COVID-19: Experiences of Racial Discrimination, Scapegoating and Stigmatisation

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Abstract

This study explores the experiences of racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigmatisation and sense of belonging during the COVID-19 pandemic in New Zealand as of the year 2020 to 2021. To do this, racial discrimination, scapegoating and stigmatistion were examined. The main component of research was semi-structured interviews using convenience sampling and the supporting component was a content analysis of news media articles relevant to the research topic using systematic sampling. From these processes, it was found that for most interviewees, their sense of belonging in New Zealand was affected by experiences of racist behaviours prior to the pandemic. It was established that the effects of COVID-19 -- racial discrimination, scapegoating and stigmatisation only amplified the interviewees' lack of belongingness in New Zealand, with media playing a key role in the interviewees' perception of said effects. Respectively, these findings put the interviewees' stories and experiences at the forefront, illustrating the lived racism of a person's life in New Zealand during the pandemic, and demonstrates how such impact came to be.

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Attestation of Authorship

I declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed:

Date: 29 June, 2021

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Philippians 4:13

I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Ethics Approval

This thesis involves research using human participants, as such approval needed to be sought out by the Auckland University of Technologies Ethics Committee (AUTEC). Approval was received on 6 October 2020 with the approval number 20/299.

Chapter 1: Overview

1.1 Researcher Journey

Having completed my Bachelor of Arts majoring in Anthropology and Communications in 2019, I wanted to continue my studies by conducting my own research. I knew Communications would equip me with the relevant skills for efficient and accurate methods of dispersing information in any field I chose. While my interest in cultures and societies has always been present, I became even more interested because of my Anthropology courses although they were challenging majors, they overlapped in interesting ways. To convey information the way it is intended to be understood, one must first know the audience.

At the time I moved to New Zealand in 2017, I had no knowledge of New Zealand's history, social and political issues. In 2019, as an undergraduate, I started to actively learn about New Zealand's history by taking several sociology courses. After the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in New Zealand and the world had more understanding of its origins, it was apparent to me that there was a social divide, which was particularly noticeable to me as a person of Asian descent. In late 2020, Auckland entered a second lockdown even though most everyone hoped the first one would be the only one. I had come across some social media posts showing rude comments about Pasifika because the second outbreak emerged from a Pasifika family. This sparked my interest and curiosity in discrimination during the pandemic.

Although I have had experiences of discrimination as an Asian person, and my interest in discrimination during the pandemic was further sparked by the comments aimed at Pasifika, this research was not focused on any specific ethnicity or race. What I have observed led me to come to an understanding that there was some racist discourse that was present in society and the media since the emergence of COVID-19 in New Zealand. After discussions with friends and lecturers in the Public Relations department at the Auckland University of Technology, I concluded that this was a relevant and meaningful topic to research.

1.2 Understanding Racial Discrimination in New Zealand

Before diving into racial discrimination and what it is, the core of this research is based on the ideology of racism. Merriam-Webster defines racism as “a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race” (2021). It is a heavily loaded negative concept, both morally and politically (Miles & Brown, 2003). “To claim that someone has expressed a racist opinion is to denounce them as immoral and unworthy” (Miles & Brown, 2003, p.3). So, if the term ‘racism’ is used, it is often used as a political weapon.

Fields (2001) defines racism as an act of assigning a person to an inferior group and a combination of two concepts: identity and agency. The mixture of one’s sense of self

and one's ability to make decisions consciously and independently is dictated by the superior group, thus the victim of racism cannot be the one to "create" racism or negotiate it. Jones (2002) states that racism is a system and not an individual's flaw or personality trait. It is a structure of policies and norms built by and in favour of a certain race.

Hamer et al. (2018), proposed that ethnicity and ethnic groups are a "result of a social process in which people draw boundaries around themselves, producing and reproducing culture, acknowledging ancestry, and using their language as an emblem of the group" (p.32), and therefore is subject to change and redefinition. Barth (1969) suggested that ethnicities are not fixed, they are flexible, open, and often self-defined, as ethnicity is transmissible because people learn cultural traits (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Cooper et al. (2003), proposed that the modern understanding of race developed from the Europeans naming and categorising populations as they were expanding their empires. Kite and Whitley (2016) referenced Morning's (2011) explanation of the present understanding of race: "a system for classifying human beings that is grounded in the belief that they embody inherited and fixed biological characteristics that identify them as members of a racial group" (p. 6).

1.3 Purpose and Scope of This Research

The purpose of this research is to identify and unpack the perspectives of lived racial discrimination, stigma and scapegoating to answer the research question: How do experiences of self-perceived racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating during COVID-19 impact an individual's sense of belonging in New Zealand?

To answer the research question, the methodology I selected was in-depth semi-structured interviews. This was the primary method of data collection. To add depth to the research, news media articles relevant to the research topic were analysed, which is further explained in the Methodology chapter. Both methods of data collection were analysed using content analysis. Therefore, the focus of the study was to explore how experiences of racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating during COVID-19 impacted an individual's sense of belonging in New Zealand.

To understand the scope of the study, there are some limitations and boundaries that need to be considered. These limitations refer to external factors that were unavoidable, while boundaries were conscious factors selected by the researcher to create clear definitions for coherent understandings throughout the thesis. These limitations were identified post-research and can be found in Chapter 6. There were also limitations identified prior to the research. For example, the total number of participants is six, ideally eight to ten interviews would have been better as interviewing more participants would have increased the reliability of the findings. The timing of this study should also

be considered as it is exploring racial discrimination, scapegoating and stigma as the pandemic is still ongoing. Despite New Zealand managing to contain and eliminate the virus, researching the experiences of racial discrimination, scapegoating and stigmatisation would have been more definitive if studied post-pandemic. Rather than researching the past, this research is appealing since it is navigated as the pandemic is still happening.

In this research, racial discrimination, scapegoating, and stigmatisation are recognised as the three core concepts to respond to the research question. Other concepts discussed or mentioned in the interviews are used to support one of the three core concepts in this research. Some terms mentioned included *stereotyping* and *othering* which are further explored in the Discussion chapter.

This study is important as it contributes to the scholarly material around COVID-19 and racial discrimination. This research can be used by other researchers to understand the relationship and first-hand experiences between COVID-19, racial discrimination, and a sense of belonging during the time of this research.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters that highlights the researcher's journey. The chapters will be presenting in the following order: Overview, literature review focusing

on racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigmatisation stereotyping and sense of belonging. This is followed by the methodology, findings, the discussion and lastly, the conclusion.

This current chapter is the overview of the thesis. It introduced the research question and the overarching ideas which comprise the basis of the research. The main concept of racism is defined and explained within a New Zealand context. This information provided a foundation before beginning to outline the in-depth details throughout the thesis. Chapter 2 is the **literature review** which will define and explore racial discrimination, stereotyping, scapegoating, stigma, and sense of belonging during COVID-19. The literature review aims to provide an understanding of each concept and what it means and to unpack the implications they have on an individual's sense of belonging. The **methodology** includes the framework about how and why the data was collected. It details the semi-structured interview method and convenience sampling of the news media articles. It discusses the processes of both forms of data collection, presenting the pros and cons of sampling methods and how concerns were overcome. This demonstrates the credibility and reliability of the chosen methodology. The **findings** present the findings collected from the interviews and an analysis of the news media articles. These findings will be presented using tables and charts. This allows the findings to become clear to the reader and will be easier to navigate in the following chapter. Next is the **discussion**. The aim of this chapter is to interpret the findings from the previous chapter by explaining the meaning behind the findings. These meanings

are supported by scholarly sources throughout the chapter. The key findings of this chapter are then discussed in relation to how it might impact sense of belonging in New Zealand, and ultimately, responds to the research question. Lastly, the **conclusion** chapter will draw conclusions from each chapter in this thesis, it will answer the research question clearly, provide the strengths and limitations and include future recommendations for this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Based on a review of academic research, it was found that works focusing on COVID-19 and racial discrimination have begun to emerge as the pandemic spread around the world. However, there is little research set in New Zealand. This chapter provides a brief overview of academic literature of five main concepts: sense of belonging, racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigma, and stereotyping. These concepts are applied to the context of COVID-19 within New Zealand, it examines how these concepts are perceived by victims of said concepts and how they are presented by New Zealand news media. By reviewing these areas, the researcher can respond to the research question as extensively and accurately as possible.

2.2 Sense of Belonging

To belong is to have a sense of involvement in a social system and to feel indispensable and integral to that system (Hagerty et al., 1992). Maslow (1954) identified belonging as a basic human need. There are two defining attributes to a person's sense of belonging, to experience feeling valued and needed, and the experience of fitting in (Hagerty et al., 1996). The consequences of belonging are psychological, social, spiritual, and physical. It involves meaningful attribution and establishes emotion and behavioural responses (Hagerty et al., 1996). This suggests that 'to belong' is impactful on multiple levels

simultaneously, and the genuine feeling of belonging initiates behaviours that contribute to a community or society that a person is a part of. In turn, this process gives the individual automatic access to the community simply by contributing to society (Shotter, 1993). The process of belonging also creates a means of exclusion (Chakraborti & Garland, 2012). To know what it feels like to belong is also to know what it feels like to be excluded, thus only through exclusion can an individual know what it means to belong. Racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigmatisation, and stereotyping all play a role in governing how much an individual feels like they belong, these concepts are further examined in this chapter.

2.3 Racial Discrimination in New Zealand

Discrimination is a multi-faceted phenomenon. It is based on social exclusion where certain individuals or groups are excluded from participating in social, political, or economic life (Andeva, 2017). This study is focused on how individuals are discriminated against based on their assumed race. There are several ways that racial discrimination is implemented socially. As this research is based on personal encounters of racial discrimination, the social aspect is the focal point. One is the behavioural approach: “the failure to give equal consideration, based on the fact of race alone” (Schmid, 1996, p.31). Second is the motivational approach: “the infliction of unequal consideration, motivated by the desire to dominate, based on race alone” (Schmid, 1996, p.32). Lastly, there is the cognitive approach which stems from racial

beliefs and projects “unequal consideration, out of a belief in the inferiority of another race” (Schmid, 1996, p.35). The emergence and development of race was a socially constructed method to characterise unfamiliar people, usually based on skin colour, hair and facial features (Kite & Whitley, 2016), so racial discrimination might be implemented via physical appearance.

Contemporary acts of discrimination occur within social and political realms, which often stem from historical events. Some significant events that depict this include the signing of The Treaty of Waitangi, which led to a power imbalance between The British and Maori. Other notable acts of discrimination throughout New Zealand’s history include the Dawn Raids in the 1970s targeting the Pasifika community, and Winston Peters, the current leader of New Zealand First party, and his campaign against immigrants, specifically Asian settlers (Munshi, 1998). Social forms of racial discrimination may present itself through micro-aggressions.

Sue et al. (2007), defined micro-aggressions as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group” (p.273). These existing forms of racial discrimination have had an after-effect during the pandemic.

2.4 Racial Discrimination during COVID-19

During the pandemic, some political leaders have misrepresented the crisis to reinforce racial discrimination. For example, the former President of the United States, Donald Trump, has referred to the virus as the ‘Chinese virus’, which linked “the health threat to foreign policy and trade negotiations'” (Devakumar et al., 2020, p.1194), and prejudiced judgements made against immigrants (Devakumar et al., 2020). Additionally, in early 2021, there was a rise in attacks on Asian Americans (Cabral, 2021) which may lead others and the Asian community to become introspective. Abrams (2021) highlighted the impact of anti-Asian racism on mental health in the American Psychological Association. It revealed the increase of stress levels amongst Asian communities since the emergence of the pandemic.

Woo and Jun (2021) found that racial discrimination related to COVID-19 were associated with depressive symptoms. “Racial discrimination was found to be a chronic social stressor that negatively impacts racial minorities’ mental health status” (Gee et al., 2007). Additionally, covert forms of racial discrimination such as being treated with less courtesy than others, is a more prevalent form of discrimination, and there are also overt or explicit forms, such as name calling or threatening someone (Chae et al., 2011), which could be a factor in high stress levels. Research by Hanasono et al., found that if individuals experience racial discrimination, the social support received from communication with others often helps racial minorities become more resilient to future encounters of discrimination (Hanasono et al., 2014). Some examples of experienced

racial discrimination presented in Woo and Jun's (2021) research included being physically attacked during COVID-19 because of the person's race/ethnicity and being refused service due to race/ethnicity. This experience is a form of personally mediated racism as a form of interpersonal racism.

Personally mediated racism is an individual's prejudice and discrimination based on assumptions about an individual based on their ethnic appearance and marginalising them whether unintentionally or intentionally (Devine et al., 2002). Discrimination based on ethnicity is often influenced by external factors like institutionalised racism which manifests itself into daily behaviours, such as personally mediated racism. Daily behaviours might include avoiding certain people, keeping an eye on someone in a store, deciding which empty seat to take depending on the person who is sitting next to it, devaluing someone based on their race and so on. A person's prejudice may revolve around their attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies around race. Behaviours of such prejudice or discrimination can be more difficult to identify due to their covert nature which Bonilla-Silva (2015) calls a new and modern form of racism. This can reveal itself through forms of scapegoating and stigmatisation.

2.5 Scapegoating during COVID-19

Scapegoating is viewed as a process of displaced aggression that is aimed at minority groups, blaming them for societal problems (Toker, 1972). The emergence and spread

of Covid-19 within New Zealand, like in other parts of the world, has brought out racist and xenophobic behaviours within some people. Scapegoating following a disease or virus outbreak is not new. It has been found that if people are threatened by uncertainty or disruption in their lives, there is a higher chance they will assign blame to whoever they see as the cause of the uncertainty and disruption (Yang et al., 2021, p.7). Particularly while undergoing experiences of illness, something like COVID-19 affecting one's own health or that of loved ones can be a huge factor in perceived personal control, such as the lack of control of a loved one's health or the uncertainty the virus has introduced to people's lives. In this midst of medical uncertainty (not understanding the virus, contracting the virus), it is not unusual for people to blame certain groups for illnesses or disease (Yang et al., 2021). Yang et al. (2021), proposed there are two main reasons to explain why this might occur. Firstly, the nature of taking control during a time of uncertainty, such as COVID-19, makes the uncertainty appear more stable. Secondly, the targeted person or group appears to be the most viable to blame. Finger pointing during a time of crisis can be seen in the past.

