

# **Rising Above Hate: Policy Options to Address Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents in British Columbia**

**by**  
**Miguel Antonio Dicen**

B.A. (with Distinction, Economics), University of Victoria, 2020

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Public Policy

in the  
School of Public Policy  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
Spring 2022

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**Name:** Miguel Antonio Dicen

**Degree:** Master of Public Policy

**Title:** Rising Above Hate: Policy Options to Address Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents in British Columbia

**Committee:**

**Chair: Genevieve LeBaron**  
Professor, Public Policy

**Olena Hankivsky**  
Supervisor  
Professor, Public Policy

**Nancy Olewiler**  
Committee Member  
Professor, Public Policy

**Maureen Maloney**  
Examiner  
Professor, Public Policy

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## **Abstract**

Canada is a diverse country with 22.3% of Canadians belonging to visible minorities (Wang & Moreau, 2022). Canada's history has been marked by systemic racism against visible minorities such as Indigenous, Black, and Asian communities. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, brought racism into stark relief with an increase in the number of hate crimes and hate incidents across Canada. This study examines the reasons behind the prevalence of hate crimes and hate incidents against visible minorities in the province of British Columbia. The study aims to better understand the experiences of racism in the province of British Columbia through focus group discussions involving members of the racialized communities, and also by drawing on evidence derived from secondary sources to understand the reasons behind the issue. Interviews were conducted with key informants belonging to various organizations involved in efforts to combat racism to determine potential gaps in current policies and government initiatives. The compilation and analysis of the data obtained in the study identified several key factors that contribute to the problem of hate crimes and hate incidents. Four policy options comprised of short to long term solutions have been proposed to address the issue of hate crimes and hate incidents.

**Keywords:** Hate Crimes; Hate Incidents; Racism; Racialized Communities

*To a future where racism is a thing of the past.*

## Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without the help of several individuals throughout my time in the program.

First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Olena Hankivsky, for her expert guidance, patience, and for her unwavering support throughout this capstone.

I would also like to thank Dr. Nancy Olewiler and the School of Public Policy for giving me the practical tools and knowledge that will be useful in my future endeavours.

Many thanks to Ana Maria and Sangeeta for giving me the opportunity to work with them, and to all the participants of my focus groups and interviews as well.

To my Mom, Dad and Kuya, thank you for encouraging me to pursue higher education and for always being there to support me.

And above all, to **Him** who makes all things possible.

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## List of Acronyms

AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
BCHRT	British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal
BCOHRC	British Columbia’s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner
BFL	Burnaby Family Life
CCIF	Collective Against Islamophobia in France
CGDIS	Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics
CHRC	Canadian Human Rights Commission
CMA	Census Metropolitan Area
CRT	Critical Race Theory
CSHE	Centre for the Study of Hate and Extremism
ERASE	Expect Respect and a Safe Education
OARH	Organizing Against Racism and Hate
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
UCR	Uniform Crime Reporting
VPD	Vancouver Police Department
WHO	World Health Organization

## Glossary

Racism	<p>The belief that one group of people, identified by physical characteristics of shared ancestry (such as skin colour), is superior to another group of people that look different from themselves. Racism occurs when individuals or groups are disadvantaged or mistreated based on their perceived race and/or ethnicity either through individualistic or systemic racism. (Government of B.C., n.d.-e)</p>
Hate Crime	<p>A criminal offence towards a person or property based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, color, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, or any other similar factor (Vancouver Police Department, n.d.).</p> <p>Any type of crime committed against a person or property... motivated by hate. These can include offences like assault, uttering threats, criminal harassment, and mischief, including graffiti (Resilience B.C., n.d. -a).</p>
Hate Incident	<p>A practical way of defining a broader range of behavior that may or may not meet the definition of hate crime (Resilience B.C., n.d.-a).</p> <p>Actions and speech rooted in prejudice that, in the view of the person who experiences or witnesses it are aimed at a person or a group of people because of their actual or perceived individual, collective or intersecting characteristics. They intend to, or does, significantly dehumanize, humiliate, degrade, injure, silence and/or victimize the targeted individual or group (BCOHRC, n.d.-b).</p>

# Executive Summary

## Background and Policy Problem

Canada is a diverse country with 22.3% of Canadians belonging to visible minorities (Wang & Moreau, 2022). Canada's history has been marked by systemic racism against visible minorities such as Indigenous, Black, and Asian communities. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, brought racism into stark relief with an increase in the number of hate crimes and incidents across Canada. Racism, as defined by the Government of B.C. (n.d.), *"is the belief that one group of people, identified by physical characteristics of shared ancestry (such as skin colour), is superior to another group of people that look different from themselves."* Hate Crime, according to the Vancouver Police Department is *"a criminal offence towards a person or property based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, color, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, or any other similar factor"* (Vancouver Police Department, n.d.). The British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC), define hate incidents as *"actions and speech rooted in prejudice that, in the view of the person who experiences or witnesses it are aimed at a person or a group of people because of their actual or perceived individual, collective or intersecting characteristics"* (BCOHRC, n.d.-b). While there is often confusion on the definition of hate crime and hate incident, it is important to note that both of them fall under the realm of racism.

The key policy problem for this study is the growth in hate crimes and hate incidents in British Columbia despite government efforts to address them. The study aims to better understand the experiences of racism in the province of British Columbia through focus group discussions involving members of the racialized communities, and to propose policy solutions to address the issues of hate crimes and hate incidents. While the initial intention of the study was to focus on anti-Asian hate crimes and hate incidents, the focus was broadened to include the experience of other racialized communities as well due to the interaction with those communities during the focus group sessions resulting in the discovery of cross-cutting issues across the communities.

## **Methodology**

A review of existing literature was first conducted to understand the history of racism in Canada. In addition, research was conducted on current policies, legislations, and government initiatives put in place to address the problems of hate crimes and hate incidents. This was followed by a qualitative study using a combination of focus group discussions and individual interviews to collect data. Seven focus groups involving at least 60 members from different racialized communities and seven interviews with key informants were conducted for the study. The first half of the qualitative research was done through focus group discussions held by the non-profit organization, Burnaby Family Life (BFL). Participants in the focus groups came from different racialized communities namely: Afghan, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, African and Latin American communities. Participants were asked general questions about their experiences with racism, and were also asked their experiences with racism in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second half of the qualitative research consisted of interviews with seven key informants that belong to different organizations and institutions that have worked on and are familiar with the topic of Anti-Racism in British Columbia. This set of participants were asked about their views on policy gaps and options regarding the problem of hate crimes and hate incidents.

## **Research Findings**

There are various legislations and institutions in place in Canada against racism such as the *Criminal Code of Canada* (crimes relating to Hate Propaganda); the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (CHRA) of 1977 protects against discrimination within areas that involve attaining services or employment from the federal government; the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* of 1982 assures that Canadians will be treated equally under the law (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.); Human Rights Commission which is an independent body from the government that has the authority to research, raise awareness and speak out on matters related to human rights in Canada (Government of Canada, n.d.-b). In addition, because of the division of powers between the Canadian federal and provincial governments, each province has their own provincial and territorial human laws that act and apply the same principles that are found on their federal counterpart. In B.C., in particular, the B.C. Human Rights Code protects people from discrimination based on protected characteristics (i.e. age, sex, race and religion)

(British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal [BCHRT], n.d.-b). Provincially, B.C. has also established their own Human Rights Commission named British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC) that is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights within the province (BCOHRC, n.d.-c.).

In order to address the issues of racism and discrimination, the Canadian government introduced the program Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy (2019-2022). At the provincial level, the government of British Columbia introduced programs to combat racism such as the Resilience B.C. Anti-Racism Network (Government of B.C., n.d.-g.); Community Roundtable on Anti-Racism in education created on July 24, 2020; and the proposed Anti-Racism data legislation planned to be introduced in the latter half of 2022.

Despite both the Federal Government's and the British Columbia Government's various initiatives to combat racism and discrimination in the province, Vancouver, British Columbia still registered the highest rate of increase (717%) on anti-Asian hate crimes in 2020 (Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism [CSHE], 2021) among the four largest cities in the country. This finding is supported by the survey done by Insight West of Asian British Columbians in 2021, which found that 83% of the respondents believed that anti-Asian Racism is a significant problem, while 87% believed that it has worsened since the pandemic started (Insights West, 2021). The results of the survey further showed that 43% of Asian British Columbians experienced a variety of racial incidents such as racial slurs, physical assaults or damages to their properties (Insights West, 2021). This is further confirmed by an online survey conducted by the B.C.'s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner in December 2021 in which they found 26% of respondents have witnessed a hate incident, and 9% were directly impacted by it (BCOHRC, 2022b).

Based on the results of the focus group discussions, hate crimes and hate incidents are not being reported due to uncertainty in their classification, delayed reactions on the part of the individuals who encountered those incidents, and individuals exercising self-restraint for fear of their family's and their own safety and well-being. Interview with participants regarding the current system revealed several gaps that contributed to the increase in the number of hate crimes and hate incidents notably; the difficulty in proving such crimes and incidents, barriers in reporting, issue of trust on the authorities that are supposed to be implementing the law, and the failure of current policies to address the

root causes of such issues. Further analysis as to the reasons why hate crimes and hate incidents happen revealed deep rooted issues in society such as ignorance of other people's culture, internalized oppression on the part of the racialized community, and internalized racism on the part of certain race and communities.

### **Policy Options and Recommendation**

Several policy options are being recommended to address hate crimes and hate incidents based on the results of the focus group discussions, interviews, and secondary sources. The first step to finding a solution to the prevalent problem of hate crime is the availability of relevant data that will help shape legislation and policies to combat them. Relevant data can be collected through the anti-racism data legislation initiated by B.C.'s Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives. Obtaining the data will help the government and other key stakeholders understand and address both short and long term issues. In the meantime, other more immediate steps must be taken that would help protect racialized communities against hate crimes and hate incidents. In the short term, a two-pronged approach is recommended. The first is to have a more effective reporting platform via a reporting app that can be used to record and report hate crimes and hate incidents. This will provide a more efficient and convenient way for both victims of, and bystanders to, hate crimes and hate incidents to immediately report such situations in order to encourage reporting. The data obtained from the more efficient reporting process can be used as aid in improving current policies and creating new ones. This will likewise increase awareness on the part of the community and help prevent more people from becoming victims to such crimes. The second is to create an information campaign to notify communities about available resources and support services that the B.C. government has for victims of hate crimes and hate incidents. This will help ensure that people are able to utilize the resources available to them in case they fall victim to such incidents thereby addressing their needs at the opportune time. In the medium to long term, it is recommended that societal change needs to be initiated through the inclusion of anti-racism education with a CRT lens in the school curriculum in order to create a more inclusive and diverse society in the future. In addition, consideration must be given on changing the concept of justice involving alternative punitive methods such as restorative justice that looks more towards healing rather than mere punishment. Consideration must also be given on implementing an anti-racism legislation instead of just relying on the current Human Rights Code in order to create a deterrent for potential violators. The anti-

racism legislation should lay down clear definitions of hate crimes and the corresponding punishments for those crimes.

This research serves as a preliminary investigation on the topic of hate crimes and hate incidents but far more research needs to be done in interrogating the relationship between these crimes and the Canadian society, and far more research needs to be done on the specificities of the different groups that are experiencing such issues to better understand the nuances. However, at the moment, these are the cross-cutting interventions that can be taken to address the issue on hate crimes and hate incidents.

