

Support for Students who have Experienced Bullying Because of their Race or Ethnicity

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Abstract

Individuals may be victimised for a range of reasons, including their ethnicity or race. These experiences can have a significant impact on individuals' health, wellbeing, and educational opportunities. However, despite the intersectionality of racism and bullying, it is a relatively under-researched topic in the tertiary sector. This pilot study utilises the student voice of 13 tertiary students who identified with one or more ethnic minority. The study aimed to understand how educational institutions can provide better support to students who have experienced bullying at secondary school or university. Approximately half of the participants had sought support from friends and parents after bullying incidents. They highlighted the importance of having their experiences taken seriously by individuals who were empathetic and culturally sensitive. Conversely, a dismissive and insensitive response reinforced their belief that there was no point in seeking help, as nothing would change. These preliminary findings could inform educational policies to increase the efficacy of support systems for tertiary (and secondary) students of ethnic minorities in New Zealand.

Keywords:

Students, Tertiary, Ethnic minorities, Bullying, Racism

Introduction

Efforts to reduce or eliminate racism continue to be key drivers of social change within most western and multicultural societies (Wong, 2021) including within Aotearoa, New Zealand (Ministry of Justice, n.d.). However, students from ethnic minorities continue to experience racial inequality within educational institutions (Singh, 2009; Wong et al., 2021). Racism has been defined as prejudice towards others, based on preconceived beliefs and assumptions about the individual's ethnicity and members of their ethnic or racial group (Hoyt Jr., 2012). Racism can include verbal, emotional, physical, or symbolic forms of abuse or violence (Wong, et al., 2021). According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Boyle, 2005), racism can be structural, institutional, or individual/interpersonal (Bowser, 2017; Wong et al., 2021). Bullying is another significant concern that has attracted considerable attention worldwide (Smith & O'Higgins Norman, 2021), including within Aotearoa (Slee et al., 2016). Bullying is typically defined as negative actions towards others by individuals who are perceived to have a higher status than the victim, with these actions being repeated over time (Olweus, 1994). Bullying can occur throughout the lifespan and within a wide range of contexts, including educational institutions (Smith & O'Higgins Norman, 2021). Although the vast majority of educational research in this field has been focused on schools, there is an emerging focus on bullying within tertiary institutions (Vaill et al., 2020).

Individuals may be bullied for a seemingly endless number of reasons including their race and/or ethnicity (Smith & O'Higgins Norman, 2021). While Crengle et al. (2012) noted that individuals from Indigenous and ethnic minorities were more likely to be targets of bullying and ethnic discrimination than those from ethnic majorities, Vitoroulis et al. (2015) found no evidence that any one particular race/ethnicity experienced more victimisation, or engaged in more bullying, than another.

There are several ways in which bullying and racism overlap. For example, O'Flynn-Magee et al. (2021) suggested there was evidence that bullying maybe triggered by racism. In addition, acts of "everyday racism" (Essed, 1991; Wong et al., 2021) that manifest as "jokes" can become part of the social norms within an environment and may occur repeatedly across an individual's lifetime. This exemplifies the repetitiveness of bullying behaviour. Another point of overlap is that both bullying and racism are underpinned by the notion of *power*. According to Olweus (1994), power is a defining aspect that distinguishes bullying from an aggressive act or conflict between parties of equal status. Most importantly, status can be represented in several ways, including social status, stature, age, and position of authority. Key aspects of racism in Aotearoa are its colonial roots and "differences in power and equity between races and/or ethnic groups" (Haenga-Collins et al., 2021, p. 44). This can be held, enforced, and promulgated at a societal, institutional, and/or individual level (Bishop et al., 2003). According to Juvonen et al. (2006), it is possible that individuals who are part of the ethnic majority may perceive themselves as possessing more power than those in the minority because of their majority status. Consequently, individuals from ethnic minorities feel less safe, more harassed, and lonelier in less ethnically diverse contexts (Juvonen et al., 2006). It is evident that understanding the context, including the relative proportions of ethnic diversity within a society, is critical to understanding this phenomenon (Kuldass et al., 2021).

According to O'Flynn Magee et al. (2021) recognising the intersectionality between racism and bullying is key to understanding how racially- or ethnically-targeted bullying may manifest and be perpetuated within educational institutions. One particular study appears to demonstrate this phenomenon. Schumann et al. (2013) investigated the relationship between the prevalence of racial bullying, community ethnicity factors, and individual ethnicity factors. The participants of this study were 20,021 students in Grades 6 to 10 in Canada. The results showed that individuals from ethnic minorities in the community were more likely to be racially victimised than individuals from the ethnic majority.

