

Glossary of Terminology

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Sociology of Race and Ethnicity/ Principles of Anti-Racism Education
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CEHS and RNAO cultural competency draft guidelines definitions added by Jane Turrittin

Ableism: the dividing of people into “abled” and “disabled.” Abled is thought of as normal while differing abilities are considered abnormal or disadvantageous.

Accountability: A feature of relationship that holds individuals, groups, or offices responsible according to principles or criteria befitting the relationship, for example, transparent communication, fairness, and trustworthiness.

Accountability practices pertaining to equity include:

- honesty and ownership of the impact of racial discrimination;
- informing persons of the perception of unfairness;
- providing an opportunity for persons to retract mistakes on their own recognizance along with apology and accommodation; and
- informing persons what the community requires.

Accountability outcomes of a transformative justice hearing of a complaint:

parties feel like whole persons;
relationships feel in balance; and
members of racialized groups feel safe (see Author, 1988)

Individual Accountability refers to the assignment of responsibility for a specific set of actions for which non-compliance may result in specific sanctions.

Public Accountability entails community participation in, and control of, the decision-making processes of public institutions (Henry et al., 1995).

Agency: A term referring to participation capacity, such as voicing needs and realizing interests through decisions and actions. Agency is equal when there is equal access and participation.

Ageism: a set of beliefs and attitudes that assume particular age groups have specific ways of behaving and acting. Such attitudes can lead to the exclusion of people based on prejudice. For example, ageism may lead people to think that all teenagers are rude and disrespectful or that all elderly people are hard of hearing and ill tempered.

Anti-racism: is an active and conscious choice that can be taken by anyone to challenge individual and systemic/institutional racism. It translates into resisting and fighting all forms of oppression against racialized people.

Anti-racism: Refers to a health promotion agenda that calls for an end to condoning and promoting racism by advocating for accountability in relationships irrespective of race, colour, or ethnicity.

Avoiding accountability for racial equality: A condoned practice permitted among all members of a society where racial discrimination, racialization, racial dominance, racial disparities, and racial segregation are not necessarily held accountable.

Backlash: Striking out in reaction to a perceived threat (Archaic use refers to the slave lashing back at the master).

Classism: an attitude giving rise to actions that distinguish people according to their income, lifestyle and status. An economic system that results in an unfair distribution of resources that leads to a violation of people's basic human rights.

Culture: ever changing ideas, customs, art, produced by a particular society that influences people's behavior. Culture is something that is learned, not biological. Culture is understood to mean a broad set of ideas related to specific systems of meaning that are learned and shared by members of a group. Culture organizes people's behaviour and thoughts in the context of their societies, history and environment and shapes their identities, attitudes, beliefs and practices.

Cultural Competence: refers to the level of knowledge-based skills required to provide meaningful, supportive and respectful service delivery to clients from various marginalized groups in society (e.g. based on: gender, race, ethnicity, age, abilities, socio-economic status, language, religion, sexual orientation, immigrant status, religion, language ability, mental health status). This involves a recognition of and commitment to addressing the complex relations of power based on varying forms of social and racial location and privilege (including those structuring the relationship between service providers and clients from marginalized groups within organizational settings) and how this positioning provides or denies people material advantages in society. Within this framework, the notion of "culture" is defined broadly (as above) and is not seen as static or homogeneous, but recognized as being a complex, changing and diverse form of social organization and reference. Responding to and affirming cultural diversity as a valued component of human social and psychological organization is critical to service delivery in a plural society. Building an inclusive methodology for service delivery involves adopting the principles of anti-oppression and basing professional practice upon critical reflection, accountability, power-sharing, collaboration with marginalized groups, and valuing, legitimating and integrating the knowledge and experience of diverse cultural groups within the services and interventions provided. In a broader sense, cultural competence should act as a means to provide the critical knowledge and skills to transform institutional/ organizational systems and cultures based on principles of social justice and equity.

Cultural competence: a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or the professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Cross et al., 1989; Isaacs & Benjamin, 1991).

Culturally competent care: The ability to provide care with a client-centered orientation, recognizing the significant impact of cultural values and beliefs as well as power and hierarchy often inherent in clinical interactions, particularly between clients from marginalized groups and health care organizations.

