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Negative Racial Encounters and Academic Outcomes of International and Domestic Students in Four Canadian Universities

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Abstract

In Canada, there has been little systematic inquiry into the nature and extent of discrimination against university students and the potential impact of discrimination on educational outcomes. On the basis of an examination of domestic and international students at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver), York (Toronto), McGill (Montreal), and Dalhousie (Halifax), it is argued that with the exception of employment of Chinese origin and Black students, in general, students experience little discrimination on- and off-campus; that the discrimination confronted by students does not systematically correspond to their minority non-minority status; and that discrimination is of little consequence for grade point average and program satisfaction.

Keywords: international students, domestic students, discrimination, educational outcomes, Canada

While non-White immigrants to Australia, Canada, and the United States may face considerable difficulty in the labour market, research shows that their sons and daughters fare relatively well. Education has a large part to play in this outcome (Reitz, Zhang, & Hawkins, 2011). This being the case, it is important to examine factors—such as discrimination—that might affect students' educational experiences. Accordingly, the current article focuses on the on-and off-campus negative racial encounters experienced by domestic and international students studying in four Canadian universities and the effect these encounters have on first year grade point average (GPA) and program satisfaction.

Review of Literature

Research conducted in the United States has shown that different groups of domestic students experience varying levels of discrimination. For example, Asian and Black students have reported more discrimination than Whites (Pieterse & Carter, 2010). Latinos have reported more discrimination than Asians in several areas including treatment by professors, employers, colleagues and students, people in helping professions, and by individuals in a number of different institutions (Hwang & Goto, 2009). In a longitudinal study involving domestic students from 1994 to 2006, 39% of Black students reported experiencing discrimination on campus. The figures for

other groups were lower: Native Indians (27%), Asian/Pacific Islanders (19%), Hispanics (19%), Whites (15%), and others (16%) (Miller & Sujitparapitaya, 2010).

In another study of domestic students, researchers found that in some sites relatively few domestic students experienced discrimination from members of a different race. For example, 93% reported no direct abuse from individuals of a different race while going to class; 96% had not heard abusive words from individuals of a different race in cars on campus; 93% indicated that they had never been pushed or shoved by members of a different race on campus; and 94% had not been the target of abusive words from an instructor of a different race. This said, smaller numbers reported never having experienced other difficulties. For example, only 73% mentioned that they had never had an instructor of a different race belittle their intelligence; only 68% reported that none of their instructors of a different race had been unfair in grading; and only 69% said that they had never heard a student of a different race utter a racist remark (Marcus et al., 2003).

Although specific groups of domestic university students, such as Blacks and Latinos, have experienced discrimination on American campuses, overall, international students have reported more discrimination than domestic students (Hanassab, 2006; Lee, 2007; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007); however, like the experience of domestic students, that of international students has not been uniform. For example, students from Canada and Europe, who have considerable cultural affinity with their American peers, have reported less discrimination than those from other areas of the globe (Hanassab, 2006; Lee, 2007).

Further differentials can be made among international students from areas other than Canada and Europe. For example, Poyrazli and Lopez (2007) found that international students from Africa and the Middle East reported the greatest amount of discrimination. In another study, Hanassab (2006) examined potential discrimination in six areas. The greatest number of international students reporting discrimination in interactions with professors (21%) was from South East Asia. Students from Africa (17%) reported the greatest amount of discrimination in their interactions with university staff. International students from the Americas other than Canada (21%) were the most likely to report discrimination on the part of classmates. When it came to applying for campus jobs the greatest amount of discrimination was reported by students from Africa and the Middle East (17%). Outside of the university students from the Middle East (46%) reported more discrimination than members of other international groups.

A number of studies confirm that the experience of discrimination has a number of potentially negative consequences for both domestic and international students. For example, discrimination has been found to contribute to anxiety, depression, emotional reactivity, and lowered self-esteem (Araujo & Borrell, 2006; Carter, 2007; Hwang & Goto, 2009; Moradi & Risco, 2006; Mossakowski, 2003; Pieterse & Carter, 2010; Williams & Mohammed, 2009; Yoo & Lee, 2005). Important for the current research is the fact that although negative links have been found between discrimination and educational/student satisfaction (Miller & Sujitparapitaya, 2010; Wadsworth, Hecht, & Jung, 2008), no connection has been made between discrimination and grade point average of university students (Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007).

Overall, three conclusions can be drawn from American studies of discrimination experienced by domestic and international students. First, both groups experience discrimination; however, overall, more international than domestic students report discrimination. Second, the experience of discrimination by domestic and international students is not uniform. In each category some groups report more discrimination than others. Moreover, members of different groups frequently report different types of discrimination. Third, discrimination can have negative

psychological consequences for both domestic and international students. In addition, some evidence indicates that experiences of discrimination detract from satisfaction with students' university experiences; however, discrimination is of no consequence for GPA.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century the number of international students studying in Canadian universities increased from 53,168 to 116,890 (Kunin & Associates, 2012, p. 16). Despite this increase, in contrast to the United States, historically, relatively few studies have been carried out of discrimination on Canadian campuses (Chandra, 1974; Chataway & Berry, 1989; Heikinheimo & Shute, 1986; Henry & Tator, 2009; Lay & Nguyen, 1998; Samuel & Burney, 2003). An examination of these studies indicates three things. First, those finding the greatest amount of discrimination are qualitative. A meta-analysis of research on the 'chilly climate' for women in universities thesis similarly demonstrated that support came primarily from qualitative studies. The explanation given for this phenomenon was that, "many of the behaviours characteristic of 'chilly climates' reflect socially accepted patterns of communication. As such, it is not uncommon [primarily in surveys] for many types of discriminatory behaviors to be interpreted as 'normal' and/or justified in order to fit them into an acceptable or comfortable worldview" (Allan, 2006, p. 703). It is possible that a similar qualification applies to studies of other forms of discrimination on campuses.

