



# The Psychosocial Cost of **Racism** to **White** University Staff

## Theoretical Framework

The Psychosocial Cost of Racism: “Negative psychosocial consequences that Whites experience as dominant group members in a system of societal racial oppression” (Spanierman et al., 2009: 2; Kivel, 2009)

## Denial

“I just realised how I usually just push it outside my awareness because it’s too difficult to think about”.

## Overwhelm

“When you kind of push people to a limit then you know people explode and that’s no good”.

## Trauma

“Extremely traumatising ... the context is just not healthy ... it’s a very distressing topic”.

## Hope

“I have to maintain some degree of optimism; otherwise, how can you carry on”.

## Disgust

“Well, I felt very angry ... I think there is a bit of a disgust as well, because it’s such a twisted way”.

## Embarrassment

“I just felt this way, like a wave of embarrassment and kind of shame and awkwardness horrible knots in my stomach”.

## Conclusions

Addressing systemic discrimination requires a sustained and collective effort, and, given the results of our study, it is imperative that all university staff actively engage in this work.



1 University  
12 Interviews  
Reflexive Thematic Analysis

