



**Nova Scotia  
Human Rights Commission**

**Working Together to Better Serve  
All Nova Scotians**

**A Report on  
Consumer Racial Profiling in Nova Scotia**

May 2013



## Preface

---

It has been a privilege to work with so many Nova Scotians on the Consumer Racial Profiling Project. This study is the first of its kind in Canada.

At the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, we value the contribution each person has made to this study. Their efforts have brought us one step closer to the project goal: working together to better serve all Nova Scotians.

A fundamental principle of human rights is the right to be treated with dignity, respect, fairness, and equality, and to be able to fully participate in our society. When these basic rights are violated, whether intentionally or not, we as citizens have a responsibility to act.

Consumer racial profiling is the practice of providing differential treatment and service to racialized groups in the marketplace. When they shop for goods and services, people are often treated unequally because of their race, while they have the right to freely participate in society.

In performing the research for this study, we heard from many first-voice participants about the experiences they had while shopping. In some instances, racialized individuals reported being subjected to various humiliating experiences by staff or security personnel. These experiences included being wrongfully detained, ignored, searched, followed, refused services, given slow service, targeted for offensive language, removed from a store, and questioned about their ability to afford a product. Racialized people experienced all these incidents because they were viewed with suspicion.

The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission is committed to working with members of our community. We promote awareness about human rights issues through education, information sharing, and learning from each other in society. We are committed to helping to build a society that is free from discrimination.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, I wish to thank all those who participated in this study. We are grateful for their desire to contribute to better society.

David Shannon  
Director and CEO,  
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

## Acknowledgements

---

The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission would like to thank all the people who made this project possible.

First we would like to thank all the Nova Scotians who gave their time to take part in this research project. Special thanks go out to the communities of Millbrook, Dartmouth, and Halifax for their partnership and willingness to host focus groups.

We want to extend our deepest gratitude to the academic leaders who held a panel presentation on cultural competency in research: Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard, Dr. Gail Baikie, and Dr. Brian Noble from Dalhousie University; and Dr. Judy Haiven from Saint Mary's University.

This study was made possible through the hard work of many people. Crystal Taylor, owner of CT-Ebony Consulting Company, provided tremendous support by facilitating the focus groups. The student researchers who dedicated their time to collect the data include Olanrewaju Dada, Bryanne Harris, Elizabeth McGiffin, and Fatima Mensah. Staff researchers were Shannon Tarr (Sydney) and Shannon Trimper (Digby). We thank them.

We express sincere appreciation for the members of the Consumer Racial Profiling Project committee for their participation and dedication. The committee members were responsible for the development, implementation, analysis, and dissemination of the research. We express our gratitude to project managers Ann Divine, Manager of Race Relations Equity and Inclusion; and Gerald Hashey, Manager of Dispute Resolutions. We also thank Shawn MacKenzie, researcher and author of this report; Alise Browne, researcher; Linda Nicholl, Human Rights Education Officer; and Rosemarie Cadogan, former Human Rights Officer. This project would also not have been possible without the overwhelming administrative support of Melissa Brayley.

We would like to send a special note of gratitude to David Shannon, our director and CEO, for his determination to see a discrimination-free society. We also thank our commissioners for their enthusiasm and dedication, which allowed this work to take place.

## Contents

---

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>9</b>
Introduction	9
Project Scope	9
Project Purpose	9
Background	10
Consumer Racial Profiling	10
Research Questions	11
Research Design and Methodology	11
Survey	12
Focus Groups	13
Research Findings	14
Survey	14
Focus Groups	15
Focus Group Themes	15
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>17</b>
1.1 The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission	17
1.2 Consumer Racial Profiling Project Scope	18
1.3 Consumer Racial Profiling Project Context	18
<b>2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</b>	<b>21</b>
2.1 Racism and Racial Profiling	21
2.2 Consumer Racial Profiling	23
2.3 Defining Consumer Racial Profiling	24
2.4 Consumer Racial Profiling in Context	25
2.5 Limitations of the Literature	27

<b>3</b>	<b>APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>28</b>
3.1	Cultural Competency in Research	28
3.2	Research Questions	29
3.3	Research Design	29
<b>4</b>	<b>SURVEY</b>	<b>31</b>
4.1	Survey Questions	31
4.2	Field Process	32
4.3	Sample and Demographics	33
4.3.1	Race and Ethnicity	33
4.3.2	Gender	34
4.3.3	Age	34
4.3.4	Educational Level	35
4.4	Limitations	35
<b>5</b>	<b>SURVEY FINDINGS</b>	<b>37</b>
5.1	Survey Question Results	37
5.1.1	Question 1—Shopping Frequency	38
5.1.2	Question 2—Choosing Where to Shop	39
5.1.3	Question 3—Being Ignored	40
5.1.4	Question 4—Receiving Slow Service	42
5.1.5	Question 5—Being Refused Service	43
5.1.6	Question 6—Being Followed in a Store	44
5.1.7	Question 7—Being Questioned about Ability to Afford a Product or Service	46
5.1.8	Question 8—Being Targeted for Offensive Language	48
5.1.9	Question 9—Being Searched	49
5.1.10	Question 10—Being Physically Removed from a Store	50
5.1.11	Question 11—Being Wrongfully Detained	51
5.2	Survey Analysis	52
5.2.1	Prevalence of Consumer Racial Profiling	52
5.2.2	Frequency of Consumer Racial Profiling	53
5.2.3	Subjective Consumer Incidents	54
5.2.4	Explicit Consumer Incidents	55
5.2.5	Relationship between Subjective and Explicit Incidents	57
	<i>Being Followed and Experiencing Explicit Incidents</i>	60
	<i>Being Ignored and Experiencing Explicit Events</i>	60
	<i>Receiving Slow Service and Experiencing Explicit Events</i>	61
5.2.6	Consumer Incidents as Consumer Racial Profiling	62
5.3	Survey Conclusion	64

<b>6</b>	<b>FOCUS GROUPS</b>	<b>65</b>
6.1	Recruitment	65
6.2	Focus Group Questions	65
6.3	Field Process	65
6.4	Sample and Demographics	66
6.5	Limitations	67
<b>7</b>	<b>FOCUS GROUP THEMES</b>	<b>68</b>
7.1	Consumer Racial Profiling in Nova Scotia	68
7.1.1	A Culture of Hidden Racism	68
7.1.2	Breaking the Silence	69
7.2	The Concept of Consumer Racial Profiling	69
7.2.1	Consumer Racial Profiling Is “Terrorism”	70
7.2.2	Consumer-Racial-Profiling Experiences	71
7.2.3	Consumer Racial Profiling Elicits a Feeling	75
7.2.4	Places of Consumer Racial Profiling	76
7.2.5	Consumer Racial Profiling Is a Systemic Issue	76
7.2.6	Consumer Profiling, Race, and the Interconnection of Identity	77
7.2.7	Consumer Profiling and Class	80
7.2.8	The Need to Prove Racism	81
7.2.9	“You Don’t Know Unless You Have Lived It”	81
7.3	Impacts of Consumer Racial Profiling	82
7.3.1	It Comes Down to Flight or Fight	82
7.3.2	Impact on Shopping Habits	83
7.3.3	Taking Business Elsewhere	84
7.3.4	No Support for Victims	84
7.3.5	Impact on Total Health	85
7.3.6	Impact on the Next Generation	86
7.3.7	Impact on Communities	87
7.4	Breaking Down Consumer Racial Profiling	88
7.4.1	Equal Representation of Minority Groups	88
7.4.2	Education and Enforcement of First Nations Rights	89
7.4.3	Educating and Training Businesses on Human Rights	89
7.4.4	Re-thinking Public Education	89
7.4.5	Better Informed and Respected Policies in Businesses	90
7.4.6	Communities Needing Better Support from NSHRC	90
7.4.7	Re-thinking the Discourse of Diversity	90
7.4.8	Challenging the Focus of Mainstream Media	90
7.4.9	Inclusion in Change Processes	91
7.4.10	Need to Promote Diverse Businesses	91

<b>8</b>	<b>DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>8.1</b>	<b>The Nature of Consumer Racial Profiling</b>	<b>92</b>
8.1.1	Profiling Is Natural Human Behaviour	92
8.1.2	Consumer Racial Profiling as Both a Feeling and Event	93
8.1.3	Consumer Racial Profiling Affects Individual and Community Health	93
8.1.4	Validation of Harm Is Essential	94
8.1.5	Consumer Profiling Based on Class	94
8.1.6	Loss Prevention Strategies Must Be Internally Focused	95
<b>8.2</b>	<b>Recommendations for the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission</b>	<b>95</b>
8.2.1	The Power of Research	95
8.2.2	“Doing Good Work”	95
8.2.3	Rebuilding Relationships with Community	96
8.2.4	Educating the Community	96
8.2.5	The Power of Storytelling	96
<b>8.3</b>	<b>Consumer Racial Profiling and Society</b>	<b>97</b>
8.3.1	Diversity Is the Future	97
8.3.2	Consumer Racial Profiling, Out-migration, and Immigrant Retention	97
8.3.3	The Movement Towards Online Shopping	98
8.3.4	Fear of Police and the Justice System	98
8.3.5	The Need of Education	98
8.3.6	First Nations Rights	99
<b>9</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>102</b>
	<b>APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY</b>	<b>106</b>
	<b>APPENDIX B: SURVEY</b>	<b>111</b>
	<b>APPENDIX C: CHI-SQUARE SIGNIFICANCE OF SURVEY RESULTS Q1–Q11</b>	<b>115</b>
	<b>APPENDIX D: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUBJECTIVE AND EXPLICIT CONSUMER RACIAL PROFILING</b>	<b>120</b>



## Executive Summary

---

### Introduction

The Consumer Racial Profiling Project is a current undertaking of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (NSHRC). This project explores the issue of consumer racial profiling. This type of racial profiling targets a shopper for discriminatory treatment based on the consumer's race, ethnicity, or both; this practice may or may not be intentional.

The Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act* mandates the NSHRC to develop programs of public information and education in the field of human rights. The NSHRC recognizes the province's growing cultural diversity and the concerns that have been brought by members of the community. To address these, the NSHRC is seeking to both learn about and educate others around consumer racial profiling. The Consumer Racial Profiling Project encourages the development of a greater understanding of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia and across Canada.

This project was reviewed by and received ethics clearance through the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board (REB file #12-096).

### Project Scope

The scope of this project includes:

- researching consumer racial profiling by collecting qualitative and quantitative data at the provincial, national, and international levels
- identifying partners in the retail, service, and security sectors to maximize program reach and impact
- developing awareness and training materials using both print and electronic media
- distributing awareness and training materials, and providing implementation support to organizations
- developing an evaluation plan to assess the effectiveness of the initiative

### Project Purpose

The Consumer Racial Profiling Project was undertaken to develop an informed understanding of the experiences and effects of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia. By conducting research in communities across Nova Scotia, the NSHRC aimed to spotlight the voices and learn from the experiences of Nova Scotians. The NSHRC will use its research results to work with retailers and service providers to develop

awareness, training materials, and best practices to reduce the barriers, experiences, and impacts of consumer racial profiling.

## **Background**

The NSHRC conducted an in-depth literature review on racial profiling and consumer racial profiling. The goal of this review was to situate consumer racial profiling locally, nationally, and internationally. Overall, the review highlighted that consumer racial profiling experiences and impacts are real for groups that are marginalized by their race or ethnicity.

At the same time, the literature demonstrates a substantial lack of Canadian research on consumer racial profiling. The lack of focus and recognition of consumer racial profiling within Canada and Nova Scotia is problematic because it maintains the invisibility of racism in our society and allows for consumer racial profiling to remain hidden and underrepresented. The lack of attention also allows for the legitimatizing of loss-prevention strategies that use racial profiling, which in turn, further stigmatizes and discriminates against many Nova Scotians and Canadians.

## **Consumer Racial Profiling**

Consumer racial profiling is defined as any type of differential treatment based on a perception of the consumer's race or ethnicity that constitutes the denial or degradation of the product or services offered to the consumer (Williams, Henderson, & Harris, 2001). This practice may or may not be intentional. The literature shows that consumer racial profiling affects members of racialized groups including those who identify as Black, African, Hispanic, Asian, and First Nations. Since September 11, 2001, there has been heightened interest and concerns about consumer racial profiling of those perceived by others as Middle Eastern or Muslim.

Consumer racial profiling can take many different forms, including avoidance (ignoring); rejection (refusing service); discouragement (providing slow service); verbal actions (using degrading racial epithets); and physical actions (subjecting to detentions, interrogations, or arrests). Anecdotal information and research evidence indicate that the practice does not occur only in retail settings. Harris (2003) suggests that this type of marketplace discrimination frequently occurs in hotels, restaurants, gas stations, grocery stores, clothing stores, department stores, home improvement stores, and office equipment stores. However, the nature of these experiences, the relationships between these experiences, and their results has not been well defined through research.

Overall, the literature associates racial profiling with certain incidents that customers experience in interactions with staff or security personnel. These include being

- ignored

- given slow service
- refused service
- followed in the store
- questioned about ability to afford a product or service
- targeted for verbal abuse
- searched physically or had one's belongings searched
- removed physically from a store without just cause
- detained wrongfully

Undoubtedly, the existing literature provides useful insights into consumer racial profiling, yet it contains several key weaknesses. First, earlier qualitative studies were based on a limited number of participants making it hard to determine the representativeness of the studies. Second, the experimental studies were limited to American cities and citizens leaving the Canadian context unexplored and unknown. Third, most of the existing literature emphasized the experiences of Blacks in America, which limits how readily the research can be applied in various contexts. Future research needs to begin to explore the experiences and views of other racial and ethnic groups pertaining to consumer racial profiling.

### Research Questions

- Does consumer racial profiling exist in Nova Scotia?
- Who is being racially profiled as a consumer in Nova Scotia?
- What is the frequency of consumer-racial-profiling experiences in Nova Scotia?
- What is the prevalence of consumer-racial-profiling experiences in Nova Scotia?
- What are the impacts of consumer racial profiling on individuals, their families, and their communities?

### Research Design and Methodology

To address these gaps in knowledge, the NSHRC employed a mixed-methods approach to its research. The research needed to emphasize the participation of various major racial and ethnic groups in Nova Scotia. This inclusion applied to both the quantitative and qualitative components of the research. In shaping our project, we spent a significant amount of time ensuring that our methodology was non-intrusive and respectful of participants. Due to the extremely sensitive nature of consumer racial profiling, specific strategies around anonymity, confidentiality, and harm prevention were employed.

## *Survey*

To measure the prevalence and frequency of consumer-racial-profiling experiences, the NSHRC administered a survey throughout Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), Sydney, and Digby. The survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews. These were conducted in HRM between March 19 and March 28, 2012, and in Sydney and Digby between March 28 and April 13, 2012.

Because the survey was designed to be conducted in face-to-face interviews, it was constructed to be minimally intrusive while still allowing for the collection of necessary information on the prevalence and frequency of consumer racial profiling.

The purpose of the survey was to collect information about consumer experiences and to compare those across different races and ethnicities. However, the survey was structured in ways that minimized a participant's awareness of this intent. It did not ask directly about "consumer racial profiling." Rather, the survey explored the prevalence and frequency of consumer incidents that have been associated with consumer racial profiling.

To ensure that a diverse cross-section of the population had the opportunity to participate, the survey was administered at various public locations at different times of the day throughout each of the three regions. The NSHRC selected the sites to be as neutral as possible. To ensure that the research took a non-blaming approach, public spaces were chosen that were not directly beside local businesses.

The survey began by asking participants about their general consumer habits when shopping for goods and services. The first two questions focused on how often participants shop (Q1) and how participants choose where to shop (Q2). The survey then transitioned into asking about consumer incidents in the previous 12 months. The focus was on interactions with staff or security personnel. The categories of these experiences included being

- ignored (Q3)
- given slow service (Q4)
- refused service (Q5)
- followed in the store (Q6)
- questioned about ability to afford a product or service (Q7)
- targeted for verbal abuse (Q8)
- searched physically or having one's belongings searched (Q9)
- removed physically from a store without just cause (Q10)
- detained wrongfully (Q11)

Questions Q3–Q11 began by asking for a yes or no response regarding whether participants had experienced the consumer incident in the past 12 months. If participants responded “Yes,” they were subsequently asked, “How often?” to which they could reply “Almost always,” “Usually,” “Occasionally,” or “Once or twice.” These follow-up questions were numbered Q3A–Q11A.

Overall, 1,190 surveys were completed in HRM, Digby, and Sydney. Approximately 93% (1,108) of the surveys were conducted across the HRM, with 4.7% (56) from Sydney, and 2.2% (26) from Digby. Overall, the large sample size lends credibility to the survey results and allows us to make some generalizations about the experiences of Nova Scotians. It is significant that the trends found throughout the HRM sample were consistent with those of the smaller sample regions of Sydney and Digby.

The survey witnessed the participation of individuals from six major racial or ethnic groups. Table 1 compares the race and ethnicity of survey respondents to the 2006 Nova Scotia census data.

<b>Table 1</b>			
<b>Comparison of survey respondents’ racial or ethnic groups to those in 2006 Nova Scotia census data.</b>			
<b>Racial/Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Sample Respondents (N=1190)</b>	<b>Sample Percentages</b>	<b>2006 Census Percentages</b>
White	709	59.6	93.2
Asian	191	16.1	1.3
African Canadian	150	12.6	2.1
Middle Eastern	86	7.2	0.5
Aboriginal	41	3.4	2.7
Latin American	13	1.1	0.1

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

### ***Focus Groups***

To gain an informed and deeper understanding of the experience and impacts of consumer racial profiling, the NSHRC conducted three focus groups. These were held in the Nova Scotia communities of Halifax, Dartmouth, and Millbrook. The focus groups were conducted between August 14 and August 21, 2012. Overall, 29 individuals participated in the focus groups; each group had approximately 10 participants.

The NSHRC promoted the three focus groups electronically through community contacts. The only requirements for participation were that participants had to be at

least 18 years of age, identify themselves as a person marginalized by race or ethnicity in Nova Scotia, and have experienced consumer racial profiling. There was a brief pre-screening process to ensure that participants met the requirements and were able to effectively describe their experiences.

Overall, the 29 participants self-identified their race or ethnicity into three major groups: Black/African Nova Scotian; Mi'kmaw/First Nation; and Muslim Canadian.

The sample was diverse in terms of gender, age, and education level. Crystal Taylor, president of CT-Ebony Consulting Company, facilitated the focus groups on behalf of the NSHRC. The focus groups were recorded by an observer and audiotaped to ensure accurate transcription. When participants arrived, written consent forms were fully explained and signed prior to participation. Participants received a small honorarium to acknowledge the time and knowledge they shared through their participation.

The focus group results are limited because they had representation from only three major racial or ethnic groups. Having participants from other racial and ethnic groups would have allowed a greater analysis of the experience of minority groups in Nova Scotia. However, as the survey highlighted, consumer racial profiling was found to affect African Canadians, Aboriginal people, and Middle Eastern persons more significantly than other racial or ethnic groups.

## Research Findings

### Survey

The results from the survey show that race or ethnicity is the most significant factor in the experience of consumer incidents when compared to other demographics, such as age, gender, and level of education. Overall, racialized respondents reported experiencing significantly higher prevalence and frequency rates of both subjective and explicit consumer incidents than did White respondents.

The data also demonstrated an interesting relationship between the subjective and explicit forms of consumer racial profiling. The study indicated that regardless of race, subjective forms of consumer incidents (being ignored, and receiving slow service) and being followed correlated to a higher likelihood of the consumer experiencing explicit forms of consumer incidents, including being

- refused service
- questioned about ability to afford a product or service
- targeted for verbal abuse
- removed physically from a store without just cause
- detained wrongfully

However, the data does not speak to the nature of this relationship and whether incidents reported by participants occurred in the same instance or were spread out over the past 12 months.

Overall, Aboriginal and African Canadian respondents demonstrated the highest prevalence and frequency rates in experiencing consumer incidents. Middle Eastern respondents also demonstrated significantly higher rates and prevalence of incidents associated with consumer racial profiling than did White respondents. Asian respondents reported experiencing consumer incidents at a greater rate than White respondents, but not to the same degree or frequency of Aboriginal, African Nova Scotian, and Middle Eastern respondents. Unfortunately, only a limited number of responses were received from the Latin American community, and this survey is unable to comment directly on the statistical significance of these responses. It is, of course, noted that within the responses we did receive consumer racial profiling clearly seems to be a serious issue for this community as well.

### ***Focus Groups***

The following is a brief overview of the themes that emerged through the focus groups. These themes were derived directly from the voices, knowledge, and stories of participants. It is important to note that the themes presented here do not describe the experiences of all racialized members of society; rather they document the nature and impacts of consumer racial profiling.

### **Focus Group Themes**

#### **Consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia**

- A culture of hidden racism
- Breaking the silence

#### **The concept of consumer racial profiling**

- Consumer racial profiling is “terrorism”
- Consumer-racial-profiling experiences
- Consumer racial profiling elicits a feeling
- Places of consumer racial profiling
- Consumer racial profiling is a systemic issue
- Consumer racial profiling, race, and the interconnection of identity
- Consumer racial profiling and class
- The need to prove racism
- “You don’t know it unless you have lived it”

### **Impacts of consumer racial profiling**

- It comes down to fight or flight
- Impact on shopping habits
- Taking business elsewhere
- No support for victims
- Impacts on total health
- Impact on the next generation
- Impact on communities

### **Breaking down consumer racial profiling**

- Equal representation of groups
- Education and enforcement of First Nations rights
- Educating and training businesses on human rights
- Re-thinking public education
- Better informed and respected policies in businesses
- Communities needing better support from the NSHRC
- Re-thinking the discourse of diversity
- Challenging the focus of mainstream media
- Inclusion in change processes
- The need to promote diverse businesses



# 1 Introduction

---

In recent years, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (NSHRC) has received an increasing number of inquiries and complaints related to consumer racial profiling. Consumer racial profiling is the practice of targeting a consumer for discriminatory treatment based on the consumer's race, or ethnicity, or both. This practice may or may not be intentional. The NSHRC is committed to promoting inclusion, reducing discrimination, and identifying barriers to full participation in society. We recognize the importance of creating a welcoming consumer environment where all Nova Scotians can participate safely in the marketplace. Therefore, in April of 2011, the NSHRC began the Consumer Racial Profiling Project. This project is the first in Canada to examine the experience and effects of discriminatory treatment towards consumers based on their race or ethnicity.

This report presents the results of the Consumer Racial Profiling Project. The project was undertaken by a diverse group of staff at the NSHRC, but the knowledge generated is owned by communities across Nova Scotia. The project took place between April 2011 and September 2012. It witnessed the participation of 1,219 Nova Scotians. The project included two modes of interaction with survey participants: a survey was administered across the province (March 12–21, 2012), and community focus groups were held in Halifax (August 14), Millbrook (August 20), and Dartmouth (August 21). The project focuses on developing an informed understanding of the experience and effects of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia.

For many, particularly those from marginalized racial groups, this research may simply confirm what is already known. However, this project is important work that is still needed to educate and inspire those around us to continue breaking down the barriers to the full and equal participation of all members of our society.

The NSHRC would like to acknowledge the contributions of time and knowledge given by many Nova Scotians throughout this project. Sharing personal stories about racial profiling and racism, and the consequences these experiences have taken on the families and communities can be a very difficult process. The willingness of so many to participate in the research demonstrates the significance of consumer racial profiling here in Nova Scotia.

## 1.1 The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

The NSHRC is guided by the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*. This act is a legal document outlining laws that prohibit discrimination and harassment in protected areas, including services and facilities such as stores and restaurants. The Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act* recognizes and protects the dignity and rights of all Nova Scotians, allowing all people to contribute to the development and well-being of Nova Scotia.

The NSHRC is a leader in resolving human rights disputes here in Nova Scotia. It also plays a significant role in developing public information and education programs in the field of human rights. We also further the understanding of human rights issues through research.

The Consumer Racial Profiling Project was undertaken to develop an informed understanding of the experiences and effects of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia. The project was reviewed by, and received ethics approval through, the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board (REB file #12-096). This research highlights the voices and experiences of Nova Scotians from which we can all learn. The results of this project will be used to work with retailers and service providers to develop awareness and training materials, and best practices to reduce the barriers, experiences, and influences of consumer racial profiling.

This report presents some of the detailed stories of consumer racial profiling shared during the focus groups. In doing so, the report and the NSHRC respect the confidentiality of the participants.

## **1.2 Consumer Racial Profiling Project Scope**

The scope of the Consumer Racial Profiling Project includes the following:

- researching consumer racial profiling to identify qualitative and quantitative data at the provincial, national, and international levels
- identifying partners in the retail, service, and security sectors to maximize program reach and impact
- developing awareness and training materials using both print and electronic media
- distributing awareness and training materials, and providing implementation support to organizations
- developing an evaluation plan to assess the effectiveness of the initiative

## **1.3 Consumer Racial Profiling Project Context**

With its long-established First Nations and African Canadian communities, Nova Scotia has a long history of settlement and race relations. However, such a history does not mean equality. A few of the long-standing concerns for both the First Nations and African Canadian communities in Nova Scotia have been around the experience of discrimination and racism. These experiences have manifested in the public education system, justice system, police force, and workforce, leading to

under-representation of these communities in government institutions and local workforces, and over-representation within the criminal justice system. The Consumer Racial Profiling Project aims to break down these barriers to create full and respectful participation in the marketplace.

Nova Scotia faces particular economic challenges in the coming years: an aging population, out-migration of its youth, and poor immigrant retention. Nova Scotia's economic sustainability will seemingly rely on its ability not only to retain all Nova Scotians, both young and old, but also to attract and retain newcomers. This current and growing challenge means that Nova Scotia will need to continue to grow as a diverse province. Persons marginalized by their race or ethnicity will play more prominent roles as consumers, employees, business owners, educators, and leaders in the province. Breaking down the barriers to respectful and dignified participation as consumers, employees, and owners needs to occur for Nova Scotia to effectively advance its economy.

The Aboriginal population in Canada has experienced significant growth since 2001, growing nearly six times faster than the rest of the country, according to 2006 census data (Statistics Canada, 2007). The Aboriginal population is also considerably younger, with a median age of 27 years as compared to 40 years among other communities in Canada. This presents opportunities in the workplace and the marketplace.

Racialized persons represent a large and growing segment in markets across North America, especially in regions where these populations are concentrated. Data based on the 2006 Canadian census highlight that 16.0% of the total population (representing over five million Canadians) identify as a member of a visible minority; this percentage is up from 13.0%, reported in 2001 and shows a higher concentrations in urban areas (Statistics Canada, 2007). Between 2001 and 2006, the visible minority population increased at a much faster pace than that of the total population. The rate of growth of the visible minority population was 27.2%, which was five times faster than the 5.4% increase for the population as a whole.

Immigration is a contributing factor as fully three-quarters (75.0%) of the immigrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006 belonged to a visible minority group. By 2017, one in five Canadians will be categorized as a "visible minority" according to Statistics Canada (2007). This explosive growth presents business opportunities for companies to attract not only a diverse workforce, but also new clients in a marketplace where buying power and investment needs will rapidly increase.

Although this report focuses on consumer racial profiling as it exists in Nova Scotia, this issue is also a national and international issue. Racial profiling is a practice that can be used by all people or all institutions and is not limited to the treatment of consumers. Consumer racial profiling is just a piece of the racial profiling issue, one that is largely understudied and uninformed.

The results of this project are central to the future work of the NSHRC. We are dedicated to raising awareness about consumer racial profiling in the public and businesses across Nova Scotia, and addressing systemic racism and discrimination. However, it is also necessary for the people and organizations across Nova Scotia to commit themselves to creating change around consumer racial profiling through monitoring best practices, and taking measures to prevent and address consumer incidents. While this report details the project research findings, the NSHRC will engage in further work to develop best practices and training and awareness materials. Meanwhile, this report serves as a useful tool in building an informed understanding of consumer racial profiling and can be used to improve race relations in the marketplace across Nova Scotia.

