .02$. See Figure 15.
**Figure 15.** Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in racial identity relevance for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

*Intergroup contact.* A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in level of neighborhood intergroup contact for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 396) = .97$, $p = .62$, $\nu = .05$. See Figure 16.
Figure 16. Proportions of neighborhood intergroup contact levels for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in neighborhood intergroup contact for white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

People of color are sometimes treated unfairly: Non-white participants. The chi-squares comparing proportions of non-white participants who reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants across education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact revealed a significant difference in highest level of education between the two groups, but no significant differences across the other variables. Non-white participants who took the GEDS a typical person of color and reported that people of color are treated unfairly
because of their race tended to have completed more formal education than all other non-white participants in the study.

*Education.* A chi-square test for independence indicated a significant difference in highest level of education for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants, $\chi^2(2, n = 79) = 7.37, p = .03, \nu = .31$. Non-white participants who took the GEDS as a typical person of color and reported that people of color are treated unfairly because of their race tended to have completed more formal education than all other non-white participants in the study. See Figure 17.

![Figure 17.](image)

*Figure 17.* Proportions of educational attainment levels for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants in the study. Non-white participants who took the GEDS as a typical person of color and reported that people of color are treated unfairly because of their race
tended to have completed more formal education than all other non-white participants in the study.

Socioeconomic status. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in average annual incomes for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 79) = .26, p = .88, \nu = .06$. See Figure 18.

*Figure 18.* Proportions of average annual income levels for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in average annual incomes for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants.
Racial identity relevance. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in racial identity relevance for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants, \( \chi^2 (2, n = 78) = 3.91, p = .14, \nu = .22 \). See Figure 19.

![Level of Racial Identity Relevance](image)

*Figure 19.* Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in racial identity relevance for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants.

Intergroup contact. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in level of neighborhood intergroup contact for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants, \( \chi^2 (2, n = 77) = 2.58, p = .28, \nu = .18 \). See Figure 20.
Figure 20. Proportions of neighborhood intergroup contact levels for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants in the study. There was no significant difference in intergroup contact for non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants.

**Research Question Four: Predictions About White People**

The fourth research question asked, *How do the social context variables influence the perceptions people have of racism as a problem for white people?* To answer the fourth research question, responses from the GEDS answered as a typical white person were each dichotomized into whether or not participants reported to believe white people are treated unfairly because of their race or not, and the variables education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact were each collapsed into three-levels. On the GEDS answered as a typical white person, 29.37% of
respondents reported that white people are treated unfairly because of their race, and 70.63% of respondents reported that white people are never treated unfairly because of their race (n = 160).

In phase one, chi-squares were used to compare the proportions for each of the five social context variables alongside GEDS responses, and then the proportions for the variables education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact alongside GEDS responses while controlling for race. In phase two, additional chi-squares were used to detect more specific differences for both white and non-white participants.

**Phase one.** The chi-squares to assess whether the proportions for each of the social context variables for those that reported white people are treated unfairly because of their race and those that reported that white people are never treated unfairly because of their race revealed a significant difference in proportions for race, education, socioeconomic status, and racial identity relevance, but not for intergroup contact. After controlling for race, only education and race remained individually significant.

**Race.** A chi-square test for independence (with Yate’s Continuity Correction) indicated a significant difference between the proportions of white participants and non-white participants and their perceptions of racism as a problem for white people $\chi^2$ (1, n=160) = 37.05, p < .001, phi = .50. White participants were more likely to say that white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and less likely to say that white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race than non-white participants. See Figure 21.
**Figure 21.** Proportions of all participants, non-white participants, and white participants that reported white people are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. White participants were more likely to say that white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and less likely to say that white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race than non-white participants.

**Education.** The initial chi-square test for independence indicated a significant difference between highest level of education and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 159) = 18.27, p < .001, \nu = .34$. See Figure 22.

**Controlling for race.** After controlling for race, a chi-square for independence still indicated a significant association between white participants’ level of education and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 159) = 10.81, p = .01, \nu = .29$. However, there was no longer a significant association between non-white participants’ level of education and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 159) = 1.23, p = .54, \nu = .20$. 
For white participants, the rejection of the null hypothesis suggests that both race and education individually influenced white participants’ perceptions of racism as a problem for white people. White participants with less formal education were more likely to report white people are treated unfairly because of their race and less likely to say white participants are never treated unfairly because of their race compared to white participants with more formal education.

For non-white participants, the failure to reject the null hypothesis suggests that race was a more influential factor on perceptions of racism as a problem for white people than education. For non-white participants, race influenced their perceptions of racism as a problem for white people; education, though tied to race (See Figure 23), did not directly influence their perceptions of racism as a problem for white people.

**Figure 22.** Proportions of educational attainment levels for participants that reported white people are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. Before controlling for race, there was a significant difference in educational attainment between
participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported white people are treated unfairly because of their race. After controlling for race, there was still a significant association between white participants’ level of education and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, but there was no longer a significant association between non-white participants’ level of education and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people.

Figure 23. Proportions of educational attainment levels for white participants and non-white participants.

