Cyber-Racism and Higher Education

Minority Students in Aotearoa New Zealand

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree

of Master of Education in the University of Canterbury

by

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2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

Racism is embedded in New Zealand society and expanded beyond physical spaces to the online realm. The widespread use of social media, especially among young people, and the escalation of race-related issues online puts minority students at risk of increased exposure to racism in their virtual spaces. Whilst the existence of cyber-racism has been established, the experiences of higher education minority students of racism on social media in New Zealand are not well understood. Therefore, this study explores twenty-five ethnically diverse higher education students' experiences of cyber-racism and its influence on their emotions, social practices, learning, and coping strategies. This study was informed by Critical Race Theory and drawing on Greer et al. (2015) and Passmore and Mandryk (2020) coping frameworks. A qualitative approach was chosen using the critical incident to unpack cyber-racism experiences through an online interview and survey to assess how students understand, make sense of, and manage racism online. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data collected from the participants. Students demonstrated a range of coping strategies classified as approach and avoid strategies to navigate the influence of cyber-racism on their emotions, social practices, and learning. Focus only on coping strategies without addressing racism through education; students can be left over-exposed to risks online. Education should consider integrating ethical attitudes in racial literacy and digital citizenship curriculum to prepare anti-racist digital citizens for a better future.

Keywords: Cyber-racism, social media, critical race theory, coping strategies, online spaces, influence, education.

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Glossary

Hapū	kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe - a large kinship group and the primary political unit in traditional Māori society.
Iwi	extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.
Mana	prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power.
Mihi	Speech of greeting, acknowledgement, tribute
Rangatiratanga	Chieftainship, right to exercise authority, chiefly autonomy, chiefly authority, ownership, the leadership of a social group, domain of the rangatira, noble birth, attributes of a chief.
Tāngata	people, men, persons, human beings
Whanū	Extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to many people-the primary economic unit of traditional Māori society.
Whenua	Land - often used in the plural, territory, and domain

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Racism is a global issue and one of the problems regarding inequality within our societies. Racism no longer exists only in the physical realm but also in virtual spaces, and the latter is harder to regulate (Caltabiano & Torre, 2013). Racism in online spaces is a growing issue given the advances in technology, the spread of social media platforms, and the use of online spaces, especially during the pandemic of COVID-19.

Globally, people use social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Messenger. More recently, TikTok has become one of the most popular talked-video sharing platforms (Marengo et al., 2022; Shutsko, 2020), especially among young people. Social media plays a central role in individuals' lives and has widely influenced peoples' cultures, beliefs and behaviours (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011) and has changed the way people communicate (Globokar, 2018; Siddiqui & Singh, 2016; Teschers & Brown, 2019). Recently, social media have provided new arenas for global conversations about race and racial inequality (Corneau & Stergiopoulos, 2012; Lake et al., 2018). For example, the rise of hashtags like #BlackLivesMatter (Carney, 2016), #Leave and "BreakingPoint" campaign (Mills & Godley, 2017) and #Illridewithyou went viral on social media platforms, and most people around the globe interacted with them. Social media users, including young people, discuss, share, and talk about race and racism and are likely to encounter cyber-racism (Gin et al., 2017). The debates on social media represent a larger struggle over the discourse of race and racism (Carney, 2016). Online discussions on race-related issues range from the existence of racism, whether people believe racism no longer poses a problem, to those who may endorse white supremacist views and others who advocate for racial equality or anti-racism.

In the New Zealand context, racism is tied to the history of colonisation since the European expedition voyages. Racism did not end after the formal end of colonisation and the creation of the New Zealand state but continues to shape the relations, power, and dominance of the majority over the minority. The discourse of race in New Zealand is complex and emotional due to the more significant aspect of our inherited social structure that is part of the racism problem through direct or indirect racist actions (Cormack et al., 2020; Donn et al., 1996). Racism in New Zealand also expanded beyond physical spaces to the online realm. A good example is the 2017 accident of the Auckland women Lara Bridger's video on social media claiming Sir Peter Leitch, the founder of the Mad Butcher, had racist actions toward her. Threatening and racist comments flooded social media; others denied racism and pretended it did not exist.

The affordances of the technology (Newton, 2018), the spread of social media usage, and the escalation of race-related issues in online spaces open the potential for minority students to experience harm online (Tynes et al., 2008; Tynes et al., 2013). This online harm can include cyber-bullying, hate speech (Smahel et al., 2020), cyber-racism (Perić, 2017), and digital hate (Merrill & Åkerlund, 2018). Digital hate, as identified by Merril & Åkerlund (2018), is the spread of hateful comments and speech against racial minority groups and is conceived as a cyber-racism (Rithika & Selvaraj, 2013; Tayo et al., 2019). Therefore, cyber-racism is virtual racism that includes threatening comments, forms of bullying, harassment, and abuse based on colour, race, ethnicity, or nationality used to oppress specific racial or ethnic[1] groups in society (Gin et al., 2017; Mills & Godley,

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[1] I use the terms race and ethnicity throughout this research; I want to define those terms clearly. In theory, the race is an ascribed category to a group of persons with shared biological or physical features. However, I acknowledge that the current understanding of race moved beyond biological traits to be more socially

2017; NetSafe, 2018). The escalation of racism in online spaces towards specific ethnic groups reveals how the platform can foster covert and overt racism (Merrill & Åkerlund, 2018). Online racism victimisation is increasingly becoming a public health concern (Tynes et al., 2008). Cyber-racism negatively influences students' sense of connection and willingness to interact with people from specific racial backgrounds (Donn et al., 1996; Tynes et al., 2013; Vera et al., 2016). Being traumatised by online racism also influences students' willingness to interact with their teachers and peers from specific racial groups (Goff et al., 2008). Besides, cyber-racism sometimes contributes to the deterioration of students' learning performance, which causes academic achievement gaps (Merolla & Jackson, 2019). Negative comments on social media may deteriorate self-esteem and psychological well-being (Ahn, 2011). Scholars argued that experiencing harm online may influence students' maturation and adoption of behavioural patterns that affect their cognitive and emotional development and growth due to the stress of witnessing or experiencing racism (Alvarez et al., 2016; Globokar, 2018; Jakubowicz et al., 2017; Perić, 2017). However, students try to find ways to cope with cyber-racism to moderate its harm to their lives.

Students' coping strategies are used as a reaction and a way to deal with stressful encounters (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007). Coping strategies refer to the practices and actions that moderate, manage, and endure difficulties (cyber-racism) experienced and the harmful influence of racism that reflects on individuals' attributes, relationships, and social contexts (Compas et al., 2017; Greer et al., 2015; Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck,

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constructed. On the other hand, ethnicity is defined as a category to describe people of shared common history, culture, and language. Race and ethnicity terms are distinct but not mutually exclusive, and I often use them together in this study. However, when referring to particular research literature (e.g., history of Māori and Pākehā), I use the specific term most appropriate to that literature.

2007). Due to the escalation and inconsistent use of ethical attitudes to online race-related issues, it is challenging to keep up with measures to prevent and mitigate risks through [2]Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use (Bangkok, 2015). Focus only on coping strategies without addressing racism through education; students can be left over-exposed to risks online. Thus, teaching children, teachers, and parents how to be good citizens in a digital world while interacting with ethnically diverse people, especially regarding race-related issues, is essential. Developing students' ethical attitudes of what D'Olimpio called "*Critical Perspectivism",* the moral attitudes when we engage with diverse others in online spaces (D'Olimpio, 2018) through the digital citizenship curriculum helps mitigate racism in online spaces. Ethical attitudes allow young digital citizens to navigate their ways more ethically and effectively with diverse racial others through an increasingly complex, digitally mediated world (D'Olimpio, 2018; McGillivray et al., 2016). Furthermore, they can engage ethically in constructive online conversations over race that demonstrate integrity and honesty in respecting privacy and freedom of speech in the digital world for all diverse people (Lenhart et al., 2011; McGillivray et al., 2016).

In the New Zealand context, the rise of social media use, the escalation of racism in online spaces, and the harm of racialised hate within the virtual environments, especially among students, ground the focus of this study. This study explores higher education minority students' experiences with cyber-racism, its influence on their emotions, social practices, learning, and coping strategies. Drawing on understandings of racism within critical race scholarship, this study analyses students' experiences of

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[2] Information and Communications Technology (ICT), there is no specific definition of ICT, it includes all devices, networking sites, Word Wide Web (WWW), applications that allow people and organisations to interact in the digital world

cyber-racism through a narrative of a specific online racist incident that happened to them. A qualitative research design was chosen to enable students' narratives of cyber-racism incidents to be explained in detail. The study poses the following main question: What coping strategies do students use to moderate the influence of cyber-racism on their emotions, social practices, and learning? With the following sub-questions (1) How do students experience cyber-racism? (2) What is the influence of cyber-racism on students' emotions, social practices, and learning? (3) What strategies can students employ to cope with/manage cyber-racism harm?

This study uses semi-structured zoom interviews and an online questionnaire to collect data from eighteen and above higher education ethnically diverse students who identified as Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Multi-racial, Pasifika, and Māori. The study foregrounds students' experiences with cyber-racism in New Zealand and its influence on their emotions, social practices, and learning. In addition, this current study highlights coping strategies students employ to manage cyber-racism to moderate its negative influence on their lives to raising awareness for education that might contribute to change. This study demonstrates that racism burdens minority students to adjust their behaviours to cope with cyber-racism within the lack of actions from New Zealand education and society to address the problem of racism.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Racism and Colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand

The history of racism in Aotearoa [3] New Zealand is tied to the history of colonisation. The colonial plan of imperial dominance, racism and White supremacy began with the exploration voyages (Barnes et al., 2013) in New Zealand. Historically, the colonial project started during Cook's expeditions to New Zealand. Then, in the 1830s, British interests continued to be predominant in New Zealand (O'Malley et al., 2010; Orange, 2015). The British settlers planned to buy lands to undermine Māori's[4] chiefly authority ahead of the Crown's intervention. By taking over Māori's lands and possessions, the settler colonialism developed and moved towards self-government (O'Malley et al., 2010) to ensure the full imperial authority over Māori and sovereignty on rangatiratanga (chiefly authority). European settlers have portrayed themselves racially and culturally superior to Māori (Reid et al., 2017). "Colonisation imposed abusive, exploitative, racist power relations on society that saw steady gains for Pākehā[5] and disastrous losses for tangata whenua" (Barnes et al., 2013, p.21). As a result, the settler's colonial racism increased, which introduced direct harm to Māori from killing, kidnapping, and diseases that caused profound negative consequences on their well-

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[3] Aotearoa is the Māori name for New Zealand, and for consistency, I use New Zealand throughout the research.
[4] Māori are the indigenous inhabitants of New Zealand.
[5] Pākehā is used to describe the European peoples in New Zealand. Orange, C. (2015). *The treaty of Waitangi*. Bridget Williams Books.

being and health. Since then, the privilege and state power have been determined by ethnicity and culture (Came & McCreanor, 2015) entrenched in the country.

The colonial project was to increase the number of European settlers in New Zealand around that time; sealers and whalers were the first European settlers, followed by missionaries and traders (O'Malley et al., 2010; Te Heuheu Tukino et al., 2017; Warbrick, 2015). As the British settlement increased, the British government decided to negotiate a formal agreement with Māori chiefs for the cession of the country to become a British Colony. "To negotiate with Māori for the establishment of the Crown's authority over the whole or any part of New Zealand" (Werbrick, 2015, p.192). The Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi[6], the Governor's book, when signed in 1840, was meant to be a partnership between Māori and the British Crown. Nevertheless, the tension between Māori and Pākehā escalated (Orange, 2013). A Series of conflicts raged between the British Crown and Māori from 1845 to 1872 due to an unresolved ambiguity (O'Malley et al., 2010) in New Zealand's founding document, the Treaty of Waitangi.

The Treaty was created in two versions, the English language and Te Reo Māori (Māori language) (Sibley & Osborne, 2016). The English version of the Treaty of Waitangi consents to the sovereignty of the British Crown over the islands of New Zealand (O'Malley, 2019; Orange, 2013). Nonetheless, sovereignty employed in the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which was signed by more than 500 Māori chiefs, is most commonly translated as "governorship" or "governance" (O'Malley, 2019; Orange, 2013) rather than sovereignty. Māori were promised full chiefly authority over their

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[6] Treaty of Waitangi; the English version, Te Tiriti o Waitangi; the Māori version. The Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi was a written agreement over the lands of New Zealand made in 1840 Waitangi between the British Crown and more than 500 Māori chiefs. I use Te Tiriti o Waitangi when referring to the Māori version; otherwise, I use the Treaty of Waitangi.

lands and resources and continual control over their affairs, which did not happen (O'Malley, 2019). Regardless of commitment to the Treaty, all Māori doubted the government's intentions, as many Māori feared the superiority of Pākehā marginalising Māori (Orange, 2013, 2015) over time. Māori chiefly authority was threatened by the increasing number of British settlers, and the structure of marginalising Māori chiefs and eliminating their authorities have formally begun (O'Malley et al., 2010; Orange, 2013). In the 1840s, the British settlers adopted a system of government to legislate laws and regulations to continue control over shipping, commerce, and lands, and there was no place for Māori in the government (Orange, 2013, 2015). British sovereignty over lands became a considerable threat to the chieftainship of most of the Māori leaders, and wars erupted between Māori and the British. Wars brought many British troops to the country, and as the number of British settlers increased, the colony's dominance increased over Māori.