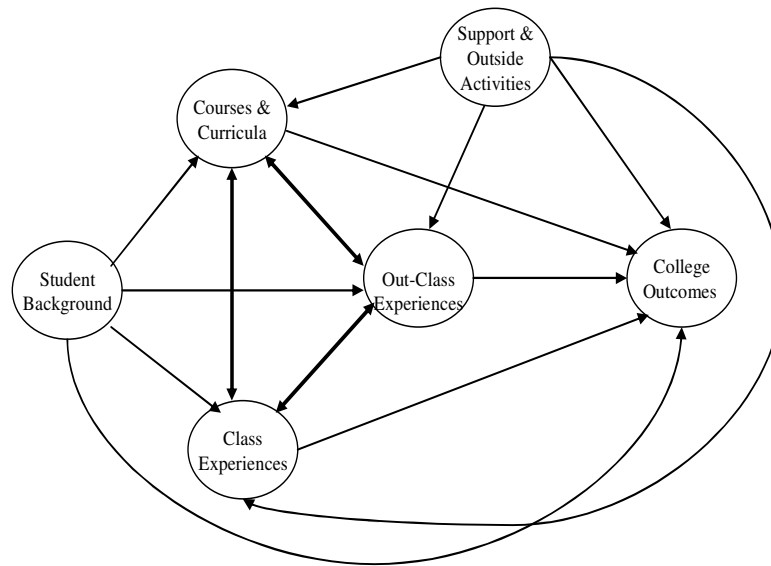
Second, while most studies analyzing the experience of international students have found evidence of discrimination, little systematic attention has been devoted to comparing the relative amounts or types discrimination experienced by international students of different origins or to examinations of differences in the experiences of discrimination of international compared to domestic students. Third, in Canada, only two studies have been conducted from the perspective of the college impact model that, as will be seen, is of relevance to the current study. The first focused on domestic students of various ethno-racial origins and assessed the net effect of the campus racial climate on student withdrawal. Overall, the net effect of racial climate was not statistically significant (Grayson, 1998). The second study examined the effect of discrimination on the satisfaction of Chinese origin students. While discrimination detracted somewhat from student satisfaction, it had no net effect on GPA (Grayson, 2007). The latter finding is similar to that of an American study (Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007).

Although they included a measure of discrimination, neither of the above studies involved a systematic examination of the nature and source of discrimination confronted and its impact on student outcomes. Filling this lacuna is the objective of the current research.

The degree to which negative racial encounters have possible implications for outcomes can be analyzed within the framework of college impact models. Despite differences, all variants of college impact models (Astin, 1993; Hurtado, 2007; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1993), are consistent with seven propositions. First, outcomes (e.g. academic achievement) can be affected in positive or negative ways by students' backgrounds (student background). Second, outcomes can be influenced by activities within universities such as taking particular courses or curricula (courses and curricula); participation in formal activities such as going to classes (class experiences); and informal activities like engaging in sports or cultural activities (out of class experiences). Third, participation in university activities may be related to background characteristics of students, such as their age or ethno-racial origin. Fourth, outcomes may be affected by the 'racial climate' of the university which is mediated by courses and curricula, class experiences, and out of class experiences. Fifth, internal activities may be related to factors outside of the university, like support from family and friends

and having a part time job (support and outside activities). Sixth, overall, the more students are involved in various campus activities; the more they receive external support from others, like families; and the more diverse the campus environment, the more likely the realization of desired educational outcomes. Seventh, an assessment of the effect of any one model variable on outcomes requires controlling for other variables in the model. Because of space constraints possible model connections cannot be discussed in detail; however, they are represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: *General Model of College Impact*



As seen earlier, research conducted in the United States has revealed a connection between discrimination and anxiety, depression, emotional reactivity, and lowered self-esteem. Conditions such as these are antithetical to forms of student involvement found to contribute to the realization of desired outcomes in college impact models. In view of this possibility, using American research as a guide, the current study has two objectives: (1) to estimate the number and to determine the nature of negative encounters experienced by international and domestic students in Canadian communities and universities; and (2) to assess the impact of these experiences on GPA and program satisfaction, net of the effect of other variables included in college impact models.

Participants

The current study is based on a sample of international and domestic students entering the University of British Columbia (Vancouver), York University (Toronto), McGill University (Montreal), and Dalhousie University (Halifax) in the fall of 2003. Excluding faculties for which a prior degree was required (e.g. law) all international students entering first year in each of the four universities who were 30 years of age or younger were mailed a questionnaire in January, 2004. Comparable numbers of randomly selected domestic students were also included in the study.