In a similar study conducted in Aotearoa, Crengle et al. (2012) investigated 9,107 secondary school students' experiences of ethnicity-related bullying at school. Participants completed the second Youth'07 National Survey of the Health and Wellbeing of New Zealand Secondary School Students. (Adolescent Health Research Group, 2008). This survey measured self-reported ethnicity, experiences of bullying because of ethnicity, the reason/s for being bullied, self-rated health status, depressive symptoms in the last 12 months, degree of feeling safe in the neighbourhood, and self-rated achievement at school. The results of this study indicated that ethnic discrimination is more likely to be reported by Māori, Pacific, Asian, and other ethnic group participants than by their New Zealand European peers. In comparison to New Zealand European participants, all other ethnic groups included in this study were more likely to report being bullied because of their culture/ethnicity at school, with Asian participants being most likely, followed by Pacific, then Māori participants. Additionally, the results showed that students who reported ethnic discrimination were more likely to report experiencing significant depressive symptoms and fair/poor self-rated health. Participants who answered "yes" or "unsure" to the question on whether they had experienced bullying because of ethnicity were significantly less likely to report excellent, very good, or good health, feeling safe in their neighbourhood, and high or middle achievement level at school.

These findings demonstrate that it is essential that victims of bullying receive sufficient support following victimisation in order to work through the negative effects caused by bullying. As a consequence of this recognition, a multitude of school-wide bullying intervention and prevention programmes have been developed globally (for a review, see Smith & O'Higgins Norman, 2021). In addition to these school-wide programs, many schools have developed targeted interventions, such as peer counselling (Houlston et al., 2011), teacher support (Flaspohler et al., 2009), and anxiety management interventions (Berry & Hunt, 2009). For example, McElearney et al. (2012) investigated the effectiveness of school-based counselling following bullying. Participants were 202 Northern Ireland students ranging from 7 to 17 years of age who had experienced bullying and engaged in weekly one-to-one counselling sessions for 6 to 8 weeks. The results of this study indicated that school-based counselling promoted positive change in students' emotional health and wellbeing. In addition to formal counselling services, students also sought support from peers, parents, and teachers (Boulton, 2005; Hunter & Borg, 2006). A critical consideration in the implementation of both school-wide programs and more tailored interventions is whether an individual will seek this support after they have experienced victimisation. Hunter et al. (2004) investigated the variables that may influence whether a victimised student seeks support. Participants were 830 students in Scotland, aged 9–14 years old. Overall, help seeking was more likely for students who believed it was possible for the intervention to result in positive outcomes. If students believe that seeking support will be helpful, then it is important to ensure that the help they receive is effective.

Several studies have investigated support systems for minority students in high school who have experienced bullying (Green, 2018; Kosciw et al., 2013; Marshall et al., 2015; Sherriff et al., 2011). Notably, a study of LGBTQ youth by Marshall et al. (2015) found that having school personnel who listened to them, demonstrated acceptance, and took action was helpful for coping with their situation. Additionally, participants reported that school personnel needed to intervene, stop bullying immediately, and acknowledge the seriousness of the situation. Kiperman et al. (2014) found that LGBT high school students perceived personnel who did not understand or connect with them, and were ignorant or close-minded, to be unhelpful social support. Kahn and Lindstrom (2015) found that LGBTQ high school students with disabilities reported extracurricular clubs and activities to be positive support systems as they were accepting places where students could relate to others and be free to express themselves.

Although most research in the last 40 years has focused on bullying and victimisation within the school-age population, there is a growing body of literature investigating the prevalence and causes of bullying and victimisation within the post-secondary sector (Cassidy et al., 2019; Faucher et al., 2020). Green (2018) highlighted the role of social support in helping university students with disabilities cope with bullying. Participants reported that peers helped to reduce the negative consequences of bullying through reassurance and acceptance. In another recent study, Faucher et al. (2020) included one question in their survey of 1,458 tertiary students across four Canadian universities as well as data from 10 focus groups (36 students). They asked the students about their proposed solutions to cyber bullying within the tertiary sector. Their findings from the focus groups demonstrated that students had some practical solutions institutions could put in place to address cyberbullying. These included: greater awareness, clearer policies and procedures, and training for university staff on how to react when alerted to bullying situations—by responding with urgency and avoiding discounting students' feelings. Another study investigating tertiary students' opinions on solutions to bullying more generally was conducted by Meriläinen et al. (2015). The researchers analysed two open-ended questions from an anonymous survey of 2,805 students. A large percentage of students were not able to suggest an answer to the question of how to intervene in bullying (60%); however, those that did suggested there should be emotional, instrumental (i.e., services), and informational support for the victim. These studies highlight the importance of the

