endpoverty edmonton

A LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RACISM AND POVERTY

THE EDMONTON CONTEXT

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Foreword

EndPoverty Edmonton (EPE) actively supports Anti-racism initiatives, practices, and policies within the city. Doing so contributes to our vision of eliminating poverty and other individual, organizational and societal benefits. Anti-racism policies create a safe and inclusive work environment, benefiting staff wellness, retention, and productivity. These policies also address employment barriers and prioritize the needs of underrepresented communities. From an economist's standpoint, an Anti-racist framework can increase access to new markets, including social procurement.

At EPE, we recognize that our target population is primarily racialized and Indigenous individuals. To combat their over-representation in poverty, we must address the root causes and contributing factors, such as racism. Understanding the interconnectedness of racism and poverty is crucial for developing effective solutions.

Preface

The literature review explores the complex connection between racism and poverty, highlighting their profound influence on individuals and communities. Racism perpetuates inequities and disadvantage, reinforcing the cycle of poverty. Simultaneously, poverty deprives individuals of essential resources necessary for a dignified life. Racism further compounds the challenges faced by equity-deserving groups, denying them access to education, employment, housing, healthcare, and other fundamental systems. Indigenous communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, bear a disproportionate burden of poverty. Additionally, newcomers and racialized individuals experience higher poverty rates due to systemic barriers like labor market discrimination. To mitigate these detrimental effects, strategies such as implementing Anti-racism legislation, incorporating inclusive policies, and providing targeted support for equity-deserving groups can be employed.

By addressing the root causes of poverty and striving for equity, we can create a future where everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive and contribute meaningfully to their community.

Acknowledgment

We recognize that we live and work on Indigenous territories, precisely Treaty 6 territory, which has been home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples for centuries, including the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Nakoda Sioux. We acknowledge the impact of colonization and anti-Indigenous racism on Indigenous peoples and all Canadians, resulting in multidimensional poverty and other inequities. As part of our efforts to truth and reconciliation, we are committing the work of this literature review.

Please visit EndPoverty Edmonton for a copy of this report.

*It is important to note that within this literature review, the terms "visible minority" and "marginalized communities" are used for consistency with the literature reviewed. However, it is crucial to recognize that these are not the preferred terms and they may carry outdated or inadequate connotations in describing diverse racial and ethnic groups. The usage of these terms does not intend to endorse or perpetuate the terms but acknowledge their presence in the reviewed literature.

I.   Introduction

EndPovertyEdmonton (EPE) conducted a literature review to examine the interconnectedness between racism and poverty. The review contributes to the ongoing discussion on how to address the impact of racism on poverty. EPE is an organization that works towards the elimination of poverty in Edmonton and the surrounding communities (Area). EPE is a member of various networks that work towards the elimination of poverty including the Vibrant Communities, a network of Canadian organizations that work towards poverty eradication. EPE uses a collaborative, coordinated approach to identify and address the root causes of poverty with an aim to *"end poverty within a generation."* EPE does this by playing an instrumental role in convening, coordinating, and brokering innovative partnerships to advocate for systemic and policy changes while building the capacity of Edmontonians, *"to take action to end poverty"* (at the individual-, family-, community-, and organizational levels). This is a comprehensive and holistic approach to addressing poverty with a focus on eight priority areas/game changers, namely:

- Anti-racism
- Inclusive economy

- Early learning and care
- Indigenization

- Affordable housing
- Education
- Health services, and
- Transportation.

The "Anti-racism" game changer is the subject of this literature review.

Purpose

This review seeks to examine how racism perpetuates poverty, focusing on policies, processes, practices, and systems of discrimination embedded within institutions. Understanding this relationship will help focus on and address some of the root causes of poverty in Edmonton and surrounding communities. In sum, the review will:

- Define key concepts related to racism and poverty,
- Examine the relationship between racism and poverty,
- Identify the populations that are impacted by poverty due to the relationship between race and poverty in Edmonton and the surrounding communities and
- Identify strategies that can contribute to the elimination of poverty.

Overall, the information gathered from this review will inform strategies on how to "end poverty within a generation." Findings will also be used to inform the strategic direction of EPE's *"Eliminate Racism"* game changer and advocate for systemic and policy changes to help reduce poverty.

Selection Criteria

The literature search employed various strategies, including conducting an electronic search in the following databases: EBSCO (Academic Search Complete), ProQuest, World Cat, Scopus, and Google Scholar. To access literature on this topic, we used the following search terms: "poverty" "poverty in Canada," "poverty in Edmonton," "racism," "racism in Canada," "racism in Edmonton," "poverty and racism" and "discrimination and poverty." In addition, we also looked at citations in relevant publications and did an electronic search of articles that other authors frequently cite. A web search of other relevant material was also conducted, including the Statistics Canada website, World Vision, and World Bank. Publications from the non-profit sector in Canada and contributions to globalization and development thinking were also reviewed.

To be included, articles had to meet the following criteria: (1) English language; (2) peer-reviewed articles; (3) review documents, including resources and reports, individual studies, or electronic book chapters; (4) clearly outlining the social, economic, political contexts of poverty and racism (5) relevant to North America or the UK; (6) accessible online; and (7) had to be written within the last ten years. Articles were not included if they discussed racism in relation to the criminal justice system and the child welfare system.

Review Questions

Below are the questions guiding this review taken from the general purposes listed earlier.

1. What is the relationship between racism and poverty, and how does racism perpetuate poverty?
2. Which racialized populations are most impacted by poverty in Edmonton?
3. What strategies can be used to address the impact of racism on poverty?

I. Definition of Key Terms

While a lot of research has explored the individual aspects of poverty and racism, the review indicated the scarcity of Canadian literature on the interrelationship between these two topics. On the other hand, research from the United States clearly shows the relationship between racism and poverty. The bodies of theoretical and empirical literature that are relevant to this review focus on scholarship on Canada's Indigenous

peoples, anti-black racism, immigration, globalization, development studies, and multi-disciplinary literature including pediatric literature and research in the field of economics. Below, we review studies from these bodies of literature noting key findings related to how racism perpetuates poverty. Also discussed are strategies to address the impact of racism on poverty. Before focusing on the review questions, it is important to define the key terms.

Racism

As a **theoretical concept**, racism is derived from the word race, which some argue is more of a social construct than it is of biological differences (Duhaney, 2022; Fredrickson, 2002; Gray, 2021). By its very nature, **racism is a political concept** where these biological differences that are based on skin colour and other phenotypical attributes are used to create systems of power and oppression that produce unearned privileges for some and marginalization and/or disadvantage for others (Duhaney, 2022; Fredrickson, 2002). Racism can also be conceptualized in relation to the **lived realities** of people on the receiving end of racist systems of power and prejudice. These are experiences of domination, subjugation, discrimination, and of social exclusion (Rashid, 2021). According to Fredrickson, racist attitudes and actions,

> *"… range from unofficial but pervasive social discrimination at one end of the spectrum to genocide at the other, with government-sanctioned segregation, colonial subjugation, exclusion, forced deportation (or ethnic cleansing), and enslavement" (2002, p. 9).*

Poverty

Poverty is a complex and multifaceted concept that can be defined in various ways depending on context. A widely used definition of poverty is a lack of financial resources and/or essentials *"... to provide for the necessities of life such as food, clean water, shelter, and clothing"* (World Vision, nd). Though poverty is usually thought of in terms of financial lack, it also includes a lack of access to other necessities of life, including health care, education, transportation, and even opportunities. To capture this complexity, End Poverty Edmonton defines poverty as "People experience poverty when they lack or are denied, economic, social and cultural resources to have a quality of life that sustains and facilitates full and meaningful participation in the community" (EndPoveryEdmonton, 2016).

Various terms are used to further contextualize poverty, showing the different statuses/faces of poverty, its severity, magnitude, and differences in the experiences of

poverty within, between, and across nations (Camarena et al., 2022; Chen & Ravallion, 2007; Neckerman et al., 2016). These terms include,

- Absolute poverty
- Extreme poverty
- Relative poverty
- Subjective poverty
- Short-term poverty
- Recurrent/cyclical poverty, and
- Chronic or persistent poverty.

Absolute poverty refers to those whose incomes fall below a line set by a given country as they are unable to meet one or more of their daily needs and cannot afford necessities such as food, water, and housing. Thus, absolute poverty focuses on needs versus wants. A want is when one chooses not to access something by choice and not because of lack or deprivation. People experiencing absolute poverty may also lack access to health and social services (e.g., health care and education), depending on the country, and their lives are endangered due to lack and deprivation. Some of the indicators used to measure absolute poverty are the state of health and low life expectancy.