Lastly, we hope this report encourages each member of our society to reflect upon the values, beliefs, and assumptions we hold as individuals, and to explore our own subconscious biases. We all continue to have a role to play in dismantling the barriers associated with racial profiling.

## 2 Review of the Literature

---

The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission conducted an in-depth literature review on racial profiling and consumer racial profiling. The goal of this review was to situate consumer racial profiling locally, nationally, and internationally. Overall, the review highlighted that consumer racial profiling experiences and impacts are real for groups that are marginalized by their race or ethnicity.

At the same time, the literature demonstrates a substantial lack of Canadian research on consumer racial profiling. The lack of focus and recognition of consumer racial profiling within Canada and Nova Scotia is problematic because it maintains the invisibility of racism in our society and allows for consumer racial profiling to remain hidden and underrepresented. The lack of attention also allows for the legitimatizing of loss-prevention strategies that use racial profiling, which in turn, further stigmatizes and discriminates against many Nova Scotians and Canadians.

### 2.1 Racism and Racial Profiling

Consumer racial profiling cannot be examined in isolation from the larger practices and impacts of other forms of racial profiling. By nature, consumer racial profiling is just a piece of systemic racism and racial profiling. The pervasiveness of racial profiling is often a point of contention in our society, and this is a well-researched field. Formerly, racial profiling was a legal term that referred particularly to law-enforcement practices and the justice system. Therefore, while the literature is abundant with research on the nature and extent of racial-profiling practices, this research traditionally focused on experiences within the justice system, which illustrates only one aspect of racial profiling.

Past research on racial profiling suggests that racialized individuals and groups often experience a level of discrimination that is rarely experienced by White people (Cox, Pease, Miller, & Tyson, 2001; Knowles, Persico, & Todd, 2001; Langan, Greenfield, Smithy, Durose, & Levin, 2001; Rojek, Rosenfeld, & Decker, 2004; Zingaff et al., 2000). As a practice, racial profiling depends on the creation and maintenance of racial stereotypes at the systemic level. These racial stereotypes exist in social institutions such as law enforcement agencies, the education system, and the criminal justice system. Racial discourse and stereotypes threaten the safety, well-being, and citizenship of racialized individuals and groups. However, like most types of discrimination, racial profiling has begun to take on more subtle and insidious forms (Tator & Henry, 1994).

Consumer racial profiling is strongly linked to racial profiling within law enforcement. The latter practice typically occurs when law enforcement officers stop, question, investigate, detain, or arrest people on the basis of their race or ethnicity rather than on probable cause or reasonable suspicion of criminal activity

(Gabbidon, 2003). Experiencing this phenomenon is commonly referred to as “driving while Black.” Over the past several decades, this experience has received increased academic, media, and public attention. The literature has documented the pervasiveness of the issue. Morin and Cottman (2001) found that 37.0% of African Americans self-reported that, while driving, they were the victims of racial profiling. Even early research around consumer racial profiling, however, demonstrates that victimizing consumers may be a more widespread practice than victimizing drivers. Williams and Snuggs (1997) found that 86.0% of African Americans believed that they were treated differently as a consumer due to their racial or ethnic identity.

Racial profiling is often misunderstood to be an effective practice of criminal profiling. This misunderstanding often serves to justify this form of discrimination. However, criminal profiling as a prevention tactic does not involve using racial profiling. Racial profiling is based on stereotypical assumptions about a person’s race, colour, or ethnicity, whereas criminal profiling focuses on actual behaviour or information about suspected activity by someone who meets the description of a specific individual (Higgins & Gabbidon, 2008). Research in 2003 by the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) states that profiling is typically carried out by persons in positions of authority and can occur in many contexts involving safety, security, and public protection issues. In the context of Canadian human rights, OHRC and Quebec’s Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ) define racial profiling. According to their definitions, racial profiling encompasses a broad list of social categories including race, ethnicity, place of origin, religion, age, language, ability, social status, and gender (OHRC, 2003; CDPDJ, 2005). Most recently, CDPDJ has defined racial profiling as

any action taken by one or more people in authority with respect to a person or group of persons, for reason of safety, security, or public order, that is based on actual or presumed membership in a group defined by race, colour, ethnic or national origin, or religion without factual grounds or reasonable suspicion, that results in the person or group being exposed to differential treatment or scrutiny (CDPDJ, 2011, p. 10)

To those who have not experienced racial profiling or do not know someone who has, it may seem to be nothing more than a mere inconvenience. However, racial profiling has real and direct consequences. Those who have experienced profiling pay the price emotionally, psychologically, mentally, and in some cases, even financially and physically (CDPDJ, 2011). The impact of racial profiling often results in negative responses to authority figures, a lack of confidence in institutions such as law and educational systems, mistrust of law enforcement officers, mistrust of community, fear of safety, and lack of confidence in the complaint process (CDPDJ, 2011).

In Nova Scotia over the past decade, the issue of racial profiling has been explored as a human rights issue. In 2002, the NSHRC determined that discrimination and racial profiling played a significant role in the treatment of Kirk Johnson, a Black boxer who was stopped by the police while driving in his licenced vehicle with his

cousin in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, in April 1998. To make such a determination requires a deep understanding of racial profiling that had been gained through much research and writing. In contrast, currently no such framework exists for understanding consumer racial profiling.

## 2.2 Consumer Racial Profiling

Business and marketing scholars have long had an interest in how racialized communities, particularly African American, are treated in retail settings, given the considerable buying power of these communities (Crockett, Grier, & Williams, 2003). Nevertheless, researchers have mostly neglected this issue, particularly in Canada. Most of the research and writing about consumer racial profiling has occurred in the United States over the past decade. Over time, various terms have been used to describe consumer racial profiling, including “consumer marketplace discrimination” (Gabbidon, 2003). “Shopping while Black” (Fifield, 2001) is another term currently used to describe the experience of this form of discrimination.

While the existing literature on consumer racial profiling is limited in volume, it remains quite diverse in focus and methodology. Most of the literature on consumer racial profiling can be separated into two distinct categories. The first body of literature has analyzed civil suits in which plaintiffs claim to be victims of consumer racial profiling (Adamson, 2000; Crockett et al., 2003; Fifield, 2001; Harris, 2003; Henderson, 2001; Lee, 2000; O’Connell, 2001; Williams, Henderson, & Harris, 2001). Many of these cases discuss the lack of services and the differential treatment of racialized persons in retail settings. Gabbidon (2003) reviewed 29 cases of plaintiffs who claimed to be victims of consumer racial profiling. The study uncovered biases in both federal and state courts in the United States. Overall, this type of research began to define the practices of consumer racial profiling. The research found that most cases involved allegations that employees, security personnel, or both had followed the plaintiff, enacted policies related to treating racialized consumers, or required customers to provide extra identification for credit card and cheque purchases. However, much of this early literature was largely descriptive and did not capture how racialized groups are targeted as suspected thieves. Perhaps the greatest limitation of the case-analysis research is that it does not address the prevalence and nature of consumer-racial-profiling experiences.

The second body of literature has adopted empirical analysis of the experiences, impacts, and perception of consumer racial profiling. One of the earliest studies related to consumer racial profiling was conducted by Feagin (1991). Using in-depth interviews, Feagin focused on racialized persons’ experiences of discrimination with respect to the type of public place, the nature of the experience, and how respondents coped with the discrimination. This research found that many respondents often received poor service in retail establishments and restaurants, and many talked about being followed as a consumer. Almost a decade later, Lee (2000) conducted qualitative interviews to look at the consumer experiences of

Black residents in New York and Philadelphia. This research found that Black shoppers were treated with higher levels of suspicion than White shoppers.

One of the earliest quantitative studies on consumer racial profiling was conducted by Asquith and Bristow (2000). They examined students' perceptions of the demographic profile of shoplifters, including race, age, and other characteristics. Participants were asked to complete an initial questionnaire, which showed that students overestimated the likelihood of males and racial or ethnic minorities to be shoplifters. Participants then watched a one-hour video that educated them on the actual demographics of shoplifters based on available data. After the video, participants were given the questionnaire again to determine if their perceptions had changed. The authors concluded that the video was not sufficient to overcome the preconceptions, attitudes, and biases held by the students (Asquith & Bristow, 2000).

More recently, Schreer, Smith, and Thomas (2009) conducted an experimental study that focused on overt and subtle retail discrimination. Researchers observed the behaviour of 33 White sales clerks towards both Black and White customers who were trained participants. These "customers" were asked to go to the sunglasses' counter while two trained observers watched the behaviour of the clerks. Their findings detailed that while White clerks were willing to remove the security sensor tags for all consumers, "after removing the sensor, salespeople stared at Black customers more often than White customers" (Schreer et al., 2009, p. 1,437). The research also demonstrated that Black individuals and groups were more closely followed by staff than groups of White customers were.

Recent research has begun to measure the prevalence of consumer racial profiling. Gabbidon and Higgins (2007) sought to determine this prevalence in a sample of Philadelphia area residents. Through a phone survey, it was found that Black residents were ten times more likely than White residents to report having experienced consumer racial profiling. Similarly, males were more than two times more likely than females to report experiencing consumer racial profiling. Those with higher levels of education were more likely to report this experience than were those with less education. In a similar study, Gabbidon, Craig, Okafo, Marzette, and Peterson (2008) found that 73.0% of racialized respondents report experiencing consumer racial profiling. Both studies found that most victims did not take action; they wanted to avoid an inconvenience or for fear of not being believed (Gabbidon et al., 2008; Gabbidon & Higgins, 2007).

### **2.3 Defining Consumer Racial Profiling**

Consumer racial profiling is defined as any type of differential treatment based on a perception of the consumer's race or ethnicity that constitutes the denial or degradation of the product or services offered to the consumer (Williams et al., 2001). This practice may or may not be intentional. Through the literature, consumer racial profiling has been shown to affect members of racialized groups



including those who identify as Black, African, Hispanic, Asian, and First Nations. Since September 11, 2001, there has been heightened interest and concerns about consumer racial profiling of those perceived by others as Middle Eastern or Muslim.

Consumer racial profiling can take many different forms, including avoidance (ignoring); rejection (refusing service); discouragement (providing slow service); verbal actions (using degrading racial epithets); and physical actions (subjecting to detentions, interrogations, or arrests). Anecdotal information and research evidence indicate that the practice does not occur only in retail settings. Harris (2003) suggests that this type of marketplace discrimination frequently occurs in hotels, restaurants, gas stations, grocery stores, clothing stores, department stores, home improvement stores, and office equipment stores. However, the nature of these experiences, the relationships between these experiences, and their results has not been well defined through research.

Victims of consumer racial profiling often feel humiliated and abused. Many racialized consumers suffer insults, often in the presence of their children and other customers, with no place to obtain justice (Gabbidon et al., 2008; Gabbidon & Higgins, 2007). Victims live with the humiliation of not knowing what to do about the unfair treatment they have experienced or how to deal with the insulting burden they are forced to carry.

Research has also moved into exploring public opinion around consumer racial profiling. Studies have found that approximately 60% of people believe that consumer racial profiling exists (Gabbidon & Higgins, 2011; Jordan, Gabbidon, & Higgins, 2009). This statistic may initially seem encouraging. A significant number of people, though, are unaware of consumer racial profiling. Further, many believe in the effectiveness of consumer-racial-profiling practices and support their use. Jordan et al. (2009) found that those with conservative views were most likely to support such practices while those with higher levels of income and education were less likely to support the practices. Similarly, Black respondents were more likely than Whites to believe in the widespread nature of consumer-racial-profiling practices.

## **2.4 Consumer Racial Profiling in Context**

Retailers lose billions of dollars each year to shoplifting (Hollinger & Adams, 2009). Many prevention strategies have been implemented over time, including the use of uniformed security guards, fitting-room attendants, and video cameras. Also in recent years, people have made more allegations that racial or ethnic profiling is a widely used preventive tactic against shoplifting (Gabbidon, 2003; Harris, 2003).

These practices exist despite no observable difference in shoplifting trends when examining different racial or ethnic groups (Dabney, Hollinger, & Dugan, 2004). “Even though there is some sense of the magnitude of theft occurring in retail settings, because not all shoplifters are caught or prosecuted when they are caught,

there is very little information on the true demographics of shoplifters” (Gabbidon et al., 2008). Regardless, some retailers and citizens continue to both intentionally and unintentionally engage in such practices. They follow these practices, even though research shows that behavioural cues—such as looking around for clerks, examining security measures, and tampering with merchandise—are likely to be much more effective loss-prevention strategies (Dabney et al., 2004).

Consumer racial profiling has also been discussed in relation to shoplifting practices. Dabney et al. (2004) sought to answer this question: “Who actually steals?” The study used trained observers from different racial or ethnic backgrounds to observe how retail employees interacted with customers of different races and ethnicities. The research revealed that there was no shoplifter “profile.” The research commented, “Black and Hispanic shoppers are no more likely to shoplift than those who are White. Further, shoppers of Asian descent are no less likely than Whites to commit theft” (Dabney et al., p. 214). The authors did note that even though their observers were trained and from different racial or ethnic groups, the observers still held an unconscious bias toward different racial and ethnic groups when observing them (Dabney et al., 2006). Therefore, even trained observers engaged in “implicit” or “unconscious” stereotyping when attempting to evaluate the profile of the shoplifter.

Motley and Ainscough (2000) identified a list of things that business owners do to prevent racialized consumers from using their stores. Many of these incidents go unreported because they are everyday acts of racism:

- Consumer products for racialized persons, such as hair-care products, are locked away and need to be requested from staff while products for White customers are readily available.
- Extra security stickers are placed on some products because it is assumed that racialized persons steal these items.
- Racialized persons may be followed as soon as they enter a shop.
- Racialized persons may be regularly accused of theft.
- Store owners often ask staff to be on the lookout for Black shoppers because they steal.

Unfortunately, the marketplace is slow to recognize that racialized groups have significant buying power. Diversity in the marketplace is a good and necessary economic business plan. By 2017, one in five Canadians will be categorized as a “visible minority” according to Statistics Canada (2007). Missing from these statistics, however, are data showing the continued levels of inequities experienced by racialized communities including African Canadians, Aboriginal people, and other racialized populations. Racialized groups are victims of structural and systemic racism even while living in a society that is labeled as a protector of human rights

and a promoter of equality. In many instances, such racial discrimination occurs through the practice of racial profiling. However, these systemic violations of both their economic and social rights are not recognized in our society (National Anti-Racism Council of Canada, 2007). In the future, retailers and business owners will be forced to accept diversity and recognize the power of racialized communities.

## **2.5 Limitations of the Literature**

Undoubtedly, the existing literature provides useful insights into consumer racial profiling, yet it contains several key weaknesses. First, earlier qualitative studies were based on a limited number of participants making it hard to determine the representativeness of the studies. Second, the experimental studies were limited to American cities and citizens leaving the Canadian context unexplored and unknown. Third, most of the existing literature emphasized the experiences of Blacks in America, which limits how readily the research can be applied in various contexts.

Future research needs to begin to explore the experiences and views of other racial and ethnic groups pertaining to consumer racial profiling. To address these gaps in knowledge moving forward, the NSHRC has identified the importance of highlighting the experiences of various major racial and ethnic groups. Such groups must participate in both the quantitative and qualitative components of the research.

The extent of consumer racial profiling is far reaching. However, as demonstrated in this review, little is known about consumer racial profiling (CRP) outside of the American context. Therefore, the experience, prevalence, and effects of consumer racial profiling in Canada remain a gap in the literature. The Consumer Racial Profiling Project addresses this gap by building a foundational understanding of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia. Perhaps most importantly, past consumer-racial-profiling research highlights that “civil rights organizations should lead campaigns that will ensure that CRP becomes a relic of the past” (Gabbidon & Higgins, 2011, p. 209). That is precisely what this project has done and will continue to do.

### 3 Approach and Methodology

---

This research is exploratory in nature. The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission views this research as a beginning step in creating a foundation of knowledge around consumer racial profiling both here in Nova Scotia and across Canada. This work was done with the goal of deepening the collective understanding of consumer racial profiling. The NSHRC hopes this research will create awareness and engagement within public, local business, and academic settings in effort to create change in our communities.

Recognizing the sensitivity around consumer racial profiling and its connectedness to systemic racism, the NSHRC adopted a critical framework in its approach to research. Although the NSHRC conducted the research, the project would not have been possible without the support and expertise of local communities that supported the project at each stage in its development. In the future, the NSHRC will continue to work with local communities to help shape the dissemination process.

Based on an examination of the diverse methodologies used in past research on consumer racial profiling, the NSHRC adopted a mixed-methods approach that used a self-report survey and focus groups. Using a mixed-methods approach to research allows the triangulation of data. This approach also enables understanding of the prevalence, experience, and impacts of consumer racial profiling here in Nova Scotia.

The NSHRC constructed the research design based on the perception that consumer racial profiling is a “real” experience. That consumer racial profiling has an effect on the lives of racialized persons in our society has been well documented in the literature, and in human rights complaints lodged with the NSHRC. However, the nature of consumer-racial-profiling experiences, and to what extent they exist in Nova Scotia, is unknown.

The Consumer Racial Profiling Project was reviewed by and received research ethics approval from the Saint Mary’s University Research Ethics Board (REB file #12-096).

#### 3.1 Cultural Competency in Research

The NSHRC recognized that to do effective, respectful, and competent research, it needed to further its knowledge of cultural competency in research. Therefore, in January 2012, the NSHRC hosted a panel, “Cultural Competency in Research.” This event featured established academics and researchers in Nova Scotia from diverse fields including Dr. Gail Baikie, Dr. Judy Haiven, Dr. Brian Noble, and Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard. The purpose of the panel was to raise awareness of best practices in research, and support the NSHRC in the development and implementation of its research in culturally appropriate and safe methods.

Some of the major themes that arose during the panel presentation were

- ensuring critical reflection to deconstruct assumptions, values, and beliefs as individuals, as a research team, and as an organization
- building research through a collectivist worldview that centres on community, power sharing, cooperation, humility, and respect
- adopting a “power-with” approach to research by including communities in all research processes
- ensuring that research is transformative in its purpose and seeks to reconcile oppressive relationships on some level

### 3.2 Research Questions

As exploratory research, this project was centred on the following research question: How does consumer racial profiling manifest in Nova Scotia?

Within this question, the project explored these sub-questions:

- What is the prevalence and frequency of consumer-racial-profiling experiences in Nova Scotia?
- What are the impacts of consumer racial profiling on individuals, families, and communities in Nova Scotia?

### 3.3 Research Design

This project studied the prevalence, frequency, and nature of consumer racial profiling as experienced by racialized persons in Nova Scotia. To maximize the wealth of knowledge obtained through this research project, a mixed-methods research design was used. The NSHRC employed a province-wide survey followed by three focus groups in Nova Scotian communities. The quantitative and qualitative data serve to compliment each other and foster a deeper understanding of the issue.

This project measured the prevalence and frequency of certain consumer incidents that the literature indicates have been linked with consumer racial profiling. Specific incidents that consumers experienced at the hands of staff or security personnel were measured. These incidents included

- being ignored
- receiving slow service
- being refused service

- being followed in a store
- being questioned about one's ability to afford a product or service
- being the target of offensive language
- having one's belongings or person searched
- being physically removed from a store
- being wrongfully detained

Quantitative information was collected to create statistical representations that effectively show the extent of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia. Gathering information around experiences of consumer racial profiling also allowed for a comparison across different racial and ethnic groups. These data are not intended to represent specific occurrences of consumer racial profiling. Rather, the survey represents a portrait of how racialized persons and groups are treated as consumers.

Qualitative information was gathered through focus groups to develop a deeper understanding of consumer-racial-profiling experiences, events, and impacts. The stories from participants provide tremendous insight into the nature of consumer racial profiling from the first-hand perspective of its victims.

As a study on racial profiling, the primary goal was to highlight the experiences and perspectives of racialized consumers. With a critical understanding of Nova Scotia's history, it was imperative to emphasize the voices of Aboriginal Peoples and African Canadians. It was also important to include other racial and ethnic groups. Many of these groups have, over the past forty years, become an integral part in Canada's immigration system and have contributed to the growth of a diverse Canadian population. These groups include, among others, people from Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America, and South America. It was also essential to capture the experiences of White people. The participation of the White Nova Scotian community in the survey enabled a broader comparison of the experience of consumer incidents across different racial and ethnic groups.

The project researchers recognized the importance of participant self-identification and did not want to limit or control how people define their race or ethnicity. Therefore, the demographic section in both the survey and focus groups were created to allow the participants to self-identify their race or ethnicity, age, gender, and education level. However, for purposes of statistical analysis, these self-identifications were combined under larger traditional racial and ethnic categories. Overall, this research saw the participation of individuals from seven different major racial or ethnic categories: Aboriginal, African Canadian, Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and White.

## 4 Survey

---

To measure the prevalence and frequency of consumer-racial-profiling experiences, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission administered a survey throughout Halifax Regional Municipality, Sydney, and Digby. The survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews. These were conducted in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) between March 19 and March 28, 2012, and in Sydney and Digby between March 28 and April 13, 2012.

### 4.1 Survey Questions

The survey was conducted to gain a broader understanding about the existence of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia. It sought to answer the following questions:

- Does consumer racial profiling exist in Nova Scotia?
- Who is being racially profiled as a consumer in Nova Scotia?
- What is the frequency of consumer-racial-profiling experiences in Nova Scotia?
- What is the prevalence of consumer-racial-profiling experiences in Nova Scotia?

Because the survey was designed to be conducted in face-to-face interviews, it was constructed to be minimally intrusive while still allowing for the collection of necessary information. Therefore, the survey was purposefully short, direct, and non-intrusive, containing only 11 survey questions and four demographic questions.

The purpose of the survey was to collect information about consumer experiences and to compare those across different races and ethnicities. However, the survey was structured in ways that minimized a participant's awareness of this intent. It did not ask directly about "consumer racial profiling." Rather, the survey explored the prevalence and frequency of consumer incidents that have been associated with consumer racial profiling. Also, the demographic portion of the survey was asked at the conclusion of the survey, allowing participants to self-identify their race or ethnicity, gender, age, and highest level of education completed. Asking the demographic questions at the end of the survey reduced the participants' awareness that race was the focal point of interest and achieved more natural responses. A full copy of the original survey can be found in appendix B.

Overall, the survey was a quick and effective means for generating meaningful data that permitted a foundational analysis of the prevalence and frequency of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia. Simultaneously, it allowed for comparisons between various demographic factors: race, ethnicity, gender, age, and educational level. The

survey also provided general information about consumer habits, which can be explored in relation to consumer racial profiling.

## 4.2 Field Process

To ensure that a diverse cross-section of the population had the opportunity to participate, the survey was administered at various public locations at different times of the day throughout each of the three regions. The NSHRC selected the sites to be as neutral as possible. To ensure that the research took a non-blaming approach, public spaces were chosen that were not directly beside local businesses.

Five research assistants administered the survey orally. They recruited participants by asking passersby if they wished to participate in a survey on their consumer experience in Nova Scotia. To minimize researcher bias, participants were approached using a system of asking every *n*th person if they wished to participate. After verbal consent was obtained from the participant, the survey was then administered.

The survey began by asking participants about their general consumer habits when shopping for goods and services. The first two questions focused on how often participants shop (Q1) and how participants choose where to shop (Q2). The survey then transitioned into asking about consumer incidents in the previous 12 months. The focus was on interactions with staff or security personnel. The categories of these experiences included being

- ignored (Q3)
- given slow service (Q4)
- refused service (Q5)
- followed in the store (Q6)
- questioned about ability to afford a product or service (Q7)
- targeted for verbal abuse (Q8)
- searched physically or had one's belongings searched (Q9)
- removed physically from a store without just cause (Q10)
- detained wrongfully (Q11)

Each of these categories of experiences had a two-part question. Questions Q3 through Q11 began by asking for a yes or no response regarding whether participants had experienced the consumer incident in the past 12 months. If participants responded "Yes," they were subsequently asked, "How often?" to which they could reply "Almost always," "Usually," "Occasionally," or "Once or twice." These follow-up questions were numbered Q3A through Q11A.



After completing the survey, participants were offered a feedback form that detailed more information on the project and provided contact information for the researchers.

### 4.3 Sample and Demographics

Overall, 1,190 surveys were completed between the regions of HRM, Digby, and Sydney. Approximately 93% (1,108) of the surveys were conducted across the HRM, with 4.7% (56) from Sydney, and 2.2% (26) from Digby. Overall, the large sample size lends credibility to the survey results and allows us to make some generalizations about the experiences of Nova Scotians. It is significant that the trends found throughout the HRM sample were consistent with those of the smaller sample regions of Sydney and Digby.

#### 4.3.1 Race and Ethnicity

Individuals from six major racial or ethnic groups participated in the survey. Table 1 compares the racial or ethnic groups of participants to those of local census data.

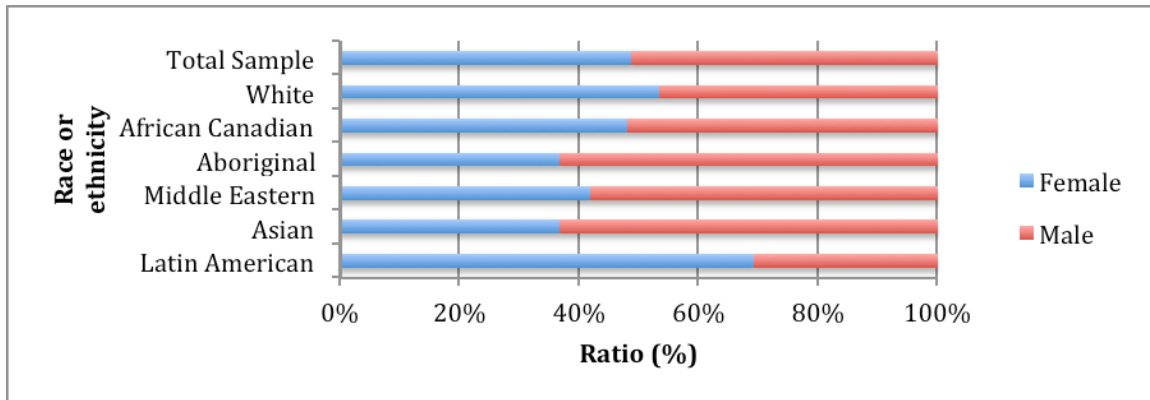
<b>Table 1</b> <b>Comparison of survey respondents' racial or ethnic groups to those in 2006 Nova Scotia census data.</b>			
<b>Racial/Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Sample Respondents (N=1190)</b>	<b>Sample Percentages</b>	<b>2006 Census Percentages</b>
White	709	59.6	93.2
Asian	191	16.1	1.3
African Canadian	150	12.6	2.1
Middle Eastern	86	7.2	0.5
Aboriginal	41	3.4	2.7
Latin American	13	1.1	0.1

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

At first glance, the small levels of participation from certain racial or ethnic groups in the survey may seem to pose a challenge, but the context of population statistics in Nova Scotia must also be considered. In comparing the survey sample to the Nova Scotia demographics collected through the 2006 census by Statistics Canada, the survey had an over-representation of marginalized racial or ethnic groups in Nova Scotia (Statistics Canada, 2007). Having an over-representation of diverse racial and ethnic groups provides greater insight into their experiences.

### 4.3.2 Gender

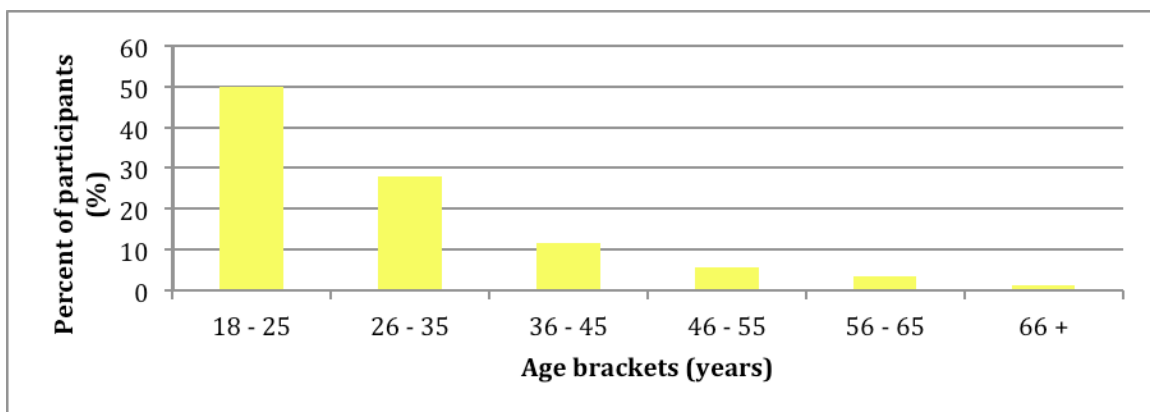
Gender representation across all survey participants was relatively equal. Gender ratios varied across the racial or ethnic groups, but overall there was a close balance between those who self-identified as male and female. Most racial or ethnic groups had balanced gender representation as well.