Throughout history, there have been many instances of scapegoating like the Covid-19 crisis. In 14th century Europe, during the Black Death from 1348-1351, Jewish people were blamed and slaughtered by Christian mobs who accused them of spreading the bubonic plague by poisoning the wells and streams. Their existing difference in religion made it easy to blame the Jews. This could be because of "the newness and 'mysteriousness' of a disease, as it serves as the key that unlocks the extremes of

insecurity and fear to ignite scapegoating and mass violence against minorities" (Cohn, 2012, p.3). If individuals are confronted with frightening or intolerable situations, the response is to either escape or control it, by either destroying it or the cause. To deny it or to displace the problem also means that the impact of the virus does not seem as frightening (Gilmore & Somerville, 1994). This response may lead to directed blame that may explain these responses.

To scapegoat is to have a primitive belief that is triggered by a panic driven reaction to make sense of an uncertain situation (Gemmill, 1989). Atlanti-Duault et al. (2014), developed the concept 'figures of blame' which argued that the accusation against a group is often recurring and is expressed through contemporary media. Journalists often construct a reality by defining events and use those elements to legitimise their understanding (Brookes et al., 2004). This could also be the case for a pandemic. In doing so, images and identities are created and are usually attached to certain symbols, already established news media norms or common sense about people or communities (Fürsich, 2010).

During the pandemic, the media was a key player in directing blame and creating scapegoats. Thomas et al. (2020), suggested that "blame is usually apportioned to geographically distant groups with the mechanisms for assigning blame often including othering, and is commonly used as a tool by the media as a form of reassurance in the face of crisis" (p.11). *Othering* is a way to differentiate between in-groups and

out-groups as a method of affirming one's identity and protecting their own self (Jackson, 2014). The public then often views the pandemic through characters, such as heroes, villains, and victims as they are introduced in the media (Mayor et al., 2013). By doing this, the media is powerful in promoting, confirming, and reinforcing constructed identities (Iwashita, 2006). Wright (2002) argued that in many cases, attitudes towards a certain group is dependent on the way the media has constructed concepts about said groups. Groups or communities who are considered 'Others' in society are more likely to be misrepresented by the media as they are different from the dominant group, which might be measured in skin colour, culture, language, religion and so on (Ahmed & Matthes, 2016).

One major power behind media constructing realities is their source of information. Information sources are present behind all disseminated news and it "determines what information the journalist obtains from whom is critical in affecting what news a media organization disseminates" (Hermida et al., 2014, p.300). According to Gabore (2020), the media space is dominated by racist ideologies and filled with unconscious racism which might lead journalists to broadcast content that specifically targets a group or community. Media sourcing allows an individual to present stories on their account by providing evidence to support their argument, and exclude any information that may be counteractive to their argument (Carlson, 2009). For example, priming in the media is a way to make some information more salient than other information (Scheufele, 2000).

2.6 Stigma during COVID-19

According to Goffman (1963), stigma is a mark or sign about an individual that exposes something unusual or bad about the person. It is a multi-layered process that is manifested from different areas, such as labeling, separation, stereotyping, emotional reaction, and power differentiation (Abbey et al., 2011). Epidemic outbreaks have often been accompanied by stigma (Villa et al., 2020). For example, in India, there is a negative perception toward those who have contracted the virus. They are perceived as ignorant and negligent and are held responsible for having contracted the virus (Bhanot, 2021).

There are several negative consequences of stigma that inhibit recovery from stigma already attached to an individual or group (Ramaci et al., 2020). This includes embarrassment and shame. This usually occurs if society is confronted with difficult situations that cannot be solved, causing individuals to either consciously or unconsciously find someone to blame (Jakovljevic et al., 2020). Jakovljevic et al. (2020), believed stigma is an inaccurate way to explain the impact of COVID-19 on long term social, economic, and political problems, and is often apparent if resources are scarce, such as face masks and ventilators (Jakovljevic et al., 2020).

The use of language in the media can sometimes contribute to fueling stigma (Villa et al., 2020). For example, Villa et al. (2020), identified the use of the term ‘Chinese virus’

and ‘Chinese syndrome’ in numerous Italian newspapers, as well as ‘Alert Jaune’ (‘Yellow Alert’) in Le Courrier Picard, a French newspaper. This paralleled the behaviour that many Asians were receiving in late January 2020, which was the beginning of the pandemic and largely limited to China. Thus, many verbal and physical attacks were against Chinese people or those of Asian descent (Giuffrida & Willsher, 2020). The former President of the United States, Donald Trump also referred to the virus as the ‘Chinese virus’. Placing blame on China has contributed to the idea that China and Chinese people are unsanitary (Chang et al., 2020), amongst other attributions, such as the theory that the coronavirus was created in a laboratory in Wuhan (Maxmen & Mallapaty, 2021) or attempts to cover up the existence of COVID-19 since it was first reported (Walsh, 2020). China or Chinese people might have been generalised, and therefore perceived as dishonest or deceiving due to this. The use of media has amplified the problem of stigma by spreading inaccurate information which is harmful towards those at the epicenter of the outbreak (He et al., 2020). This is depicted by Medford et al.’s (2020), study on stigma by examining keywords from Twitter hashtags associated with COVID-19. It was found that key words like “corona” and “Wuhan corona” were linked to emotions of fear and anger “ranging from fear of infection, death, and inability to travel as well as emotional distress and fear regarding the effect on the economy and politics” (Melford et al., 2020, p.4).

The social stigma of targeted groups developed during COVID-19 was attributed to “unscientific belief and improper understanding of common masses” (Bagcchi, 2020,

p.782) as well as leaders, such as Donald Trump using the phrase “Chinese virus” as previously mentioned in Chapter 2.3. The stigma created by these factors lead to stress induced consequences.

Stress is associated with a constant threat of being stigmatised by others (Link & Phelan, 2006). The fear of being stigmatised can sometimes impact other aspects of life (Link & Phelan, 2006), such as the workplace environment and coherency between colleagues. Such implications may come at the cost of hypertension and other health problems, particularly for those with disease-associated stigma (Link & Phelan, 2006), such as COVID-19. For Asian communities, everyday activities have been especially affected as they have been the scapegoat for the virus as “elites succeeded in racializing the coronavirus pandemic in its early stages as uniquely *Asian”* (Reny & Barreto, 2020, p.4). Those who feel stigmatised might decide to distance themselves, so they are not labelled. This might be avoiding public spaces or not wearing a mask. It suggests that stigma can discourage care seeking (Reny & Barreto, 2020).

2.7 Stereotyping in New Zealand

Stereotypes are everywhere. They are often used as jokes amongst friends or can be wildly offensive if made in the wrong context. Stereotypes are “pictures in our head” that help us make sense of the world. Ashmore and Del Boca (2015) concluded that stereotypes are mostly negative on the basis that they oversimplify a person and

therefore, are incorrect to some extent. Ashmore and Del Boca (2015) believed that stereotypes are rigid and an impaired perception of human cognition. This often comes in the form of assumptions, stereotypes, generalisations, and so on. Stereotypes are often activated if information about someone matches the content of a stereotype (Gilmour, 2015). The person forming impressions about someone might use physical features to identify targets. This includes age, gender, or race. Stereotypes are triggered within individuals because knowledge is accessed about social groups (Gilmour, 2015). This is an automatic process, highlighting both positive and negative associations of the targeted person. This usually occurs if one encounters an out-group member (someone who does not belong in an individual's own group). This automatic process can lead out-group members to feel threatened and judged, which then impacts their confidence.

If people feel threatened or judged by others and their surroundings, it can lead to decreased individual performance, decreased self-esteem and even lower a person's desire to take on leadership roles (Ashmore & Del Boca, 2015). Individuals who feel threatened by stereotypes about themselves tend to fulfill the same stereotype that generalises them, whether subconsciously or not. This is depicted through the theory of 'stereotype threat'.

Stereotype threat is the theory that "every individual has at least one social identity that is targeted by a negative stereotype in some given situation" (Spencer et al., 2016). The research around this theory was initially focused on African American intelligence in

education. Research conducted by Aronson et al. (2002), found that most aspects of academic achievement showed that African American inferiority to their Caucasian counterparts is not entirely attributed to socioeconomic status. Their research showed that stereotype threat undermined academic achievement in two ways. One is by inducing anxiety, a short-term effect. If a stereotype threat was minimised, they found that tests were non-diagnostic in terms of ability, the gap between African Americans and Caucasians were almost completely removed. The second way academic achievement is undermined is through disidentification. This is defined as a disengagement from aiming for high achievements so that students can cope with stereotype threat and the result is underperformance (Aronson et al, 2002). To succeed in any given domain, such as a classroom or workplace, means sustained self-esteem which can be affected at a young age. Devaluing is an early stage of disidentification. This might be “maths is for nerds” if a student receives a good grade (Aronson et al., 2002). Ongoing processes of devaluing often lead to students completely disengaging from academics because they might feel that they are not intelligent enough. Factors that impact this psychological disengagement in academics can hinder a person’s future success. While research was focused on the performance of African Americans in an academic setting, it shows how when subjected to a stereotype, especially if it suggests inferiority, it affects their identity. This impact is called social ascription.

Social ascription or a socially assigned image of an individual influences the way individuals perceive themselves. An example of social ascription during COVID-19 is

the way Asian New Zealanders were perceived. “Media organizations with hegemonic dominance usually create negative images and stereotypes of groups they identified as ‘Others’” (Saeed, 2007, p.449). This was reflected in online articles, such as Stuff’s[1] piece on the virus as the new convenient symbol of racism against Asian New Zealanders (Te, 2020). In the article, Janne Song, a Wellington based Korean woman recounts her experiences, such as attempting to dress inconspicuously so she would not stand out. She avoided wearing a mask to avoid assumptions about her identity and her belonging in New Zealand. During New Zealand’s first lockdown where leaving the house was only for essentials, Song only went on one walk to avoid racist behaviours. Other encounters of COVID-19 brought out racist behaviours including someone yelling “Wuhan” at Liang Cui, a woman who moved to Wellington for her PhD. The virus resulted in the same racism for Asian New Zealanders who were born and raised in New Zealand. In the same article, University of Auckland lecturer Dr David Tokiharu Mayeda discussed the idea that Asian people would always be seen as “forever a foreigner” despite New Zealand’s ongoing immigration. That identity has been ascribed and thus, many Asians never truly feel at home in New Zealand, and anything connected to Covid-19 re-intensifies that connection to being a foreigner.

Historically, Chinese New Zealanders have suffered at the hands of mainstream media in ways that conformed to New Zealand’s prejudices and stereotypes. While the number of Chinese migrants decreased in the 1880s, the anti-Chinese sentiment became more

[1] Stuff is a New Zealand based news media website first launched in 2000. It has a monthly audience of more than 2 million.

prominent with the forming of the Anti-Chinese Association and Anti-Asiastic League forming in 1908 (Ma & Cartier, 2003). In addition to active anti-Chinese organisations, many newspapers at the time focused on Chinese committing crimes, centering on Chinese shops that opened past the closing time of white New Zealanders, as well as smoking opium and gambling. Such coverage of Chinese led to the concepts yellow peril and model minority. The expression that the yellow peril carried on and extended much further than unwelcomed company. It portrayed the Chinese as the erotic, exotic and strange Orient in a comprehensible and intelligible manner and turned them into a logical and purposeful community. This developed the idea that Asians were a group to keep their heads down and work hard, it eventually led to Chinese adopting the image of a model minority: “successful minorities who have quietly moved to the pinnacle of success in various contexts through hard work and determination” (Wong & Halgin, 2006, p.38).

Since most voices in the public sphere of news journalism are mainly White, Western press has been frequently criticised for representing other ethnic groups in ways that conform to existing stereotypes and prejudices (Harris, 2009), this is why the media plays a significant role in determining and instilling stereotypes within society. Mass media is heavily populated with stereotypes. Research conducted by Seiter (1986) on stereotypes and the media found that “individuals would hold these ‘habits of thought’ only lightly and would be ready to change them when new experiences or contradictory evidence was encountered” (p.16). Stereotypes are not merely a way to make sense of

our reality but are a way to justify social differences. For example, stereotypes about the black community often compare the education disparities between blacks and whites (Taylor et al., 2019). Individuals often maintain stereotypes rather than change them.

2.8 Summary

This chapter reviewed the concepts scapegoating, stigma and stereotypes and how they might contribute to racial discrimination and its possible effect on an individual's or group's sense of belonging during COVID-19. Existing racial discrimination in New Zealand has played a role in racial discrimination during COVID-19. Concurrently, this highlights acts of scapegoating that were particularly focused on Asian communities in the West. This then showed how the stigma of scapegoating has developed. Lastly, in the process of exploring stigma and scapegoating, stereotyping was another key concept that emerged. Following this chapter is the Methodology. The methodology begins the data collection and data analysis journey. It details sampling methods and population. It concludes by highlighting any research bias and the reliability of the data.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

While conducting research, it is important to give proper thought to the method to ensure that the findings are reliable Kumar (2018). It is the responsibility of the researcher to create a methodologically convincing story by providing a strong rationale for the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

This chapter will explain the processes taken to make sure the outcomes are reliable. Firstly, the methodological framework will be described. Secondly, convenience sampling and systematic sampling will be clarified and justified, as well as highlighting the advantages and limitations of both methods of sampling. Thirdly, the semi-structured interview process and selection of news media articles are explained. Following this, content analysis is described by highlighting the advantages and limitations. Lastly, research bias and the reliability of data are discussed to underline any concerns about the methodology.

3.2 Methodological Framework

This research is based on an interpretative paradigm. It is the most suitable for this qualitative research, as the research is focused on the experiences of participants. The

main goal of interpretive paradigm researchers is to explore how individuals make sense of their experiences (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). The interpretive paradigm is a dynamic process, with the researcher in control of how deeply they can access the participant's experiences. Through interpretation, the researcher can make sense of the world through the participants' lens (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). According to Smith (2015), the interpretive paradigm is often described as a two-fold process. Firstly, participants make meaning of their world and secondly, the research attempts to decode that meaning. This allows the researcher to not only understand experiences from the participants perspective, but to also ask critical questions such as "what is really being said here?", "what is trying to be achieved?" or "Do I, as a researcher, see something else that the participant is less aware of?" (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Through meaning making and asking these questions, the interpretive paradigm makes the analysis richer and more comprehensive.

3.3 Semi-structured Interviews

Before conducting interviews, the aim of the research must be made clear to the researcher and the participants. The research on applied theory was conducted prior to the interviews so the researcher had foundational academic knowledge about racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigmatisation, stereotyping and sense of belonging in New Zealand. This made it easier for the researcher to generate interview questions

that are specific to the topics. Thus, it permitted in depth dialogue between the interviewer and the participants.

According to Chenail (2011), qualitative research is often discovery oriented. Thus, the set of curated questions were open-ended, so it enabled interviewees to contribute their thoughts and perspectives with little to no limitations which is often imposed with close-ended questions. Open-ended questions tended to begin with who, what, when, where, how and why. From there, follow up questions were asked to develop a more in-depth response or for clarification as stated by Chenail (2011): “curiosity-driven qualitative researchers then tend to employ follow up questions based upon the responses offered by the interviewee and designed to discover more details about the respondents’ particular experience” (p.256). While semi-structured interviews are a common method of data collection, it still takes practice to lead an interview, write open-ended questions and transform them into close-ended questions, particularly with a sensitive topic.

Semi-structured interviews, also referred to as informal or conversational interviews, are ways to have a discussion that are self-conscious, orderly, and partially structured. In semi-structured interviews, a set of questions are formulated that all participants will be asked. The researcher was able to narrow down specific topics or areas their research focuses on. An entirely unstructured interview means a risk of not obtaining information on the desired topic. Semi-structured interviews allowed some focus on the research

topic and also gave participants room to share their own stories related to the topic or areas of research (Rabionet, 2011). From there, each interview had its own flow depending on the responses of the participants. It was important for the semi-structured interview to have a component of freedom and flexibility to generate genuine and unscripted discussion (Brounéus, 2011). The indicative interview questions needed to reflect different aspects and angles to answer the research question, it involves a process of focusing on a specific perception while simultaneously seeing the big picture of the topic (Brounéus, 2011).

In the semi-structured interviews, all participants were asked the same questions in the same order and the researcher put the participants' responses and experiences at the forefront of the research. Semi-structured interviews compared participants' responses by item, which in this case had to do with their experiences with racism, scapegoating and their identity in New Zealand. The data collected was comparable because participants were asked the same questions with some secondary questions that encouraged a deeper explanation or clarification of the participant's response which could not be obtained via other methods, such as participant observation or questionnaires/surveys (McIntosh & Morse, 2015).

Based on Rabionet's (2011) findings, the interview protocol played a significant role in an effective and purposeful interview. There were two main components: How the interviewer introduced herself to the interviewee and which questions she asked. The

first component was important in creating rapport before getting into the research topic. It helped create a comfortable environment for the interviewee which encouraged truthful and genuine responses. Components, such as confidentiality, consent, withdrawal from interview and use of data were also included in the protocol as a reminder in addition to the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form. It is important to note that all procedures leading up to, during and post interviews were approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee.

3.4 Convenience Sampling of Semi-structured Interviews

Verma et al. (2017), defined sampling as a process of selecting a representative part of a population. The sample is chosen based on a set of parameters of the population. The population itself is defined as a group of people who fit the given criteria to be able to participate in a study. The population is individuals who believe they have experienced racial discrimination, feel scapegoated, stigmatised, or stereotyped during the pandemic in Auckland, New Zealand. Following this, convenience sampling was deemed the most suitable form of sampling for the interviews.

The interviewees are chosen based on the convenience of the researcher. This follows the idea of “the right place at the right time” and thus, they are recruited to participate in the research (Acharya et al., 2013). There are many advantages of using convenience sampling. It is affordable and saves time as the researcher can generate more samples with little to no investment in a brief period. It does not require a checklist to filter out

certain individuals of the population which makes gathering information uncomplicated. The criteria for participant selection are broader which makes it easier to access potential interviewees. Other than self-identified experiences of racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigma and stereotyping during COVID-19, they were Auckland based and they were able to be on time for the interview. Beyond convenience sampling, Auckland was chosen as the location of the study based on several factors. After the scapegoating of the South Auckland family for Auckland's second lockdown and news media stories about individuals of Asian descent (see Chapter 2.7), the researcher believed ethnicity played a significant role in perceived racial discrimination, stimgatisation and scapegoating. According to the World Population Review, Auckland has the highest population in New Zealand with 1.5 million people. Auckland has a more evenly represented population compared to other cities around New Zealand. Statistics provided by Stats NZ and Census[2] 2018 show a more evenly distributed percentage of ethnicities in Auckland. The ethnicities recorded were European (53.5%), Māori (11.5%), Pacific peoples (15.5%), Asian (28.2%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (2.3%), and Other ethnicity (1.1%). This diversity suggests a range of cultural backgrounds and experiences, and therefore various perspectives and opinions may be collected in the interview stage.

Some disadvantages of convenience sampling include the "variability and bias [that] cannot be measured or controlled" (Acharya et al., 2013), and the findings cannot be

[2] Census is a government survey distributed to individuals in New Zealand. The aim is to capture a snapshot of who is living in and visiting New Zealand. The survey is distributed every five years.

generalised to the population. Convenience sampling is not a purposeful or strategic method of data collection (Etikan et al, 2015) as it is a process of recruiting participants who fit the broad criteria and who are easily accessible to the researcher. Since convenience sampling accepts participants who are available, it risks limited specificity and therefore recruiting more participants would increase the accuracy and reliability of the results (Malterud et al., 2015). The parameters for this study include Auckland based participants, 18 years of age or older, availability and participants' willingness to participate.

Based on the 'Working Together: Racial Discrimination in New Zealand' statistics report (2012), "one in ten people aged 15 or over reported experiencing some form of discrimination in the last 12 months. This equates to an estimated 343,000 New Zealanders." (p.3). However, as this research is examining experiences during the pandemic, the population might be narrowed down. In addition to the interviews, news media articles related to the research topic were also selected to support the interviews. These articles were selected using systematic sampling.

3.5 Systematic sampling of News Media Articles

Systematic sampling falls under probability sampling or random sampling. Probability sampling allows every single item, in this case, every article, to have an equal chance of being included in the sample (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

The news media articles sample was found on Newztext[3]. Newztext allows the researcher to set the parameters of the sample, ensuring the articles were New Zealand based, relevant to the topic and within the time frame set by the researcher. The key words used to find the sample were pandemic, COVID-19, experience, scapegoat*, blam*, racism, discrim*, stigma*. The asterisk symbol meant the words scapegoating, scapegoats and scapegoated would also be found in the search and so forth. The time frames for all articles were 12 August 2020-9 September 2020, 14 February 2021-14 March 2021, and 28 February 2021-21 March 2021. These dates are of all Level 3 lockdowns in Auckland.

It was decided to focus on level three lockdown because the first level three lockdown in August 2020 was due to a secondary outbreak of COVID-19 that originated from a Pasifika family living in South Auckland. This family received public backlash, becoming a scapegoat for Auckland's second lockdown. Based on this, the researcher wanted to investigate how news media articles reported the two different level three lockdowns in 2021.Each time frame is a month long and begins with the day the lockdown began. Even though these lockdowns were less than a month long, this parameter meant a larger population. After setting the parameters, the researcher began selecting the sample.

The researcher decided that within each period the top 100 articles would be reviewed to determine if the article was related to the research topic. There were 300 articles in

[3] Newztext is a New Zealand based database that provides access to New Zealand news media articles and other business publications.

total. From this population, 15 articles were selected to represent the sample. In terms of selecting the articles to include in the sample, they needed to cover the pandemic and racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigma, or stereotyping. Fifteen news media articles were selected to explore possible conclusions about the phenomenon. The aim was to find five different articles published during all three lockdown periods. The researcher took into consideration the time it would take to find suitable articles regarding the topic and the time it would require to analyse and code. Thus, fifteen articles was the decided sample size. And even though fifteen news media articles is a relatively small sample upon which to draw conclusions, it gave the researcher an opportunity to read, at a glance, about those who experienced the phenomenon. It is also recognised that with a small sample size it means there could be a larger sampling error. A sampling error occurs if only a sample is observed rather than a greater number of the population. It is acknowledged that the sample in this study is a miniscule glance at the experiences of racial discrimination, stigmatisation and scapegoating during COVID-19 in Auckland, New Zealand. It is also acknowledged that conclusions drawn from this sample size can vary from another sample of the same population, and thus any conclusions drawn cannot be generalised, so the conclusions only give an idea of some of the experiences of some people during COVID-19.

This sampling method was chosen for the news media articles due to its simplicity in execution and its use for a larger population. Although Newztext ensured that all articles were New Zealand based and allowed the researcher to set the search parameters,

Newztext does not have all news media outlets in their database and so many articles from other news media outlets would have been excluded from the population.

3.6 Research Bias

Due to the nature of convenience sampling, the results from this sampling method are often biased and cannot be applied beyond the sample. The researcher will not know how well the sample represents the population and “what makes convenience samples so unpredictable is their vulnerability to severe hidden biases” (Etikan et al, 2015, p.2). Although this was difficult to control, the researcher had to trust that the participants genuinely self-identified as someone who had experienced racism and scapegoating during Covid-19.

There are some challenges that come with in-depth semi-structured interviews. Chenail (2011) stated that the researcher can be a great contributor to bias and the trustworthiness of the data collected. The researcher must be prepared for the interview and the possible consequences. This might include reading the interviewee if they become uncomfortable with a topic or question. Poggenpoel & Myburgh (2003) suggested a potential reason for researcher bias can be because of one of three reasons:

> “(a) the researcher's mental and other discomfort could pose a threat to the truth value of data obtained and information obtained from data

> analyses; (b) the researcher not being sufficiently prepared to conduct the field research; and (c) the researcher conducting inappropriate interviews" (Chenail, 2011, p.419-420).

Thus, the researcher had to be in a stable mental state that allowed data to be collected objectively. The researcher was prepared to conduct field research with knowledge of how to build rapport, how to read the room, which questions to ask and in what order. Additionally, any affiliation the researcher may have with the population under study can introduce an extent of bias, as stated by Mehra (2002) in Chenail's (2011) research. The researcher's affiliation "may limit their curiosities so they only discover what they think they don't know, rather than opening up their inquiries to encompass also what they don't know they don't know" (Chenail, 2011, p. 257). Affiliation with the population could have possibly led to the researcher entering the interview with a closed mind. It was important for the researcher to be reminded that everyone's experiences with racism and scapegoating are different and not to enter the interview with an agenda.

Reflexivity as it relates to the research is also necessary to reduce bias in the data. Guillemin and Gillam (2004) suggest that reflexivity is "a helpful conceptual tool for understanding both the nature of ethics in qualitative research and how ethical practice in research can be achieved" (p.262-263). Reflexivity constructs interpretations. It

questions what the researcher knows, how they know and how their interpretations came about (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Bourdieu (as cited in Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) suggested that the reflexive process is to look at the research with an open mind. Firstly, the researcher needs to be objective towards the research subject. This means asking the question “How do I know?” followed by “What do I know?”. This was an ongoing active process that the researcher had to maintain. Harding (as cited in Guillemin & Gillam, 2004), suggested that the social and political locations, the questions asked and questions that we discarded all affected the research because in some way, it reveals who the researcher is. As stated by Guillemin and Gillam (2004): “our choice of research design, the research methodology, and the theoretical framework that informs our research are governed by our values and reciprocally, help to shape these values.” (p.274).

In addition, the way the researcher has chosen to present the research, the interpretation and analysis of data are integral to reflexive research. Thus, reflexivity is a process of critical reflection of knowledge produced and how an individual's knowledge is generated.

3.7 Reliability and Validity of Data

The reliability of the process and findings of the research requires the researcher to make sound decisions about the application of methods taken (Noble & Smith, 2015).

Guba and Lincoln (1991) propose that the trustworthiness of research consists of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is having confidence in the findings. Transferability is how applicable the findings are in other areas. Dependability is having results that can be replicated if the same method was used again. Lastly, confirmability is having removed researcher bias from influencing the results. Even though these are ways to measure the validity and reliability of the method and results, there are also critiques about the measurement of qualitative data.

One critique of qualitative research is the lack of scientific rigour, lack of transparency in the analysis stage and the results represent a collection based on the researcher's opinion which is also subject to research bias (Noble & Smith, 2015). Unlike the tests and measures used to establish reliability and validity in quantitative data, qualitative data cannot be measured in the same way (Noble & Smith, 2015). Denzin (2017) suggests two ways that qualitative data can be measured.

Denzin (2017) identified two ways to measure validity, internally and externally. Internal validity refers to how true the findings are to reality rather than being true due to extraneous variables. External validity addresses how applicable the findings are across the population.

3.8 Analysis of Interviews and News Media Articles

Both the interviews and news media articles were analysed using the same method. As they are both bodies of text, content analysis was used for both sets of data. The interviews were voice recorded, transcribed using both the researcher's note taking, and a transcribing software called Otter.ai, and then analysed using content analysis. The news media articles did not require any transcription and skipped this step of the analysis process.

Content analysis pays great attention to the qualitative aspects of the data. By transcribing the interviews, examining the patterns and codes in context become more manageable (Schuster & Weber, 1986). This allows the researcher to develop rich data (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). While analysing the transcription and through the news media articles, the researcher is looking for patterns, such as common or related categories and ideas mentioned throughout the text. Such patterns of content analysis can appear in two forms: manifested and latent. Manifested patterns are clear and obvious categories in the data, while latent patterns are categories that are implicitly referred to. Content analysis draws on both types of patterns, even if manifested categories are on the surface of the analysis, the aim of content analysis is to understand the latent meanings of manifested themes through interpretation. Burnard's (1991) process allows for an in-depth analysis.

Burnard's (1991) stages of analysis allows the researcher to be as thorough as possible. This process assumes that interviews have already been transcribed accurately and entirely. Firstly, note-taking is necessary right after each interview. These notes might include quotes or ideas that stood out to the researcher and are used as reminders for the researcher later in the analysis process. Secondly, the researcher should make notes while reading through the transcripts and the news media articles. The aim of this stage is to be immersed in the data and to become aware of the world via the interviewees' perspective and the author's understanding and intention of the article. Thirdly, the texts are read through as many times as possible until all content has been accounted for via notes highlighting codes and potential categories. Following this, the codes are sorted into categories and then the list of categories is worked through again by removing or renaming categories to produce the final list of categories. From here, the researcher has an organised set of data to begin writing up the results.

The interview recordings were first transcribed into text and sorted into a table for easier analysis. Column one was the question, column two was the interviewee response. This allowed the research to separate qualitative responses (stories or opinions) and quantitative answers (yes or no responses). During the analysis, the researcher looked for key words like those used to find the news media article sample (see Chapter 3.5), feelings expressed by the interviewees, personal encounters of racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating, and any codes related to racism during COVID-19 (see Appendix D). The codes were then classified into the overarching themes. For the

news media articles, a similar process was used but without the table. The researcher looked for keywords, stories, and meanings (see Appendix E) and placed them into overarching themes.

3.9 Summary

In conclusion, this chapter has explained the methods that were used to carry out the study. This was done by first explaining the methodological framework interpretive paradigm as the most appropriate method for this research. Secondly, the semi-structured interview process was then described in depth. This was accompanied along with the way the interview questions were generated. Then the type of news media articles were described. This was followed by the details of convenience sampling and systematic sampling, along with the advantages and limitations. Lastly, potential research bias was highlighted, and the reliability and validity of the data was discussed. With the methodology established, the following chapter will present the findings of the interviews and news media articles.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results to respond to the research question: How do experiences of self-perceived racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating during COVID-19 impact an individual's sense of belonging in New Zealand?

This chapter is split into two sections: the findings of the semi-structured interviews and the findings of the news media articles. The first section of this chapter details key information about the interviewees and presents the interview findings of each of the nine interview questions. This identifies the main categories found in the analysis and uses direct quotes to represent and explain each category, which reveals trending answers and anomalies. The second part of this chapter covers the findings of the news media articles that are relevant to the research topic. This section also identifies categories found in the analysis stage. All categories are presented via figures and tables. Lastly, the results of both the semi-structured interviews and news media articles will be summarised.

4.2 Overview of Interviews

Table 1

Information about the interviews and interviewees

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Interview Location	Interview Duration
Angela	20s	F	Korean	Public café	0:22:15
Sam	20s	F	Filipino	Public café	0:34:44
Fiona	20s	F	Cambodian/ Chinese	Auckland University of Technology	0:33:24
Chris	Under 20	M	Filipino	Public café	0:32:02
Stan	40s	M	Tongan	Interviewee's office	0:37:37
Casey	20s	M	Indian	Public café	1:03:27

This section provides information about the interviewees that may have influenced the responses. Their age, ethnicity and upbringing might shape their perspectives on the topic. While this research has had no intention of focusing on ethnicity or race exclusively, it was important to note the ethnicity of the interviewees to provide a better understanding of their perspectives and experiences. The ethnicities of the interviewees were disclosed by the interviewees themselves. This also provides some insight into the study before entering a more detailed discussion in the following chapter. By highlighting some interview information, it gives credibility to the participants for taking the time to be a part of this study. Table 1 presents the pseudonyms of each participant,

approximate age, gender, location of interview and the length of each interview. There were an equal number of female and male participants. Five out of six participants were in their twenties, one participant was in their forties. Two out of six participants were working professionals, while the other four were tertiary students. The shortest interview was 0:22:15 long and the longest interview was 1:03:27. Four interviews were held at a public café, one was held at the Auckland University of Technology City Campus, and another was held at the interviewee's office. All interviewees chose their desired location for their interview, so they were in a comfortable environment.

4.3 Overall Findings of Interviews

The overall findings of the interviews present the responses to the interview questions (See Appendix C). The interview questions were designed to focus on the concepts of racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigma, stereotyping and sense of belonging. The responses are examined in Chapter 4.3.1 to Chapter 4.4.

4.3.1 First Memories of Racist or Discriminatory Behaviour in New Zealand

Five out of six interviewees first experiences of racism were in their childhood to adolescent years. These experiences were not registered as 'racism' at the time, but the interviewees realised they were victims of racism as they got older. Angela expressed that she never experienced any racist encounters while growing up, and it was only until the pandemic that she felt a sense of discomfort. Growing up in Wellington, Angela never felt she was discriminated against because of her ethnicity. Similarly, Fiona talked

about realising she received “certain looks” if she was inside stores, even as a child, but she was unsure why and her parents did not address it because they were used to it. For Sam, it was at her first job in New Zealand at age 15. A man walked into a kebab shop where Sam worked and casually asked where she was from. She responded, to which the man replied “they let anybody in nowadays”. To Sam, it seemed like harmless banter which is why she was not offended straight away. She explained how she still does not know how to respond to people who are racist and say something that is like that to her. She would “rather avoid it so I just let them say it to me”.

Stan's first experience with racism was at the age of eight where older teenagers said derogatory things to them and wrote KKK[4] in the playground, but he never knew it was racism. As they all got older, they never talked about it, but the racist behaviour stopped. Stan believed this was the case because he and his friends grew taller and bigger.

> *We just became adults and for Island kids, they grow [up] really fast and big, and I think that probably played a big part in the presence we had. — Stan*

[4] KKK also known as the Ku Klux Klan, is a white supremist hate group founded in 1865 that aims to maintain Protestant cultural and political power.

4.3.2 Feeling Stereotyped in New Zealand

Four out of six interviewees felt they were stereotyped in New Zealand, while Angela and Chris felt somewhat stereotyped. For Angela, this was because she did not feel like she experienced much racism in her childhood and therefore she only felt somewhat stereotyped in New Zealand. Chris expressed he felt more stereotyped for other reasons, such as sexual orientation rather than ethnicity or race. He mentioned he had talked to his friends about stereotyping before, and he explained how some of his friends did not feel stereotyped at all in New Zealand because they were constantly surrounded by people of the same ethnicity or race.

Some stereotypes were Filipinos studying nursing, being smart as an Asian, not being a good driver as an Asian, being asked to say a prayer as a Polynesian, and being good at speaking English for an Asian. One of Angela's experiences involved being stereotyped as 'smart'. However, in the context that she was in, there was no exam or tests to measure "smartness" and so she wondered how people knew if she was smart or not. She also felt that because others thought she was smart, she needed to be smart.

> *It puts expectations on you and how you should behave or what your characteristics should be like, it puts pressure on you, people have a view of you already and we fall into it. — Angela*

Sam, who is Filipiino, expressed how she felt upset if she gets mistaken for Pacific Islander or Māori because of her features. She felt like she “needs to prove them wrong”, so that Pacific Islanders and Māori are not stereotyped. Once she revealed she was Filipino, only then did her intelligence make sense.

> *Some people are surprised that I have a tertiary education. When they find out I’m Filipino, only then does my ability make sense. — Sam*

Similarly, Fiona identified the stereotype “Asians are bad drivers”. She needed to prove the stereotype wrong by being a good driver.

4.3.3 Witnessing Racial Discrimination

Four out of six interviewees had witnessed racial discrimination happening to someone else. Angela’s story was about an incident that happened on a public bus. Two Chinese women were speaking Chinese and a man told them that if they were speaking Chinese, they should go back to their country. Fiona’s experiences were mostly at work where customers purposely avoid employees of colour and ask for a white employee.

> *I’ll ask them if they need help. They won't reply to you. And they’ll walk straight for [a] white lady in the store. Yeah that actually happens. It's crazy. And they think that we [other employees] don’t notice. — Fiona*

In Fiona's experience, she felt like there was not much she could do about the racist behaviours at work because she was working on a commission basis and required customers to make sales.

> *You can't really complain, everyone higher up is white, I don't think they'll do anything, and you almost can't even prove it, like you can't go to camera footage and say 'look at that glance', there's nothing you can really do, the whole customer is always right? If they want to be served by a different person, they can do that. We work off commission, everyone has to reach a target. If you don't meet a certain percentage, you do get warnings and stuff. So, you know, a customer is a customer. — Fiona*

In Stan's experience, he was at sports games with his kids, and he heard another parent say, "Look at all these fobs". The term 'fob' is slang for 'fresh off the boat' which was first used to describe Asians who are not yet acculturated in Western countries. In New Zealand, it is a derogatory term used to describe individuals who just moved to New Zealand. Stan felt like maybe individuals were comfortable making such comments in an area where there were more Pākehā[5]. Casey shared an alternative story of racial discrimination. Some of his female Asian friends were seen as docile, particularly if a male attempted to make advances.

[5] Pākehā is a Te Reo Māori term for New Zealanders, primarily of European descent.

4.3.4 Harassment during COVID-19

Sam said she felt angry and frustrated that one demographic had been blamed for the pandemic. She felt that even though the Asian community was not perfect, the community had been careful during COVID-19, and yet the Asian community was still being attacked.

> *I feel like it's just so unfair that we're working so hard for everyone's benefit, but people still think that we're to blame, and honestly sometimes it makes me scared. I'm so lucky that I don't look like your stereotypical Asian because I feel like if we were in like America or something where there's like an increase in attacks on so many Asians, I feel like I'm at a lower risk. — Sam*

Chris also expressed that his whole family had a lot of frustration built up because they were always mistaken for Chinese which was “where the hate was going”. Stan felt bad because the blame placed on groups was all over the media.

> *As someone who is Pacific Islander, that second lockdown and the blame just wasn't it. It made me feel like “that's typical”. What makes it worse is that's where it's so prevalent in the New Zealand Herald[6]. It gave me a bad feeling like how we are still living in this racist era. — Stan*

[6] The New Zealand Herald is a New Zealand based daily newspaper and news media outlet. It was first founded in 1863.

He continued to say that this was because of fear and individuals needed a way to make sense of the situation by blaming someone for it. People were also upset because lockdowns, social distancing and wearing face masks were a disruption to everyone's lives so frustration built up. Additionally, the media dictated who was to blame for all these inconveniences.

> *It's fear and a way to look for an escape — it's like a knee jerk reaction, you hit a certain pressure point and people panic. — Stan*

> *People are frustrated so they need a punching bag, and the media plays a role in who to blame. — Casey*

On the other hand, Sam said cases of harassment and blame were because of the lack of responsibility that communities have, since blaming someone else for a problem is always easier.

> *People don't take responsibility. It's always easier to blame other people than to admit that you're also in the wrong. — Sam*

Fiona felt that some people acted like they were entitled to discriminate or act in a racist manner whether it was intentional or out of ignorance.

They don’t think it's racist. They think they're just taking care of themselves and trying to keep themselves safe. But whereas they've completely aimed it at a specific group, even if a person who fits in that minority hasn't even been to that country.” — Fiona

4.3.5 Feeling Scapegoated during COVID-19 in New Zealand

Three out of six interviewees have felt scapegoated or marginalised during COVID-19. The way the participants have been treated by other people have made them feel as if they were to blame for the spread of COVID-19. Angela recalled an encounter she had early 2020 when the pandemic first became known in New Zealand. A group of people were walking past her on the street because they “were very noticeably staring and whispering”, said Angela.

Angela mentioned coughing while taking the bus and having people look at her. At the time, she had little to no knowledge about COVID-19 and it had not spread in New Zealand yet, which was why these experiences made her wonder “is there something different about me?”.

In Chris’ case, a man yelled “You Chinese?” as he was crossing the road. Sam’s experience was while she was on holiday with her friends in Tauranga. As they walked through several restaurants, a table of older white men coughed at the group of friends who were all Asian descent. Since Sam did not want to confront them, her partner who

was with her wanted to go back and talk to them. However, Sam did not want to confront them in case of further harassment.

> *They didn't do anything — they didn't attack us or anything. They were just making a remark. But also, I wish we didn't have to just be okay with things like that. I wish we could say things to them without fearing for our life. — Sam*

4.3.6 COVID-19 Impacting Sense of Belonging in New Zealand

Two out of six interviewees said they felt like COVID-19 had impacted their sense of belonging in New Zealand. For Angela, COVID-19 has been a reminder that she will always be seen as a foreigner in a place she was born and raised, and New Zealand sometimes did not feel like home.

> *COVID has reminded me that I am always seen as a foreigner even though I was brought up here and I tried so hard to be a Kiwi. — Angela*

This also brought back memories of her youth since she had tried not to be “too Asian”. “Too Asian” implied being Asian is a negative thing, or certain traits or behaviours attached to being Asian that are viewed as less than ideal. For Stan, he felt his sense of belonging was always affected not only by COVID-19 but because of his ethnicity.

It has happened to me since I was a child. And I'm seeing it again in my adulthood. It's like an unfortunate part of New Zealand that I've kind of accepted. That's like an ugly part of being a Kiwi[7] that I've accepted. -- Stan

Similarly, Sam expressed that she has felt very isolated and was unsure if she felt she belonged in New Zealand to begin with. In contrast, Casey felt like New Zealand has become his home and has embraced the culture. Fiona stated that she did not feel like COVID-19 had affected her sense of belonging in New Zealand because she knows she was born and raised here, and therefore New Zealand is her home.

4.3.7 Contributors to COVID-19 Scapegoating

Five out of six interviews identified the media as a key contributor to scapegoating. Other identified contributors included the people that individuals were surrounded by in terms of the environment where the individuals lived, the lack of knowledge about the virus and people's frustrations about new restrictions, such as wearing a mask, social distancing, and lockdowns. Sam explained how there was always an agenda in the news and there was so much information, but individuals need to make the effort to go out and find out more about the pandemic for themselves as well.

[7] A Kiwi is a colloquial term in the language referring to a New Zealander.

I think it's a lot to do with the media and what they are releasing. There's always some kind of agenda to kind of steer people to believe a certain thing or like to negatively view a certain group. There's so much information that the media are spitting out, but people are not looking for information themselves. I think that lack of it is kind of affecting how people are viewing it. — Sam

Both Sam and Fiona highlighted that global news about the pandemic was another reason to explain why some people or groups are specifically targeted.

Trump [former US president] and his speeches didn't help, and it spread in New Zealand too and people listened. — Fiona

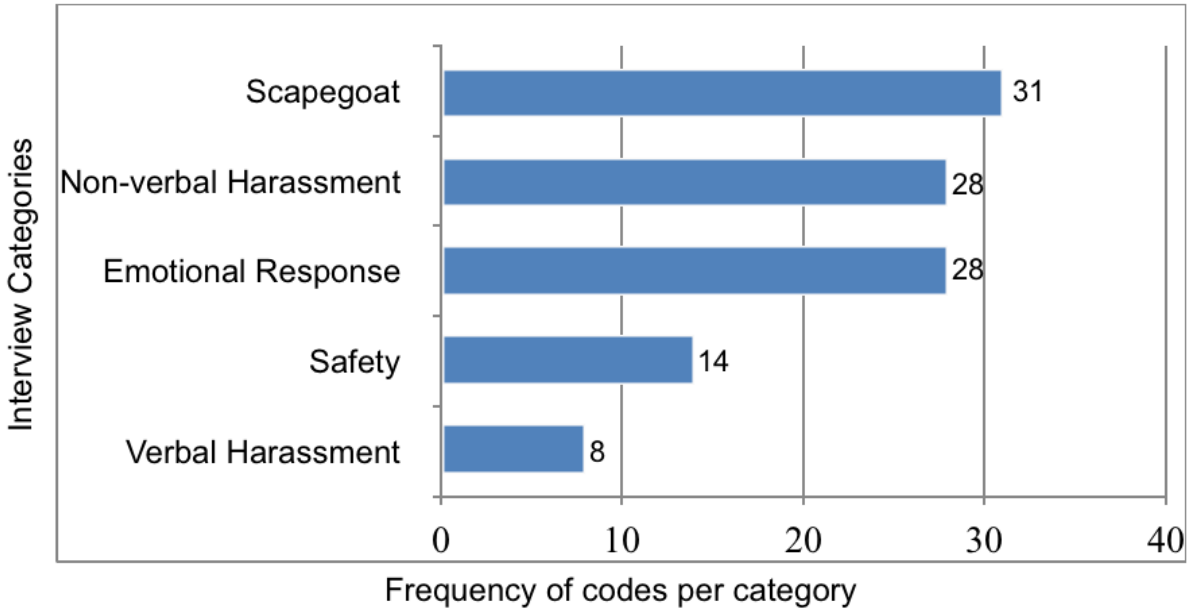
4.3.8 Other Thoughts and Experiences

Sam expressed how it pained her to be so accepting of other people's actions and behaviours towards Asian New Zealanders. She emphasised that while she was able to stand up for herself by saying "that's not very nice" in response to racist comments, her fear still outweighed her desire to stand up for herself. Even so she usually just accepted it and remained idle in racist situations. Fiona highlighted that racism is not always explicit, which is why it can be difficult to prove. It often came in forms of a person's tone of voice or the way they looked at her.

4.4 Interview Categories

Figure 1

Frequency of Categories in Interviews



The responses from the interview questions were coded and then sorted into five categories (See Appendix B for codes). These categories are emotional response, nonverbal harassment, verbal harassment, scapegoat, and safety.

Scapegoat was referenced the most throughout the interviews (31). It is composed of discussions around scapegoating through stereotyping. These discussions also include discussions of how appearance and facial features of Asian descent have impacted their experiences and perspectives of scapegoating.

I don't [feel scapegoated] and it goes back to the fact that I don't look like your stereotypical Asian person. — Sam

Blame also included how interviewees feel which relates to the Emotional Response category. For example, "people are frustrated so they need a punching bag", said Casey.

Non-verbal harassment was referenced 28 times. This category included discussion of behaviours, or actions that made the interviewees feel they were a victim of racial discrimination, stigmatisation, or scapegoating. Non-verbal harassment included staring, gestures, body language and tone. Five out of six interviewees referenced experiencing this type of behaviour. The behaviours, and actions of perpetrators might have been either explicit or implicit. For example, Sam experienced a group of people coughing at her, which is explicit. Fiona felt victimised because of someone's tone or look directed at her.

Even if people aren't doing anything explicit, you can feel people being racist just by the way they look at you or the tone they use. — Fiona

Emotional response was mentioned 28 times. An emotional response is clarified as any emotive language used to describe the interviewee's experiences, such as anger or

fear. Comments and stories that began with “I feel” or “I felt” were also deemed as an emotional response.

> *I tried to stay away from people, so they didn’t think I had COVID so obviously I’m going to feel more isolated than usual. — Chris*

> *Pains me to be so accepting of like to have to be so accepting of people's actions and behaviours towards us. -- Sam*

> *I felt offended and retaliated by swearing. -- Stan*

Safety was referenced 14 times. This category revolves around how safe or how threatened the interviewees felt during their experiences of racial discrimination or interpersonal racism. Three of six interviews mentioned their safety around standing up for themselves if they were experiencing racial discrimination.

> *My family just stays out of it because they do not want to make people angrier. — Chris*

Two of these interviewees were female. For Sam, there are other possible threats to think about. They talked about their increased fear of confronting cases of racial discrimination, particularly if the perpetrator was male.

Lastly, verbal harassment was mentioned eight times. Verbal harassment included any vocal attacks or spoken words that made the interviewee feel victimised. Three out of six interviewees experienced verbal harassment since the pandemic in New Zealand.

> *A man was on a motorbike, and I was crossing the road, and he yelled:*
>
> *"You Chinese?"*

4.5 Overview of News Media Articles

The news media articles chosen for this research are articles published by New Zealand based media outlets and newspapers. The articles varied from opinion pieces to statistical reports, to reports of experiences of racial discrimination. These articles relate to the pandemic as the published date of all articles was from the first day of each Auckland lockdown (see Chapter 3.5 for specific dates).

The results of the news media articles are used to support and explain the findings of the interviews. The news media articles were selected using systematic sampling based on their relevance to racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating during COVID-19. All articles selected were published four weeks from the beginning of all three Level 3 Lockdowns in Auckland, New Zealand. All articles were selected from the top 100 articles within the time frame the article was released and were found using the same keywords that were used to find the relevant articles (see Chapter 3.5).

Table 2

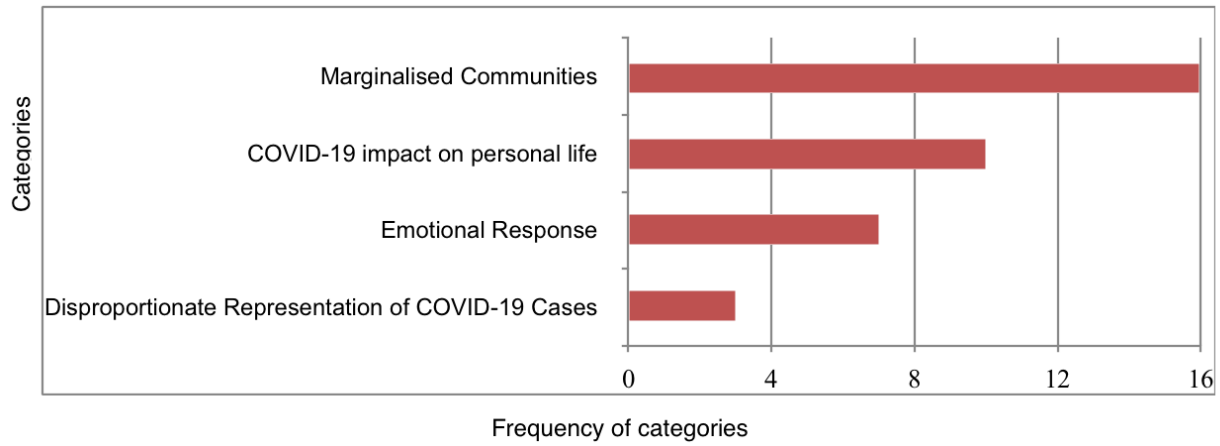
Title, date of publication and media outlet of news article collected during the research stage

Article Title	Published Date	Media Outlet
1. Coronavirus: Quarantine policy shift is 'racist', say critics	15 August 2020	Stuff
2. Rebuked for calling COVID-19 Chinese virus	17 August 2020	The Dominion Post
3. Covid-19: Pacific Health Leader Warns Of Potential For 'Wildfire' Spread In Pacific Community	18 August 2020	Scoop
4. Vitriol harms Pasifika as much as Covid	18 August 2020	The Northern Advocate
5. Racism, privilege and Covid	25 August 2020	The New Zealand Herald
6. Meng Foon: Racist stereotypes on the rise in the age of Covid-19	2 September 2020	Radio New Zealand Newswire

7. Covid-19 coronavirus: Stigma fears for asthma, allergy sufferers	26 January 2021	The New Zealand Herald
8. Covid-19: Maori, Chinese communities report most discrimination during pandemic	17 February 2021	Stuff
9. Covid-19 heightens racism against Maori, Chinese - research	17 February 2021	Radio New Zealand Newswire
10. Covid pandemic has highlighted how discrimination and poverty persist in NZ	22 February 2021	Stuff
11. Covid-19: Let's stop this lockdown blame game, finger- wagging won't get you anywhere	2 March 2021	Stuff
12. Covid-10: Papatoetoe community speaks out against 'regional profiling'	3 March 2021	Stuff
13. Structural racism produces Covid-19 hesitancy	4 March 2021	Stuff
14. Covid-19 coronavirus: Woman challenges anti-Chinese gesture in Mission Bay	26 March 2021	The New Zealand Herald
15. Rally protests against anti-Asian violence, abuse in US and NZ	27 March 2021	Radio New Zealand Newswire

Figure 2

Frequency of Categories in News Media Articles



Marginalised communities were referenced 16 times. Sevelius et al. (2020), defined marginalised communities as groups that are excluded from mainstream social, economic, education or cultural life. For example, groups can be excluded based on race, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language and so on, and there are often unequal power relationships between social groups (Sevelius et al., 2020).

In this study, marginalised communities are defined as groups of people who have been inaccurately represented whether it be in the number of COVID-19 cases, the way they are presented in by the media or how members of said communities view themselves. These communities are classified as marginalised because they have received negative repercussions since the emergence of COVID-19. For example, policy changes and regulations on self-isolating and statistics on COVID-19 testing have led the Pacific community to be singled out as the problem.

Blaming “south Auckland" for the latest Covid outbreak is not so much a “dog whistle” as a public announcement. — Article 11: Covid-19: Let’s stop this lockdown blame game, finger- wagging won’t get you anywhere

Medical racism also exists in New Zealand. Many Māori and Pacific people experience the existing public health system as hostile and alienating. — Article 13: Structural racism produces Covid-19 hesitancy

Dr Rawiri Taonui, an independent researcher, said it was mainly Pākehā returning from overseas who carried the virus in the first wave of infection “They didn't get locked down in quarantine,” Taonui said. “This has impacted Māori and Pacific people more and all of a sudden we’re expected to quarantine. They don’t trust us. It hints at racism.” Article 1 -- Coronavirus: Quarantine policy shift is ‘racist’, says critics

The impact of COVID-19 on personal lives was mentioned 10 times. This category identifies struggles or issues that COVID-19 has introduced to an individual's daily life or has elevated existing issues since the pandemic began in New Zealand. This includes, yet is not limited to, impacts on schooling, mental health and financial management.

> *Suffering from mental health issues, struggling to make ends meet, or living in a two-bedroom apartment with 10 people. — Article 12: Covid-10: Papatoetoe community speaks out against 'regional profiling'*

The emotional response category for news media articles was mentioned seven times. This category includes emotive language found in the articles that suggest feelings about racial discrimination, scapegoating or stigma.

> *First of all, I had a sick, visceral feeling in the pit of my stomach. It's that feeling when you know something is wrong and so absolutely effed up it makes you sick. The second feeling was anger – that feeling when you read something, and you know how much this will affect [the] people you love and you want to fight the world with all your strength and all your swear words combined. The third feeling was the academic one. The one where all the statistics and research and big words flew into my head and made me want to write a paper about racial hierarchies in our society and the effects of humanising white men while being okay with the dehumanising of brown women. -- Article 5: Racism, Privilege and Covid*

Disproportionate representation of ethnicity in COVID-19 cases and testing were mentioned three times. This category is compiled of articles that reported on an imbalance or inaccurate representation of ethnicity in COVID-19 statistics. From the

disproportionate representation of ethnicity to the COVID-19 vaccine, it was reported that this issue stemmed from structural racism.

> *The outbreak was made up of mainly New Zealand-European people, between the ages of 30 and 50, who were returning to New Zealand from other countries. However, the current Auckland cluster is 69 percent Pasifika, 16 percent Māori and 14 percent other. -- Article 3: 3. Covid-19: Pacific Health Leader Warns of Potential For 'Wildfire' Spread in Pacific Community*

> *“If we get the picture that 70 percent of all cases in the new cluster is Pacific, and they say ... the Pacific testing is only 10 percent of the total testing, then we can say ‘That’s not good enough’. -- Article 4: Vitriol harms Pasifika as much as Covid*

4.6 Summary

Having discussed the interviewees’ answers about racial discrimination, stigmatisation and scapegoating, as well as news media articles of the same topic, this last section will summarise the most frequent answers. When the interviewees were asked about their first experience of racial discrimination, stigmatisation, or scapegoating, many recounted childhood memories. The majority only realised it was racism as they got older. Even as adults, some were still unsure about how to address encounters of

racism, particularly if they were subtle non-verbal forms of harassment. One of the main contributors of racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating that the interviewees named was the media, both local to New Zealand and the United States of America, although the researcher only analysed New Zealand media content. Most of the interviewees felt that their sense of belonging had been impacted since the pandemic. Additionally, it was found in the news media articles that COVID-19 had further impacted individual's personal lives. Both the interviews and news media articles have brought different perspectives to explore racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating. The next chapter will explain these results in greater detail, drawing on possible conclusions, trends, and insights in the data, allowing the researcher to answer the research question.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the combined findings of the in-depth interviews and news media article analysis to answer the research questions underlying this study. The results were combined to explore and share stories of racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating during COVID-19 in Auckland, New Zealand, and will answer the research question: “How do experiences of self-perceived racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating during COVID-19 impact an individual’s sense of belonging in New Zealand?”

This chapter discusses the responses to each interview question in depth. These questions have been organised into four main topics: experiences of racial discrimination, stereotyping, stigma, and scapegoating. Each of these topics is discussed in relation to a sense of belonging. Each topic is also supported by the findings of the news media articles. Throughout this process, the research question will be consistently referred to and ultimately, the research question will be answered using the discussed findings.

5.2 Experiences of Racial Discrimination

Discrimination on its own is to single out a person from a larger group based on certain criteria (Heckman, 1998). The interviewees were regarded as social minorities in New Zealand (See Table 1 in Chapter 4.2). Stats NZ (2018) revealed six major ethnic groups identified in the 2018 New Zealand Census: European (70.2%), Maori (16.5%), Asian (15.2%), Pacific peoples (8.1%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (1.5%) and Other (1.2%). As all the interviews involved either Asian or Pacific peoples, they have been classified as social minorities in this study. Most of the interviewees had talked about their first experiences of racial discrimination as encounters they did not initially identify as racist. Even as adults there were times they questioned the motive for some comments, looks and tones of others if they were being addressed. Sometimes if individuals are unable to clearly identify if what they just experienced was racist or not, it can be classified as subtle or casual racism (Liao et al., 2016). The form of racism raises eyebrows and also makes the victim ask the question “was that racist?”. A modern form of subtle racism is cool, distant, and indirect (Liao et al., 2016). This might reveal itself in poor customer service or racial profiling. Although blatant forms of racism have declined over the years, “subtle and attributed ambiguous forms of racism may still persist” (Pettigrew, 1998, p.239). There are two reasons why subtle racism is challenging to the perceiver: 1), it is difficult to discern and 2), the actions of subtle racism can be justified by causes other than racism (Crandall and Eshleman, 2003). It can be almost impossible to prove whether a look or tone of voice that someone has received is racist, despite how the victim may feel. Even then, such behaviours can be

explained by blaming the victim for overreacting. This behaviour can be labelled as microaggressions.

Examples of microaggressions as experienced by the participants include being told “your English is so good” or being asked “where are you from?”. While it may have appeared as harmless conversation, some of the most impactful forms of microaggressions are usually delivered by individuals with harmless intentions towards a socially devalued group (Sue, 2010). Such behaviours are active manifestations and a direct reflection of a worldview that considers and judges inferiority/superiority and normality/abnormality.

In countries where there is one dominant culture or group of individuals, world views such as values, beliefs, customs, and traditions often stem from such cultures. In New Zealand where the dominant group is Pākehā, this group has more power than other groups if it comes to what is perceived as normal or socially acceptable. It is true while deciding if someone is “a real Kiwi”. The comment Sam received: “they let anybody in nowadays”, is a way to ‘other’ the non-dominant. It implies that only someone who is considered a “real Kiwi” should be allowed into the country. This brings up the question, what is a real Kiwi? It suggests that someone of Asian descent is not viewed as a Kiwi despite having citizenship and implies that Sam does not belong in New Zealand. Research by O’Keefe et al. (2014), focused on the impact of racial microaggressions on mental health based in the United States of America. O’Keefe et al. (2014), highlighted

specific forms of microaggressions, one is an assumption that a person of colour is a foreigner or alien in their own land and not a “true” American. This can also be said for a Kiwi. By asking where Sam was from, it was a way of questioning and invalidating how ‘Kiwi’ she was.

Sue (2008) detailed the perspective of minorities and victims of perceived racial discrimination. According to Merino and Tileagă (2010), ethnic minorities are treated “as something that does not just appear or simply pre-exist contexts of use, but something that is creatively, flexibly, and contextually constituted, and which makes sense as part of interactional structure” (p.87). Sue (2007) found several reasons why some minorities perceive Caucasians as:

> “(a) racially insensitive, (b) unwilling to share their position and wealth, (c) believing they are superior, (d) needing to control everything, and (e) treating them poorly because of their race. People of colour believe these attributes are reenacted every day in their interpersonal interactions with Whites, oftentimes in the form of microaggressions" (p.299).

Stan’s first experience of racism was more overt than Angela’s and Sam’s. Stan’s experience included direct derogatory comments via written text. He recalled teenagers harassing him and his friends at the age of eight at the playground. Whether or not the behaviour of the teenagers was intentional or not, it was learnt somewhere. Slabbert

(2002) found that “racial attitudes of preschoolers are neutral at an early age (36-54 months), a definite bias develops rapidly among older children (55-72 months)” (p.162). Based on these findings, it could be assumed that factors, such as education and perspectives of parents play a role in how their children view others who are different from them, thus racial discrimination is taught and can also be unlearned. The infamous Bobo doll study was first conducted by Albert Bandura in 1961. The study consisted of 24 preschool children assigned to three conditions. Group one observed adult models playing aggressively with a plastic blow up doll. The second was observing non-aggressive adults playing with the doll. The third group was a control group that observed the doll with no adult models. In groups one and two, half the children observed adults of the same sex and the other half of the opposite sex. The children were then invited to play with the doll. The results of this study revealed that the children exposed to aggressive behaviour resembled levels of aggression like the observed model, and their aggression scores were significantly higher than the control group. While this experiment was to find out how aggression is learned, it highlights how easy it is for children to mimic the behaviour of adults. Without reinforcements to the children, observational learning can occur. The same can happen with children learning racist or discriminatory behaviour from parents or teachers. Without anyone telling them not to do that, it becomes learned behavior. It could be said that if the teenagers in Stan’s experience were not exposed to such behaviours, Stan might not have experienced this encounter as a child.

5.3 Witnessing Racial Discrimination

There are a few things that are considered if confronted with situations that require fair judgements of the witness to decide whether they need to interfere. Although xenophobia was not explicitly named by the interviewees, some experiences and news media articles revealed xenophobic behaviours, and forms of othering. Hjerm (2001) defined xenophobia as “a negative attitude towards, or fear of, individuals or groups of individuals who are in some sense different (real or imagined) from oneself, or the group(s) one belongs to” (p.43). Bordeau (2010) explained that it is the belief that there are certain people who are outsiders and do not belong in a community or nation and it could be attributed to several factors, such as economic distress, increased nationalism, and immigration related policies. During the pandemic, all three factors might have been triggered as COVID-19 put a strain on New Zealand’s economy. New Zealand’s collectivism may have increased as the “team of five million” rhetoric was used as encouragement for the entire population of New Zealand during the first lockdown and border restrictions were put in place as the virus began to spread globally. These changes during the pandemic might have influenced xenophobic behaviours in New Zealand. Xenophobic behaviours during the pandemic were found in Article 2: Rebuked for calling COVID-19 Chinese virus, where the West Coast regional Councilman, Allan Birchfield, called the virus ‘Chinese virus’ and justified this by saying “I'm taking a bit of a different attitude to this Chinese virus.” and for anyone who was offended by this to “stop being so bloody precious". Reny and Barreto (2020) suggested that elite rhetoric of influential icons such as Donald Trump calling the virus the “Chinese virus” or “Kung

Flu” played a role in creating anti-Asian attitudes. Although Reny and Barreto’s (2020) research was based in the United States of America, some interviewees named international media and Donald Trump as specific factors to experiences of racial discrimination in New Zealand.

Angela witnessed a man telling two older women who were speaking Chinese on the bus to “go back to your country”. This goes back to the concept of othering a person or group of people. Canales (2000) explained two forms of othering: inclusion and exclusion. Inclusion is to “use power within relationships for transformation and coalition building” (Canales, 2000, p.19) and exclusion as the use of “power within relationships for domination and subordination” (Canales, 2000, p.19). Exclusionary othering often means “alienation, marginalization, decreased opportunities, internalized oppression, and exclusion” (Canales, 2000, p.19), all of which plays a role in an individual’s identity. Hall (1996) argued that identity construction is ever changing and an individual's “sense of belonging to a community is fundamental to one’s identification” (Udah & Singh, 2019). To have a sense of belonging in a community is to feel safe and at home. This is a combination of “familiarity, identification, emotional attachment, recognition and a sense of security” (Yuval-Davis, 2006), that is constituted via boundaries, essentially it is about inclusion and exclusion. And so, if someone says to “go back to your country”, it sets exclusive boundaries and inherently removes feelings of safety and being at home.

Such behaviours might stem from ideas of yellow peril. Merriam-Webster's definition of yellow peril is "a danger to Western civilization held to arise from expansion of the power and influence of eastern Asian peoples" (2019). However, Okihiro (1994) said "the idea of the yellow peril does not derive solely from the alleged threat posed by the yellow race to the white race and their 'holiest possessions'—civilization and Christianity—but from non-White people, as a collective group, and their contestation of white supremacy'' (p. 120). In this concept, Asian people and their culture are viewed as a threat to the economic, social, and political realms in the West. It projects the fear of Asians eventually taking over a nation (Li & Nicholson, 2021). This concept is externalised by Asians through assimilation to minimise the yellow peril effect.

In Fiona's workplace, she is one of many Asian women who work there, and if a customer who walks in, ignores Fiona as Fiona asks if the customer needs any assistance, it becomes apparent that the customer has made a quick judgment based on Fiona's appearance. It then solidifies Fiona's assumption that the customer has chosen to ignore her based on her race if the customer asks a white employee for assistance. From Fiona's perspective, she felt that she was unable to complain to her manager because she felt that nothing would be done as everyone who is in a higher position, is Caucasian, and even if they did believe her, she felt like she was unable to prove anything because the customer did not verbally abuse or attack her. This perpetuated a continuous cycle of subtle racist behaviour that is not easy to change because it is either unidentifiable, there is more at stake like a job, or the victim is not

believed. It also highlights the hierarchy in the workplace and shows the effects of whoever is in power trickles down to employees.

Even at a kids' sports game, Stan recalled his experience with a parent calling Pacific Islanders "fobs". The term 'fob' is slang for 'fresh off the boat'. It is often expressed to describe an immigrant who has not yet grasped the customs, language, or culture of the country they have immigrated to (Abad-Santos, 2014). The term is often derogatory it depends on who is saying it. For example, 'fob' is often used by Asians to describe other non-acculturated Asians. However, Stan heard a Pākehā woman use this term, and he was immediately offended. While the term 'fob' is not an explicit insult and does infer any racist notions, it's the tone and insinuation that creates a racist undertone. Guess (2006) described this as racism by consequence. This concept operates at the macro level of society, which includes institutions and hierarchies that represent historical evolution. "It constitutes a gradual shift away from a conscious, almost personalized conviction of the inferiority of an othered race" (Guess, 2006, p.651). This conviction can present itself in attitudes of prejudice and discriminatory behaviours, which is why the use of 'fob' was received as an insult carrying racist connotations.

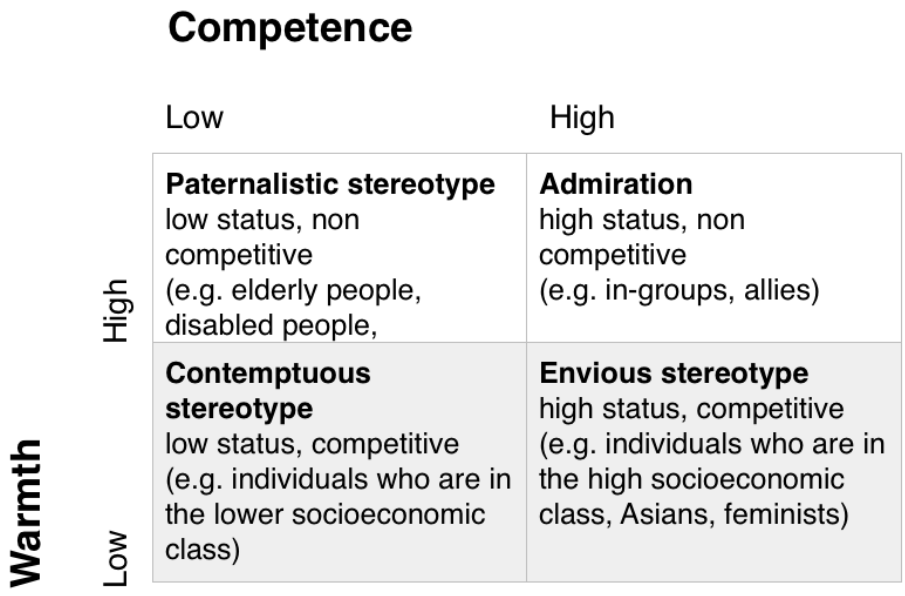
5.4 Stereotyping in New Zealand

The most telling was that all interviewees felt stereotyped in New Zealand to a certain extent. Fisk et al.'s (1999), work on the Stereotype Content Model argued that

stereotypes of almost all social groups are generalised beliefs that vary to the degree of two dimensions: warmth and competence. The warmth dimension asks questions such as, are members of this group my friend or foe? Do they have positive or negative intentions towards my group? It looks at how trustworthy or sociable someone is. The competence dimension asks if this group can act on its intentions (either positive or negative) towards my group? Are they capable? In total, there are four combinations of warmth and competence —high warmth and low competence, high warmth and high competence, low warmth and low competence, and low warmth and high competence. These combinations include different ethnic groups, social context, national history, and immigration circumstances (Fiske, 2018).

Figure 3

Model of Warmth and Competence



Angela's experience of having been called "smart" even though there was no measurement of intelligence at the time is an example of low warmth and high competence. As Angela was stereotyped, she was viewed as highly competent, studious, high achieving, often leaving Asians to be perceived as having low warmth (Lin et al., 2005). The representation of Asians as highly competent leaves little room for corresponding levels of sociability (Lin et al, 2005). The "model minority" image reinforces stereotypes of Asians lacking in interpersonal skills. Low levels of sociability associated with Asians reflects the derogation of Asians as an out-group (Jost & Major, 2001). Asians as an out-group makes them a potential racial target of prejudice and more vulnerable to othering. Other stereotypes identified in the interviews that also fall under the low warmth, high competence combination could be 'Filipinos taking nursing courses at university', which was identified by Chris and Sam as two Filipinos. Stereotypes create expectations of certain groups, whether it is the way one acts or the characteristics others believe they should have. This is because society establishes the means of categorising people (Goffman, 1963). It generates an ideal image of an individual and the way they should be and often, individuals fall into that expectation. Aronson (2002) explained this process in a classroom setting. A teacher develops an expectation about a student based on prior information. This might be ethnicity, social class, or a test score. The teacher develops an unconscious bias and inadvertently acts on these expectations. The example Aronson (2002) used is the image of African Americans as intellectually inferior. A teacher may unconsciously assume an African American student has little potential. The interactions between the teacher and student

reflect that expectation. This might come in the form of calling on the student less often or assigning easier homework, and in turn, the student responds to this treatment by not learning as much. Even though being smart is a positive trait, since Angela was put into the “smart” box, it limited her from being herself.

On the other hand, Sam and Fiona’s encounters with stereotypes led them to consciously act to disprove those stereotypes. Sam identified the stereotype “Islanders and Māori are not likely to get a tertiary education” because she is often mistaken for Pacific Islander and Māori because of her facial features, and thus she sometimes received notions of racism targeted towards Polynesians. Typically, individuals are unaware that such generalisations or assumptions have been made about someone until a question arises to either disprove or confirm these generalisations, and assumptions (Goffman, 1963). There are specific attributes that lead individuals to categorise someone as a whole person to a less desirable or tainted person, which is how Goffman (1963) explained stigma. In Sam and Fiona’s case, their physical appearance was attributed to them stereotypically as less intelligent or poor drivers.

Rogers and Way (2016) highlighted the resistance and accommodation framework to explain the processes of actively disproving stereotypes. It is a “conceptual framework for understanding how individuals respond to and negotiate systems of oppression” (Rogers & Way, 2016, p.265). There are two paths of resistance (Robinson & Ward, 1991). Resistance for survival is through “quick fixes" which provides a sense of agency.

Resistance for liberation is long term and benefits the individuals and the collective. It is based on the “inner strength” of a person and the others who are involved. This might be in the form of succeeding in school even though low expectations have been set. Fiona’s need to be a good driver is a quick fix to disprove the stereotype “Asians are bad drivers”. This happened as she was driving and therefore gave her a sense of agency over how others perceived her. Article 15 (Rally protests anti-Asian violence, abuse in US and NZ) also portrayed the resistance paths. In early 2021, Aucklanders rallied together to stand in solidarity against Asian hate, which during this time, it was at a high with shootings and attacks on Asian Americans in the United States of America. Protests give power to the people, and while it may not create immediate change, the aim of protests is to eventually create resistance for liberation. By standing in solidarity with Asian-Amerians it created enough noise via every individual's agency at the protest to push for collective benefits, such as ways to prevent hate crimes and lessen racial discrimination in society.

5.5 COVID-19 Scapegoat

Fear during the pandemic was a common thread among the interviewees. Feelings of fear and panic during the pandemic are understood as social constructions from meaning making. The pandemic posed “a huge challenge to the society because it tests its ability to cope with a multifarious threat under the constraints of the situation” (Schimmenti et al., 2020). This included the circulation of false information and the

well-being of those who were targeted. The virus itself would not be considered a global threat if it were not for the actors involved in the narrative: media representation that confirmed every death, official statements made by government officials and viral social media content whether true or false. Due to this, Barreneche (2020) suggested that:

> an objective fact (‘a new virus is infecting a high number of people in a very short time’) becomes a threat because specific meanings are attributed to it based on a broader narrative that serves as the interpretative framework. Fear and panic are, hence, the product of social discourse. (p.24)

Barreneche (2020) argued in the case of COVID-19, the context of collective fear, that specific discourses attributing blame began to emerge. Putting the blame on any identified individual is difficult during the pandemic, which is why collective groups of individuals have been constructed to make blame-attribution possible, and therefore these groups have been used as scapegoats to relieve feelings of impotence linked to fear caused by abnormal circumstances, such as lockdowns and mandatory wearing of face masks. Additionally, the initial blame that targeted the Chinese community deepened blame attribution. “‘The Chinese’ was blamed for the origin of the virus due to their gastronomic customs, which were usually judged as unhealthy and primitive” (Barreneche, 2020, p.21). The actions and behaviors of the people around the interviewees, as well as what media have reported, were the main source of

interviewees feeling scapegoated. These actions included verbal and non-verbal forms of harassment like someone calling out to Chris “You Chinese?”, as he crossed the road, or a group of people coughing at Sam’s groups of Asian friends. Behaviour that may appear insignificant, such as a look or tone of voice can make someone feel targeted. The researcher found that there was considerably more news media content focused on the representation of the Pasifika community in comparison to the Asian community. This might suggest blame aimed at the Pasifika community during the pandemic is more overt in comparison to blame aimed at the Asian community that might be more covert. This is reflected in seven out of fifteen news media articles. Despite New Zealand being “a team of five million”, the representation of the Pacific community during the pandemic says otherwise. “New Zealand's "team of five million" has been endlessly credited for the quashing of Covid-19” (Morton, 2020), however issues like regional profiling presented in Article 12 (Covid-19: Papatoetoe community speaks out against ‘regional profiling’) has led the community to be marginalised and forgotten about during trying times. For instance, the source of the second outbreak in Auckland was from a South Auckland family, and they were subject to online harassment based on their ethnicity, which contributed to existing ideas about South Auckland (See Chapter 5.7).

Article 1 (Coronavirus: Quarantine policy shift is ‘racist’, says critics) reported a policy shift in community cases, where these cases needed to move into isolation facilities after the South Auckland family contracted the virus. In previous community cases, they

only needed to stay at home for two weeks. The policy shift was interpreted as the government's distrust of Pacific people and assumed their inability to follow self-isolation rules. Article 3 highlighted the possibility of a huge second outbreak in the Pacific community due to existing factors, such as lower incomes, crowded housing, and poorer engagement with the health system, and thus the odds were stacked against the Pacific community during the pandemic. The second outbreak brought media backlash against the Pacific community because it originated in South Auckland. Similarly, Article 4 (Vitriol harms Pasifika as much as Covid) reported the media coverage that marginalised the Pacific community and the family who first contracted the virus in the second outbreak. Since it was revealed that the family was Pasifika, existing discourses, and stereotypes, such as distrust of the community to follow quarantine rules as expressed in Article 1 (Coronavirus: Quarantine policy shift is 'racist', says critics), about Pacific people contribute to the perception of who the family is and what they are like as people.

Article 5 (Racism, privilege and Covid) reported a rumour that emerged after the second outbreak in Auckland, which then later proved to be false in an interview confronting the man who started the rumour. The rumour about how a Pasifika woman contracted the virus at the University of Auckland was untrue. This article was written from the perspective of a Pasifika woman. The man who started the rumour is referred to as a 'young white professional'. It was reported that the young professional was apologetic and remorseful for his actions. The key takeaway from this article was the way the

media gave this young professional the benefit of the doubt and described him as “promising” with “a lot to lose”, while the media are not so forgiving when it comes to the wrongdoings of Pacific or Māori men. Loto et al. (2006), found that “ethnic minorities are significantly disadvantaged in mainstream media coverage” (p. 102) and leads to “Pacific people remain[ing] under-represented in media accounts and, when they do appear, tend to be depicted in all the wrong places: hospitals, courts, ghettos, welfare offices and prisons” (p.103).

Subtle racism and repeated forms of implicit and covert racism is what leads an individual to feel like the source of the problem, ultimately also impacting their sense of belonging in a country that they consider home. Verbal and non-verbal forms of harassment are an indication of othering a person or group and the recipient of such harassment would not feel socially accepted. The impact of news media extends further than New Zealand media. Understanding the virus and knowing how to contain it was the most crucial point to lowering death rates. During this time of the pandemic, the 45th President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, had made several false claims in science and misled the public. For example, the former president claimed that medical experts should research the effectiveness of injecting disinfectants to treat COVID-19 (Paz, 2020).

5.6 COVID-19 Stigma

As mentioned in section 5.4, there are specific attributes that lead individuals to categorise someone as a whole person to a less desirable or tainted person (Goffman, 1963). Stigma tends to be associated exclusively with ‘inferior’ forms of physical appearance or ethnicity (Goffman, 1963). For example, Misztal (2001) said trust is a mutual unspoken agreement in society. Trust in society controls social order, particularly in a pandemic where individuals trust others to stay home if they are unwell, will get a COVID-19 test if they have symptoms or will wear a mask. If combined with the stigmatisation of Asians or Pasifika, the physical features of said parties may influence that trust, especially if the media has poorly represented the Asian community and the online harassment of Pasifika and South Auckland (see Chapter 5.5 and 5.7).

Stigmatisers benefit from the process of stigmatisation. It creates a simplified perception of the target. It also allows perceivers to go beyond the available information about the target and make judgements about their personality and behaviours (Bhanot et al., 2021). This depicts the attribution theory (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Attribution theory deals with how information is gathered and combined by perceivers to explain how a situation came to be (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Stigmatisation during the pandemic stems from specific attributional tendencies of blame. For example, certain attributes of the Chinese community might be unhealthy and primitive (see Chapter 5.5). This might be used to explain why the virus originated in China. From here, a stigma against the Chinese during the pandemic was created.

Stigmatisation is about being able to maintain inequality through power, resources, and status, which in turn, emphasises control over the stigmatised “by practicing derogatory behaviors against them” (Bhanot et al., 2021, p.2). Such practices “serve to boost the self-esteem and well-being of the stigmatisers, as well as serve to reduce their existential anxiety” (Bhanot et al., 2021, p.2), highlighted by Fiona when she said “they think they’re just taking care of themselves and trying to keep themselves safe”. This aligns with the fear and frustration of lockdowns and the impact lockdowns had on normal life.

Article 4 (Covid-19 coronavirus: Stigma fears for asthma, allergy sufferers) reported COVID-19 symptoms, such as coughing and sneezing becoming a stigma for those who have allergies. It was found that those with allergies might face discrimination due to these similar symptoms. Approximately 41 percent of Otago residents automatically assumed that someone who coughed or sneezed had COVID-19.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, on a global scale, Asian communities in western countries have received the short end of the stick. Stigma during COVID-19 could be understood as a social process that is set to exclude people who are perceived to be a potential source of the virus and pose a threat to daily life. Angela depicted this as a group of individuals noticeably avoided her as they were walking on the street and were whispering about her. She wondered if there was anything wrong with her. Sam

mentioned how appearance was key in the way Asians were treated during the pandemic.

This was apparent in Article 14 (Covid-19 coronavirus: Woman challenges anti-Chinese gesture in Mission Bay) where a man swore at a woman because she “looked Chinese”. Sam was often mistaken for Pacific Islander or Māori thus she felt less targeted in comparison to her Asian peers however in a group with her friends who were all Asian descent, she experienced a group of men coughing at them as they walked by. Chris and his family were constantly mistaken for Chinese which is “where all the hate was going”. Appearance plays a key role in identifying who is Asian, and during the pandemic, it impacted how safe individuals felt in their home. Those with an “Asian appearance” led to some individuals of Asian descent to be racially profiled and stigmatised due to the virus. Article 8 (Covid-19: Māori, Chinese communities report most discrimination during pandemic) reported the most common forms of racial discrimination were online abuse, being stared at in public, being avoided in public and receiving negative comments in public, all of which were experienced by the interviewees.

5.7 Sense of Belonging in New Zealand

A sense of belonging is a measure of social integration and cohesion (Wu et al., 2011), which was disrupted by stereotypes, stigma, and scapegoating. It rests on feeling safe,

accepted, and invested in society and it reflects social bridging and trust between groups, which builds on national identity (Wu et al., 2011). Stereotyping, scapegoating and stigma all contribute to “how much” an individual belongs in New Zealand, particularly during a pandemic that has heightened these issues and created a lack of social acceptance and sense of safety.

Article 11 (Covid-19: Let's stop this lockdown blame game, finger-wagging won't get you anywhere) highlighted the government’s policy to punish individuals who broke lockdown rules. However, singling out individuals for their wrongdoings is the worst way to get people to follow rules (Pagani, 2021). A sense of belonging is even more tainted for South Auckland as the dominant societal discourse encouraged individuals to avoid South Auckland altogether as it is painted as a place synonymous with danger and poverty, and highly dependent on government assistance (Borell, 2006). This is portrayed in Article 12 (Covid-19: Papatoetoe community speaks out against ‘regional profiling’), where a snippet from Lion King was used and subtitled to paint Otara and Papatoetoe as places to avoid as they might kill you, being an area close to the second outbreak of the virus.

Verbal and non-verbal harassment and the impact of news media for the dominant culture or group can serve to reject a person or group. In New Zealand, the dominant group is Pākehā and the experience of rejecting other groups creates a sense of hostility towards the dominant group. At the same time, it increases minority group

identification (Branscombe et al., 1999), which could be an explanation for Chris' thoughts on some of his friends not feeling scapegoated or stigmatised in any way because their entire group of friends and immediate environment are all Asian descent. Wu et al. (2011), argued that the rejection from the dominant group had added benefits of group identification among minority groups, and therefore, countering some of the negative impacts of discrimination. Branscombe (1999) hypothesised that "experiencing ethnic/cultural or racial discrimination would serve to strengthen in-group sense of belonging" (p.6). This might be a reason to explain why two out of six interviewees said they felt like COVID-19 had impacted their sense of belonging in a negative way. Some interviewees have always felt as if they were an outsider, despite being raised in New Zealand. Others' sense of belonging was only contested if the virus led to new encounters of stigmatisation that they did not notice previously.

In the interviews, it was interesting to find that even though emotional responses were recorded 28 times, as the second most frequently referenced category, these emotional responses mostly revolved around fear and anger. Sam was the only participant who expressed feelings of sadness and emotional pain about her experiences and understanding of racial discrimination, scapegoating and stigma during COVID-19.

5.8 Summary

This chapter has aimed to combine the findings of both the interviews and news media articles to answer the research question: “How do experiences of self-perceived racial discrimination, stigmatisation, and scapegoating during COVID-19 impact an individual’s sense of belonging in New Zealand?”.

Not surprisingly, all interviewees felt stereotyped in New Zealand in some way and were able to identify stereotypes about themselves. There were different approaches to dealing with said stereotypes: Interviewees either accepted the stereotype regardless of how they felt about it, or they actively fought against the stereotype by trying to disprove it via their own agency. Interviewees of Asian descent only recounted experiences of verbal and non-verbal harassment which were also reflected in the news media articles that focused on experiences of racial discrimination. All the interviewees named the media as a key factor to explain how communities were scapegoated during the pandemic. This could be a reason the Asian community was scapegoated for the cause of the virus and have been stigmatised since the media began portraying China as the source of the problem.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will first provide an overall research conclusion of racial discrimination, scapegoating, stigmatisation, and stereotyping based on the interviews and what was found in the news media articles and determine how this phenomenon impacts individual's sense of belonging in New Zealand during the COVID-10 pandemic. Secondly, the strengths and limitations of this study will be highlighted. Thirdly, the limitations of the research will be listed and explained. Fourthly, recommendations for improvement or further and/or expanded research of this study will be highlighted. The chapter will then end with a summary of the information that is addressed in this chapter.

6.2 Overall Thesis Findings and Conclusions

Racial Discrimination

Out of the most recurring concepts (stereotyping, scapegoating, stigmatisation) that emerged in the interview, racial discrimination was found to have existed pre-pandemic and was magnified as the pandemic spread to and around New Zealand. Interviewees revealed that pre-pandemic, their first encounters of racial discrimination were during their childhood and that they were unable to identify their encounters as racial

discrimination. Interviewees expressed that they felt unsure and would not rebut behaviours of racial discrimination to avoid confrontation. While recalling these experiences as adults, they were able to label it as racism yet sometimes they felt unsure about how to address or confront such behaviours. Amongst the articles, articles 6 (Meng Foon: Racist stereotypes on the rise in the age of Covid-19), 8 (Covid-19: Maori, Chinese communities report most discrimination during pandemic) and 9 (Covid-19 heightens racism against Maori, Chinese - research) directly highlighted the increased statistics of racial discrimination due to COVID-19. Article 12 (Covid-19: Papatoetoe community speaks out against 'regional profiling') and 14 (Covid-19 coronavirus: Woman challenges anti-Chinese gesture in Mission Bay) were examples of lived racial discrimination during the pandemic. What can be gathered from the responses of the interviews and the news media articles regarding racial discrimination is that COVID-19 has added to existing racial discrimination, and simultaneously generated a stigma and forms of scapegoating via the news media during the pandemic.

Stereotyping

All interviewees identified stereotypes about themselves. This suggested that they have been subjected to such stereotypes or have been exposed to said stereotypes. It could be said that the environment they have been surrounded by has projected such stereotypes onto them. Some emotions associated with feeling stereotyped were "unsure" and "upset". Feeling unsure about being stereotyped showed that it was

difficult for stereotypes to be determined as either covert or overt. The divide of in-groups and out-groups in the warmth and competence model indicated that both groups make judgements about other groups, creating generalised images of each other. It could also be said that stereotypes have some control over the stereotyped behaviours, as many interviewees expressed that they either felt the need to live up to the stereotype or to disprove the stereotype. This might be an indication of the way stereotypes play a role in how comfortable or “at home” an individual may feel in a country they consider home, particularly if comments, such as “she is smart” are questioned if ethnicity is also involved.

Scapegoating

The media was identified as a key factor in feeling scapegoated during the pandemic. American media and icons, such as Donald Trump were named as strong contributors to scapegoating during the pandemic. American media was able to impact New Zealanders which revealed how influential American media is on a global scale. This also showed how an icon, such as Donald Trump was able to control the perception of an entire country by calling the virus the “Chinese virus” and “Kung Flu”. Consequently, blame-attribution was possible. It meant that individuals who were tied to being Asian, especially if individuals had facial features of Asian descent, were targeted because of their portrayal by the media, which was incriminating the Asian community.

Stigma

Interviewees of Asian descent acknowledged their appearance and were aware of whether they had Asian facial features. This was a key factor in their encounters of verbal and non-verbal harassment. The “Asian appearance” showed that there is still a lack of knowledge about Asians and Asia. It could be said there was a generalisation about an “Asian” person and what s/he looked like. This might have stemmed from the media coverage that focused on China which led to the correlation between “Chinese-looking” people and the virus, even though, in fact, Asia and Asians include more than just China or other “Chinese-looking” ethnicities. Symptoms of COVID-19, such as coughing or sneezing have also generated a stigma, particularly of those who have allergies or hay fever. This suggested that those who cough or sneeze in public spaces might be avoided, which might further lead those with similar symptoms to COVID-19 to feel more ostracised.

Impact on Sense of Belonging

Based on gathering the conclusions of stereotyping, scapegoating, and stigma, it can be concluded that these concepts are interconnected and collectively have had an impact on an individual's sense of belonging during the pandemic, both in a positive and negative way. As racial discrimination, stereotyping, stigma and scapegoating during the pandemic was a product of existing racism in New Zealand, the pandemic revealed the covert racism that was concealed within society. This implied racial discrimination,

stereotyping, stigma, and scapegoating has always been an undertone in New Zealand because of historical, political and social discrepancies.

6.3 Strengths of the study

Looking back at the research journey there are several strengths worth noting. While there is much scholarly material focused on COVID-19 and its relationship to racism, most of the material found was based in The United States. Although this was useful and applicable to this study, since this study was based in New Zealand and explored the experiences of those who were here in New Zealand during the pandemic, it contributes to academic literature. The combination of convenience sampling, semi-structured in-depth interviews and content analysis complemented each other. They all put the interviewees' experiences at the forefront of the research which was one of the goals for this research. The news media articles were helpful in supporting the interviews.

6.4 Limitations of the study

Like any study, limitations are natural. Firstly, as this study was conducted to fulfill a Master in Communication Studies, there were time restraints throughout the study. Research needed to meet the deadlines, therefore limiting the exploration of the topic which might have been more accurate and richer if there was no time limit. Secondly,

only six interviews were conducted, rather than the ideal eight to ten interviews. This might have been due to the reluctance to discuss a personal or confronting topic. Of the six interviews, five were with participants of Asian descent and one was with a participant of Polynesian descent. While this study never intended to be exclusive to race or ethnicity, the ethnic backgrounds of the interviewees may have limited the perspectives and findings of the interviews. With the use of convenience sampling and the fact that the researcher was of Asian descent, it was possible that more participants of Asian descent were more comfortable in talking to the researcher. There were also other interviewee factors that might have influenced the interview discussion and the findings.

All the interviewees were based in Auckland and five out of six interviewees were in their twenties. Three out of six interviewees were born and raised in New Zealand. Two interviewees moved to New Zealand as young children, and one interviewee moved to New Zealand for university and is now working in New Zealand. The background of the interviewees may have limited the content of this research. However, the findings of the study can still be considered significant, allowing more comprehensive and diverse studies to be done in the future. Next, the news media articles found were limited to what Newztext had. Even though there was considerably more content found on Google, Newztext was used as it allowed the researcher to set parameters, such as New Zealand based articles, keywords, and time periods. Lastly, despite recognising researcher bias and the researcher's conscious effort to reduce as much bias as

possible, it is important to acknowledge that with the researcher's own experiences with racial discrimination during COVID-19. Despite the researcher's effort to address research bias before the data collection, it was possible that subconscious bias emerged.

6.5 Recommendations and Opportunities for Future Research

There are several recommendations that can be addressed for future research. First, if this study were to be replicated or extended, the same methodology should be used, including interviewee selection, news media article parameters and content analysis. This would be helpful in reducing researcher bias and generating more in-depth interview content with additional interviewees. If replicated, the researcher may consider using a combination of semi-structured interviews and online survey research for wider research, using the same interview questions.

This is because the researcher found it difficult to reach potential interviewees, even via video call. Future interviewee selection could include participants from different cities in New Zealand to investigate if the current findings are only limited to Auckland. Future research might consider the backgrounds of the interviewees, such as age and a wider range of race/ethnicities. In addition, older interviewees may be able to provide insight and perspectives of their experiences as youth compared to their current experiences.

To expand on the scapegoating phenomenon, further research may also consider scapegoating by looking at the experiences of health workers and New Zealand border or airline employees during COVID-19 as they are frontline workers, and therefore more likely to contract the virus. Further investigation may include international research in other Western countries to examine whether the experiences of New Zealanders are the same or different from other countries.

Some practical recommendations to model appropriate behaviour include workshops that discuss behaviours, and the issues of stereotyping, scapegoating and stigmatisation in primary, intermediate, and high schools, for both students and teachers. This workshop can also be applied to managerial roles and news media article writers to become more educated and sensitive to avoid stereotyping, scapegoating, or stigmatising.

6.7 Summary

The discussions of this study's strengths, limitations, future research opportunities and recommendations and answering the research question has brought this thesis to a close. First, this chapter ensured that experiences of racial discrimination, scapegoating and stigmatisation were all revealed. Second, the strengths were identified, such as its contribution to New Zealand based academic literature. Third, the limitations were listed, the most significant, being unable to reach the ideal number of interviews. Lastly,

recommendations and opportunities for further research were suggested based on the limitations which would allow for deeper and richer findings.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Participant Recruitment blurb

Hi there,

I'm Catherine Sung, a master's student at AUT currently writing my thesis. My research topic is Covid-19: Experiences of Racism and Scapegoating and I'm looking for participants who are willing to do an interview with me about their experiences.

No experience is too small or insignificant - I'm looking for any experience of perceived or real racism, scapegoating of blame because of Covid-19/the pandemic.

About the interview

- approx. 30 - 60 mins
- at a place of your choosing (cafe, online, etc.)
- voice recorded
- you'll remain anonymous (I won't use your real name or reveal any personal detail that might identify you)

About you

- believe you have experienced racism, scapegoating or blame since the pandemic emerged
- have felt targeted or blamed in some way for the virus
- are willing to share and talk about your experiences
- ethnicity is not important - you can be of any ethnicity or culture

I love to hear from you. If you are interested or would like more information, please email me at xvy4370@aut.ac.nz. Please feel free to pass this information on to anyone you think might be interested.

Thank you :)

Catherine Sung

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:
4 September 2020

Project Title
Covid-19: Experiences of Scapegoating and Racism

An Invitation
I'm Catherine Sung, currently obtaining my Master in Communication Studies. This is an invitation to participate in a research study as a part of my thesis component in fulfilment of a Master of Communication Studies. This qualitative study explores how the Covid-19 pandemic has generated new forms of scapegoating and racial discrimination. The aim of this study is to highlight the experiences of individuals who feel they have been targeted since Covid-19 broke out in New Zealand. There are no potential conflict of interest issues and choosing to participate or not participate will not disadvantage you in any way.

What is the purpose of this research?
Racism is a longstanding social, political, and economic issue in New Zealand. Since the global spread of Covid-19, there have been cases of racial discrimination and scapegoating of communities around the world. The purpose of this research is to curate an in-depth piece of work that highlights experiences of individuals who feel like they have been subjected to racist or xenophobic behaviours, and how Covid-19 has impacted their sense of belonging in New Zealand. The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?
Potential participants have been identified because they are known to the researcher or responded to the advertisement on Facebook or Instagram. Potential participants are individuals who feel stigmatised and marginalised, or who have been subjected to racist and/or xenophobic behaviours and feel they have been scapegoated during the pandemic.

How do I agree to participate in this research?
You need to respond to this email or send a private message via Facebook or Instagram. Once you email the researcher, you will be sent a consent form which you need to complete. You are able to decide whether you wish to be identified or not in the data (i.e., the use of your real name).

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage or disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?
The research involves an approximate hour-long interview with the primary researcher. You will be asked questions based around your experiences of marginalisation, scapegoating, racial discrimination and how Covid-19 has shaped those experiences. The interview will be held at a cafe of your choice or at AUT city campus, and will be audio recorded for analysis purposes.

What are the discomforts and risks?
The topic at hand is a sensitive one and can resurface negative experiences. If you feel uncomfortable and would like to take a moment or stop entirely at any time during the interview, this will be respected without any judgement**.**

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?
When such a sensitive topic is being discussed, it is normal to feel overwhelmed, emotional and anxious. If you would like to talk to someone after the interview, AUT Health Counselling and Wellbeing can offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project.

These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centres at WB219 or AS104 or phone 921 9992 City Campus or 921 9998 North Shore campus to make an appointment. Appointments for South Campus can be made by calling 921 9992
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on http://www.aut.ac.nz/being-a-student/current-postgraduates/your-health-and-wellbeing/counselling.

What are the benefits?
You will be able to discuss and highlight your experiences and feelings in a safe environment. You will be helping the primary researcher obtain their Master in Communication Studies.

How will my privacy be protected?
All data collected during the interview (audio recordings and note-taking) will not be shared with anyone other than the primary researcher and the primary supervisor. The data will be kept in the supervisor's office. During the data analysis stage, you may choose to be identified or not (i.e., your name used in the analysis stage). All consent forms are kept at AUT for a minimum of six years. After this, all forms will be securely disposed of.

What are the costs of participating in this research?
You will spend approximately one hour participating in the interview. Travel to the interview location may take approximately 10-30 minutes.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?
You have 2 weeks to consider this invitation. If you do not contact the researcher within the month, it is assumed you do not wish to participate in the research.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?
Yes, you will receive feedback on the results of this research. Once the data analysis stage is complete, you will be sent a document via email that details the findings of this research.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?
If you have any questions or concerns about the research or interview, please feel free to contact the primary researcher, Catherine Sung, via email (xvy4370@autuni.ac.nz), Facebook or Instagram. All questions and queries will not be shared with other potential participants or the public. It will be shared with the primary supervisor for clarification.

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Petra Theunissen, ptheunis@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext. 7854. Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?
Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:
Catherine Sung
Email: xvy4370@autuni.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:
Petra Theunissen
Email: ptheunis@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6/10/2020, AUTEC Reference number 20/299.

Appendix C: Interviewee Questions

1. There are many forms of racism. Some can be blatantly obvious, and some can be more subtle. Do you remember the first time you recognised racist or xenophobic behaviours aimed at you? How old were you? Could you please tell me about the encounter? What were you feeling and thinking at the time? Looking back, how do you feel about it now?

2. Stereotypes are an over generalised image or idea of a group of people, and is often a negative thing. Do you feel stereotyped within New Zealand? If so, what are these stereotypes? How do they make you feel? Why do you think they exist?

3. Have you ever witnessed racial discrimination happening to someone else? What happened? How did you feel at the time?

4. Since the spread of Covid-19, there have been cases of harassment and blamed placed on groups of people and communities, not only within New Zealand but around the world. How does this make you feel? Why do you think this happens?

5. What made you feel scapegoated or marginalised during Covid-19? How did it make you feel? Why do you think this happens?

6. Do you feel like Covid-19 has impacted your sense of belonging in your own community and in New Zealand? If yes, how so?

7. Have you ever been harassed in person or online due to Covid-19? If yes, what happened? How did you feel? Thinking back to it now, how do you feel about it now?

8. What do you think contributes to certain people being scapegoated for something like Covid-19?

9. Are there any other thoughts or experiences you would like to share?

Appendix D: Category and Codes of Interviews

Categories	**Codes**
Scapegoating	Stereotyping Assumptions Breaking stereotypes Impact of internet, social media, and local/global news media Pop culture impact Responsibilities Appearance Educate self Mindful of own behaviour Generational
Emotional Response	Alone Instinctive feeling Self-doubt Don't know how to respond Fulfilling expectations Foreign Frustration Isolated Fear Alienation

	Offended Powerless
Non-verbal Harassment	Behaviours and actions of others Unaware Casual racism Accustomed to behaviors Realisation Ignorance Accepting behaviours of others
Safety	Standing up for self Avoid confrontation Safety as female Avoid public Mindful of own behaviour
Verbal Harassment	Casual racism Ignorance Accepting behaviours of others

Appendix E: Category and Codes of News Media Articles

Category	**Codes**
Marginalised Communities	Pasifika community Health and community Affecting Maori Asian NZ sense of belonging Historical impacts Community support Community struggle Assumptions Verbal harassment Non-verbal harassment Media representation

	Workplace discrimination Generalisation Regional profiling Stigma Assigning blame
COVID-19 Impact on Personal Life	Personal safety Virus is the problem, not people Impact of lockdown Growing racism Sense of belonging Concerns about vaccine More things happening in people's lives than COVID-19 Repercussions of self-isolating Living situation Missing school
Emotional Response	Fear for health Frustration Wanting everyone to be safe Concerns about the most vulnerable during lockdown People already struggling Shock Elevated stress levels
Disproportionate Representation of COVID-19 Cases	Misrepresentation Covid-19 cases Impact of misinformation