Extreme poverty: is the most severe form of poverty where individuals or households live in extreme deprivation, lacking access to basic necessities for survival, such as food, shelter, clean water, education, and healthcare. The International Poverty Line (IPL) is a measure set by the World Bank (WB) to define extreme poverty and is currently set at an income level of $1.90 per person per day, based on 2011 purchasing power parity (PPP) rates (World Bank, nd). Those living on less than US$2 a day are in extreme hunger or starvation (Camarena et al., 2022; Chen & Ravallion, 2007; Neckerman et al., 2016; Short, 2016). It is also important to note that the definition of extreme poverty varies by nation and organization.

Relative poverty: while the World Bank's measure of absolute and extreme poverty (living on less than $2 a day) might be appropriate for the experiences of poverty in less affluent nations, the same cannot be said for those living in more affluent societies (Edward, 2006; UNDP, 2005). This is because progress has been made in terms of access to basic necessities such as health care, clean drinking water, and education for the larger population. In such societies, relative poverty might be a more appropriate measure to describe the experiences of poverty. Relative poverty is used to compare experiences of poverty in relation to the rest of the country, using income thresholds below a certain percentage. This percentage varies as the median income

can change due to market conditions or economic growth, reflecting the rising standards of living (Edward, 2006; UNDP, 2005).

Subjective poverty: While measures of absolute and relative poverty are based on input from researchers, politicians, and policymakers, subjective poverty is based on citizens' perceptions about the amount of money needed to meet their needs. Subjective poverty is an evaluation of poverty based on peoples' responses to representative surveys about what level of household income they would consider sufficient to maintain a minimum standard of living. Subjective poverty evaluations

> *"…provide important information about whether poverty is being objectively defined by politicians and policymakers and whether the social minimum standards in society are sufficient to meet the perceived minimum income needs of the population" (*Short, 2016, *p. 320).*

Occasional/Single year/Incidental: This is poverty that is transient and short-term in nature. When experiencing occasional poverty, people normally draw on financial savings, rely on family or use government social safety nets to survive for the duration. These strategies are only feasible in the short term and are inadequate to provide relief in the long term. Short-term or occasional poverty can be non-life threatening, however, if it is prolonged for longer periods, it becomes persistent poverty (Chen & Ravallion, 2007, Edward, 2006).

Chronic poverty/persistent poverty: many people exposed to poverty risk staying in poverty for long periods without much hope of escaping this situation. This type of poverty is defined as persistent or chronic and is detrimental to individuals and families and "often detaches people from their normal social networks, leisure, and discourages job search."
(Edward, 2006; Kevang, 1996; Nice, 2011). In most cases, people who experience persistent poverty have a poor,

> *"relationship with the labour market either by not working through unemployment or non-participation or by working few hours (lone parent households, lower educational level, fewer annual working hours, a higher age of the household head" (*Neckerman et al., 2016*).*

Recurrent poverty: a situation where people may move into and out of poverty frequently and hence experience multiple instances of short-term or temporary poverty.

Recurrent poverty is cyclical in nature, with people occasionally lacking the financial resources to meet their basic needs due to changes in the global financial markets or the labour market, social welfare arrangements, domestic policies, and changes in individual or family circumstances. Recurrent or cyclical poverty shows that poverty is not static, as there is mobility with people moving in and out of poverty (Edward, 2006; Kevang, 1996; Nice, 2011).

Cyclical poverty: some people will get out of poverty only for a short period of time and get back into the cyclical nature of poverty. These people have income that is insufficient to lift them out of poverty (Edward, 2006; Kevang, 1996; Nice, 2011). Cyclical poverty is poverty that is recurrent and occurs over a prolonged period. Information on cyclical poverty presupposes the availability of panel data that makes it possible to have a longitudinal view of poverty emphasizing the importance of the move away from the snapshot of poverty as it can be misleading as it does not show the full picture. Panel data focuses on the incidence and distribution of transient (single-year) cyclical and persistent poverty. It is measured through repeated surveys with the same people, to examine longitudinal practices and show pictures of change in the poverty statuses of individuals and households over time. The prevalence of poverty over time should be the subject of concern to academic researchers, politicians, and policymakers" (Short, 2016).

II. Measurement of Poverty

Direct income measures/indicators

In most countries, poverty is measured using income thresholds, with centralized bodies like the Census Bureau collecting data and updating income information annually based on inflation (Short, 2016). These thresholds are designed to determine the income level below which individuals or households are living in poverty (UNDP, nd). Another way to measure the level of poverty based on income is through household surveys whereby information about household income is collected, providing some evidence on the state of poverty or deprivation among a population based on income thresholds. Each individual member of the entire household living under this income threshold is living in poverty. An example of an income threshold is the poverty line used by the World Bank and the standard budget line approach or money/income/transferred expenditure poverty line used by the United States of a poverty line. The income method is criticized for being one-dimensional as it focuses solely on income, with poverty perceived as either a state of low consumption or low welfare (UNDP, 2005; Neckerman et al., 2016; Short, 2016).

Indirect measures/indicators

It is important to note that income threshold alone cannot fully capture the state of poverty, hence the use of indirect measures and indicators used to assess poverty. While income thresholds use direct income measures, these indirect measures use the level of consumption and various aspects of well-being and living conditions beyond income alone. The use of indirect poverty measures recognizes the complexity of poverty as a person or household can simultaneously experience multiple forms of deprivation, with varying levels of intensity. Some examples of indirect poverty measures include the following:

Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI): The MPI is a measure developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that considers multiple dimensions of poverty, including health, education, and standard of living (Alkire & Santos, 2010). It looks beyond income and provides a more holistic picture of poverty. The multi-dimensional measure covers a broad set of indicators of the actual living standards, highlighting the different vulnerabilities that an individual or household experiences. Vulnerability is defined as "the risk that a household or an individual will experience an episode of income or health poverty over time" (UNDP, 2005; Short, 2016).

Human Development Index (HDI): The HDI, also developed by the UNDP, measures development and well-being by considering indicators such as life expectancy, education, and income. It provides a broader assessment of human development rather than focusing solely on income or material wealth (United Nations Development Program, 1990).

Poverty Gap Index: This index quantifies the depth of poverty by measuring the average shortfall from the poverty line for those below it. It takes into account the extent to which individuals or households fall below the income threshold, providing a more nuanced understanding of poverty levels (Foster, Greer, & Thorbecke, 1984).

Social Exclusion Indicators: These indicators assess the extent to which individuals or groups are excluded from key opportunities and resources in society. They can include access to education, healthcare, housing, employment, social networks, and political participation (Atkinson, 2002; Silver, 1994).

Access to Basic Services: Assessing poverty can also involve examining access to essential services such as clean water, sanitation, healthcare, education, and electricity. Lack of access to these services can be indicative of poverty and deprivation (World Bank, 2022).

Measurement of Poverty in Canada

In Canada, the measurement of poverty is primarily based on the Low-Income Measure (LIM) and the Market Basket Measure (MBM), income indicators commonly used by Statistics Canada. These measures provide alternative perspectives on poverty and help to identify specific groups or populations that may be more vulnerable to poverty.

Low-income measure: The LIM is a relative measure of poverty that calculates the percentage of individuals or households with incomes below a certain threshold relative to the median income. The threshold is set at 50% of the median income adjusted for household size and geographic location. LIM is often used to analyze trends in poverty rates over time and compare the poverty levels across different population groups (Statistics Canada).

While the MBM is based on an individual or family not having enough income to afford the cost of a basket of goods and services, LIM is based on the concept of an individual or family having a low income relative to the nation's median income. Both the MBM and LIM provide a more complete measure of low-income and poverty trends (Djidel, et al, 2020).

Market Basket Measure (MBM): The MBM is an absolute measure of poverty that estimates the cost of a basket of goods and services needed to meet basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living. It considers various expenses, such as food, clothing, shelter, transportation, healthcare, and other expenses for a reference family. These costs are compared to the disposable income of families to determine whether they fall below the poverty line. The MBM threshold varies depending on factors such as family size, composition, and geographic location. According to the MBM, a family lives in low income if its disposable income is less than the Market Basket Measure threshold for a family of its size in its region (Djidel, Gustajtis, Heisz, Lam, Marchand, & McDermott, 2020).

To reflect the economic realities of families with young children more accurately, some researchers have argued that childcare should be included in the MBM as it takes a significant portion of a family's income (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2020; Campaign 2000, 2019). Ignoring this expense underestimates poverty levels, especially for households with children. According to Statistics Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), they continue to conduct a review of the (MBM) to ensure that the basket continues to reflect a modest, basic standard of living and that the costs of the contents of the basket reflect geographic differences in the costs of living (Statistics Canada).

Social exclusion and basic needs indicators: social organizations that provide support to individuals and families who live in poverty use social exclusion and basic needs indicators. These indicators include access to social services, education, healthcare, and opportunities. Social exclusion indicators are mostly used when looking at discrimination and racism and how this perpetuates poverty for marginalized communities. The aim is to reduce poverty and improve the well-being of marginalized populations.