**Figure 1.** Gender ratio of survey participants.

### 4.3.3 Age

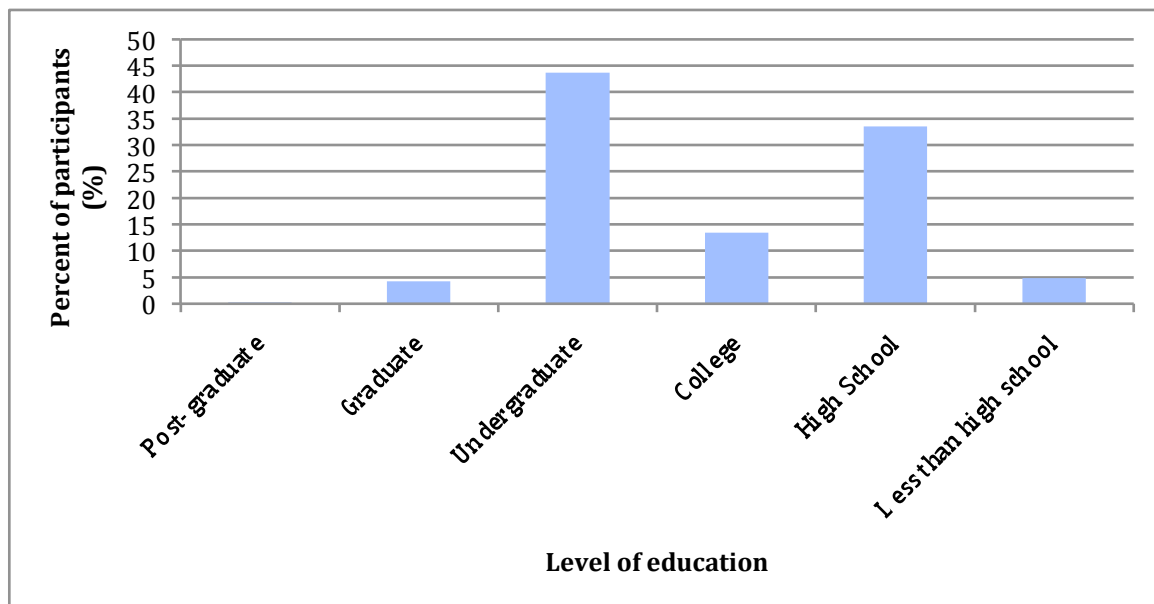
The survey sample had an average age of 29.4 years (SD=11.29), whereas Statistics Canada reports the actual median age of Nova Scotians as 41.8 years (2006). The sample consisted of a range of ages from 18 to 83 years. The sample was slightly younger than the actual population. This difference may indicate a relatively high number of university students in the area at the time of conducting the survey. However, the cross-section of different age groups were representative of various consumer age groups.



**Figure 2.** Age of survey respondents.

#### 4.3.4 Educational Level

Individuals in the overall sample had higher levels of education than those in the 2006 census data. This could be in part due to having a young sample for whom attending university is far more common. However, the sample had significant participation from individuals with various educational backgrounds from each major racial or ethnic group.



**Figure 3.** Highest level of education completed by survey respondents.

#### 4.4 Limitations

As a self-report measure, the findings of this survey are inherently limited in their ability to document actual events. The survey, therefore, measures the perception of consumer-racial-profiling experiences rather than actual occurrences. Conducting a face-to-face survey also limited the data through the effects of social desirability. Nevertheless, based on the patterns unveiled through data analysis, it may be safe to assume that these perceived experiences are appropriate reflections of the actual experiences.

Further, the survey asked about the experience of consumer incidents in the past 12 months, but did not capture details around the context. Therefore, if a participant reported being both followed and searched, we do not know if they experienced these incidents in the same instance or in multiple instances over the 12-month period. This limits the ability to draw direct connections between the different types of experiences.

Lastly, although the survey was conducted in three regions across the province, participation in Sydney and Digby was at much lower levels than in the HRM. Therefore, the data are limited in their ability to look at the differences throughout different geographical areas. A deep analysis of rural and urban differences is also hindered. However, in comparison to the rest of Nova Scotia, the HRM is the home of over 70% of the visible minority population of the province (Statistics Canada, 2007). Consequently, a large sample in HRM still provides greater representation of racialized groups.

## 5 Survey Findings

---

An overview of the survey findings presents the data collected through the survey that was administered between March 12 and April 13, 2012. All data from the 1,190 completed surveys were entered into IBM SPSS, a statistical database program. The data were double-checked for proper entry, and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The relationship between the demographic factors and consumer incidents was explored through cross-tabulation tests.

### 5.1 Survey Question Results

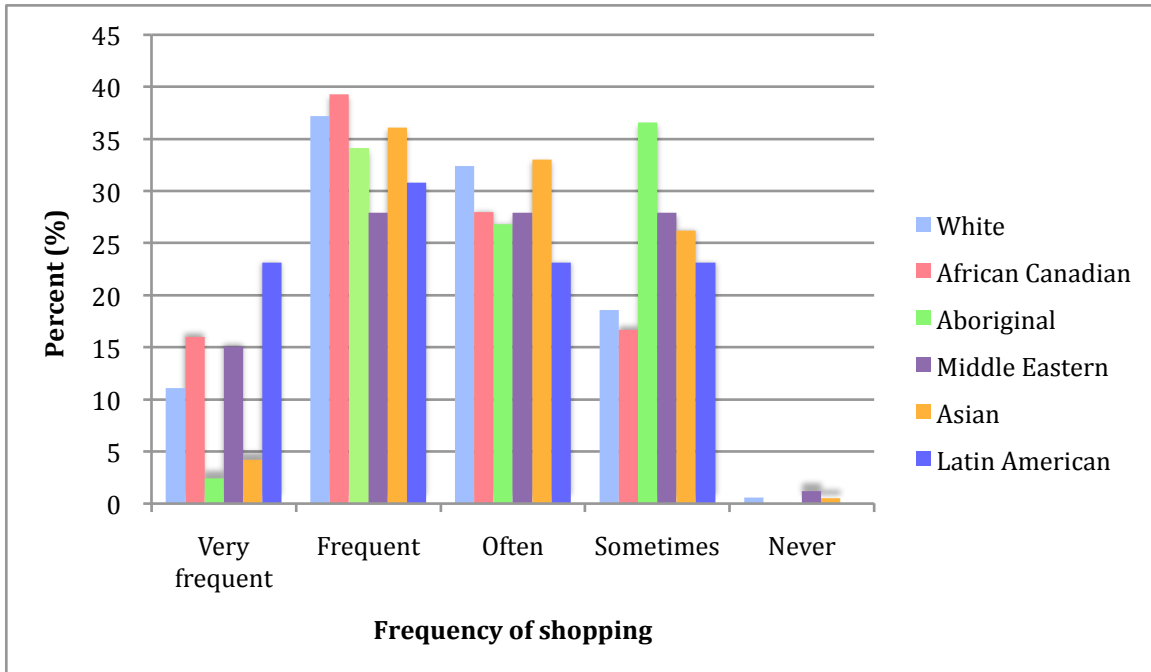
The survey results were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Significance values were calculated through *chi-square tests*, with the purpose of assessing the relationship between the demographic factors collected and the experience of consumer incidents. Chi-square tests calculate balanced probability; they compare the statistical likelihood of an event occurring based on chance alone to what actually happened in the survey. Complete tables with the results of the chi square significance tests are shown in appendix C.

The survey questions that were posed by the research assistants are listed below together with figures and summaries that illustrate the results. The actual survey is shown in appendix B.

### 5.1.1 Question 1—Shopping Frequency

*“How often do you shop for goods and services?”*

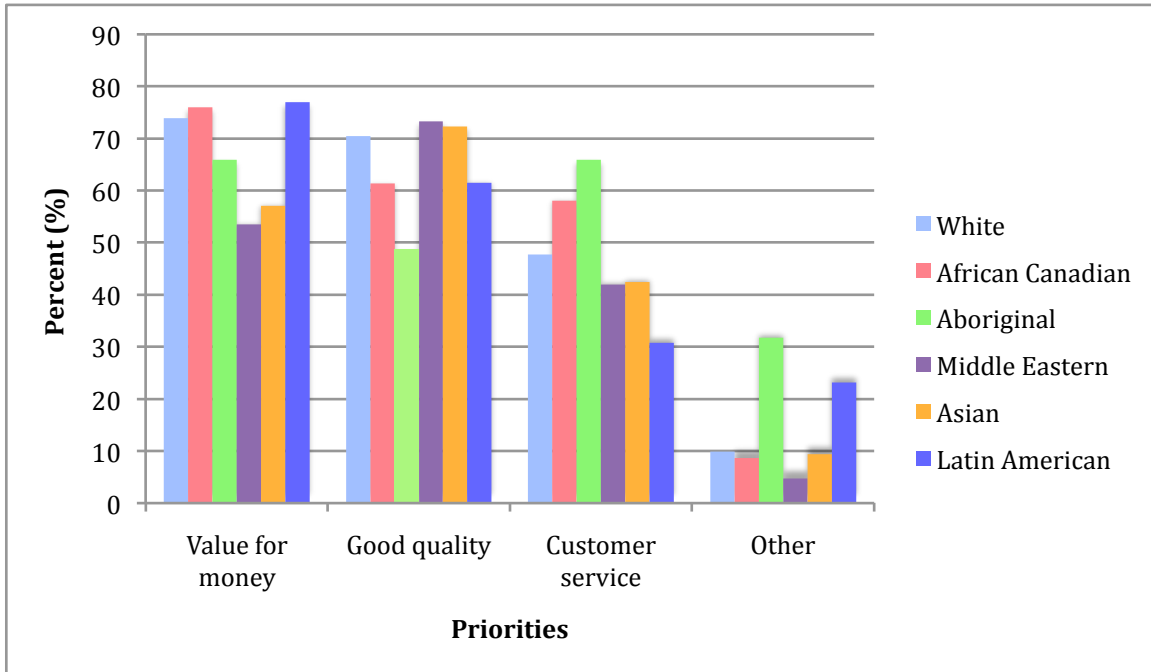


**Figure 4.** Frequency of consumers’ shopping for goods and services shown by race or ethnicity.

- The majority of respondents, regardless of race or ethnicity, self-reported their shopping behaviour as frequent (36.5%) or often (31.3%).
- African Canadian respondents indicated the highest frequency of shopping behaviour (16.0% very frequent, 39.3% frequent).
- Aboriginal respondents reported the lowest frequency of shopping behaviour (2.4% very frequent, 34.1% frequent)

### 5.1.2 Question 2—Choosing Where to Shop

*“How do you choose where to shop for goods and services? Choose all that apply.”*

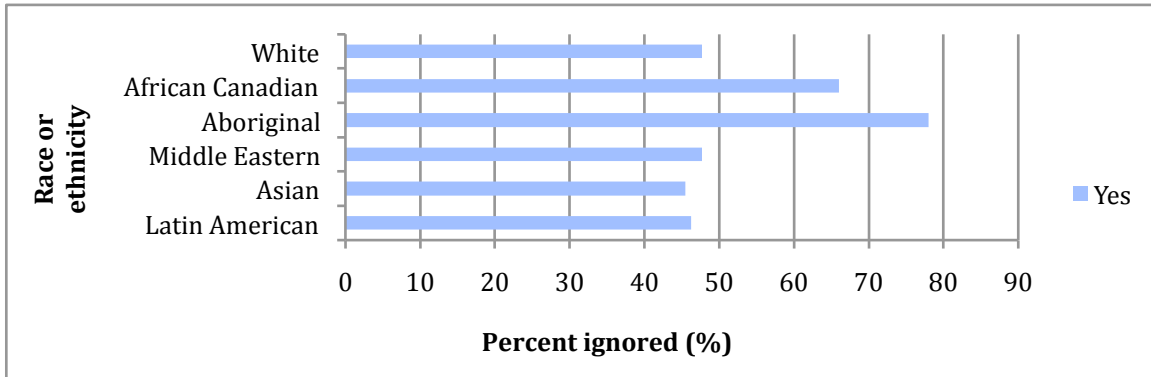


**Figure 5.** Consumers' priorities for choosing where to shop for goods and services, listed by race or ethnicity.

- Customer service was rated most important to Aboriginal respondents (65.9%) and African Canadian respondents (58.0%).
- White respondents reported choosing where to shop primarily based on value for money (73.9%) and good quality (70.4%).
- Aboriginal respondents reported choosing to shop primarily based on customer service (65.9%), value for money (65.9%), and other factors (31.7%), citing cultural goods and local stores.
- African Canadian respondents emphasized shopping based on value for money (76.0%), good quality (61.3%), and customer service (58.0%).
- Of the “other” responses from all participants, 70% were related to the location of the store and distance from home.

### 5.1.3 Question 3—Being Ignored

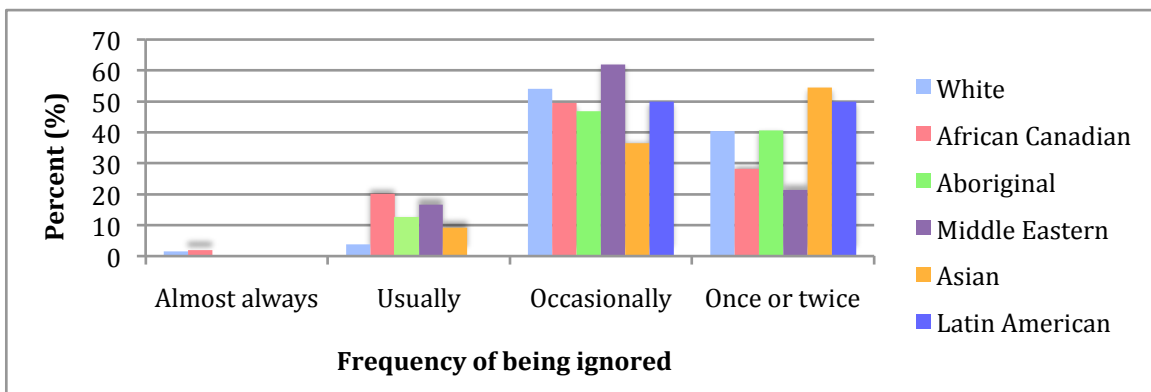
*“In the past year, have you been ignored by staff while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 6.** Percentage of survey participants who reported being ignored by staff.

- Being ignored was a common experience for many consumers (50.7%).
- Aboriginal (78.0%) and African Canadian (66.0%) respondents reported being ignored more frequently than did White respondents (47.7%).
- White (47.7%), Middle Eastern (47.7%), Latin American (46.2%), and Asian (45.5%) consumers all reported similar prevalence rates of being ignored as a consumer.

**If “yes,” then “How often?”**



**Figure 7.** Frequency of survey participants being ignored by staff or security personnel.

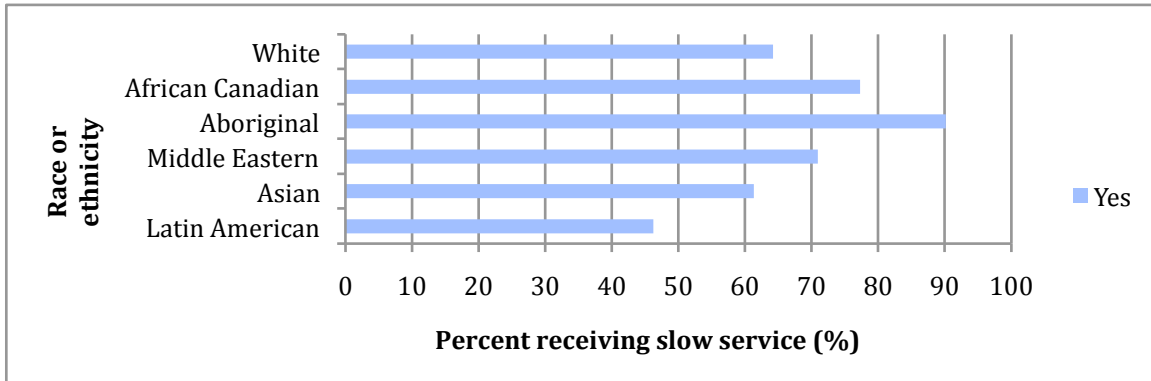
- Approximately half (50.9%) of the respondents experienced being ignored occasionally in the past 12 months.



- African Canadian (20.2%), Middle Eastern (16.7%), Aboriginal (12.5%), and Asian (9.1%) respondents reported being ignored usually, compared to only 3.8% of White respondents who reported this.
- African Canadian respondents (22.2%) reported being ignored usually or more often, compared to Middle Eastern (16.7%), Aboriginal (12.5%), and White (5.3%) respondents who reported this.

### 5.1.4 Question 4—Receiving Slow Service

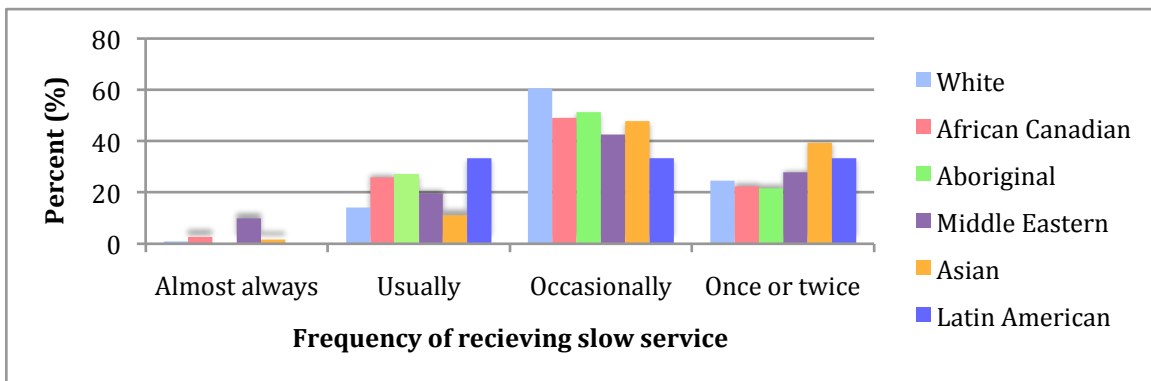
*“In the past year, have you received slow service while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 8.** Percentage of survey participants who reported receiving slow service.

- Receiving slow service was a common issue for many respondents (66.6%).
- Aboriginal (90.2%), African Canadian (77.3%), and Middle Eastern (70.9%) respondents reported experiencing higher prevalence rates of slow service in the past 12 months, than did White respondents (64.2%).

**If “yes,” then “How often?”**

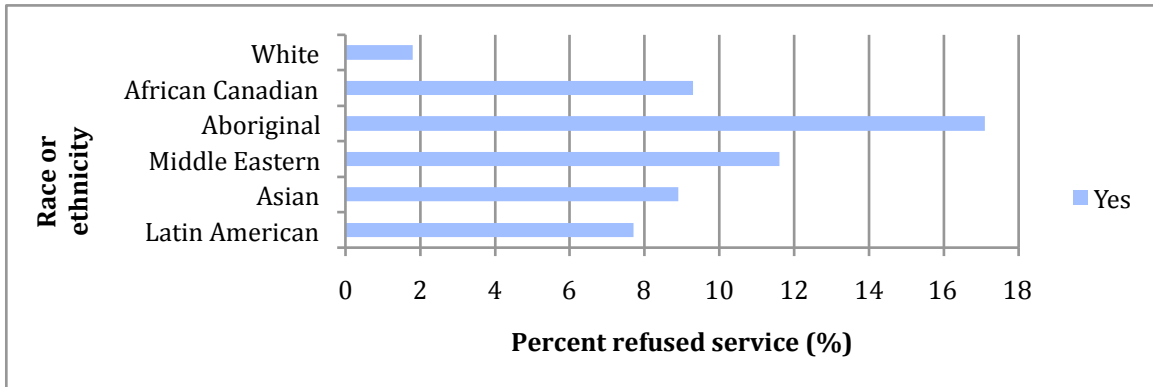


**Figure 9.** Frequency of survey participants receiving slow service.

- The majority of respondents (54.9%) reported experiencing slow service occasionally in the past 12 months.
- Middle Eastern (29.5%), African Canadian (28.5%), and Aboriginal (27.0%) respondents reported experiencing slow service usually or almost always, compared to only 15.0% of White respondents who reported this.

### 5.1.5 Question 5—Being Refused Service

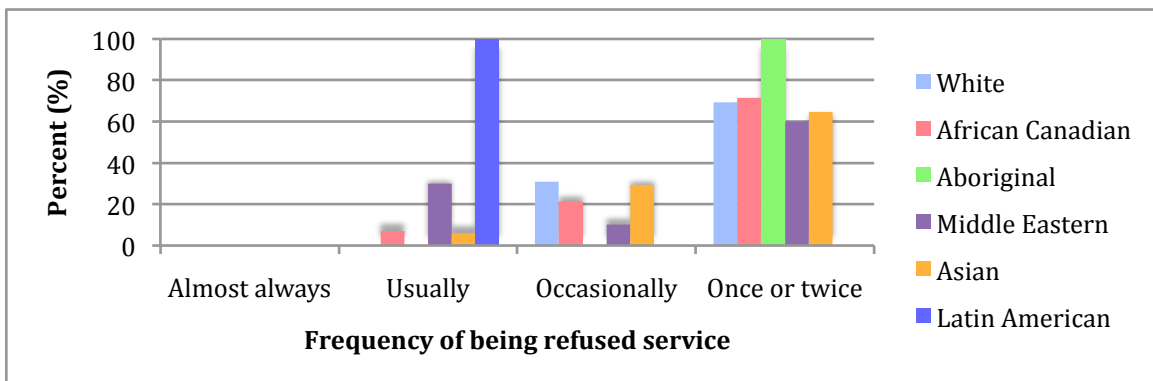
*“In the past year, have you been refused service while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 10.** Percentage of survey participants who reported being refused service.

- Overall, 5.2% of respondents self-reported being refused service as a consumer in the past 12 months.
- Aboriginal (17.1%), Middle Eastern (11.6%), African Canadian (9.3%), Asian (8.9%), and Latin American (7.7%) respondents reported greater prevalence rates of being refused service than did White respondents (1.8%).

**If “yes,” then “How often?”**

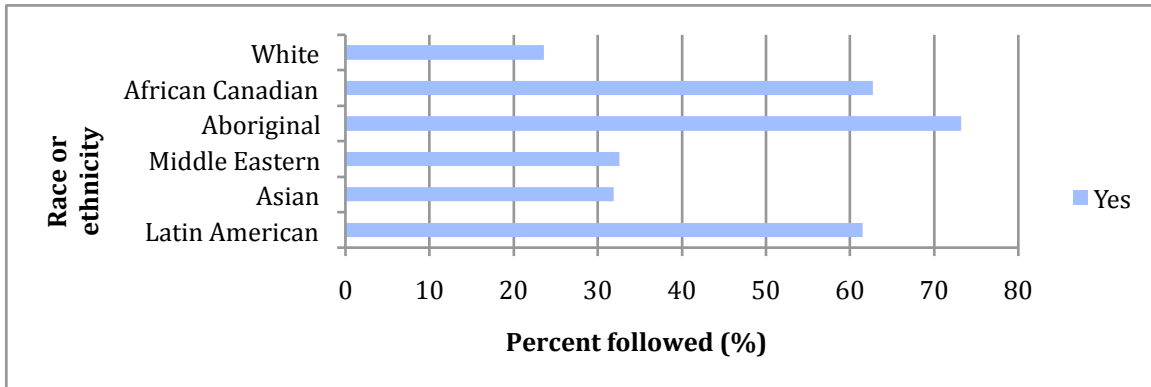


**Figure 11.** Frequency of survey participants being refused service.

- Overall, being refused service was experienced once or twice by respondents (69.4%).
- However, Latin American (100%), Middle Eastern (30%), and African Canadian (7.1%) respondents reported experiencing being refused service usually.

### 5.1.6 Question 6—Being Followed in a Store

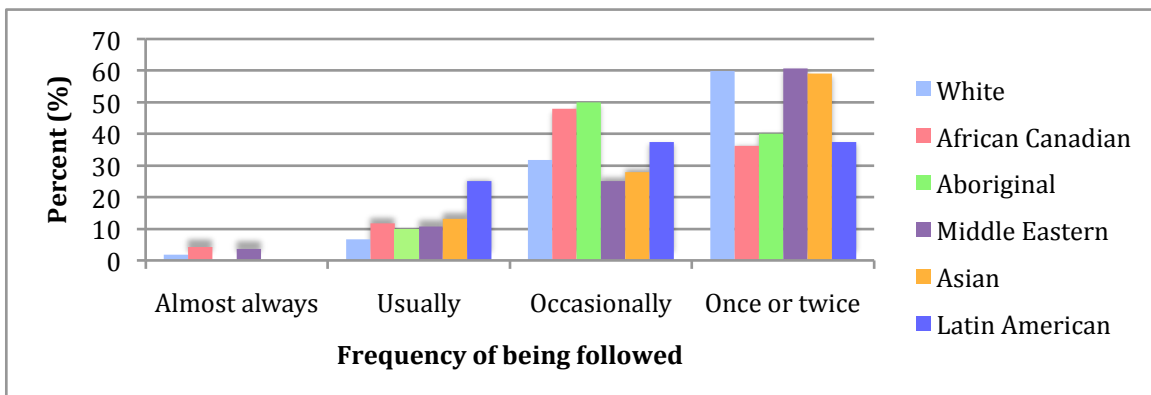
*“In the past year, have you been followed around by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 12.** Percentage of survey participants who reported being followed.

- Overall, 32.6% of respondents reported being followed as a consumer in the past 12 months.
- Aboriginal respondents reported the highest prevalence of being followed (73.2%), followed by African Canadian (62.7%) and Latin American (61.5%) respondents.
- Only 23.6% of White respondents reported being followed.

If “yes,” then “How often?”



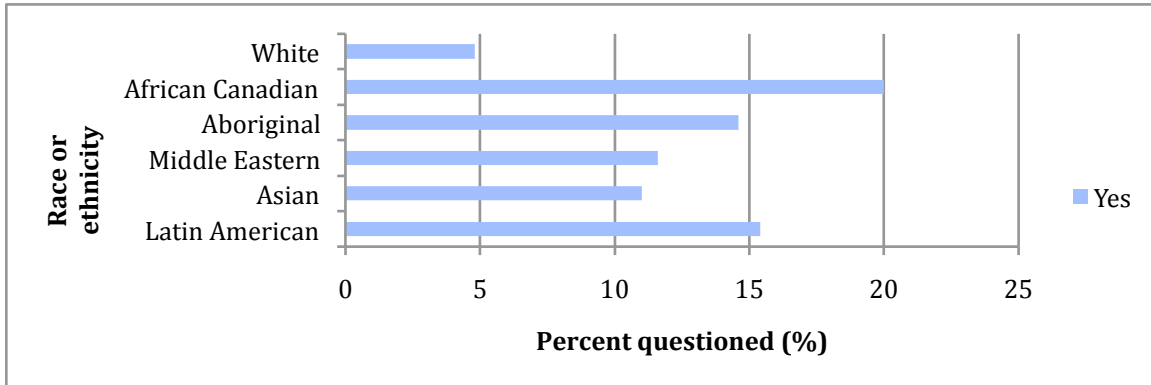
**Figure 13.** Frequency of survey participants being followed.