# Chapter 1.

## Introduction

Considered to be a multicultural and diverse country, Canada has seen a growing proportion of its citizens designated as members of visible minority groups (Wang & Moreau, 2022). Canadians who identify themselves as visible minorities often speak different languages other than English and French and may also practice different religions other than Christianity (Wang & Moreau, 2022). The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism viewed Canada as a mosaic or a multicultural society made up of three elements which are the British, French and other Canadians (Department of Justice, n.d.-a). However, despite being celebrated as a multi-cultural country, Canada has its history of racism which continues to this day.

Racism has been part of Canada's history dating back to the assimilation of Indigenous communities in the 1600s, the unfair treatment of Chinese immigrants who worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 1800s, the prevention of the sale or rental of properties to those of African descent in the 1920s, and the treatment of Asian settlers as being inferior to their European counterparts in the 1950s. The institutionalized practice of racism continues in current times where up until the closure of residential schools in 1996, Indigenous children were separated from their families with the goal of assimilation. While there have been initiatives from both the Federal Government (e.g. Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy from 2019 to 2022) and the Provincial Government of British Columbia to combat racism (e.g. Organizing Against Racism and Hate [OARH] in 2001), racially motivated hate crimes and hate incidents are rising. For example, the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey on police reported crimes done by Statistics Canada reported an increase of 37% or 718 more incidents in 2020 compared to 2019 (Wang & Moreau, 2022).

With the projected increase in the proportion of Canadians that belong to visible minority groups to more than one in three of working age individuals (15 to 64 years old) by 2036 (Wang & Moreau, 2022), and the COVID-19 pandemic amplifying the cases of racism, the importance of addressing the issue of hate crimes and hate incidents involving visible majority groups is pressing and timely. The key policy problem for this study is the

growth in hate crimes and hate incidents in British Columbia despite government efforts to address them.

The study aims to better understand the experiences of racism in the province of British Columbia through focus group discussions involving members of the racialized communities. While the initial intention of the study was to focus on anti-Asian hate crimes and hate incidents, the focus was broadened to include the experience of other racialized communities as well due to the interaction with those communities during the focus group sessions resulting in the discovery of cross-cutting issues across the communities. The results of the focus group discussions are presented to show the factors that trigger hate crimes and hate incidents, the factors that affect the reaction to them, and the perceived gaps in the current system as obtained from the participants. The study will also go through some of the current government initiatives, both at the federal and provincial levels, to provide an understanding of what is currently being done on the issue. Finally, the study proposes policy options to better address hate crimes and hate incidents in British Columbia.

## Chapter 2.

### Literature Review

#### 2.1. Historical Overview

Canada has a long history of racism and hate crimes. Racism, as defined by the Government of B.C. (n.d.-e), *“is the belief that one group of people, identified by physical characteristics of shared ancestry (such as skin colour), is superior to another group of people that look different from themselves. Racism occurs when individuals or groups are disadvantaged or mistreated based on their perceived race and/or ethnicity either through individualistic or systemic racism.”* Among the many different components of racism, the day-to-day interpersonal interaction people have with one another is where hate crimes and hate incidents often manifest. Hence, it is important to understand the differences between the two as their proper classification is necessary from a law enforcement perspective.

Hate Crime is defined by the Vancouver Police Department, the police force for the City of Vancouver in British Columbia, as *“a criminal offence towards a person or property based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, color, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, or any other similar factor”* (Vancouver Police Department, n.d.). The Resilience BC Anti-Racism Network, a program funded by the Province of British Columbia to identify and challenge racism, further defines hate crimes as *“any type of crime committed against a person or property... motivated by hate. These can include offences like assault, uttering threats, criminal harassment, and mischief, including graffiti”* (Resilience B.C., n.d.-a). Hate incidents, on the other hand, are *“a practical way of defining a broader range of behavior that may or may not meet the definition of hate crime”* (Resilience B.C., n.d.-a). The British Columbia’s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC), in their inquiry into hate incidents in B.C., defined hate incidents as *“actions and speech rooted in prejudice that, in the view of the person who experiences or witnesses it are aimed at a person or a group of people because of their actual or perceived individual, collective or intersecting characteristics”* (B.C. Human Rights Commissioner, n.d.-b). In addition, they are *“intended to, or does, significantly dehumanize, humiliate, degrade, injure, silence and/or victimize*

*the targeted individual or group*” (B.C. Human Rights Commissioner, n.d.-b). While there is often confusion on the definition of hate crime and hate incident, often resulting in the conflation of their meaning, it is important to note that both of them fall under the realm of racism.

Despite being recognized and often celebrated as a multicultural country, the Canadian state has played an active role in creating and perpetuating systemic racism. Please refer to Appendix A for examples of laws and legislations implemented which discriminated against various racialized communities in the history of Canada. In the current setting, systemic racism is alive and well and continues to affect different groups, in particular, racialized communities.

## **2.2. Hate Crime Trends**

According to the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, hate crimes increased by 37% in 2020 or 728 more incidents compared to 2019 (Wang & Moreau, 2022). Based on the “Police Reported Hate Crimes in Canada” report, the number of crimes motivated by hate towards race or ethnicity increased from 884 to 1,594 (an 80% increase) between the years 2019 and 2020 (Wang & Moreau, 2022). Communities that saw an increase in hate crimes were from the Black population (+318 incidents), East or Southeast Asian population (+202 incidents), Indigenous population (+44 incidents) and the South Asian Populations (+38 incidents) (Wang & Moreau, 2022). Overall, throughout Canada, provinces have reported increases in hate crimes in 2019. The province of British Columbia in particular, reported the second highest number of hate crimes among the provinces in 2020 with an increase of 198 incidents (Wang & Moreau, 2022). The first and third highest increases were in Ontario with 316 and Quebec with 86 incidents, respectively. The majority (84%) of hate crimes in Canada committed occurred in census metropolitan areas (CMAs) with Vancouver having the largest increase among CMAs with an increase of 145 incidents recorded between 2019 to 2020 (Wang & Moreau, 2022). In terms of the characteristics of the hate crimes being committed, there was an overall increase for both non-violent and violent crimes in 2020 with the former increasing by 41% and the latter increasing by 32% (Wang & Moreau, 2022). It was also found that, while non-violent crimes still accounted for the majority of the incidents, there was an increase in all types of non-violent crimes such as general mischief and public incitement

of hatred towards an identifiable group with an increase of 44 and 18 incidents respectively (Wang & Moreau, 2022).

### **2.3. Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Hate Crimes**

The World Health Organization (WHO) came to know about the emergence of a new virus on December 31, 2019 after cluster cases of 'viral pneumonia' were reported in Wuhan, People's Republic of China (WHO, n.d.-a). The new virus responsible for the outbreak was subsequently identified as SARS-CoV-2 and the infectious disease caused by the virus was named as Coronavirus disease or COVID-19 (WHO, n.d.-b). On January 30, 2020, the Director-General of WHO "*declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC)*" which is WHO's highest level of alarm (WHO, n.d.-c). With the growing number of COVID-19 cases outside of China, which has increased 13-fold, and the number of affected countries increasing 3-fold, the Director-General of WHO declared COVID-19 as a pandemic in a press conference on March 11, 2020 (WHO, n.d.-c). A pandemic is defined as "*an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area (such as multiple countries or continents)*" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated anti-Asian sentiments. People often blame those who are Asians or of Asian descent for the pandemic, believing that Asians are responsible for starting the virus and spreading them (Nicholson, 2021). The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism (CSHE) found that in 2020, anti-Asian hate crimes rose in four of the country's largest cities. According to the Center, there was a 532% increase in anti-Asian hate crimes in 2020 with the largest increase registered in Vancouver, British Columbia which experienced a 717% increase from 2019 to 2020 (CSHE, 2021). In terms of overall hate crimes, it has increased by 74% from 2019 to 2020 (CSHE, 2021). In a survey done by Insight West of Asian British Columbians in 2021, they found that 83% believed that anti-Asian Racism is a significant problem, while 87% believed that it has worsened since the pandemic started (Insights West, 2021). The results of the survey further showed that 43% of Asian British Columbians experienced a variety of racial incidents such as racial slurs, physical assaults or damages to their properties (Insights West, 2021). A similar survey was conducted by B.C.'s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC) in December 2021 wherein they found that 1 in 4 British Columbians have experienced or witnessed a hate incident since the start of the

pandemic (BCOHRC, 2022b). Other notable findings include 26% of respondents having witnessed a hate incident take place since the start of the pandemic, while 9% directly experienced a hate incident (BCOHRC, 2022b).

## **2.4. Applicable Laws on Racism and Hate Crime**

There is no direct criminal offence category in the Criminal Code of Canada for Racism or Hate Crime. Instead, there are several sections in the Criminal Code relating to Hate Propaganda: Advocating genocide (Criminal Code, 1985, s 318); Public incitement of hatred (s 319(1)); Willful promotion of hatred (s 319(2)); Definition of mischief to religious property (s 430(4.1)); and Other sentencing principles, where race is considered as a factor (s 718.2). The Criminal Code of Canada is a federal law that defines the criminal offences that have been enacted by the Parliament of Canada (Government of Canada, n.d.-c).

Canada protects its citizen's human rights through federal, provincial and territorial laws (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.) The *Canadian Human Rights Act* (CHRA) of 1977 protects against discrimination within areas that involve attaining services or employment from the federal government, First Nation governments or federally regulated private companies such as telecommunication and trucking companies (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.). Canadians who experience harassment or any discrimination such as race, age or sexual orientation can utilize this act to protect themselves.

Part of the Canadian constitution, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* of 1982, assures that Canadians will be treated equally under the law (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.). The charter protects broad equality rights and other fundamental rights such as freedom of expression and freedom of religion (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.). The Charter is also designed to protect citizens against laws, policies, government actions which include authorities like the police from having their rights being infringed upon (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.). Canada also has a Human Rights Commission which is an independent body from the government that has the authority to research, raise awareness and speak out on matters related to human rights in Canada (Government of Canada, n.d.-b).

It is important to note that the CHRA only covers the Canadian federal government, federal agencies, and federally-regulated businesses and industries due to the division of powers between the federal and provincial governments (Level Access, n.d.). In turn, each province has their own provincial and territorial human laws that act and apply the same principles that are found on their federal counterpart. In B.C., in particular, the B.C. Human Rights Code protects people from discrimination based on protected characteristics (i.e. age, sex, race and religion) in their day to day lives in areas such as employment, housing and services like stores and schools, publications, buying a house or other land and union membership within provincial and territorial jurisdictions (British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal [BCHRT], n.d.-b).

Provincially, B.C. has also established their own Human Rights Commission named British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC) that is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights within the province (BCOHRC, n.d.-c). Their role, as stated in their website, include (BCOHRC, n.d.-c):

- intervening in human rights proceedings before courts and tribunals such as the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal
- Implementing special programs that target better conditions for disadvantaged groups
- Conduct inquiries, issue reports and recommendations regarding human rights.
- Promote the compliance of international obligations on human rights
- Encourage the development, research, delivery and education on human rights

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC) has conducted several townhalls, roundtable and virtual events with B.C. residents regarding their experiences on hateful violence. They have also met with various community organizations that handle issues of hateful violence (BCHORC, n.d.-a). In August 2021, the organization announced the first province-wide inquiry regarding hate incidents during the COVID-19 Pandemic (BCOHRC, n.d.-a). This involved interacting with experts, gathering factual evidence and hearing from people that were affected by racism to be used in the creation of recommendations to address and prevent outbreaks of hate from happening (BCOHRC, n.d.-a). B.C. residents were encouraged to partake in online surveys that closed on March 6, 2022 (BCOHRC, 2022a). These will help

in the creation of the final report and recommendations to be made by the Commission (BCOHRC, 2022a). The recommendations of the British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner is set to be made public in early 2023 (BCOHRC, 2022a).