Socioeconomic status. The initial chi-square test for independence indicated a significant difference between socioeconomic status and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 158) = 8.82, p = .01, \nu = .24$. See Figure 24.
Controlling for race. After controlling for race, a chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association between white participants’ socioeconomic status and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 158) = 3.29, p = .19, \nu = .16$, or between non-white participants’ socioeconomic status and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 158) = 1.47, p = .48, \nu = .22$. For white and non-white participants, the failure to reject the null hypothesis suggests that race was a more influential factor on perceptions of racism as a problem for white people than socioeconomic status. See Figure 25.

![Average Annual Income (SES)](image)

**Figure 24.** Proportions of average annual income levels for participants that reported white people are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. Before controlling for race, there was a significant difference in average annual income between participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported white people are treated unfairly because of their race. After controlling for race, there was no longer a significant association between white or non-
white participants’ level of education and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people.

**Figure 25.** Proportions of average annual income levels for white participants and non-white participants.

**Racial identity relevance.** The initial chi-square test for independence indicated a significant difference between racial identity relevance and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 159) = 18.86$, $p < .001$, $\nu = .34$. See Figure 26.

**Controlling for race.** After controlling for race, a chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association between white participants’ racial identity relevance and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 159) = 3.90$, $p = .14$, $\nu = .17$, or between non-white participants’ racial identity relevance and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 159) = 1.15$, $p = .56$, $\nu = .20$. For white
and non-white participants, the failure to reject the null hypothesis suggests that race was a more influential factor on perceptions of racism as a problem for white people than racial identity relevance. See Figure 27.

![Racial Identity Relevance](image)

*Figure 26.* Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for participants that reported white people are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. Before controlling for race, there was a significant difference in racial identity relevance between participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported white people are treated unfairly because of their race. After controlling for race, there was no longer a significant association between white or non-white participants’ level of racial identification and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people.
Figure 27. Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for white participants and non-white participants.

**Intergroup contact.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference between intergroup contact and perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, $\chi^2 (2, n = 157) = 2.04, p = .36, \nu = .11$. The proportions of participants that scored low, medium, and high on level of neighborhood intergroup contact were no different for participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race. See Figure 28.
**Figure 28.** Proportions of neighborhood intergroup contact levels for participants that reported white people are never, or are sometimes, treated unfairly because of their race. Before controlling for race, there was no significant difference in racial identity relevance between participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and participants that reported white people are treated unfairly because of their race.

**Phase two.** The chi-squares reported below indicated no significant differences in proportions for the variables education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race (compared to all other white participants), and for non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race (compared to all other non-white participants). When assessing white participants who reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race (compared to all other white participants), a chi-square indicated a significant
difference in education, but not in the other three variables. White participants that reported white people are treated unfairly because of their race tended to have completed more formal education than all other white participants in the study. There was not a significant difference in education, however, between white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

*White people are never treated unfairly: White participants.* The chi-squares comparing proportions of white participants who reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants across education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact revealed no significant difference between the two groups.

*Education.* A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in highest level of education for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 403) = 1.83, p = .40, \nu = .07$. See Figure 29.
Figure 29. Proportions of educational attainment levels for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no difference in educational attainment levels between white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

Socioeconomic status. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in average annual incomes for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 401) = 2.31, p = .32, \nu = .08$. See Figure 30.
**Figure 30.** Proportions of average annual income levels for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no difference in income levels between white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

**Racial identity relevance.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in racial identity relevance for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 399) = 4.47, p = .11, \nu = .11$. See Figure 31.
Figure 31. Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no difference in racial identification levels between white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

*Intergroup contact.* A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in level of neighborhood intergroup contact for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 396) = 2.08, p = .35, \nu = .07$. See Figure 32.
Figure 32. Proportions of neighborhood intergroup contact levels for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no difference in intergroup contact levels between white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

**White people are never treated unfairly: Non-white participants.** A chi-square was not possible for this group because there were only 7 non-white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race.

**White people are sometimes treated unfairly: White participants.** The chi-squares comparing proportions of white participants who reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants across education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact revealed a significant difference in highest level of education between the two groups, but
no significant differences across the other variables. White participants who took the GEDS as a typical white person and reported that white people are treated unfairly because of their race tended to have completed less formal education than all other white participants in the study.

*Education.* A chi-square test for independence indicated a significant difference in highest level of education for white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2(2, n = 403) = 10.31, p = .01, \nu = .16$. White participants who took the GEDS a typical white person and reported that white people are treated unfairly because of their race tended to have completed less formal education than all other white participants in the study. See Figure 33.

![Education](image)

*Figure 33.* Proportions of educational attainment levels for white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. White participants who took the GEDS a typical white
person and reported that white people are treated unfairly because of their race tended to have completed less formal education than all other white participants in the study.

*Socioeconomic status.* A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in average annual income for white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 401) = 2.41, p = .30, \nu = .08$. See Figure 34.

![Average Annual Income (SES)](chart)

*Figure 34.* Proportions of average annual income levels for white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no difference in income levels between white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

*Racial identity relevance.* A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in racial identity relevance for white participants that reported
white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 399) = 1.82, p = .40, \nu = .07$. See Figure 35.