Overall, the measurement of poverty in Canada involves a combination of income-based measures and other indirect measures, such as access to basic services and social exclusion indicators. The goal is to provide a more comprehensive understanding of poverty and its impacts on well-being. Additionally, tracking the number and percentage of people who fall below the poverty line, either nationally or internationally, provides an indicator of progress on the effectiveness of programs designed to "lift" people out of poverty."

However, most of the statistics on poverty deal with snapshots of poverty with less availability of a longitudinal view of poverty. Panel data would provide information on the incidence and distribution of transient (single year), cyclical, and persistent poverty over time" (Neckerman et al., 2016). Understanding the longitudinal nature of poverty helps in the study of events that trigger the occurrences of poverty and to examine the statuses of individuals and households over time (Neckerman et al., 2016; Short, 2016). A longitudinal understanding of poverty also helps target and action prevention efforts to focus on either addressing short-term versus long-term poverty (cyclical, persistent, chronic poverty). However, panel data is often not available because it is expensive, time-consuming, and requires a high level of technological competence (Neckerman et al., 2016).

III. CAUSAL FACTORS FOR POVERTY

The definition of poverty states that poverty is a lack of financial resources to meet the basic needs of life as well as a lack of access to opportunities to be able to provide for basic needs. Poverty is a complex, multifaceted issue with various root causes that are internal or external to the individual limiting someone's ability to access financial resources to be able to sustain themselves and their household and live a prosperous life.

Internal factors that perpetuate poverty are those that exist at the individual or family levels such as single-parenthood, divorce, death, and even the lack of social networks, which form part of an individual's social safety net. Internal factors are often linked to individual life course decisions.

External factors that perpetuate poverty are those that exist outside of an individual's control and are linked to the socioeconomic, cultural, and political conditions existing within a community, society, or nation. Thus, external factors occur independently, outside of individual life decisions, and include economic shocks, war, a change in government administration, or a natural disaster. External shocks can affect the creation of and availability of employment opportunities and other social support systems available at the federal, provincial, and local levels, causing unexpected changes to an individual's poverty status.

Internal and external factors interact and can reinforce each other causing differential impacts and experiences of poverty based on social location and intersecting identities. These factors exist within a broader social, economic, and political context. For example, internal shocks (e.g., marriage and divorce)

"co-determined by individual life course decisions might be emerging because of typical.

The section on strategies to address poverty below will focus more on some of the external causal factors of poverty including

- Lack of access to education and skills
- Unemployment and underemployment
- Low wages and income inequality
- Health issues and disabilities
- Geographic location and rural poverty
- Family structure and household composition
- Discrimination and social exclusion
- Historical and systemic factors

IV.   RACISM AND POVERTY

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a theoretical framework that seeks to understand how racism has been embedded within systems, in particular its codification into the law. Proponents of CRT argue that it is an analytical tool for unearthing and interrogating the pervasiveness of systemic racism and the myriad of ways it is embedded in society, institutions, policies, processes, and practices (Crenshaw, nd; Duhaney, 2022; Gray, 2021). CRT scholars explore the role of racism in a variety of fields, including in areas of education, health care, the child welfare system, and history and center the perspectives and lived experiences of racialized people. CRT also examines the ways in which people's intersecting and overlapping identities of race, gender, class, and other intersecting identities contribute to differential experiences. Because of its critical analysis of systemic racism, CRT can also be **used to provide an in-depth analysis of the relationship between racism and poverty** as it is embedded within systems.

CRT calls into question the perception that equal opportunities exist for all and that anyone can reach their dreams with hard work. The CRT scholars describe this meritocracy, "… as a liberal construct designed to conceal the barriers which impede success for people of colour" (Lander, 2021). It recognizes how racist systems and structures make it difficult for racialized individuals to compete on a level playing field with everyone else. Critical race theorists are interested not just in studying the law and

systems of racism, but in changing them for the better, hence the focus on dismantling systems of subjugation and dominance. Thus, CRT is an action-oriented discourse and is committed to advancing a social justice agenda. Crenshaw in Gray (2021) is quoted stating that,

> *Critical race theory just says, let's pay attention to what has happened in this country, and how what has happened in this country is continuing to create differential outcomes. We believe in the promises of equality. And we know we can't get there if we can't confront and talk honestly about inequality.*

This assertion is relevant when looking at how racism perpetuates poverty as it is about paying attention to what has happened and what continues to happen and inviting discussion to address this issue. Below, we discuss literature that examines how racism perpetuates poverty.

A critical race theory perspective is also applicable to the Canadian context. Duhaney (2022) argues that although most of the discussions on CRT have largely taken place in the United States (US), the political polarization of CRT has significance in the Canadian context. In contrast to the U.S., Canada is often characterized as welcoming and accepting of people from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Therefore, it could be argued that racism in Canada is not as pervasive as it is in the U.S. However, Canada has a violent colonial history that has and continues to denigrate and exploit Indigenous, Black, Brown, and other racialized peoples (Duhaney, 2022; Gray, 2021; Lander, 2021).

Poverty and Social Exclusion

The relationship between racism and poverty is described as that of social exclusion (Cuellar,nd). Social exclusion is the process by which individuals or groups are marginalized, disadvantaged, or denied access to resources, opportunities, and participation in social, economic, and political spheres of society. It involves the systematic exclusion or isolation of certain individuals or groups based on various factors such as poverty, discrimination, gender, ethnicity, disability, or other social characteristics (Levitas et al., 2007). Social exclusion fails to value diversity and excluded individuals are deprived of opportunities to maintain an adequate standard of living as they are "denied access to" or have limited education or employment opportunities (economic participation). This exclusion also extends to other areas of life, including civic and political participation, as excluded individuals are unable to

contribute to decisions that impact them. Cuellar adds that when discrimination stems from prejudice based on race, ethnic identity, nationality, or culture, it also affects collective subjects (populations and communities) that have rights as a group, deriving from their identity and culture but do not always have the necessary legal or political status to be able to defend themselves and claim rights.

Institutional, Structural, Systemic Racism and Poverty

The exclusion of marginalized individuals and communities from fully participating in different spheres (e.g., economics, education, health care, or politics) is supported by institutions, structures, and systems that have been built to facilitate discrimination. The terms structural racism, systemic racism, and institutionalized racism are interrelated and can be used interchangeably. Gillespie, as cited in Glover and Miguel (2020), defines structural, institutional, and systemic racism as the "system of structures that have procedures or processes that disadvantage [marginalized populations]." These systems persist because of the failure … "to recognize and address [their] existence." Understanding these terms will help clarify how racism perpetuates poverty and can point to key strategies to address poverty.

Institutional racism: Institutions refer to established systems, structures, organizations, and practices that shape and govern human behaviour within a society. Institutions provide a framework of rules, norms, and procedures that guide individuals' interactions, behaviours, and expectations in various social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. Examples of institutions include the legal, educational, health care, social service, government, media, and criminal justice systems. Institutional racism describes how **racism is embedded within these institutions** through practices, policies, and norms that perpetuate racial inequality. Institutional racism can include actions (or inaction), processes, and attitudes, which can manifest through oppression, discrimination, and mistreatment of people belonging to a certain group because of their ethnicity (Kihika, 2020).

Institutional racism perpetuates poverty by limiting or increasing access to necessities of life to the detriment of a certain group. For example, limiting access to employment opportunities because foreign credentials and experience are not recognized or refusing access to health care for a member of a marginalized group (Kihika, 2020). An increase in incarceration of the marginalized population perpetuates poverty by depriving their families of their socioeconomic contributions (Lee, Fang, Luo, 2013).

This oppression is supported and enforced by society and its institutions, operating in a manner that disadvantages certain races or ethnic groups while privileging others.

Structural racism: Structural racism is a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It refers to **wider political and social disadvantage**s within society that lead to higher rates of poverty for marginalized groups. Structural racism identifies dimensions of history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with "whiteness" and disadvantages associated with "colour" to endure and adapt over time. Its origin is in historical events such as slavery and colonialism and persists because of contemporary structural factors that replicate and perpetuate historical social injustices, placing white people at the top and racialized people at the bottom (Lander, 2021). Because structural racism has happened for so long (more than 400 years), it normalizes historical, cultural, and institutional practices of discrimination against marginalized populations (Lander, 2021). Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice, it is a feature of the social, economic, and political systems in which we all exist. Structural racism is a root cause of poverty as it affords opportunities for some and exclusion for others.

Systemic racism: is very similar to structural racism, with the main difference being that structural racism "pays more attention to the historical, cultural and social psychological aspects of our currently racialized society" (Glover & Miguel, 2020). On the other hand, systemic racism is a type of racism that exists within and between institutions and organizations and permeates across society.