The British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner presents two options to those who experienced hate incidents and racist violence. The first option is the criminal process that responds to hate crimes. This process involves reporting the incident to law enforcement. The second option involves the human rights approach that deals with hate speech and discrimination. Discrimination, as defined by B.C.'s Human Rights Tribunal, is the *“bad treatment based on a characteristic like race.”* For the incident to qualify as discriminatory under the B.C. Human Rights Code according to the B.C.'s Human Rights Tribunal (n.d.-b), it must fulfill the following criteria:

- Badly treating an individual or to causing them harm under specific areas previously mentioned.
- Personal characteristics like race was a factor that led to the harm.
- No defence can be made for the conduct.

The process involves filing a complaint through the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal (BCHRT) as it pertains to the B.C. Human Rights Code. The B.C. Human Rights Tribunal is a neutral decision-making body that handles complaints by individuals that are based on the B.C. Human Rights Code (BCOHRC, n.d.-a). There are three possible options if the complaint fits within the time limit and the bounds of discrimination (BCHRT, n.d.-a). The first option is the complainant and respondent can agree to settle the complaint, the second is respondent can respond and appeal to have the complaint dismissed (BCHRT, n.d.-a). If the matter is not resolved with the two options, the Tribunal holds a hearing to decide whether discrimination did take place (BCHRT, n.d.-a).

## **2.5. Law Enforcement**

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is Canada's national police service primarily responsible for crime prevention and law enforcement from coast to coast, at the community, provincial, territorial and federal levels. Under the Provincial Police Service Agreement, the RCMP acts as the Provincial Police of British Columbia (Government of B.C., n.d.-d). Most hate crimes fall within the jurisdiction of provincial or municipal police

services rather than with the RCMP and its federal role (Department of Justice, n.d.-b). While the RCMP collects information on ideologically-motivated crime, it does not routinely gather data on crimes motivated by hate (Department of Justice, n.d.-b).

Municipalities that have a population of more than 5,000 provide their own law enforcement as agreed upon under the Police Act (Government of B.C., n.d.-c). There are 11 Municipalities that have their own Municipal Police Force in British Columbia. An example would be the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) which is the police force of the City of Vancouver. The main responsibility of the VPD in relation to hate crimes is to fully investigate cases where hate, bias or prejudice may have occurred (Vancouver Police Department, n.d.). Their duty ranges from collecting and preserving evidence, addressing the needs of the victim along with the affected community, and to make sure that the Crown is notified that the crime is motivated by hate, bias or prejudice when requesting for charges (Vancouver Police Department, 2021).

## **2.6. Federal Response to Combat Racism**

In order to address the issues of racism and discrimination, the Canadian government recently introduced the program Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy (2019-2022) and also created a new Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat to act as a hub, convener and catalyst for government and communities (Government of Canada, n.d.-a). The strategy was approved on June 2019 with a budget of 45 million dollars every three years. It was designed to lay the foundation for long term federal action to combat racism and discrimination in Canada with a focus on community-based projects (Government of Canada, n.d.-a). The program is intended to complement existing programs that aim to eliminate inequities already implemented by the government (Government of Canada, n.d.-a). The Anti-Racism Strategy has three guiding principles which are: Demonstrating Federal Leadership; Empowering Communities; and Building Awareness & Changing Attitudes. The role of the secretariat, on the other hand, is to help departments and institutions in identifying gaps and systematic barriers found in legislations, policies, programs, and international agreements (Government of Canada, n.d.-a). The secretariat has also been tasked to find a more responsive initiative to help improve the lives of communities which are affected by these problems (Government of Canada, n.d.-a). Through Empowering Communities, the strategy aims to help communities to have a better understanding and build the expertise to tackle the problem

of racism and discrimination while also promoting inclusion and diversity (Government of Canada, n.d.-a). With regards to the guiding principle of Building Awareness & Changing Attitudes, the Federal Anti- Racism Secretariat aims to increase awareness through a marketing and advertising campaign that promotes the Public Education and Awareness Anti-Racism Campaign with specific focus on non-racialized Canadians and middle-aged adults (Government of Canada, n.d.-a). It is hoped that by doing so, the program will change the attitudes of the target groups regarding racism and discrimination in Canada (Government of Canada, n.d.-a).

## **2.7. B.C. Government's Initiatives to Combat Racism**

At the provincial level, the government of British Columbia has introduced programs to combat racism. One of the initiatives is the Resilience BC Anti-Racism Network in British Columbia which is a province-wide program that focuses on identifying and challenging racism (Government of B.C., n.d.-g). The program was created on November 18, 2019 after a series of community dialogues led by the former Parliamentary Secretary for Sport and Multiculturalism, Ravi Kahlon (Government of B.C., n.d.-f). The recommendations made involved revising the existing program called Organizing Against Racism and Hate (OARH) to better assist local communities in their fight against hate and racism (Government of B.C., n.d.-f).

The Resilience BC Anti-Racism Network aims to connect communities with information, support and training to prepare against situations that involve racism and hate (Government of B.C., n.d.-g). With a total investment of \$540,000 annually, the program operates its services through a hub-and-spokes model (Government of B.C., 2020b). The organization that is acting as the provincial hub is the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS) that anchors the program and serves as the connection between communities and provides general oversight (Government of B.C., n.d.-g). The hub is also responsible for coordinating the necessary training and anti-racism initiatives of the program. The spokes, on the other hand, are community-based branches that provide the service to communities (Government of B.C., n.d.-g). The spokes are available in more than 50 communities throughout the province (Government of B.C., n.d.-g) and are the representatives of the program in the local communities and work within the local population (Government of B.C., n.d.-f). The spokes are also responsible for identifying local issues and moving projects forward to address them (Government of B.C., n.d.-f).

One of the spokes of Resilience BC Anti-Racism network is the organization, Burnaby Family Life (BFL). Established in 1971, the organization offers quality community social services for the city of Burnaby and its neighboring communities (BFL, n.d.-b). They provide different programs such as Family Life Education, Family Resource Programs, Pre & Post Natal Programs, Child Care Services, and Moving Ahead. The program Moving Ahead, in particular, helps immigrants and refugees that encounter difficulties in their integration and settlement within the community (BFL, n.d.-a). As part of the data gathering process for this study, the researcher partnered with this organization to conduct focus group discussions with racialized communities.

Resilience B.C. provides various resources in their website providing support services for victims of hate crimes and hate incidents such as: Victimlink B.C.; Directory of IBPOC therapists; and Legal Aid BC (Resilience B.C., n.d.-b). They also provide local law enforcement numbers for victims of hate crimes to make a report.

## **2.8. Other Planned Initiatives by the B.C. Government**

A proposed Anti-Racism data legislation is currently underway and is planned to be introduced in the latter half of 2022. Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives - Rachna Singh aims to introduce this legislation, designed to reduce systemic discrimination, through a better understanding of where the gaps and barriers lie within government services (Government of B.C., n.d.-a). The B.C. government believes that this data legislation will be essential in modernizing services such as policing, healthcare, and education. They have partnered with B.C.'s new Human Rights Commissioner, Indigenous leadership, and various stakeholders to create this legislation (Government of B.C., n.d.-a). The B.C. government gave the opportunity for organizations such as Burnaby Family Life to apply for funding to host these community consultations in order to get input from diverse communities to help in the legislation process (Government of B.C., n.d.-a).

A Community Roundtable on Anti-Racism in education was also created on July 24, 2020 in support of the development of an anti-racism action plan. This roundtable was established to strengthen the K-12 curriculum by incorporating inclusivity to ensure that culture, beliefs and ancestry of both students and staff are accepted, celebrated and understood (Government of B.C., 2020a). This was considered the first in a series of steps by the Ministry of Education and its B.C. education partners to understand the barriers

faced by its students who are Indigenous or are people of color (Government of B.C., 2020a).

Currently, there are codes of conduct or policies that are aligned with the B.C. Human Rights Code implemented across B.C.'s 60 school districts and independent schools (Government of B.C., 2020a). This is designed so that schools are *“free from discrimination against a person based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age of that person or class of persons”* (Government of B.C., 2020a). In addition, the current system implements the provincial ERASE (expect respect and a safe education) strategy that aims to provide support for school district; foster connectedness; and to address bullying and prevent violence (Government of B.C., 2020a). The Vancouver School Board established the Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Policy in support of the commitment to anti-racism education. They have done so through actions like the implementation of an Anti-racism and Diversity Mentor. The Mentors are responsible for training teachers, support staff and administration; and acts as advisors to staff on how to respond to racism and facilitates the Restorative Justice Circles; advises staff on how to respond to racism to name a few (Pauchulo, 2013). The Vancouver School Board has also implemented the Multiculturalism and Anti-racism Advisory Committee to support the Mentor and give advice to the District regarding policy implementation (Pauchulo, 2013).

The B.C. government is also in the midst of developing a K-12 anti-racism action plan which aims to address racism, discrimination and hateful behaviors in a comprehensive multi-year strategy (Government of B.C., 2021). There are 5 key elements to the action plan which are: Provincial leadership, system leadership, system support, workforce development, and raising awareness (Government of B.C., 2021). It is, however, still under review by ministry partners and has therefore not been disclosed to the public.

Due to the prevalence of racism, especially during the pandemic, not for-profit organizations such as Vancouver's project 1907, Vancouver Asian Film Festival (VAFF), hua Foundation, Bảo Vệ Collective, Chinese Canadian Historical Society of BC and Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizens' Associations have created intensive campaigns to combat against both anti-Black and anti-Asian racism in Canada (Claxton

et al., 2021). Another project that was implemented was the creation of a system called “Fight COVID Racism” which is an online reporting system that allows individuals to share their experiences on racism and enables the tracking and recording of similar incidents during the pandemic (Fight COVID-19 Racism, n.d.). The reporting system has since recorded more than a thousand incidents after it was created.

## **2.9. Prevailing Problem on Hate Crime**

It is worthy to note that despite both the Federal Government’s and the British Columbia Government’s various initiatives to combat racism and discrimination in the province, Vancouver, British Columbia still registered the highest rate of increase (717%) on anti-Asian hate crimes in 2020 (CSHE, 2021) among the four largest cities in the country. As cited previously, this finding is supported by the survey done by Insight West of Asian British Columbians in 2021, which found that 83% of the respondents believed that anti-Asian Racism is a significant problem, while 87% believed that it has worsened since the pandemic started (Insights West, 2021). The results of the survey further showed that 43% of Asian British Columbians experienced a variety of racial incidents such as racial slurs, physical assaults or damages to their properties (Insights West, 2021). This is further confirmed by an online survey conducted by the British Columbia Office of the Human Rights Commissioner in December 2021 in which they found 26% of respondents have witnessed a hate incident, and 9% were directly impacted by it (BCOHRC, 2022b). Given the foregoing, further analysis is required to determine the reasons why hate crimes continue to prevail in huge numbers in British Columbia despite the current government programs introduced to combat racism and discrimination, and to provide policy options to better address the issue.