![Racial Identity Relevance](image)

**Figure 35.** Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no difference in racial identification levels between white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

*Intergroup contact.* A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in level of neighborhood intergroup contact for white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 396) = .72, p = .70, \nu = .04$. See Figure 36.
**Figure 36.** Proportions of neighborhood intergroup contact levels for white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants in the study. There was no difference in intergroup contact levels between white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other white participants.

*White people are sometimes treated unfairly: Non-white participants.* The chi-squares comparing proportions of non-white participants who reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants across education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact revealed no significant difference between the two groups.

*Education.* A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in highest level of education for non-white participants that reported white people are
sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants, \( \chi^2 (2, n = 79) = 2.17, p = .34, \nu = .17 \). See Figure 37.

**Figure 37.** Proportions of educational attainment levels for non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants in the study. There was no difference in educational attainment levels between non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants.

**Socioeconomic status.** A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in average annual incomes for non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants, \( \chi^2 (2, n = 79) = 3.27, p = .20, \nu = .20 \). See Figure 38.
Figure 38. Proportions of average annual income levels for non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants in the study. There was no difference in income levels between non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants.

Racial identity relevance. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in racial identity relevance for non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 78) = .64, p = .73, \nu = .09$. See Figure 39.
Figure 39. Proportions of racial identity relevance levels for non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants in the study. There was no difference in racial identification levels between non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants.

Intergroup contact. A chi-square test for independence indicated no significant difference in level of neighborhood intergroup contact for non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants, $\chi^2 (2, n = 77) = 3.22$, $p = .20$, $\nu = .20$. See Figure 40.
Figure 40. Proportions of neighborhood intergroup contact levels for non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants in the study. There was no difference in intergroup levels between non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race and all other non-white participants.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Until this point, I have reported the findings as they were. I believe it is critical to note, however, that the sample in this study most likely does not accurately captured the experiences and perceptions of people of color. To create a sample size large enough to run statistical analyses, the racial groups Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander were collapsed into one category (people of color/non-white participants), which outright ignored the nuance of each racial group’s unique experiences. Despite having a total sample of 483 participants, non-white participants were only 16.35% of the total sample, and considering that there were three separate versions of the survey, each sub-sample had 30 or fewer non-white participants. Drawing conclusions or making generalizations about the non-white participants would be inappropriate, irresponsible, and potentially harmful given the low level of accuracy such conclusion would have given the low number of responses. As such, I will only attempt to discuss findings from the white participants in the study, and will leave any conclusions about any other racial group’s perceptions of racism to future research. There were 404 white participants in the study, with each sub-sample containing over 130 white participants; therefore, I feel comfortable discussing white people’s perceptions of racism.

With that in mind, I will provide an overview of all the findings (for both white and non-white participants), and then proceed to discuss the implications specifically for white people. Aside from the limited sample of non-white participants, the study had
other limitations, which will also be discussed, followed by recommendations for future research.

**Review of the Findings**

The overarching question guiding this study was: *How does social context influence perceptions of racism?* The findings suggest that, in general, people’s perceptions of racism as a problem are not accurate to the reality of people’s experiences of racism. The aspect of social context that most influences that perception is their own racial group. Highest level of education might also be influential for certain groups, and the other variables- socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and neighborhood intergroup contact- do not appear to be influential on a person’s perception of racism.

Exploring the accuracy of people’s perceptions of racism as compared to the reality, non-white participants, on average, were less accurate in their predictions about imagined racial groups’ experiences of racism than white participants. With regard to white people’s experiences of racism, both white and non-white participants significantly overestimated the prevalence of white people’s experiences of racism when compared to the reality of white people’s experiences of racism.

With regard to people of color’s experiences of racism, on average non-white participants significantly overestimated the prevalence of people of color’s experiences of racism. White participants, however, were, on average, fairly accurate: They did not under- or overestimate the prevalence of people of color’s experiences of racism when compared to the reality of people of color’s experiences of racism.

Exploring how social context influences perceptions of racism as a problem for
people of color, the two phases of analysis suggested that race is the strongest predictor as to whether a person believes people of color are treated unfairly because of their race. Highest level of education might also influence whether a person believes people of color are treated unfairly because of their race for certain groups; socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact were not influential.

In phase one’s analysis focused strictly on the 163 participants that took the GEDS as an imagined person of color, white participants were more likely to report that people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race and less likely to report that people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race than non-white participants. The other social context variables—highest level of education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and neighborhood intergroup contact—did not appear to influence whether people reported that people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race.

In phase two’s analysis focused on the study’s 404 total white participants and 79 total non-white participants, there was a significant difference in highest level of education only for the non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race, but not non-white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race or for white participants.

Non-white participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race tended to be more educated than all other non-white participants in the study. Non-white participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race did not differ in highest level of education when
compared to all other non-white participants in the study. White participants that reported people of color are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race did not differ in highest level of education when compared to all other white participants in the study. White participants that reported people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race did not differ in highest level of education when compared to all other white participants in the study. There were no significant differences in socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, or neighborhood intergroup contact for any group (white/non-white, sometimes/never).