- Overall, the majority of respondents (52.1%) reported being followed as a consumer once or twice in the past 12 months.
- Aboriginal (50%) and African Canadian (47.9%) respondents reported being followed occasionally.

- Overall, Latin American (25%), African Canadian (16.0%), Middle Eastern (14.3%), and Aboriginal (10%) respondents, report being followed as a consumer usually or almost always.

### 5.1.7 Question 7—Being Questioned about Ability to Afford a Product or Service

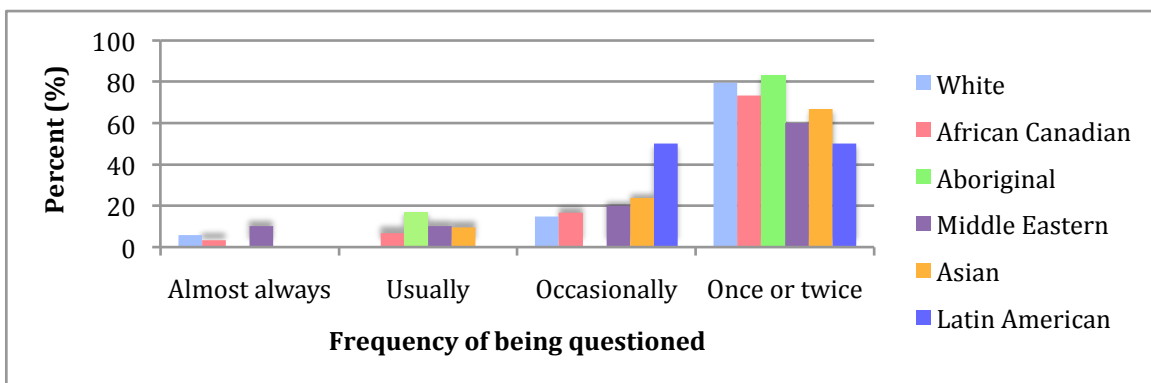
*“In the past year, have you been questioned about your ability to afford a product by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 14.** Percentage of survey participants who reported being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service.

- Overall, 8.7% of respondents reported being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service in the past 12 months.
- African Canadian (20.0%), Latin American (15.4%), Aboriginal (14.6%), Middle Eastern (11.6%), and Asian (11.0%) respondents reported significantly higher prevalence rates of being questioned about their ability to afford than did White respondents (4.8%).

If “yes,” then “How often?”



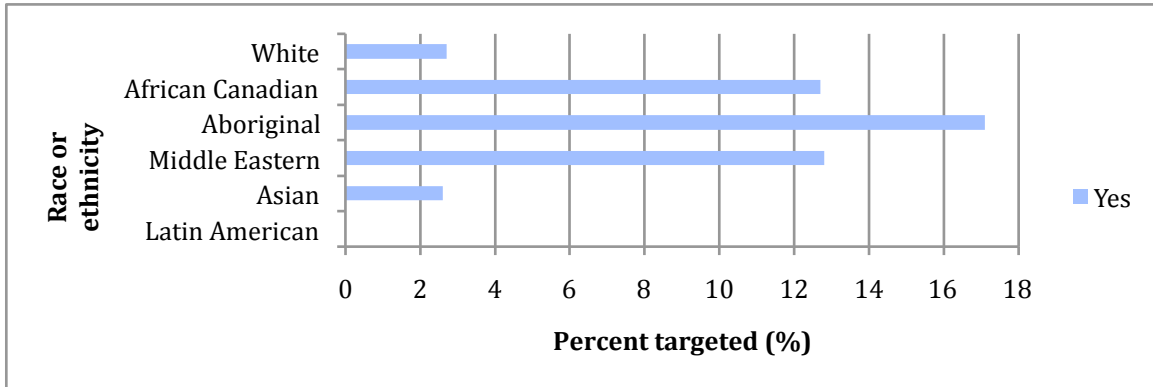
**Figure 15.** Frequency of survey participants being questioned about ability to afford a product or service.

- The majority (72.8%) of respondents reported being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service once or twice in the past 12 months.

- Middle Eastern (20%), Aboriginal (16.7%), African Canadian (10.0%), and Asian (9.5%) respondents reported being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service usually or almost always, compared to only 5.9% of White respondents.

### 5.1.8 Question 8—Being Targeted for Offensive Language

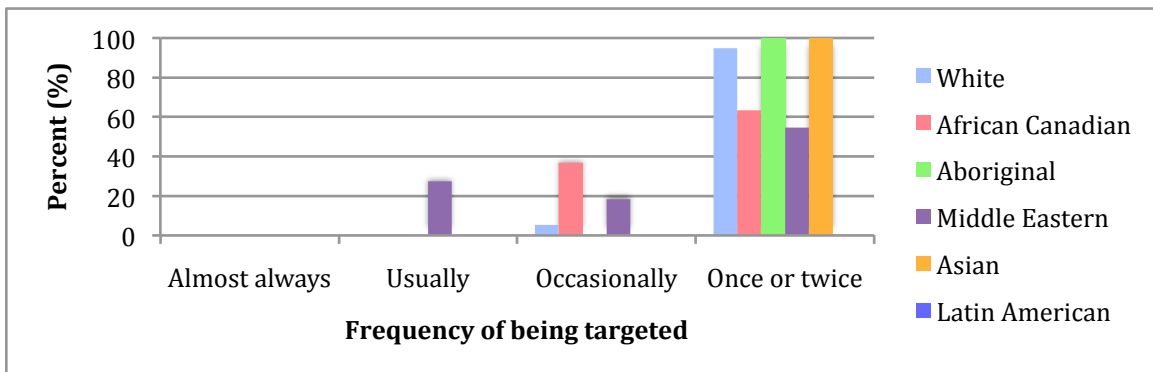
*“In the past year, have you been the target of offensive language used by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 16.** Percentage of survey participants who reported being the target of offensive language.

- Overall, 5.1% of respondents had been the targets of offensive language as a consumer in the past 12 months.
- Aboriginal (17.1%) respondents reported the highest prevalence, followed by Middle Eastern (12.8%) and African Canadian (12.7%) respondents.
- Only 2.7% of White respondents reported being the target of offensive language.

If “yes,” then “How often?”



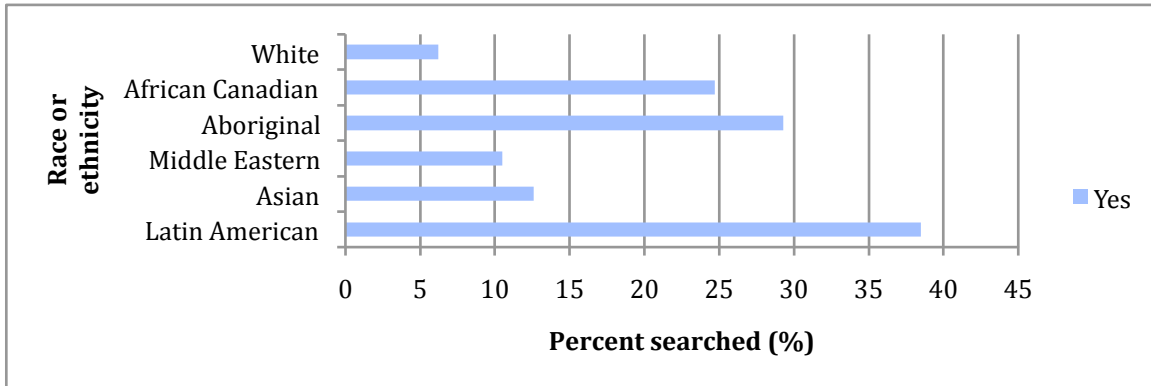
**Figure 17.** Frequency of survey participants being the target of offensive language.

- Overall, being the target of offensive language was reported as occurring once or twice (78.7%) in the past 12 months.
- However, Middle Eastern (45.5%) and African Canadian (36.8%) respondents reported being the target of offensive language occasionally or usually.



### 5.1.9 Question 9—Being Searched

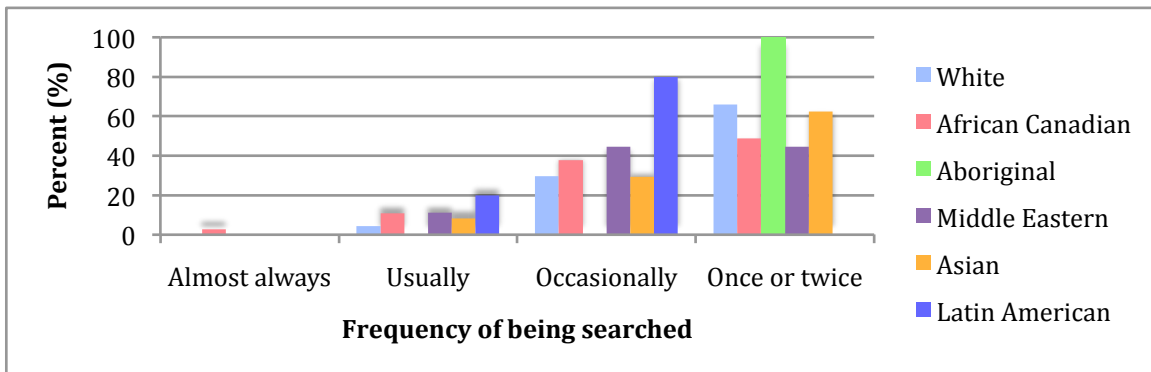
*“In the past year, were you or your belongings searched by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 18.** Percentage of survey participants who reported being searched.

- Overall, 11.0% of respondents had been searched as a consumer in the past 12 months.
- Latin American (38.5%), Aboriginal (29.3%), and African Canadian (24.7%) respondents reported significantly higher prevalence rates of being searched than did White respondents (6.2%).

**If “yes,” then “How often?”**

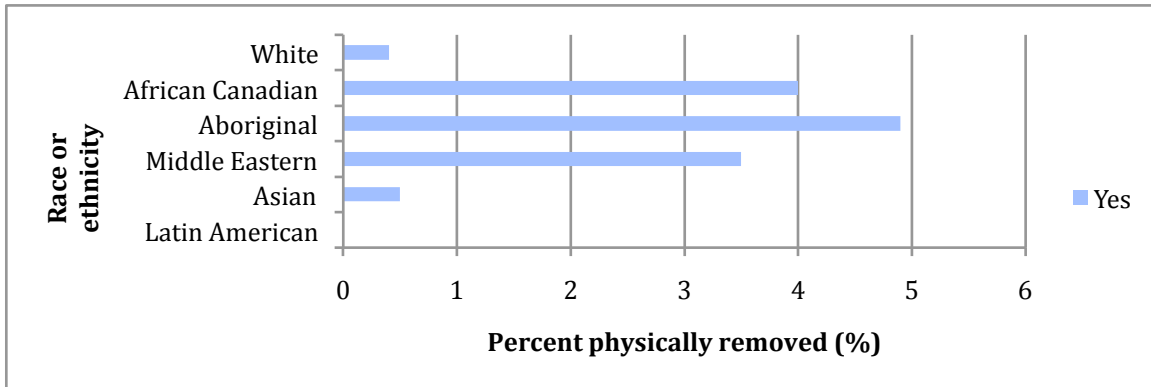


**Figure 19.** Frequency of survey participants being searched.

- Overall, the majority (59.5%) of respondents reported being searched without just cause once or twice in the past 12 months.
- However, Latin American (100%), Middle Eastern (55.5%), and African Canadian (51.3%) respondents reported being searched as a consumer in the past 12 months more than once or twice, as compared to just 34.1% of White respondents who reported this.

### 5.1.10 Question 10—Being Physically Removed from a Store

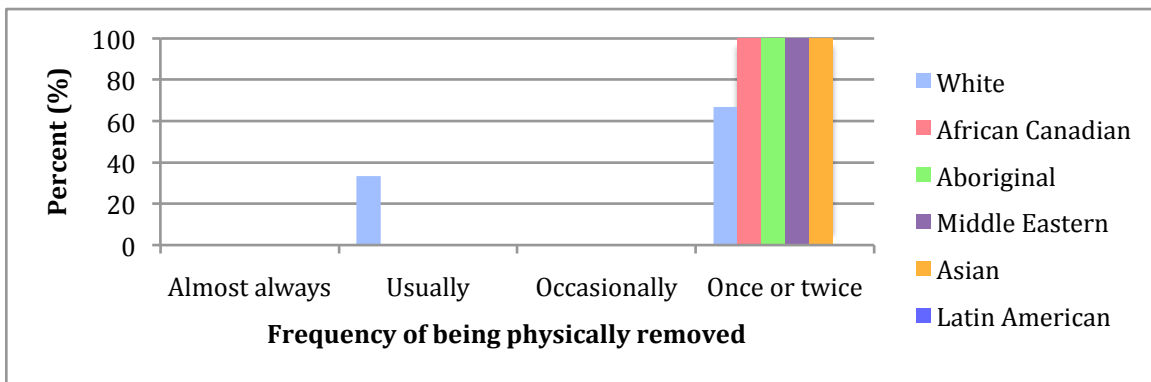
*“In the past year, have you been physically removed from a store by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 20.** Percentage of survey participants who reported being physically removed from a store.

- Overall, 1.3% of respondents reported being physically removed from a store in the past 12 months.
- Aboriginal (4.9%), African Canadian (4.0%), and Middle Eastern (3.5%) respondents reported being physically removed from a store.
- Only 0.4% of White respondents reported being physically removed from a store.

If “yes,” then “How often?”

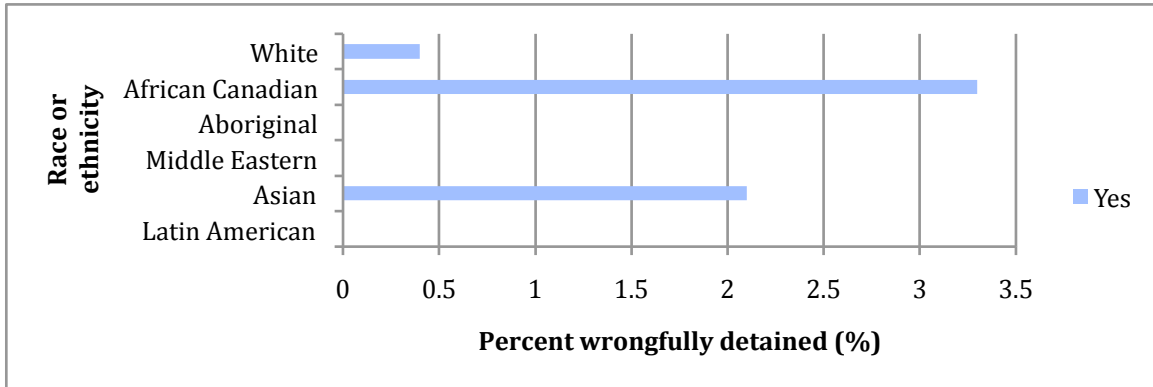


**Figure 21.** Frequency of survey participants being physically removed from a store.

- Overall, being physically removed from a store was found to be an experience that predominantly occurred once or twice in the past 12 months.

### 5.1.11 Question 11—Being Wrongfully Detained

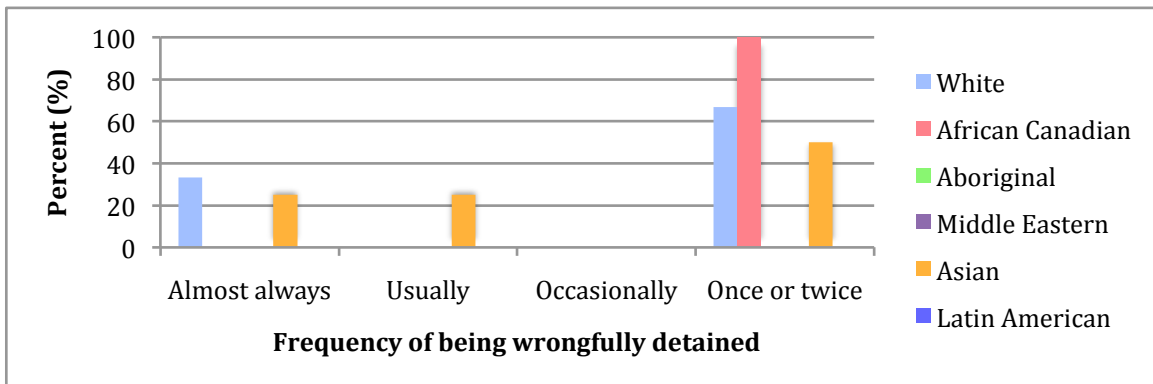
*“In the past 12 months, have you been wrongfully detained (i.e., detained without possession of stolen goods) while shopping for goods and services?”*



**Figure 22.** Percentage of survey participants who reported being wrongfully detained.

- Overall, 1.0% of respondents indicated being wrongfully detained in the past 12 months.
- African Canadian (3.3%) and Asian (2.1%) respondents reported being wrongfully detained, compared to only 0.4% of White respondents.

**If “yes,” then “How often?”**



**Figure 23.** Frequency of survey participants being wrongfully detained.

- Overall, the experience of being wrongfully detained was generally reported as occurring once or twice in the past 12 months.

## 5.2 Survey Analysis

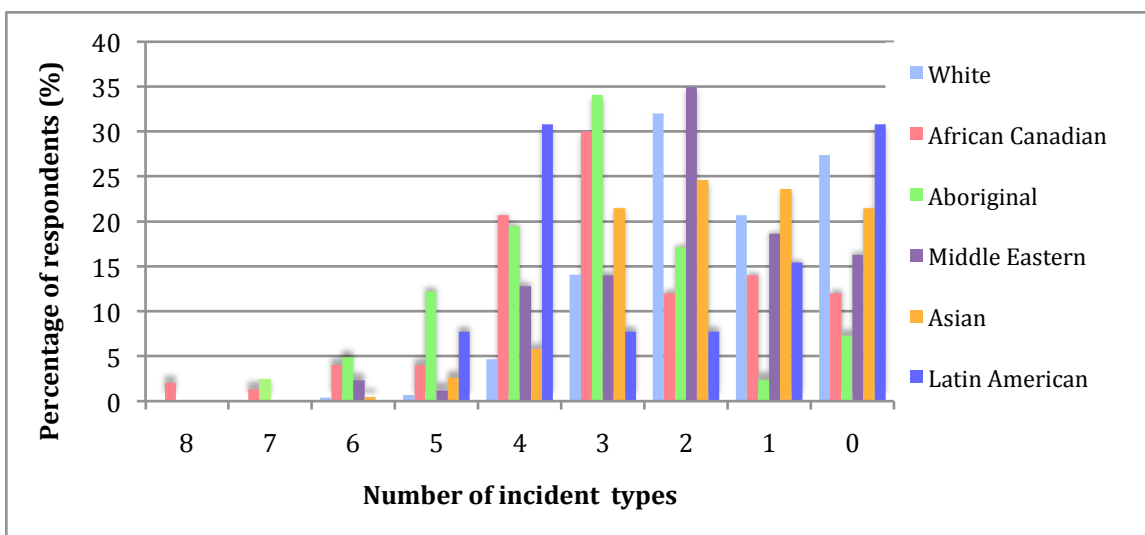
The following section provides an analysis of the survey results and discusses the patterns that emerged.

### 5.2.1 *Prevalence of Consumer Racial Profiling*

Overall, the survey data demonstrate that all Nova Scotians experience significant incidents as consumers regardless of their race or ethnicity, age, gender, or educational background. The data show that 77.0% of all respondents reported experiencing at least one type of consumer incident associated with consumer racial profiling in the previous 12 months. Of all respondents, 29.7% reported experiencing three or more types of incidents. Further, the data show a clear and statistically significant relationship between a person's race or ethnicity and their experience of these incidents.

The survey results suggest that consumer incidents are more prevalent and frequent for racialized persons than for White persons (see table 8, in appendix C). *Prevalence* refers to the number of individuals within a specific group who have experienced a specific type of consumer incident. In all nine criteria measured, African Canadian, Aboriginal, and Middle Eastern respondents consistently reported significantly higher prevalence rates, and overall, more frequent experiences of consumer incidents, than did White respondents.

Racialized respondents reported not only experiencing greater prevalence rates, but also more types of different incidents in the past 12 months than did White respondents. Overall, 48.3% of racialized respondents reported experiencing at least three of the nine consumer incidents measured, and 26.8% reported four or more types. In comparison, only 19.9% of White respondents reported experiencing three or more types, and just 5.8% reported four or more types of consumer incidents in the past 12 months.



**Figure 24.** Number of types of consumer incidents experienced by respondents

Race or ethnicity was the most significant demographic factor in determining whether respondents had experienced consumer incidents (see appendix C). Educational level also showed statistical significance for five of the nine incidents measured:

- receiving slow service
- being refused service
- being questioned about ability to afford
- being targeted for offensive language
- being searched

However, since a person's educational level is not a visible feature, it is not a direct factor in consumer profiling. Educational level has been linked to class and socioeconomic status; however, the relationship between educational level and consumer incidents may indicate consumer profiling that is based on classism. This relationship between consumer discrimination and class needs further exploration.

Although this research did not examine the intention behind consumer incidents, earlier research has found that active consciousness and intent do not need to exist for a person to exhibit discriminatory behaviour towards another (Holroyd, 2012). Therefore, regardless of intention, these subjective and explicit consumer incidents still carry with them the impact of racism and discrimination upon the consumer.

### 5.2.2 Frequency of Consumer Racial Profiling

The survey data around frequency of consumer-racial-profiling incidents complemented the prevalence rates. *Frequency* refers to how often individuals

reported experiencing a specific type of consumer incident. Overall, the consumer incidents measured were primarily found to occur only once or twice in the past 12 months. However, the subjective incidents (being ignored, and receiving slow service) were primarily reported as occurring occasionally.

More importantly, as shown in appendix C, a respondent's race or ethnicity was found to be statistically significant for the frequency of being ignored (Q3A), receiving slow service (Q4A), being refused service (Q5A), being followed (Q6A), and being the target of offensive language (Q8A). Racialized respondents reported, on average, higher frequencies of incidents than did White respondents. The data, therefore, suggest that racialized persons experience these consumer incidents more frequently. In particular, African Canadian, Aboriginal, and Middle Eastern respondents reported significantly higher frequencies of being refused service, being followed, and being the target of offensive language.

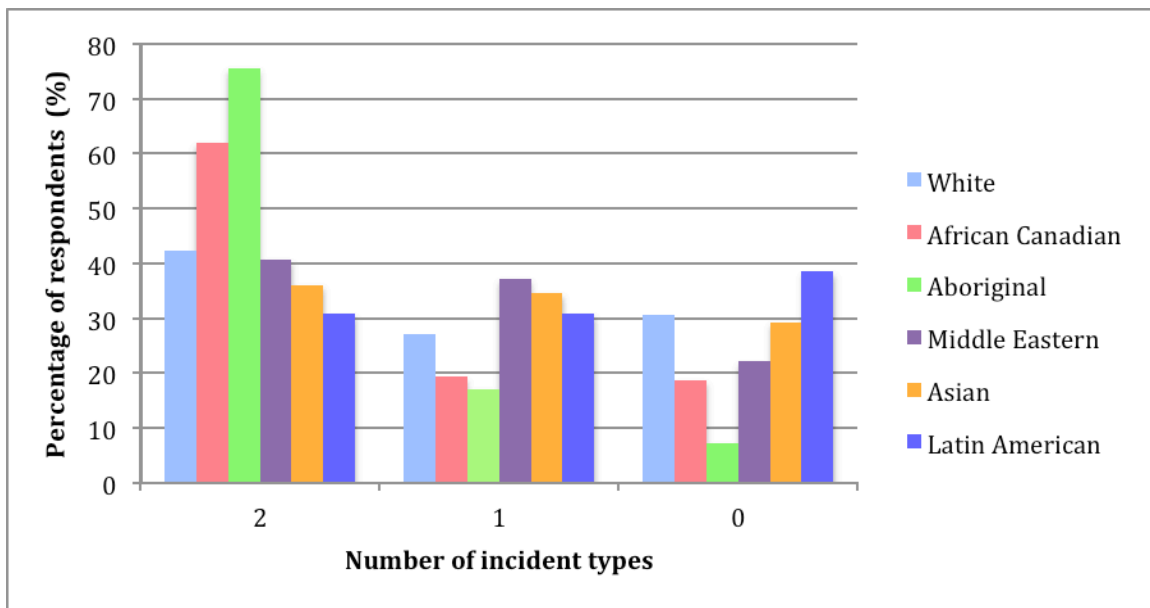
### 5.2.3 Subjective Consumer Incidents

*Subjective* consumer incidents refer to experiences of subtle forms of differential treatment. They do not require direct interaction between the consumer and the staff or security personnel. For the purpose of the survey, two of the incidents measured (being ignored, and receiving slow service) are defined as subjective experiences. These experiences are largely interpretive. A consumer comes to understand that they are being ignored or are receiving slow service by interpreting the behaviour of staff or security personnel. Consumer definitions of what constitutes being ignored or receiving slow service vary greatly; this dissimilarity contrasts with the more predictable understandings of being refused service, followed, searched, and so on. With subjective consumer incidents, there is room for different consumer interpretations of whether one is receiving slow service or being ignored. Consequently, claims of discrimination and racism are much more difficult to prove; there is often no direct interaction that demonstrates intent.

As mentioned above, the experiences of being ignored and receiving slow service were common experiences for respondents from all racial and ethnic groups. However, the survey results indicate that the relationship between race or ethnicity and the experience of subjective consumer incidents is statistically significant ( $p$  value = .000, effect size = .204). The evidence suggests that racialized groups, particularly African Canadians and Aboriginal people, experience subjective incidents at a higher prevalence and frequency rates than do White respondents. This discrepancy suggests that race and ethnicity play a role. This is important because it rejects the notion that racialized individuals are being too sensitive or overreacting to the body language and behaviour of retail staff.

Figure 25 examines the number of different types of subjective incidents that each racial or ethnic group experienced. This information was gathered by grouping individuals who had experienced being ignored, receiving slow service, or both.

Figure 25 highlights the finding that more Aboriginal and African Canadian respondents report experiencing both types of subjective incidents than do other major racial or ethnic groups.



**Figure 25.** Number of types of subjective consumer incidents experienced by respondents.

#### 5.2.4 Explicit Consumer Incidents

The survey results also demonstrate the prevalence of consumer incidents that are more explicit than subjective experiences. In this project, *explicit* incidents consist of consumers being

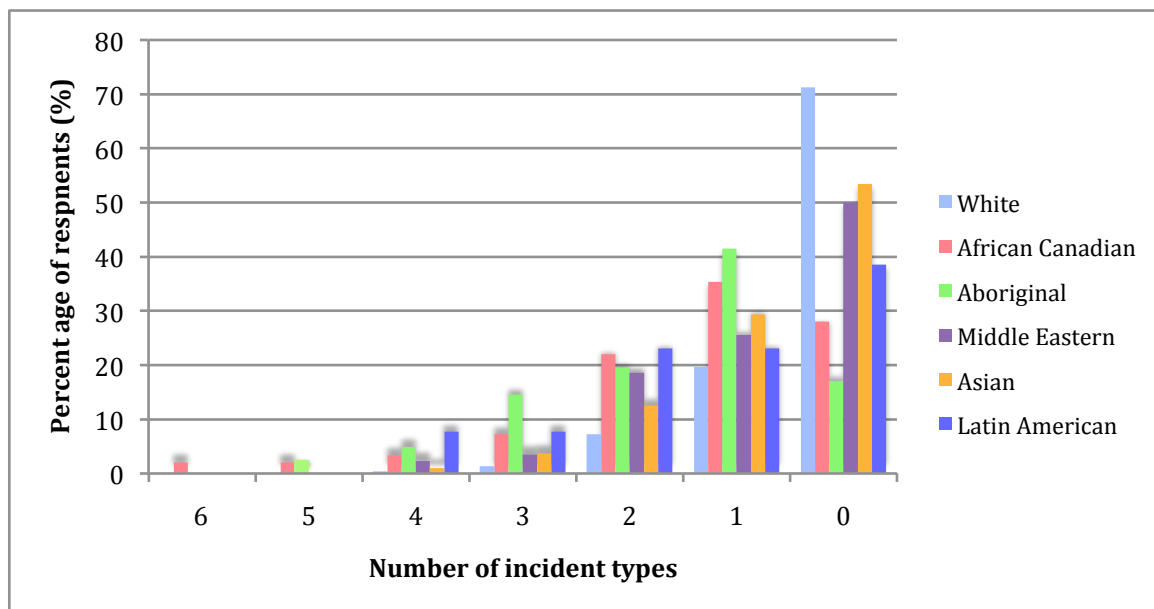
- refused service (Q5)
- followed (Q6)
- questioned about their ability to afford a product or service (Q7)
- targeted for offensive language (Q8)
- searched (Q9)
- physically removed from the store (Q10)
- wrongfully detained (Q11)

These experiences require explicit behaviour by the staff or security personnel towards the consumer. The explicit behaviour results in direct interaction, leaving less room for different interpretations of what constitutes discriminatory treatment.