Consequently, British settlers considered themselves superior to Māori, and Māori were discriminated against in various ways (Consedine, 2011; Reid et al., 2017). Since then, Māori has experienced different forms of racial discrimination (Came & McCreanor, 2015). For example, there was a separate census for Māori apart from Pākehā between 1877 and 1951, and Māori did not receive old age and widows' pensions until 1945 (Consedine, 2011). Another example, in the years after the Second World War, the number of Māori moving to the cities increased, and views about Māori inability to cope with the demands of the capitalist world and stereotype of Māori as lazy, slovenly and inefficient surfaced (Belich, 2001, 2012). "The vast majority of Māori (93%) felt racism had an impact on the daily, and even more (96%) said that racism was a problem for their wider whānau at least to some extent." (Whakatika Survey, p.9).

Racism and colonial ideology[7] practised on Māori in New Zealand intended to marginalise them to ensure continual sovereignty and control over them (O'Malley et al., 2010). For instance, the systematic ideologies in the involvement of Pākehā in critical issues for Māori have worked to break down their traditional society to weaken its base (the whānau, the hapū, the iwi), which consequently made it almost impossible for Māori to maintain tribal responsibilities for their people (Reid et al., 2017).

The lived experience of injustice, brutality, deprivation and marginalisation has been transmitted across multiple generations, aggravated by land loss, economic disempowerment, poverty, disease and racism that are reflected in diverse statistics of disparity and particularly . . . in health and well-being. (Barens et al., 2013, p.23).

The colonial ideology and racism in New Zealand were to ensure the continued dominance and power of the British colony over Māori by marginalising them, breaking down and diminishing their mana.

The Ongoing Legacy of Racism

Colonial racism did not end after the formal end of colonisation and the creation of the New Zealand state. Racism continues to shape relations in the post-colonial context where Pākehā maintain the continual power and dominance of the majority over the minority. Post-colonial ideology "possess a specific set of socio-structural conditions that foster a unique pair of complementary ideologies responsible for maintaining the status quo" (Sibley & Osbrone, 2016, p.115). The continuous oppressive set of policies and

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[7] Ideology refers to the doctrine, culture hierarchy, and supremacy that forms the basis of policies and economic domination over the native population. Kortright, C. (2003). Colonization and identity. *The Anarchist Library*, 1-14.

structural racism that disadvantage Māori are to maintain dominance and superiority that reflect the status quo of the colonial ideology. Nowadays, New Zealand populations radically reflect growing diversity (Donn et al., 1996); the continuous structural racism of marginalisation of Māori has recently included other racial minority groups. Structural racism is the practice of unfair policies to oppress minority groups to maintain power relations and the superiority of the dominant group (Byrne, 2007; Cormack et al., 2020; Mills & Godley, 2017). Racism occurs between individuals once one's beliefs come into interaction with others; then, racism is now considered an interpersonal (Lawrence & Keleher, 2004). According to the scholars of Critical Race Theory (CRT), structural racism presents in everyday practice and interpersonal racism, whether intentional or unintentional, against minorities and Indigenous People (Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Solorzano et al., 2000; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Racism involves covert and overt actions, insults, and behaviours that negatively influence minority groups; those forms of racism reflect historical structural racism. Racist interpersonal acts are a (re)production of historical structural racism and reflect the expansion of power-relation and dominance across generations (Pack et al., 2015, 2016a). This study uses structural racism to refer to discriminatory practices against ethnic minority groups based on their racial identity to maintain power relations and White supremacy.

Racism against Indigenous People and other ethnic minority groups is typical of colonial societies like New Zealand (Gentry, 2015). The post-colonial aspects created in New Zealand are co-constitutive and maintain and (re)produce socially oppressive conditions (Cormack et al., 2020). New Zealand Statistics (2012) reported that racial minority groups experience racial discrimination in various ways. In New Zealand, the Human Rights Commission has received many racial discrimination complaints against

Māori and minoritised racial groups. The collective dissonance created by the past colonial ideologies, which expanded to present injustices, creates divisions and social and psychological issues. The oppressive policies used to justify inequality within a socio-cultural context that typically governs ethnic group relations (Sibley & Osborne, 2016) contribute to a continuous trauma after colonisation supposedly finished (Reid et al., 2017).

According to Reid et al. (2017), the distressing atmosphere of colonisation and the discriminatory colonial practices that Māori are exposed to might lead to mental and stress disorders. Rage, discomfort, and denial sometimes come as responses from people who experienced or witnessed racism (Came & McCreanor, 2015; Gin et al., 2017). In particular, the Ministry of Health (2014) reported steady high Māori suiciding rates among youth, and Lawson-Te Aho and Liu (2010) argued that suicide among young people is an expression of pain due to trauma colonisation and racism. The cumulative emotional and psychological issues over the lifespan and across generations emanate from massive group trauma experiences due to inequalities and racial discrimination against Māori and racial minority groups in New Zealand (Aho & Liu, 2010; Came & McCreanor, 2015). The intergenerational trauma caused by colonisation is linked to the fundamental and long-lasting structural changes and psychosocial challenges caused by the ongoing process of settler colonisation" (Reid et al., 2017, p.9).

Structural racism expanded to all sectors in New Zealand, and education is one where people experience racism. Walters (2020) argued that New Zealand has one of the least equal education systems in the rich world, with Māori children lagging behind Pākehā, and education focuses primarily on the learning development of the dominant population (Bishop, 2012; Pack et al., 2016b). "The failure of the education system to meet Māori needs subsequently affected employment opportunities, which in turn

influenced earning potential leading to an entrenched cycle of disadvantage" (Came & McGreanor, 2015, p. 27). Racism in education can be illustrated by the Ministry of Education analysis of Youth2000 "the majority of racism and ethnic discrimination comes not from bullying by peers, but from unfair behaviours of adults such as teachers" (He Whakaaro, 2019, p.4). Many minority students across New Zealand experience racism and face discrimination in schools, whether from their teachers or peers (Brown, 2015; Humpage, 2001).

According to Bishop (2012), the prolonged imposed colonial belief systems and structures of racism and 'culture deficiency'[8] in education maintain 'culture superiority'[9]. The subordination and power imbalances in education resulted from the historical colonial in New Zealand. Bishop explains that the cultural deficiency and the negative representations of Māori in education, society, and culture negatively impact the learning achievements of Māori and other minority students in New Zealand. In addition, Bishop demonstrates that culture deficiency serves the structural dominance of Pākehā over Māori by marginalising their culture in the education (Bishop, 2012). The failure of education to meet Māori and other minorities' needs influences their academic achievements and subsequently impacts their employment opportunities. The structural racism of excluding and ignoring the cultures of minority groups in education creates division and academic gaps between racial majorities and minorities and, in many cases, leads to schooling dropouts (Bishop, 2012; Bishop, 2003). Bishop (2012) also highlights that some theorists blamed Māori students for their academic deterioration, reflecting the denial of the dominant racial group of the structural racism in excluding Māori and other minorities to ensure continuous power relations and dominance. The cost of racism

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[8] Cultural deficiency refers to the lack of embedding the cultures of other racial minority groups in education
[9] Referes to the culture of the dominant racial group

has a long-term negative influence on minority students' sense of connection and willingness to interact with their teachers and peers (Donn et al., 1996; Tynes et al., 2013; Vera et al., 2016) due to the exclusion and marginalisation whether in curriculum or classrooms. In addition, studies found that racism contributes to psychological and emotional illness due to the traumatic stress of witnessing or experiencing racism (Jakubowicz et al., 2017; Tynes et al., 2008) in face-to-face or virtual spaces. Explaining the historical racism in New Zealand helps understand how racism against minority students reflects colonial racism heritage and is entrenched in our society.

Racism on Social Media

Identifying Cyber-Racism

Gin et al. (2017) identify cyber-racism as virtual racism, including threatening comments toward Black students. In the New Zealand context, according to NetSafe, cyber-racism is defined as the form of bullying, harassment, and abuse based on colour, race, ethnicity, or nationality. Mills and Godley (2017) identify racism, whether online or offline, as the beliefs and practices used to oppress specific racial groups in society. Some scholars refer to cyber-racism as an 'online racial discrimination (Jakubowicz et al., 2017; Tynes et al., 2008; Tynes et al., 2013; Xine" Yao, 2018). According to Tynes and her colleagues, "online racial discrimination involves denigrating or excluding an individual or group based on race through the use of symbols, voice, video, images, text, and graphic representations" (Tynes et al., 2013, p. 104). In line with this definition, I refer to cyber-racism as any form of ethnic or race-related discrimination in online spaces, including deliberate and unintentional hostile behaviours or activities published online. These include hate comments, texts, racist imagery or representations, and speech intended to

harm people based on their racial or ethnic origin. In the New Zealand context, forms of racial expression/racism in online spaces, whether subtle or hidden, generally reflect historical colonial heritage.

Cyber-racism on Social Media Platforms

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Messenger are popular communication channels. More recently, TikTok has become one of the most popular talked-video sharing platforms and its twin application in China, called Douyin (Marengo et al., 2022; Shutsko, 2020), especially among students. Social media plays a significant role in societies and has become an integral part of individuals' lives, upbringing, and socialisation (Ivanović, 2014; Micheli, 2015). Social media has widely influenced young people's cultures and beliefs through openly shared knowledge and ideas and has changed how people communicate (Ivanović, 2014; Perić, 2017; Siddiqui & Singh, 2016; Teschers & Brown, 2019).

Some scholars argue that social media promotes interconnectedness and interdependence between diverse people through interactive online dialogues that build an understanding of different views (Sawyer & Chen, 2012; Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). Sawyer and Chen (2012) explain that social media links people worldwide regardless of racial and cultural differences and geographical boundaries. Social media allows young people who have become social media literate, no longer just media consumers yet producers, to establish, maintain relationships, find and share information on various issues (Graber & Mendoza, 2012; Ridzuan et al., 2012; Wei-wei, 2016).

Other scholars highlight social media as an outlet for widespread racial discrimination and a fertile ground for spreading race-related hate speech (Gin et al., 2017; Merrill & Åkerlund, 2018; Rice et al., 2016). Gin et al. (2017) described hate speech

as the "racialised hate in cyberspaces" against specific ethnic or racial groups of people. Merrill and Åkerlund (2018) define hate speech in cyberspaces as '*Digital hate',* the hateful language that uses ethnic or race-related discrimination in online spaces against specific ethnic groups of people. Digital hate in online spaces reveals how the platform can foster covert and overt racism (Merrill & Åkerlund, 2018) and be conceived as a cyber-racism (Rithika & Selvaraj, 2013; Tayo et al., 2019). In the United States, scholars indicated that the escalation of racism and hate speech in online spaces is generated by social media users (Daniels, 2009; Maxwell, 2016). They argue that racist ideologies incite against people of colour through hateful online comments, texts, photos, and language to support White supremacy. The racist ideologies are ideas, beliefs, and stereotypes associated with White people against minorities that create hate, disparities, and divisions (Carney, 2016; Daniels, 2009; Maxwell, 2016; Tynes et al., 2008). In the New Zealand context, racist ideologies are the heritage of the historical colonial beliefs against racial minority groups. 'White supremacy' and 'people of colour' are not common terms in New Zealand; however, in my research, I mentioned those terms in some locations; the former refers to the dominance of the racial majority and the latter to racial minority groups.

Cyber-racism can turn a space where students interact and maintain connections into a hostile ground and threatening environment (Gin et al., 2017). According to Herald (2017), Auckland woman Lara Bridger posted a video on social media claiming Sir Peter Leitch, the founder of the Mad Butcher, told her, "Waiheke Island was a White man's island, and [she] should acknowledge that". Bridger's video was widely shared and had received more than 90,000 views before it was removed. Bridger said, "people were going a bit overboard with threats and racist comments". However, Sir Peter denied that his comment was racist but 'light-hearted banter.' Leitch's Facebook page was flooded with

angry posts from members of the public, knee-jerk responses, and digital texts that attempted to deny that the incident was racist rather than taking claims seriously or considering its roots (Herald, 2017). The mad Butcher incident, followed by online racist comments, reflects the heritage of racism ingrained in our society and how race remains a central condition in relationships (Mills & Godley, 2017). "Rather than risk a direct challenge through overt discrimination, Pākehā prejudice can be diverted into passive aggression, micro-assaults, and subtle processes of exclusion of difference, with inevitable negating and damaging impact on its targets". (Came & McCreanor, 2015, p 8). In the New Zealand context, the power relations produced by colonial heritage racism reinforce privilege for White. The privilege of Whiteness that subordinates and targets Māori and other racial minority groups in New Zealand serves power relations of majority groups even in online spaces.