Exploring how social context influences perceptions of racism as a problem for white people, the two phases of analysis suggested that race is the strongest predictor as to whether a person believes white people are treated unfairly because of their race. Highest level of education might also influence whether a person believes white people are treated unfairly because of their race for certain groups; socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact were not influential.

In phase one’s analysis focused strictly on the 160 participants that took the GEDS as an imagined white person, white participants were more likely to report that white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and less likely to report that white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race than non-white participants. For white participants, highest level of education also influenced whether participants believed white people are treated unfairly because of their race. White participants with less formal education were less likely to report that white people are never treated unfairly because of their race and more likely to report that white people are
sometimes treated unfairly because of their race than white participants with more formal education. For non-white participants, race influenced their perceptions of racism as a problem for white people; highest level of education, though tied to race, did not directly influence their perceptions of racism as a problem for white people.

In phase two’s analysis focused on the study’s 404 total white participants and 79 total non-white participants, there was a significant difference in highest level of education only for the white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race, but not for white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race or for non-white participants.

White participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race tended to be less educated than all other white participants in the study. White participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race did not differ in highest level of education when compared to all other white participants in the study. Non-white participants that reported white people are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race did not differ in highest level of education when compared to all other non-white participants in the study. Non-white participants that reported white people are never treated unfairly because of their race could not be compared to the other non-white participants in the study because only seven people fell in this category. There were no significant differences in socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, or neighborhood intergroup contact for any group (white/non-white, sometimes/never).
Implications

The implications for the study’s findings will be discussed with regard to the influence of each of the five social context variables on white participants’ perceptions of racism as a problem for people of color and racism as a problem for white people.

Racism as a problem for people of color. Although the white participants that made predictions about people of color’s experiences of racism were, on average, accurate in their predications, the validity of that conclusion is questionable for two reasons. First, any assessment of accuracy depends on the actual reported experiences of non-white participants. Given the limited sample size of only 25 non-white participants that took the GEDS as themselves, any conclusion remains speculative. Second, even if I assume that the non-white participants’ actual GEDS scores are valid, the mean prediction score does not necessarily capture meaningful differences between white participants’ predictions and non-white participants experiences because the more meaningful differences are in the extremes. Over one-third of white participants predicted people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race, with the other 64.75% of white participants reporting that people of color are, to some degree, treated unfairly because of their race.

So, what is it about the 35.25% of white participants that influenced them to predict people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race? According to the results of this study, only their whiteness influenced those perceptions. The other social context variables—highest level of education, socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact—did not appear to be influential.
Race. The notion that whiteness may influence a person to predict people of color are never treated unfairly because of their race is consistent with the literature on contemporary racism. Wright and Rogers (2015) suggested that many white Americans believe racial discrimination no longer affects people’s lives, and both Liao et al. (2016) and Nelson et al. (2012) found that majority group members are less aware of racial discrimination than minority group members. The finding that 35.25% of white participants do not believe people of color are treated unfairly because of their race mirrors a similar study’s finding, which found that 16% of white participants believed people of color are not discriminated against because of their race (National Public Radio, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Harvard School of Public Health, 2017).

The finding that over one-third of the white participants in this study predicted people of color are not treated unfairly because of their race is also consistent with the literature on the denial of racism. In contemporary society, the denial of racism as a problem for people of color is both common and frequent (Augoustinos & Every, 2007; Nelson, 2013; Todd et al., 2011). Oftentimes, white individuals’ colorblind approach to racism further bolsters their denial of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Colorblind racial attitudes allow white people to suggest that they do not see color and that race no longer determines a person’s opportunity (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Worthington et al. (2008) further suggested that colorblind attitudes contribute to the unawareness of racial issues and discrimination.

Education. The finding that education does not influence a person’s prediction about people of color being treated unfairly because of their race is not consistent with
the literature on education and contemporary racism. Both Beck et al. (2011) and Wodtke (2012) found that an advanced education positively affects an individual’s awareness of racism and discrimination; however, in this study, white participants with no college degree, with a college degree, and with graduate level education were equally as likely to predict people of color are, or are not, treated unfairly because of their race.

*Socioeconomic status.* Research suggests that there is a relationship between racism and socioeconomic status, yet the specifics of that relationship remain up for debate. Perez et al. (2008) found that higher levels of socioeconomic status were related to higher reports of discrimination; meanwhile, Brondolo et al. (2009) found that lower levels of socioeconomic status were related to higher reports of discrimination. In addition, Jones (2002) suggested that race is a merely proxy for socioeconomic status. Nonetheless, current research has yet to specifically examine the relationship between an individual’s socioeconomic status and their ability to perceive racism as a problem for others. Stellar, Manzo, Kraus, and Keltner (2012) suggested that lower-class individuals may have more compassion for the suffering of others than higher-class people, and Dietze and Knowles (2016) theorized that higher-class individuals might be generally less aware of others around them compared with lower-class individuals. Perhaps future research with a larger, more representative sample could be able to distinguish the relationship between socioeconomic status and an individual’s awareness of racism for others.