Discourse: Language-based expression (verbal, written, non-verbal) that includes knowledge plus ideology or "the talk and the walk." Discourse can be either a reflection of social structures or a mechanism for restructuring relations.

Discourses of racial discrimination: Language-based expressions that structure relations of dominance including marginalization, exclusion, problematization, and containment of racialized people. These expressions can target racialized persons' supporters.

Discrimination: treating a person or persons unfairly because of a specific characteristic such as race, religion, gender, etc.

Diversity: the term used to describe variation between people in terms of a range of factors such as ethnicity, national origin, gender, ability, age, physical characteristics, religion, values, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, or life experiences.

Employment Equity: Refers to a set of standards of fairness and equality achieved throughout employment by the administration of equilibration practices designed in policy and legislation to protect all workers.

Equality: means that every person enjoys the same status, and thus everyone should be treated the same way so that everyone can realize their full human rights and potential in contributing to social development, and then benefit from the results.

Equity: is the process of being fair to everyone, which often needs designing particular measures to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that keep different groups at different levels. Equity acknowledges the fact that equal treatment for everyone does not always yield equal results for everyone.

Equity: Standards of fairness achieved through social justice proceedings.

Ethnocentrism: Refers to an ubiquitous tendency to view all peoples and cultures in terms of one's own cultural standards and values.

Ethnocentrism: is the belief in one's own ethnicity as superior and its use as the basis to judge all other racial and ethnic groups. Racist ethnocentrism is often referred to as **Eurocentrism**, the placement of knowledge and experiences of people ancestrally from Europe as the norm from which to view and value all other races and ethnicities.

Ethnoracial competencies: Skills manifested by healthy discourse practices that integrate anti-racism principles and strategies in decisions and relationships. The term can also refer to broad based people skills that transact equity pertaining to age, class, disability, gender, race, sexual diversity, and so on (Meeks, 2003).

Faithism: a form of oppression where people are judged based on their religious affiliation or belief system. In this part of the world, Christianity may be seen as the normal faith group and others may be seen as deviant, wrong or strange.

Health disparity: "marked difference or inequality between two or more population groups defined on the basis of race or ethnicity, gender, educational level or other criteria" (quoted by Percy and Keppel in Spitzer, 2005, p.S 78).

Heterosexism/ Homophobia: is an attitude that breeds actions that discriminate against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals on the basis of their sexual orientation. People who are homosexual are treated as though they are abnormal and that their relationships are of lesser value than heterosexual ones.

Inclusivity: refers to an organizational system where decision-making includes perspectives from diverse point of view. It includes the rights of individuals and groups for equal opportunity and participation.

Institution: a large organization in any society that typically has a great deal of power, such as: schools, government, media, banks, big business.

Institutional racism: The lack of accountability for racial equality in society's institutions, such as health care. Its fundamental basis is the privilege – informed by ideology and group power – of not having to be equally accountable to racialized people as to non-racialized group members.

Interlocking Systems of Oppression: various forms of social marginality based on race, class, gender, religion, sexuality, age, ability and mental health status form a system of interlocking oppressions that are mutually reinforcing and sustaining. Attempting to understand and dismantle these systems involves addressing the multiple sites of oppression and challenging these systems of domination that ideologically and systemically sustain social difference and inequality.

Invisible minorities: People who experience social inequalities because of traits that are not visible, for example, cognitive capacities, sexual diversity, or age.

Islamophobia: a fear, mistrust or morbid association relating to Islam and categorizing Muslims as being dangerous, terrorists, extremists, foreigners and strangers that translates into individual, ideological and systemic forms of oppression and discrimination.

Mainstream: people or ideas that are part of the mainstream are thought of as “normal” or “conventional.” Individuals who are judged to be part of this normative social category tend to be in positions of power.

Marginalization: to relegate or confine to a lower or outer limit or edge, as of social standing. The social process of marginalization refers to a lack of equitable access to social, political, and economic benefits including health on the basis of one’s membership in an identifiable group.

Minoritized: refers to the social, political, economic and cultural forces that relegate specific groups of people into “minority” status even when they may be a demographic majority (i.e people from non- White ethno-racial groups are a demographic majority globally and in Toronto, but are viewed as a “minority” group).

Minority groups: Existing in proportionally smaller numbers. Within social contexts it is a misleading term to describe non-dominant ethnic identities (Bowen, 2004).