## **Chapter 3.**

### **Data Analysis**

#### **3.1. Background**

This study was conducted to better understand the reasons for the prevalence of hate crimes and hate incidents against racialized communities in British Columbia, and to identify possible gaps between the government initiatives and the recipients of those anti-racism programs. This qualitative study used a combination of focus group discussions and individual interviews to collect data. Seven focus groups involving at least 60 members from different racialized communities and seven interviews with key informants were conducted for the study. The first half of the qualitative research was done through focus group discussions held by the non-profit organization, Burnaby Family Life (BFL). Participants in the focus groups came from different racialized communities namely: Afghan, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, African and Latin American communities. Focus group discussions were conducted to obtain information and gain insights from lived experiences on the issue of Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents to identify cross-cutting challenges experienced by these groups. While the initial focus of the study was the Asian community as it is ideal to look into the specific groups separately, broader discussions were conducted instead to get a better understanding of the cross-cutting issues that these groups face that will be useful in putting in place solutions that will be useful across all racialized groups. Participants were asked general questions about their experiences with racism, and were also asked their experiences with racism in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second half of the qualitative research consisted of interviews with seven key informants that belong to different organizations and institutions that have worked on and are familiar with the topic of Anti-Racism in British Columbia. This set of participants were asked about their views on policy gaps and options regarding the problem of hate crimes and hate incidents. Please refer to Appendix B for the focus group interview schedule. The findings were transcribed and coded with the use of the software 'NVivo' and were then analyzed. The key themes are discussed in the following section.

## **3.2. Data Results on Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents**

### **3.2.1. Environmental Settings**

During the focus group discussions, participants were asked whether they, or anyone they knew, experienced any hate crimes or hate incidents. On each of the focus group discussions held, there were various stories of encounters that happened in different settings, from schools to hospitals, and even within housing communities. It is important to note that many of the stories told could not be classified as a hate crime but rather as a hate incident according to the definitions provided by Resilience B.C.. Participants noted that, during those encounters, they were not doing anything unusual and were engaged in mundane activities. An example a participant provided was when their daughter went to play at the park. They narrated that “...*when she went to the park to play, her hair was braided, one girl came up to her and told her your hair is not nice. My daughter started crying and started unbraiding her hair when she got home.*” In order to comfort their daughter, the participant taught her three types of hair styles: straight, braided and afro. They then explained that “*others cannot do that but only keep it straight. After that she understood (why it is okay to be different).*”

### **3.2.2. Factors Affecting Reaction to Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents**

Participants in both the focus group discussions and interviews exhibited various types of reaction to hate crimes and hate incidents, including the decision to report or not the incident. Following are cross-cutting factors that emerged during the discussions and interviews which affected the reactions on hate crimes and hate incidents.

#### ***Uncertainty on What Constitute as Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents***

Participants in the focus group discussions stated that they were not sure how to measure the severity of an incident being committed, and so were unable to decide whether an incident is worth reporting or not. As one of the participants who has worked with other immigrants asked “*so what is big, what is small and when they should report?*” as they themselves were not sure when to act. As a result, the Resilience B.C. definitions of hate crimes and hate incidents were clarified for participants during the focus group sessions. This prompted participants to start sharing their experiences. For example, one

focus group participant described their experience when lining up at a cash register in the store:

When we were lined up, everyone wear masks, I wear mask as well... but there's a lady in front of me. She's Caucasian lady. She purposely kept a long distance from me. She doesn't want even (to) stand close to me. So I was in the beginning, I didn't feel anything. But when people lined up, you go forward to me. So I want to move forward. She said, "Stay where you are." I said I had two vaccinations already. What do you mean I back up? I said there is a social distance. She said, "Just back up. I don't feel comfortable. You're close to me".

In instances such as the above, the actions that were committed can be seen as racist but would not fall under the definition of a hate crime but as a hate incident instead. The participant in this example chose not to report it, considering it as a minor incident.

### ***Delayed Reaction***

When encountering aggressors, participants mentioned how they were unable to respond to a racist situation right away. Only after the aggressor has left and some time has passed does the participant realize what has happened. As one participant explained *"when these things happen, you don't know how to react if you were not expecting. So that's what most of us are caught by surprise. Freeze. So what should I say? Should I say something? Maybe, maybe I don't. Should I be screaming? Maybe don't?"* They acknowledge that at that moment they don't know how to react or respond, and even doubt whether the event did actually happen. This was evidenced in an encounter at the dollar store by a participant and their child, as described in the following quote:

One white woman...she just passed by me... and she said "Oh, your kid is ugly" ... I was so shocked... I really wanted to say something but I was so shocked. And then I just trembled. My son didn't understand because he just speaks Korean. So I was shaking, and then I just stayed over there, like, one or two minutes, and then I couldn't go, I couldn't move.

### ***Concerns on Safety and Well-being***

When encountering an incident, victims oftentimes choose not to engage with the aggressor as they have family members with them that they want to protect. During those incidents, participants expressed concern about the safety of their family members. In one case, a participant decided to exercise self-restraint because they had their five year-old son with them and was concerned how it might negatively impact their son if they were to

engage the aggressor. In another incident, the mother of the participant prevented them from interacting with the aggressor despite the participant wanting to respond to the racial slurs directed to the participant's mother. They also stated that they do not want to report the crime as they feel *"it is not worth it"*, explaining that it is both emotionally and physically exhausting for them and their companions. As a participant stated: *"Even as an adult going into university here, going into workcare, there've been incidents but I've never reported... we don't want to take [that] kind of process, you know [it is] emotionally... [and] physically draining."* Another participant reiterated this point when describing their experience witnessing an incident on the Skytrain: *"Everybody is very busy in order to go further with [reporting] it. It takes lots of time. So that's why we did not go further with that. And we just get off the train and that's all."*

### **3.2.3. Factors that Trigger Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents**

In order to gain a better understanding of the factors that trigger the occurrence of hate crimes and hate incidents from the point of view of the participants, they were asked why they believe those incidents happened and why immigrants are targeted. Following are the main reasons that emerged from the discussions and interviews.

#### ***Deep Rooted Issues***

Participants acknowledged that hate crimes and hate incidents often stem from deeper issues that have been there even before the pandemic took place. In one example given, a participant was riding the train to work when they encountered a white person who began to shout *"Oh, you guys brought the COVID, you guys are doing this and we are suffering because of you. You're taking us somewhere else... you took our break, you took our house, you took our jobs."* For this participant, as expressed in their opinion below, the issue is not so much about COVID-19 but rather a reflection of issues that were already present in society before the pandemic occurred:

It's in the mind of the people, but it is just a trigger. It's like just a provocation that brings up that anger that was inside and it has no stimuli...this pandemic is just a stimuli. But stuff like that had been present in their mind. It doesn't have to do anything with the pandemic. The things that they have in their mind, they're coming out to that anger. They're bringing it out. It's just, you can say that it is stimulated, triggered it...It triggered that or the anger is on different things.

## ***Ignorance of Other Cultures***

Participants emphasized what they perceive as a sense of ignorance on the part of those who attack immigrants. They say this also relates to the effect and influence the media has on how Canadians perceive immigrants. Without knowing much about the culture of different racialized communities, incidents occur when aggressors make assumptions based on what they see or hear on the news and utilize those as source for their ignorant comments. In one instance, a participant mentioned the encounter described below, with two men on a bus, while the participant was wearing a hijab:

Two other men were sitting behind me. I don't know how they found that I am new here and I am Afghan, and then they start talking about me like "oh, see, she's Muslim, she's wearing a hijab, she's now in here. Let's stay far from her and let's stay behind her or something and then they continuously start talking about my country like what is going on in my country like they were actually telling me that Afghan people are all so bad like with wearing a hijab... About an hour, I was still in the bus and they keep telling and talking about the genocide of Muslim people. I felt very bad but I didn't say anything until... my station came and I had to get off the bus and I just looked back and I told them ... "Yes I'm Afghan, I'm Muslim, and I do know English and I completely hear whatever you said and ... all the things". They are very ashamed, actually, like they wanted to tell me sorry, but I didn't tell them anything. I was like it's okay.

In this situation, the aggressors expressed ignorant comments involving the participant's religion and country, and what they perceived as lack of rights in that country. It was only after the participant confronted them about their ignorant and racist comments that they apologized and acknowledged their mistake. The participant then went on to say that: *"the things that you're seeing is just war, fighting with each other, but you guys do not actually know that we Afghans are also educated, we know English, we can see, we can talk. We also have the drive to move to another country to improve our lives. And all these things."*

The participant highlighted the fact that many people who are not from or have not been to Afghanistan learn about the country through the media which often highlight negative news such as the constant unrest or the lack of rights of women in the country. As a result of the negative news in the media, the other positive traits of Afghanistan and its people are overshadowed.

The discussions then led to the importance of education to combat ignorance and hate, specifically highlighting the education of the youth. The participant argued that the

*“best way to tackle this is to spread love at a young age no matter how we look or we think.”* It is important to teach at a young age about racism and the effects it has on racialized communities. One participant added that *“schools play a big role... [they must] teach kids love, tolerance and acceptance [and] have conversations like this with them and how it affects people.”*

### ***Internalized Oppression***

During the course of the discussions, the concept of internalized oppression was raised as an explanation as to why hate crimes and hate incidents continue to occur against immigrant communities. As a participant noted: *“I think it was just an acceptance. It's like we go to the market. My dad is Sikh. He wears a turban... I grew up with kids pointing at them and I'm from rural Kamloops. Nobody else who looked like us. So I grew up with people pointing at us, so I just didn't... never reported...”*

They emphasized the fact that there is a sense of acceptance towards a certain level of racism for immigrants growing up in Canada that the participant never thought to report it. Participants in the focus group were in agreement and even shared similar experiences. When asked as to why that is the case, one participant noted how *“as a little child watching my parents doing this, we never saw those incidents as something that we would ever go to the RCMP for.”* They note, however, that when an actual crime is being committed such as being burglarized due to their race, they would report the crime but, otherwise, oppression was tolerated.

When asked about this phenomenon, one participant offered their insights. They stated that in society, there are social norms and contracts in place that help govern people's behavior. If one were to violate those, they would normally be met with some kind of penalty that would signal to the offender that their behavior is not acceptable which can be shown either directly or indirectly. When it comes to hate incidents, however, this poses a problem. As the participant noted:

When something proliferates in terms of behaviors, and there is no social controls managed to minimize them, then it's likely that ...there's not much control, the people are not reacting. People are not censoring, people are not monitoring, and there's really no penalty for it, or very little penalty. And that's what I mean by tolerate.

When these types of incidents occur regularly in society across several different generations, it becomes tolerated. Social norms and contracts prove to be ineffective when both the offender and the victim accept that these practices are common and to be expected that there is no longer any disincentive to go against it. In a sense that when society is desensitized by instances of subtle racism and discrimination, it becomes accustomed to it and accepts that it has always been that way. This would explain why the participant, who grew up under that type of environment, never considered reporting their experiences to the authorities.