The Influence of Cyber-racism on Students

Over the past couple of decades, there has been a growing concern concerning the influence of cyber-racism. Scholars highlighted that online structural racism through the production and circulation of digital texts about race and racialised dialogue influences students' social practices, emotions (Gin et al., 2017; Jakubowicz et al., 2017; Jakubowicz, 2017; Rice et al., 2016; Tynes et al., 2008; Tynes et al., 2013), and learning (Museus & Truong, 2013).

Online race-related issues contribute to several consequences, including emotional and psychological problems. Experiencing harm online may influence students' maturation and adoption of behavioural patterns that influence their cognitive and emotional development (Globokar, 2018; Perić, 2017). Online spaces facilitate overt racism that includes racial slurs, risky arguments around racial and ethical issues, and

photos of physical violence that create a hostile environment among communities and cause mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety (Tynes et al., 2008). Jakubwicz et al. (2017) argued that cyber-racism and discrimination cause stress that limits the potential for individual growth and flourishing. Jakubwicz and his colleagues supported their argument that stress is associated with other health-related issues that impact growth and flourishing, such as "poor self-rated health, immune dysregulation, hypertension, obesity, sleep difficulty, preterm birth, frequent colds, mental health, and substance use disorders" (Jakubwicz et al., 2017, p.29). Cyber-racism's destructive and subsequent consequences negatively influence self-esteem and significantly lead to psychological issues.

Similarly, Tynes et al. (2008) noted that online racial discrimination decreases students' self-esteem and psychological well-being. Also, Tynes and her colleagues explained that in most cases, race-related discrimination in online spaces triggers emotional and psychological stress that might lead to depression and anxiety. Scholars approved that due to cyber-racism emotional and psychological effects, students struggle to interact with their peers and other people, whether online or offline, influencing their willingness to engage in social practices (Carney, 2016; Tynes et al., 2013). Emotions play an integral part in individuals' well-being and health. Experiencing racism, whether online or offline, has outweighed all negative aspects; it tremendously influences one's life and, in some cases, leads to depression and suicide.

Cyber-racism has become a growing problem among students in recent years (Tynes et al., 2013). Another line of thought is that race-related issues in online spaces create tensions that influence social development and behaviour (Carney, 2016). Cyber-racism directed toward a specific racial group generates a hatred environment among majorities and minorities and influences their social practices and engagement. Racist

content in online spaces creates division and social distance among students and negatively impacts their relationships with specific ethnic groups (Carney, 2016; Tynes et al., 2008; Tynes et al., 2013). For example, the "Breaking Point" campaign, which included images of dark-haired and olive-skinned refugees waiting in line to enter the E.U., argued after the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union in the "Brexit" referendum. "In the months leading up to the vote, those in favour of leaving were circulating increasingly racist and anti-immigration digital texts via the #leave hashtag and the" Breaking Point" campaign" (Mills & Godley, 2017, p. 9). The #leave racist digital texts and "Breaking Point" campaigns circulated on social media platforms defended the privilege of Whiteness and were evident that real worlds, neither physical nor virtual, are posted (Mills & Godley, 2017). The #Leave and "Breaking point" reflected how White people controlled social media and allowed the circulation of unethical racial slurs, speech, and comments to serve their ideologies for the privilege of Whiteness. The circulation of texts, slurs, photos, and stereotypes against minorities on social media is systematically instructed to eliminate minorities/immigrants to continue maintaining the privilege of Whiteness (Mills & Godley, 2017).

Similarly, New Zealand's social media platforms recently were overwhelmed with "gutless" racism directed against Pasifika communities as the COVID-19 outbreak continues to grow in New Zealand. People started blaming Pasifika People for spreading the virus and causing new lockdown measures. Racial discrimination against Pasifika went viral on social media platforms that negatively influenced them (Guardian, 2020) and created social tension. Online racism separates people and creates a hatred environment among ethnic groups, negatively influencing their social cognitive behaviour (Tinsley, 2018; Tynes et al., 2008).

However, ethical constructive race-related online conversations, such as interactive online dialogues, can help understand different views and build good relationships between diverse people (Sawyer & Chen, 2012; Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). In 2013, the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag was rallying the cry for "Black Lives" following the acquittal of George Zimmerman, who killed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin. The hashtag was invigorated after the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, in August 2014 (Carney, 2016) at the hands of a White police officer. #BlackLivesMatter travelled around the globe. Many people worldwide of different ages and racial groups interacted with the anti-racist movement showing solidarity with the Black people in the U.S (Carney, 2016). Also, they used it to shed light on anti-Black racism elsewhere. As a result, according to scholars, the positive interaction and solidarity with online anti-racist campaigns positively influenced relationships with people from different ethnic or racial backgrounds in online spaces and face-to-face environments (Brinkman, 2018; Xine" Yao, 2018). I deliberately mentioned the example of #BlackLivesMatter to stress the moral attitude of what D'Olimpio calls '*Critical Perspectivism*', the practice of being ethically engaged with media information to encounter the social and ethical challenges that social media creates (D'Olimpio, 2018; Flores & James, 2013). Engaging in constructive race-related conversations in online spaces fosters social and racial attitudes (Lake et al., 2018). For instance, the solidarity in the #BlackLivesMattre hashtag demonstrated how online ethical and constructive engagement on race-related issues united diverse ethnic people and consolidated their interactions and relationships (Carney, 2016).

Concerning the influence of cyber-racism on learning, scholars focus on racism offline and the relationship between racism in physical spaces and achievement gaps (Merolla & Jackson, 2019). Other scholars highlighted that cyber-racism causes achievement gaps due to the deterioration of the academic developments (Museus &

Truong, 2013). Merolla and Jackson's (2019) study uncovers offline mechanisms that link race with education and discuss racial disparities in academic achievements. They found that the structural racism in education and the "system of social organisation that categorises individuals by race and subsequently confers advantages on some and disadvantages others is the fundamental cause of educational disparities" (Merolla & Jackson, 2019, p. 8).

Much like racism offline, cyber-racism is becoming a public health issue and a problem of concern, especially in higher education and among young people (Gin et al., 2017; Raju et al., 2015; Ramirez, 2017; Rice et al., 2016; Rithika & Selvaraj, 2013; Tayo et al., 2019). Scholars demonstrate that viewing racist content online or experiencing cyber-racism is similar to the lived experience of racism in the offline/face-to-face life (Chan, 2017). "Online experiences, just as those offline, can trigger emotional and physiological responses in the form of stress, which can lead to feelings of depression and anxiety" (Tyne et al., 2013, pp 568). Online racial issues demand sustained awareness of social and racial justice (Xine" Yao, 2018), giving an alarm to all people to take steps to increase tolerance (Masko, 2014), ethical engagement (D'Olimpio, 2018), understanding others' differences and their rights, and equality like White people, in online and offline spaces. Cyber-racism can turn a space where students interact and maintain connections into a hostile ground and threatening environment (Gin et al., 2017). In the New Zealand context, many scholars discuss racism and the negative representations of Māori in media and its influence on their well-being and health (Nairn et al., 2006; Rankine et al., 2011; Victoria University of Wellington. Media Research & New Zealand. Broadcasting Standards, 2005; Walker, 1990).

Nonetheless, there is a gap in studies in the New Zealand context that discuss how higher education minority students experience racism on social media and how they cope

with it. Building on the idea that cyber-racism influences students' emotions, social practices, and learning. In this study, I explore how cyber-racism influences higher education minority students' emotions, social practices, and learning through their narratives of a lived incident of cyber-racism. In designing my research questions, it was crucial to explore the dimensions of the influence of racism on social media on students' emotions, social practices and learning to explore how students cope with online racism.

Coping Strategies

The escalation of racism in online spaces and the inconsistent use of ethical attitudes in race-related online contexts engender greater moral sensitivity (Flores & James, 2013) and influence students' lives. Accordingly, questions are raised concerning coping strategies to mitigate the negative influence of cyber-racism. Due to the stressful effect of cyber-racism on students' mental and psychological well-being (Greer et al., 2015; Tynes et al., 2008), students use coping strategies to moderate the influence of racism (Greer, 2021; Greer et al., 2015). Coping is defined as individuals' actions to moderate, manage, and endure difficulties experienced, and individuals' attributes, relationships, and social contexts reflect on coping strategies (Compas et al., 2017; Greer et al., 2015; Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007). Greer et al. (2015) defined coping strategies as individuals' efforts to manage the strong negative emotions associated with race-related experiences. Victims of racism who appraise race-related incidents they experience in their lives and possess strategies to address the stressor may experience stress-free over time (Greer et al., 2015). The conscious and optional effort that regulates emotions and behaviours associated with stressful incidents helps individuals "to function adaptively in emotionally arousing situations." (Compas et al., 2017, p.940). Coping strategies of avoidance (avoid) and confrontation (approach) are associated with

race and racism-related issues among students in the higher education (Greer et al., 2015).

According to Greer et al. (2015), students of colour attending predominately White campuses often report subtle and hostile forms of racism in their social interactions with their peers and college members. Coping strategies include avoidance and confrontation dimensions (Greer et al., 2015), which are problem-solving and problem avoidance strategies (Stanisławski, 2019); both strategies require appraisals of race-related incidents—evaluating incidents (race-related experiences) to choose coping strategies to contribute to the development of regulatory and everyday resilience (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007).

Problem-solving refers to approach coping strategies, as explained by Stanislawski (2019), acknowledging critical thinking of situations and undertaking efforts to choose the most appropriate solutions to solve the problem, which refers to confrontation strategies described by Greer and her colleagues (2015). Developing critical thinking helps students critically evaluate the perception of normality created and disseminated via dominant ideologies (Macaluso & Thomas, 2015) on social media. Also, critical thinking helps in the appraisals and evaluations of race-related content on social media that requires action. However, problem avoidance strategies avoid the problem by reducing thinking and efforts to solve the problem and probably giving up and escaping (Greer et al., 2015; Stanisławski, 2019). Avoidance coping strategies are perceived as negative actions for escaping, and giving up will not help solve the problem; nonetheless, confrontation coping strategies are perceived as positive for they contribute to solving the problem and reduce its negative influence (Greer et al., 2015; Stanisławski, 2019). Further, avoidance and confrontation coping strategies reflect positive and negative

characteristics of individuals (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007) when dealing with problems.

Further, Passmore and Mandryk (2020) found that young people used approach and avoid coping strategies with racially discriminatory stressors in digital gaming. They referred to avoid coping strategies as the "attempts to ignore, tolerate, or passively not engage with the act" (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020, p.8). Also, avoid coping strategies refer to blocking players (attackers) to eliminate the discriminatory racial sources or by changing one's (victims') identity on the gaming profile, values and beliefs (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020). In contrast, they referred to approach coping strategies based on one's appraisals of racist situations by engaging in aggressive engagement, calling out discriminators, or/and seeking support by involving others like family, friends, and bystanders (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020).

In the digital age, close attention must be given to critical thinking and problem-solving skills and strategies that students (digital citizens) can employ in online spaces to manage risks and protect themselves from online harm, including in the cyber-racism (Rice et al., 2016). In addition, extending ethical and behavioural skills into the digital world to use digital technologies responsibly and ethically (D'Olimpio, 2018; Graber & Mendoza, 2012) encourage online civic engagement (Forkosh Baruch & Erstad, 2018; Maxwell, 2016; Rice et al., 2016) and respectful discourse with ethnically diverse others. As Stanislawski (2019) explained, problem-solving requires a critical assessment of the situations and critical thinking skills needed to respond most appropriately to solve the problem. Therefore, we can think of problem-solving; approach coping strategies that are grounded in critical as well as ethical practice as a moral attitude of what D'Olimpio (2018) calls '*critical perspectivism* _that supports the practice of being ethically and critically engaged with media information to encounter the social and ethical challenges

that social media creates. To be digital citizens, schools should teach students how to be morally engaged in the digital world, critically think, and compassionately understand the mass media information (D'Olimpio, 2018).