The total number of individuals invited to participate in the survey was 4,872. After four contacts, the response rate was 31%. Of the 1,425 students included in the study, 916 were domestic and 509 international. Among domestic students 32% were immigrants: 14% were born in China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan; 1% were from the United States; and 17% were immigrants from other countries. In essence, with respect to origins, there was considerable diversity among domestic

students. Such diversity is common in many large urban universities in Canada. Among international students, a plurality, 39%, was from China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan. Overall, 73% of domestic and 60% of international students were female. Additional information on sample characteristics and an argument for not weighting the data are found elsewhere (Grayson, 2008, 2011).

Measures

High school grades (the basis on which students in the sample were admitted to their first year), GPA, sex, student status (domestic or international), and number of completed credits were obtained from administrative records. Both GPA and credits were standardized to facilitate comparisons. Other information used in the study was collected via the survey and merged with information from administrative records.

Questions focusing on exemplary performance by professors were derived from a study at the University of Guelph of students who kept diaries of their first year experiences and who participated in interviews with researchers. The aspects of classroom performance by professors that were identified as exemplary in this way were: having adequate teaching expertise; having knowledge of subject matter; being responsive to the class; caring about students in the class; having a sense of humour; and being well organized (Benjamin, 1990). In the current study, students were asked how many of the instructors in the courses in which they were currently enrolled had each of the characteristics identified above (Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$). The mean scores for these measures comprised an index of *professor performance*. A principal component analysis extracted a single component responsible for 54% of the variance. The corresponding factor scale correlated highly with the index ($r(1,404) = .99, p < .001$).

Class involvement was measured by two questions in which students were asked what percentage of their lectures/seminars; and tutorials, labs, and studios they attended. The responses for each were averaged into a single index (Cronbach's $\alpha = .56$).

Organized event involvement was assessed by eight questions asking students in a given time period how much they had been involved in: 1) non-required academic activities; 2) campus clubs and student councils; 3) organized sports; 5) unorganized sports; 6) watching sports; 7) cultural or arts events; 8) pub activities. In order to ensure comparability of questions, responses were standardized before summing into an index of event involvement. As this is a simple average, a calculation of Cronbach's α was not appropriate.

On campus personal involvement was measured by questions from the College Expectations Student Questionnaire (CESQ). More specifically, students were asked how often they: "told a friend who is a student why you reacted to another person the way you did"; "discussed with other students why some groups get along smoothly and other groups don't"; "sought out another student who is a friend to help you with a personal problem"; and, "asked another student who is a friend to tell you what he/she really thought about you". Response options ranged from 1 meaning 'never' to 5 indicating 'daily' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$). The items mean scores comprised an index of on-campus personal involvement. A principal component analysis extracted one component explaining 63% of the variance. The corresponding factor scale correlated perfectly with the index ($r(1,414) = 1.00, p < .001$).

The relationship between time students studied and their accomplishment was measured by dividing the number of standardized credits earned by number of weekly study hours – *hours study per standardized credit*. The variable, *weekly hours job*, was a measure of the number of hours students spent in paid employment and was assessed by the question: "How many hours per week do you spend at a job (include any work in a family business)?"

The extent to which students believed that they had *difficulty meeting the expectations of others* was measured by two questions. One focused on meeting the expectations of family. The second dealt with the expectations of friends. For each, on a five point scale, 1 indicated 'very problematic' and 5 'no problem at all'. Cronbach's alpha for these two items was .76.

Student status and language was measured by two questions. In the first, students were asked, "What language did you usually speak most at home while you were growing up"? If they said 'English,' and were domestic or international students, they were classified as domestic English and international English respectively. Other responses were classified as 'English as a second language' (ESL), with further divisions based on students being domestic or international – domestic ESL, international ESL.

Ethno-racial origin was measured by a question in which students, consistent with Statistics Canada categories, were able to identify the group of which they considered themselves a member. Ideally, students would have been categorized on the basis of both ethno-racial origin and place of birth. Unfortunately, this practice would have resulted in categories with numbers that were too small for some groups of students. As a compromise, for large groups, such as those of Chinese origin, it was possible to further classify on the basis of place of birth: China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Canada. For some small groups, such as Arabs and West Asians, it was not feasible to further divide on the basis of birthplace. For groups such as these, the only possible distinction was ethno-racial origin. Fortunately, this compromise did not affect the integrity of the analysis. Overall, students were classified as Canadian born students of European origin, Other born European, Chinese from China, Chinese from Hong Kong, Chinese from Taiwan, Canadian born Chinese, Black, Arab/West Asian, South Asian, Canadian born Other, and Other born Other. Students of other than European origin can be viewed as members of a 'visible minority'.

There are different ways in which the measurement of discrimination can be approached (Hwang & Goto, 2009; Marcus, et al., 2003; Miller & Sujitparapitaya, 2010; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007; Wadsworth, et al., 2008). In this study, consistent with Heikinheimo & Shute (1986), Rothman, Lipset, & Nevitte (2003), and Marcus, et al. (2003), students were asked questions about their own and others' behaviour. It was then possible to determine if students of particular ethno-racial groups had experiences that were distinct from those of students of other ethno-racial origins. The categories derived in this way overlap with areas of potential discrimination identified in other studies.

The specific questions used to reveal these experiences were derived from eight focus group meetings with first year Black students ($n = 48$), four with students of European origin ($n = 33$), and three with Chinese origin students ($n = 26$). In the groups students were asked to identify forms of discriminatory *behaviour* that they had encountered.