Multicultural society: Multiculturalism: An official policy of the Canadian government recognizing the diversity of Canadians in ethnicity, national or ethnic origin, colour, and religion, as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society.

Multiculturalism: refers to a view which recognizes the diversity of cultures and traditions that exist within communities. Critics of multiculturalism in practice believe that it does not question current power structures, Eurocentrism or whiteness as a normative standard.

Otherness: A situation in which one is being undervalued or discounted because of race, colour, or ethnicity, for example, being subjected to difference, marginalization, subordination, disadvantaging, restriction, being silenced, lacking in information or cooperation for control, events being in chaos, and/or lacking information about the correct means and channels for decision-making (Hagey and MacKay, 2000). Non-racialized people who champion anti-racism can experience otherness in their workplace.

Power: is a relational concept; it functions between individuals and groups and depends on one’s subordination for another’s domination and privilege. This is usually referred to as “power over.” “Power over” is visible in the control of or access to institutions sanctioned by the state; it is visible in the power to define reality and rules etc. Access to “power over” is complex and partially defined by **white privilege**. There are also other types of power that are less hierarchical and destructive. Power that works on a horizontal basis of sharing is often found in collective organizing. Power is also evident in an individual’s capacity to act.

Prejudice: a negative opinion or judgment formed about someone/something without any just grounds or sufficient knowledge; a preconceived notion. A negative pre-judgment is often called a stereotype; an action based on pre-

judgment is discrimination. With reference to racism, prejudice is the unreasonable and inexplicable hostility toward a person, race or ethnic group. A prejudice is an attitude toward a group that may be the result of a stereotype.

Privilege: a special right or unearned advantage that puts one person or a group in a better position than others. It is usually invisible to those who have it because they are taught not to see it. In terms of racism, privilege is the unearned social power given to white people or people of European ancestry. **White privilege** is mainly historically-based in colonization and remains a contemporary system of preferential treatment at the individual and systemic level (i.e systemic racism).

Productive diversity: effective utilization of the diversity of the workforce to accomplish organizational goals.

Race: A set of assumptions used in discrimination, creating racialized and non-racialized peoples. Assumptions of race make a connection between European derived signifiers of race, such as skin colour or heritage, so that accountability is not owed to the racialized person(s).

Race: is not based on biology; it is a created category with historical roots used to classify groups of people. Race was historically determined by genealogical or class differences. Our modern conception of race based on physical differences is a product of colonialism; it was defined in terms of skin colour, where non-white people were considered lower "races" in order to justify colonial expansion by Western European nations. Contemporary relationships between differently raced people are still determined by this moment in history and remain unequal, where based on skin colour white people have the most power and privilege and are considered the norm (i.e non-raced). It is important to understand that white is also a created racial category. Although racial categories derived from oppressive contexts, they can also be reclaimed and used as forms of resistance by communities of colour.

Race consciousness based on anti-racist principles: A strategy for racial equality that names and questions discourses of domination and promotes equal access and participation in governance, media, education, research, corporations, health care, policing, child welfare, politics, justice, and so on.

Racial backlash: Negative reaction or repercussion when a racialized person assumes a privilege that is deemed suitable for whites only; also pertains to reprisal for complaining of racism (see "Reprisal," below).

Racial discrimination: Policy and practices characterized by avoidance of a relation of accountability for equity with racialized people, who consequently experience social domination and differences.

Racial disparities: Inequalities in health, employment, income, education, social justice, and other societal benefits, that impact negatively on racialized people.

Racial profiling: Intentional or unintentional discrimination of personal attributes consistent with the European derived ideologies around race, white privilege, and racial superiority. Accountability for racial profiling requires race consciousness.

Racism: from a socio-psychological standpoint is an attitude that breeds discrimination and hatred of people based on their race or ethnic origin. In this society, being white is viewed as the norm and people of colour are viewed as being outside the mainstream. Racism is a specific type of racial prejudice or discrimination backed up by legitimated institutional power. Though prejudice and discrimination can be experienced by all people in different contexts, racism is specific in its beliefs, assumptions and actions based on an ideology of the inherent superiority of the white race over other racial groups. Racism takes three main forms that operate together to maintain a system of oppression. 1) **Individual Racism-** individual acts reflecting racist attitudes/beliefs (racial slurs, jokes, individual acts of violence, etc); 2) **Ideological Racism-** negative ideas and attitudes often circulated through media, texts and informal channels of communication that create stereotypical notions that provide legitimacy and a rationale for the inferiority or superiority of certain groups in society and unequal social relations (i. e Muslims are violent terrorists,

