



From concern to commitment: Learning to center Black perspectives in reconfiguring healthcare education at SPOT

Layla Razek and Dr. Hiba Zafran

McGill Global Health Program, School of Physical and Occupational Therapy

Background

Black students are **systematically excluded** from healthcare education (2.3% at McGill OT in 2018-19), denying the right of an increasing Black Canadian population to diverse healthcare practitioners¹⁻². We addressed this by **exploring barriers** to admissions and **identifying innovative approaches** for the outreach, inclusion, and retainment of Black students in healthcare education at McGill.

Objectives

Explore context of systemic anti-Black racism

Understand perspectives of current and former students

Identify barriers to admissions

Establish principles and recommendations

Methods

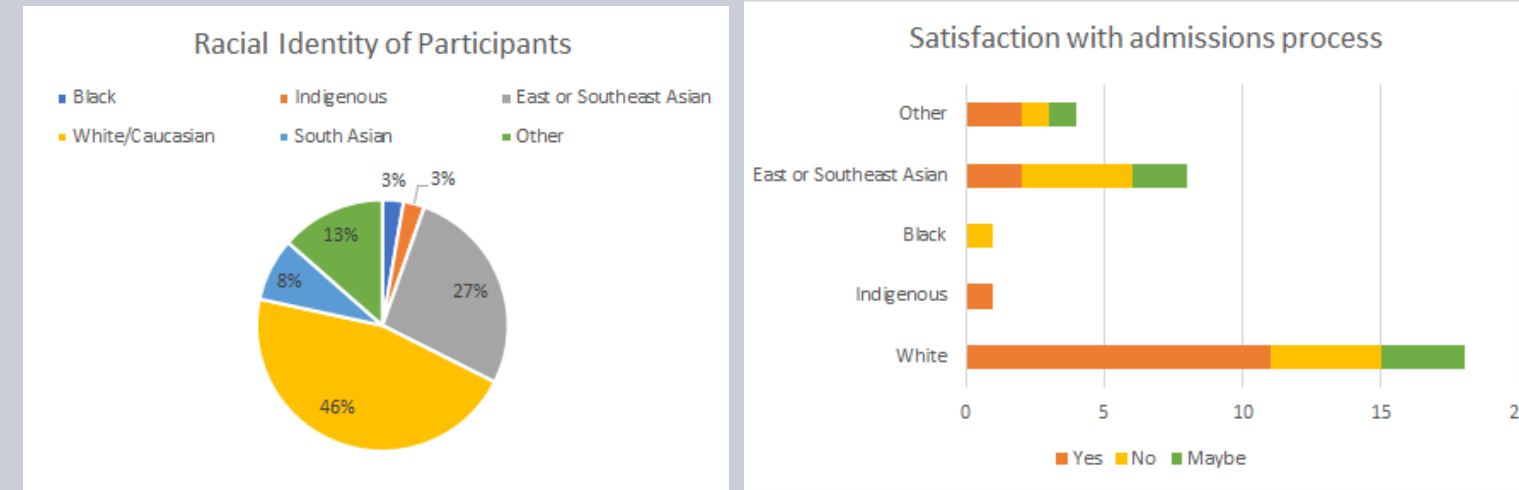
International Lit Review

Survey of OT students (N=73)

Interviews of key individuals

Race-Class Critical Analysis³

Results



Barriers

"Your leadership is valued more when you're rich"

- Lack of diversity in admissions committee and an elite idea of excellence
- Cost of application
- Resistance to Affirmative Action initiatives
- Social Capital and networks
- Internalized racism

Principles

- Humility⁴
- Responsiveness to causes of inequity⁴
- "Nothing about us, without us"
- Acknowledgment of current and past wrongdoings
- Cultivating a sense of belonging
- Revising criteria for academic excellence and leadership
- Critical inclusion benefits everyone

Recommendations

"Just knowing that the cohort was actually going to be diverse would have been nice. And knowing a little bit about the members of the application committee." (Black participant)

- Black Student Application Program
- Mentorship for Black students
- Financial Aid and Scholarships
- Accessible resources for underrepresented students
- Outreach to Black communities
- Hiring diverse Faculty, staff, and admissions reviewers

Conclusion

"If I hadn't gotten in, I would never know if it was because my grades weren't good enough, or if it was because some unknown group of individuals deemed me unethical or "bad" in some way." (Black participant)

In acknowledging its role within institutional racism, McGill OT must redress the specific ways Black students have been kept out. An accessible and comprehensive action plan to include and welcome Black students must be supported by the admissions committee, and a Black student pathway is strongly recommended.

Acknowledgments

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1- McGill OT Demographic Survey, 2020
 2-Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Institutional and Policy-Level Strategies for Increasing the Diversity of the U.S. Healthcare Workforce; Smedley BD, Stith Butler A, Bristol LR, editors.
 3-Hampton, 2020
 4-<https://cagh-acsm.org/en>