Structural racism and capitalism: The terms institutional, structural, and systemic racism can be used to describe the relationship between socioeconomic status and race and how racism is embedded within these systems, perpetuating poverty. Structural racism is intimately intertwined with capitalism, which requires, maintains, and reinforces the racial hierarchies that structural racism and white supremacy are used to establish (Kihika, 2020). Access to, ownership, and control of the means of production are hierarchically distributed along racial lines, with racial minorities at the bottom of the ladder. This produces and reproduces racial inequality for-profit and allows racial subjugation to both generate capital (e.g., the Transatlantic Slave Trade) and enable capital accumulation (e.g., the racial wealth gap). It is enforced through institutional systems and practices that seem neutral, such as recruitment policies, which lead to the exclusion of people of colour from organizations and limit their

advancement in positions of power and social prominence. Together, structural racism, white supremacy, and capitalism function to extract and distribute resources along a racial hierarchy which then concentrates and perpetuates poverty within certain racial groups.

Kihika's comments about a paradox between capitalism and inclusivity are interesting as by its nature, capitalism is not an inclusive system. It perpetuates racialized poverty because of systemic barriers that open up opportunities for some and present barriers for others (2021). Capitalism promotes individualism and oppression, as people compete against one another to gain a material advantage. Unequal access to power, resources, rights, and protections by race, reinforces notions of white racial dominance (white supremacy) and racial subjugation provides the social hierarchy that capitalism requires and exploits for profit accumulation. Thus, the concentration of poverty within racialized groups and the consequent racial health inequities that result from racial inequality are all a direct product of the relationships between structural racism, white supremacy, and capitalism.

Capitalism is cemented by the political organization of a society in relation to government policies, for example, trade liberation and laissez-faire policies that weaken social protections, collective bargaining, and reduce minimum wages are also cited as perpetuating poverty (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967). The shift in domestic political power in favour of owners of capital is reinforced by the pressures from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international financial institutions (IFIs) to reduce social spending and to cut the political power of labour unions insisting that countries adopt "flexible" labour market policies (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967). A lack of a political voice to influence how decisions are made also limits access to economic opportunities.

VI. The State of Racism and Poverty in Canada

In Canada, racism is viewed within its history of the colonization of the Indigenous peoples, slavery, capitalism, and its multicultural policies (Kihika, 2020; Edmonton Community Foundation, Vital Signs Report 2022). Research shows that in addition to Indigenous peoples, migrant populations, including Black Canadians, Chinese, Japanese, and other visible minorities, have also experienced racism in Canada (Baird, nd; Mullings, Morgan, & Quelleng 2016; Rashid, 2021; Williams 2013). The challenge however is that this history of racist policies and practices is seldom talked about, with "a tendency to look at and emphasize the conditions in the United States, suggesting that it is an American rather than a Canadian problem (Jean-Pierre, nd). In many cases, most of this history has never made it into the history books, giving a false impression that Canada is and has always been a welcoming society (Mullings, Morgan, & Quelleng 2016; Williams 2013). However, racism still exists in Canada, though subtle (Rashid, 2021) and has many negative impacts, including perpetuating poverty.

Some authors have noted that this recurring omission about the nature of racism in Canada means that Canadians remain uninformed about the histories of enslavement, segregation, displacement, and marginalization of generations of African Canadians (Bernard and Bonner 2013; Bundy 2019; Spencer 2012) as well as that of Indigenous peoples and other racial minorities (Bernard and Bonner 2013; Bundy 2019; Spencer 2012). This *omission* also limits constructive discussions on how to address experiences of "marginalization," "economic insecurity" (Livingstone & Weins, 2015), "environmental racism" (Waldron 2018), and "inequities in workplaces" (Jean-Pierre, nd).

Statistics on Poverty in Canada (At a Glance)

Data on the state of poverty in Canada is available from different sources including census data and the Canadian Income Survey (CIS). CIS is a cross-sectional survey developed to provide a portrait of the income and income sources of Canadians, showing individual and household characteristics (Statistics Canada). The CIS collects information on labour market activity, school attendance, disability, unmet health care needs, support payments, childcare expenses, inter-household transfers, personal income, food security, and characteristics and costs of housing. This content is supplemented with information on individual and household characteristics (e.g., age, educational attainment, main job characteristics, family type), as well as geographic details (e.g., province/territory, Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) from the Labor Force Survey (LFS). Tax data indicating income and income sources are also combined with the survey data. A limitation of the CIS is that it excludes persons living on reserves and other Indigenous settlements in the provinces, the institutionalized population, and households in extremely remote areas with very low population density, though they are less than two percent of the population. The data collected in the CIS is used to provide a comprehensive picture of income inequality in Canada and to inform public policy decisions related to income redistribution and social programs. The survey is a tool for monitoring and understanding changes in the income distribution and economic well-being of a portion of the Canadian population over time.

Canada's Official Poverty Dashboard of Indicators: Trends, March 2022

Canada's official poverty rate

14.5%	12.9%	11.9%	11.2%	10.3%	6.4%
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020

"Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy" establishes the Official Poverty Line for Canada along with the Dashboard of 12 Indicators to track progress on poverty reduction for Canadians and their households.

Dignity

Opportunity and Inclusion

Resilience and Security

Indicator	Most recent value	Previous value	Trend	Percentage change	Reference periods
Deep income poverty (Persons with income below 75% of Canada's Official Poverty Line)	3.0%	5.1%	▼	-41.2%	2019 to 2020
Unmet housing needs and chronic homelessness					
- Unmet housing needs	12.7%	12.5%	▲	1.6%	2011 to 2016
Unmet health needs (Persons 16 years and older who reported not receiving health care when they felt they needed it)	7.2%	6.1%	▲	18.0%	2019 to 2020
Food insecurity (Persons living in households that reported food insecurity)	11.2%	10.8%	▲	3.7%	2019 to 2020
Relative low income (Persons who had less than half the median after-tax income)	9.3%	12.1%	▼	-23.1%	2019 to 2020
Bottom 40 percent income share (Percentage of total after-tax income that went to the bottom 40% of the income distribution)	22.2%	21.0%	▲	5.7%	2019 to 2020
Youth engagement (Persons aged 15 to 24 who were not in employment, education or training)	11.4%	11.8%	▼	-3.4%	2020 to 2021
Literacy and numeracy					
- Low literacy (15-year-olds)	13.8%	10.7%	▲	29.0%	2015 to 2018
- Low numeracy (15-year-olds)	16.3%	14.4%	▲	13.2%	2015 to 2018
Median hourly wage					
- All	$26.00	$26.36	▼	-1.4%	2020 to 2021
- Women	$24.40	$24.81	▼	-1.7%	2020 to 2021
- Men	$28.00	$28.62	▼	-2.2%	2020 to 2021
Average poverty gap (For those living below the poverty line, the poverty gap ratio is the amount that the person's family disposable income is below the poverty line, expressed as a percentage of the poverty line)	31.7%	33.0%	▼	-3.9%	2019 to 2020
Asset resilience (Persons who had enough liquid assets to cover three months of the low income measure)	67.1%	66.6%	▲	0.8%	2016 to 2019
Low income entry and exit rates					
- Entry rates (All persons)	3.9%	3.9%	—	0.0%	2017/2018 to 2018/2019
- Exit rates (Persons in low income)	29.5%	28.1%	▲	5.0%	2017/2018 to 2018/2019

Canada's Official Poverty Dashboard will be updated as new data become available. The indicators based on the Market Basket Measure (MBM) use the 2018 base.
The methodologies used to estimate the unmet health needs and food insecurity indicators were updated.
Note: The concepts and dimensions of poverty are defined in detail in *Opportunity for All – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy*, available for download at canada.ca/publicentre-ESDC.

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Statistics Canada / Statistique Canada

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Canada

Based on data from the 2021 Census of Population, the poverty rate in Canada was 8.1% in 2020, down from 14.5% in 2015. Even though there was an overall decline in poverty across the nation, a look at the 12 indicators of poverty shows that there are still some categories where there has been an increase in the poverty rate. There is a negative increase in the following categories compared to the previous census data,

- Unmet housing needs are now at 12.7% compared to 12.5% between 2011 and 2016.
- Unmet healthcare needs are now at 7.2% compared to 6.1% between 2019 and 2020.
- Food insecurity is now at 11.2% compared to 10.8% between 2019 and 2020.
- Low literacy (15-year-olds) is now at 13.8% compared to 10.7% between 2015 to 2018.
- Low numeracy (15-year-olds) 16.3% (current) compared to 14.4% of the previous value.

The biggest decrease observed in the census data were low literacy with a 29.0% percentage change; unmet health care needs with an 18.0% percentage change; and low numeracy with a 13.2% percentage change.