Critical perspectivism is a moral agent that uses rational emotions with the vital importance of considering diverse others globally that determines our actions in online spaces. D'Olimpio refers to rational emotions such as compassion; she argues that engaging with understanding and an imaginative manner in online spaces allows young people to accept the idea that "together we form a community of people seeking the truth and a harmonious life" (D'Olimpio, 2018, p. 11). She refers to the imaginative manner as thinking of the online content 'what it is like' for others before taking action, 'putting yourself in others' shoes'. The #Illridewihtyou hashtag is an outstanding example of people being critically perspectival on social media when interacting with diverse others (Guardian, n.d). The hashtag went viral in Australia when a shooter held people; hostage in a cafe in Sydney. The #Illridewithyou went viral on Twitter to support Muslims in Australia who feared an Islamophobic backlash (Guardian, n.d). Putting ourselves in the shoes of others can help us feel compassion towards individuals' differences and ethically think before taking action that causes harm to others. Being critical perspective and imaginative in understanding what racist content is like on social media allows young people to think critically about what promotes or inhibits ethical approaches (D'Olimpio, 2020; Flores & James, 2013; Forkosh Baruch & Erstad, 2018) and coping strategies. Developing students' critical thinking and ethical attitudes (coping strategy) allow them to critically assess the online content (cyber-racism) (Ivanović, 2014; Marchi, 2012; Teschers & Brown, 2019), engaging with compassion (D'Olimpio, 2020) with diverse others online by listing carefully to one another regardless of any racial, ethnic, or cultural differences (Sawyer & Chen, 2012). In addition, critical thinking and moral attitude

enable students to engage ethically with race-related issues in online spaces, demonstrating respect for the concepts of privacy and freedom of speech in the digital world for all diverse people.

In this research, I refer to coping strategies in line with Greer et al. (2015) and Passmore and Mandryk (2020). They distinguished between approach and avoid coping strategies as moderators for racial discriminatory stressors. I assess students' coping strategies regarding critical thinking of the students' actions and critical evaluation of racist incidents seeking solutions. For example, approach coping strategies seek to build knowledge about racism/anti-racism by engaging in constructive conversation with diverse racial people or creating counter-posts as a problem-solving strategy that contributes to challenging or mitigating racism online. In addition, I assess students' suggestions of ethical engagement as a strategy taken by education and society for anti-racist generations. Ethical engagement refers to the ethical attitudes of what D'Olimpio calls *'critical perspectivism'* 'concerning ethical engagement in a constructive conversation with diverse others on social media platforms and coping strategies.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The escalation of racism in online spaces and its consequences on minority students grounded the focus and purpose of this current study. I examined higher education minority students' experiences of cyber-racism and its influence on their emotions, social practices, learning, and coping strategies. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and an online questionnaire. Participants were asked about their lived incidents of cyber-racism and its influence on their emotions, social practices, and learning, and how they manage racism on social media. A qualitative approach was chosen to explore participants' experiences to assess how students understand, make sense of, and manage racism online. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data collected from participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006) in the semi-structured zoom interviews and the open-ended responses through the online questionnaire. The transcribed data were manually coded with the most frequently used words. Thematic analysis showed emergent themes primarily revolved around the nature and content of cyber-racism and the contexts in which they occur, cyber-racism influence, and students' coping strategies. Racism in this study is understood in line with critical race scholarship that posits that racism is woven into the structure of Western society, its laws, policies, and social practices (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Race Critical Research & Racism Online

Critical Race Theory (CRT) first emerged as a theory in legal studies in the US, seeking to transform the relationship between race, racism, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 1998, 2001). Since then, CRT has found application across several academic disciplines, including the education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Lynn et al., 2002; Solorzano et al., 2000). Passmore and Mandryk (2020) draw on CRT to understand players' coping strategies with discriminatory racial stress in video games. Passmore and Mandryk used CRT to design their survey questions on the centrality of racial identity and compare experiences, perceptions, and beliefs around racial discriminatory coping strategies (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020). They described "how player racial identities inform in-game behaviour and exposure to types of discrimination and how coping strategies are navigated." (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020, p.1). They discussed the cumulative effect of racial discrimination on well-being and one's formation of beliefs concerning others, and the ability to advocate for one or others (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020).

Studying online racism, Mills and Godley draw on CRT scholarship to demonstrate that "racism [is] interwoven in all aspects of society, including seemingly benign and neutral literacy policies such as the use of technology in schools and online access." (2017, p.2). They argue that racism is structural and embedded in social media and digital spaces (Mills & Godley, 2017). Drawing on different tenets of CRT, they discuss how racism is reproduced online in various ways, such as the underrepresentation of people of colour on televisions and films and white control over the representations of race in video games. In addition, social media platforms and internet sites are controlled by white people (Mills & Godley, 2017). Mills and Godley discuss that colour-blind approaches on social media have led to low multicultural competence. In addition, they

discuss the contemporary contribution of counterstories as potent tools in online spaces to challenge racism. CRT's theorists define counterstories as "a method of telling the stories of those whose experiences are not often told (i.e., those on the margins of society)". (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p.32). Despite the underrepresentation of voices of colour, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter can be fast avenues of disseminating such counter stories (Mills & Godley, 2017).

In an education context, CRT has been used to understand the racial inequalities and educational barriers for people of colour and examine the ways race and racism impact the structures, processes, and discourses within a higher educational context (Solorzano et al., 2000; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). For example, Solórzano and Yosso (2002) discussed people of colour's marginalisation in educational institutions by documenting people of colour's voices through their stories. Their work thus also interrogates whose stories are privileged or silenced within educational institutions. Solórzano and Yosso highlight the power of personal narratives, storytelling, and counterstories for exposing, analysing, and challenging majoritarian stories (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). CRT utilises storytelling and counterstories to elevate minority voices, perspectives, and experiences and allow minoritised people to speak up about their experiences with racism (Delgado, 1990; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Storytelling is used to disseminate vital information (Graham et al., 2011) about racism and the expression of oppression.

In designing this research's questions, it was vital to unpack the contexts in which racism experiences occur and have differential influences on minority students. I relied on students' lived incidents of cyber-racism as narratives that achieved the storytelling method used by Solórzano and Yosso (2002). When creating the interview and questionnaire questions, I relied on questions that allowed students' narratives of a

specific incident of cyber-racism they experienced to be expressed in the form of questions and answers. Racism is not simply an individual belief but entails a set of ideas, practices, and a system of ubiquitous inequities in society (Crenshaw, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2011). When analysing the data, I specifically focused on the narratives that represent storytelling and demonstrated how experiences of racism online are reflections of structural racism in the New Zealand context. Exploring the forms of racism on social media through students' narratives and their influence helped me understand how students' coping strategies are navigated (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020).

Research Questions

The study posed the following questions:

Main research question

What coping strategies do students use to moderate the influence of cyber-racism on their emotions, social practices, and learning?

Sub-questions

1- How do students experience cyber-racism?

2- What is the influence of cyber-racism on students' emotions, social practices, and learning?

3- What strategies do students employ to cope with/manage cyber-racism harm?

Research Method

This study examines cyber-racism and its influence on minority students in higher education in New Zealand. It explores the narratives about racist incidents on social media, their influence, and students' coping strategies to manage online racism harm. A

qualitative-narrative approach was applied to analyse participants' interviews and survey data.

Generally, qualitative research in education uses various methods for data collection, such as interviews, structured, semi-structured, and unstructured, within individuals or/and students' focus groups. Asking questions to provide answers and information about the study phenomenon and address the aims and objectives of the research (Gill et al., 2008). Qualitative data is narrative and descriptive (Drew et al., 2008); it takes the form of words rather than numbers as empirical materials. Some describe the written result of the qualitative research as "anecdotal" because it contains quotations that intend to describe a particular situation, view of the world, and capture the interchange between two or more people (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Yin, 2011). The written word is essential in qualitative recording data and disseminating findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). According to Cohen (2013), the qualitative narrative approach is a powerful way of presenting qualitative data of making meaning "in terms of 'storied text' which catch the human condition, human intentionality and the vividness of human experience very fully and the multiple perspectives and lived realities of participants" (Cohen, 2013, p.664). The qualitative narrative approach is evidence-based because it relies on personalised stories through personal experiences that convey and bring information to life (Cohen et al., 2013).

Therefore, a qualitative narrative approach was chosen while it is not identical to storytelling in CRT; this approach allowed analysing of participants' experiences and responses in more detail. The qualitative narrative approach allowed a selective focus to be adopted, including themes, critical incidents, behaviours, and actions (Cohen et al.,

2013) that organised the analysis process. The themes were identified based on participants' critical incidents[10] of cyber-racism.

At the start, I chose to collect the data through recorded semi-structured focus group interviews to open the space for participants to tell their stories of cyber-racism. My research focused on collecting data through students' critical incidents of cyber-racism. The study was approved by the University of Canterbury Human Research Ethics Committee in July 2021. The proposal included collecting data through focus group interviews. Still, due to the second wave of COVID-19 in New Zealand and compliance with the precautionary measures, it was challenging to collect data from face-to-face interviews. Therefore, the research proposal was amended to include zoom interviews and an anonymous online questionnaire, and it was approved in September 2021. I conducted one zoom interview, and the rest of the data was collected through the online questionnaire.

I created a blog (Appendix 1) to include all research-related information, such as the research e-advertisement (Appendix 2), research information sheet (Appendix 3), participants' consent form (Appendix 4), and an introductory video (Appendix 5). The introductory video explains the research aim and purpose and my interest and experience in this study. The blog also included links for the zoom interview, an anonymous online questionnaire, and a post highlighting the main research points. The anonymous online questionnaire was created using the University of Canterbury Qualtrics Survey (Appendix 6). The blog also included information highlighting students' rights and the study's possible dissemination. Participants were informed about

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[10] From now onwards, I refer to students' narrative as a critical incident or incident

voluntary participation. Students are free to withdraw from the study without any consequences and are not coercive to participate (Mutch, 2005), as explained in the research information sheet. In addition, information about confidentiality, anonymous participation, and dissemination are included in the research information sheet. All data were collected, analysed and published in ways that prevent the recognition of the individual (Cullen, 2005). The research information sheet includes information about students' privacy and safety to minimise the risk and maximise the benefits (O'Neill, 2008). Consent forms were also available online. As for the online questionnaire option, participants were asked to sign the consent form online before commencing the questionnaire as a mandatory field and to be downloaded, signed, and sent to me via email for the interview option.

Sampling Strategies and Recruitment

Participants were recruited through social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter). Several criteria guided participant sampling to ensure participants could reflect on their lived incidents of cyber-racism. The study targeted higher education minority students aged eighteen and above who experienced cyber-racism in New Zealand. After gaining approval from the University of Canterbury Human Research Ethics Committee, I planned to reach as many participants as possible. Thus, I contacted the Students' Association Clubs (SAC) at the University of Canterbury that match my research targeted sample, asking their permission to post my research e-advertisement on their Facebook pages. The research e-advertisement included the blog and questionnaire links. After gaining SACs' permission, the survey and research-related information blog links were distributed through SACs' Facebook pages. I also posted all research-related information and questionnaire links on my personal Twitter account.
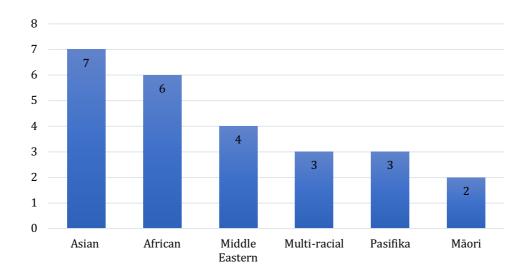
Research Interview and Questionnaire Questions

I designed the questions in an open-ended format to allow participants to explain their incidents of cyber-racism in detail (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). I based my questions on the centrality of race and racism in the social media (Mills & Godley, 2017), asking about students' incidents of cyber-racism, its influence, and how they cope with it (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020). I used two methods to collect qualitative information from participants, a questionnaire and a zoom interview. Questionnaire and interview methods allowed participants to choose the most convenient way to open up and write/talk about their incident of cyber-racism. Questions in both the questionnaire and interview were similar. Also, all questions were optional because participants' well-being and safety were my priority. Participants were asked about their experiences with cyber-racism and its influence; they optionally shared their stories of lived racist incidents. Then in the following questions, participants reflected on their actions toward the racist incidents they experienced on social media and their coping strategies in protecting themselves from cyber-racism harm. Ultimately, I asked the participants about their recommendations for online free of racism.

Participants

The targeted sample was higher education minority students aged eighteen and above in New Zealand. At the start, I targeted youth, but given the broad age range of students, I have not limited the sample to any particular age range. The sample included participants who identified as Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Multi-racial, Pasifika, and Māori (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

The Number of Participants by Ethnicity/Race

I received sixty-four responses from both the recorded zoom interviews and questionnaire. However, twenty-five responses were considered to be analysed; one zoom interview and twenty-four questionnaire responses after excluding incompleted and duplicated questionnaire responses and those outside of New Zealand. All participants' names were randomly changed into pseudonyms to ensure anonymity (Table 1).