*Racial identity relevance.* Nelson et al. (2013) found a negative correlation between white individuals’ scores of racial identification and their perceptiveness to
systemic manifestations of racism, but not to isolated incidents. Bolstering those findings, this study found no relationship between white participants’ racial identity relevance (using the same measure) and their perceptions of racism as a problem for people of color (using the GEDS, which relies heavily on individual level incidents). Interesting to note, however, is that Nelson et al.’s participants scored relatively high on the Collective Self-Esteem Scale, compared to this sample. In Nelson et al.’s sample, the mean racial identity relevance score (out of a possible 7) for white participants was 6.14 (SD = 1), and the mean score for African American participants was 6.31 (SD = 0.75). In the present study, the mean score for white participants was 3.25 (SD = 1.14), and the mean score for non-white participants was 2.07 (SD = 1.20). Future research could explore how lower racial group identification relates to perceptions of systemic manifestations of racism.

*Intergroup contact.* Intergroup contact has been heavily studied as a means to reduce prejudice (Allport, 1954; Cabrera, 2012; Ntetla & Greenlee, 2013; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Pettigrew et al., 2011; Tropp, 2007), yet there does not appear to be a relationship between intergroup contact and a person’s perceptions of prejudice as a problem. It is possible that intergroup contact does not influence an individual’s awareness of racism, but given the strong support for a relationship between intergroup contact and its ability to reduce prejudice, more research would be necessary to corroborate this finding. One potential confounding factor for this component of the study is people’s ability to accurately self-report intergroup contact. In American society, whiteness is often thought to be the default and the norm, and it is possible that white people may tokenize people of color (DiAngelo, 2011). For white people, the presence of
one non-white individual in a typically white space could belie the perception of racial diversity.

**Racism as a problem for white people.** When considering white participants’ tendency to overestimate white people’s experiences of racism, the validity of the finding is not questionable. Both the sample of white participants that took the GEDS as themselves and the sample of white participants that took the GEDS as an imagined white people were well over 100 participants. Although most white participants reported that they themselves are not treated unfairly because of their race and predicted that other white people are not treated unfairly because of their race, 14.81% of white participants that took the GEDS as themselves reported that they are treated unfairly because of their race, and 18.46% of white participants that took the GEDS as a typical white person predicted that white people are treated unfairly because of their race.

Focusing on that perception about white people’s experiences of racism, what is it about the 18.46% of white participants that influenced them to predict white people are treated unfairly because of their race? According to the results of this study, both their whiteness and their level of education influenced those perceptions. The other social context variables- socioeconomic status, racial identity relevance, and intergroup contact-did not appear to be influential.

**Race.** The notion that whiteness may influence a white person to predict white people are treated unfairly because of their race is consistent with the literature on contemporary racism. With increasing frequency since the 1950s, many white Americans believe that they are victims of reverse racism (Cabrera, 2012; Norton & Sommers, 2011;
Wilkins & Kaiser, 2013; Wilkins et al., 2015). One national study found that 55% of white participants believe there is discrimination against whites (NPR et al., 2017), and a second national study found that 57% of white participants believe that discrimination against whites is as big a problem as discrimination against people of color (Jones et al., 2016). Comparatively, white Portlanders may be less likely to espouse beliefs of reverse racism, but still generally align with the belief that whites can experience discrimination.

Education. The finding that educational attainment is related to white participants’ predictions about white people being treated unfairly because of their race is consistent with the literature on contemporary racism and education level. This study found that white participants that reported white people are treated unfairly because of their race tended to have completed less formal education than other white participants. Both Beck et al. (2011) and Wodtke (2012) found that an advanced education positively affects an individual’s awareness of racism and discrimination. In two national survey studies, the majority of white participants reporting that white people are discriminated against did not have a college degree (Jones et al., 2016; NPR et al., 2017). Graduate level training as opposed to an undergraduate degree did not appear to influence perceptions in this area, so it is possible that the exposure to people with backgrounds and ideas different from one’s own often encountered in university settings, not the level of advanced education, could be influential here.

Socioeconomic status. As previously noted, researchers recognize a relationship between racism and socioeconomic status, yet there is not complete consensus as to the direction of that relationship. Both NPR et al. (2017) and Jones et al. (2016) reported that
white individuals with higher incomes were less likely to believe white people experience discrimination. Those findings could be explained by the positive relationship between education and income, as both those studies also found that white individuals with higher education levels were less likely to believe white people experience discrimination.

In phase one of this study, education, socioeconomic status, and racial identity relevance (but not intergroup contact) were all found to influence white participants’ perceptions of racism; however, after controlling for race, only education remained an influential factor. Thus, race supersedes income with this group of white individuals, and a facet of higher education outside of the associated income levels was influential on whites’ perceptions of reverse racism. This finding bolsters support for the belief that race, not class, more prominently affects the life chances of Americans (Feagin, 1991).