Aboriginals are lazy, etc); 3) **Systemic/ Institutional Racism**- organizational policies and practices at the institutional levels of society that indirectly target racialized communities and maintain white privilege (i.e racism in the criminal justice system, racial profiling, etc)

Racialization: is the social process of construction of specific negative and essentialized images and their attribution to particular human groups. Since those images are taken to be the 'essence' (fixed, permanent) of the group they are attributed to, they become a means to promote and justify exclusion of members of that particular group. For instance, people belonging to certain human groups can be unfairly assumed to be 'lazy' because the group they belong to is 'racialized' as being supposedly 'lazy' (think of racializing images of Black and Latino groups, which have a negative impact on employability of their members). On the other hand, certain groups can be racialized as being particularly 'productive', 'disciplined' and even 'submissive' (think of certain Asian communities whose members can thus be 'comoditized' and exploited as tireless and diligent workers). Historically groups that are categorized as "White" have also been racialized as a means of attaching a negative and debasing reference to their identity (i.e early Irish immigrants to North America were referred to as the "Black Irish" or " Irish Negroes").

Racialization: A social segmentation and control process that relies on discourse practices of discrimination, dominance, and difference in treatment that are based on the assumption that in a racist society, one is permitted not to be equally accountable to racialized people as to non-racialized people.

Racialization is denied and behaviours are rationalized even when non-racialized people challenge racialization processes. Accountability for racialization requires race consciousness.

Racialized encounter: A racialized person(s) receives an intentional or unintentional communication so that the sender accomplishes racial segmentation and control (i.e. marginalization, problematization, containment and/or exclusion of the racialized person(s)). Accountability for perpetrating racialized encounters and their effects requires race consciousness.

Racialized people: People who experience social inequalities because of their race, colour, or ethnicity.

Regulatory body: in the context of professions, is an external organization that has been empowered by legislation to oversee and control professional practice and outputs germane to it. Its primary activity is to protect the public.

Reprisals: Denotes retaliation for making a complaint. Reprisals are prohibited under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Resilience: Individual strengths based on coordinating supports and influence to achieve social goals and objectives.

Restitution: Differences including accommodation required in order to achieve equity outcomes.

Set-up: The unfair manipulation of people and the organization of events toward desired inequitable outcomes. For example, racialized nurses experience set-up that puts them in a bind so that they (and not their non-racialized counterparts) must choose between one disadvantage and another.

Sexism: results from cultural and social norms/practices that give more power to men than to women. Men tend to fare better in society than women leaving many women struggling for fairness economically, politically, and socially.

Stereotyping: a stereotype is a fixed general image or set of characteristics that are considered representative of a particular type of person or group. Stereotypes can lead to false conclusions and perceptions. They exaggerate the sameness of a group and the differences between groups. Stereotypes are not just about individual ignorance but are also part of a system that keeps relations of power unequal.

Systemic racism: Policies, practices, and procedures that are considered normal, but can intentionally or unintentionally discriminate against individuals and groups protected under the Code, thus privileging non-racialized people. *The privileges of systemic racism are upheld by discourse that avoids accountability for racial domination.*

Tit for tat: Backlash and counter backlash, or resistance and counter resistance typical of dispute escalation. (See Fisher and Brown, 1988)

Transparency: A principle of procedural justice upholding ethical practices, such as informed consent and equal access to information, participation, and decision-making channels.

Visible minorities: Statistics Canada allows Canadian residents other than Aboriginal peoples to self-identify their visible minority status when completing forms. Identification usually refers to race or colour.

Whiteness: In-group credits enjoyed on the basis of the freedom of not being liable for one's race, colour, or ethnicity and on immunity from having to be accountable to out-group members (see "Otherness"). Privileges include normality, authority, dominance, freedoms for flexibility, capacity for voicing and likelihood of being heard, opportunity for being in control, events being orderly, and having information and access to the correct means and channels of decision-making (Hagey and MacKay, 2000). In workplaces that uphold institutional racism, in order to sustain the privileges of whiteness, racialized people and non-racialized people collaborate to oppose anti-racism.