TABLE 1

Participants' Pseudonyms, Age, and Ethnicity/Race based on Number of

Participants by Ethnicity/Race

Name (Pseudonym)	Age	Ethnicity/Race
Agiou	22	Asian
Cho	22	Asian
Luke	20	Asian
Olivia	21	Asian
Rose	20	Asian
Stacey	32	Asian
Tom	21	Asian
Adam	21	African
David	21	African

Ezy	20	African
Kate	25	African
Peter	25	African
Sally	22	African
Ahmad	22	Middle Eastern
Fadi	25	Middle Eastern
Farid	19	Middle Eastern
Mina	19	Middle Eastern
Sandra	20	Multi-racial
Thomas	23	Multi-racial
Zak	31	Multi-racial
Aden	19	Pasifika
Fetu	31	Pasifika
Matt	20	Pasifika
Ariki	21	Māori
Manaia	23	Māori

Data Collection Process & Interview Procedure

Participants who chose to participate in the study through the interview were given the option to select between zoom or face-to-face interviews. Due to the sensitivity of the research topic, the flexible parameters in conducting the research ensured privacy, confidentiality, and a sense of safety for each participant. At the start of the interview, I asked the participant's permission to record the interview. Recording the zoom interview was essential to help obtain transcript data. I began the zoom interview with an introduction about the research topic, purpose and participants' anonymous participation and dissemination to ensure participants fully understood the research purpose and their rights. I have created a set of safety and privacy rules for the interview (Appendix 7) to ensure the participant's safety. In addition, I highlighted that all questions are optional, and the participant has the right not to answer any of the questions that cause her any emotional, cultural, or psychological stress. Several broad questions guided the zoom interview, but mainly the questions were similar to those in the online questionnaire. In the interview, the participant recalled a racist incident that

happened to her and then reflected on how the incident influenced her emotions, social practices, and learning. In addition, the participant reflected on her actions towards racist people on social media, explaining how she responded to cyber-racism when the racist incident occurred. Finally, the participant was asked about her recommendations for an anti-racist generation. Overall, this approach allowed flexible and in-depth participant-directed discussion due to the sensitivity of the research topic and ensured that the interview covered the desired topic.

Students who chose to participate in the research through the online questionnaire proceeded directly to its link. I have designed the questionnaire to allow participants to skip any questions they do not like to answer. Furthermore, I added an option to move between questionnaire pages to ensure the flexibility for adding or deleting the answer. In the questionnaire, participants answered the questions and wrote about a racist incident that happened to them and its influence on their emotions, social practices, and learning. Then, participants explained how they managed online racism and presented suggestions for change in education and society for an online free of racism.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Summary of Findings

The analysis of data was done in multiple steps. Firstly, I extracted all data I got from the anonymous online qualitative questionnaire and online zoom interview into an excel sheet to be easy to track and analyse. Codes and themes were created manually (Table 2); coding was essential to categorise the data to develop themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006) that facilitate the analysis. Codes were used through the extracted data, capturing and identifying the main aspects of the research in the data items that form the basis of repeated patterns (themes) across the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Codes were used as a group of words assigned as a salient summative essence capturing the main ideas of students' experiences of cyber-racism, influences, and coping strategies. However, themes and sub-themes were used in presenting the data as they are broader than codes. Themes captured the features of participants' accounts, characterising their experiences relevant to the research questions. Sub-themes were used as secondary to the major themes. "Sub-themes are essentially themes-within-a-theme. They can be useful for giving structure to a huge and complex theme and demonstrating the hierarchy of meaning within the data." (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.92). Thus, data were presented according to the categories, themes, and sub-themes generated from the codes.

The Analysis

In this section, I presented the data and unpacked race and racism through students' incidents of cyber-racism, its influences, and coping strategies. I presented the

data based on the categories, themes, and sub-themes generated from the codes. Codes were formed from participants' responses following a rigorous method of reading and re-reading the transcribed data collected from the questionnaire. A verbatim transcript of the zoom interview was essential to ensure trustworthiness. Then, all keywords in the entire text were highlighted to create codes related to a particular segment of texts within the transcripted data. Next, codes were grouped to create an overarching theme that capsulated each group of codes to create categories based on my research questions (Table 2).

TABLE 2

Categories, Themes, Sub-themes, and Codes for the Descriptive Collected Data for the Analysis

Category	Theme	Sub-themes	Codes	Description
Experiences of Cyber-racism	Interpersonal Racism	⇒ Culture and racial identity ⇒ Origin ⇒ Sense of belonging/exclusion ⇒ Appearance Stereotype	▪ Mocking my culture, history, and language ▪ Blaming China for COVID-19 ▪ Get back to your country ▪ We do not want you here ▪ You are so Black ▪ You look horrible	Experiences of racism on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, other communication apps) of students in New Zealand.
Cyber-racism Influence on Victims	1. Emotions 2. Social practices 3. Learning	⇒ Trust issues ⇒ Multilayered emotions/resentment ⇒ Low self-confidence ⇒ Hesitant talking to people ⇒ Hate people and isolation ⇒ Negative influence ⇒ No influence	▪ Disconnection and distrust ▪ Confusion ▪ Mixed feelings ▪ Feel incompetent ▪ Afraid to approach people ▪ Isolation ▪ Not attending classes/uni or school ▪ Focus more on study	The influence of cyber-racism on students' social practices, emotions, and learning.
Coping Strategies 1. **Coping Strategies by the Victims of Cyber-racism** 2. **Educational and Social Change**	 **1.1 Critical thinking** **2.1 Ethical engagement**	⇒ **Approach strategies** ⇒ **Avoid strategies**	▪ Educate (being informative/defendant) ▪ Stand-up ▪ Report ▪ block people involved ▪ Ignore ▪ Delete comments or photos ▪ Accept ▪ Respect ▪ Kind ▪ Compassionate ▪ Ethics ▪ Use social media effectively	Students' coping strategies with racist incidents they experienced on social media platforms Students' recommendations for anti-racist generation and actions taken by the society and education for online free of racism.

Experiences of Cyber-Racism

This category capsulated the themes and sub-themes of the grouped codes related to racism participants experienced on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and other communication apps). Data was presented based on the major theme and sub-themes that emerged from the grouped codes.

Interpersonal Racism

This theme capsulated the grouped codes related to racism between individuals when interacting with others of different racial groups. Individuals' racial beliefs reflect on their public interactions and perform an act of exclusion, marginalisation, and discrimination based on students' race.

$\Rightarrow$ **Cultural and Racial Identity**

Data demonstrated that the intentional or unintentional cyber-racism targeting Māori in New Zealand appeared to illustrate the subordination of Māori and their language to ensure superiority. "Ariki" mentioned how people on social media reproduce racism against Māori that reflects the colonial heritage of marginalising Māori's culture and language "I've experienced a number of hateful comments about my race, forcing Te Reo on people, and comments about our history and culture. I received an anonymous message calling me several racist slurs."

"Manaia" also explained how people mocked his culture on social media. "Hateful comments on Facebook about my culture. Some people were making fun of my culture and race, teasing our Kapa haka dances and the way we looked while performing." He said.

"Sandra" explained her experience with cyber-racism, especially on the news or political posts. "Sandra" talked about her experience as a bi-racial person (Māori and

Pākehā) who struggles with the disparities in her family. "Sandra" observed hateful comments of people commenting things like "dole bludgers", "this is NZ, not Aotearoa", or "there is a reason they overpopulate our prisons" on articles about Māori people. "Sandra" talked about an incident she remembers vividly.

> Seeing my nana post on her Facebook slamming Jacinda Ardern for taxing utes and her older mates commenting things like "we should be taxing those we have been giving handouts too like the Māoris . . . I felt confused why my nana would say that when my grandad is Māori and how that would make him feel.

> The slurs of "dole-bludgers", "this is NZ, not Aotearoa", "there is a reason they overpopulate our prisons", and "forcing Te Reo Māori" and the negatives about Māori on social media are most likely reflected the historical colonial heritage of New Zealand. The former slurs reflect the colonial heritage of marginalising and spreading negatives about Māori to eliminate them to maintain power-relation. Generally, Indigenous People of a colonial country experience various forms of racism that reflect historical colonial ideology to maintain power relations and superiority (Gentry, 2015). Structural racism stems from a long time ago breaking down Māori's tradition, whakapapa, culture, language, and history to weaken their bases (the whānau, the hapū, the iwi) in the society (O'Malley, 2019; Te Heuheu Tukino et al., 2017). Structural racism on social media ensures the sustainability of the dominant power relations and superiority to Māori and other racial minorities.

"Fadi" mentioned how he experienced cyber-racism because of his culture; he said,

> On Facebook, people made fun of my own country and my race; I shared the news of the Pharaohs' parade that happened recently in Egypt, and some people started

making fun of the event and said that all fake and photoshop; people in Egypt still living in the deserts and riding camels as transportation.

⇒ **Origin**

Hateful comments relating China to the virus and their culture reflect the racism that presumably serves dominant group purposes. Spreading unjust beliefs concerning other racial minorities tended to explain how prevalent groups practice racism toward racial minorities for the continuity of power-relation. "Olivia" explained how hateful comments about the Chinese circulated on social media during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Facebook and Twitter, but mostly Facebook. In news posts, people relate Chinese with COVID-19. People said this is what we get from Chinese eating dogs." "Tom", who is also Asian, mentioned examples of racism such as "Anti Asian sentiment after Covid, calling Covid wuflu, not eating Chinese food or one might get Covid, covert comments on how good my English is for a foreigner, calling me exotic". In addition, "Agiou" explained how haters and media reports target Asians and spread hateful messages against them.

Media reports tend to balming and shame China for the outbreak of COVID-19, and I read comments like "I wanna kill every f**kn Asian", and "she is the one spreading the virus, she eats bats", "I wish I could put them all in a concentration camp."

Race remains a central condition in relationships between majorities and minorities in online spaces like physical spaces. "Rose" explained how cyber-racism on social media, news, and media reports influenced people's behaviour towards specific racial groups. She said,

one example would be coming from personal experience (not relevant to online photos or comments - however, I would think the incident was a result of an influence of cyber-racism). I vividly remember one of my former classmates back

in senior college shouting something in the lines of "let us stay away from Asians - they'll infect you with it [COVID-19]". People in my class seemed not to care and believed him because I being the only Asian in the room - sat alone on one side of the room while everyone sat on the other side of the room. It was very distressing and humiliating on my part, having known how global news reports have put pressure against Asians being the roots of COVID-19; and, as a result of that, less-educated or ill-mannered students have been influenced with the decision to fuel up their hatred and strip Asians from our rights to be respected.

⇒ **Sense of Belonging/Exclusion**

The data also demonstrated that interpersonal racism targeted participants' sense of belonging. A sense of belonging is crucial in developing connections, relationships, and mental and physical health (Tynes et al., 2013). Cyber-racism targeted students' sense of belonging to probably exclude them and weaken their relations with people and the country they live in to serve power-relation purposes. "Cho" explained how racist people on social media targeted him and made him feel excluded.

As a Korean in secondary school at the time, I was always exposed to hurtful comments about my ethnicity. I was tagged in a photo with a couple of friends at the lake. I remember looking through the comments, one of them stating that I don't belong there.

Also, "Matt" explained his experience of cyber-racism, which targeted his sense of belonging. He said,

People posted racist comments about my race and said, get back to your island. On FB, A Pasifkia guy had a video about our culture, and people started posting racist comments about us and said, get back to your island; we do not want you here.

Rose mentioned, "in relation to the COVID-19 response, people in social media.

(including online articles) would comment things like "get out of our country".

Racism allows race hate speech, comments, and slurs to emerge on social media, presumably reflecting dominants' reluctance to treat racism as a severe cyber problem to ensure superiority.

$\Rightarrow$ **Appearance Stereotypes**

Data demonstrated dehumanising other racial minorities based on their skin colour and appearance in a derogatory manner on social media platforms. Dehumanising generally stimuli stereotypes associated with White people concerning other racial groups serves power privilege. The dehumanising is a form of racism in which perpetrators do not view victims as having vulnerable emotions or feelings. "Ariki" explained how as a Māori student, he experienced stereotypes online, "pertaining to the ideas of Māori being lazy, calling māori shit skinned, along with a suggestion that I kill myself". Hateful comments on social media tend to stimulate stereotypes associated with the dominant group concerning other racial minorities to ensure power-relation. "Farid" illustrated how racial minority groups are exposed to racism online; he said,

> I have observed people of colour being discriminated against online countless times. Things like hateful comments and messages are common. I have seen people say things to all sorts of races. I can recall once an Indian being discriminated against and hateful comments being hurled at him such as "curry-muncher" or "dairy-owner".

Similarly, "Luke" explained stereotypes against Asians on social media "there have been comments online referring to my race in a derogatory manner on social media sites such as Instagram/Snapchat. Some things said that I eat cats/dogs, calling me a "chink".