Racial identity relevance. Racial identity relevance was the one variable not found to be significant on white participants’ perceptions of reverse racism before controlling for race. Although Nelson et al. (2013) found a negative correlation between white individuals’ levels of racial identification and their perceptiveness to manifestations of racism, they examined racism as experienced by people of color, not by white people. To corroborate the present finding that white racial identity is not related to perceptions of reverse racism, additional research would be necessary.

Intergroup contact. Similar to socioeconomic status, white participants’ intergroup contact level was originally found to be related to their perceptions of reverse racism; however, after controlling for race, intergroup contact was no longer influential. Thus, here as well, race supersedes intergroup contact with this group of white people. At
issue here, as well as with white participants’ perceptions about people of color being treated unfairly because of their racism, is the potential for white individuals to not accurately self-report intergroup contact due to white-universalism and tokenism (DiAngelo, 2011).

Limitations

The following limitations existed in this research study:

1. Portland’s lack of racial diversity and general racial segregation limit the study’s generalizability to more racially diverse, or to more racially integrated, localities.
2. Participants may have been tempted to skew responses due to a social desirability bias; as people increasingly espouse egalitarian beliefs about race, people may have over-reported perceptions of racism.
3. The use of non-probability sampling techniques allowed for the possibility of researcher bias in selecting participants.
4. The sample was not truly representative of the population. White participants and educated participants were overrepresented. As participants were able to opt into taking the survey, self-selection bias may have created a sample that is not truly representative of the population. The lack of non-white participants made it inappropriate to draw conclusions about people of color and limited the study’s reliability and validity overall.
5. When referring to racism, the language of the GEDS specifically said “treated unfairly because of your race.” Although some people may define racism that way, others may not define racism that way. Differences in perspectives as to
whether “treated unfairly because of your race” equates to racism could have impacted the validity of the study.

6. The GEDS assesses frequency of racist events. Only assessing frequency may have neglected more nuanced experiences of racism (e.g. microaggressions) that may be more common with modern racism.

7. Participants may not have fully understood the directions pertaining to which perspective from which to answer the GEDS and may not have answered appropriately.

8. Using a multiple choice question with only five recognized races did not allow all participants to accurately self-select their racial classification.

Recommendations for Further Research

Given the limitations to this study and the contradictions between this study’s findings and the available literature, additional research would be beneficial. I recommend five potential areas for future research.

Replication with a larger, more representative sample. This study’s most pressing limitation was the limited sample that was not inclusive of non-white participants. Lack of a representative sample hindered the generation of valid, reliable findings in some cases, and prevented any attempt at conclusions in others. Despite this, I still believe this study originated with enough merits to be worth an attempt at replication. Perhaps starting with a larger, more representative sample would enable the possibly of a path analysis, as originally intended; or if not, then more credible results from which to draw conclusions that would generalize to the larger population.
Socioeconomic status and awareness of racism. Researchers have examined the relationship between socioeconomic status and an individual’s awareness of racism as a problem for themselves, but there does not appear to be current research specifically examining the relationship between socioeconomic status and an individual’s awareness of racism as a problem for others. To increase understanding of how different individuals perceive societal problems, future research could explore how class status relates to an individual’s awareness of racism as a problem for other racial groups.

Cognitive dissonance and racial intergroup contact. The components in this study that explored intergroup contact have led to questions regarding how accurately an individual is able to self-report their own level of intergroup contact, and have led to new questions about the accuracy of people’s perceptions of intergroup contact. Given that most American cities are highly racially segregated, do people’s perceptions of segregation and integration align with the reality? How does the presence of a small number of token minorities influence white perceptions of diversity? What societal and individual factors mediate those perceptions?

White racial identity and reverse racism. Researchers have explored the relationship between racial identity relevance and perceptions of racism as a problem for people of color. Given the growing notion amongst the white community that white people also experience discrimination, future research could explore how white racial identification impacts perceptions of racism as a problem for white people. Exploration in this area could help to reveal mechanisms through which the idea of reverse racism as a potential reality could be curtailed and exposed as fiction.
A structural approach to racism research. Lastly, and most importantly, future racism research should strive to make a deep departure from this study in one crucial way. Racism is structural. Racism cannot be understood only as individual attitudes, beliefs, or perceptions because racism was created and is maintained through systems of power and oppression. Yet, this study attempted to understand perceptions of racism through the lens of five individual-level variables. Race, on its own is completely meaningless; only when examined through the American racial hierarchy does race even take on meaning. Education, socioeconomic status, and intergroup contact will continue to be correlated with race until we can determine how to change policy, culture, and power-relations to disrupt the current racial hierarchy. Racism is ultimately a structural problem that must be studied and mitigated through a structural lens.

With regard to racism as a problem for white people, reverse racism is an individual belief, not a structural problem as there are no systems in this country specifically designed and maintained to oppress white people; therefore, reverse racism can be studied on the individual level.