Overall, census data shows a positive decrease in the poverty rate across the nation, as there was less income inequality in Canada in 2020 (11.1%) than in 2015 (14.4%). The poverty rate also decreased among Indigenous and racialized peoples. Even though the poverty rate of Indigenous and immigrants declined from 2015 to 2020, poverty is still prevalent among these populations. For immigrants, poverty is most prevalent, particularly among refugees and recent immigrants (those who landed in the five years preceding the census year). The poverty rate of immigrants fell by over half from 18.8% to 9.1% (André Bernard and Xuelin Zhang, 2021). Among Indigenous people aged 16 and older, about 89,000 (11.8%) were below the poverty line in 2020. This is a decrease of 6.8 percentage points from the 2019 rate (18.6%). Despite this decline, the poverty rate among Indigenous people remained approximately double that of non-Indigenous people (6.6%). The poverty rate among First Nations people living off-reserve was 15.2% in 2020, down from 22.8% in 2019. Among Métis, the poverty rate was 9.4%, down from 13.7% in 2019. Separate estimates for the Inuit could not be published because of a smaller sample.

VII. The State of Racism and Poverty in Edmonton

In this section, we focus on the prevalence of poverty among equity deserving populations in Edmonton focusing on seven key indicators of poverty, namely, low-income; access to health care; food insecurity, low literacy; housing, and minimum wage and low wage work. In discussing the state of poverty in each of these different areas, we will also identify strategies that are currently being employed or can be employed to address the different dimensions of poverty. This section will draw heavily on census data. To provide context (where applicable), information on the rest of the population of Edmonton will be provided and comparisons made between the most recent census data and data from previous years. It is important to note that Statistics Canada has not yet released the results of 2021 Census data on some of the variables, in such instances, data from the previous census will be identified. Statistics collected by the non-profit organizations will also be included to provide further context.
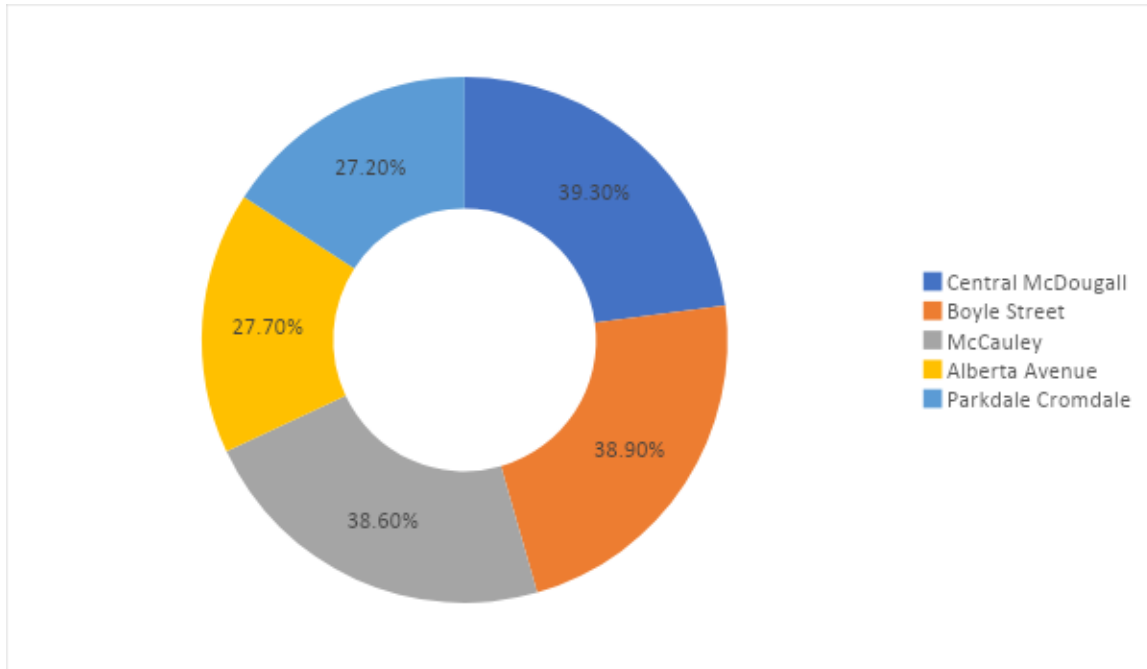
Edmonton Population

According to the 2021 census, Edmonton had a city population of 1,010,899 and a metropolitan population of 1,418,118, making it the fifth-largest city and sixth-largest metropolitan area in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2021). The population of Edmonton grew by 11.5% since 2016 when the population of Edmonton was around 972.223. The same 2021 census data showed that about 39% of the Edmonton population are visible minorities, with 21% of Asian descent (South, Southeast, and East). There is a 7% increase in the percentage of visible minorities in Edmonton between 2016 and 2021 with approximately 31.9% of visible minorities (non-Caucasian or non-white) in Edmonton, with the largest visible minority group being South Asian (8.6%), Chinese 7.4%, and Black at 6.1%.

Figure 1: Ethnic Groups in Metropolitan Edmonton 2021 Census data
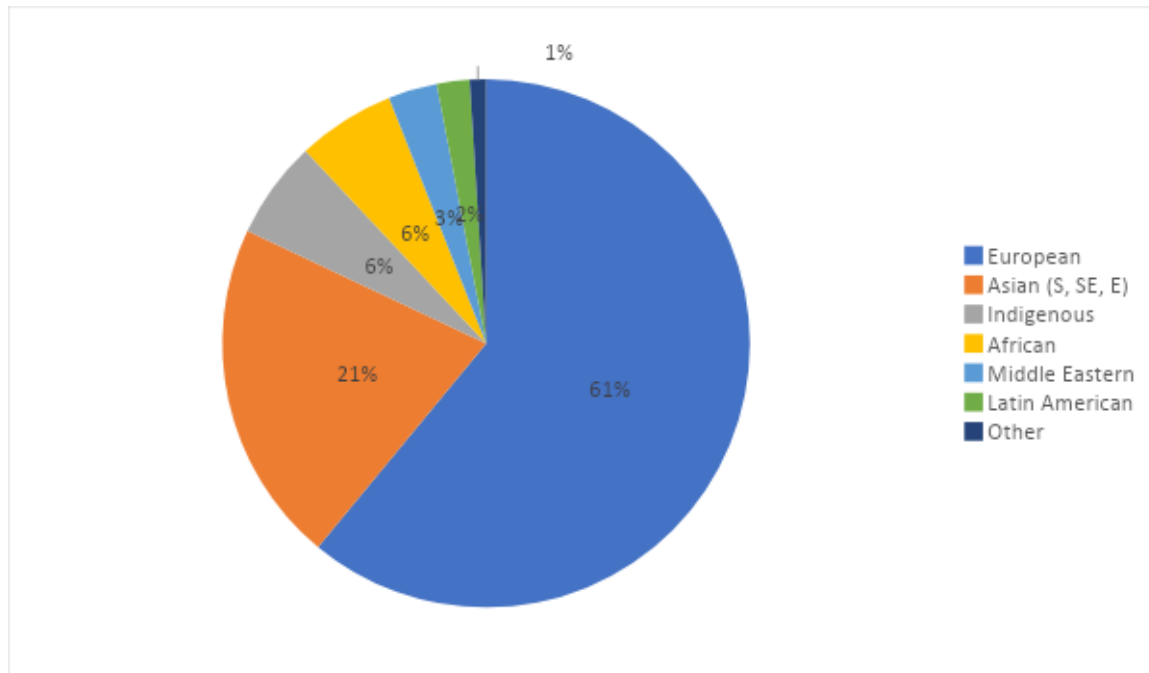
Geographic distribution of poverty: Research on the spatial distribution of poverty indicates that poverty is often concentrated in specific neighbourhoods, particularly the downtown core, with a high percentage of Indigenous populations, racialized groups, recent immigrants, students, young adults, and persons living alone or with roommates (Chety, Henndren, & Katz, 2016; Galster & Killen, 1995; Canadian Mortgage & Housing Corporation, 2017; Ihlanfeldt & Scafidi, 2018). The 2021 Statistics Canada census data shows that the poverty rate in the downtown core of Canada's large urban cities was 18.6%, double the overall rate of 9.2% of urban areas. The latest available data from the Edmonton Social Planning Council (2021) shows that the communities with the highest poverty rate in Edmonton are those in the downtown core, and these include Central McDougall, Boyle Street, McCauley, Alberta Avenue, and Parkdale Cromdale.