Also, "Stacey" explained how people on social media dehumanised her based on her skin colour, which changed her confidence in her racial identity. She said,

Some people negatively commented on my skin tone - which prior to that, I never felt bad about. I was referred to as n**** leg ... I was shocked. I couldn't believe it had happened. I feel incredibly privileged in many ways, but that experience gave me a taste of how dehumanising it is to have someone blatantly call out your skin tone and react negatively to it. In hindsight, it was a teachable moment for me to know what it feels like, and it wasn't nice.

"Aden" mentioned, "I posted a photo of me with my family, and people were making fun of our skin tone and how we look." Likewise, "Peter" and "Zak" mentioned that people were racist because of their skin colour. "Peter," said, "I posted pictures of myself on Facebook, and they commented on me, saying I am too dark, and they said horrible things." "Zak," said, "Yes, they hated my skin colour because I am black, like too black in nature ... they threatened to call the police on me and called me a thief."

Some participants mentioned the superiority and dominance of White people over colour. "Adam said,

There was a photo of a gorilla, and a guy mentioned my name. It made me feel ashamed of my race at that time, but after I got older, I regretted that because those sick racist people tried to put other races down to enjoy superiority and dominance.

Furthermore, "Tom" stated that the cyber-racism incident he was exposed to "did reinforce the perception that white people still consider themselves superior because of skin colour and they really think that this place is theirs and not colonised."

Racism is embedded on social media, like physical spaces, which is as ordinary as breathing and reflects the superiority of the dominant group over other racial minorities.

"Ezy" mentioned how racism against minorities is typical; he said, "Yes, just the "*standard"* and called for messages, being called a monkey." Also, "Fetu" described that he received "hateful comments on public forums . . . Facebook page entitled "Pasifika Facebook", commenting things like "Samoans are big fat people."

Cyber-Racism Influence on Victims

This category capsulated the influence of cyber-racism on students' emotions, social practices, and learning. Data was presented based on the major themes and sub-themes that emerged from the grouped codes. I highlighted all keywords in the generated codes associated with the influence of cyber-racism that produced the sub-themes of trust issues, multilayered emotions/resentment, and low self-confidence classified under the emotions theme. Sub-themes of hesitant talking to people and hate people, and isolation was organised under the theme of social practices. The learning theme included negative influence and no influence sub-themes.

1. Emotions

This theme demonstrated how online race-related issues could trigger emotional and phycological responses in the form of stress (Tynes et al., 2008). The cumulative emotional and psychological wounding of cyber-racism incidents causes a significant impact on students' maturation and adoption of healthy behaviour patterns.

⇒ **Trust Issues**

Participants explained the considerable influence of racist incidents they experienced on social media on their emotions and well-being. "Sandra" explained how the racist incident caused distrust in her family.

It made me feel alien in my own family. It was a big moment of disconnection with the older generation. I felt confused why my nana would say that when my grandad is Māori and how that would make him feel. It influences whom I trust and whom I consider family.

Also, Rose explained how she was traumatised by cyber-racism and how this incident caused her trust issues. She said,

I think I have been traumatised by that. In the present time, I find it hard to trust people easily because they might end up thinking the same thing as my former classmate, even if they are people going to school. Nowadays, even people going to school can be heavily influenced by cyber-racism.

⇒ **Multilayered Emotions/Resentment**

Cyber-racism caused some participants a complex variety of emotions, multilayered emotions or resentment that included madness, sadness, miserabilism, and bitterness due to racism. "Manaia" mentioned, "I blocked those people, but I was so mad and sad as we are the indigenous people of New Zealand and are discriminated against in our own land". Moreover, "Ariki" described the influence of cyber-racism on his well-being and emotions; he highlighted the importance of being supported in that hard time. "[I] deleted the message and sought emotional support from whanau." Likewise, "Aden" described the influence of the racist incident he experienced on his emotions; he also mentioned the importance of support like "Ariki". He said, "It was a bad experience, and for a while, I felt miserable but got support from my family." Additionally to the miserable feelings, "Zak" expressed his deep pain when he said, "I was very bittered."

⇒ **Low Self-Confidence**

The trauma of racism can cause other psychological illnesses like low self-confidence that influence students' relationships with others. Some participants mentioned the negative influence of cyber-racism on their confidence.

"Olivia" mentioned, "Yes, it made my self-confidence down, and I became more quiet." Moreover, "Peter," said, "I dare not post my pictures on the Internet. I feel worthless." "Sally" mentioned that "[the racist incident] affects me. It causes me physical and mental stress and low self-esteem."

Low self-confidence/esteem associated with race-related issues on social media influenced students' social development, whether online or offline.

2. Social Practices

This theme demonstrated how cyber-racism directed toward a racial group generates hatred environments and disparities among majorities and minorities that influence their social practices and engagement (Tynes et al., 2013).

⇒ **Hesitant Talking to People**

"Stacey" explained that the incident she experienced on social media influenced her relationship with others, although she tried not to make this happens. "I didn't want it to, but it definitely impacted how I interacted with people while out and about. I was more closed off and hesitant to talk to them." On the other hand, "Sandra" explained the influence of the racist incident on her relationship with her family (the white side) and other White people. She said,

I blocked my nana on Facebook and talked to her only if I must. I make no effort to see her, nor do I want to . . . Definitely! As a white presenting Māori, it's made me

more suspicious of other white people and made me want to test the waters on their beliefs before I become close with them.

Some other participants expressed the influence of the online racist incident on their social practices with other people from a specific racial group. Some participants expressed their unwillingness to talk to people except for their race and how others were wary when talking to a particular group. "Agiou," said, "I am only talking to people from my race." "Aden" mentioned, "I became circumspect when talking to specific people." In addition, "Ariki" noted that "Experiences like that have made [him] wary about speaking to pākehā about [his] culture." Furthermore, "Olivia," said that the racist incident she experienced made her feel "a bit stressed talking to white people." "Rose" also explained how cyber-racism she was exposed to influenced her social practices; she said,

> I believe that incidents have heavily influenced my social practice or relationship with people, but not to the extent of no longer talking to anyone I see. I tend to observe and get to know people for months (or sometimes, even years) before I release my true nature into the wild.

The influence of cyber-racism made some participants pre-judgemental about our races; as "Mina" said, "It made me more pre-judgemental about other races. I would assume that people of certain races think a certain way based on what I saw on social media." Also, "Farid," said, "it clouded my judgement against caucasian people."

⇒ **Hate People and Isolation**

Other participants explained how cyber-racism made them hesitant to talk to certain people and, to some extent, hate people. "Fetu," said that cyber-racism made "[him] went off FB for two years and made [him] hate people more." Likewise, "Matt"

"[he] was off FB for one year ... not talking with white people." Moreover, "Zak," said that the racist incident "[made him] always stays indoors". And "Ezy" mentioned that the racist incident "stopped [him] being as active on social media."

The racist, hateful comments and negatives about racial minority groups forcibly made them distance themselves from people, whether online or offline—the forms of power-relation reflected students' behaviours and actions. Cyber-racism negatively influenced students' psychological health and well-being and changed and adjusted their behaviour to act in specific ways to cope with cyber-racism.

3. Learning

$\Rightarrow$ **Negative Influence**

Online experiences of racism can contribute to students' learning performance deterioration. They can also cause academic achievement gaps due to the stress of witnessing or experiencing racism (Merolla & Jackson, 2019; Museus & Truong, 2013). Deterioration in students' learning was demonstrated in participants not attending university, not paying attention in class and sometimes not going to class, and others taking a year off from school, which influenced their academic achievements.

Five participants mentioned that cyber-racism influenced their learning. "Peter," said, "Yes, sometimes I don't pay attention in class, and even sometimes I don't go to class" In addition, "Sally" stated that cyber-racism "... bring [her] physical and mental pressure and inferiority, unwilling to face classmates and teachers." Sally's response demonstrated the negative influence of the racist incident she experienced on social media on her psychological health, which influenced her learning by not attending classes or facing classmates and teachers.

"Thomas" explained how cyber-racism influenced him not going to school too; he mentioned that "for the last part of term four that year going into exams, I had to push myself a lot harder for study due to not keeping up with school work at all during the time" "Adam" also mentioned, "At that time [he] didn't like to go to the school." "Peter" and "Matt" agreed on the point that cyber-racism influenced them by not going to school, "I didn't like to go to the uni.", which might be due to the emotional and psychological stress of the racist incident they were exposed to, like "sally".

⇒ **No Influence**

Twenty participants explained that cyber-racism incident did not influence their learning or academic performances. "Rose" mentioned,

> No, I did not let all that negative incidents affect my learning. I chose to carry on and study until I finish; because the best tool to defend yourself from all cyber racism/racism is knowledge. Knowledge is power, and it depends on how to utilise the information we acquire.

Also, "Sandra" mentioned that "[racist incident] did not [influence her learning] but made [her]want to find out more information to where these stereotypes come from." "Ahmed" as well mentioned that the cyber-racism incident did not influence his learning, but "[he] focused on [his] learning more to prove [himself]." Both "Sandra" and "Ahmed" turned the negatives of racism they were exposed to into something positive by educating themselves to change the ideas of stereotypes.

On the other hand, "Agiou" mentioned that "[he] focused more on [his] learning to keep [himself] away from people." Although, Agiou's answer demonstrated no negative influence of the racist incident he experienced on social media on his learning. However, the rest of his answer illustrated how the racist incident he experienced on social media

influenced his connections by isolating himself or escaping by focusing on learning. "To keep myself away from people" reflects the profound pain of the incident on "Agiou".

The rest of the participants just mentioned "No effect", "Not really", and "No".

As stated above, various statements by participants highlighted the significant influence of cyber-racism on their learning performance; nonetheless, most participants mentioned that there was "no effect" on their learning, reflecting how racism is structural and embedded in our society.

Coping Strategies

This category included the subordinate categories of coping strategies by the victims of racism and educational and social change.

1. Coping Strategies by the Victims of Cyber-Racism

This subordinate category included the themes of critical thinking that captured the sub-themes of approach and avoid strategies. I refer to approach strategies to confrontation, the act of confronting cyber-racism and racist people on social media. In contrast, avoid strategies refer to the forcible act by avoiding containing the escalation of racism and the spread of hate. Participants used multiple strategies to manage cyber-racism depending on their evaluation of the racist situations they experienced.

1.1 Critical Thinking

⇒ **Approach Strategies**

Approach strategies students used of educating (being informative/defendant) and stand-up demonstrated the intentions of changing the stigma about minorities and fighting against cyber-racism. "Stacey" supported that "there needs to be a sense of

collective disapproval of those kinds of posts – people need to stand up to make a difference and show how many people disagree." Likewise, " Olivia " supported stand-up against racism to eliminate it. "I think to be level-headed and talk logically will help counteract racism". Also, "Agiou" said, "I think to stand up against those people probably helps counteract cyber-racism."

Several participants mentioned that racial minorities should be patient, vigilant, educated, and knowledgeable to help mitigate racism on social media. "Sandra" explained how she tries to change the stigma around a particular racial group (Māori) while educating others about her people. She said,

> I made all my platforms a safe space for Māori people by sharing positive posts and articles to change the stigma around this particular group ... I share information on helplines and repost posts talking about why it is wrong. I have been known to send angry messages to people, calling them racist for their beliefs or the people they support. I believe one also needs to be patient. Many racist people lack information and simply need to be informed to change their perspective.

Also, "Farid" explained how he tried to educate people about his culture to change the stigma around his people (Egyptians), too, like "Sandra". He said,

> I shared links that explain Egypt's history, civilisation, and recent developments. I also shared photos and links of the malls, hotels, streets, and all wonderful places in Egypt. Being a defendant with evidence reveals the truth and how other people are wrong.

Same with "Tom", who asserted the idea of being informative and stand-up but vigilant. He highlighted,

Be informative and engage in a respectful educational discourse where you can explain to people why their actions are hurtful. However, pick your battles, some people just don't want to learn, and it is better to report them to the police, their workplace or educational institution.

⇒ **Avoid Strategies**

Reducing the harm of racism requires young people to choose the best way to manage cyber-racism. Some participants illustrated that avoid strategies of ignoring, blocking people involved, and reporting is the best way to manage cyber-racism according to their appraisals of their incidents. Participants explained their perceptions of utilising their skills to reduce the spread of hate and harm of racism. Some participants managed cyber-racism by ignoring hateful comments/messages or photos to avoid interaction with racist people in online spaces; others reported racist incidents and people, a few blocked people involved, and deleted messages. "Ariki" explained that deleting, ignoring, and reporting haters or racist comments reduce the spread of hate. He said,

If possible, I delete their messages, block their profiles, try to ignore it and avoid interaction with them if possible. Often any sort of interaction with racist people online, whether out for aggression or kindness, just opens the door for them to spread their hate even more.

Social media is likely a fertile ground for the dissemination of racist ideas. "Mina" explained that haters or racist people hide behind screens trying to spread their toxic ideas concerning race among young people, and giving them attention is a waste of time. "I honestly just scroll past it. That person would most likely not say that stuff to my face, so I should not give them the time of my day or any effort."