Outside of the university students identified behaviour such as unequal treatment in stores, restaurants, and public transportation as forms of discrimination that they had encountered. Some students also reported discriminatory behaviour in places of work and with landlords. Very few pointed to discrimination by the police (Grayson, 1994).

In the current study, questions operationalizing discrimination were restricted to negative discrimination. More specifically, for discrimination outside of the university (*external discrimination*), consistent with findings of the focus groups, students were asked to identify how often they had:

1. Been treated *suspiciously* by people working in stores
2. Been *ignored* by people working in stores
3. Had people who work in stores try to *cheat* you
4. Not gotten a job because of *who you are* rather than your qualifications for the job
5. Not gotten a promotion because of *who you are* rather than your qualifications for the job
7. Been treated *rudely* by a bus driver
8. Been treat *rudely* by another passenger on public transportation (bus, subway, etc.)
9. Been treated *unfairly* by people who work in fancy restaurants
10. Been treated *unfairly* by police
11. Been treated *unfairly* by landlords

Response options were 1 meaning never to 4 indicating very often. Cronbach's alpha for the 11 items was .80. A principal component's analysis extracted one meaningful component explaining 43% of the variance. The corresponding factor scale correlated highly with the index ($r(1505) = .84, p < .001$).

Within the university, when differential treatment was reported, it was relatively minor, and, in some instances, *favored* minority students. Consistent with the findings of the focus groups, measures of discrimination within the university (*internal discrimination*) focused on how often students had:

1. Been treated *unfairly* by professors
2. Been treated *unfairly* by other students
3. Been treated *unfairly* by university staff (secretaries, counsellors, etc.)

Response options were the same as for external discrimination. Cronbach's alpha was .67. A principal component's analysis extracted one component explaining 43% of the variance. The corresponding factor scale correlated highly with the index ($r(1,507) = .97, p < .001$).

The final measure, *program satisfaction*, was assessed by asking students, overall, how satisfied they were with their program of studies, with 1 indicting very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied.

Analysis

Analysis will proceed in two steps. First, information will be presented to demonstrate the degree of discrimination experienced by students. Second, within the general framework of the college impact model, regression analyses will be used to identify the impact of discrimination on two first year outcomes: GPA and program satisfaction.

Frequency of Unfairness for Various Groups

Table 1 lists each of the measures of potential unfairness mentioned above. Information in the table should be read in the following manner. The first line of data, 'NA', refers to the total

percentage of all students in the group who had not been in situations specified in each question. For example, overall, 45% of all students indicated that they had never been in a situation in which it would have been possible to have been treated unfairly by the police (item 9). The second line of data, 'Never', represents students who had been in the situation represented in the question who had never experienced unfair treatment. The third line, 'Sometimes,' refers to the percentage of students who had experienced the conditions stated in the question who had experienced unequal treatment. The second and third lines of data total 100%. The significance of chi-square, found to the right of the table, is reported for data in lines two and three and excludes students for whom the situation was not applicable.