### ***Internalized Racism***

Another related issue raised during the discussions is the concept of internalized racism. This is the idea that there is racism, not just towards racialized communities, but also from within the different communities. A participant from a focus group stated: *“we [must] admit as well that we also have stereotypes to [those from] other cultural background or other nationalities so we should admit that as well to ourselves and, and it's really important as well to discuss it to people around us to also like, break that stereotype.”* When discussing this with a key informant, they provided a specific example of *“how as immigrants, we have internalized racism against Indigenous people? We doubt even knowing it. Yeah, because, you know, the Indigenous people we see visibly are the ones that are homeless, or, you know, on the street, or protesting. We don't have interactions with Indigenous people otherwise. So, if those were our only interactions, then, yeah, we have totally bought into the narrative. That Indigenous people are a problem.”*

Another key informant associated this, not as a unique aspect to one community but rather, as a by-product of colonialism on how it positioned communities at differing levels from one another. An example given was how specific communities are being seen as the “model minority.” These communities who are placed higher in a perceived social hierarchy compared to other communities benefit from it. They gain some power and privilege by propagating that system. In the example of racism against Indigenous communities by immigrants, they argue that immigrants turn a blind eye to it, supporting and internalizing that system as a result. As immigrants, people come to believe in the idea that they have earned what they have, disregarding the privileged spot they have compared to other communities. In essence, it also becomes a trap they set for

themselves. One participant explained this further: *“We trap ourselves, because we have to be this model of perfect behavior, because it's almost like we're telling ourselves, we're good enough, if the white society thinks highly of us.”* The key informant explained further why the Asian community has provided the attention and willingness to address racism more recently. They argued that, while the Asian community had a universal denial with regards to their own racism for a long time in Canada, the recent acknowledgment has been because of the directed racism towards Asians brought by the pandemic and its discovery in China. The previous system that benefits the Asian community no longer does as they are now the target of racism.

Other notable examples mentioned were the idea of anti-blackness within the Asian community. The idea of how, the whiter the skin, the more beautiful that person is, and the negative connotations associated with those who have darker skin compared to those who are white. All of these get internalized and affect our behavior in different ways that it becomes normalized. These factors, in turn, continue that cycle of racism.

### **3.2.4. Gaps in Current System**

During the course of the focus group and interview discussions, participants were asked about what they perceive as gaps in the current system on anti-racism. The participants were quick to mention the lack of anti-racism legislation and the issues on the current laws in place to protect people, while other participants mentioned the difficulties they faced when it came to reporting hate crimes.

#### ***Difficulty in Proving Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents***

When asked about the difference in the classification of hate crime and hate incident under the law, majority of the key informants offered explanations on why there is a difference. As one participant puts it, *“Hate Crimes are easier to legislate, like the low hanging fruit.”* They argued that with hate crimes, it can be treated in the same way any other type of crime is prosecuted. They further explained that the expectation is when a hate crime is committed and evidence is gathered against the perpetrator, it should lead to a punishment that is deemed fitting for the crime. In practice, however, it can be difficult to classify a crime that is motivated by hate, as one key informant suggested. In order for a crime to be classified as a hate crime, a certain criteria must be met that is often too high that it leads to many cases going unreported. Another key informant added that one must

prove intent or racial bias against the victim which is a very difficult task to achieve. If a crime case moves forward and does get prosecuted, however, it is often done not with a hate label attached to it. As a key informant explained *“You can get a conviction for somebody driving into your car intentionally. You can get that conviction but getting a conviction with it being called a hate crime is much more difficult.”* This emphasizes the difficulty of proving the intent of racism.

The category of hate incidents are hard to prosecute since they involve, to a larger extent, a pattern of behavior. As another key informant stated: *“incidents, on the other hand, are rampant, of course, they're harder to systematize at the level of security, but they also have been ignored more broadly in society. So, they're often seen as interpersonal issues. And we seldom regulate.”* Unlike a hate crime that can be classified as a crime, hate incidents are meant to encapsulate those that do not fall under the category of a hate crime and, as such, it is difficult to categorize and persecute. This places hate incidents in a grey area that is overlooked or ignored by society.

### ***Barriers in Reporting***

Another gap in the current system mentioned by the participants is the hesitancy to report an incident due to the barriers that they faced. Among those barriers are the fear of no one believing them and the lack of evidence necessary to make a case.

One participant provided the following example of an incident that happened to them in downtown Vancouver while waiting for their partner outside of the hospital for a health check:

I took a walk and, and you know, I bumped into a white guy who just ... threatened me, so he was like ... shouting at me across the street and saying that ... the virus was coming from...you, Chinese people, and...you shouldn't be walking on the streets and because you're carrying all the virus stuff like that... I wasn't happy about that but I ignored him and then he actually ran towards me. He... actually jaywalked across the road and ran towards me.

Fortunately, the participant was able to run away and even considered reporting it to the police but did not, explaining the decision as follows:

What could they [the police] do? Because I anticipate that there's nothing they could do .... First and foremost, I didn't really get hurt, right? So that's the thing if I was hurt, you know, maybe that would become a case. So,

because I didn't get hurt...And, everything was just verbal, ...and now I didn't really have the opportunity to record anything right. So I wouldn't have any evidence... and even if I told the police, I couldn't identify that person

This highlights the issue that participants within the focus groups raised when it comes to reporting crimes. Participants believe that approaching an officer to make a report would lead to a series of questions and inquiries that they might not be able to answer, contributing to hesitancy in reporting. One participant also mentioned the issue of language barrier for people who may not be fluent in English. The participant explained, *"I knew some people in Vancouver, they try to report, but [in] Vancouver the website report is only in English. So, there's no other language [and] so it's not very easy for them."*

During the interviews, there were mentions of the need for the improvement and ease of reporting, citing several barriers that would prevent any victims of a hate crime or hate incident from reporting. *"I think, easier reporting, because not every case, people feel safe to go to the police. Sometimes the policeman is the one who's targeting you and being racist. And so you can't really go tell another police officer on a police officer, it's not safe, you don't feel safe."* It was noted during the discussions that those who did report incidents knew resources that were available to them and engaged with their aggressor but, as they stated, there can be problems in reporting the crime.

Other participants have also stated: *"Well to who should I report it [to]?"* In cases where hate incidents have occurred, participants did not know where to report them to, and often spoke about how they lacked the necessary resources and the support system to address the issue.

### ***Trust Issue with Law Enforcers***

The issue of trust with the police was brought up during the discussions. In the interviews with key informants, an informant mentioned that one factor to consider is the level of trust and relationship an immigrant previously had with their country's police force. The informant stated that:

People come from different countries, and depends on the relationship, or how you show the police the perception you have of the police in your country, you come here, assuming the same thing. So, if you know that in your country, you complain, [and] nothing happened. So, what are you going to do [if] something happens to you and you're going to call the

police? Probably [nothing], because you will be assuming everything's gonna be the same thing.

Another key informant brought up systemic racism, particularly the racist past of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), as another issue. Given the negative police experiences that some communities have had in the past, they are less likely to trust them. In the case of the Indigenous communities for example, a participant explained, *“their relationship to the RCMP from the beginning of time goes back a long ways that the RCMP was basically set up to be part of the assimilation.... so those relationships that were from the get go have been harmed.”*

There are also cases where it can stem from their own, or someone the participants knew, having had a bad experience with the police. A story was shared by a participant who encountered a police officer who pulled them over on a busy highway. The participant felt they did not do anything wrong but they were asked to get out of the car. The person explained:

“[The police officer] actually made me get out of the car and step to the back. And he started really scaring me. And he started like, telling me to put my hands up and it was real. And I started crying because I was so scared. I just wanted to get a ticket and leave. And he was like, “I don't know, should I give you one ticket? Two tickets Three tickets?” It was so bad...So he's definitely like a big bully and a racist on a cop's uniform... He has so much power, so much power.”

It is noted that in the case of this participant, they fought back and reported the incident. They knew what their rights were and what types of resources were available to them due to their sibling being a lawyer. The participant explained that because their brother is a lawyer, they had the opportunity to find out about their rights. The interviewee explained this experience:

He (my brother) said, actually, that's not legal. He's not allowed to tell you to step out of the car on a busy road, that's actually dangerous. And he's not allowed to tell you to step out unless there's a reason [like] if you're intoxicated, or there's a proper reason, but not every person is actually allowed to step out of their car. And so he (the police) obviously thought I didn't know and I was... dumb because I'm an immigrant. And so when I took him to court... I won because he was wrong.

It would be later discovered that the police officer was infamous around the area among immigrants. The participant added: *“[The police officer] does this to a lot of immigrants. And he has told them all to step out of their vehicles on a dangerous area. So, they all say*

*he's the meanest cop in the area. And every time they see him, they're like, scared of him.*" Situations such as these present a barrier for immigrants to come forward and report on hate crimes or incidents especially when the instigators are the ones the immigrants are supposed to report to.

### ***Failure to Address the Root Causes***

Systemic racism is difficult to address. In the words of one participant:

there's a certain way of looking at the world, including the justice system, including education, including health care, which is very much, you know, Western, colonial patriotic point of view. And with anti-racism, all you're trying to do is to find ways to, to kind of put little pieces of anti-racism within something that is racist to begin with.

The problem, as the key informant argued, is that the approach to solve the problem in society is reactionary because it addresses the symptoms of the sickness but not the disease itself and *"systemic issues need systemic solutions."* A participant gave the example of the RCMP as an institution that was historically racist, being often involved in the abuse of Indigenous people. When an RCMP officer is accused of sexual assault or sexual harassment, the accused officer is punished. The institution and those in the hierarchy who have enabled it, whether through silence or taking part in covering up the crime, is able to get away and avoid facing any consequences. As a result, the institution continues to function as before which allows for that type of environment to remain. As the key informant noted: *"sure you got rid of that little nail. But that cancer has already taken root. And at some point you have to realize that you're going to have to do something very drastic to get rid of that."* This only further conveys the false narrative that the incident is only a case of one bad apple rather than an institutional one. With the RCMP example, it does not help that their role was historically seen as being racist when they took Indigenous children away from their families to be put in residential schools or take away Indigenous lands to be given to white farmers. Today, the RCMP continues to fulfill their role of enforcing the law that is perceived as benefitting white society. This can be seen when indigenous people are protesting the pipelines or the logging of old growth.

In the context of hate incidents, the participant believes that the current legal framework lacks the tools necessary to address the issue. *"What's the purpose of this? If the purpose is to change human behavior, then let's actually look at what changes human behavior, as opposed to what hardens human behavior."* Another key informant added

that *“like anything else, you don’t run a society by...capturing the killers... you run a society by making sure nobody kills. So, to me... you got to focus on prevention in a society, where this does not happen.”* While they acknowledge that society still needs to have a proper carceral and justice system to be present to address any criminality that people will report on, it is important that it should not exhaust its resources in the process.

## **Chapter 4.**

### **Policy Analysis**

#### **4.1. Criteria**

##### **Equity**

This criterion involves “*ensuring that everyone has access to the resources, opportunities, power and responsibility they need to reach their full, healthy potential as well as making changes so that unfair differences may be understood and addressed*” (Clow et al., 2012). in relation to hate crimes and hate incidents. Everyone, regardless of which community they belong to, has the right to freedom and safety as they live their lives in an equal and just society. This criterion is based on the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* which guarantees that Canadians have the right to equal opportunity and treatment regardless of their background or characteristics (Wang & Moreau, 2022).

##### **Empowerment**

The concept of empowerment refers to the idea of enhancing the human condition through self-realization. This is based on the core value of empowerment espoused by Burnaby Family Life (BFL) as they support their community. BFL is committed to “*support everyone in finding their own voice and developing their strengths*” (BFL, n.d.-c). This criterion looks into whether the policy option promotes the full realization of an individual and/or the racialized communities they belong to. This can be measured based on how likely those who are affected by the policy issue will improve themselves as a result. For this criterion, the more opportunity given by the policy option for individuals/ groups to better themselves and enhance their human condition, the higher the score will be.