The survey results demonstrate a statistically significant relationship between a respondent's race or ethnicity and their experience of explicit consumer incidents

( $p$  value = .000, effect size = .416). The survey results clearly show that explicit forms of consumer incidents are significantly more prevalent in racialized groups. Only 28.8% of White respondents reported experiencing at least one type of explicit incident in the past 12 months, and the majority of them reported experiencing only one type. In contrast, racialized respondents reported significantly more incidents: 82.9% of Aboriginal, 72.0% of African Canadian, 61.5% of Latin American, 50.0% of Middle Eastern, and 46.6% of Asian respondents reported experiencing at least one type of explicit event in the past 12 months.

Figure 26 examines the types of explicit forms of incidents experienced by respondents from different racial or ethnic backgrounds. The information was gathered by calculating the responses to questions Q5–Q11. The figure highlights a pattern of differential treatment of racialized respondents.



**Figure 26.** Number of types of explicit consumer incidents experienced by respondents.

When we examine the data by looking at respondents who had experienced at least two explicit incidents, we can see that

- Aboriginal (41.4%), African Canadian (36.6%), and Middle Eastern (24.4%) respondents reported experiencing two or more explicit events in the past 12 months compared to 9.0% of White respondents.
- Aboriginal (7.3%) and African Canadian (7.3%) respondents reported experiencing four or more explicit experiences in the past 12 months compared to 0.4% of White respondents.



### 5.2.5 Relationship between Subjective and Explicit Incidents

While this research does not explore the intention or motivation behind consumer incidents, more insight can be gathered by examining the relationship between explicit and subjective incidents. Table 2 demonstrates this relationship.

<b>Table 2</b>								
<b>Respondents' experience of both explicit and subjective consumer incidents. (N = 1,190)</b>								
		<b>Number of types of explicit consumer incidents experienced</b>						
		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Number of types of subjective consumer incidents experienced</b>	<b>0</b>	23.0%	2.8%	1.3%	0.4%	-	-	-
	<b>1</b>	16.7%	7.1%	2.9%	0.9%	0.2%	0.1%	-
	<b>2</b>	19.4%	14.6%	7.3%	1.8%	1.1%	0.3%	0.3%

**Note.** N = number of respondents. Percentages show the results for all survey participants who experienced various combinations of explicit and subjective incidents.

$p = .000^*$ , effect size = .348

These results demonstrate a statistically significant relationship between subjective and explicit consumer incidents regardless of one's race or ethnicity. Table 2 demonstrates that respondents who experienced one or more types of explicit consumer incident were more likely to report experiencing subjective incidents as compared to those who reported experiencing no explicit forms of consumer incidents.

These data may indicate heightened awareness of customer service and treatment that is instilled in consumers after experiencing an explicit consumer incident. However, the data may also indicate patterns of staff or security personnel behaviour; in other words, a consumer who experiences subjective incidents may be more likely to be exposed to explicit consumer incidents.

To explore this relationship in more depth, the direct relationship between subjective and explicit events was analyzed. Table 3 highlights the statistical relationship between the subjective and explicit types of consumer incidents measured.

<b>Table 3</b>		
<b>Statistical relationship between subjective and explicit consumer incidents.</b>		
<b>Consumer incidents</b>	<b><i>p</i> value</b>	<b>Phi effect size</b>
Ignored & refused service	.000*	.110
Ignored & followed	.000*	.328
Ignored & ability to afford	.001*	.094
Ignored & offensive language	.000*	.115
Ignored & searched	.000*	.170
Ignored & physically removed	.077	.051
Ignored & wrongfully detained	.004*	.083
Slow service & refused service	.190	.038
Slow service & followed	.000*	.273
Slow service & ability to afford	.104	.047
Slow service & offensive language	.220	.036
Slow service & searched	.000*	.101
Slow service & physically removed	.575	.016
Slow service & wrongfully detained	.533	.018

**Note.** \*statistically significant:  $p < 0.05$

The relationship between subjective and explicit experiences was also explored for being followed and the other explicit incidents. Being followed can be a subjective experience. However, many instances of being followed are explicit. Because extra scrutiny is placed on consumers who are followed, we would expect that they are

also more likely to experience one of the other explicit incidents. Therefore, it is important to look at the relationship between being followed and other explicit forms of consumer incidents. Table 4 highlights this relationship.

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Statistical relationship between being followed and experiencing explicit consumer incidents.</b>		
<b>Consumer incidents</b>	<b><i>p</i> value</b>	<b>Phi effect size</b>
Followed & refused service	.000*	.184
Followed & ability to afford	.000*	.181
Followed & offensive language	.000*	.220
Followed & searched	.000*	.277
Followed & physically detained	.023*	.066
Followed & wrongfully detained	.000*	.109

**Note.** \*statistically significant:  $p < 0.05$

In examining tables 2–4, we can see a clear relationship between the experiences of being ignored and followed (subjective incidents) with explicit incidents. Regardless of race or ethnicity, all respondents who had experienced being ignored or followed as a consumer in the prior 12 months had significantly higher rates of experiencing explicit consumer incidents as compared to those who had not been ignored or followed. Rarely did a participant report experiencing an explicit form of consumer incident without also reporting experiencing a subjective incident. This means that those who had experienced more incidents of subjective experiences were also the ones who experienced more incidents of explicit experiences.

We can look at the relationship between being followed, being ignored, and receiving slow service with experiencing explicit incidents of consumer racial profiling.

### *Being Followed and Experiencing Explicit Incidents*

Respondents reported on their experiences of being followed and experiencing various explicit incidents.

Of the respondents who reported being followed

**23.5% also reported being searched without just cause.**

- Only 5.0% of respondents who reported **not** being followed reported being searched without just cause.

**16.0% also reported being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service.**

- Only 5.1% of respondents who reported **not** being followed reported being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service.

**12.1% also reported being the target of offensive language.**

- Only 1.7% of respondents who reported **not** being followed reported being the target of offensive language.

**2.6% also reported being wrongfully detained.**

- Only 0.2% of respondents who reported **not** being followed reported being wrongfully detained.

**2.3% also reported being physically removed from a store.**

- Only 0.7% of respondents who reported **not** being followed reported being physically removed from a store.

### *Being Ignored and Experiencing Explicit Events*

Respondents reported on their experiences of being ignored and experiencing various explicit incidents.

Of the respondents who reported being ignored

**16.3% also reported being searched.**

- Only 5.6% of respondents who reported **not** being ignored reported being searched.

**11.3% also reported being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service.**

- Only 6.0% of respondents who reported **not** being ignored reported being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service.

**7.6% also reported being the target of offensive language.**

- Only 2.6% of respondents who reported **not** being ignored reported being the target of offensive language.

**1.8% also reported being wrongfully detained.**

- Only 0.2% of respondents who reported **not** being ignored reported being wrongfully detained.

***Receiving Slow Service and Experiencing Explicit Events***

Respondents reported on their experiences of receiving slow service and experiencing various explicit incidents.

Of the respondents who reported receiving slow service

**41.7% also reported being followed.**

- Only 14.6% of respondents who reported **not** receiving slow service reported being followed.

**13.3% also reported being searched without just cause.**

- Only 6.5% of respondents who reported **not** receiving slow service reported being searched without just cause.

We can examine these subjective-explicit relationships together with the respondents' race and ethnicity. When we do, we see that each racial or ethnic group that has experienced both a subjective and explicit incident demonstrates similar differences as compared to those who have only experienced an explicit incident. A detailed table outlining these relationships can be found in appendix D.

For example, we can look at the relationship between being followed (Q6) and being questioned about one's ability to afford a product or service (Q7), while also using racial and ethnic groupings to separate the respondents.

<b>Table 5</b>						
<b>Relationship between being followed and being questioned about one's ability to afford a product or service.</b>						
	<b>Followed</b>			<b>NOT followed</b>		
	<b>Total N followed</b>	<b>N followed &amp; questioned</b>	<b>% followed &amp; questioned</b>	<b>Total N NOT followed</b>	<b>N NOT followed but questioned</b>	<b>% NOT followed but questioned</b>
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	167	19	11%	542	15	3%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	94	24	26%	56	6	11%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	30	5	17%	11	1	9%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	28	5	18%	58	5	8%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	61	7	12%	130	14	11%
<b>Total (N = 1177)</b>	380	62	16%	797	41	5%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

Table 5 shows that each racial or ethnic group has a similar pattern and level of difference between their subjective and explicit consumer incidents. The overall pattern is that having subjective experiences increases the likelihood of also experiencing explicit incidents; this is demonstrated for both racialized groups and White respondents. The main and crucial difference is that racialized groups experience greater prevalence and frequency of both subjective and explicit incidents.

### ***5.2.6 Consumer Incidents as Consumer Racial Profiling***

As stated earlier, the overall trend is that experiencing subjective consumer incidents is associated with the likelihood of experiencing explicit consumer incidents. This trend was consistent across each racial group. These results show, for example, that the experience of being followed is associated with the likelihood

of being questioned about ability to afford regardless of race. However, looking at this statistic alone is deceiving. In examining the rates of subjective and explicit experiences within racial groups, we see patterns of racial profiling and discrimination. Racialized respondents demonstrate significantly higher rates of experiencing both subjective and explicit events when compared to White respondents. For example, 26.0% of African Canadians who had been followed also reported being questioned about their ability to afford, whereas only 11.0% of White respondents who had been followed also reported being questioned about their ability to pay. This is a trend throughout each subjective/explicit pair. The data further demonstrate that racialized groups experience consumer incidents at higher and disproportionate rates.

Racialized respondents also demonstrate significantly higher rates of not experiencing subjective incidents but still experiencing explicit incidents than do White respondents. To continue from the previous example, 3.0% of White respondents who reported not being followed still had their ability to afford a product questioned whereas 11.0% of African Canadians who reported not being followed still had their ability to afford questioned. Further, the rate of African Canadians who were not been followed but who were still questioned about their ability to afford (11.0%) is equivalent to the rate of White respondents who were followed and questioned about their ability to afford (11.0%). This demonstrates that regardless of being followed African Canadian consumers are still more likely to be questioned about their ability to afford a product or service.

<b>Table 6</b>				
<b>Percentages of White and African Canadian respondents who reported being followed and questioned about their ability to afford a product.</b>				
	<b>% followed</b>		<b>% NOT followed</b>	
	<b>White (N = 167)</b>	<b>African Canadian (N = 94)</b>	<b>White (N = 542)</b>	<b>African Canadian (N = 56)</b>
<b>Questioned about ability to afford</b>	11%	26%	3%	11%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

These results demonstrate that racialized persons experience not only higher rates of being followed, but also higher rates of explicit incidents without experiencing subjective incidents than do White respondents.

### 5.3 Survey Conclusion

The results from the survey conducted for the Consumer Racial Profiling Project show that race or ethnicity is the most significant factor in the experience of consumer incidents. When compared to other demographic factors such as age, gender, and level of education, only race and level of education showed a significant relationship to the experiences of consumer racial profiling. Although educational level is not a visible feature of a person, it does have a relationship to class. This relationship needs further exploration through future research. Race or ethnicity was statistically significant for each question; however, level of education showed a less significant relationship, and for only some responses.

The data collected show that racialized persons in Nova Scotia are more likely to experience both subjective and explicit forms of consumer incidents. Additionally, they reported significantly higher prevalence and frequency rates of both subjective and explicit consumer incidents than did White respondents.

The data also demonstrated an interesting relationship between the subjective and explicit forms of consumer racial profiling; they showed that, regardless of race or ethnicity, experiencing subjective incidents (i.e., being ignored, receiving slow service) and being followed significantly increases the likelihood of experiencing explicit forms of consumer incidents. However, the data do not address the nature of this relationship. Neither do the data show whether incidents reported by participants occurred in the same instance or were spread out over the prior 12 months.

In the analysis, it is not reasonable to make assumptions about why certain racial or ethnic groups are experiencing certain types of consumer incidents, but it is important to emphasize some central themes around race or ethnicity and consumer racial profiling. Overall, Aboriginal and African Canadian respondents demonstrated the highest prevalence and frequency rates in experiencing consumer incidents. Middle Eastern respondents also demonstrated significantly higher rates and prevalence of incidents associated with consumer racial profiling than did White respondents. Asian respondents reported experiencing consumer incidents at a greater rate than White respondents, but not to the same degree or frequency as did Aboriginal, African Nova Scotian, or Middle Eastern respondents. Unfortunately, only a limited number of responses were received from the Latin American community, and this survey is unable to comment directly on the statistical significance of these responses. It is, of course, noted that within the responses we did receive consumer racial profiling clearly seems to be a serious issue for this community as well.

This survey demonstrates the existence of a pattern of significant discriminatory treatment, and it validates the existence and practice of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia.



## 6 Focus Groups

---

To gain an informed and deeper understanding of the experience and impacts of consumer racial profiling, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission conducted three focus groups. These were held in the Nova Scotian communities of Halifax, Dartmouth, and Millbrook. The focus groups were conducted between August 14 and August 21, 2012. Overall, 29 individuals participated in the focus groups; each group had approximately 10 participants.

### 6.1 Recruitment

Participants were recruited through convenience recruitment methods. The NSHRC promoted the three focus groups electronically through community contacts. The only requirements for participation were that participants had to be at least 18 years of age, identify themselves as a person marginalized by race or ethnicity in Nova Scotia, and have experienced consumer racial profiling. There was a brief pre-screening process to ensure that participants met the requirements and were able to effectively describe their experiences.

### 6.2 Focus Group Questions

The focus groups were guided by five main questions. These sought to explore the nature of consumer racial profiling and build an understanding of its impacts on the individual, their family, and their communities:

- What are your experiences of consumer racial profiling?
- How do you as a consumer know that you are being racially profiled?
- How have your experiences with consumer racial profiling impacted your shopping habits?
- How has consumer racial profiling impacted your personal life in terms of family, employment, education, access to general services, and so on?
- What changes are necessary that would allow you as a consumer to shop throughout Nova Scotia without fear or concern that you might encounter consumer racial profiling?

### 6.3 Field Process

All three focus groups were conducted in the evening. They were held in local community spaces in an attempt to create safe, accessible, and welcoming spaces for participants.

Crystal Taylor, president of CT Ebony Consulting Company, facilitated the focus groups on behalf of the NSHRC. The focus groups were recorded by both an

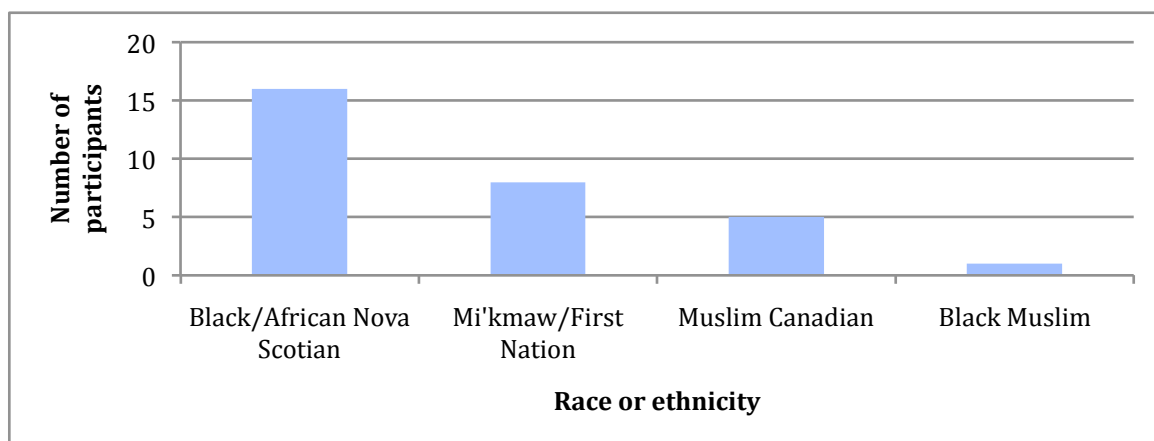
observer and an audiotaping device to ensure accurate transcription. When participants arrived to the focus groups, written consent forms were fully explained and signed prior to participation. Participants received a small honorarium to acknowledge the time and knowledge they shared through their participation.

#### 6.4 Sample and Demographics

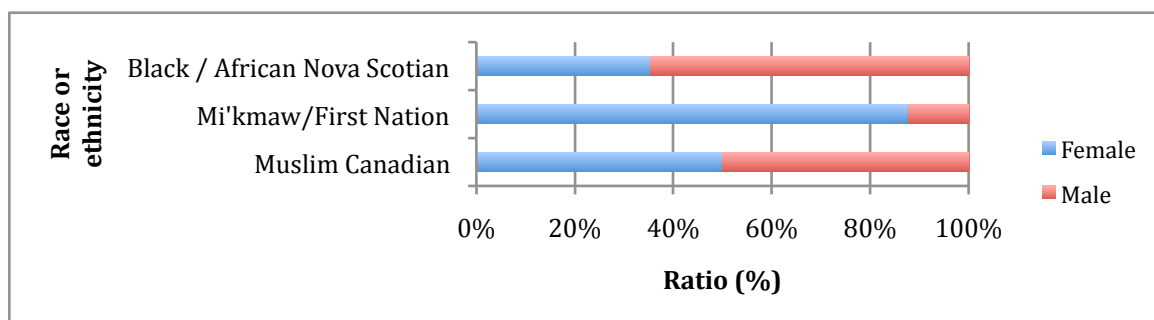
Overall, the 29 participants self-identified their race or ethnicity into three major groups:

- Black/African Nova Scotian
- Mi'kmaw/First Nation
- Muslim Canadian

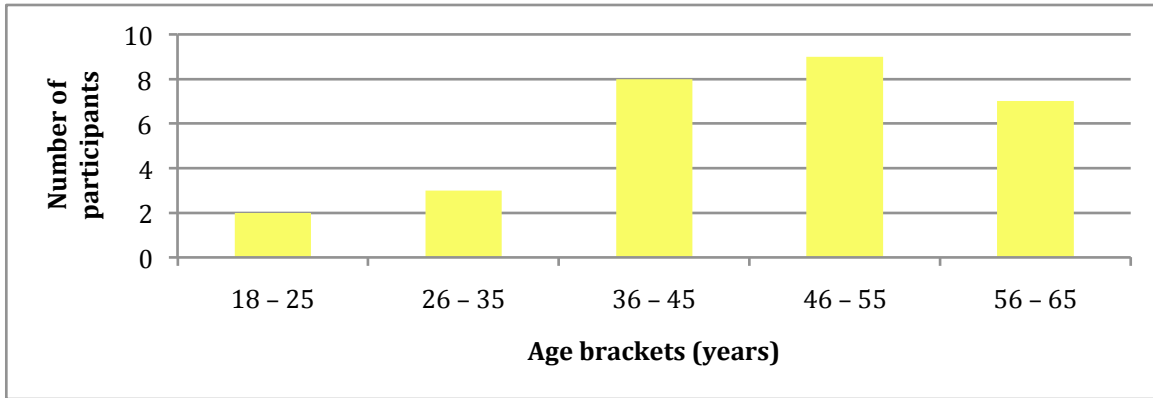
The sample was diverse in terms of gender, age, and education level. Figures 27–30 present the participants' demographic information.



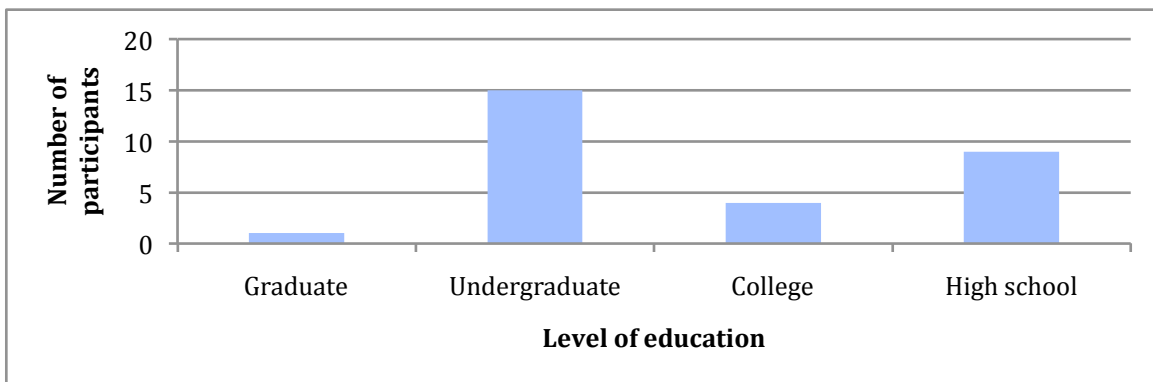
**Figure 27.** Race or ethnicity of focus group participants.



**Figure 28.** Gender ratio of focus group participants.



**Figure 29.** Age of focus group participants.



**Figure 30.** Highest level of education completed by focus group participants.

## 6.5 Limitations

The focus group results are limited because they had representation from only three major racial or ethnic groups. Having participants from other racial and ethnic groups would have allowed a greater analysis of the experience of minority groups in Nova Scotia. However, as the survey highlighted, consumer racial profiling was found to affect African Canadians, Aboriginal people, and Middle Eastern persons more significantly than other racial or ethnic groups.

Hosting more focus groups across Nova Scotia would have been ideal; this would have allowed a greater analysis of consumer racial profiling, including the experiences of different geographic and racial or ethnic communities. However, three focus groups was an achievable margin that still provided an in-depth look into the experiences and impacts of consumer racial profiling.

## 7 Focus Group Themes

---

The following section provides an overview of the themes and patterns found through analyzing the focus group data. These themes were derived directly from the voices, knowledge, and stories of participants. Investigating these enables the development of a deeper understanding of consumer racial profiling, particularly within Nova Scotia. The topics presented here cannot describe the experiences of all racialized members of society. They do, however, document the nature and impacts of consumer racial profiling, while highlighting patterns of differences between racial and ethnic groups.

### 7.1 Consumer Racial Profiling in Nova Scotia

This section provides an overview of the themes that emerged from the focus groups. These themes spoke to consumer racial profiling as it exists within the Nova Scotian context.

#### 7.1.1 *A Culture of Hidden Racism*

Nova Scotian cultural discourse has been well defined in Canada as welcoming, hospitable, and accepting. Numerous participants suggested that the people and institutions of Nova Scotia have seemingly internalized this discourse. However, participants spoke about it as a cultural myth. Participants who were born in Nova Scotia and those who had “come from away” agreed that racism is “different in Nova Scotia.” When speaking about the historical progression of civil rights, one Black male participant commented that, “We have come from the ‘60s to 2012, and Nova Scotia missed the boat.” The difference between Nova Scotia and places such as Quebec or Ontario was explained as a hidden type of racism that often goes unspoken. One Black male participant commented, “Nova Scotians don’t acknowledge the racism that is pervasive in the society. This surface hospitality—Maritimers are good people—but there is this other side that is not acknowledged or addressed.” A participant who was an immigrant to Canada further added to this by saying, “I’ve lived in the Middle East, Europe, ... Africa, and here for 12 years. I have never faced such racism and discrimination as I have here. I can’t have my children grow up here.”

Participants suggested that consumer racial profiling has not gone away, but has become more subtle and hidden. When speaking about how Black people continue to be marginalized, one Black female participant said, “Whites have become more educated on how to be racist.” Older participants spoke about growing up in Nova Scotia and as children experiencing forms of racism and consumer racial profiling that were more explicit. They spoke about still experiencing the same degrees of

discrimination as adults, but in less explicit ways. One Black male said, “They can’t call you nigger, but they treat you different and take away your dignity in other ways.”

Participants spoke about racism as being a part of the daily lived experience of racial and ethnic minorities in Nova Scotia, suggesting that racism is a quiet part of White Nova Scotia culture, whether intentional or not. An African Nova Scotian female commented on this pervasiveness:

With being here in Nova Scotia, we learn that, from the time we can speak. We know it’s coming. We’re not prepared. We’re never ready for it, but we know it can raise its ugly head at any time. It’s our norm. The saving grace is that you proved them wrong.

### **7.1.2 *Breaking the Silence***

A notable aspect of all three focus groups was that all participants had many stories to tell about consumer racial profiling they had experienced in the course of their lives. All had been victims of consumer racial profiling. Many participants said that their impetus for participating in the focus groups was the historical silencing and isolation. Participants commented, “I have never been given the opportunity to discuss this,” and “I have never been asked, ‘How do you feel?’ or ‘How do you react?’”

Participants spoke extensively of isolation at multiple levels. Participants expressed a sense of isolation from Nova Scotia society at large. Overwhelmingly, across all three focus groups, many participants mentioned that their motivation to participate in the group was based on finally having an opportunity to speak and share their voice. An African Nova Scotian female noted that, “There is not a conversation about racism. Everything is wonderful and equal, and that is not my take on it.” This speaks to a sense of the historical silencing of racial and ethnic minorities. Participants also talked about having no safe space to speak about their experiences of consumer racial profiling and racism, mentioning that, “They are telling us we are not welcome.”

Participants also expressed a feeling of isolation within their own communities. Participants’ desire to find others who had similar experiences was interconnected with their motivation to speak out. The focus group allowed community members to feel connected to each other. An African Nova Scotian male talked about the impact that consumer racial profiling had on his community, saying, “We exclude ourselves from society—that is a result of oppression.”

## **7.2 The Concept of Consumer Racial Profiling**

This section provides an overview of the themes that speak to the nature of consumer racial profiling. This section also provides some of the stories told by participants that convey their experiences of specific types of consumer racial profiling.

### ***7.2.1 Consumer Racial Profiling Is “Terrorism”***

Overall, participants spoke about how pervasive the racism and racial profiling is in their lives. They described a range of emotions and feelings. First and foremost, there was a clear sense of anger and frustration that there has been little change to the discrimination that continues to exist and affect the lives of their families and communities. Many participants commented on the fact that they had lost hope for change. They described such discrimination as being an “everyday practice” and “the norm” thereby displaying the mental, emotional, and physical impacts that consumer racial profiling has on racial and ethnic groups. A Black female participant commented that, “We are never prepared for it, even though we know it is coming.”

One of the most powerful descriptions of consumer racial profiling came from the Halifax focus group, in which one participant alluded to consumer racial profiling as terrorism. The participant asked another participant, “Would you consider yourself terrorized?” and went on to speak about the physical, mental, and emotional impacts of consumer racial profiling as the “physical results of terrorism.”

Participants described themselves as not being able to fully participate in society due to marketplace discrimination and the systemic effects of racism on other social institutions. Several participations commented on being made to feel “lower class” or like “second-class citizens” as consumers.

Considering the feelings and impacts that participants described, labeling the experience of racial profiling as terrorism is justified. The extent of the negative experiences and impacts that occur in fulfilling one’s basic life necessities is the definition of being terrorized. Participants commented on the level of distrust that is created towards Nova Scotia’s social structures and institutions, and not feeling safe to shop in their own community.

One participant commented, “I feel like I look guilty” when shopping, due to the prevalence of consumer racial profiling. Participants also expressed a certain level of acceptance of being racially profiled as a consumer. The level of frustration with the lack of change over time was evident as well. As one participant said, “It’s like beating a dead horse. It’s our normal everyday life.”

