

Reducing Health Inequalities for Racialized Workers

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Reducing Health Inequalities for Racialized Workers

- Linking social inequality, income polarization and poverty
 - Key trends: class and racial inequality
- Economic exclusion – racialized employment and income discrimination
- Canada's *Colour Coded Labour Market* - Study
- Racialization of poverty
- Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)
- Social exclusion and health disparities

Social Inequality in Canada in the Early 21st Century

- Class, race and gender dimensions of social inequality

Gini Co-efficient values (Canada)

		<u>Canada</u>	<u>Toronto CMA</u>
• 1990	-	0.28	0.29
• 2006	-	0.32	0.45

Source: Statistics Canada, 2010

- Intensification of income inequality
 - By class
 - By race

Income Polarization from 1980s Onward

- Major trends in the last 25 years
- A growing gap between managerial and professional class and workers, particularly in blue collar and services sectors
- A growing gap between racialized/immigrant and non-racialized/Canadian born cohorts
- The income gaps have steadily increased over the last 25 years
- Racialized groups at the intersection of those two trends

Canada: The Unequal Economy

According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives report titled *The Rich and The Rest of Us—The Changing Face of Canada's Growing Gap, 2010*, 'Canada's economy doubled in size since 1981 - now making it the 9th richest nation in the world'

- But that stellar performance, measured by GDP growth, was accompanied with growing economic and income inequality
- The report concludes that:
 - the income gap between rich and poor is at a 30-year high
 - there is greater polarization as the rich are getting richer and the rest stagnate
 - the bottom half are particularly shut out of these economic gains
 - people are working longer to maintain their earnings

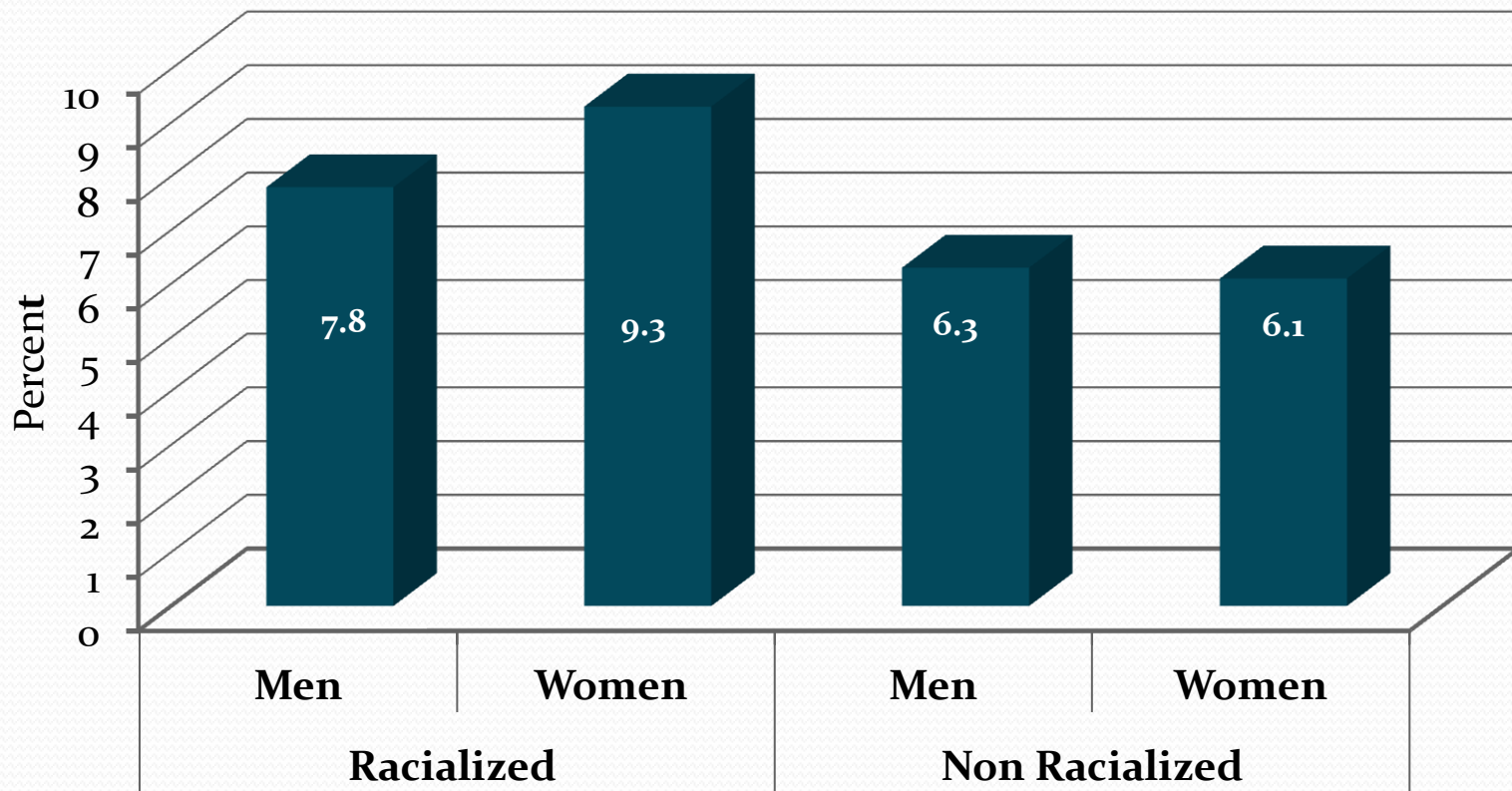
The Changing Nature of the Labour Market