Conclusion

This study attempted to identify which social context factors contribute to a person’s perceptions of racism, so as to help direct future anti-racism efforts. While white participants were more likely to suggest that racism and discrimination do not affect the lives of people of color than non-white participants, there was no one set of predictor variables, or one type of white person, that was more or less likely to espouse that belief. For one, no racial group’s experiences are homogenous. In addition, contemporary racism
is best understood as a system that has been codified in American institutions (Jones, 2002) and thoroughly saturates American life (Bonilla-Silva, 1997); as such, racism may be better understood through a structural, rather than an individual-level lens. Thus, to bring increased awareness to the issue of racism as a problem for people of color in this country, efforts must move away from focusing on individual-level factors (i.e. education, socioeconomic status, intergroup contact, racial identity relevance) and should instead focus on transforming customs, practices, and laws.

Reinforcing the attempt to direct future anti-racism efforts, this study also explored the growing perception of racism as a problem for white people in hopes of understanding how to best mitigate those perceptions. While white people can be discriminated against because of their race, white people cannot experience racism. By racism’s design, white people are in position to benefit from the same system that disadvantages people of color (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). Thus, unlike racism, reverse racism, is an individual-level issue, not a structural one. This study’s results suggest that efforts to mitigate the belief that white people experience racism should focus on educational attainment. Whether it is the actual act of attending and participating in a higher education institution or some extraneous variable associated with higher education, educational attainment may help to reduce the belief that white people are victims of racism. As whites that endorse the idea of reverse racism often believe racism to be zero-sum (i.e. any advances for people of color come at the direct expense of white people) (Norton & Sommers, 2011), white people that feel their opportunities are threatened by
people of color’s advances could act to thwart systems change that would lead to a more equitable existence for everyone (Plaut, 2011).
References


doi:10.1146/annurev.so.06.080180.000245


doi:10.2105/ajph.2015.302706


*Community psychology: Linking individuals and communities.* Belmont: 
Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

ethnic discrimination scale. *PsycTESTS Dataset.* doi:10.1037/t27323-000

Liao, H.-Y., Hong, Y., & Rounds, J. (2016). Perception of subtle racism: The role of 
doi:10.1177/0011000015625329

whites’ motivated perceptions of racial privilege. *Personality and Social 

Lueke, A., & Gibson, B. (2014). Mindfulness meditation reduces implicit age and race 
doi:10.1177/1948550614559651

doi:10.1037/t16793-000

eyes: When majority group members take collective action on behalf of an 

doi:10.1177/0956797612451466


Southern Poverty Law Center (2017). Hate groups increase for second consecutive year as Trump electrifies radical right. Retrieved from


Wilkins, C. L., Wellman, J. D., Babbitt, L. G., Toosi, N. R., & Schad, K. D. (2015). You can win but I can’t lose: Bias against high-status groups increases their zero-sum


Appendix A: Recruitment Flier

Please help out with my research study with Concordia University!

Hello! I am hoping you will take ~10min to take a survey for my master’s thesis. I am a graduate student of Concordia University’s Master of Community Psychology program. I am researching perceptions of racism in Portland and I need to get at least 300 responses- that’s a lot!

Participation is entirely voluntary. Your responses are entirely confidential. All respondents will have the option of entering into a raffle, with one respondent winning a $50 Fred Meyer Grocery gift card.

You can access the survey online by visiting this link: https://tinyurl.com/concordiasurvey You can also email me, and I will send you the link directly.

If you feel more comfortable completing the survey on paper, please call/text/email me. I am happy to mail you a hardcopy and include postage/envelope for returning the completed survey back to me.

This project is extremely important to me, and I believe, to our community. I would greatly appreciate if you could take the time to complete my survey. Please contact me if you have any questions. :)

Thais Kelly
thaisrosekelly@gmail.com
(408) 393-5911
Appendix B: Participant Consent Form

Please read the following consent form:

Purpose and what you will be doing:
The purpose of this survey is to explore perceptions of racism. I expect approximately 300 volunteers total. No one will be paid to be in the study, however you do have the option of entering your email address into a raffle for the chance to win a $50 Fred Meyer gift card. I will begin enrollment in October, 2017, and end enrollment in December, 2017. To be in the study, you will complete the following 49 survey questions. The survey should take less than 25 minutes of your time.

Risks:
There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your email address for the raffle entry. However, I will protect your information. Any personal information you provide will be coded so it cannot be linked to you. Any name or identifying information you give will be kept securely via electronic encryption or locked inside a locked file cabinet within a locked room. When I or my faculty advisor (the researchers) look at the data, none of the data will have your name or identifying information. To analyze the data, we will only use a numeric code, a code that no one outside of this study could link to an individual participant. We will not identify you in any publication or report. Your information will be kept private at all times and then all study documents will be destroyed 3 years after we conclude this study.

Benefits:
Information you provide will help research to understand perceptions of racism in our community. This study has the potential to identify key focal points to support future anti-racism interventions and efforts.

Confidentiality:
This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. We do ask for your email address should you choose to participate in the raffle, but this information will be kept private and will only be used to contact you if you win. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

Right to Withdraw:
Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking are personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating.

If you have questions you can talk to or write the principle investigator, Thais Kelly, at thaisrosekelly@gmail.com. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

Your Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I volunteer my consent for this study.
Appendix C: Survey

Please answer each of the following questions honestly. Remember, your answers are strictly confidential and you are free to stop at any time.