### 7.2.2 Consumer-Racial-Profiling Experiences

The following section provides a sample of a few of the stories shared for each type of consumer-racial-profiling incident. Participants addressed a range of experiences, including both overt and subtle consumer incidents that were measured in the survey. Participants also brought forward new incidents that were not measured in the original survey. These are listed in Table 7.

<b>Table 7</b>	
<b>Types of consumer-racial-profiling incidents discussed in the focus groups.</b>	
<b>Measured in the survey</b>	<b>NOT measured in the survey</b>
Followed	Subject to different policies or standards
Ignored	Offensive behaviour
Slow service	Physically assaulted
Searched	
Refused service	
Ability to afford questioned	
Target of offensive language	

#### A) Followed

“I went into the store with my daughter, who was six years old. A new security guard saw me and moved to receive me at the doorway. I just ignore people like that. I was in a rush. So I go in the store with my daughter. The meat department was at the back of the store and we go there.... There were lots of friends there and we got to chatting.... While I am chatting, there is this fellow behind me, leaning on another counter with arms folded. He was the one at the door. I was enraged. When this happens to me, I’m incensed. The most degrading thing for my family is that someone can stand and watch me, based on my race. I said to him, ‘Why are you here?’ ‘I am just doing my job,’ he said.”

—African Nova Scotian male

“I notice a guy following me. He wasn’t trying to hide it, and being ignorant. I asked to talk to the manager at customer services, and the guy was right there. They said you can make a complaint, and he continued following me. He was trying to get me riled up so he could give me a ticket to kick me out of the store.”

—African Nova Scotian female

“One day I went in and didn’t buy anything. We don’t steal. As I was coming out, because I didn’t buy anything, he [security guard] watched me, and watched what I was doing with the cars. When he saw I had the key for my car, he stopped watching me.”

—Black Muslim male

### **B) Ignored/Slow Service**

“I went in and felt someone was staring at me. Three ladies glared at me, heads cocked to the side, and staring at you. They are looking at me. Where I was, they followed me and were behind me. They never came over or asked if I needed help.”

—African Nova Scotian female

“I don’t like the fact they ignore you. You’re there and they will serve others. You are ignored.... They don’t want to deal with you.”

—Aboriginal male

### **C) Searched**

“As I went out [of the store], [the monitor] went beep. He [security] said, ‘No, I don’t want to see your bag, but empty your pockets.’ I had a piece of paper... and a pencil. I took it out. He said, ‘Go out.’ I went back in as it beeped. ‘How about your vest?’ There was nothing in my vest pockets. He said, ‘Go out,’ and it beeped. Why? I am not a thief. He said, ‘Take your shoes? off,’ and he turned it upside down over and over and ran a monitor over each one. The only thing I have metal is the bra fastening. For the fourth time I went out, and it beeped. There were people everywhere—watching.”

—Aboriginal female

### **D) Refused Service**

“We were with my cousins and my sister on a family trip. I went to get a slushy. I asked if I could have a lime slushy. The woman said to wait five minutes and it will be ready. So my sister and I are waiting for it to be ready and the next customer comes up and gets a lime slushy, and the next, too. She told me it would be five minutes.... My sister went up and asked the woman for a lime slushy. The woman looked at her irritated and made the slushy angrily.”

—Muslim female



## **E) Ability to Afford Questioned**

"I work mainly with men, White men. I stop at a drapery shop, with my uniform and safety boots on. I was dressed in my work clothes. I look at the drapes and ask, 'How much are they?' The staff said 'They are expensive.' They wouldn't say that to a White guy."

—African Nova Scotian female

"I went into a store.... I knew it was high in price. I went in, and there were other people there, and they were being helped. I was waiting for service, and eventually I had to go to her [staff] and say what I was looking for. I was told I had an accent. She said, 'I don't think we have something you can afford.' I said, 'Excuse me!' I went off to look myself. It made me feel lower class, and I never want to go back to the store."

—African Nova Scotian female

## **F) Target of Offensive Language**

"I used to be called 'Chief.' I'd say, 'Thanks, but I wasn't elected yet!'"

—Aboriginal male

"I walked into [an establishment], and the woman said, 'Oh, you are Indian.' I walked out."

—Aboriginal male

"I am in line. The girl [employee] is nudging the customer in front of me, and said 'Look at the guy. He's looking funny.' When I got there, I said, 'Do I look funny to you?' She said, 'I'm sorry.' I asked the cashier, 'When did you move here? It's my town, and you say, 'Look, he's looking funny.'"

—Muslim male

"I learned the N word at the age of 5. On our street...there was a corner store, and we wanted to go there as kids to get penny candy. I'd go with my older sister. When we go into the store, there was this woman in the store. The counter was up high, and we'd reach up and put our hands on the counter to try and see. The woman would come with a paper and hit our hands, saying, 'Get your Black hands off,' and call us the N word.... That was the beginning for me, and that continues through my life."

—African Nova Scotian male

"I was driving pilots to the airport. 'I might not make it to the airport,' said a pilot. 'What do you mean by that?' I asked. He said it again."

—Muslim male

“I have to say I am not related to Osama bin Laden in a grocery line.”

—Muslim male

### **G) Subject to Different Policies or Standards**

“I went to a bank...at lunchtime, dressed like this [in a suit]. I tried to deposit a GST cheque into my own account. The teller asked me if I had any photo ID. At the time, I did not, so I said it in a polite way. The teller said, ‘Oh, we get these cheques stolen all the time.’ ... She wouldn’t deposit the money into my account. I asked to speak to the supervisor, who backs up the teller’s decision. I decide to go to another branch, the main branch. I had two big guys come up to me as I walked to the teller. They had been warned about me.”

—Black male

“When you purchase tax free....at [an establishment], I do the business in the front. In [another establishment], it’s in the back.

—Aboriginal male

“You have to go to a defunct layaway counter in the back.”

—Aboriginal female

“I asked to get this [product] tax exempt, and the cashier said we don’t do that. I said that I have a right and asked to speak to the manager. She said, ‘We did it for you once as a favour. We don’t do that normally.’ I said, ‘You are not aware we are allowed to. It’s not a favour, it’s our right.’”

—Aboriginal female

“[For a hotel] here one time, no one else but Aboriginal people had to put up a \$500 guarantee for a hockey tournament.”

—Aboriginal male

### **H) Target of Offensive Behaviour**

“I worked for a retailer who had a code when you [a Black] came into the store. [They said,] ‘The eagle has landed,’ when a Black person walked into the store...I quit my job over it.”

—Black male

“When you go into the store, they put the change on the counter, and they [do not] put it in your hand. So degrading.”

—African Nova Scotian female

“Their code for a Black person, or a funky person, or a Native person, they say [over the loudspeaker], ‘Code 29.’ When those people come in the store, that alerts them.”

—Aboriginal female

“When you show your transfer [on the bus], they grab it out of Black people’s hands, not out of White people’s hands. I asked the bus driver, ‘Was there any reason why you took the transfers out of the Black person’s hand, and you thanked the White people and didn’t take them?’ Her response was, ‘Is this the end of your stop?’”

—African Nova Scotian female

“If I am dressed in my white gown, they speak slowly to me, unlike when I am dressed liked this.”

—Muslim male

“I’m from West Indies. I only speak English. They ask you, ‘What language do you speak?’ I say, ‘English.’ They say, ‘Oh, you know two languages then?’”

—Muslim male

## **I) Physically Assaulted**

“I was at [an establishment] and I came on my bike wearing a hat on a hot day. I came there with my hat and a small bag on me. The lady [employee] said to put my bag at the front of the store. She said that it’s written on the wall at the front of the store. I’m already in the aisle and found what I needed to buy. She says, ‘You can’t take that up to the front with you,’ and grabbed the barrel. She started pulling and assaulted me. She was older. She called the police, so I put it down and exited like a thief.”

—Muslim male

### ***7.2.3 Consumer Racial Profiling Elicits a Feeling***

While all participants spoke directly to negative experiences with staff and security personnel, many participants spoke simply about the feeling they get when they enter an unwelcoming store. An Aboriginal female commented, “I can remember the feeling. Nothing was said, but you were taking them away from the real business they do.” She continued, “You can’t put your finger on a word or comment. The way you feel stays with you, keeps you away. How someone makes you feel stays with you a lot longer than just words.”

#### ***7.2.4 Places of Consumer Racial Profiling***

Participants in all focus groups talked about experiencing consumer racial profiling in many different types of services and shops in both rural and urban regions of Nova Scotia. Participants shared their experiences of consumer racial profiling in retail stores, accommodations, restaurants, service providers, housing services, and transportation services such as a bus, taxi, and airplane.

However, participants from the more rural areas of Nova Scotia spoke about the differences of consumer racial profiling in rural and urban areas. Stores in rural areas were believed to be less concerned with the quality of service they provide due to generally having a less diverse population base and having less competition for customers. Urban areas in Nova Scotia have not only greater numbers of diverse ethnicities and races, but also a greater number of businesses competing for customers; they were, therefore, believed to be more likely concerned with their quality of customer service. Participants from Halifax mentioned sometimes being able to find a shop or service that treats them with respect and dignity, whereas those from rural areas sometimes had no other option but to continue using a certain store.

#### ***7.2.5 Consumer Racial Profiling Is a Systemic Issue***

Participants in each focus group centred their discussion on consumer racial profiling as a systemic issue. Systemic racism and White privilege were core themes in participant discussions. Participants recognized that individual action stemming from systemic racism and White privilege is often unintentional and unrecognized as such by the individual. This was described as being a part of White people's instincts. Participants attributed their experiences of consumer racial profiling to the creation and maintenance of stereotypes through social structures such as the educational system, media, justice system, immigration system, and economic institutions. Participants highlighted that these systems contribute to the creation and reproduction of racial discourse in Nova Scotia society. These institutions were described as maintaining and allowing for the justification of negative racial discourse and stereotypes. Participants described this discourse as affecting policy development of businesses, training for employees, and individual employee attitudes around race and ethnicity.

Participants addressed the unequal access to employment as one of the main reasons for a lack of change in their experience of racism. One participant commented, "We need to promote that there are entire government departments that have no Black people, no Black staff." Participants mentioned that this under-representation in the Nova Scotia government, workforce, and institutions leads to the justification of negative stereotypes and reinforces both the conscious and unconscious treatment of

customers from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. One participant noted that, “When you don’t have the different levels of diversity and management, as long as they are not changed, we continue to go through the same things over and over. We don’t fit. The old boys do the same things over and over.”

Participants spoke about how racial and ethnic minority groups are not only under-represented in employment, but also under-represented in “visible” employment. Participants described that those minorities who are hired are often in the back and hidden from customers, which reinforces stereotypes about them. An Aboriginal participant commented that, “You walk into any store and you are guaranteed not to see an Aboriginal salesperson.” An African Nova Scotian male noted that, “In a mall, you cannot see Black managers. That’s why staff follows us around.” He added, “We have very qualified people—qualified and unemployed.”

Consumer racial profiling was described as requiring power. That power could be accessed either through social location (i.e., White privilege) or authority given through employment. Although White privilege was a core theme across each focus group, participants also discussed the fact that consumer racial profiling was “not just a White thing.” A Black male participant commented, “I feel that the profiling I get is not just from the dominant group, but also from within ourselves. Black Nova Scotians will profile the African Nova Scotians...the educated Black will profile the poorer ones...there is a lot of stressful profiling.”

Assumptions about who was born here and who is an immigrant were explored in one of the focus groups. While talking with another participant, an African Nova Scotian participant made an assumption about nationality based on a second participant’s ethnic and religious beliefs, saying,

The new community [Muslims], you do experience racism, but there is a distinction. We’ve [African Nova Scotians] been raised in a racial society. You can find people like you in your own country. We’ve never been wanted. That is another layer that is the indignity we have to suffer.

However, almost all of the Muslim participants present were actually Canadian-born citizens. This situation demonstrates how the practice of racial profiling crosses all racial and ethnic groups.

### ***7.2.6 Consumer Profiling, Race, and the Interconnection of Identity***

Focus group participants from all demographics in attendance—including African Nova Scotian, First Nation, and Muslim—described experiencing a variety of consumer-racial-profiling events. Overall, in each focus group, participants overwhelmingly shared experiences of being targeted with offensive language; these accounts were followed by those of being followed by staff or security, and being targeted for offensive behaviour. Each focus group also witnessed numerous stories

about being ignored by staff, subjected to extra consumer standards, searched, and refused service.

Regardless of race or ethnicity, shopping in groups more negatively affected how participants were treated as consumers. An Aboriginal female participant commented,

It makes a difference who I am with. I have friends who are Aboriginal and look Aboriginal. If I shop with them my experience is different than if I shop with friends who don't look that way.... Because we look like Native people, I feel it. If I shop with someone who is non-Native, I don't feel it.

Several participants described their experiences of consumer incidents as related primarily to their race or ethnicity. However, participants described recognizing differences in the experiences based on other aspects of their social location, including gender. An African Nova Scotian woman spoke about having to constantly analyze, "What is the Black part in that? What is the woman part in that?"

Many participants explored the profiles that are prominent in society, including the Black male, Black female, and Aboriginal male profiles. These discussions highlighted how the experience of consumer racial profiling is based primarily upon race, but with differences between genders.

A racial/ethnic analysis cannot be solely based on the types of experiences shared. Yet considering that most focus group participants mentioned having endless stories to share, the stories that were brought into these discussions may shed light on the most prominent experiences in the lives of participants.

### **A) African Nova Scotian**

The stories that were told by African Nova Scotian participants mainly focused on being followed, being the target of offensive behaviour or language, and facing different standards or policies than did White consumers. Generally, the stories that were told highlighted that, as consumers, African Nova Scotians are generally treated as second-class citizens who are poor, dangerous, and likely to steal from stores.

African Nova Scotian participants spoke specifically about the profile and stereotypes regarding the Black male. One African Nova Scotian male said, "Without [my] in any way being threatening...they saw me as a physical threat...I was profiled as a Black man who was potentially violent, although I was doing everything to make sure I was not."

The profile of the Black man was also linked directly to crime and violence. One African male said, "This guy [a manager] is going on about how this lady is a nice lady, she stays late and works hard.... He said she was probably thinking about the

gangland thing. I say, 'Why do you think I am in a gang?' He answers, 'You fit the profile of gangs.'"

## **B) Aboriginal/First Nations**

The stories that were told in the focus groups by First Nation participants mainly focused on being the target of offensive language, being ignored, being followed, and not having their rights recognized by stores and employees. These stories emphasize that staff and security often treat First Nation people as poor, likely to steal, lazy, and undeserving.

First Nation participants spoke about the consumer profile that is imposed on them by society. They discussed stereotypes such as being stupid, uneducated, underserving, lazy, and drunks. An Aboriginal female spoke about a field trip to a university: "The Native support worker.... said 'I'm only taking kids going to university.' She was White. I am going into second-year college now!" Another Aboriginal participant spoke about an employer who explained, "They say, 'I hired one before and because they drink I won't hire a second.'"

## **C) Muslim Canadian**

Muslim focus-group participants spoke primarily about experiences of consumer racial profiling that were more explicit. Muslim participants focused on being the targets of explicit offensive language and offensive behaviour. Their stories highlight the effects of September 11th, 2001, in creating stereotypes of Muslims and the Middle East, whereby Muslims have become viewed as a threat. Staff and security personnel, therefore, seemingly treat Muslims with disrespect both verbally and through their mannerisms and behaviour.

Muslim participants spoke about the profile that is imposed on them by society, speaking about always being viewed as an immigrant regardless of their nationality. Many Canadian-born Muslims spoke about being treated as outsiders to Nova Scotia. This was also emphasized through stories about language. Many participants recounted stories about being told they "speak good English," or being asked what their first language is.

Muslim participants also emphasized the ways that society is taught to project the events of 9/11 on the entire culture of Muslims. They describe how society has learned to have such hatred towards Muslim culture, finding it funny, dangerous, and threatening. Participants also spoke about the impact of having foreign-sounding names. One participant said, "Names are a huge challenge. Because of my name, I haven't been called for jobs and volunteer situations.... When applying for an apartment, if people are putting in the foreign name, forget it."

Interestingly, Muslim Canadian participants did not speak about being questioned about their ability to afford a product or service. This may indicate societal assumptions about Muslims as immigrants and the requirement of having money to immigrate to Canada.

### *7.2.7 Consumer Profiling and Class*

Many participants described being treated differently as a consumer based on the way they dress. An African Nova Scotian female commented, “Every time I go shopping, I have to be dressed up just to be respected in the store.” Another African Nova Scotian female recounted an experience:

My husband had bought me a short mink coat.... It was beautiful.... I had on my normal winter jacket one day and I went into [the store].... I felt like someone was staring at me. Three ladies glared at me, heads cocked to the side, and staring at you.... Where I was they followed me and were behind me. They never came and asked if I needed help.... The next day I went back in the store with the mink coat on. She raced right over to me: “Can I help you? Can I help you?” .... I bought all kinds of stuff and took it to the counter and paid for it. I then said, “I don’t want it,” and made them refund it all. I told them why...and I left.

However, some participants noted that the way they dress is important, but only to a point. Regardless of dress and appearance, participants still experienced racism as consumers. One Black male participant noted, “I thought how one is dressed could make a difference.... I dress in suits.... I thought it would make a difference to me as a Black male. I’m surprised when I am not served, or I am followed, or I am asked for extra ID.... I thought being in nice clothes I would be treated different.”

In the focus groups, African Nova Scotian, Aboriginal, and Muslim participants all commented on how they had to avoid wearing certain types of clothing to increase the likelihood that they would be respected. One Muslim male participant commented, “If you dress a certain way, you are treated differently. I avoid going into a store in my black clothes coming from Mosque. I am strategic. I have been called Taliban.”

This theme suggests that there is a link between discriminatory consumer profiling and assumptions about class through personal appearance. This is something that needs further exploration in future work.



### **7.2.8 *The Need to Prove Racism***

Participants spoke to their need to constantly prove discrimination and experiences of racism, noting that, “So many times we are pushed to say ‘prove it.’” Participants described this frustration as another main reason for participating in the survey. Participants were also motivated to participate in a process that they viewed as a means to create change in society. Several participants acknowledged the power of research to effect social change and education. One participant spoke to the potential healing power of research that seeks social change, noting, “Having the documentation and put it down in writing, solidify what we feel and what is happening. It helps us heal, gives awareness to others about what is really happening.”

### **7.2.9 *“You Don’t Know Unless You Have Lived It”***

A central theme in the experience of consumer racial profiling is that unless you have lived it, you cannot fully understand the experience and its impact. A familiar sentiment in each focus groups was, “You don’t know racism if you are not in my shoes.” This means people from marginalized racial or ethnic groups who have experienced consumer racial profiling are the experts of that experience and its impacts.

Participants spoke about the reactions of White consumers during their experiences of consumer racial profiling. An African Nova Scotian female commented, “The woman was handling my drink. She broke the cinnamon stick in her hands into my cup. I said, ‘You didn’t wash your hands and you shouldn’t do that.’ The woman behind me [in line] said, ‘Really,’ in a very sarcastic tone.... I said, ‘Really.’”

Participants stressed that they felt it was important to remain calm when experiencing discrimination as a consumer. One participant said, “You are sending a message to all the other patrons in the store.” Participants believed that lashing out and causing a scene can actually reinforce the very stereotypes that were at play in the racial profiling incident, in the staff, security personnel, and other consumers present. Participants spoke about the reactions of staff and security personnel who were often hostile when participants stood up for their dignity. A Black male participant noted, “When you call someone on it, it is a ‘security’ issue.” Essentially, in speaking up for their right as citizens to be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity, they are deemed a threat.

Participants also spoke about comments made by White people when they told their stories to them. One participant commented, “People look from the outside... and they think you are overreacting. You must have done something.” Participants conveyed the idea that many people in Nova Scotian society have blind trust in those who hold power and authority.

Interestingly, one participant had actually been on both sides of ethnic privilege. This participant was born and raised in a privileged White middle-class family in Nova Scotia. It was not until he decided to become Muslim that he began to experience discrimination. He commented,

I have baseline data to compare it to...the different ways I was treated without the hat and beard, to the way I am treated now as a Muslim. As a person who grew up as a White person, my first wife was Black and she would say, "Did you see that?" I didn't know. You can only understand if you are in the skin.

This highlights the lack of awareness and understanding of consumer racial profiling from a privileged, White perspective.

### **7.3 Impacts of Consumer Racial Profiling**

This section provides an overview of the themes that emerged from the focus groups. These themes spoke to the impacts of consumer racial profiling on the participants, their consumer habits, their families, and their communities.

#### ***7.3.1 It Comes Down to Flight or Fight***

In describing their reactions to experiencing racism as consumers, most participants talked about learning how to deal with it. Many participants, at one point or another, have reacted by confronting the situation. However, in the majority of stories, participants simply walked away, so many situations go unreported. Still, many participants spoke about walking away from the heat of the moment and reporting the incident to management later. While most participants described feeling a level of support from management, in almost all instances there was no change or follow through by management in relation to the issue. Participants spoke about the frustration associated with the lack of follow-through as a deterrent to complaining. An African Nova Scotian female said, "I wrote a letter and it took hours. It drags me into things I must do that I hate doing."

Several participants spoke about experiences where they stood up for themselves in the moment. In all three focus groups, there was a real sense of fear in participants around punishment, police, and jail from standing up for themselves. One participant said, "When you call someone on it, it is a 'security' issue, and you can end up spending the night in jail." Another participant commented, "If I said something else, I'd end up in jail." However, for the most part, participants spoke about speaking out as an "educational opportunity." Some participants recognized that the practice of consumer racial profiling is not always intentional. One participant commented on one of her experiences by saying, "I believe the young guy said it and didn't know about it. I'm trying to educate that young man."

However, participants felt that by instructing the staff about the problem, the security issue ultimately worked against their goal of education.

### ***7.3.2 Impact on Shopping Habits***

Participants in every focus group described the negative effects of consumer racial profiling on their shopping habits. One common theme among all participants was the need to be strategic. This involved a level of mental preparation that was necessary before going shopping. Participants needed to think through all possible scenarios. A female African Nova Scotian participant commented, “You have to play all the scenarios out. I will walk the half block to put the bag into the car instead of bringing it into the store.” Participants spoke about being strategic in their claims for differential treatment, mentioning that when they shop they “watch for patterns.” They observe how staff are treating White people and compare that to how they are then treated.

Participants discussed techniques for decreasing the likelihood of being racially profiled as a consumer. One participant explained, “You have to tiptoe.” These techniques included dressing up to shop, not bringing bags from other stores, having nothing in their pockets, ensuring their kids had no toys with them, and finding and greeting security upon entering a store. However, a Black female participant also spoke to unconscious instincts that have been unknowingly created after continuously being racially profiled as a consumer. She said, “I find myself making sure I am always visible to staff, without realizing.”

Participants also reported that shopping had become less enjoyable. One Aboriginal participant noted, “I don’t want to shop anymore. It is mentally and emotionally exhausting.” Many participants shared how shopping with friends had been one of their favourite pastimes until it became too overwhelming to experience such discrimination. Shopping, then, is no longer a social event, but a task. Participants spoke to no longer taking time to browse in most stores and simply shopping for specific items. Participants spoke about how having to be strategic and having to face discrimination everyday when shopping has made them dislike shopping. An Aboriginal female participant said, “I love to shop. I’ll spend two or three hours just browsing, but I don’t enjoy it anymore. I go in and out.”

Several participants suggested that not buying anything when shopping is worse than buying something. A Black Muslim participant said,

One day I went in and didn’t buy anything. We don’t steal. When I was coming out, because I didn’t buy anything, he watched me and watched what I was doing with the cars. I went into my car, and when he saw that I had the key for that car, he stopped watching me.

Several participants believe that not buying anything reinforces the stereotype that you are stealing from the business.

### ***7.3.3 Taking Business Elsewhere***

All participants spoke about avoiding stores where they had had negative racial-profiling experiences. They preferred to take their money to businesses that treat them with respect and dignity. A few examples of statements from participants:

- “When there isn’t good customer service, I just won’t go back there.”
- “I won’t give my money to them.”
- “I never go to stores again [after being treated poorly], and over [the past] 15 years, I give other stores my business all the time.”
- “I don’t go back and don’t spend money there.”
- “We used to look around. Now we don’t do that, we go in and out.”
- “I never did business with them again.”
- “I don’t buy as much as I used to.”
- “Either treat me the way the White people get treated, or I don’t go.... I don’t allow them to dehumanize me.”

Participants who live in rural areas of Nova Scotia sometimes could not avoid problematic stores entirely. Fewer businesses operate in rural areas. Therefore, often participants chose to shop at stores with the lowest prices, even if they had previous negative experiences. These consumers still used such stores at times, but took their major expenses elsewhere. One participant commented, “Some things we have to get and we go there, but we don’t do our Christmas shopping there.”

Participants also discussed the economic impact of that taking their business to other stores. One participant commented, “I heard the manager say that 75% of the net income for the store is from First Nations people. If First Nations people put all that money into the store, you would want them to keep coming in.”

### ***7.3.4 No Support for Victims***

Participants discussed their frustration with the lack of support for their claims of consumer racial profiling, which often left them feeling isolated. Participants described that, although sometimes businesses would demonstrate a certain level of understanding about the complaint, there would be no follow-up action. This was described as being just as harmful as the consumer racial profiling event itself. By not following through and creating change in the business, decision makers do not

validate the harm. The individual's experience of consumer racial profiling is dismissed and devalued. Judging by the way participants described their experiences and their resulting impacts, validating these experiences and the harm caused is central to moving forward in creating respectful consumer spaces and business environments.

Participants also discussed their frustration with a lack of support from the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission with their past human rights complaints around racism and racial profiling. Participants commented on the NSHRC as being "lawyer-centred" and overrun with red tape, and they expressed frustration with a need to prove intention. One participant summed up their experience by saying, "Dealing with racism and the racial onslaught and the depression my kids see us suffer, you need to go to a place to find comfort, and you find the NSHRC." Participants commented that, as community leaders, they have begun to steer people away from taking their complaints to the NSHRC. One participant stated, "The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission...discourages you to file a complaint, and demeans you. They are dealing with other people's lawyers. They are not for you. The whole thing needs a revamp."

### **7.3.5 Impact on Total Health**

Participants spoke directly about the impacts of consumer racial profiling on the health of their communities, their families, and themselves. The effect on health was described as applying to the mental, emotional, and physical components of a person's health. One participant said, "It makes you raise the level of everything you do, what you do, to a higher standard always. That becomes so draining that it affects your health physically, mentally, and emotionally." The constant stress, frustration, depression, anxiety, fear, pain, and suffering that participants had to go through because of both consumer racial profiling and racism as it relates to society at large has devastating effects on health. Participants spoke about the dehumanizing effects of consumer racial profiling as reinforcing the notion that "we don't fit." One participant commented, "They treat us awful and—the impact on our sense of self—it scars you for life." This person went on to add, "This is me in my 50s. I feel defeated." Another participant added, "I'm afraid I will be an example of how this affects a person."

One participant recognized the effects of psychological harm as he described his actions after experiencing consumer racial profiling. He said, "When I pretend to drop the \$150 bottle of champagne, there is something wrong with me." Emphasizing the extreme frustration and harm that comes from consumer racial profiling, they add further, "It's to the point we get gratification if we do something disruptive."

One participant alluded to the fact that people who are marginalized by their race or ethnicity internalize the pain. Therefore, exclusion from full participation in society is imposed by the organizational culture and systemic barriers that exist, but also

caused by individuals removing themselves from society because of the pain. Participants stressed that the impacts on their health exist for a lifetime. One participant spoke powerfully, saying, “I consider myself well placed and well adjusted, but the demons are forever there.”

### ***7.3.6 Impact on the Next Generation***

When discussing the impacts of consumer racial profiling, most participants immediately raised its impacts on youth. Participants spoke about how youth learn racism early, which breeds a sense of distrust in the police, authority figures, and White people. One participant said, “In the education system, kids know they are Black or White. It’s not intentional by the teacher .... It’s ingrained in the society. It’s covered by politeness.”