##### **Administrative Complexity**

This criterion assesses the administrative complexity of implementing the policy option. This measures how easy or complex the policy option will be to implement. The higher the score would signify the less complex the policy option will be to implement. As

a viable policy option, it must be realistic in its implementation and must consider factors like scalability with different municipalities or jurisdictions across B.C., and also with the rest of Canada. This will be measured in terms of how long it will take to implement the policy option.

## **Public Acceptance**

This criterion assesses the likelihood of the general public accepting the policy option. It is important to gauge the public's reaction to the introduction of the policy option as it will define its success. This would be measured through the general public's attitude regarding similar initiatives in other countries or jurisdictions.

## **Budgetary Cost**

This criterion looks into the cost of each of the policy options for the government to implement. It is important to determine the upfront cost if the government were to implement the policy option to measure its viability. This will include other factors such as human resources and other additional costs it would take to implement. It is important to note that these costs are estimated based on similar solutions found in existing programs.

## **4.2. Policy Options**

### **Option 1: Information Campaign Through Social Media and Traditional Media**

During the focus groups, it was noted that there were numerous instances of information gaps regarding the resources that were available to the participants, and even cases where definitions of hate crime and hate incidents needed to be clarified. This policy option looks into addressing the information gap through an information campaign via different social and traditional media. This will include video advertisements, online posters, and provision of links where these resources and services can be accessed. This would help notify members of racialized communities on where they can access information and support if and when they encounter hate crimes and hate incidents. It is important that the information campaigns would be broadcasted on both social and

traditional media while also presenting the message in a variety of ways for maximum coverage. The campaign would also be done in various languages which are native to the racialized communities to address language barriers. Examples of social media websites could include Youtube, Facebook and Instagram while examples of traditional media would be television and radio stations. This would be done in order to capture different groups within racialized communities as seniors will likely see the ads on television than on Instagram, for example. This will also be a way to raise more awareness on the issue of hate crimes and hate incidents affecting racialized communities.

### **Option 2: Anti-Racism Education with a Critical Race Theory lens in BC Curriculum**

This policy option seeks to implement a revised educational model of anti-racism education in post-COVID-19 Canada as suggested by Lei and Guo. The model that they proposed follows the principles of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Under this model the roles of educators would go beyond the classroom and into community, and educational practices that engage on political and social issues (Lei & Guo, 2021). Specifically, educators would teach and discuss racism while highlighting the context of the pandemic, and create awareness on the effects the pandemic has brought. They then discuss solutions by way of action plans on how to eliminate these (Lei & Guo, 2021). In order to accomplish all of these, there must be collaboration across different stakeholders that would include administrators and community activists, not just between teachers and students (Lei & Guo, 2021). Introducing Critical Race Theory in the educational curriculum would allow students to obtain a different perspective on racism as it will enable them to confront the practices and beliefs that allow racism to continue, and challenge these in order to address systemic racism. CRT emphasizes the importance of trying to understand and examine the sociocultural forces that affect how society perceives, experiences, and responds to racism (Purdue Writing Lab, n.d.). In addition, it also allows a better understanding of how race interacts with other identities such as gender and class (Purdue Writing Lab, n.d.).

### **Option 3: Create Software Application (i.e. App) for Ease of Reporting**

During the interviews, participants raised the issues on understanding the definition of “hate crime” and “hate incident”, and the barriers faced when reporting them.

There needs to be a more efficient way to report. Currently, it takes time to navigate the Resilience B.C. website and to read the contents of each page in order to report a hate crime or hate incident. Because of these factors, users can easily get lost or be dissuaded from reporting a hate crime. Under this policy option, individuals or groups will utilize an app from their mobile devices rather than navigating the B.C. government or B.C. Resilience website. The app will be similar to the apps implemented in France: Appli CCIF or Collective against Islamophobia, and in Australia: Islamophobia Watch Australia. Through the apps, users can report and catalogue racist incidents while also raising awareness on the problem of racism (Lentin & Humphry, 2017). With the availability of Smartphones in today's era, having an app will allow users to easily record and report any hate crimes or hate incidents that they will encounter. Similar to their foreign counterparts, the apps will be run by anti-racist organizations (and those who are part of the Resilience B.C. Network) that also provide information and advice for victims on whether to pursue criminal actions. This will allow users who have a distrust or fear of the police to access help and guidance when reporting a hate crime or incident.

#### **Option 4: Implementation of the Collection of Disaggregated Data**

During the course of the interviews, participants highlighted the difficulty to address deep rooted issues such as systemic racism within the society and its institutions. This policy option will aim to gather data as evidence to support and inform the implementation of effective legislation to address these issues. As a participant recommended, there is a need for a different kind of approach when it comes to collecting disaggregated data. The approach for this policy solution is through the collection of disaggregated data that uses "*the grandmother perspective*" which values the importance of relationship as opposed to a "*Big Brother mentality*" and its reliance on control. The framework, as recommended by the B.C.'s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHR) in their 2020 report, *Disaggregated demographic data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective*, is summed up into three main themes as follows:

- **Purpose:** Highlighting the goal of the collection of disaggregated data which is the elimination of systemic racism and oppression while also cultivating equity (BCOHR, 2020). It is important to establish the purpose as without it, collecting disaggregated data may cause more harm than good towards the affected community.

- Process: The need to create a respectful relationship among different communities which is grounded on community governance (BCOHRC, 2020). This is achieved when the community affected is involved throughout the different stages of collection, storage, use and distribution of data (BCOHRC, 2020). This framework will also include guidelines and principles to help the government build a respectful relationship with communities. (BCOHRC, 2020). These can be summed up into the concepts of Relevant, Responsible, Reciprocal and Reflexive.
- Tool: Collecting disaggregated demographic data if needed, to achieve its purpose (BCOHRC, 2020). As the B.C.'s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner argues, disaggregated data is only a tool that can be utilized if needed.

The immediate course of action that this policy option recommends is the collection of disaggregated demographic data in a variety of different areas. These areas would be based on the advocacy of communities where there are clear definitions of the type and mechanism of data collected (BCOHRC, 2020) particularly race-based demographic data in different programs in Healthcare, Policing, Corrections, Poverty Reduction/ Housing, Education, Children and family development. On top of that, there should be an interim community governance board to oversee and guide these initiatives, specifically during the disclosure of statistical results to avoid instances where it can cause more harm than good (BCOHRC, 2020).

### **4.3. Policy Evaluation**

#### **Option 1: Information Campaign Through Social Media and Traditional Media**

The key strength for this policy option is that it will lead to an increase in empowerment for racialized communities. The information campaign is designed to fill in the information gap and increase awareness of the available resources and information for racialized communities that was noted during the focus groups. The more these communities see these ads, the higher the chance of recall for victims on where they can access information. This will be helpful as these supports will help these victims process what has happened. As one key informant stated: *“people need other kinds of support a lot of times ... just to validate their emotions to be able to move forward.”* In terms of administrative complexity, the implementation of this policy option would score high as there is no major change that needs to be done on the existing framework by the B.C.

government. This policy option is seen as a medium to deliver existing anti-racism strategies such as resources and support for victims of hate crimes and hate incidents.

Results have varied when looking at different examples of anti-racism campaigns in the past. One example is the *Racism. It Stops with Me* campaign which was launched by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) in partnership with different non-government organizations and government departments to create national public awareness on racism, and to provide and empower Australians with tools and resources to take action and respond effectively against racism (AHRC, 2015). In a 2015 Summary Evaluation report by the Commission which assessed the campaign, the Commission found social media like Twitter to be a useful way to disseminate information such as anti-racism initiatives, factsheets and reports through its strong network of followers (AHRC, 2015). Additionally, social media was determined to be effective in terms of immediately responding to people's requests such as inquiries on information about the Commission's complaint services. In a 2018 report, the Commission reported that their social media campaign had reached more than 3.5 million users (AHRC). On Facebook, it garnered more than 4,500 shares and 2,200 comments that indicate a high level of engagement (AHRC, 2018). The campaign has been seen as a success, especially when the ad campaigns were shown in high proportions of the population through mass media (AHRC, 2018). The Commission also noted that despite its modest budget for the campaign, the aim of starting a conversation on racism was a success. (AHRC, 2018).

However, another example shows the danger of a poorly planned anti-racism campaign. The Quebec government previously released an anti-racism ad featuring a group of black people gathered at the park which showed the words "friends." Users were quick to criticize the ad implying that the message felt basic and had no impact (Spector, 2021). It also featured other sets of ads that called a group of Arabic people gathered in an apartment as "family", and a South American with many tattoos as "neighbour" (Spector, 2021). The ad met criticism from the organization, Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), calling out the message of the ad as confusing (Spector, 2021). Other users also were quick to point out that the English version of the ads differed because the Quebec version had the words "des amis Québécois" which to some users implied that non-French speakers were not Quebecers (Spector, 2021). The Quebec government eventually pulled the ads from Youtube and TV and reshot them at a cost of around 20,000 CAD (Lofaro, 2021). Another example of an ad that created controversy was the Nike ad

campaign featuring the NFL athlete Colin Kaepernick who was well known for kneeling during the U.S. national anthem in protest of racial oppression and police brutality (Intravia et al., 2019). When the ad was shown, it sparked controversy as people threatened to boycott the company going as far as to destroy their own Nike products. To look further into this, a survey was done by Intravia et al. within six classes of a large Midwestern University. They found that Black students, compared to other respondents, are one and a half to two times more likely to agree with three outcomes from the ad: Kaepernick being featured in the ad, Nike utilizing their ad to raise awareness on social issues, and Nike donating to Kaepernick's charity (Intravia et al., 2019). This further exhibited the mixed review on the public acceptance of the ad.

In terms of budgetary costs, there is a wide range of pricing dependent on the media where the ad campaign would be broadcasted allowing for flexibility as to where to show and how much to spend. Assessing three marketing firms (*LYFE Marketing, Top Draw, and Social Vantage*) based in the U.S. and Canada, it was found that social media would be less expensive as an ad campaign medium which is measured as cost per 1,000 impressions (CPM) i.e. cost per 1000 audience who sees the ad. Social media can cost between 3-7 CAD in contrast to broadcast TV (20-35 CAD), direct mail (70-500 CAD), newspaper (10-45 CAD) and radio (10-20 CAD). Taking into account B.C.'s estimated population of 5,263,772 combined with the average price of each medium, the resulting cost of the information campaign is estimated to be around 1.9 million CAD.

## **Option 2: Anti-Racism Education with a Critical Race Theory Lens in BC Curriculum**

This policy option will empower younger generations especially those belonging to racialized communities. The use of a Critical Race Theory lens in the anti-racism curriculum will allow students to learn and gain insight on the concept of race and how it affects everyday life ranging from the history of Canada to its influence to current institutions. Having that open acknowledgement and being more racially conscious will also allow teachers to foster a better environment for students to learn (Zalaznik, 2021). There have already been talks by the B.C. Ministry of Education regarding an anti-racism plan. While not much is known yet about how exactly this action plan will be implemented, it is a good start to have these discussions to address the racial gaps between communities in Canada. It is, however, important that the action plan that is being

conceptualized goes beyond the policy dimension of multiculturalism that Canada has implemented. The proposed policy option is different in that it focuses on the social justice aspect which follows the three principles of social justice theorized by Nancy Fraser which are: recognition, redistribution, and representation (Lei & Guo, 2021). In the context of the education plan, there needs to be a recognition of the cultures of racialized communities, the egalitarian redistribution of socioeconomic resources, and finally an increase in representation of those belonging to racialized communities in decision making and representations in consultations (Lei & Guo, 2021). Another key difference is that this policy option is designed to encourage racialized communities to take initiative in the planning and execution of multicultural education programs, not just limited to celebrating specific events, songs and rituals (Lei & Guo, 2021). Finally, Lei & Gou (2021) anticipates that such policy option would see a change in ideological focus when approaching racism. This new educational model would directly question and challenge the problematic ideology of white supremacy found in the social system, and in political and public discourse (2021).