- The changing nature of work is a key factor responsible for the unequal outcomes.
- Precarious employment is on the rise - contract, temporary work arrangements with low wages, limited job security, and no benefits.
- Racialized groups are disproportionately represented in sectors of the economy where these forms of work are a major feature.
- Racialized groups suffer higher levels of unemployment and underemployment.

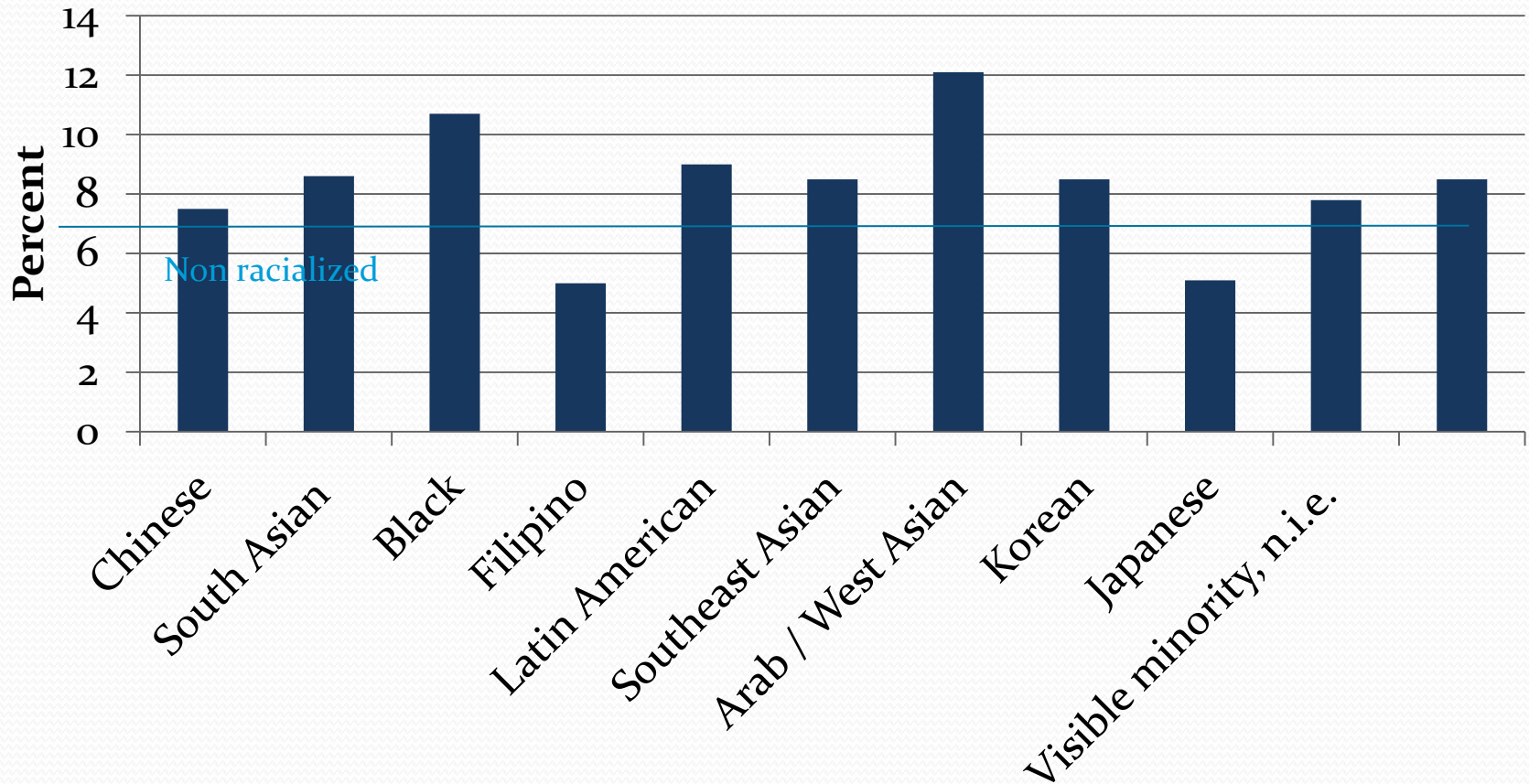
Canada's Colour Coded Labour Market, Sheila Block & Grace-Edward Galabuzi, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative/Wellesley Institute, 2011