Statuses of Poverty in Edmonton

In Edmonton, there are different faces of poverty ranging from the working poor, the long-term social assistance recipients, the houseless population, those who continue to cycle in and out of poverty, and the occasional poor. Like in other major cities in Canada, poverty is mostly prevalent amongst visible minorities including the Indigenous populations, recent immigrants, and other racialized populations (Statistics Canada, 2020). The populations living in poverty are experiencing multiple forms of social exclusion from low-income, limited access to safe and affordable housing, food insecurity, and limited access to health care. COVID-19, the changing socio-economic landscape, coupled with high-interest rates have significantly expanded the populations of people living in poverty to include some households that might be perceived as having an income above the Low-income Measure (LIM).

Low-income (Poverty Rates in Edmonton)

Overall, the 2021 Census data showed that despite having higher income levels, residents of large urban areas were more likely to experience poverty than residents of smaller population centres (Statistics Canada, nd). This difference in the experiences of poverty is due to higher costs of living in large urban areas, and the rising inflation rates are making it even more challenging for urban dwellers to afford necessities such as food and housing costs.

In Canada, poverty rates are mostly measured by the Low-income cut-off measure and the Market Basket Measures (MBM), which use different thresholds of poverty *(see the section on the measurement of poverty)*. The low-income measure is based on a fixed percentage of median household income. This measure is criticized for not considering regional variations in the cost of living, not considering individual needs and the ability of households/families to afford these necessities, for example, childcare or household costs (Farhang, Kwong See, & Thumath, 2019). The Market Basket Measure (MBM) is an alternative measure of poverty that can be used to provide a different perspective on the state of poverty.

Data from the 2016 Census of Canada (low-income cut-off measure), shows that the poverty rate in Edmonton was 12.9% compared to 12.7% for the national poverty rate (Statistics Canada, 2018). The 2016 low-income cut-off census data showed that the poverty rate among visible minorities was 18.4% higher than the poverty rate among non-visible minorities (11.9%). In comparison, a 2016 report by the Edmonton Social Planning Council showed that approximately 27.1% of households that identified as visible minorities lived in poverty, higher than the poverty rate for households that did not identify as visible minorities (Edmonton Social Planning Council, 2016).

Inadequate financial resources make it challenging for people to afford other necessities such as food, transportation, and health care *(please see data below)*. A Statistics Canada 2019 Market Basket Measure (MBM) report indicates that the poverty rate for Edmonton was 7.22%, lower than the 12.9% 2016 low-income cut-off measure. In comparison, the 2016 Edmonton Social Planning Council report which also used the MBM of poverty, showed that about 41.5% of visible minority households lived in poverty (Edmonton Social Planning Council, 2016).

Strategies for Addressing Low-income Poverty

Various strategies have been used to address low income among the population, ranging from individual to community-level strategies, including government initiatives (local, provincial, and federal). Individual-level strategies include reducing expenses, increasing education and technical school to increase opportunities for higher-paying jobs, and having an extra income (Chan, 2013; Dave Ramsey, nd). Other individual

strategies include relying on material support from friends and family (Kondratjeva & Schifferes, 2013).

Some strategies, within the non-profit sector and government, have focused on providing financial support to support low-income households such as providing childcare subsidies. There is strong evidence to suggest the effectiveness of government financial interventions. The government of Canada provided financial support during Covid-19 in the form of tax credits, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), and the Canada Child Benefit (CCB), which proved to be a huge support for individuals and families who lost their jobs or experienced a reduction in family income (Government of Canada, 2020). According to the 2021 Statistics Canada report, these financial supports from the federal government reduced the poverty rate by 21.2% in 2020 compared to what it would have been without these supports (Statistics Canada, 2021).

Because of the effectiveness of these financial interventions in reducing poverty and inequality, there has been a renewed call for Canada to strengthen its social safety net through the provision of a living wage (The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2021; The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2019; The Living Wage Families Campaign, 2021); extension of the CERB (The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2020); or a Guaranteed Annual Income (GAI) in the form of ongoing financial supports provided to individuals and families living in poverty (The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2021).

Access to Health Care

It is well documented that Indigenous peoples and immigrant populations in Canada face significant health challenges compared to the larger population (Kim, 2019). Contributing factors include experiences of poverty, food insecurity, lack of employment opportunities, unavailability of suitable housing, and a lack of access to timely, adequate, and culturally appropriate health care (Davy, Harfield, McArthur, Munn, & Brown, 2016; Tjensvoll Kitching et al., 2020).

Even though Canada's health care system is publicly funded, there are still some barriers to access to health care, particularly for racialized minorities due to racism and social exclusion (Loppie Reading & Wien, 2013; The Wellesley Institute, 2015; Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2016). For immigrant populations, language, cultural differences, and inability to navigate systems are barriers to access to health care

(Migration Policy Institute, 2017; The World Health Organization, 2017; The Canadian Medical Association Journal, 2017).

According to a 2019 Statistics Canada's Community Health Survey (CCHS), visible minorities were more likely to report having unmet healthcare needs (10.9%), compared to the larger population (8.7%). As well, visible minorities were more likely to report not having a regular healthcare provider (15.9%) compared to non-visible minorities (8.3%). Approximately 8.6% of Edmonton residents aged 12 years and older reported not having access to a regular healthcare professional. Limited access to timely healthcare support is evidenced by people accessing emergency healthcare support.

Limited access to healthcare increases emergency room visits as a lack of access to preventative healthcare makes it difficult to manage chronic healthcare conditions. The Globe and Mail reported that there were 24,926 emergency room visits in 2020 and 24750 in 2019 by the houseless population (The Globe and Mail, nd). However, due to privacy concerns and limited collection of race-based data, it is challenging to show the utilization of health care services by ethnicity.

Strategies for Addressing Health Disparities in Access to Healthcare
Addressing health inequities requires a focus on systemic barriers that perpetuate racism and discrimination to promote inclusiveness. An increase in the number of healthcare providers will help increase the availability of healthcare professionals. Efforts to increase cultural competence training for health care providers, language translation, education, and advocacy to help people navigate systems will also address the limited use of health care services by visible minorities. Increasing the number of Indigenous and racialized healthcare providers will also increase the use of healthcare services by marginalized communities. Another area that will help address healthcare inequities in Edmonton and Canada is the availability of race-based data to help identify disparities and improve healthcare access for underrepresented groups (The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2015; The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011; Oxford University Press, 2007). However, there is a need for standardization in how race-based data is collected to ensure consistency and quality of the data collected (The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011).

Education

Racism in education refers to the systemic and individual biases, discrimination, and unequal treatment based on race or ethnicity that can occur within educational systems. It affects students, teachers, administrators, and the overall learning environment. Racism can manifest in various ways within educational settings, including individual-level biases and systemic inequities. Research has shown that racism in education can have negative impacts on the academic achievement, mental health, and social well-being of students from marginalized racial and ethnic groups (Bernal & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2016; Au, 2013).

One way that racism can impact education is through disparities in access to quality educational resources and opportunities (Reardon & Owens, 2014). Students from historically marginalized racial and ethnic groups may be more likely to attend underfunded schools with fewer resources, less experienced teachers, and outdated curriculums. This can contribute to achievement gaps and perpetuate systemic inequities.

Additionally, individual-level biases and discrimination can impact the experiences of students and educators within educational settings. Students from marginalized groups may experience racial slurs, bullying, and microaggressions from their peers and teachers, which can create hostile learning environments and impact their academic performance (Berger, McLeod, & Croll, 2017). Educators themselves may also experience discrimination and bias, such as being overlooked for promotion or having their expertise questioned due to their race or ethnicity.

Further, racism can contribute to an achievement gap between different racial or ethnic groups, with marginalized students often experiencing lower academic performance, higher dropout rates, and limited access to educational opportunities. Students from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds may face discriminatory practices such as disproportionate disciplinary actions, tracking or streaming, and limited access to quality resources and educational programs. Education systems may present biased or incomplete perspectives on history, literature, and social sciences, leading to the marginalization and erasure of certain racial or ethnic groups' contributions and experiences. Lack of cultural sensitivity and inclusivity in schools can create an unwelcoming environment for students from diverse backgrounds, leading to feelings of isolation and decreased engagement.

Strategies for Addressing Racism in Education

Addressing racism in education requires a multifaceted approach, including implementing policies and practices that promote equity and inclusion, providing anti-bias training to educators, and engaging in critical conversations about race and racism within educational communities. Additionally, it is important to prioritize the voices and experiences of those most impacted by racism in education, including students and educators from marginalized racial and ethnic groups. Some strategies that can be implemented include:

- Implementing anti-racist policies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in education.
- Providing professional development and training for educators to develop cultural competence, recognize and address their own biases, and adapt teaching practices to meet the needs of diverse students.
- Ensuring that the curriculum represents diverse perspectives, histories, and experiences, and challenging stereotypes and biases.
- Establishing safe and inclusive school environments that celebrate diversity, address bullying and discrimination, and promote positive intercultural relationships.
- Engaging parents, communities, and diverse stakeholders in decision-making processes to ensure their voices are heard and their perspectives are valued.