Table 1: Potential Sites of Discrimination by Ethno-Racial Group

		China	Hong Kong	Taiwan	Con born Chinese	Black	Arab W Asian	Other Asian	South Asian	Con born European	Other born European	Canadian born Other	Other born Other	Total	p
1. % Been treated suspiciously by people working in stores	NA	16	12	17	5	4	11	16	13	3	6	7	9	8	0.011
	Never	68	69	67	57	45	53	63	69	55	61	49	60	59	
	Sometimes	32	31	33	43	55	47	38	31	45	39	51	40	41	
	N	134	116	65	80	57	65	114	104	452	158	76	68	1489	
2. % Been ignored by people working in stores	NA	12	9	11	4	4	3	10	9	1	3	4	3	5	0.001
	Never	33	36	39	18	28	33	26	51	23	31	23	39	29	
	Sometimes	67	64	61	82	72	67	74	49	77	69	77	61	71	
	N	134	116	64	80	56	65	114	104	452	158	76	68	1487	
3. % Had people who work in stores try to cheat you	NA	17	16	27	6	7	8	13	13	3	3	8	7	9	0.156
	Never	62	72	64	61	62	65	66	62	68	74	54	58	66	
	Sometimes	38	28	36	39	38	35	34	38	32	26	46	42	34	
	N	133	116	64	80	57	65	114	104	451	156	76	67	1483	
4. % Not gotten a job because of who you are rather than your qualifications	NA	50	59	56	43	33	35	41	40	28	44	33	31	39	0.001
	Never	51	67	57	67	66	76	69	68	83	80	75	68	73	
	Sometimes	49	33	43	33	34	24	31	32	17	20	25	32	27	
	N	135	116	64	80	57	65	114	104	452	158	76	68	1489	
5. % Not gotten a promotion because of who you are rather than your qualifications	NA	61	65	66	54	65	42	53	57	37	52	40	46	50	0.001
	Never	58	73	64	70	85	86	83	70	86	85	89	70	80	
	Sometimes	42	28	36	30	15	14	17	30	14	15	11	30	20	
	N	133	115	64	80	57	64	114	102	452	157	75	68	1481	
6. % Been treated rudely by a bus driver	NA	8	12	8	9	5	3	7	6	12	9	11	9	9	0.003
	Never	61	54	54	33	44	43	43	43	40	47	37	44	45	
	Sometimes	39	46	46	67	56	57	57	57	60	53	63	56	55	
	N	134	115	64	80	57	65	113	104	450	158	76	68	1484	
7. % Been treated rudely by another passenger on public transportation (bus, subway)	NA	5	9	8	8	5	0	4	5	10	4	11	6	7	0.137
	Never	60	52	61	47	43	51	48	56	47	52	41	58	51	
	Sometimes	40	48	39	53	57	49	52	44	53	48	59	42	49	
	N	135	115	64	80	57	65	114	104	452	158	76	68	1488	
8. % Been treated unfairly by people who work in fancy restaurants	NA	16	16	14	24	18	14	17	16	15	16	13	7	16	0.065
	Never	63	65	64	62	64	73	57	79	62	69	53	63	64	
	Sometimes	37	35	36	38	36	27	43	21	38	31	47	37	36	
	N	135	116	64	80	57	65	114	104	452	158	76	68	1489	
9. % Been treated unfairly by police	NA	38	58	42	61	42	42	51	53	41	42	38	40	45	0.551
	Never	75	90	89	74	79	82	82	85	78	80	74	80	80	
	Sometimes	25	10	11	26	21	18	18	15	22	20	26	20	20	
	N	135	116	64	80	57	65	114	102	452	158	76	68	1487	
10. % Been treated unfairly by landlords	NA	24	59	51	68	46	55	54	55	57	41	61	43	51	0.018
	Never	63	77	94	88	68	86	77	83	79	76	80	72	77	
	Sometimes	37	23	6	12	32	14	23	17	21	24	20	28	23	
	N	135	116	65	80	57	65	114	104	452	157	76	68	1489	
11. % Been treated unfairly by professors	NA	8	5	9	9	7	0	10	5	3	2	4	6	5	0.035
	Never	63	71	76	62	70	52	72	73	63	68	62	53	65	
	Sometimes	37	29	24	38	30	48	28	27	37	32	38	47	35	
	N	135	115	64	80	57	65	114	104	452	158	76	68	1488	
12. % Been treated unfairly by other students	NA	6	5	6	6	2	3	6	3	2	1	3	1	3	0.463
	Never	54	54	43	39	43	54	45	55	52	51	47	46	50	
	Sometimes	46	46	57	61	57	46	55	45	48	49	53	54	50	
	N	135	116	64	79	57	65	114	103	452	158	76	68	1487	
13. % Been treated unfairly by university staff (secretaries, counsellors, etc.)	NA	11	24	16	21	4	8	13	11	12	8	7	10	12	0.029
	Never	58	75	83	68	71	58	56	69	65	68	63	67	66	
	Sometimes	42	25	17	32	29	42	44	31	35	32	37	33	34	
	N	135	116	64	80	57	65	114	104	452	158	76	68	1489	

Because of space limitations, discussion of the data in Table 1 will be confined to items listed on the left side of the table for which differences based on ethno-racial origin were statistically significant. Following this procedure we see that there were no statistically significant differences among ethno-racial groups for the following items:

3. Had people who work in stores try to cheat you
7. Been treated rudely by another passenger on public transportation
8. Been treated unfairly by people who work in fancy restaurants
9. Been treated unfairly by police
12. Been treated unfairly by other students

Proceeding in descending order of presentation for the items for which differences based on ethno-racial origin were statistically significant, we see that, overall, only 8% of students indicated that they had never been in a situation in which it would be possible for them to have been treated with suspicion by store clerks. Fifty nine percent (59%) indicated that they had never encountered suspicion in this context while 41% had experienced suspicion. Table figures indicate that of those for whom the situation was relevant Blacks (55%), Canadian born students of European origin (45%), and Canadian born students of Other origins (51%) experienced suspicion above the mean (41%). For overall differences $p \leq .001$. Overall, non-European origin students did not report an excess of suspicious treatment by people in stores.

Table data also show that only a very small minority, 5%, indicated that they had never been in a context in which it would not have been possible to be ignored by people working in stores. Of those for whom the question was applicable, 71% indicated that they had been ignored by store workers while 29% stated that they had not experienced this type of treatment. Incidences of ignoring above the mean (71%) were reported by Canadian born Chinese (82%), Blacks (72%), Other Asians (74%), Canadian born Europeans (77%), and Canadian born Other students (77%). For this situation, $p \leq .001$. Again table data indicate that while there were differences from group to group, it cannot be argued that Canadian born students of European origin were ignored less in this area than other students.

Relatively large numbers of students (39%) reported that they had not been in situations in which they did not get a job because of who they were rather than because of their qualifications. Not surprisingly, large numbers of Chinese (50%), students from Hong Kong (59%), and students from Taiwan (56%) gave this response, perhaps because at the time of the study laws restricted the employment of foreign students in Canada. This said, 43% of Canadian born Chinese students also gave this response while the figure for Canadian born students of European origin was only 28%. Of those for whom the situation described in the question was applicable, 27% of respondents indicated that they had experienced unfairness in the hiring process. Of this group, most unfairness was reported by Chinese (49%), Taiwanese (43%), and Black (34%) students. The least discrimination was reported by Canadian born students of European origin (17%) and Other born students of European origin (20%). As $p \leq .001$, it can be concluded that students of European origin, independent of birth place, experienced the least unfairness in obtaining jobs and students of Chinese origin and Blacks the greatest. The experiences of other groups fell between.