What is the highest level of education you have received? Please choose one response.

- Some high school
- Graduated high school or equivalent
- Some college or additional training
- College degree
- Some graduate level training
- Graduate level degree

What is your average annual income? Please choose one response.

- Under $15,000
- $15,000 - $24,999
- $25,000 - $34,999
- $35,000 - $49,999
- $50,000 - $74,999
- $75,000 - $99,999
- $100,000 - $149,999
- $150,000 - $199,999
- $200,000 and above
What is your race? *Please choose one response.*

- [ ] white
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] Hispanic or Latino
- [ ] Asian American Indian or Alaska Native
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

What is your age in years? *Please write a number in the space provided.*

___________
For the following questions, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I often regret that I belong to the racial group I do.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, I’m glad to be a member of the racial group I belong to.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, I often feel that the racial group of which I belong to is not worthwhile.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel good about the racial group I belong to.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the following questions, please select one answer choice about the racial composition of your neighborhood or neighborhood school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All white</th>
<th>Mostly white</th>
<th>half white, half People of Color</th>
<th>Mostly People of Color</th>
<th>All People of Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking of the children in your neighborhood, would you say white people tend to associate with People of Color a great deal, only somewhat, hardly ever, never?**

- [ ] A great deal
- [ ] Only somewhat
- [ ] Hardly ever
- [ ] Never

**Thinking of the adults in your neighborhood, would you say white people tend to associate with People of Color a great deal, only somewhat, or hardly ever?**

- [ ] A great deal
- [ ] Only somewhat
- [ ] Hardly ever
- [ ] Never
If you identify as white, do you know any Person of Color whom you consider a close personal friend? If you identify as a Person of Color, do you know any white person whom you consider a close personal friend?

- Yes
- No

Version 1: For the following questions, please indicate the frequency with which a typical person of color would have experienced each situation both in the past year and in their entire life. Remember, instead of selecting your own personal answers, place yourself in a typical person of color’s shoes and answer all questions as a typical person of color.

Version 2: For the following questions, please indicate the frequency with which a typical white person would have experienced each situation both in the past year and in their entire life. Instead of selecting your own personal answers, place yourself in a typical white person’s shoes and answer all questions as a typical white person.

Version 3: For the following questions, please indicate the frequency with which you personally have experienced each situation both in the past year and in your entire life.

How often have you been treated unfairly by teachers and professors because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often have you been treated unfairly by your employers, bosses, and supervisors because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you been treated unfairly by your co-workers, fellow students, and colleagues because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you been treated unfairly by people in service jobs (by store clerks, waiters, bartenders, bank tellers, and others) because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often have you been treated unfairly by *strangers* because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you been treated unfairly by *people in helping jobs* (by doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, case workers, dentists, school counselors, therapists, social workers, and others) because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you been treated unfairly by *neighbors* because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Context and Perceptions of Racism

How often have you been treated unfairly by **institutions** (schools, universities, law firms, the police, the courts, the Department of Social Services, the Unemployment Office, and others) because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you been treated unfairly by **people that you thought were your friends** because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you been **accused or suspected of doing something wrong** (such as stealing, cheating, not doing your fair share of the work, or breaking the law) because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often have people **misunderstood your intentions and motives** because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How often in the past year?</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How often in your entire life?</strong></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Version 1: Remember, please indicate the frequency with which a typical person of color would have experienced each situation both in the past year and in their entire life. Remember, instead of selecting your own personal answers, place yourself in a typical person of color's shoes and answer all questions as a typical person of color.

Version 2: Remember, please indicate the frequency with which a typical white person would have experienced each situation both in the past year and in their entire life. Instead of selecting your own personal answers, place yourself in a typical white person’s shoes and answer all questions as a typical white person.

Version 3: Remember, please indicate the frequency with which you personally have experienced each situation both in the past year and in your entire life.

How often have you wanted to tell someone off for being racist toward you but didn’t say anything?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you been really angry about something racist that was done to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never (1)</th>
<th>Once in a While (2)</th>
<th>Sometimes (3)</th>
<th>A Lot (4)</th>
<th>Most of the Time (5)</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time (6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often in the past year? (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life? (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often have you been **forced to take drastic steps** (such as filing a grievance, filing a lawsuit, quitting your job, moving away, and other actions) to deal with some racist thing that was done to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often in the past year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you **been called a racist name**?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often in the past year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often have you **gotten into an argument or fight about something racist that was done to you or was done to another member of your race/ethnic group**?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often in the past year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often have you been made fun of, picked on, pushed, shoved, hit, or threatened with harm because of your race/ethnic group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often in the past year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>Almost all of the Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often in your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How different</th>
<th>The same as it is now</th>
<th>A little different</th>
<th>Different in a few ways</th>
<th>Different in a lot of ways</th>
<th>Different in most ways</th>
<th>Totally different</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In your entire life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would you like to be entered in a raffle to win a $50 Fred Meyer Gift Card? If you select Yes, please provide your email address.

- Yes  .................................................................

- No