student voice in finding solutions to bullying within the tertiary sector. Although the views of tertiary students from ethnic minorities who have experienced bullying has not often been sought, their experiences of racism have been investigated (e.g., Harris, 2017; Pilkington, 2013; Singh, 2009; Vess, 2016). Most recently, Wong et al. (2021) interviewed 42 tertiary students about their experiences of racism within a university in England. To address the issues raised by the students, the authors recommended all staff and students attend workshops on inclusion, equality, and diversity. They suggested the need for a specific emphasis on recognising and calling out racism with the intention of teaching individuals how to alter the prevailing passive bystander practices silence (Vess, 2016; Wong et al., 2021).

The present study sought to build on previous research by seeking the voices of ethnic minorities who had experienced bullying either at school or university to understand what supports, if any, they had received and whether they were helpful. The specific questions were: (1) Do students seek support following bullying? If so, who is support sought from, and what aspects of support are considered helpful and unhelpful? (2) What would encourage students to seek support following bullying in the future? and (3) What support do students want to receive following victimisation, and what does this look like?

Method

Ethical clearance and informed consent

Ethical approval, in accordance with New Zealand law, was obtained from the relevant university ethics committee. Participant assent was inferred by completion and submission of the anonymous survey.

Materials

An online survey consisting of 15 questions was developed specifically for this study. The items were developed by the authors and drew upon studies which had adopted similar methodologies. Once a draft set of questions was developed, consultation was conducted with student leaders from relevant clubs and organisations within the university. Four questions measured demographic data of the participants—including age, gender, ethnicity, and total years spent in tertiary study—and 11 measured attitudes towards support systems and care in New Zealand following bullying victimisation. Participants had the option to skip questions if they did not wish to answer. The latter 11 questions were divided into three sections:

Experience of bullying or discrimination. A dichotomous “yes/no” question measured whether participants from ethnic minorities had experienced bullying or discrimination at school and/or university in New Zealand. If participants answered “no”, they were redirected to a latter question in the survey, (i.e., What would encourage you to seek support and/or help from others after being bullied?). A five-item multiple choice question measured what type/s of bullying participants had experienced (i.e., verbal, physical, relational, cyber, other). Participants were also asked to select who they were typically bullied by from a seven-item multiple choice list (i.e., friends, classmates/peers, strangers, teacher/lecturer, support staff, family members, other).

Support systems. A nine-item multiple choice question measured which support system/s participants engaged with following bullying (i.e., parents, siblings, friends, teacher/lecturer, counsellor/advisor, club/society, helplines, other and “No, I did not seek support from anyone”). Four open-ended questions measured what participants found helpful and unhelpful about these forms of support, and what would encourage/discourage participants from seeking support after being bullied.

Ideal support. Three open-ended questions measured how friends and family, schools, and universities could best support and care for participants following bullying, and the changes participants would make to the support systems and care already in place.

Recruitment procedures

At the conclusion of the consultation process, the student leaders were contacted via email with a link to the online anonymous survey. The survey landing page included relevant information about the study and available support services (if needed). The student leaders were asked to distribute the email to members within their organisations and other associations. Additionally, participants were recruited through online lecture announcements and flyers distributed around the various university campuses.

Participants for this pilot study were recruited using snowball sampling, whereby they had to meet the following characteristics: aged 18–25 years old, a current tertiary student, and self-identifying as part of an ethnic minority. We specifically chose to recruit participants aged between 18 and 25 years of age as these students also had more recent experience of support systems offered in secondary school institutions and, therefore, could provide a modern perspective. The “majority ethnicity” in New Zealand was determined using data from New Zealand's 2013 Census of Population and Dwellings (Statistics New Zealand, 2015) which stated that 74% of people living in New Zealand identified with at least one European ethnicity. Therefore, all ethnicities aside from European were considered minority in New Zealand. Additionally, individuals who identified as European alongside other minority ethnicities were invited to participate in this study.

Data analysis

Given the small dataset in this pilot study, we used descriptive analysis for the quantitative questions. Responses from each qualitative question were analysed separately, then tallied and grouped together into common themes and answers. The common answers were then verified by a second coder.

Results

Participants

A total of 15 individuals responded to this survey; however, data from two individuals were excluded due to them not meeting the age requirements. Data from the 13 individuals who met participant requirements were analysed. Eight of the participants were aged between 18 and 19 years old and all but one identified as female. The participants could identify with more than one ethnicity and identified as Caucasian, Māori, Asian, and Pacific Islander. There were also a number of other specific ethnicities listed but, given the small sample set and the need to protect their identities, these are not reported.

Experiences of bullying

Of the 13 participants who responded to the survey, 12 answered “yes” to experiencing ethnically-based bullying at school and/or university in New Zealand and eight of these provided answers to the remaining survey questions. Four reported they had experienced verbal bullying, one reported they had experienced relational bullying, and three reported they had experienced both verbal and relational bullying. In regard to the perpetrators of bullying, all eight participants reported being bullied by classmates/peers. Over half of the participants also reported being bullied by friends, and

half of the participants reported being bullied by strangers, a teacher/lecturer, and/or family members.

Experiences of support

Of the eight participants who answered the remaining survey questions, six reported that they sought support following bullying. The survey allowed the selection of more than one support system. Friends were the most frequently sought support system ($n=6$) followed by parents ($n=4$). Participants rarely sought support from teachers/lecturers ($n=1$) or a counsellor/advisor ($n=2$), while two participants indicated that they did not seek any support. Receiving support from others who were culturally sensitive and who made them feel valued was a key theme for most of the participants when asked about the helpfulness of the support. For example, one participant said:

[It felt like I had] people who didn't object to my nationality.

Participants also described that talking to someone they trusted, who showed empathy by sharing their own experiences, was particularly helpful. For example, one participant said:

...just the fact of talking to someone about what I was experiencing. Although [the] majority of the time these outlets didn't alleviate the bullying I experienced, it was good to let somebody know anyway.

...they shared their experiences in dealing with racism. Knowing someone else is going through the same struggle of not feeling like you can do anything is slightly comforting but, it doesn't solve the issue.

It was reported by one participant that distractions in the form of hobbies were helpful as they took their mind off the situation. Additionally, one participant reported that others defending them was helpful. Another participant reported that, as they got older, they realised:

...it wasn't [me] who was the problem.

In contrast, participants were also asked what they found unhelpful from forms of support in relation to their experience/s of bullying. Responses from four participants indicated that a dismissive attitude was particularly unhelpful, where the seriousness of the bullying was downplayed, and they were told to ignore the bullying and “suck it up”. For example, one participant said:

...giving me dumb advice that's easier said than done e.g. just ignore it, tell a teacher, ask them to stop.

Support systems exhibiting a lack of empathy and relatability were reported by two participants as unhelpful. Participant responses referred to people who lacked understanding and did not relate to their culture, and people who lacked effort to develop understanding. For example, one participant said:

...not understanding my feelings, not making an effort to understand. Assuming they understand everything about the situation.

Receiving insufficient support was described by two participants as unhelpful, stating that they did not get the support they needed and when they did get support it was not exactly helpful. Additionally, one participant reported a feeling of helplessness regarding support systems due to the notion that:

...the issue of racism cannot be solved.

Willingness to seek support

Participants were asked what would encourage them to seek support after being bullied. Three focused on the possible positive consequences, such as not feeling isolated and alone, putting their mind at ease, and knowing that the support system worked. Knowing they could go to others about anything was indicated by one participant as encouraging, whereas knowing the form of support was confidential was indicated by another participant. Furthermore, one participant reported that increasing severity of the situation would encourage them to seek support. Being told it is okay to seek support was reported as encouraging from another participant. Contrastingly, two participants were not sure or reported nothing as being encouraging, with one participant stating:

...after my experiences, I've become accustomed to not talking to many people about it. I cry about it and then try to forget about it.

Additionally, participants were asked what would discourage them from seeking support after being bullied. Dismissing the seriousness of the situation was discouraging for two participants, including “the mockery of being told to just ‘take a joke’”. Negative consequences were indicated by three participants as discouraging, including knowing the bully might be involved, being made fun of, and nothing being resolved. The fear of being judged was reported by one participant as discouraging, whereas another described not knowing whether they would be supported properly. Additionally, one participant reported that nothing would discourage them from seeking support.

