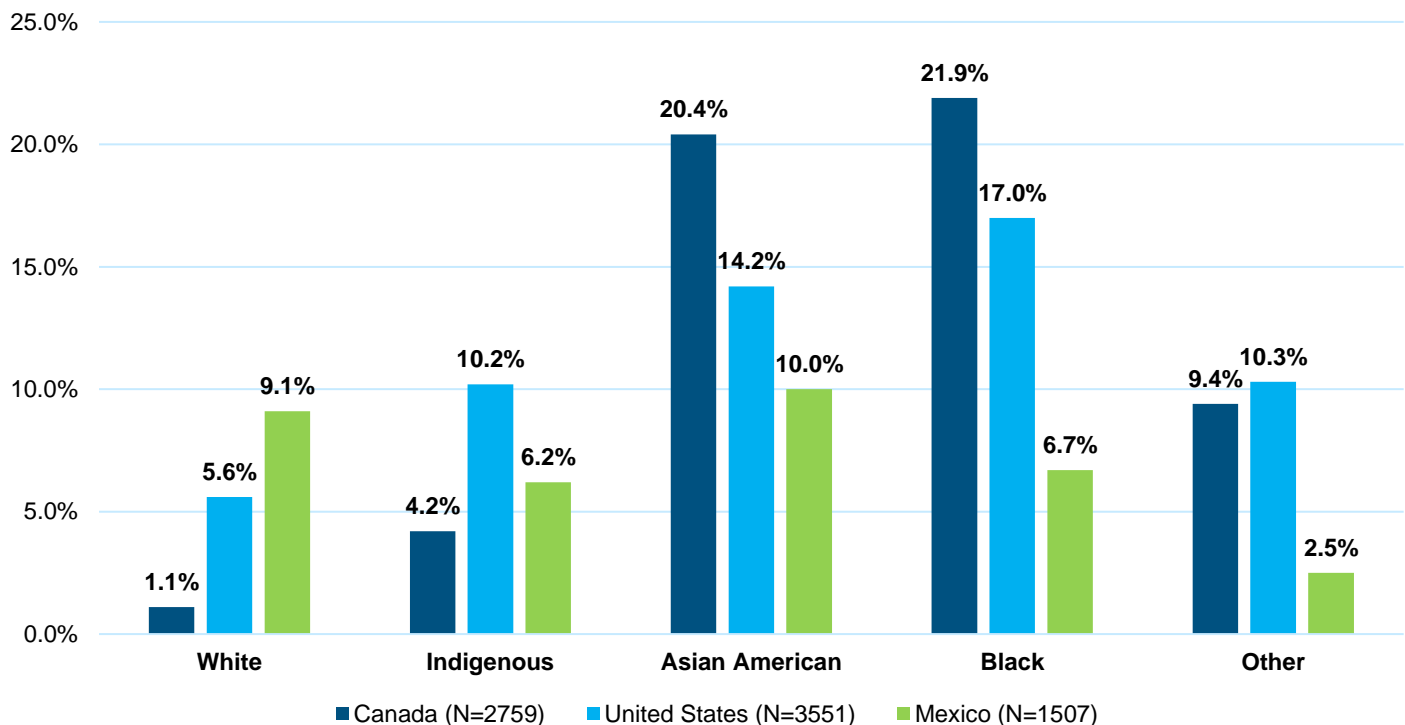


# COVID Impacts

## ANTI-ASIAN RACISM DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, have you been treated unfairly?



### WHAT WE KNOW

As we enter year two of this pandemic, people of Asian descent worldwide face increasing racism and xenophobia. Unfortunately, Asians are experiencing a pandemic within a pandemic. Various news and academic literature articles have highlighted the rise of Anti-Asian discrimination occurring in Canada and the United States (Chen, Trinh, and Yang 2020; Gover, Harper, and Langton 2020; Le et al. 2020). These include unprovoked physical attacks on East Asian persons, being blamed and harassed for the emergence of COVID-19, death threats and hate crimes against Asian businesses.

According to their National Report (2021), *Stop Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Hate* found that verbal harassment and shunning are the most reported forms of discrimination. Women and those of Chinese descent were the most likely to be victims.

Sadly, Asians now fear for their lives as hate crimes and attacks have become fatal, resulting in the deaths of innocent people. Evident racism has also appeared on social media and through the vocabulary used to describe COVID-19.

## RESILIENCE

While it seemed that Anti-Asian attacks and hate crimes were hidden and ignored when incident rates began to increase, now, more than ever, people worldwide are aware of the injustices this community is faced with. Following the death of eight women in three Atlanta Spas, which included six Asian women on March 16 2021, several #StopAsianHate and #StopAAPIHate (Asian Americans and Pacific Islander) marches took place across the majority of states in America and several cities in Canada. The rise of incidents has also become an essential conversation across major social media platforms, allowing the masses to be informed about the challenges.

## PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

Asian participants across Canada, the United States and Mexico were asked whether they had been mistreated since the outbreak of COVID-19. A total of 73 open-ended responses illustrated the discrimination Asian peoples are facing due to perceptions surrounding COVID-19. Examples of responses included:

- “Because I’m Asian I have been discriminated against frequently, where before I never encountered it.”
- “Being blamed for the virus since I am Asian.”
- “I am a Chinese American and people on the streets would yell racial remarks at me -- things like “Go back to China!” and “We don't want your kind here!” I have never been to China. I am an American patriot.”

## RESULTS

These findings illustrate a clear picture – Asian communities are currently facing two different challenges. While attempting to navigate through a pandemic, they must also navigate through continuous discrimination, which stems from a long history of racism, xenophobia, and current beliefs in

mass media. Unfortunately, acts of discrimination faced by this community continue to rise as the pandemic continues to be at the forefront of many lives.

Asians and other peoples of colour should no longer be victims of prejudice at the hands of others, especially as we all attempt to cope and grapple with our new reality. COVID-19 has affected us all in various ways; however, no person should also experience race-based inequalities. For these communities, COVID-19 has resulted in more intense feelings of despair and fear.

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## ABOUT THE PROJECT

**The researchers:** A cross-national team of over 30 researchers led by Dr. Lori Wilkinson, Dr. Kiera Ladner and Dr. Jack Jedwab, received funding from CIHR for this study *COVID-19's differential impact on the mental and emotional health of Indigenous Peoples and Newcomers: A socioeconomic analysis of Canada, US and Mexico*.

**The study:** The team has been collecting data in Canada since March 9 and the United States since March 27, 2020. Ongoing survey waves now include Mexico. Our goal is to measure and follow the changes in attitudes, behaviours, health and socioeconomic outcomes among persons living in all three countries using a mixed methodology of surveys and unstructured interviews.

Fact sheet prepared by Valérie Georges (University of Manitoba).