Several participants preferred to ignore racist people online. Some participants explained that getting into a discussion with racist people will not change their minds and might have adverse effects. "Manaia" stated, "I don't argue with them because that won't change their minds. I just ignore and report, being wise not responding to hateful comments and reporting them will eliminate cyber racism.". "Thomas" mentioned, "I report as much as I can . . . I do not like commenting or replying to things as it often creates more harm than it prevents". "Farid" also agreed with "Thomas" and "Manaia" he explained that "the best way to deal with cyber-racism is ignoring it; there is no way to change their mindset, so the best thing people can do is to get far away from that negativity." In addition, "Zak" supported ignoring behaviour to avoid turning the discussion into aggressiveness "It will make on aggressive."

According to the findings, critical thinking was the skill that students employed in the evaluation of their racist experiences in which they accordingly chose the best way to cope with cyber-racism, whether by avoid or approach strategies to moderate cyber-racism influence.

2. Educational and Social Change

This subordinate category included the ethical engagement theme that capsulated the participants' suggestions for preparing an anti-racist generation. Changes could be employed in society and organisations, primarily in education, to mitigate racism. Education and society are part of the structure that causes the problem of racism, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Ignoring the issue of racism and pretending it does not exist in our society helps entrench racist attitudes. Lack of action to solve the problem of racism and inequality, especially in education, creates a hostile environment and division among majorities and minorities. Therefore, it is essential to develop moral

attitudes to engage meaningfully and ethically with the online media (D'Olimpio, 2018), especially regarding racism. Developing ethical attitudes in online engagement by respecting and accepting diverse others regardless of racial or cultural differences helps build an anti-racist generation in the digital world.

2.1 Ethical Engagement

Participants highlighted the role of schools in teaching racial and ethical attitudes and preparing students for a racism-free future. "Agiuo" mentioned that schools have an essential role in teaching young people rules of ethics, "Teaching students at schools rules of ethics and respect." Other participants also mentioned the importance of teaching ethics in schools, regardless of racial differences. "Aden," said, "Schools should teach students at an early age to respect and accept others regardless of skin colour or race.

Further, "Matt" mentioned, "Schools teach students how to be kind and accept others' differences."

"Manaia" suggested that "Youth should understand others' differences and learn how to be kind to one another and use social media in something worthwhile." Also, "Olivia" suggested teaching diversity in schools and supported her suggestion with personal experience; she said,

Something to be taught in schools about diversity: I remember when I was young, I was ashamed of my culture and identity as growing up in a white school made me feel stressed not to share my culture or even food my mom prepared for me.

"Tom" suggested, "Exposing children to different cultures at a young age is important to inculcate tolerance. In universities, cultural sensitisation seminars should be held and diversity groups in workplaces." In addition, "Stacey" suggested learning about others' cultures too.

They need experience learning about other cultures - not just seeing videos, but living and experiencing life with and around these groups of people. Seeing a video on racism isn't going to help - this is where in-person relationships need to be cultivated.

"Mina" made an additional point by mentioning organisations other than schools, such as churches and youth programs to raise awareness about the risks of racism. "Mina's" suggestion demonstrated the importance of coordination across societal sectors to mitigate racism. He suggested that

[Mitigating racism] needs more awareness by schools, churches, youth programs etc. Youth nowadays don't understand the gravity behind even the smallest racist joke. They think it's okay and funny and cool because they were not taught in school and by their parents about the seriousness of the topic.

Further, moral development requires cooperation between school and parents to ensure the effectiveness of education for young people. Some participants highlighted that preparing an anti-racist generation likely starts with parents teaching their children how to treat others respectfully regardless of racial differences. "Cho" and "Rose" explained that parents play an essential role in preparing an anti-racist generation due to their significant influence on their children. "Cho" mentioned, "I think that things like racism start with the parents, and if the parents can teach our youth about these types of things, then our youth would be better educated when it comes to this manner." Also, "Rose" suggested that "parents, I believe, have a much heavier obligation to teach their children well and educate their children about others' differences and how to treat everyone right."

The findings demonstrated that education is retracted in achieving equality and implementing practical solutions to address racism. Online engagement comes with

responsibilities and challenges, particularly in the diverse digital world, and this should

be taught to students in schools. To be digital citizens, students should ethically, kindly,

and compassionately listen to one another and treat people equally regardless of racial

differences.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion of Finding

The study explored the first sub-research question: How do students experience cyber-racism? In chapter four, in the *'Experiences of Cyber-racism'* section, findings demonstrated that minority students were exposed to similar experiences of cyber-racism. For example, the findings corresponded that all-participants were discriminated against due to their race, culture, and origin. The results of slurs and negative comments about ethnic minorities on social media reflected the structural racism embedded in our society to ensure the sustainability of the dominant power-relations, accordingly to what Mills and Godley argued in their research (Mills & Godley, 2017). Māori participants said that Pākehā were using racist slurs on social media about Māori's culture and history. Participants' responses indicated that the negative comments Māori received on social media were from Pākehā. "Sandra's" responses in mentioning her nana's negative comments as a Pākehā against Māori regardless of "Sandra's" grandfather is Māori. In addition, when "Ariki" mentioned, "Experiences like that have made me wary about speaking to pākehā about my culture". The slurs of "being lazy", "shit shinned", "dole-bludgers", and "there is a reason they overpopulate our prisons" reflect how Pākehā see themselves as superior to Māori. Hateful comments against Māori reflected the entrenched power relation dynamic and historical and colonial dimensions that expanded beyond physical spaces to the online realm demanding dominant power relation, as Gregory (2011) discussed. The dissemination of the ongoing negatives about Māori reflects historical racism of Pākekā against Māori and empowerment to eliminate

their presence (Reid et al., 2017). Stressing Māori students on social media with negative slurs and comments led them to leave social media spaces forcibly due to the harm of racism, which will be explained in detail in the later sections. Concerning Māori's language, results demonstrated how Pākehā on social media news and articles infused the ideas of marginalising Māori by eliminating their language too by using comments like "this is NZ, not Aotearoa" and "forcing Te Reo". The findings of eliminating Māori's language, culture, and history corresponded to Reid and his colleagues' argument that marginalising Māori reflects the historical colonial heritage and structural subordination of Māori to ensure the dominance of the dominant group in our society (Reid et al., 2017).

The above results aligned with other scholars' arguments that structural racism stems from colonial heritage to breaking down Māori's tradition, whakapapa, culture, language, and history to weaken their bases (the whānau, the hapū, the iwi) in the society (O'Malley, 2019; Te Heuheu Tukino et al., 2017). The long-promulgated patterns and stereotypes marginalise Māori people, their culture, history, language and achievements in society (Came & McCreanor, 2015) to assure the power-relation of the dominant group in New Zealand.

Similarly, with other minority students, findings demonstrated that other students experienced hateful comments and racial slurs in a derogatory manner on social media platforms. Stereotyping and racial slurs like "curry-muncher" and "dairy-owner", "Samoans are big fat people", "n***r leg", and "You are too dark". Stereotypes also described Egyptians as "ignorant" people "Egypt still living in the deserts and riding camels as transportation". In addition, racist comments against China's culture and food and blaming them for the spread of the COVID virus, "calling COVID wuflu", "not eating Chinese food or one might get COVID", and "this what we get from Chinese eating dogs". The findings demonstrate the power-relation and subordination, regardless of the

differences between the slurs against other minority students and those against Māori that reflect the historical colonial heritage; the findings demonstrate the power-relation and subordination. Reflecting on the recent incident on New Zealand's social media platforms concerning COVID-19 and the Pasifika community blaming them for spreading the virus. The circulation of texts, slurs, photos, and stereotypes against minorities on social media is systematically instructed to eliminate minorities/immigrants and continue maintaining the privilege of Whiteness (Mills & Godley, 2017). These findings also align with Smith's (2017) argument that structural racism aims to marginalise racial minority groups by eliminating their presence on social media like physical spaces, to serve power relations and maintain power privilege in online and offline spaces (Smith, 2008). Eliminating the minority's presence will be explained in different contexts in the following sections. The findings illustrated that some students preferred to leave social media to moderate the harm to their well-being and mental health.

The study's second sub-question was, what is the influence of cyber-racism on students' social practices, emotions, and learning? Students' responses to this question were presented and analysed in the '*influence of cyber-racism on victims'* section in chapter four above. Results demonstrated the students' profound pain and feelings as victims of racism. The participants' responses helped me understand how cyber-racism could negatively influence students' mental health, reflecting on their social practices and how it eliminated their presence on social media. Results demonstrated how the critical racist incidents students experienced on social media influenced their self-confidence. In addition, experiences of racism changed the students' behaviours due to being traumatised and stressed, reflecting negatively on their social development. These results align with what Tynes and her colleagues argued, that online race-related issues could

trigger emotional and phycological responses in the form of stress and change young people's attitudes (Tynes et al., 2008).

Regarding the influence of cyber-racism on emotions, for example, participants highlighted that cyber-racism made them "hate people", "It made me hate white people", and "hate people more"__This means that cyber-racism has a strong influence on students' emotions and well-being that reflected negatively on their feelings about a specific racial group. The answer of "hate" indicated how painful the experiences of cyber-racism on students' emotions changed their behaviour patterns. This finding aligns with Tynes and her colleagues' argument that racism creates hate, disparities, and divisions among majorities and minorities (Tynes et al., 2008). In addition, "I was bittered", "I feel worthless", and "I felt miserable" articulated the profound pain and negative influence of cyber-racism on one's feelings, emotions, and mental health. The findings correspond with many scholars who argue that the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding of racism incidents strongly influences students' maturation and adoption of healthy behaviour patterns (Globokar, 2018; Perić, 2017).

Furthermore, results demonstrated that cyber-racism incidents negatively influenced students' social and behavioural patterns. Responses like, "It made me more pre-judgmental bout other races", "I find it hard to trust people", and "it clouded my judgement against caucasian people". Accordingly, some participants expressed their unwillingness to talk to people except their race, which influenced their social development. Also, results demonstrated that race-related issues on social media related to a deterioration in self-confidence/esteem that influenced students' emotional and social development and well-being. For instance, "it made my self-confidence down" and "It causes me physical and mental stress and low self-esteem". These findings align with some scholars who pointed out that social media risks influence the maturation and

adoption of behavioural patterns that affect students' cognitive, emotional, and social development (Globokar, 2018; Perić, 2017).

Concerning social practices, as mentioned above, students described that the critical incidents of cyber-racism made them hesitant to talk to people and sometimes hate people. Consequently, some participants explained that they stopped interacting with people in online spaces or went off social media and feared posting lest they experience the same harm. Likewise, some other participants were emotionally influenced by cyber-racism; they tended to isolate/distance themselves due to low self-confidence and fear of revealing their identities. Eliminating the minority's presence on social media has been explicitly illustrated in students' claims and the forcible act of "Not interacting online", "Not talking to people", "I was closed off", and "a bit stressed talking to white people." Those claims explained how structural racism targets minority students and forcibly leads them to leave social media to eliminate their presence to serve power relations. Claims made by the participants demonstrated their profound pain of disempowerment and the power over their rights to use social media like other groups in power. In some cases, participants preferred to leave social media platforms and isolate themselves to moderate cyber-racism risks and for their safety due to the harm.

Regarding learning, findings illustrated that cyber-racism incidents influenced students' relationships with their teachers and classmates, negatively reflecting their learning. The results of "didn't pay attention in class", even "sometimes didn't go to class", and "took a year off from school/uni" reflect how cyber-racism influenced students' learning achievements. The findings align with what Tinsley (2018) argued, that experiencing racism during a developmental period in one's life influences young people's social practices and contributes to a lack of attention in classrooms. In addition, the findings correspond to Merolla and Jackson's (2019) argument that structural racism

contributes to the deterioration in students' learning performance, which causes academic achievement gaps due to the stress of witnessing or experiencing racism. Although the numbers of participants' responses that confirmed the negative influence on learning were less than participants who confirmed 'no influence', it could not be deniable. However, participants' responses of 'no influence' reflect acceptance; this acceptance reflects the normality and how racism is structural and embedded.

The research's third sub-question examined what strategies students employ to cope with cyber-racism? This question is answered in chapter four's '*coping strategies*' section. Results demonstrated more than one strategy that students used to manage cyber-racism. Findings supported the approach and avoid strategies set within Passmore and Mandryk's framework (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020). Findings demonstrated how students critically identified and took measures to moderate the negative influence and protect themselves against potential risks of cyber-racism (Perić, 2017; Rice et al., 2016) based on each one's evaluation of the racist incident. Participants critically evaluated the racist situations and utilised approach strategies using their existing skills, knowledge, and behaviour to respond to online race conflicts (Gutiérrez & Tyner, 2012). Students employed the approach coping strategies as an act of revenge to expose racist people "I have been known to send angry messages to people calling them racist".

On the other hand, other students used the approach strategies to draw attention to discrimination to make a positive change by creating counter-posts to change the stigma around minorities and oppose racial stereotyping. Students' responses of "I repost posts talking about why it is wrong" and "Being a defendant with evidence reveals the truth and how other people are wrong" are evident in their insistence on the positive change concerning race. The findings align with Passmore and Mandryk's approach to coping strategies in their research, which referred to the active and aggressive

engagement with the discriminatory resources in digital spaces by calling out abusers and drawing attention to discrimination acts as an act of revenge (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020) or positive change.

In contrast, some participants used avoid coping strategies by preventing interaction with racist people on social media platforms lest it creates more harm and aggression than it contains. Avoid coping strategies in this finding are also set within the framework of "coping strategies with racial discrimination in digital spaces" by Passmore and Mandryk to moderate the influence of cyber-racism (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020). According to Passmore and Mandyrk, avoid coping strategies are used to reduce the acute power of acts by "removing or limiting the source(s) of discrimination from digital space." (Passmore & Mandyrk, 2020, p.8). Avoid coping strategies in this study demonstrated feelings of disempowerment and reflected social power imbalances (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020). The participants' actions of "I deleted the photo", "I deleted the messages", "I dare not to post my pictures on the Internet", and "stopped me from posting" demonstrated the power over racial minorities' rights of freedom of speech or equal opportunities of the use of social media as those in power. In addition, avoid coping strategies illustrated forcible acts due to the force of those in power on participants' choices.

Furthermore, despite the strong influence of racism on students' well-being and mental health, students navigated their coping strategies to moderate the harm of racism in their lives. Some participants prefered to "delete" their photos or posts lest they be attacked more "I didn't like to be attacked more" or by "[ignore] because of the great discrimination" to moderate the negative influence. Deleting the messages or photos demonstrates removing the source of discrimination, and ignoring illustrates eliminating the harm and reducing the acute power of acts. In addition, avoid coping strategies refer

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to seeking support from family, friends, or bystanders online (Passmore & Mandryk, 2020). In this study, seeking the support of what Passmore and Mandryk found was demonstrated in the findings of "sought emotional support from whānau" and "I talked to my friends". Participants' avoid strategies also reflected the acceptance of how racism is structural and embedded in our society.

In addition, besides the findings of approach strategies that supported the positive changes by individuals concerning racism. The result supported positive changes suggested by the participants to education and society regarding employing ethical attitudes and racial literacy for preparing an anti-racist generation. Students highlighted those young people should learn to accept and respect others' differences. "Kind", "compassionate", "respect", "accept", "ethical", "moral" were keywords that captured students' suggestions for an anti-racist generation. The moral agent that D'Olimpio (2018) argued the *'critical perspectivism'* when communicating and engaging with "compassion" in constructive conversation with other people online (Flores & James, 2013; Forkosh Baruch & Erstad, 2018; Gleason & Gillern, 2018). Findings demonstrated schools' lack of actions and potential initiatives to embed minorities' cultures in the curriculum and teach young people about ethical attitudes when engaging with others. Findings asserted that schools continue to be part of the cause of racism, whether deliberately or unintentionally. Ignoring the problem of racism and the absence of solutions to eliminate racism reflects the structural racism embedded in our society (Cormack et al., 2020).

All suggestions reflected that participants did not learn about others' racial differences and cultures in their schools. "learning about other cultures - not just seeing videos, but living and experiencing life with and around these groups of people". These findings align with the 'culture deficiency', according to Bishop (2003), for the non-

participation of Māori and other minority groups in education. Further, participants' suggestions indicated that they were not being taught how to engage ethically with online content and accept others' racial and cultural differences. "Schools should teach students at an early age to respect and accept others regardless of skin colour or race" and "schools should teach [students] how to use social media effectively". Moral development occurs when young people confront problems, make sense of them, and make choices connecting ethical attitudes and online content on social media (D'Olimpio, 2018). Therefore, schools play an integral role in preparing young people for the future digital racial diverse challenges. 'The potential for addressing the development and educational achievement for Māori and other minority groups from within current mainstream educational models leaves much to be desired" (Bishop, 2003, p. 223). Schools must consider developing students' ethical attitudes of respecting and accepting others' racial and cultural differences to prepare them to be good citizens in the diverse digital world.

In answering the overall research question of what coping strategies do students use to moderate the influence of cyber-racism on their emotions, social practices, and learning? It was crucial first to understand how students experience cyber-racism and the influence of racism they experience online on their emotions, social practices, and learning. Then, by exploring students' experiences of cyber-racism and its influence, the picture became vivid and allowed the study to discover the reasons behind students' coping strategies with cyber-racism. It became clear that inherited structural racism embedded in online spaces reinforces racism to ensure the power-relation and dominance of the majority group. Further, the harm and profound pain of experiencing racism led students to think critically about coping with cyber racism without solutions by organisations, systems, and society.

What goes wrong? Findings demonstrated that victims of racism adjusted their practices and behaviours to cope with the cyber-racism problem. However, changing attitudes should be upon the attackers by respecting others' racial and cultural differences. Anti-racism scholars fight against dealing with race-related issues being on victims of racism; rather, it should be collaboratively upon organisations, systems, and society, especially in education, to acknowledge other racial differences that reflect our nation's diversity (Taylor et al., 2009; Tynes et al., 2008). Since then, nothing has changed our society, system, and organisations concerning race-related issues. The findings proved that racism still burdens victims to adjust their behaviour to cope with it. When engaging with diverse people, changing practices and attitudes should be upon racist people; they should self-correct and reflect on their practices and attitudes. Also, the system of social media companies concerning racism should change. Open up the space for equal opportunities for minorities, like majority users, to be content creators who produce films, share, and post online. In addition, education should change by focusing on racial literacy and ethical attitudes that might help create an anti-racist proactive generation to help victims of racism, speak up against the system of oppression, and challenge others to do the same—going beyond the ability to use digital technology to address racism and fully engaged in active digital citizenship. In the digital age, schools should teach students how to use digital tools to educate broader communities about racial diversity and foster civic and ethical engagement over the discourse of race— focusing on the ethical attitudes when engaging with diverse racial others in online spaces that can be a component of digital citizenship curriculum and racial literacy.

Strengths and Limitations

This study had multiple methodological strengths. The targeted sample of the study was ethnically diverse and from different age groups. Further, developing a blog with an introductory personal video about the research using the mihi approach encouraged the participants to participate in the study. Additionally, the open-ended questionnaire design was objective and neutral, allowing participants to write/talk about their personal experiences with some details. Also, the interview protocol allowed questions to be spontaneously described by participants in response to queries with huge consideration for their safety and well-being. The data was thoroughly and systematically analysed to uncover race and racism, its influence, and coping strategies, with several reliability checks conducted.

This study's limitations were in the recruitment of participants during COVID-19 level changes and the sensitivity of the research topic. In-person interviews would have been more beneficial to obtain richer data from students' stories than an online questionnaire and zoom interview. Although the targeted sample of the study was heterogeneous in terms of ethnicities/races and age groups, it was homogeneous as the majority of participants were mainly from the Canterbury region. Additionally, the research population size was not sufficient. These factors limit the generalizability; of the external validity. However, most racism studies are based on individuals' experiences and stories.

Implications and Future Research

Many implications stem from this research applied to education and New Zealand society. This study utilised higher education students' actions and suggestions to educate young people early on to be anti-racist and prepare them for 21st-century online

challenges regarding race and racism. Schools should pay attention to the harmful influence of cyber-racism on students' emotions, social practices, and learning and consider embedding and focusing on ethical attitudes and critical thinking aspects of digital citizenship and racial literacy curriculum concerning race. Schools must equip our young people with skills and competencies to engage critically and ethically with online content and protect them from online harm. This study highlighted the importance of developing ethical attitudes to protect our children from online racism harm. Moral attitudes of respecting and accepting others' racial and cultural differences are essential in the diverse digital world. Using digital technologies comes with ethical responsibilities to engage constructively and civilly with diverse others in online spaces for the benefit of our society.

Regarding New Zealand society, New Zealand is a multi-racial society, and this diversity is beneficial for the development of our country. Accepting and respecting others' racial and cultural differences is essential for all people's safety and well-being. Policy-makers, social media systems/companies, and cyber-safety should apply rigorous, ethical rules for respecting and accepting others' racial and cultural differences across New Zealand's sectors and among media users_and breaching those ethical rules should be held liable.

For future research, this study filled the gap in New Zealand research and highlighted how structural racism on social media platforms influences students' coping strategies. Longitudinal future research with a bigger sample size and perhaps in more depth, like ethnography, will help explore structural racism on social media and its harm to young people that might contribute to social and educational quick actions to solve the problem of racism in New Zealand.

Conclusion

Protecting young people from cyber-racism harm is of great importance. Qualitatively, this study explored the cyber-racism experiences of twenty-five ethnically diverse students in higher education in New Zealand through an online questionnaire and zoom interview. This study also examined the cyber-racism influence on students' emotions, social practices, and learning and coping strategies. Undoubtedly, the stress of racism influences students' mental and psychological health (Greer, 2021; Greer et al., 2015; Tynes et al., 2008; Tynes et al., 2013). Experiencing harm online influence students' maturation and adoption of behavioural patterns that affect their emotional development and growth due to the stress of witnessing or experiencing racism (Alvarez et al., 2016; Globokar, 2018; Jakubowicz et al., 2017; Perić, 2017). However, students strive to find ways to cope with cyber-racism to moderate its harm to their lives. This research exposed that racism happens in online spaces similar to offline ones (Mills & Godley, 2017).

Further, this study provided evidence that the victims of racism strive to cope with cyber-racism to moderate its influence on their emotions, social practices, and learning. Students adopted coping strategies due to the absence of the New Zealand society's actions and community resilience to address the problem of racism. In addition, students' coping strategies reflected how racism is structural and embedded in our society and still burdens victims to adjust their behaviours rather than being upon attackers.

Looking for solutions to mitigate cyber-racism harm to ethnic minority students in New Zealand is essential. This research's findings suggested that changes are needed in our education and society and can be generalised for a future free of racism. The suggestions of the collaborative roles of responsibilities start with individuals and parents educating their children about other people's racial and cultural differences and how to treat others respectfully. Then, young people could further experience others'

cultures by online searching and reading, engaging with different racial people in online spaces, schools, churches, and cultural events. Engaging with diverse others helps young people open up and accept others' differences. Secondly, the dual role of responsibilities is upon the New Zealand Ministry of Education and schools, prioritising and drawing attention to the ethical attitudes of what D'Olimpio called '*Critical perspectivism',* which can be a component of the digital citizenship racial literacy curriculum. In today's technological and global digital world, teaching students in schools to be critical perspectival and encouraging them to adopt moral attitudes of respect, kindness, and compassion when engaging with diverse racial others online is urgent. In addition, teaching the roles of ethics of respecting and accepting others regardless of differences and "put yourself in other's shoes" is essential. Teaching students reciprocal respect for diverse others, acceptance of others' racial differences, and freedom of speech are crucial. Preparing students for the 21st online challenges is vital by encouraging them to adopt actions that reflect integrity and civility, especially in the diverse digital world.

Further, conducting regular anti-racist workshops and training for teachers, educators, and staff under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, to ensure a workforce free of racist attitudes for the safety of our children are essential. One does not simply become anti-racist; one must continue working on oneself. Racism is on a continuum, and what might be accepted now might not be later. We should keep updating our knowledge and accelerate finding solutions for the problem of racism. Working collaboratively to address the problem of racism should be the priority in the multicultural New Zealand society to ensure equality and mitigate racism harm in our country.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Research Blog

https://margreteibrahimeducationalresearch.blogspot.com

Appendix 2. Research E-Advertisement

https://margreteibrahimeducationalresearch.blogspot.com/2021/09/speak-up-against-cyber-racism.html

Appendix 3. Research Information Sheet for Zoom Interview

https://margreteibrahimeducationalresearch.blogspot.com/2021/09/research-information-sheet-for-zoom.html

Appendix 4. Zoom Interview Consent Form

https://margreteibrahimeducationalresearch.blogspot.com/2021/09/zoom-interview-consent-form.html

Appendix 5. Research Introductory Video

https://margreteibrahimeducationalresearch.blogspot.com/2021/09/blog-post.html

Appendix 6. Research Questionnaire

http://canterbury.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dhQeYACK1n5b4Uu

Appendix 7. Zoom Interview Rules

INTERVIEW RULES:

- Your safety and wellbeing are my priority; you have all the right not to answer any question that causes you any stress.
- In case of any possible stress, please let me know immediately, and we can stop the conversation.
- Reciprocal respect of everyone's lived experience is highly recommended
- The data shared in this interview is so confidential, so it is **NOT** allowed for any participant to share any of other's stories extrinsically.