Overall, education can be an important tool for addressing poverty by providing individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to access higher-paying jobs, improving job prospects, fostering economic growth, and breaking the cycle of poverty (Mandela, 1990; World Bank, 2018; Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2017).

Employment

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on overall employment rates across the country, there is a body of literature that shows that visible minorities in Canada face added challenges in accessing equal employment opportunities (McDonald, 2018; Wayland, 2018; Preston & Lauer, 2015). Visible minorities are often employed in low-wage industries, are under-employed, and lack representation in management or leadership positions (Canadian Race Relations Foundation, nd). Even when gainfully employed, they tend to experience wage gaps compared to non-visible minorities. For example, a 2016 report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, showed that visible minorities earned an average $0.81.4 cents

for every dollar earned by non-visible minorities. Some of the factors that limit their employment opportunities include discrimination, hiring practices, language barriers, a lack of social networks, and a lack of recognition of foreign credentials and work experience (Edmonton Social Planning Council, nd).

According to a report by Statistics Canada, the employment rate for visible minorities in Canada was 64.4% in 2016, compared to 72.3% for non-visible minorities. Visible minorities also tend to have higher unemployment rates (8.8% in 2016) compared to the general population (6.3%). According to the latest data from Statistics Canada as of April 2022, the employment rate in Edmonton is 67.3%. However, according to the 2016 Canadian Census, the employment rate for visible minorities in the Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) was 72.6%, which was slightly lower than the employment rate for non-visible minorities, which was 74.5%.

Strategies for Addressing Employment Barriers for Visible Minorities
Employment outcomes for Indigenous peoples and racialized individuals are strongly influenced by systemic barriers, therefore any attempt to address this issue must focus on institutional and systemic changes to allow for equity and diversity. Efforts should be made to promote equity in the labour market and address systemic barriers to employment. Strategies may include mentorship, networking, and training opportunities, and create more equitable hiring practices.

Some initiatives aimed at improving labour market outcomes of visible minorities are already underway and these include government employment programs to promote labour market integration for visible minorities, such as the Visible Minority Newcomer Women Pilot Program, skills training programs through community-based organizations, and diversity, equity, and inclusion policies. However, some of these programs are criticized for maintaining existing oppressive systems. For example, though most organizations have EDI policies, they are often seen as paying lip service without meaningful action to address oppressive systems to promote racial equality (Nkomo & Cox, 2013).

These programs often focus on individual-level changes (unconscious bias training) rather than systemic changes (Keller & Lublin, 2018). They are more symbolic and give the impression of progress without changing the status quo (West, 2016). These

examples show the need for more innovative and strategic initiatives aimed at addressing root causes to achieve meaningful changes (Nkomo & Cox, 2013). Community organizations and advocacy groups can also play an important role in addressing employment inequities by providing job training and support services, advocating for policies that promote equity in the workforce, and partnering with employers to create more inclusive workplaces.

Access to Safe and Affordable Housing

A lack of access to safe and affordable housing is an important indicator of poverty.

A review of housing as a core need considers safety, affordability, suitability, and the condition of dwelling needs of the household and whether affordable rental housing is available that meets all these needs. A household is said to be in core housing need if its dwelling falls below at least one of the affordability, suitability, or condition of dwelling standards, and if it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable to meet all three housing standards.

According to the 2016 Canadian Census, approximately 18.5% of Edmonton's population identified as a visible minority or racialized group. The census data also provides some information on housing conditions for visible minority individuals in Edmonton. Visible minority households in Edmonton were more likely to experience overcrowding (5.7%) compared to non-visible minority households (3.3%). Visible minorities were also more likely to be unable to afford household costs, with about 33.6% spending more than 30% of their income on housing income compared to 22.7% of non-visible minority households. In the same vein, visible minority households in Edmonton were less likely to own their homes than non-visible minority households with a 42.3% homeownership among visible minorities compared to 55.5% of non-visible minority households.

The City of Edmonton regularly conducts a housing needs assessment to identify housing needs and trends to inform policies and strategies to address those needs. According to the Edmonton Affordable Housing Needs Assessment about 49 215 households are in core housing need, with 1 in 3 renter households who are Indigenous. Approximately, 44% of these households are newcomers who spend between 75-100% of their income on housing (City of Edmonton, 2022).

According to the 2020 Homeless Count conducted by the City of Edmonton, there were 1,875 people experiencing homelessness in Edmonton on the night of April 7, 2020. This includes individuals who were staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and sleeping rough (i.e., outside or in public places). It is important to note that the 2020 Homeless Count was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have impacted the number of people experiencing homelessness in the city. In comparison, the Homeward Trust Edmonton puts the number of people experiencing homelessness in Edmonton at 2,888 (Homeward Trust, 2023) and more than half are Indigenous. Estimates by the Boyle Street community services are not far off at approximately 3000 people seeking housing in Edmonton, which might be a conservative estimate given the current service levels (Boyle Street Community Services, nd). However, research has shown that Indigenous peoples and racialized communities are overrepresented in the houseless population in Canada. This is due to a variety of systemic factors such as poverty, discrimination, and historical trauma.

Addressing housing needs

To address the housing needs of Edmonton, a collaborative approach that seeks to remove systemic barriers is needed. This can include efforts to increase access to affordable housing, address discrimination in housing markets, and create more equitable housing policies and programs. Efforts to build affordable housing can include providing financial incentives for private developers (National Housing Conference, 2018); rent controls (Turner, Rawlings, & Wong, 2021), and even putting controls on housing prices families can work towards home ownership. Currently, the City of Edmonton in collaboration with community partners are working towards advocacy efforts and plan to build affordable housing units.

Addressing mental health and addiction issues is critical to reducing the risk of homelessness and improving outcomes for those experiencing homelessness (City of Edmonton, 2022; Gaetz & Gulliver, 2013; O'Campo, Kirst, Tsamis, Chambers, Ahmad, & Sheehan, 2009). According to the report, 60% of the people experiencing homelessness have mental health and addiction issues which puts them at risk of homelessness.

Food Insecurity

Health Canada defines food insecurity as "… inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints. This can result in an inadequate quantity and/or quality of food and may be associated with nutritional, health, and social problems" (2018). People experiencing food insecurity do not have sufficient, safe, or nutritious food

(Edmonton Food Bank, 2021). Different factors lead to food insecurity including, income insecurity, poverty, unemployment, underemployment, low wages, lack of access to healthy food options, high food prices, and inadequate social support systems (United Nations, 1996).

Food insecurity is a major issue in Edmonton, affecting a significantly large number of residents. Hundreds of families in Edmonton are not able to put food on the table as they do not have access to adequate nutritious food. High inflation rates have worsened the situation by driving up food prices and Alberta was identified as having some of the highest food prices in Canada (Smith, 2022). According to a 2020 report by the Edmonton Social Planning Council, the percentage of households experiencing food insecurity in Edmonton was estimated to be 11.8% in 2019. However, this percentage may have increased due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. A 2019 survey by the Alberta Food Bank Network Association and the University of Alberta School of Public Health indicated that about 12.2% of households in Edmonton experienced some level of food insecurity.

The 2019 report by the Edmonton Social Planning Council, which analyzed data from the Canadian Community Health Survey, found that visible minorities in Edmonton were more likely to experience food insecurity than the general population. The report also noted that Indigenous people, single-parent families, and households with lower incomes were more likely to experience food insecurity.

Food insecurity is not just about access to food, but also access to healthy food. In Edmonton, many low-income neighbourhoods have limited access to grocery stores and other sources of healthy food, which can make it difficult for residents to maintain a healthy diet. Indigenous peoples in Canada experience higher rates of food insecurity compared to non-Indigenous populations, and this is also true for Indigenous peoples living in Edmonton (Alberta Food Bank Network Association & University of Alberta School of Public Health, 2019).

The Edmonton Food Bank, which is the largest food bank in Edmonton, reports that in 2021, they distributed 6.5 million kilograms of food to individuals and families in need. However, it is difficult to estimate the exact percentage of people accessing food banks in Edmonton, as many people may use multiple food banks or other food assistance programs, and some may not seek assistance at all. The Edmonton Food Bank saw a 196% increase in their services within a two-year period from June 2020 to

June 2022 (Panza-Beltrandi, 2022, cited from the Edmonton Social Planning) providing about 350 000 meals and snacks per month. The Multicultural Health Brokers, an organization that supports newcomers in Edmonton, underwent a four-fold increase in its clients for its food provision program during the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the Multicultural Health Brokers *Food Waste and Insecurity Report: A Youth Perspective"* about 13.8% of Edmonton residents were food insecure during the pandemic.

Strategies for Addressing Food Insecurity

Overall, food insecurity and reliance on food banks is a significant issue in Edmonton and highlights the ongoing need for comprehensive poverty reduction strategies to address the root causes of poverty and increase access to affordable, nutritious food for all residents. Addressing food insecurity in Edmonton will require coordinated efforts from government, community organizations, and other stakeholders. This can include initiatives to increase access to healthy food in low-income neighbourhoods, increase income support for low-income households, and provide funding for food security programs and services. Efforts to address food insecurity in Edmonton include initiatives to increase access to affordable, nutritious food, such as community gardens, food banks, and meal programs. There are also calls for policy changes to address the root causes of food insecurity, such as poverty and income inequality by implementing income support measures such as living wages, social assistance, and tax credits to help low-income households afford food. Supporting community-based initiatives that aim to improve access to healthy and culturally appropriate food for marginalized groups is another way to improve food security. Another avenue will be to increase public awareness and education on food insecurity to reduce stigma and improve understanding of the issue (Food Insecurity Policy Research, nd).

VIII. Discussion

Poverty is a complex issue with multiple root causes that stem from both the internal (individual and family level factors) and external environment (socio-economic, cultural, and political factors). A look at the relationship between racism and poverty adds to this complexity pointing to the need for a wide range of solutions to address its root causes. Racialized poverty negatively impacts individuals along the life course, from infancy to childhood right into adulthood. Exposure to racialized poverty also shapes intergenerational health outcomes at the family and community levels. It is important to note that racism and poverty do not only affect marginalized populations, but it also impacts society.

Because of the complexity of poverty, there is a need for concerted efforts in addressing its impact. International bodies such as the United Nations, national and local governments, and the non-profit sector have made declarations, and developed, and implemented policies to address poverty. At the international level, one of the most common declarations on poverty is the Millennium Development Goals with poverty and social inequality as the main goals. Canada has adopted the Millennium Development goals and incorporated these in its poverty reduction strategies. Opportunity for All is Canada's first poverty reduction strategy that focuses on living in

dignity, providing opportunity and inclusion, and enhancing resilience and security. The government of Canada is committed to poverty reduction and emphasizes collaborative work with various levels of government, community organizations, the private sector, and all Canadians.

Responsibility for addressing poverty: A discussion on eradicating poverty is not complete without a deep reflection on who is responsible for what. As stated above, poverty is a complex issue and as such requires concerted efforts from multiple levels to address it. In some countries, the government plays a minimal role in supporting individuals and families to exit poverty, leaving that responsibility to market forces hoping that there will be a "trickle-down effect" which often leaves thousands in poverty. The state plays a huge role in developing and implementing anti-poverty policies looking at the changing role of the state versus the changing role of the individual. Some of the strategies that the government of Canada has implemented is the provision of social support to families. For example, the Canada Child Benefit for families with young children and the Guaranteed Income Supplement to support seniors. The government of Alberta has also provided financial supports to individuals and families through the Affordability Action Plan and a reduction in utility costs. The benefits provided to individuals and families in response to Covid-19 have shown how government supports play a huge role in addressing poverty as shown by the poverty rate which fell even during times of economic stagnation with people losing employment and slow economic growth.

Addressing institutional, structural, and systemic racism: Government policies should also focus on addressing poverty by preventing people from entering poverty in the first place. As noted in this review, institutional, structural, and systemic issues related to racism and social exclusion play a huge role in perpetuating poverty among marginalized populations. Social exclusion is still widespread despite the understanding that it perpetuates poverty and limits full participation of marginalized populations. It is important to give a proper diagnosis to fully understand how and why poverty is mostly experienced by marginalized communities in Canada. For example, Thésée and Carr (2016) observed that in some Canadian studies, African Canadians' experiences are associated with problems of acculturation while racialization is minimized or ignored. Yet, research has shown that racist stereotypes (Creese 2019; James 2012), racism-related stress (James et al. 2010), and historic and contemporary structural barriers affect Black Canadians across regional, linguistic, immigrant, and/or socioeconomic status groups (United Nations Human Rights Council 2017). It is

important to acknowledge institutional, structural, and systemic racism as a legitimate social problem and work toward addressing its impact in employment, training, education, housing, and health.

Availability of research and implementation of evidence-based practices: Other researchers have stated that there is a lack of theoretical literature informed by research on institutional and systemic racism. This information is lacking even in "institutions that would produce tangible transformative and equitable policies (Jean-Pierre, nd). Without an understanding of the structural and intersectional inequalities that contribute to poverty, it makes it challenging to even identify how these structures can be addressed.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Concepts such as diversity, equity, and inclusion have become buzzwords in both the public and private sectors seeking to address racial disparities in employment and leadership opportunities. Diversity and inclusion scholars argue that the current craze in diversity and inclusion has done little to redress structural and systemic racism embedded within institutions as biases in the hiring, recruitment, and selection practices still exist. Birk (2021) argues that diversity is not the solution to every problem. She argues that both public institutions and private corporations would have to acknowledge the systemic, institutional, and residual effects of racism and white supremacy embedded in our society and in their corporations. Investments need to be made in the hiring and retaining of diverse staff, promoting racialized people to senior leadership positions, making working conditions better for diverse staff through safer corporate cultures, and fair pay, and implementing initiatives that support employees to balance work and family responsibilities, for example, affordable childcare and paid sick days. Equity policies could improve the labour and socioeconomic outcomes of marginalized populations (Sall, 2020).

Short-term versus long-term strategies: This review went into detail in highlighting the various statuses/faces of poverty e.g., chronic, persistent, and transient poverty. Strategies to address poverty should be aimed at an understanding of the nature of poverty with a combination of both short-term and long-term strategies. Most of the statistics on poverty deal with cross-sectional data which only provides a short-term understanding of poverty. While some social indicators such as the unemployment rate and monetary poverty show large cyclical fluctuations, other social measures such as the Human Development Index are, by construction, dominated by long-run trends (Camarena et al.) The availability of panel data makes it possible to have a longitudinal

view of poverty, understanding the root causes and events that trigger the occurrence of these occurrences of this poverty over time. It also helps examine longitudinal practices by providing pictures of changes in the poverty statuses of individuals and households over time.

Address poverty among Indigenous populations
Poverty strategies should also target specific populations with an understanding of the complexity of their issues. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action Report (2015) identified racism as a key issue and called for Anti-racism strategies. The multigenerational trauma experienced by the First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in Canada continues to take a toll on Indigenous lives. Many Indigenous populations continue to experience multiple forms of poverty (unmet health care needs, food insecurity, houselessness, low income, limited educational attainment) as the systems and structures that perpetuate poverty are still in existence. For example, Indigenous students in Canada do not graduate from secondary school at the same rate as their non-Indigenous peers (Harper and Thompson, nd), further perpetuating poverty among Indigenous peoples.

Performance Measurement: With so many strategies being implemented to address poverty, it is needful to build structures to support evaluation and performance measurement to be able to track success and make improvements based on data. One of the important components that will help support a monitoring and evaluation system in relation to tackling poverty is the collection of race-based data by different government agencies and departments. The absence of disaggregated data by race contributes to Canadians' tendency to ignore racism and social inequalities as it is not captured. The current lack of data limits the effective analysis of, and response to, the disparities experienced by marginalized populations Millar and Owusu-Bempah 2011; United Nations Human Rights Council 2017). This was especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic as they were differential experiences of poverty based on race (Millar and Owusu-Bempah, 2011).

IX. Conclusion

This literature review looked at the relationship between racism and poverty. There are many bodies of literature that examine racism and poverty. These are complex topics that can be looked at from multiple perspectives; therefore, we do not claim to have been exhaustive in our review. The literature review first provided definitions for key terms and looked at the different statuses of poverty and the measurement of poverty. The review then examined the relationship between racism and poverty in relation to social exclusion and how racism is embedded within systems, institutions, structures and its relationship with capitalism and white supremacy.

The review then moved into understanding poverty within the Canadian context with particular emphasis on Edmonton. Despite the many efforts undertaken by the international community, federal, provincial, and local governments, as well as community organizations, racism and racist practices continue to spread in subtle perpetuating poverty for racialized individuals and families. Therefore, a broader view of poverty is needed than the simple focus on income or consumption, which ignores the socio-psychological, political, and cultural issues that perpetuate poverty and are responsible for the inability of particular groups to be unable to escape poverty once they enter it.

The review also identified strategies to address poverty, which requires a collaborative and coordinated effort from all stakeholders. By working together, these key players can develop and implement effective poverty reduction strategies that help to build a

more equitable and prosperous community for all residents. The City of Edmonton together with community organizations, businesses, researchers, and advocacy groups play a key role in addressing poverty through its social policy and programs; through policy development, research, and community engagement; by providing support and services to people in need; opening employment opportunities; supporting community initiatives; raising awareness about poverty; and advocating for policy changes to address root causes. The aim is to end poverty within a generation.

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