While this policy option will not immediately result in the reduction in hate crimes or incidents, it is seen as a necessary step in creating an inclusive and safe society in the long run. One concern on this policy option is the possibility that its implementation would be seen as problematic similar to that in the U.S. where there was a backlash and pushback towards its implementation (Morgan, 2022). The controversy in the U.S. stems from parents and politicians, particularly those with conservative backgrounds, seeing this as a way to push the agenda that white people are inherently racist while black people are seen as hopeless victims (Morgan, 2022). The parents worry that if taught, their children would unnecessarily feel the burden and guilt over matters that have happened in the past. Similarly in Alberta, Canada, Premier Jason Kenney recently stated in a speech to the United Conservative party on how "*(The NDP) tried to put their woke left-wing dogma in the school curriculum... We reversed the NDP's attack on parental authority in education*" (Lachaz, 2022). However, in the context of British Columbia there is no indication, as of the writing of this paper, of any controversies relating to the planned introduction of anti-racism in the education curriculum. In addition, the B.C. Government has consulted various groups and communities to be able to gather their inputs as part of the initiative. (Government of B.C., 2021). In terms of the cost to the government for a curriculum reform, it can be costly if there are any major updates to be done. In 2016,

Alberta updated their curriculum in terms of what children are being taught which included topics like climate change, history of indigenous people and residential schools, gender identity. It took the province 6 years and 64 million dollars to implement (CBC News, 2016). Around the same time, B.C. invested \$1 million and dedicated time worth \$100 million over a span of three years to prepare teachers for the new curriculum the province implemented (Government of B.C., 2015).

### **Option 3: Create Software Application (i.e. App) for Ease of Reporting**

This policy option aims to address the problem of under-reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents. Through this policy option, people will have easier access to report hate crimes and hate incidents through the use of the app in contrast to navigating a website. This will provide everyone with the opportunity, power and resources needed to report any racist actions that were committed against them or to others. With more eyes and ears recording these incidents, it can create a network and database to protect people belonging in racialized communities against racist attacks. With the higher possibility of being caught, it can serve as a deterrent for any potential offenders. Similar to its counterparts abroad, it would be maintained by different organizations such as those belonging to the Resilience B.C Network. This, in turn, would ease the administrative complexity as it would utilize an already existing network of organizations. The budgetary cost of creating such an app is relatively inexpensive compared to other policy options. Estimates from three Web App Development Companies, *Digitalya*, *IT Craft and Oozou*, which are all based in the U.S. (no figures are available from Canadian companies) showed the cost of developing the app to range from 65,000 to 80,000 USD or 81,988.40 to 100,908 CAD, which translates to an average of approximately 95,000 CAD. Development of the app can incorporate a variety of features like:

- Dashboard: to measure the app performance
- Activity Feed: which keeps up to date information and news that would be vital to know about recent hate crimes and hate incidents
- Video/Media Streaming: the ability of users to interact and upload/download videos, pictures and audio content
- Messaging: necessary for users to be able to contact the organizations and even the proper authorities.

- Maps/Geolocations: in order to pinpoint exact locations where the hate crime or incident happened so that other users are more aware and be alerted.

In terms of experience in using an app for anti-racism initiatives, the Collective Against Islamophobia in France (CCIF) received a lot of reports of Islamophobic experiences but the organization has acknowledged that the app did not directly lead to increase in reports in general. The CCIF was utilized as a tool for diffusing information and raising awareness. The CCIF in particular saw the main purpose of its app as a bottom up citizen journalism relying on citizens as actors of democracy as a counterweight to the official channels that relay information (Lentin & Humphry, 2017). As a result, the main feature of the app utilizes a newsfeed (that actively goes through the verification process done by the organization) that shares information that is available anytime and anywhere. Similarly, Islamophobia also has a list of incidents that is formatted like a newsfeed with the addition of some predominant ones being presented on a map format. The live map format functions both to alert the community of the incident but also to build solidarity with those who are victims of racism (Lentin & Humphry, 2017). While the CCIF organization's webmaster did acknowledge that there have been several positive outcomes due to the reporting function, there was not much information or data recorded in terms of the number of successful cases that were prosecuted due to the reporting function (Lentin & Humphry, 2017). This, however, is mainly attributed to the fact that the organizers did not place a high value on finding out the results of the complaints as their main goal was to raise awareness of Islamophobia in France (Lentin & Humphry, 2017).

The implementation of an app for reporting hate crimes and hate incidents is seen as an inexpensive and effective tool to combat hate crimes and hate incidents. It has been proven as an effective tool for diffusing information and raising awareness in the case of CCIF. The prevalence of the ownership of digital gadgets would make this option easier to implement. However, care must be given when designing the app to ensure that it provides for ease of navigation as well as reporting, and contains all the functionalities that will serve as a reporting tool of hate crimes and hate incidents and not just as a newsfeed provider. A robust information campaign should accompany the launch of the app to ensure maximum visibility to reach its target audience, especially the racialized communities, and optimum use of its functionalities through user education. Likewise, the app should cater to the different languages of the racialized communities.

## Option 4: Implementation of the Collection of Disaggregated Data

The purpose of this policy option is to utilize the data gathered to help affected communities. This, in turn, will empower these communities as the evidence gathered through the data collected can be used to initiate reforms and create policies that will help them better. It is important to emphasize that the data gathered must follow the main themes of the grandmother perspective in that it is utilized to help communities rather than harm them as recommended by B.C.'s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner in their 2020 report. During the community engagement process, participants noted that it was important to clarify how their data would be used as well as who can access them. They expressed concern and were hesitant when giving out their information as they feared the data collected could potentially harm them. It is important to note that similar data collection processes have already been undertaken by the federal government when doing consensus but due to stringent privacy laws, they are not able to share the results with the provincial government for purposes other than what they were originally gathered for. With similar data gathering exercises having been done previously, as well as the similarity on the data collected, the collection of disaggregated data scores high in terms of administrative complexity.

This policy option can be seen as a very expensive task to be undertaken due to the amount of research and data gathering from various areas of government/public sectors to get meaningful data. So far, community engagements funded by Multiculturalism B.C. have already allotted 30,000 CAD for each successful organization application in order to gain more insights on how communities felt regarding the implementation of anti-racism data legislation. Another issue with this policy option is that it will take time to collect the data. The federal government in 2018/2019, provided 6.7 million CAD in funding in a span of five years with an additional \$600,000 thereafter for the Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics (CGDIS) in aid of evidence-based policy *“by monitoring and reporting on gender, diversity and inclusion”* (Statistics Canada, 2020). The data itself is also not a means to an end as Dr. June Francis states: *“we need data that can truly do some of the things we want to do. So it’s not just collecting this data. We’re trying to get at a problem. And the question is, how can data get us there?”* (BCOHRC, 2020, p. 54) Collecting disaggregated data by itself will not lower hate crimes or hate incidents. The data gathered must be analyzed and used in creating meaningful government policies and initiatives towards addressing hate crimes and incidents.

**Table 1: Policy Analysis Table**

Criteria	Policy Option 1	Policy Option 2	Policy Option 3	Policy Option 4
<b>Equity</b>	<b>2</b> Most likely geared to support after crimes happen (reactionary) Provides resources needed to reach their full potential	<b>2</b> Provides opportunity, power and resources needed to reach their full potential while also addressing the differences (Not immediate)	<b>3</b> Enhanced security through reporting which empowers people	<b>1</b> Data collection alone is not enough
<b>Empowerment</b>	<b>3</b> Educate immigrants	<b>3</b> Educate young students about systemic racism	<b>2</b> Utilized more as an extension of a reporting tool already present	<b>2</b> Data Collection can be used to benefit racialized communities
<b>Administrative Complexity</b>	<b>3</b> Planning and advertising are the main factors therefore have relatively low complexity	<b>2</b> Similar plans are to implement an anti-racism K-12 education action plan	<b>3</b> Utilize the existing network of Resilience B.C.	<b>3</b> Already being done by the federal government
<b>Public Acceptance</b>	<b>2</b> Results varied in the case of the examples	<b>2</b> A Slight Possibility of a pushback from the general public	<b>3</b> Based on findings, no indication of controversy	<b>3</b> Similarly done by the federal government when collecting census data
<b>Budgetary Cost</b>	<b>2</b> Can be expensive but there is a wide price range allowing for more flexibility depending on the type of media used	<b>1</b> Can be expensive based on previous curriculum redesigns	<b>2</b> Developing an app is relatively inexpensive,	<b>1</b> Data gathering will be costly across different areas,
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>

## 4.4. Limitations

This study is not without its limitations. The importance of including Indigenous partners in this study is recognized as they are also victims of discrimination, racial violence and abuse. First Nations people are the original people of Canada while immigrants are uninvited guests. We must respect that and create systems that not only help the immigrant communities of Canada but also the indigenous communities. It is hoped that this study can lead to future collaborations and partnerships with these communities.

Another limitation considered in this study is culture bias. The researcher for this study is an international student from the Philippines and therefore grew up in a different cultural environment compared to Canada. To compensate for this, great care was taken in ensuring that the results of the research and the conclusions derived were proofread under the guidance of those who are more familiar with Canadian culture.

Timing constraint was also another factor. Data gathering for the study was done in a span of 2 months with various racialized communities. It is understood that this was not enough to fully encompass the plight of these communities and, therefore, to supplement the gaps in information, more research was done through readings of various literature and other related studies. With limited time, there was also the constraint on the collected data size. A total of 7 focus group discussions were held for this study and it is recognized that other communities were not represented as a result. Nonetheless, given these two barriers, the questions that were asked were general in nature designed to gather the consensus among these communities.

## Chapter 5.

### Policy Recommendations

*“The quick answer is there is no magic bullet or a quick solution. This is a complicated work where everyone has a role to play.”* In order to combat hate crimes and hate incidents, a combination of the policy options needs to be implemented. The focus of this research is to provide recommendations for short, medium, and long term solutions in addressing hate crimes and hate incidents in B.C.. In addition, this paper also takes the opportunity to reflect on additional potential long-term recommendations.

#### Short Term

The first step to finding a solution to the prevalent problem of hate crime is the availability of relevant data that will help shape legislation and policies to combat them. As one key informant stated:

Until we actually have clarity in the data. We don't know how big or small the magnitude of the problem and where is the problem, and how should we address it, without any of the evidence. We know there's hearsay. We know we saw it in the media, but without concrete data, it is hard for us to figure out what is the most effective plan of action.

Relevant data can be collected through the anti-racism data legislation initiated by B.C.'s Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives. Obtaining the data will help the government and other key stakeholders understand and address both short and long term issues. In the meantime, other more immediate steps must be taken that would help protect racialized communities against hate crimes and hate incidents. This can be achieved through a two-pronged course of action. The first one is the creation of a more effective and accessible reporting platform that can immediately record and capture instances of hate crimes and hate incidents. The ease of use of the app will be critical in combating hate crimes and hate incidents in racialized communities, and will help address the issue on the current barriers to reporting raised during the focus group discussions.