Youth learn over time that experiencing racial profiling and racism is an everyday experience. One participant noted that, “If you have children growing up, you don’t want them seeing these things.” Participants spoke about the need to educate and prepare their children. One participant commented, “I live with racism and my two sons do, too. Every day I have to reinforce they are as good as anybody.” However, participants commented that even with educating and preparing their children for experiencing racism, they still worry about what could happen when their children leave the protection of their home each day.

Participants also spoke about instances when their children have been present during consumer-racial-profiling experiences. One participant recounted an experience with their six-year-old daughter, in which the child ended up asking, “Is that man going to put you in jail?” This illustrates just how early children learn about racism, punishment, and jail. One participant commented, “You have to be strategic when you are a mom. You have to raise the tone and [set an example]” They spoke about the need to remain calm in the moment and to address the issue with management. In one instance, a participant noted that, “I had to lie [to my son] and say they agreed to do diversity training.” Participants stressed that youth need to see a potential for change to avoid losing complete hope for change.

Some participants spoke about how their perspective on racial profiling developed when they were children. One participant commented, “When I got it as a young person, I thought, ‘When I grow up and get money, it will go away,’ and it hasn’t.” Due to racism’s effects on youth growing up in Nova Scotia, participants commented that they encourage their youth and their own children to leave Nova Scotia when they are old enough. One participant said, “I tell my sons, the first chance you get, go out of Nova Scotia.”

The question remains, as one participant said, “How do we role model the youth to walk out with dignity, in a suit or not, get out on that street, and feel good about themselves?”



### 7.3.7 *Impact on Communities*

Participants spoke about the impact of consumer racial profiling on the community's ability to function collectively. The feelings of isolation and powerlessness were described as affecting the cohesiveness of communities, and their spirit to create collective action. The hopeless, beaten-down, and defeated state of individuals makes it difficult to be motivated to work against a systemic issue. One participant said, "The Black Community here is very isolated. We live in pockets. Even those of us who try to assimilate or fit in, we are perceived as misfits or aggressors." Being historically silenced and isolated at a community level makes individuals less inclined or optimistic about community involvement. Also, as previously discussed, the issue of youth leaving the community affects the community's future, and its ability to grow and be cohesive.

The impact of racism and discrimination on the health of citizens also affects their ability to function as persons, parents, and community members. One participant said,

I am a guardian of two kids, who are teens and half-Black. I have to put in additional effort to build up their self-esteem, which takes away from parenting and other resources. It takes away my emotional ability to care for the community, but for me to role model as a parent I have to go to the community and show them the value of Africanness, and that takes a lot of emotional energy.

The First Nations participants centred their individual stories in the collective and community context. They focused their discussion on health, as it relates to the community. They emphasized discrimination's effects on the next generation and the community's ability to function and thrive, discussing education, employment, and rights. First Nations participants really stressed the issue of inconsistent tax-exemption policies in Nova Scotia and not having their rights recognized in stores.

The Muslim community described the effects of consumer racial profiling on their community as creating a sense of isolation. Having traditionally experienced little support from community organizations and government departments, the community has not found an effective means for dealing with situations of discrimination. This community also spoke about being excluded from full participation in Nova Scotian society because of the discourse around Islamic and Muslim culture.

Those participants who were immigrants emphasized that they had not experienced consumer racial profiling until they lived in Canada. One participant commented, "I've never faced such racism and discrimination as I have here. I can't have my children grow here." Another participant noted, "I have spent a year in Nova Scotia. I am from Nigeria.... I am thinking of bringing my family here but I am having second thoughts." These participants emphasized that Nova Scotia is not a welcoming environment to settle for immigrants who are marginalized by their race or ethnicity. The immigrant participants from African countries also emphasized a

feeling of exclusion from even the Black community here in Nova Scotia. One participant stated, “We have to prove we are Black.” One participant noted that they “invited some of my friends [to the focus group], but they were of Caribbean descent, not African descent. They said they didn’t think they would feel welcome. They felt it was exclusively for Nova Scotian Blacks.”

## **7.4 Breaking Down Consumer Racial Profiling**

The following sections provide an overview of solutions presented by focus group participants for breaking down consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia.

### ***7.4.1 Equal Representation of Minority Groups***

Many participants defined consumer racial profiling as a systemic issue. In doing so, they believed solutions have to be sought at an institutional level. Equal representation in government, institutions, and the workforces was identified as essential. One participant said, “We need to look at who is serving our communities. When you don’t have different levels of diversity in management, as long as they are not changed, we continue to go through the same things over and over. We don’t fit.” In another focus group, a participant said, “We need to promote that there are entire government departments with no Black people or Black staff.” Participants believed that a society’s government should be reflective of that population, thereby allowing its decision-making processes, programs, and services to be reflective of its citizens.

Participants also spoke about the need to have equal representation of racial and ethnic groups in businesses and stores, among staff and management. One participant mentioned, “If we had more Aboriginal people in retail, that would help... We have very qualified people—qualified and unemployed.” Another Aboriginal participant commented on the fact that even if Aboriginal people are on staff, “You don’t see Aboriginals. They don’t serve. They are in the back washing and cleaning.”

Participants highlighted that when diversity policies are implemented to hire people of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, the results may be undesirable. One participant said implementing these policies inappropriately results in “lots of diversity in the night. The cleaners are people of colour.” Participants highlighted that not only are there barriers to accessing employment, but there are barriers in accessing meaningful work that has opportunities for advancement and professional development. In speaking about new immigrants to Nova Scotia, one participant commented, “They hire new immigrants and there is no professional development available to them.”

Seeing equal representation of diverse racial and ethnic groups in Nova Scotian society and its institutions and businesses was believed to be integral to removing the effects of consumer racial profiling and racial profiling at large. Participants



believe that allowing diverse racial and ethnic groups to gain meaningful employment in government, social institutions, and local businesses will be a major factor in changing the discourse around racial and ethnic groups. Participants believe that breaking down stereotypes occurs through having interactions with people that alter our previous perceptions and assumptions about them.

#### ***7.4.2 Education and Enforcement of First Nations Rights***

Aboriginal participants spoke directly to the fact that there are inconsistent policies around First Nation tax exemption rights across Nova Scotia businesses. Aboriginal participants also addressed how these rights were often unrecognized in businesses, or how the standards of service were often discriminatory.

Participants spoke about a need for a system to ensure that, in all Nova Scotian businesses, First Nations rights are recognized and enforced in ways that are not discriminatory or degrading. In addressing the First Nations tax question, one participant alluded to the residential schools issue, by saying, “[Like] when Nora did the residential school thing.... It is all over the world now. Why can’t someone do the tax thing? ... It’s a big issue.”

#### ***7.4.3 Educating and Training Businesses on Human Rights***

Participants spoke about the lack of awareness and education around the discriminatory nature of consumer racial profiling practices. Participants outlined the need to use this research project to inform and educate Nova Scotian businesses.

#### ***7.4.4 Re-thinking Public Education***

Many participants highlighted that education is integral to creating change in racial and ethnic discourse. Participants spoke about the need to think critically about how racial discourse is created, maintained, and reinforced in the Nova Scotian public education system. One participant commented, “We are brought up with it in a White dominated school. You become very tolerant about how to deal with [discrimination].” Another participant noted that, “In the education system, kids know if they are Black or White. It’s not always intentional by the teacher.”

In speaking about the education system, one participant commented, “When I graduated high school there were two courses, one about African Nova Scotians and one about Mi’kmaq. They were electives, not mandatory. Realistically, the people who took the courses were getting educated on themselves.” Participants spoke about how African Nova Scotian and First Nation history is therefore not viewed as central to Canadian history in the public education system. Consequently, by not

making the African Nova Scotian and First Nation history courses mandatory, the majority of students are not learning about either of these perspectives.

Participants also described many new developments within the educational system that they found encouraging. One participant mentioned that students in grades 7–9 are required to choose between Mi'kmaw and French as a second language credit course.

#### ***7.4.5 Better Informed and Respected Policies in Businesses***

Participants spoke about the ineffectiveness of store policies that are meant to protect consumers. One participant commented that the manager “said they have a zero policy for harassment, so he didn’t know what was happening.... I said your policy didn’t protect me or my daughter.” One theme in this area was that businesses put policies in place without the proper training, enforcement, monitoring, or implementation necessary to ensure the effectiveness of those policies. Another problem identified was that businesses often rely on policy alone.

#### ***7.4.6 Communities Needing Better Support from NSHRC***

The victims of consumer racial profiling identified the need for better support from the NSHRC in their human rights issues. Many participants shared the sentiment expressed by one person, that “no one takes an effective role” in consumer racial profiling issues.

#### ***7.4.7 Re-thinking the Discourse of Diversity***

Many participants believe that all businesses in Nova Scotia need to take diversity training on a regular basis. One participant commented, “When we were foster parents, we had to take a sensitivity course and diversity course. When I get followed or get moodily talked to, I think these people who are going to serve need to take [a similar course]. We’re here and you’re here, and we’re not going anywhere.”

One participant also spoke about how the discourse of diversity can often negatively affect diverse racial and ethnic groups. The participant said, “I have a fear for Caucasian people with diversity training.... It’s going into their attitudes that we are less than human.” The concern was that how diversity training is presented and thought about can actually reinforce differences between White people and “others.”

#### ***7.4.8 Challenging the Focus of Mainstream Media***

Participants described the power and effects of mainstream media in Nova Scotian society. Participants detailed how the profiles used in racial profiling and

stereotyping are created, maintained, and reinforced through media stories and images. One participant commented,

TV heroes are White. The anti-heroes are not White.... Whenever there is a positive article in the paper about African Nova Scotians, there is a negative one that goes along with it.... Racism becomes a joke—go on TV and make quantities of racial jokes, and nothing is done.

#### ***7.4.9 Inclusion in Change Processes***

Participants highlighted that change processes are most effective, relevant, and appropriate when first-voice experiences are included. Therefore, persons who are marginalized by their race or ethnicity as consumers must be actively involved in creating and guiding the change process. One participant pointed out that “expertise comes from Eurocentric people.” By including people from different races and ethnicities in decision-making around policy, training, and hiring, businesses can better create safe spaces for all people.

#### ***7.4.10 Need to Promote Diverse Businesses***

Participants stressed that there are not many Black businesses in Nova Scotia. Participants also said that the businesses that are “Black” or non-White are businesses that don’t have economic value. Creating prominent non-White businesses would build the economic capacity of diverse communities while simultaneously changing the discourse around race and ethnicity.

## 8 Discussion and Recommendations

---

There will always be different ideas around the existence, prevalence, and frequency of consumer racial profiling and racism. This research, however, has demonstrated a pattern that suggests the existence of discriminatory consumer treatment based on race and ethnicity. The themes discovered through the focus groups complement the findings from the survey. The survey data show evidence that racialized persons encounter higher prevalence and frequency rates of consumer-racial-profiling experiences, and the focus groups highlight the nature of these experiences and the impacts of consumer racial profiling.

This research has provided an in-depth framework for understanding the experience of consumer racial profiling as it exists in the Nova Scotian context. Consumer racial profiling was found to have significant effects on the physical, mental, and emotional health of racialized persons, their families, and their communities.

### 8.1 The Nature of Consumer Racial Profiling

The following section presents several core themes from the focus groups that speak to the nature of consumer racial profiling.

#### *8.1.1 Profiling Is Natural Human Behaviour*

Humans interpret their world by creating categories. In its simplest form, creating categories is how a person distinguishes between paper and a pen. It is important to remind ourselves that the profiles that we create are just categories for understanding our world. This became evident through the focus groups, as participants who were talking about racial profiling were also profiling other participants. Inevitably, all focus group participants created profiles from which to understand and interact with others when they first gathered. Humans need a frame of reference for engaging in their world. Therefore, the creation of profiles is not problematic in itself. Profiling becomes a dangerous and potentially discriminatory act when implicit biases affect our creation and use of negative categories and profiles.

Again, the behaviour of profiling is not problematic; the problem is introduced when we make harmful assumptions about certain racial or ethnic groups. These negative profiles, which are ingrained in society, are based on stereotypes. They lead to discriminatory thoughts and behaviours regardless of intention.

### ***8.1.2 Consumer Racial Profiling as Both a Feeling and Event***

Consumer racial profiling extends beyond the interactions with staff and security personnel. It comes down to the meanings that are socially produced and constructed in consumer spaces through both material and symbolic processes. These processes affect how racialized persons understand and feel within a space.

The experiences and social interactions that occur inside the physical space of a business influence the patterns of use and the meanings that are attributed to the space. Simply put, if a person experiences discrimination in a store, that person will construct a negative conception of that space. Regardless of intention, businesses that practice racial profiling will consequently create a meaning of the business space that is unwelcoming, discriminatory, or even racist. That symbolic meaning may not be consciously present to those who are privileged by their race. Even so, many Nova Scotians who experience consumer racial profiling are aware of the spaces that have been constructed as discriminatory, and they consequently avoid them.

However, the creation of the material setting by businesses produces specific meanings as well. Everything—from the structure of the store, to the types of goods sold—influences the meaning that is created in that space. Therefore, practices such as locking up Black hair products or selling products that only reflect White people, directly influence how people understand the business. Particularly, these discriminatory practices affect how people from marginalized races and ethnicities give meaning to the space.

- Nova Scotian businesses need to look critically at how they construct and produce meaning in their stores, by reflecting on both the physical and symbolic space.

### ***8.1.3 Consumer Racial Profiling Affects Individual and Community Health***

The focus groups made clear that consumer racial profiling has a profound impact on the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of individuals, families, and communities across Nova Scotia. Due to the everyday experiencing of differential and discriminatory treatment as consumers, racialized persons describe tremendous stress, emotion, and impact on their lives and well-being. Further, while the consumer-racial-profiling event itself was described as degrading, the lack of validation of harm was described as one of the most impactful aspects of consumer racial profiling.

#### ***8.1.4 Validation of Harm Is Essential***

Victims of consumer racial profiling all spoke about how they felt no support from either the business where the experience occurred or the agencies, such as the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, that are put in place to support consumers in Nova Scotia. As participants spoke about consumer racial profiling as it relates to their everyday experiences of racism, it became clear that these experiences are not validated in Nova Scotian society. Participants spoke about needing to constantly prove discrimination was at play. They described being accused of overreacting or somehow “deserving it.” Essentially, participants described not having their experiences of harm validated, and the resulting physical, emotional, and mental harm they experienced.

- Nova Scotia businesses need to validate consumer harm, particularly around human rights issues. Businesses must also improve their systems for dealing with consumer complaints that involve reactionary protocols. Complaints must be addressed in the moment, in post-event review processes, and through follow-up actions.
- The NSHRC needs to ensure that it continues, through its new dispute-resolution model of restorative practice, to validate the harm and experiences of its service users and to continue to work in the best interest of those users.

#### ***8.1.5 Consumer Profiling Based on Class***

While it was not the focal point of this project, this research has produced evidence that suggests consumer profiling and discrimination occurs in part due to assumptions about class. One could make a case that because racial and ethnic stereotypes are often based on assumptions of class, consumer racial profiling in itself involves a class profile. However, the survey results showed a significant relationship between a respondent’s highest level of education completed and experiencing consumer incidents. Although we cannot make assumptions of a person’s class based on their education levels, lower levels are generally correlated to lower class and socioeconomic status. The focus groups added to this notion, as participants discussed the effects of their physical appearance on how they are treated as consumers. Physical appearance including clothes and hair influence how we build profiles about people’s class.

- While this research does not provide conclusive evidence about the relationship between class and consumer profiling, it does present some initial results that should be explored in future research.

### ***8.1.6 Loss Prevention Strategies Must Be Internally Focused***

There exists an abundance of literature that provides conclusive evidence that the majority of loss that happens in businesses is caused by internal or employee theft (Applebaum, Cottin, Pare, & Shapiro, 2006; Gross-Schaeffer, 2000; Wang & Kleiner, 2005). This evidence indicates that loss prevention strategies that intentionally or unintentionally focus on consumers' race are ineffective. Loss prevention strategies need to look internally at employee theft.

- Nova Scotian businesses and security personnel agencies need to evaluate their training policies and practices around consumer profiling to ensure that criminal profiling occurs as it relates to personal behaviour, and not personal characteristics.
- Nova Scotian businesses need to actively develop strategies to monitor internal loss prevention.

## **8.2 Recommendations for the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

### ***8.2.1 The Power of Research***

Through conducting this research, the NSHRC has taken upon itself the responsibility to use the resulting knowledge to create change in Nova Scotian society. However, these results not only hold relevance in the context of Nova Scotia, but can also serve as a template for understanding, exploring, and researching consumer racial profiling across Canada.

The individuals and communities that participated in this research emphasized the power that research holds in society. Participants reflected on this project's potential for transformational change. It is essential that this research project remains accountable to its participants and to the communities that the NSHRC serves.

- The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission needs to ensure that the results of this project are used in the best interest of the communities that it serves. In doing so, the NSHRC must involve the community in decision making around the dissemination of findings.

### ***8.2.2 "Doing Good Work"***

Participants expressed their excitement to see the NSHRC take the lead in conducting the Consumer Racial Profiling Project. It has become clear through this project work that the NSHRC needs to embrace its role as the leader of human rights

in Nova Scotia and conduct similar types of projects that further the research, understanding, and awareness of human rights issues.

- The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission needs to develop its role as a leader in research and education around issues of human rights in Nova Scotia and across Canada through the continual development of projects such as the Consumer Racial Profiling Project.

### ***8.2.3 Rebuilding Relationships with Community***

It became clear through this research that individuals from various communities in Nova Scotia felt unsupported by the NSHRC in their human rights issues and complaints. Participants described their frustration in attempting to navigate the (now former) dispute resolution model. The relationship between communities and the NSHRC has deteriorated over the years. The problem had gotten to the point that community leaders spoke about advising community members not to take their human rights issues to the NSHRC. The NSHRC hopes that its new dispute-resolution model, adopted in January 2013, will better support and encourage the communities served.

- It is essential to the effective functioning of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, that it re-connect with communities at the grassroots level to ensure it supports the needs of these communities and works in their best interest.

### ***8.2.4 Educating the Community***

Another point clarified through the focus groups was that members of various racial and ethnic groups were unaware of changes to the NSHRC dispute-resolution process. This lack of awareness affected the participants trust, use, and feeling of support from the NSHRC.

- It is essential that the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission connect at the grassroots level with communities to provide awareness of the changes to dispute-resolution processes.

### ***8.2.5 The Power of Storytelling***

Almost all participants in the focus groups indicated that finally having an opportunity to tell their stories was their main motivation to participate. One participant summed up the sentiments by saying, “I think the world is becoming a dangerous place. The marginalized and the oppressed people, if we don’t give them



the opportunity to express themselves... doors are being closed quickly.” Focus group participants observed the great individual and collective therapeutic benefits and the healing power of storytelling.

- The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission needs to find ways to create spaces for storytelling, allowing community members to speak about their experiences as they relate to human rights issues. Such discussions not only allow communities to influence the ongoing work in human rights, but also enable the NSHRC to work more effectively with and for its local communities.

### **8.3 Consumer Racial Profiling and Society**

#### ***8.3.1 Diversity Is the Future***

Nova Scotia and Canada at large are encountering changing population demographics in respect to race and ethnicity. It is expected that by 2017 “visible minority” groups will account for approximately 20% of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2008). What this means for businesses is that, to thrive in the future reality of our province, they will need to find ways to become more welcoming consumer spaces and attract the business of racial and ethnic minorities.

- Businesses in Nova Scotia need to develop strategies that create consumer spaces and workforces that are inclusive, welcoming, respectful, and reflective of the people they serve.

#### ***8.3.2 Consumer Racial Profiling, Out-migration, and Immigrant Retention***

Consumer racial profiling, as a part of systemic racism, is a direct cause in the out-migration of youth from diverse racial and ethnic communities, as well as the poor Immigrant retention of Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia born participants overwhelming spoke about encouraging their youth and children to leave Nova Scotia as soon as they are old enough. Participants who were immigrants spoke about leaving Nova Scotia and not choosing to raise their families here. Overall,

- In order to effectively sustain the Nova Scotian economy in future years, government and businesses need to develop and implement strategies that decrease the barriers to the full participation of racialized persons in Nova Scotia.

### ***8.3.3 The Movement Towards Online Shopping***

While the research highlights evidence that diverse racial and ethnic groups are frequent shoppers, choosing where to shop is dependent largely upon the experience of customer service at the business. Focus group participants spoke about the ease and comfort of online shopping from home rather than risk discrimination in local businesses. This trend has the potential to have a tremendous effect on the Nova Scotian economy and vitality of local businesses.

- Businesses need to find ways to attract diverse consumers to their businesses. Businesses need to ensure that they are creating safe and welcoming environments through both proper training and policies guiding staff behaviour and the structural layout of their space.

### ***8.3.4 Fear of Police and the Justice System***

In almost every story of consumer racial profiling told by focus group participants, there was an element of fear around punishment. The police played a prominent role in the stories of participants. While the project intended to explore consumer racial profiling, racial-profiling stories around police were, in many ways, interconnected to stories of consumer racial profiling. Participants spoke about fearing police involvement during experiences of consumer racial profiling, speaking about the practice of racial profiling used by police leading to their fear of jail and their distrust of police. Participants also spoke about the negative effects that the relationship of distrust with police has on youth and community development.

- In order to continue rebuilding the relationships between police and the diverse racial and ethnic communities across Nova Scotia, the province needs to take a closer look at the practice of racial profiling within the local police forces to ensure that their practices are non-discriminatory.

### ***8.3.5 The Need of Education***

Participants spoke about the education system as a place where youth begin to learn racial discourse. Participants described influential factors ranging from the curriculum, teacher practices, and structure of the classroom.

- To effectively break down the racial stereotypes that lead to discriminatory racial profiling, the Nova Scotia education system needs to review its curriculum, teacher training, and school practices as they relate to race and ethnicity.

### ***8.3.6 First Nations Rights***

First Nations participants overwhelmingly spoke about how their rights as First Nations people are not being recognized by many businesses. Additionally, they described how when their rights are recognized, it is often with animosity. First Nations participants said they are treated poorly as consumers by staff or security personnel because of these rights. First Nations participants referenced the tax issue as being on the same magnitude as the residential schools issue.

- At the macro level, Nova Scotia businesses need to be held accountable to recognize and accommodate the rights of First Nations people. However, local businesses need to better educate their managers and staff around First Nations rights.

## 9 Conclusion

---

This research undertaken by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission intended to explore the issue of consumer racial profiling. It aimed to build an informed understanding of the nature, prevalence, and impacts of consumer racial profiling on all Nova Scotians. Through its research, the NSHRC has arrived at an initial understanding of the prevalence, frequency, nature, and impacts of consumer racial profiling here in Nova Scotia.

The results of this research validate the existence of consumer racial profiling in Nova Scotia. Both the survey and the focus groups show that racialized persons, particularly from African Canadian, Aboriginal, and Muslim or Middle Eastern communities, experience significantly higher prevalence and frequency rates of differential and discriminatory treatment as consumers. These experiences have tremendous impacts on the physical, mental, and emotional health of individuals, families, and communities.

This research also provides evidence that a different kind of racism exists today than was formerly seen in Nova Scotia. No longer does our society engage primarily in the more overt types of racism. Rather, the racism seen today in Nova Scotia today may be referred to as “democratic racism.” This type of racism refers to when two conflicting sets of values are made congruent to each other (Tator & Henry, 2006, p. 22). The democratic principles, such as social justice and equality that are ingrained into the values and behaviours of Nova Scotians, coexist and conflict with racial and ethnic stereotypes and racist behaviours. The result is often discrimination that is expressed through a “discourse of denial,” which is based on concepts such as “being colour-blind,” victim blaming, and multiculturalism.

Consumer racial profiling appears to be more about stereotyping than the expression of overt racism. However, stereotyping continues to be a form of racism; just because the intent is not there does not mean stereotyping is not racism. All members of society need to work each day to break down the barriers of racism and discrimination, and the stereotypes that are pervasive in our society. Validation of harm that has been caused is central to the healing process; it requires that our society and fellow citizens begin recognizing and acknowledging racism and its impacts.

Overall, this project is an important starting place for dismantling the barriers of consumer racial profiling and racism at large. It is our hope that this report serves not only as a guiding document in the future work of the NSHRC, but also as resource that can be used by businesses, organizations, communities, and individuals to reflect on and continue the fundamental work required to reduce racism. This document should encourage businesses to evaluate their employee training, workplace materials, policies, and overall business practices to ensure that we are creating a welcoming and respectful space for all Nova Scotians to shop. The

NSHRC also encourages the development of future work and research that furthers the understanding of consumer racial profiling and actively promotes social change.

While this report presents overwhelming information around the experiences of discrimination and racism in Nova Scotian society, it also presents a few glimmers of hope. It is hopeful that many members of racialized communities across Nova Scotia are still committed to and engaged in creating change and breaking down racism. Of course, this project remains only a small step in the right direction. To be of real value, this research must be taken further than this writing and be used by the NSHRC to create change in business and consumer cultures. The knowledge gained through this research needs to be owned and embraced by the communities across Nova Scotia.

This study examined consumer racial profiling; however, we cannot separate this form of discrimination from the larger issue of systemic racism. The practice of consumer racial profiling cannot be eliminated from our society unless significant work is done around White privilege and systemic racism at all levels of society. Such a task requires building new partnerships between government, service providers, and communities. These partnerships must be based on the values of inclusion and equality, and a commitment to improve the lives of all racialized persons in Nova Scotia.

## References

---

- Adamson, J. (2000). *The Denny's story: How a company in crisis resurrected its good name and reputation*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Applebaum, S., Cottin, J., Pare, R., & Shapiro, B. (2006). Employee theft: From behavioural causation and prevention to managerial detection and remedies. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, 9(2), 175–182.
- Asquith, J. L., & Bristow, D. N. (2000). To catch a thief: A pedagogical study of retail shoplifting. *Journal of Education for Business*, 75(5), 271–276.
- Crockett, D., Grier, S. A., & Williams, J. A. (2003). Coping with marketplace discrimination: An exploration of the experiences of black men. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 4, 4–21.
- Cox, S., Pease, S. E., Miller, D. S., & Tyson, C. B. (2001). 2000–2001 report of traffic stops statistics: July 2000 to June 2001. Rocky Hill, CT: Division of Criminal Justice.
- Dabney, D. A., Dugan, J., & Hollinger, R. C. (2006). The impact of implicit stereotyping on offender profiling: Unexpected results from an observational study of shoplifting. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 33(5), 646–674.
- Dabney, D. A., Hollinger, R. C., & Dugan, L. (2004). Who actually steals? A study of covertly observed shoplifters. *Justice Quarterly*, 21(4), 693–728.
- Feagin, J. R. (1991). The continuing significance of race: Antidiscrimination in public places. *American Sociological Review*, 56(1), 101–116.
- Fifield, A. (2001). Shopping while black. *Good Housekeeping*, 233, 129–136.
- Gabbidon, S. L. (2003). Racial profiling by store clerks and security personnel in retail establishments: An exploration of “Shopping while black.” *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 19(3), 345–364.
- Gabbidon, S. L., Craig, R., Okafo, N., Marzette, L., & Peterson, S. A. (2008). The prevalence and nature of consumer racial profiling experiences among students at historically black colleges and universities: An exploratory study. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 36, 354–361.
- Gabbidon, S. L., & Higgins, G. E. (2007). Consumer racial profiling and perceived victimization: A phone survey of Philadelphia area residents. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 32(1-2), 1–11.