Ideal forms of support

Participants were asked to indicate how friends/family and university could best support and care for them if they were being bullied. Three participants reported that friends/family could best support them by making them feel accepted and loved. This included reinforcing the “beauty of

who they are inside”, making them feel valued, and reassuring them. Other participants reported that being empathetic was how friends/family could best support them. For example, one participant said:

[They could support me by] saying that my feelings are valid. Understanding that I am upset and seeing the situation from my perspective.

Two participants reported that they wanted friends/family to listen to them, whereas two participants wanted friends/family to help them avoid thinking about the situation, including distracting them and “refrain[ing] from bringing it up.” Individual participants reported they wanted friends/family to help manage their emotions and spend time with them (respectively). In addition, one participant wanted family/friends to have a light-hearted approach to the situation. Half of the participants reported that they wanted their school to hold the perpetrator/s of bullying accountable. Responses indicated that their previous schools did not reprimand bullies to a suitable extent, did not intervene in bullying situations, and justified people’s bullying behaviour. For example, one participant said:

[The school could support me] by not allowing for the comments to continue for the reason of “they’ll grow out of it, we can’t stop every child from doing it”. This makes matters worse, and a lot of people don’t ‘grow out of it’.

Two participants reported that they wanted their teachers to take immediate action in response to bullying. For example, one participant said:

...teachers taking immediate action. I know my high school did mediation and this was hardly ever effective. Instead of making appointments to talk to one another, address the issue straight away before the situation gets worse.

A participant reported they wanted their university/school to have more cultural clubs available, therefore providing “a place for us all to gather and be authentic around.” Other participants wanted their university/school to talk about the bullying situations with them, with one participant reporting on the increased awareness of discrimination in the present day, as exemplified by the following response:

...the movement for calling out racism is stronger these days but I wish it was [stronger] back then.

In contrast, two participants reported that they were unsure about how their university/school could best support them following bullying, with one participant reporting:

I don't know, I feel like there are no good anti-bullying measures in place.

Participants were also asked to report the changes they would make to the support and care systems already in place following bullying. From the two participants who responded to this question, a strong need for increased ethnic diversity was expressed. Responses indicated there was a lack of cultural diversity and representation of ethnic minorities at their previous schools that negatively affected their relatability to teachers and support systems.

Discussion

The majority of the students who participated in this study had experienced ethnically-based bullying in their New Zealand secondary and/or tertiary institution. Students reported experiencing relational, verbal, or both forms of bullying. The most prominent perpetrators of bullying were classmates/peers, followed by friends, strangers, a teacher/lecturer, and family members. In response to bullying, students most frequently sought support from their friends (presumably “other” friends), followed closely by their family. It was, of course, positive that students were rarely victimised by staff; however, it is interesting to note that none sought support from staff within their educational institution. It is unclear why the participants didn't seek support. It is possible that the hesitancy was partly due to student and staff uncertainty about the perceived pastoral care responsibilities of academic staff (Lu, 2022; Tang et al., 2022). Students may have also been influenced by past experiences of not being heard or taken seriously by teachers (Green, 2021).

When students did seek support, they indicated that it was unhelpful to experience a lack of empathy from those they told, or have their concerns dismissed and be given advice that was “easier said than done”. Furthermore, for some participants there appeared to be a sense of frustration about the lack of efficient support they received, while others communicated a sense of helplessness, indicating that nothing would encourage them to seek support. These findings emphasise the emotional toll and range of feelings that individuals experience in response to being victimised (Albdour et al., 2017).

Additionally, participant responses in the current study highlighted the intersectionality of bullying and racism within educational institutions, particularly at the personal/interpersonal level. For example, occurrences of everyday racism were highlighted by some participants in the present study, when their concerns about racist comments were dismissed and they were told to just “take a joke”. The study by Douglass et al. (2016) further supports this finding, reporting that ethnic/racial joking was considered normal and harmless within adolescent peer networks. However, youth who did not want to participate (including being the target of teasing and experiencing teasing vicariously) had a negative experience of racist joking, and experienced negative implications, including increased anxiety. As highlighted by Wong et al. (2021), the normalisation of racist jokes can make the target feel as if they are in the wrong, as they are unable to perceive the situation like everyone else. It also demonstrates how joking about ethnicity can become part of the social norms and may result in increased participation, as it is considered acceptable behaviour.

Participant responses on what would encourage them to seek support following bullying covered a wide range of factors, including the likelihood of positive consequences. This finding is also consistent with the study of high school students by Hunter et al. (2004), which found that seeking help following bullying was more likely for students who believed a positive outcome was possible. Furthermore, students reported that their friends and family could best support them by making them feel accepted and loved, being empathetic, and listening to them. For some participants, it was important for family and friends to refrain from discussing the situation. Similarly, Albdour et al.

(2017) sought the views of ethnic minorities within a high school setting. Students reported talking to family or friends who helped them reduce stress and made them feel better about themselves was helpful for coping with bullying experiences.

The findings of the current study are consistent with previous studies that have focused on students from other minority groups. For example, in a study by Marshall et al. (2015), LGBTQ youth suggested that having school personnel who listened to them and demonstrated acceptance was helpful for coping with their situation. Additionally, participants reported that school personnel needed to intervene, stop bullying immediately, and stop dismissing the seriousness of the situation. The findings from the present study are also consistent with Kahn and Lindstrom (2015) who found LGBTQ high school students with disabilities reported extracurricular clubs and activities to be positive support systems as they were accepting places where they could relate to others and be free to express themselves. Green (2018) also highlighted the role of social support in helping university students with disabilities cope with bullying. Participants reported that peers helped to reduce the negative consequences of bullying through reassuring them and demonstrating acceptance. The findings from the current study on unhelpful aspects of support systems were also consistent with those of Kiperman et al. (2014) who found that LGBT high school students perceived unhelpful social support as individuals not understanding or connecting with them and being ignorant or closed-minded. However, as previously mentioned, as these studies focused on LGBTQ and disabled populations, the findings may not translate completely to the current study.

Some students recommended that their secondary or tertiary institution could best support them by staff taking immediate action in response to bullying and holding the perpetrator/s accountable. However, in order to do this effectively, the educational institutions (including schools and tertiary providers) need to understand the socio-ecological factors that help to develop and maintain bullying behaviours (Espelage & Swearer, 2004). This understanding would, in turn, enable the establishment of a whole-of-institution commitment to bullying intervention and prevention similar to the approach taken in schools. Prevention needs to be systemic and may include the promotion and expansion of cultural clubs, thereby providing a space for students to be themselves and interact with others who share similar experiences. In addition, educational institutions could promote greater awareness through the development and implementation of a structured programme of diversity and equality inductions for staff and students (Wong et al., 2021). In the intervention space there needs to be an unequivocal commitment from senior leadership to the programme with clear evidence-based policies and procedures in place that are accessible and informative (Campbell et al., 2019). Professional development for staff should focus on cultural competence, empathetic skills, and how to react when alerted to bullying (Faucher et al., 2020). Furthermore, both students and staff need to feel comfortable and confident in recognising and calling out all forms of bullying, including racism (Wong et al., 2021). Most importantly—given students' reluctance to seek support from staff—they need to know their concerns will not be dismissed. Although this type of unconditional support may be given within the counselling services provided by educational institutions, opportunities for students to approach academic staff for support may help ensure students have more timely responses to their concerns.

One of the limitations of this pilot study is that English may not have been the first language for some participants and, as such, there may have been some misunderstanding of the concepts being explored. To ensure clarity, future research could include survey questions in multiple languages to accommodate a range of ethnic minorities with differing first languages. The generalisability of the findings from this pilot study are limited due to the small sample size and the mostly female sample. Additionally, the sample was not representative of all ethnic minorities within Aotearoa. However, it is hoped that this pilot study, including the specifically designed survey focusing on support systems for students who have been bullied because of their ethnicity, has contributed to the emerging conversation about the intersectionality of race and bullying within educational

institutions. In addition, it has helped to reveal some important aspects of the student voice that warrant further exploration with a larger, more inclusive, sample of tertiary students across the Motu.

Educational institutions have an important role to play in supporting students who have been victimised. More importantly, they have a duty to promote inclusivity and be transformative in helping to eliminate everyday racism by having clear policies in place and by providing educational opportunities (that focus on inclusion and equality) for staff and students. The findings from this pilot study have increased our understanding of what support students need if they have been bullied because of their ethnicity and, perhaps as importantly, what else needs to be done to prevent it.

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