The app will not only act as a deterrent for potential instigators but will also help raise awareness in the community regarding the fight against racism. This will also increase the engagement of bystanders in doing more to help fight against racism. As a

representative explained regarding their anti-racism app: *“It is within our logic to get citizens to react so that they also take responsibility for this struggle, that it is not just us shouldering it like a sort of romantic fight against racism. We have to encourage that”* (Lentin & Humphry, 2017, p.1547).

The second course of action is to increase awareness with racialized communities on the available resources and support for victims of hate crimes. During the focus groups, it was raised that there are information gaps on available resources that prevented participants from utilizing them. This included information on what constitutes as a hate crime and hate incident that prevented victims from reporting them. In contrast, those who knew about the available resources and information were able to deal with the situation better by getting the required services that they needed such as emotional/psychological support. The availability of the app can also be advertised as part of the information campaign. This course of action can be achieved through a strategic information campaign utilizing different media to ensure that different groups, especially racialized communities, can be reached. It is important to note that a poorly designed ad campaign can backfire as was found through the Quebec government ad campaign. Therefore, careful planning and design must be made to ensure the success of this information campaign. Based on the lessons learned from the successful campaign of the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC, 2018), success factors for an information campaign must include:

- Starting Conversations: Foster the discussion on the difficult topic of racism.
- Sending a message: Create a sense of responsibility among citizens and organizations that ensures that racism is not tolerated.
- Providing leadership: Highlight the importance of the leadership role in creating an effective strategy.
- Empowering Action: Encourage organizations to implement anti-racist action through the campaign while also supporting existing ones.

Ultimately, a successful campaign will be measured by the increase in the awareness of racialized community, and the decrease in the number of hate crimes and hate incidents being reported.

## Medium to Long Term

Addressing the issue of hate crimes and hate incidents also requires action in the medium and long term period, in addition to the short term options mentioned above. This will ensure the sustainability of the success of short-term initiatives to combat racism and hate crimes. For the medium to long term period, a societal change needs to happen.

One way to cause societal change is through anti-racism education with a CRT lens. The anti-racism curriculum will allow students to learn and gain insight on the concept of race and how it affects everyday life ranging from the history of Canada to its influence to current institutions. Educating society will help foster the change that is needed to address the systemic issues that pave the way for racism and hate crimes to pervade Canadian society. This new educational model would directly question and challenge the problematic ideology of white supremacy found in the social system, and in political and public discourse (Lei & Guo, 2021) and will empower younger generations especially those belonging to racialized communities. This policy option will take longer to bear fruit as it will require a generational change. Participants opined, however, that it is not impossible citing various examples such as the change in attitude towards smoking between the past and present generations. By educating the general public on the negative effects of smoking, it caused a decline in the number of smokers over the years as younger generations are now more averse to smoking. Educating the younger generation will be a crucial long term policy option to ensure that racism and hate crimes will no longer prevail in the future as the future generations will no longer possess the general biases that the older generations had. Influencing them to be better versions of the previous generations can hopefully move society in the right direction towards more inclusivity and diversity as they will be the future leaders of the society.

While not part of the policy options, one other aspect to consider for societal change is the concept of justice. This was acknowledged during the interviews where it was recommended that, as a society, Canadians must look beyond the reliance on the justice system to protect against hate crimes and hate incidents. As a participant pointed out: *“if we are looking at actually finding ways to address hate incidents, it needs to come from a very different place, like our current ways of dealing with... “justice,” are not about justice. They are about punishment. And they will actually end up doing more harm than good.”* Instead, an alternative way through restorative justice should be considered where,

as one participant opined, *“it starts with the individual acknowledging that behavior, apologizing for the harm they caused, and then the healing starts to begin.”* Through restorative justice, victims have the opportunity to speak to their perpetrators and explain the harm that they have caused. This would allow an opportunity to create a consensus on how the offending party can make amends to those that they have hurt. While this happens, there is an opportunity for the offender to be rehabilitated.

*“We need to change the way society thinks about something.”*

Another important aspect for consideration in the long term, which is not part of the policy recommendations, is a change in existing legislations in order to address hate crimes and hate incidents. A participant in the focus group discussion provided the following opinion on anti-racism legislation:

First of all, I don't think there's an anti-racism legislation. I think there's a human rights code. And that's about it. And there's an anti-racism strategy at the federal level. But there isn't some, like very clear public policy, that that, you know, takes you from anti racism strategy to anti racism policies, beyond, you know, feel good statements, right. And we still seem to be in the very much the reactive space.

It is worthy to note that racism is not listed as a crime by itself in the Criminal Code of Canada. Rather, it is a consideration on the violation of the Sections on Hate Propaganda namely: Advocating Genocide, Public Incitement of Hatred, and Willful Promotion of Hatred. Racism is also a consideration under the Other Sentencing Principles of the Code when meting out a sentence in relation to the commission of a crime where the crime is motivated by certain factors, one of which is race. The absence of specific legislation on Hate Crime leads to confusion on how it is determined as well as difficulty in proving and prosecuting such cases as shared during the focus group discussions. The prevalence of hate crimes and hate incidents exhibited on racialized communities, especially during the pandemic, is a testament to the inability of the current legislation to address those issues. An anti-racism legislation that clearly defines what hate crimes and hate incidents are, and the corresponding punishments for those actions, is therefore needed. As opined by participants in the interviews, this will require time and resources to ensure that the outcome will be an effective legislation that is able to protect those that are vulnerable and at the same time hold those accountable for their actions

without abusing the system. The key to effective anti-racism legislation is to obtain the relevant data in order to have a good understanding of the situation as a whole.

## **Chapter 6.**

### **Conclusion**

The goal of this study is to examine the reasons behind the prevalence of hate crimes and hate incidents against racialized groups in British Columbia, and determine policy options that can be implemented to address these issues. A review of existing literature was first conducted to understand the history of racism in Canada. In addition, research was conducted on current policies, legislations, and government initiatives put in place to address the problems of hate crimes and hate incidents. Focus group discussions were then held involving members of various racialized communities to better understand the issues based on the lived experiences of the participants. Several key informant interviews were also conducted to further understand the current systems in place and to identify gaps within those systems in order to come up with potential solutions to alleviate the problem of hate crimes and hate incidents.

Based on the results of this study, hate crimes and hate incidents are not being reported due to uncertainty in their classification, delayed reactions on the part of the individuals who encountered those incidents, and individuals exercising self-restraint for fear of their family's and their own safety and well-being. Interview with participants regarding the current system revealed several gaps that contributed to the increase in the number of hate crimes and hate incidents notably; the difficulty in proving such crimes and incidents, barriers in reporting, issue of trust on the authorities that are supposed to be implementing the law, and the failure of current policies to address the root causes of such issues. Further analysis as to the reasons why hate crimes and hate incidents happen revealed deep rooted issues in society such as ignorance of other people's culture, internalized oppression on the part of the racialized community, and internalized racism on the part of certain race and communities.

Several policy options are being recommended to address hate crimes and hate incidents based on the results of the focus group discussions, interviews, and secondary sources. The first step to finding a solution to the prevalent problem of hate crime is the availability of relevant data that will help shape legislation and policies to combat them. Relevant data can be collected through the anti-racism data legislation initiated by B.C.'s

Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives. Obtaining the data will help the government and other key stakeholders understand and address both short and long term issues. In the meantime, other more immediate steps must be taken that would help protect racialized communities against hate crimes and hate incidents. In the short term, a two-pronged approach is recommended. The first is to have a more effective reporting platform via a reporting app that can be used to record and report hate crimes and hate incidents. This will provide a more efficient and convenient way for both victims of, and bystanders to, hate crimes and hate incidents to immediately report such situations in order to encourage reporting. This will result to better monitoring and a more accurate way of determining the actual number of such incidents by the authorities to help them react in a more timely manner to address such incidents. The data obtained from the more efficient reporting process can be used as aid in improving current policies and creating new ones. This will likewise increase awareness on the part of the community and help prevent more people from becoming victims to such crimes. The second is to create an information campaign to notify communities about available resources and support services that the B.C. government has for victims of hate crimes and hate incidents. This will help ensure that people are able to utilize the resources available to them in case they fall victim to such incidents thereby addressing their needs at the opportune time. The campaign will also be a good avenue to advertise the reporting app earlier recommended. In the medium to long term, it is recommended that societal change needs to be initiated through the inclusion of anti-racism education with a CRT lens in the school curriculum in order to create a more inclusive and diverse society in the future. In addition, consideration must be given on changing the concept of justice involving alternative punitive methods such as restorative justice that looks more towards healing rather than mere punishment. Consideration must also be given on implementing an anti-racism legislation instead of just relying on the current Human Rights Code in order to create a deterrent for potential violators. The anti-racism legislation should lay down clear definitions of hate crimes and the corresponding punishments for those crimes.

It should be noted that the above are important preliminary starting places to create a dent on the issues of hate crimes and hate incidents given how well entrenched these issues are in the fabric of Canadian society. This research serves as a preliminary investigation on the topic of hate crimes and hate incidents but far more research needs to be done in interrogating the relationship between these crimes and the Canadian

society, and far more research needs to be done on the specificities of the different groups that are experiencing such issues to better understand the nuances. However, at the moment, these are the cross-cutting interventions that can be taken to address the issue on hate crimes and hate incidents.

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## Appendix A.

### Resources on Racialized Communities and their experiences

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## Appendix B.

# Interview and Focus Group Questions

### Focus Group Questions

Resilience BC defines hate crimes as “*any type of crime committed against a person or property can be motivated by hate. These can include offences like assault, uttering threats, criminal harassment, and mischief, including graffiti.*” While they define a hate incident as “*a practical way of defining a broader range of behaviour that may or may not meet the definition of hate crime.*” Different factors under hate incidents are considered. These are the gravity of the behaviour, the quality of the available evidence and public interest considerations to which authorities may judge that some conduct even if deemed hateful, prejudicial or biased can not be charged or prosecuted.

There are different factors that are being considered which can include the gravity of the behaviour, the nature of the available evidence and public interest considerations, and authorities may decide that some hateful, prejudicial or biased conduct will not be charged or prosecuted.

- Have you or anyone you know experienced any incidences of hate crime?
  - If you have experienced it, have you ever reported it?
    - If yes, how did you go about it? What was the process like?
    - If no, why didn't you talk about it? Why didn't you report it?
- Why do you think more incidents and crimes of hate are happening (in Covid 19 context)?
- What do you think can or should be done about it?

### Interview Questions

- To start off, what brought you to this work? (or join this organization?)
- What are, in your opinion, the policy gaps regarding the current anti-racism legislations in British Columbia?
- Why, in your opinion, isn't there more attention being paid to the broad spectrum encompassing both hate incidences and hate crimes given the fact that they are potentially rising? (i.e. why is there a distinction under the law that only focuses on hate crimes and not include what others call hate incidence)
- Do you think the problem of Hate Crimes and Hate incidences is getting worse?

- Do you believe that the Covid Pandemic played a role in this?
- What policy changes do you think should happen?
- How can we reduce hate crimes and hate incidences?
- What role do you believe will disaggregated data play in the fight against racism in British Columbia or even in Canada as a whole?
- Is there anything we haven't talked about that you believe I should know about?