- Gabbidon, S. L., & Higgins, G. E. (2011). Public opinion on the use of consumer racial profiling to identify shoplifters: An exploratory study. *Criminal Justice Review*, 36(2), 201–212.
- Gross-Schaeffer, A. (2000). Ethics education in the workplace. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 26(2), 89–100.
- Harris, A. G. (2003). Shopping while black: Applying 42 U.S.C. 1981 to cases of consumer racial profiling. *Boston College Third World Law Journal*, 23(1), 1–56.
- Henderson, T. P. (2001). Perception that some merchants practice racial profiling generates debate. *Stores*, 83(6), 26–30.
- Higgins, G., & Gabbidon, S. (2008). Perceptions of racial profiling and negative emotions: An exploratory study. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 36(1), 77–88.
- Hollinger, R. C., & Adams, A. (2009). 2008 National retail security survey: Final report. Gainesville, FL: Security Research Project.
- Holroyd, J. (2012). Responsibility for implicit bias. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 43(3), 274–306.
- Jordan, K., Gabbidon, S. L., & Higgins, G. E. (2009). Exploring the perceived extent of and citizens' support for consumer racial profiling: Results from a national poll. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 37(4), 353–359.
- Knowles, J., Persico, N., & Todd, P. (2001). Racial bias motor vehicle searches: Theory and evidence. *Journal of Political Economy*, 109(1), 203–229.
- Langan, P. A., Greenfield, L. A., Smithy, S. K., Durose, M. R., & Levin, D. J. (2001). Contacts between police and the public: Findings from the 1999 national survey. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Lee, J. (2000). The salience of race in everyday life: Black customers' shopping experiences in Black and White neighborhoods. *Work and Occupations*, 27(3), 353–376.
- Morin, R., & Cottman, M. H. (2001, June 22). Discrimination's lingering sting: Minorities tell of profiling, other bias, *The Washington Post*, p. A1.
- Motley, C. & Ainscough, T. L. (2000). Will you help me please? The effects of race, gender, and manner of dress on retail service. *Marketing Letters*, 11(2), 132–139.

- National Anti-Racism Council of Canada (2007). *Racial discrimination in Canada*. Toronto: ON.
- Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (Spring/Summer 2011). *Human rights in the workplace: A glossary of terms*. Halifax: Nova Scotia. Retrieved from <http://humanrights.gov.ns.ca/publications-reports-and-plans>
- O'Connell, T. (2001). Retail racism: Caught red handed. *Security*, 38(4), 9–10.
- Ontario Human Rights Commission (2003). *Paying the price: The human cost of racial profiling*. Retrieved from <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/english/consultations/racial-profiling-report.shtml>
- Quebec Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse. (2011). *Racial profiling and systemic discrimination of racialized youth: Report of the consultation on racial profiling and its consequences*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/en/publications/Pages/default.aspx>
- Quebec Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse. (2005). *Racial profiling: Context and definition*. Retrieved from <http://media.thestar.topscms.com/acrobat/7b/a1/011b0133400bbc65bb67e656cf3d.pdf>
- Rojek, J., Rosenfeld, R., & Decker, S. (2004). The influence of drivers' race on traffic stops in Missouri. *Police Quarterly*, 7(1), 126–147.
- Schreer, G. E., Smith, S., & Thomas, K. (2009). "Shopping while Black": Examining racial discrimination in a retail setting, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 39(6), 1432–1444.
- Statistics Canada. (2007). *2006 Census. Nova Scotia & Halifax 2006 Community Profiles*. (Catalogue number 92–591–XWE). Retrieved from <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=12&Geo2=CMA&Code2=205&Data=Count&SearchText=Halifax&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&B1=Al&Custom>
- Statistics Canada. (2008). Figure 28: Number and proportion of visible minority population in Canada, 1981 to 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-003-x/2007001/4129904-eng.htm>
- Tator, C., & Henry, F. (1994). The ideology of racism: "Democratic racism." *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal*, 26(2), 1–14.
- Tator, C., & Henry, F. (2006). *The Colour of Democracy: Racism in Canadian Society*, 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education Limited.



Wang, Y., & Kleiner, B. (2005). Defining employee dishonesty. *Management Research News*. 28(2), 11–22.

Williams, J. D., Henderson, G. R., & Harris, A. M. (2001). Consumer racial profiling: Bigotry goes to market. *The New Crisis*, 108, 22–24.

Williams, J. D., & Snuggs, T. (1997). Survey of Attitudes Toward Customer Ethnocentrism and Shopping in Retail Store: The Role of Race. *Society for Consumer Psychology 1997 Winter Conference Proceedings*. Cornelia Pechmann and S. Ratneshwar, eds. Postdam, NY: Society for Consumer Psychology, 161–162.

Zingaff, M. T., Mason, H. M., Smith, W. R., Tomaskovic-Devey, D., Warren, P., McMurray, H. L., & Fenlon, C. R. (2000). *Evaluating North Carolina state highway patrol data: Citations, Warnings and Searches in 1998*. Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety.

## Appendix A: Glossary

---

**Aboriginal Peoples**—Individuals or groups who are original inhabitants (or native to) a country. In Canada, Aboriginal people include Mi'kmaq, Inuit, Metis, Iroquois, and others. The terms “Native” or “First Nations” are also used to refer to Aboriginal people.

**Access (to Services or Facilities)**—Access to service or facilities is a protected area in the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*. This includes, for instance, health care or educational facilities.

**Assimilation**—Refers to the loss of the original ethnic identity, as a person merges into the dominant culture in an attempt to adjust to what is required by that dominant culture.

**Attitude**—The state of mind that makes us act in certain ways about social events or objects; a consistent pattern of thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and reactions.

**Barrier**—An overt or covert systemic obstacle that prevents equal opportunities or outcomes.

**Bias**—A preference for or against. Subjective opinion, preference, or inclination, formed without reasonable justification. Bias influences an individual's or group's ability to evaluate a particular situation objectively or accurately.

**Civil Rights**—The right of citizens to liberty and equality. Civil rights include, but are not limited to, freedom to worship, to express oneself, to vote, to take part in political life, and to have access to certain information.

**Classism**—Discrimination or prejudice based on social or economic class. Classism, in which one group has power and privilege over another group based on income or access to resources, can lead to systemic oppression.

**Colour**—The pigmentation of a person's skin (see also *race* and *ethnicity*). Colour is a protected characteristic in the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*.

**Complaint Process**—A process through which individuals or groups have their concerns investigated or determined on their merits.

**Conflict**—A disagreement between opposing groups or individuals. A state of opposition or disagreement. Incompatibility of ideas.

**Consumer Racial Profiling**—Any type of differential treatment of the consumer in the marketplace based on race or ethnicity that constitutes denial or degrading in

the product or services offered to consumers. This practice may or may not be intentional.

**Cultural Competence**—An ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures. Cultural competence comprises a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies within a system or agency or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations.

**Cultural Group**—A group of individuals having the shared beliefs, behavioural norms, values, language, and ways of thinking about and viewing the world.

**Cultural Identity**—Seeing and addressing oneself in relation to one's own cultural group.

**Culture**—Refers to integrated patterns of human behaviour of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. These behavioural patterns include language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions. Culture can also entail socially transmitted behavioural patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought constituting the expression of a particular community or population.

**Discrimination**—Treating an individual or group differently (by intention or otherwise) based on one of more of the protected characteristics (perceived or actual) in the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*. Discrimination results in a disadvantage to that person or group.

*Direct discrimination* is a form of discrimination against a particular group that is explicit, purposeful, and intentional.

*Indirect discrimination* may be neutral on its face while impacting individuals in a different fashion. Policies can exemplify indirect discrimination.

*Systemic discrimination* comprises a pattern of discrimination throughout a place of employment, service, or program that is a result of pervasive and interrelated actions, policies, and procedures.

**Diversity**—The presence of a wide range of a particular quality, attribute, or group in a specified area.

**Equality**—The quality, fact, or state of being the “same.” Equality is an ideal in the context of providing the same opportunity to all. However, treating everyone equally (the same) does not create equality. The bases are unequal because society consists of levels (class, privilege, advantage, exclusion, etc.).

**Ethnic Group**—A population sharing a genealogical or ancestral heritage, or historical background. This shared experience may be linked by a common cultural practice, language, and sometimes, religion, belief, or tradition.

**Ethnicity**—An ethnic group is socially defined on the basis of cultural characteristics of diverse types, such as language, religion, kinship, organization, dress, mannerisms, or any other set of cultural criteria deemed relevant to the persons concerned. The use of “ethnicity” rather than or in addition to “race” is preferable in written text as ethnicity has fewer negative connotations.

**Equity**—An application of fairness that incorporates justice in providing opportunities to all. Equity enables the disadvantaged to eventually attain equality. Equity takes into account the unequal access experienced by disadvantaged groups.

**Eurocentrism**—Presupposes the supremacy and superiority of Europe and Europeans in world culture, and relates history according to a European perception and experience.

**First Nations People**—The term, which refers to Native Canadians, came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word “Indian,” which many people thought was offensive or inaccurate since it refers to people from India. Many First Nations people have adopted the term “First Nation” to replace the word “band” in the name of their communities. The term does not refer to Inuit or Metis, which are considered separate groups.

**Gender**—Socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes considered appropriate for men and women.

**Human Rights**—The universal recognition of the right of all persons to fairness and freedom by moral entitlement, legal entitlement, or both. Human rights are protected and become enforceable when they are codified as statutes, conventions, covenants, or treaties.

**Human Rights Act**—The Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act* is the statute that governs human rights law in Nova Scotia.

**Immigrant**—One who moves from their native country to another with the intention of settling and gaining a better life or for better opportunities for personal, political, religious, social, or economic reasons.

**Impact**—A strong effect or impression. In human rights, impact refers to a significant outcome as a result of a negative event. Impact is the key element in deciding if discrimination or harassment has occurred during a complaints process.

**Language**—In Canada, the official languages are English and French. However, census statistics show that there are areas in the country where people don’t use either of these languages. Misunderstandings in a multilingual and culturally diverse setting can occur based on language differences.

**Marginalization**—The process through which people are prevented from finding work, attaining education, and gaining access to social or community services, and therefore, cannot become fully participating members of society.

**Muslim**—An adherent of the Islamic faith.

**Oppressed**—The state of being in the minority or in an underclass due to harsh or unjust treatment.

**Oppression**—The act of dominating others by treating them harshly or with injustice. Prolonged harsh or cruel treatment based on one or a combination of factors by which difference or otherness is determined. Oppression may pertain to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, ability, class, or other characteristics.

**Power**—Possessing control, influence, or authority. It is an implied or overt relationship between individuals or groups whereby one has the ability to exercise influence or control over another.

**Prejudice**—A set of negative personal beliefs about a social group that leads individuals to prejudge people from that group, or the group in general, regardless of individual differences among members of that group. Prejudice can come from anyone and be directed at anyone.

**Privilege**—A right or advantage available only to a particular group of people, often existing as a systemic issue.

**Race**—A social construct used to describe each of the major divisions of humankind loosely summarizing ancestry, place of origin, skin colour, or ethnicity. Race and racial differences have been matched to divisions and inequalities in society.

**Racial Group**—A broad, non-technical term used to refer to groups of people, who usually have a shared biological heritage that is distinguished by skin colour or physical characteristics. Racial groups are determined by socially selected physical traits.

**Racial Profiling**—Any action taken by one or more people in authority with respect to a person or group of persons, for reason of safety, security, or public order, that is based on actual or presumed membership in a group defined by race, colour, ethnic or national origin, or religion. Racial profiling results in the targeted person or group being exposed to differential treatment or scrutiny. Racial profiling is not based on factual grounds or reasonable suspicion.

**Racialized**—The process by which societies construct races as real, different, and unequal in ways that matter to economic, political, and social life. This term is widely preferred over descriptions such as “racial minority,” “visible minority,” or

“person of colour,” as it expresses race as a social construct rather than as a description of persons based on perceived characteristics.

**Racism**—Differential treatment of individuals through institutional, cultural, and individual practices and beliefs that assign differential value to people according to their race. Racist behaviour humiliates, intimidates, isolates, and excludes an individual or group by focusing on their race, ethnicity, place of origin, or skin colour.

**Representative Workforce**—A workforce that reflects the proportion of designated groups in the working-age population, at all organizational levels and in all occupational classifications.

**Social Exclusion**—Depriving people from access to basic opportunities associated with the fabric of society.

**Status Indian**—An Aboriginal person who is designated as “Indian” by the *Indian Act*, determining who can or cannot receive various rights or benefits conferred by the act.

**Stereotype**—A widely held generalization and oversimplified image of a particular type of person, group of people, or quality, allowing for little or no individuality or critical judgment. A stereotype is often a negative belief that regards all members of a group as being the same in relation to a particular attitude or attribute.

**Underclass**—A second-tier, lower-level segment of society. The underclass is either subject to under-representation within society and its workforce, or is not able to advance to high levels in organizations.

**Under-representation**—Disproportionately low levels of employment of designated groups, in consideration of their qualifications and availability in the workforce.

**Value**—A principle or moral standard held as important by an individual or group.

**Visible Minority**—A political construct that was intended to be used within the specific context of employment equity measures; in this context, “visible minority” is defined as non-White and non-Aboriginal. The term has negative connotations as it evokes the idea of being “other,” while being White is considered the norm. The preferred for visible minority is “racialized persons.”

## Appendix B: Survey

---



---

### Survey

Participant Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Preamble:**

- ☐ *Would you be interested in completing a quick 5 minute survey?*

#### **If no:**

- ☐ *That's alright. Thank you very much!*

#### **If yes:**

- ☐ *Great! Thank you.*
- ☐ *So I am doing research with Dr. Judy Haiven from Saint Mary's University and the purpose is to better understand the experiences of consumers here in Nova Scotia.*
- ☐ *Answers are completely confidential and we don't ask for your name or any identifying information.*
- ☐ *I will read each question and the possible answers to you.*
- ☐ *Please choose the answer that best describes your experience.*
- ☐ *You can ask questions at any time*
- ☐ *Are you ready to begin?*

#### **Questions:**

1) How often do you shop for goods and services?

- a. Very frequent
- b. Frequent
- c. Often
- d. Sometimes
- e. Never

2) How do you choose where to shop for goods and services? (choose all that apply)

- a. Value for money
- b. Good quality
- c. Customer service
- d. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- e. All of the above

- ☐ *The following questions are yes and no responses.*
- ☐ *If you respond, "yes," I will ask you the question, "How often?"*
- ☐ *You will be able to choose from "Almost always," "Usually," "Occasionally," and "Once or twice."*

3) In the past year, have you been ignored by staff while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice

4) In the past year, have you received slow service while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice

5) In the past year, have you been refused service while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice



6) In the past year, have you been followed around by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice

7) In the past year, have you been questioned about your ability to afford a product by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice

8) In the past year, have you been the target of offensive language used by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice

9) In the past year, were you or your belongings searched by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice

10) In the past year, have you been physically removed from a store by staff or security personnel while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice

11) In the past year, have you been wrongfully detained (i.e., detained without possession of stolen goods) while shopping for goods and services?

- a. No
- b. Yes

**If Yes:** How often?

- a. Almost always
- b. Usually
- c. Occasionally
- d. Once or twice

☐ ***We are almost done.***

☐ ***There are just a few questions left about general personal characteristics.***

12) How do you identify your gender? \_\_\_\_\_

13) How do you identify your race? \_\_\_\_\_

14) What is your age in years? \_\_\_\_\_

15) What is the highest level of education completed? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ ***That concludes our survey. Thank you very much for participating.***

☐ ***Would you like an information sheet?***

☐ ***It provides you with information on our study and gives you some contact information if you have any further questions or wish to follow up and ask about the results.***

## Appendix C: Chi-Square Significance of Survey Results Q1–Q11

---

The following tables show the chi-square significance of the questions Q1–Q11 that were asked during the survey.

The  $p$  value represents the significance value. To be deemed a statistically significant relationship, the  $p$  value must be less than 0.050. The closer the  $p$  value is to 0.000, the greater the statistical significance.

The *phi effect size* value represents the strength of the relationship between two variables. A value between 0.00 and 0.10 represents a small effect size. A value between 0.10 and 0.30 represents a medium effect size. A value above 0.50 represents a large effect size.

<b>Table 8</b>		
<b>Statistical relationship between race or ethnicity and survey responses.</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b><i>p</i> value</b>	<b>Phi effect size</b>
Q1 – Shopping frequency	0.015*	0.174
Q2 – Value for money	0.000*	0.170
Q2 – Good quality	0.012*	0.111
Q2 – Customer service only	0.000*	0.121
Q2 – Customer service	0.006*	0.118
Q3 – Being ignored	0.000*	0.162
Q3A – Frequency of being ignored	0.000*	0.285
Q4 – Slow service	0.000*	0.147
Q4A – Frequency of slow service	0.000*	0.259
Q5 – Refused service	0.000*	0.196
Q5A – Frequency of refused service	0.027*	0.571
Q6 – Being followed	0.000*	0.323
Q6A – Frequency of being followed	0.036*	0.260
Q7 – Ability to afford questioned	0.000*	0.189
Q7A – Frequency of ability to afford questioned	0.800	0.316
Q8 – Target of offensive language	0.000*	0.209
Q8A – Frequency of target of offensive language	0.002*	0.635
Q9 – Searched	0.000*	0.242
Q9A – Frequency of being searched	0.115	0.407
Q10 – Physically removed	0.001*	0.135
Q10A – Frequency of being physically removed	0.369	0.535
Q11 – Wrongfully detained	0.014*	0.109
Q11A – Frequency of being wrongfully detained	0.370	0.597

**Note.** \*statistically significant:  $p < 0.05$

<b>Table 9</b>		
<b>Statistical relationship between age bracket and survey responses.</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b><i>p</i> value</b>	<b>Phi effect size</b>
Q1 – Shopping frequency	0.619	0.121
Q2 – Value for money	0.028*	0.103
Q2 – Good quality	0.189	0.079
Q2 – Customer service only	0.757	0.047
Q2 – Customer service	0.046*	0.097
Q3 – Being ignored	0.973	0.027
Q3A – Frequency of being ignored	0.068	0.198
Q4 – Slow service	0.696	0.050
Q4A – Frequency of slow service	0.286	0.149
Q5 – Refused service	0.749	0.047
Q5A – Frequency of refused service	0.596	0.323
Q6 – Being followed	0.936	0.033
Q6A – Frequency of being followed	0.477	0.194
Q7 – Ability to afford questioned	0.476	0.062
Q7A – Frequency of ability to afford questioned	0.170	0.400
Q8 – Target of offensive language	0.882	0.038
Q8A – Frequency of target of offensive language	0.860	0.255
Q9 – Searched	0.422	0.065
Q9A – Frequency of being searched	0.356	0.354
Q10 – Physically removed	0.671	0.052
Q10A – Frequency of being physically removed	0.870	0.218
Q11 – Wrongfully detained	0.327	0.070
Q11A – Frequency of being wrongfully detained	0.938	0.258

**Note.** \*statistically significant:  $p < 0.05$

<b>Table 10</b>		
<b>Statistical relationship between gender and survey responses.</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b><i>p</i> value</b>	<b>Phi effect size</b>
Q1 – Shopping frequency	0.001*	0.125
Q2 – Value for money	0.027*	-0.064
Q2 – Good quality	0.011*	-0.074
<b>Note.</b> *statistically significant: $p < 0.05$		
Q2 – Customer service	0.052	-0.056
Q3 – Being ignored	0.102	-0.047
Q3A – Frequency of being ignored	0.166	0.092
Q4 – Slow service	0.066	-0.053
Q4A – Frequency of slow service	0.012*	0.117
Q5 – Refused service	0.173	0.039
Q5A – Frequency of refused service	0.302	0.197
Q6 – Being followed	0.912	-0.003
Q6A – Frequency of being followed	0.886	0.041
Q7 – Ability to afford questioned	0.283	0.031
Q7A – Frequency of ability to afford questioned	0.348	0.179
Q8 – Target of offensive language	0.132	0.044
Q8A – Frequency of target of offensive language	0.745	0.098
Q9 – Searched	0.278	0.031
Q9A – Frequency of being searched	0.069	0.233
Q10 – Physically removed	0.085	0.050
Q10A – Frequency of being physically removed	0.086	0.443
Q11 – Wrongfully detained	0.622	0.014
Q11A – Frequency of being wrongfully detained	0.424	0.378

**Note.** \*statistically significant:  $p < 0.05$

<b>Table 11</b>		
<b>Statistical relationship between education level and survey responses.</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b><i>p</i> value</b>	<b>Phi effect size</b>
Q1 – Shopping frequency	0.001*	0.194
Q2 – Value for money	0.125	0.085
Q2 – Good quality	0.002*	0.124
Q2 – Customer service only	0.184	0.080
Q2 – Customer service	0.028*	0.103
Q3 – Being ignored	0.651	0.053
Q3A – Frequency of being ignored	0.064	0.199
Q4 – Slow service	0.017*	0.107
Q4A – Frequency of slow service	0.026*	0.186
Q5 – Refused service	0.004*	0.121
Q5A – Frequency of refused service	0.917	0.181
Q6 – Being followed	0.108	0.087
Q6A – Frequency of being followed	0.615	0.182
Q7 – Ability to afford questioned	0.011*	0.112
Q7A – Frequency of ability to afford questioned	0.416	0.347
Q8 – Target of offensive language	0.002*	0.126
Q8A – Frequency of target of offensive language	0.097	0.470
Q9 – Searched	0.011*	0.112
Q9A – Frequency of being searched	0.173	0.354
Q10 – Physically removed	0.286	0.072
Q10A – Frequency of being physically removed	0.400	0.443
Q11 – Wrongfully detained	0.444	0.063
Q11A – Frequency of being wrongfully detained	0.770	0.524

**Note.** \*statistically significant:  $p < 0.05$

## Appendix D: Relationship between Subjective and Explicit Consumer Racial Profiling

---

The following tables show the relationships between subjective and explicit experiences of consumer racial profiling, as reported by survey participants. The tables show the results by race or ethnicity of the survey participants.

<b>Table 12</b>						
<b>Relationship between being followed and being refused service as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	<b>Followed</b>			<b>NOT followed</b>		
	<b>Total N followed</b>	<b>N followed &amp; refused service</b>	<b>% followed &amp; refused service</b>	<b>Total N NOT followed</b>	<b>N NOT followed but refused service</b>	<b>% NOT followed but refused service</b>
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	167	10	6%	542	3	0.5%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	94	11	12%	56	3	5%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	30	7	23%	11	0	0%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	28	6	21%	58	4	7%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	61	8	13%	130	9	7%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	380	43	11%	797	19	2%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.



<b>Table 13</b> <b>Relationship between being ignored and being refused service as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	Ignored			NOT ignored		
	Total N ignored	N ignored & refused service	% ignored & refused service	Total N NOT ignored	N NOT ignored but refused service	% NOT ignored but refused service
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	338	10	3%	371	3	1%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	99	12	12%	51	2	4%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	32	7	22%	9	0	0%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	41	6	15%	45	4	9%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	87	10	11.5%	104	7	7%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	597	45	8%	580	16	3%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 14</b> <b>Relationship between being followed and being questioned about ability to afford a product or service as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	Followed			NOT followed		
	Total N followed	N followed & questioned	% followed & questioned	Total N NOT followed	N NOT followed but questioned	% NOT followed but questioned
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	167	19	11%	542	15	3%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	94	24	26%	56	6	11%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	30	5	17%	11	1	9%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	28	5	18%	58	5	8%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	61	7	12%	130	14	11%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	380	62	16%	797	41	5%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 15</b> <b>Relationship between being ignored and being questioned about ability to afford a product or service as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	Ignored			NOT ignored		
	Total N ignored	N ignored & questioned	% ignored & questioned	Total N NOT ignored	N NOT ignored but questioned	% NOT ignored but questioned
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	338	23	7%	371	11	3%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	99	24	24%	51	6	12%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	32	6	19%	9	0	0%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	41	4	10%	45	6	13%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	87	9	10%	104	12	11.5%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	597	66	11%	580	35	6%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 16</b> <b>Relationship between being followed and being targeted for offensive language as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	Followed			NOT followed		
	Total N followed	N followed & targeted	% followed & targeted	Total N NOT followed	N NOT followed but targeted	% NOT followed but targeted
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	167	12	7%	542	7	1%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	94	16	17%	56	3	5%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	30	7	23%	11	0	0%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	28	8	29%	58	3	5%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	61	4	7%	130	1	1%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	380	47	12%	797	14	2%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 17</b> <b>Relationship between being ignored and being targeted for offensive language as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	Ignored			NOT Ignored		
	Total N ignored	N ignored & targeted	% ignored & targeted	Total N NOT ignored	N NOT ignored but targeted	% NOT ignored but targeted
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	338	13	4%	371	6	2%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	99	13	13%	51	6	12%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	32	6	19%	9	1	11%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	41	10	24%	45	1	2%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	87	4	4.5%	104	1	1%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	597	46	8%	580	15	2.5%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 18</b>						
<b>Relationship between being followed and being searched as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	<b>Followed</b>			<b>NOT followed</b>		
	<b>Total N followed</b>	<b>N followed &amp; searched</b>	<b>% followed &amp; searched</b>	<b>Total N NOT followed</b>	<b>N NOT followed but searched</b>	<b>% NOT followed but searched</b>
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	167	27	16%	542	17	3%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	94	33	35%	56	4	7%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	30	9	30%	11	3	27%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	28	3	11%	58	6	10%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	61	14	23%	130	10	8%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	380	86	23%	797	40	5%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 19</b>						
<b>Relationship between being ignored and being searched as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	<b>Ignored</b>			<b>NOT ignored</b>		
	<b>Total N ignored</b>	<b>N ignored &amp; searched</b>	<b>% ignored &amp; searched</b>	<b>Total N NOT ignored</b>	<b>N NOT ignored but searched</b>	<b>% NOT ignored but searched</b>
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	338	31	9%	371	13	4%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	99	32	32%	51	5	10%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	32	9	28%	9	3	33%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	41	7	17%	45	2	4%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	87	14	16%	104	10	10%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	597	93	16%	580	33	6%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 20</b> <b>Relationship between being followed and being physically removed from a store as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	Followed			NOT followed		
	Total N followed	N followed & physically removed	% followed & physically removed	Total N NOT followed	N NOT followed but physically removed	% NOT followed but physically removed
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	167	0	0%	542	3	0.5%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	94	4	4%	56	2	4%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	30	2	7%	11	0	0%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	28	2	7%	58	1	2%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	61	1	1.5%	130	0	0%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	380	9	2%	797	6	0.5%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.



<b>Table 21</b> <b>Relationship between being ignored and being physically removed from a store as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	Ignored			NOT ignored		
	Total N ignored	N ignored & physically removed	% ignored & physically removed	Total N NOT ignored	N NOT ignored but physically removed	% NOT ignored but physically removed
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	338	1	0.2%	371	2	0.5%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	99	4	4%	51	2	4%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	32	2	6%	9	0	0%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	41	3	7%	45	0	0%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	87	1	1%	104	0	0%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	597	11	2%	580	4	0.5%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 22</b>						
<b>Relationship between being followed and being wrongfully detained as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	<b>Followed</b>			<b>NOT followed</b>		
	<b>Total N followed</b>	<b>N followed &amp; wrongfully detained</b>	<b>% followed &amp; wrongfully detained</b>	<b>Total N NOT followed</b>	<b>N NOT followed but wrongfully detained</b>	<b>% NOT followed but wrongfully detained</b>
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	167	0	2%	542	0	0%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	94	4	4%	56	1	2%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	30	0	0%	11	0	0%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	28	0	0%	58	0	0%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	61	3	5%	130	1	1%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	380	10	2.5%	797	2	0.2%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.

<b>Table 23</b>						
<b>Relationship between being ignored and being wrongfully detained as a consumer, by race or ethnicity.</b>						
	<b>Ignored</b>			<b>NOT ignored</b>		
	<b>Total N ignored</b>	<b>N ignored &amp; wrongfully detained</b>	<b>% ignored &amp; wrongfully detained</b>	<b>Total N NOT ignored</b>	<b>N NOT ignored but wrongfully detained</b>	<b>% NOT ignored but wrongfully detained</b>
<b>White (N = 709)</b>	338	3	1%	371	0	0%
<b>African Canadian (N = 150)</b>	99	4	4%	51	1	2%
<b>Aboriginal (N = 41)</b>	32	0	0%	9	0	0%
<b>Middle Eastern (N = 86)</b>	41	0	0%	45	0	0%
<b>Asian (N = 191)</b>	87	4	4.5%	104	0	0%
<b>Overall (N = 1,177)</b>	597	11	2%	580	1	0.2%

**Note.** N = number of respondents.





**Nova Scotia  
Human Rights Commission**

[www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights](http://www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights)