




Exploring Systemic Racism Among Black OT Educators and Leaders: Inspiring Change and Advancing Equity

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Objective 1

Attendees will gain insight into the lived experiences of Black OT educators and leaders facing systemic racism in academic settings, highlighting its impact on career progression and professional identity.



Objective 2

Attendees will explore actionable strategies for fostering culturally safe and inclusive academic environments that support the success and leadership of Black OT educators.

Diversity of the Profession

	2023		
	Overall	OT	OTA
African	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%
African American / Black	4.0%	3.6%	6.1%
East Asian	1.9%	2.1%	0.9%
Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American	4.4%	3.9%	7.0%
Middle Eastern or North African	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%
Multiethnic	3.1%	3.0%	3.6%
Native American or Alaska Native	0.7%	0.6%	1.2%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%
Not Listed	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%
Prefer not to answer	2.2%	2.3%	1.8%
South Asian	0.9%	1.0%	0.6%
Southeast Asian	0.9%	1.0%	0.6%
White	85.1%	85.6%	82.3%

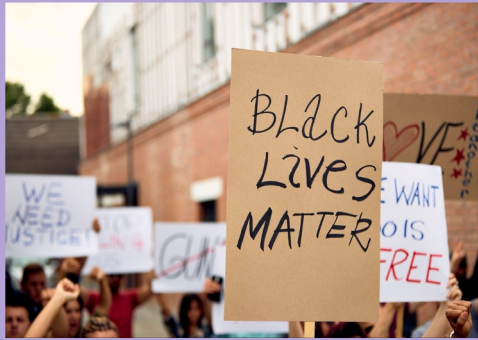
	2018	2014
	Overall	Overall
African American / Black	3.0%	3.1%
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0.3%	0.3%
Asian / Pacific Islander	5.8%	4.4%
Caucasian / White	83.7%	85.3%
Hispanic / Latinx	3.9%	3.2%
Multiethnic	1.8%	1.4%
Prefer not to answer	1.5%	2.2%

Additional race and ethnicity categories were added for this year's survey based on feedback from previous years. In addition, if a respondent answered two or more race/ethnicity questions, each response was counted as unique. This leads to percentage sums greater than 100%. 3.1% of 2023 respondents selected more than one race or ethnicity.

Significance of the Topic

- A significant gap exists in representation within the ethnic composition of OT faculty.
- Through reflective analysis and discussion, this session will contribute to fostering culturally safe environments and advancing inclusivity in academia.

- Despite acknowledging the profound impact of race on lived experiences, research on Black educators and leaders in OT is scarce.
- This presentation aims to provide a voice for Black OT educators and leaders to share encounters with systemic racism and coping strategies.



2013



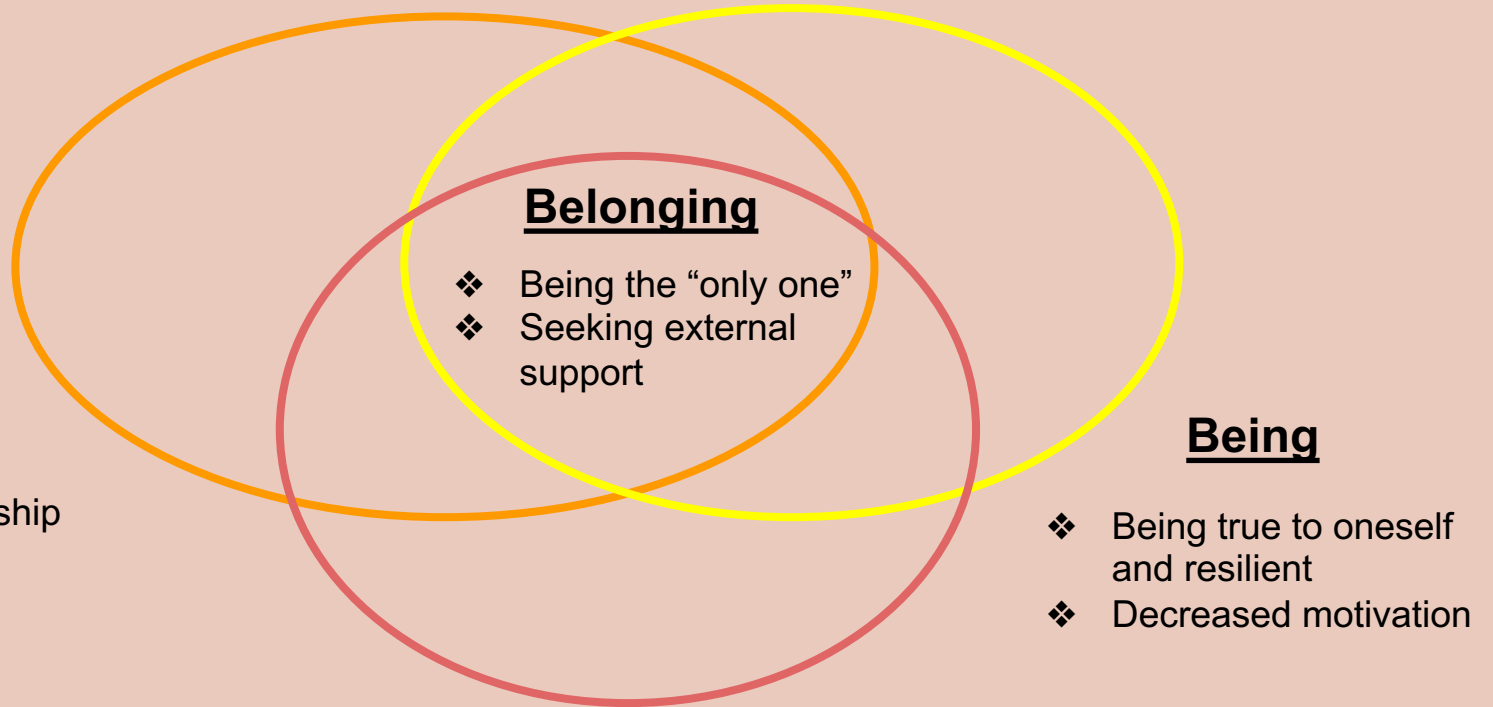
2020



Today

Theoretical Model

Occupational Perspective of Health



Results of Coding

Mentorship	Self-confidence/ Self-advocacy/ Setting boundaries/ Reaching out	Black tax	Microaggression	Thickened skin/ Desensitized	Doing, Being, Becoming, <u>Belonging</u>	PEOP impacted mental health/ Trigger
Extra work being pushed	Being (DBBB)	Topic aversion/ white fragility	White privilege	"Only one" in the room / position	Heightened awareness	Conformity
Uncertainty if racially motivated, allegiance	Black gravitates to Black	Lack of internal support for Black individual	Being the change	Opportunity disparity	Microinvalidation	Lasting impact of representation
Butterfly effect	Future implications	Poor workplace morale	Ineffective/ ignorant DEI initiatives	Lack of internal support for Black individual	Thickened skin/ desensitized	Opportunity disparity

100% of participants
90-95% of cases

Qualitative Themes

Black Tax/ Mentorship

Participant #6:

"...I technically have, on paper, 5 advisees. But I advise all of our students of color unofficially, ... the black students but also the speech students, the PT students, the PA students, some of the undergraduate students who have interest in OT some of the Med students who don't have black mentors, ... I don't get to count that time. I don't get compensated for that time ...It's not fair to me right?... But the system also isn't fair to the students like they don't deserve that part of their experience and they deserve to see more people who look like me. And so, while it is exhausting to do it, I do it a lot of times at my own expense."



Doing/Being

Participant #9 :

"I felt that my ability to maintain and sustain a balance of work, rest, and play was impossible. You know it affected my mental health. It affected my leisure time. It impacted just my overall success because I was so inundated with nonsense."



Qualitative Themes

DBBB: Belonging

Participant #5: "...having to prove that you belong there gets old. It was okay when I was a 25 year old OT student at field work, I hadn't lived that. At 42 I shouldn't have to keep proving myself."



Pressure to Perform

Participant #22: "You have to, because you are black, you do have to ramp it up. You have to give a hundred plus, 110% for others to take you seriously."



LOW VS HIGH

Gender: Males more likely to report than females (B = 15.46, $p < 0.001$).

Age: Younger respondents showing higher odds of reporting low levels of racism

Regionally: Respondents in Northeast more likely to report low racism (B = 0.24, $p = 0.031$).

Institution Type: Respondents at PWIs have significantly lower odds of reporting low racism compared to HBCUs (B = -18.23, $p < 0.001$).

Roles and Years in Academia: OTs had higher odds of reporting low racism than OTAs (B = 2.55, $p = 0.101$; OR = 12.79).

Years as a practitioner showed a non-significant trend toward increased odds of reporting low racism (B = 0.485, $p = 0.537$; OR = 1.62).

MODERATE VS HIGH

Gender: Males were significantly more likely to report moderate rather than high racism (B = 19.59, $p < 0.001$).

Age: Younger participants were less likely to report moderate vs. high racism compared to older

Regionally: Differences remained significant, with positive associations for all regions relative to the West.

Institutional and role-related variables did not significantly differentiate between moderate and high racism levels.

Quantitative Themes

Multinomial Logistic Regression

LOW LEVELS OF RACISM

Feeling welcomed:

Mean Rank = 40.19, $\chi^2 = 15.71$, $p < 0.001$

Eagerness to go to work:

Mean Rank = 39.71, $\chi^2 = 16.32$, $p < 0.001$

Sense of belonging:

Mean Rank = 37.24, $\chi^2 = 8.27$, $p = 0.016$

Alignment with workplace values:

Mean Rank = 37.29, $\chi^2 = 9.38$, $p = 0.009$

Celebration of unique characteristics:

Mean Rank = 39.93, $\chi^2 = 14.53$, $p = 0.001$

Perception that the organization supports addressing discrimination:

Mean Rank = 40.12, $\chi^2 = 15.23$, $p < 0.001$

HIGH LEVELS OF RACISM

Being singled out by coworkers:

Mean Rank = 38.11, $\chi^2 = 11.08$, $p = 0.004$

Experiencing prejudice or discrimination:

Mean Rank = 39.02, $\chi^2 = 16.18$, $p < 0.001$)

Being overlooked for advancement:

Mean Rank = 34.72, $\chi^2 = 8.99$, $p = 0.011$

Perceiving cultural identity as a barrier:

Mean Rank = 36.00, $\chi^2 = 6.39$, $p = 0.041$

Being perceived as a “diversity hire”:

Mean Rank = 34.35, $\chi^2 = 6.26$, $p = 0.044$

Quantitative Themes

BIVARIATE FINDINGS

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References