A similar pattern was evident when students were asked if they had been denied a promotion because of who they were rather than their qualifications. Overall, 50% indicated that this situation was not applicable to them with the greatest incidence of non-applicability being reported by Chinese (61%), Hong Kong (65%), Taiwanese (66%), and Black students (65%). The question was

most applicable to Canadian born students of European origin, only 37% of whom stated that the question was not relevant.

Of those for whom the question was relevant, 20% indicated that they had experienced unfairness; however, the figures for Chinese (42%), Hong Kong (28%), Taiwanese (36%), Canadian born Chinese (30%), South Asians (30%), and Other born Other students (30%) are well above the mean for all groups (20%). Least discrimination was reported by Blacks (15%), Arabs and West Asians (14%), Canadian born students of European origin (14%), Other born students of European origin (15%), and Canadian born Other students (11%). The figure for Black students may indicate that once they got jobs they were not disadvantaged because of their race. As $p \leq .001$ we can conclude that not all students have experienced equal treatment in the matter of job promotions; however, there are no clear distinctions to be made on the basis of visible minority status of students.

Table data indicate that only 9% of students had never been in a situation in which it was possible to be treated rudely by a bus driver. Of the remainder, a surprisingly large number, 55%, indicated that they had experienced rude behaviour. Those reporting the most were Canadian born Chinese (67%), Canadian born Other students (63%), and Canadian students of European origin (60%). The least was reported by Chinese students (39%) and students from Hong Kong (46%) and Taiwan (46%). While $p \leq .003$, given the patterns revealed in the data, perhaps it is safest to conclude that foreign born Chinese students experienced the least rude behaviour and Canadian born Chinese students the most. Other groups fell between these extremes, and there is no clear division between visible minority and other students.

Most of the sample (51%) reported that a question about unfair treatment by landlords was not applicable to them. Among those for whom it was applicable, 77% reported no unfair treatment. Among the 23% who reported unfair treatment, the most unfairness was experienced by Chinese (37%), Blacks (32%), Other born Europeans (24%), and Other born others (28%). The least unfair treatment was reported by Taiwanese students (6%), Canadian born Chinese (12%), Arabs and West Asians (14%), and Canadian born students of European origin (21%). The relatively low incidence of unfair treatment by some minority groups, such as Chinese, may reflect a tendency to seek rented accommodation with other members of the same ethno-racial group. While overall differences are statistically significant ($p \leq .018$) there is no discernable pattern in the data that can be linked to visible minority status.

From the foregoing situations outside of the university several conclusions can be reached. First, in many instances only a minority of students reported behaviour on the part of others that can be viewed as discrimination. These findings are consistent with those of some American studies (Hanassab, 2006; Hwang & Goto, 2009; Marcus, et al., 2003; Miller & Sujitparapitaya, 2010). Such findings should not be interpreted as suggesting that discrimination is not a problem or that it does not have potentially serious consequences for those affected. Second, for many situations of possible unequal treatment there are no clear distinctions that could be made between students of European origin and other students. Third, despite the generality of the foregoing, some students of Chinese origin, and Blacks, felt that they were unfairly treated in hiring processes. Some Chinese origin students also felt that they had been unfairly denied promotions. Fourth, in some areas, such as on buses and fancy restaurants, students experienced unfair treatment equally.

The first area of possible unequal treatment within the university involved unfair treatment by professors. Only 5% of students indicated that this possibility was not relevant to them. Of the others, 65% stated that they had never experienced unfair treatment at the hands of professors while

35% reported unfair treatment. At a very general level these figures are comparable to those found in some American studies (Marcus, et al., 2003; Miller & Sujitparapitaya, 2010). While group differences are not as great as for some of the other areas studied, Arab and West Asian (48%), Chinese (37%), Canadian born Chinese (38%), Canadian born students of European origin (37%), Canadian born Other students (38%), and Other born other students (47%) reported unfair treatment above the mean (35%). The least unfair treatment was reported by Hong Kong (29%), Taiwanese (24%), Other Asian (28%), South Asian (27%), and Other born European students (32%). Although p for these differences is $\leq .035$, there is no discernable logic related to visible minority status underlying the observed patterns.

The final dimension to be examined is unfair treatment by university staff. Only 12% indicated that the question assessing this possibility was not applicable to them. Excluding this group, 66% indicated no unfair treatment and 34% the opposite. Among the latter, Chinese students (42%), Arabs and West Asians (42%), Other Asians (44%), and Canadian born Other students (37%) reported unfairness the most. Students from Taiwan (17%) were the least likely to report unfairness. Canadian born students of European origin reported unfairness just above the mean (30%). Although $p \leq .029$, once again there is no discernable pattern to the results related to visible minority status.

Impact on Outcomes

The next step in analysis is an examination of the impact of discrimination on the educational outcomes, GPA, and program satisfaction net of the effect of variables included in the college impact model, student status and linguistic group, ethno-racial origin, and university. This process allows us to see the unique impact of discrimination on outcomes after the effect of all other variables has been considered.

The results of this process can be seen in Table 2. The first two variables listed on the left are background variables of possible consequence for outcomes. Variables 3 through 9 represent formal and informal activities on campus with the potential to affect outcomes. Variables 8 and 9 are external influences of possible consequence for outcomes. Student status (international or domestic) and first language are listed as variables 10 to 12. Note that these are dummy variables with domestic students for whom English was a first language as the reference group. Variables 13 to 23 are dummy variables for ethno-racial origin with the Canadian born of European origin as the reference category. External discrimination, variable 24, and internal discrimination, variable 25, are the indices described earlier. With UBC as the reference category dummy variables 26 to 28 identify the university that the student attends. Inclusion of these variables was very important in view of the possibility that the discrimination experiences of students vary from one university to the next. Including them in the regression analysis enables us to determine if in fact experiences of discrimination do vary from one university location to another. The number of cases with listwise deletion on which analysis is based is represented by 'N' and the significance of the two regression models is indicated by 'model p'. Beta; significance levels for each variable, 'p'; and cumulative r squared can be found at the top of the relevant columns.

Starting with the model explaining GPA, it is seen that of the background variables high school grades (beta = .398) makes a statistically significant contribution to the model and, in combination with being male, explains a relatively large 17% (rounded) of the variance in GPA. What this means is that, as expected, those with good high school grades are likely to get high GPAs.

Of the variables in the college impact model classified as formal and informal activities, only class involvement is statistically significant ($\beta = .094$). The inclusion of these variables increases the explained variance to 20%. In essence, various forms of student involvement in the university contribute relatively little (3%) to GPA. Similar amounts of explained variance for these variables have been found in other Canadian and American studies (Grayson, 1997; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Table 2: Regressions for GPA and Program Satisfaction

	GPA			Program Satisfaction		
	Beta	p	R sq.	Beta	p	R sq.
Student background						
1. Male (<i>Reference = female</i>)	0.037	0.124	0.000	-0.008	0.748	0.000
2. HS grades	0.398	0.000	0.171	0.057	0.049	0.001
University experiences						
3. Professor performance	0.034	0.167		0.326	0.000	
4. Class involvement	0.094	0.000		0.053	0.046	
5. Organized event involvement	-0.003	0.919		0.036	0.190	
6. On campus personal involvement	-0.037	0.136		0.042	0.124	
7. Hours study per standardized credit	0.037	0.117	0.197	0.031	0.242	0.177
Support and outside activities						
8. Weekly hours job	-0.042	0.097		-0.003	0.926	
9. Difficulty meeting expectations others	0.355	0.000	0.311	0.119	0.000	0.202
Student status and language						
<i>Reference = Domestic English</i>						
10. Domestic ESL	-0.015	0.636		0.070	0.041	
11. International ESL	-0.071	0.048		0.018	0.650	
12. International English	-0.020	0.489	0.314	0.020	0.533	0.206
Ethno-racial origin						
<i>Reference = Cdn. born European</i>						
13. China	0.047	0.146		-0.071	0.049	
14. Hong Kong	0.043	0.152		-0.080	0.017	
15. Taiwan	-0.030	0.296		-0.088	0.006	
16. Canadian born Chinese	0.074	0.005		-0.033	0.251	
17. Black	0.022	0.366		0.028	0.297	
18. Arab/West Asian	0.055	0.034		0.009	0.762	
19. South Asian	0.035	0.194		-0.057	0.068	
20. Other Asian	0.009	0.743		0.050	0.095	
21. Other born European	0.006	0.835		0.029	0.391	
22. Canadian born Other	0.002	0.949		0.039	0.155	
23. Other born Other	0.029	0.284	0.321	-0.021	0.475	0.219
Discrimination						
24. External discrimination	0.055	0.041	0.326	0.008	0.778	0.221
25. Internal discrimination	0.039	0.149	0.327	-0.125	0.000	0.231
University						
<i>Reference = UBC</i>						
26. York	0.096	0.001		0.000	0.993	
27. McGill	-0.024	0.381		0.043	0.164	
28. Dalhousie	0.035	0.193	0.335	0.078	0.009	0.235
N	1268			1190		
Model p		0.001			0.001	

An analysis of the impact of external variables indicates that the number of hours in employment has no statistically significant impact on GPA. By contrast, having no difficulty meeting the expectations of others makes a statistically significant contribution ($\beta = .355$); those who have no difficulty in meeting others' expectations obtain higher grades. The inclusion of these two variables increases the explained variance to 31%.

Of the student status and language variables only international ESL is statistically significant (beta = $-.071$). In other words, international ESL students are likely to get slightly lower grades than the reference group (domestic students whose first language is English).

Focusing on the statistically significant ethno-racial variables we see that Canadian born Chinese students (beta = $.074$), and Arab and West Asian students (beta = $.055$) get slightly higher grades than Canadian born students of European origin. The grades of all other groups are not different from this reference category. The inclusion of the ethno-racial variables slightly increases the explained variance to 32%.

When external discrimination is examined, we see that it has a statistically significant slight *positive* effect on grades (beta = $.055$). This finding was contrary to expectations based on previous research. A Black female graduate student in one of my classes interpreted this finding as follows: students who have a general experience with discrimination develop a 'toughness' that becomes manifest in task dedication, and, potentially, in higher grades. The effect of the inclusion of this variable is a small increase in explained variance to 33%. By contrast, internal discrimination has no statistically significant effect on GPA.

An examination of attendance at particular universities shows that all else being equal, going to York has a statistically significant small impact on grades (beta = $.096$). All else being equal, students at York earn higher grades than at the other universities. The inclusion of the university variables increases the explained variance to 34%.

Information on program satisfaction indicates that of the two background variables, only high school grades has a statistically significant, yet small, effect (beta = $.057$). Those with good high school grades are slightly more likely than others to express satisfaction with their programs. The variance explained by background variables is 1%.

Of variables focusing on formal and informal campus activities, professor performance (beta = $.326$) and class involvement (beta = $.053$) have statistically significant effects on satisfaction. Moreover, the variables in this block increase the explained variance from 1% to 18%. While activities in the university appear to be of little consequence for GPA, they have considerable importance for program satisfaction.

As was the case for GPA, number of hours spent in employment is of little consequence for satisfaction. By contrast, having no difficulty in meeting others' expectations has a statistically significant positive impact (beta = $.119$). The inclusion of these two variables increases the explained variance to 20%.

Among student status and language variables, only being a domestic ESL student has a statistically significant effect on satisfaction (beta = $.070$): domestic ESL students have slightly greater satisfaction with their programs than domestic English speaking students. With the inclusion of these two variables, the explained variance increases slightly to 21%.

Being a student from China (beta = $-.071$), Hong Kong (beta = $-.080$), or Taiwan (beta = $-.088$) has a statistically significant effect on program satisfaction; however, as indicated by the negative regression sign, students from these areas are less likely than the reference group, Canadian born students of European origin, to express satisfaction with their programs. No other

ethno-racial variable has a statistically significant effect. Inclusion of ethno-racial variables leads to a slight increase in the explained variance to 22%.

In contrast to the situation for GPA, external discrimination has no statistically significant effect on program satisfaction. Internal discrimination, by comparison, is statistically significant and has a slight negative impact on satisfaction ($\beta = -.125$). Put differently, students who experience discrimination on campus are slightly less likely than others to say that they are satisfied with their academic programs. This is to be expected. Student who experience unfair treatment in the university are unlikely to have a satisfying experience. The inclusion of discrimination variables increases the explained variance slightly to 23%. (It is interesting to note that the magnitude of the negative effect of internal discrimination on program satisfaction ($\beta = -.125$) is far greater than the magnitude of the positive impact of external discrimination on GPA ($\beta = .055$)).

If university of attendance is examined, we see that being at Dalhousie as compared to UBC has a statistically significant small effect on program satisfaction ($\beta = .078$). With the inclusion of the university variables explained variance increases very slightly to 24%.

In conclusion it can be argued that off-campus discrimination has a slight positive effect on GPA and discrimination on campus has a small negative effect on program satisfaction. Neither of these variables, however, has the greatest impact on the outcomes under consideration. For GPA, the greatest impacts are those of high school grades and being able to meet the demands of others. Formal and informal activities in the university are of little consequence. By contrast, activities within the university have the greatest impact of all variables on program satisfaction. The relative impacts of student status and language, and ethno-racial origin, are minimal on either outcome. Attendance at particular universities has a slight impact on both GPA and program satisfaction.

Conclusion

As seen in the introduction, immigrants to Australia, Canada, and the United States may face difficulties in the labour market; however, their sons and daughters do not suffer from this disadvantage. Education is important in explaining this difference between parents and their offspring. As a result, it is important to determine the degree to which potential discrimination on and off campus either contributes to, or detracts from, the realization of educational outcomes.

Overall, it is clear that international and domestic students in Canadian universities experience a number of negative encounters, particularly outside of the university; however, with the exception of students of Chinese origin and Blacks in hiring processes, it is not possible to single out particular groups of students and argue that they systematically encounter more negative situations than others. Members of some groups may encounter more unfairness than the norm in some areas; however, in other areas they may experience less unfairness than the norm. Moreover, on the basis of the evidence collected from this study, it is clear that it is not possible to argue that students in Canadian universities who are not of European origin (visible minorities) systematically encounter an undue amount of unfairness in their activities inside and outside of the university. These findings are consistent with the results of American studies indicating that independent of domestic/international status, the magnitude and effect of discrimination may vary from one ethno-racial group to the next.

This said, inconsistent with the basic propositions of the college impact model, unfairness that students in Canada experience outside of the university has an independent *positive* effect on

their GPAs; however, given the small size of the effect, we must be careful not to exaggerate its importance. By contrast, unfairness within the university is of no consequence for GPA.

External experiences of unfairness have no effect on program satisfaction. By contrast, experiences of unfair treatment within the university detract somewhat from the program satisfaction of students in Canada. This is to be expected and is consistent with the basic propositions of the college impact model. Moreover, the size of this negative effect is larger than the positive effect of external discrimination on GPA.

It must be emphasized that the current study has only dealt with one aspect of relations among different demographic groups in four Canadian universities. Moreover, despite certain consistencies between findings of the current study and some conducted in the United States, the findings of the current study should not be generalized to other countries with different histories of immigration and race relations (Justus, 2004; Lipset, 1990). In addition, we should not lose sight of the possibility that, given its nature, proof of discrimination on campuses is better found in qualitative than in quantitative studies. In Canada we need more research into this possibility.

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