- Summary of findings
- Using publicly available census data paint a picture of the labour market experience of Canadian racialized workers
- Included
 - Labour market experience – participation rate, employment and unemployment rate
 - Labour force by industry and by occupation
 - Employment income – total; full-time, full year; by immigration status
 - Poverty rates
- Disaggregated by gender, by racialized groups
- Health implications

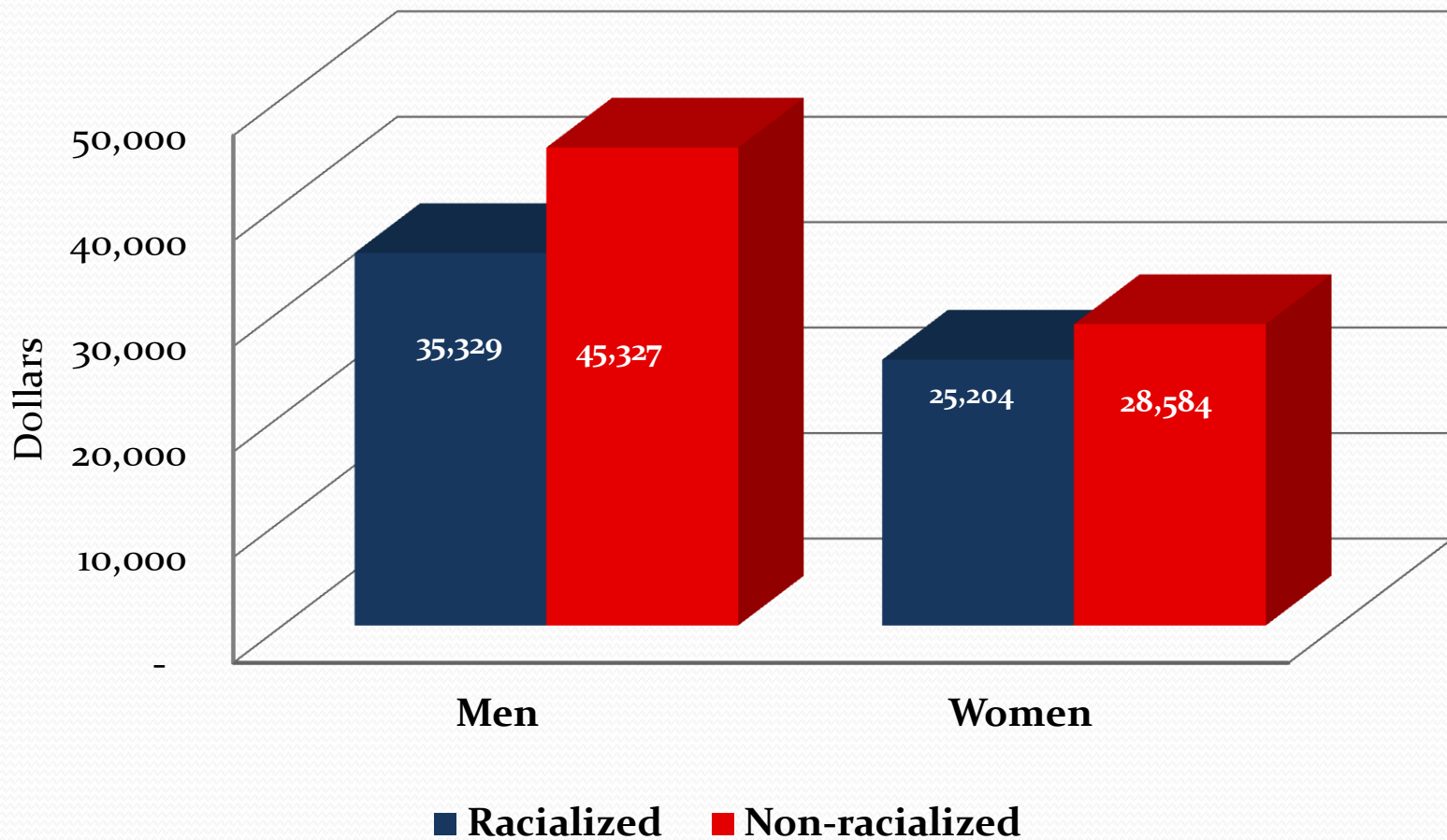
Unemployment Rates 2006, Canada



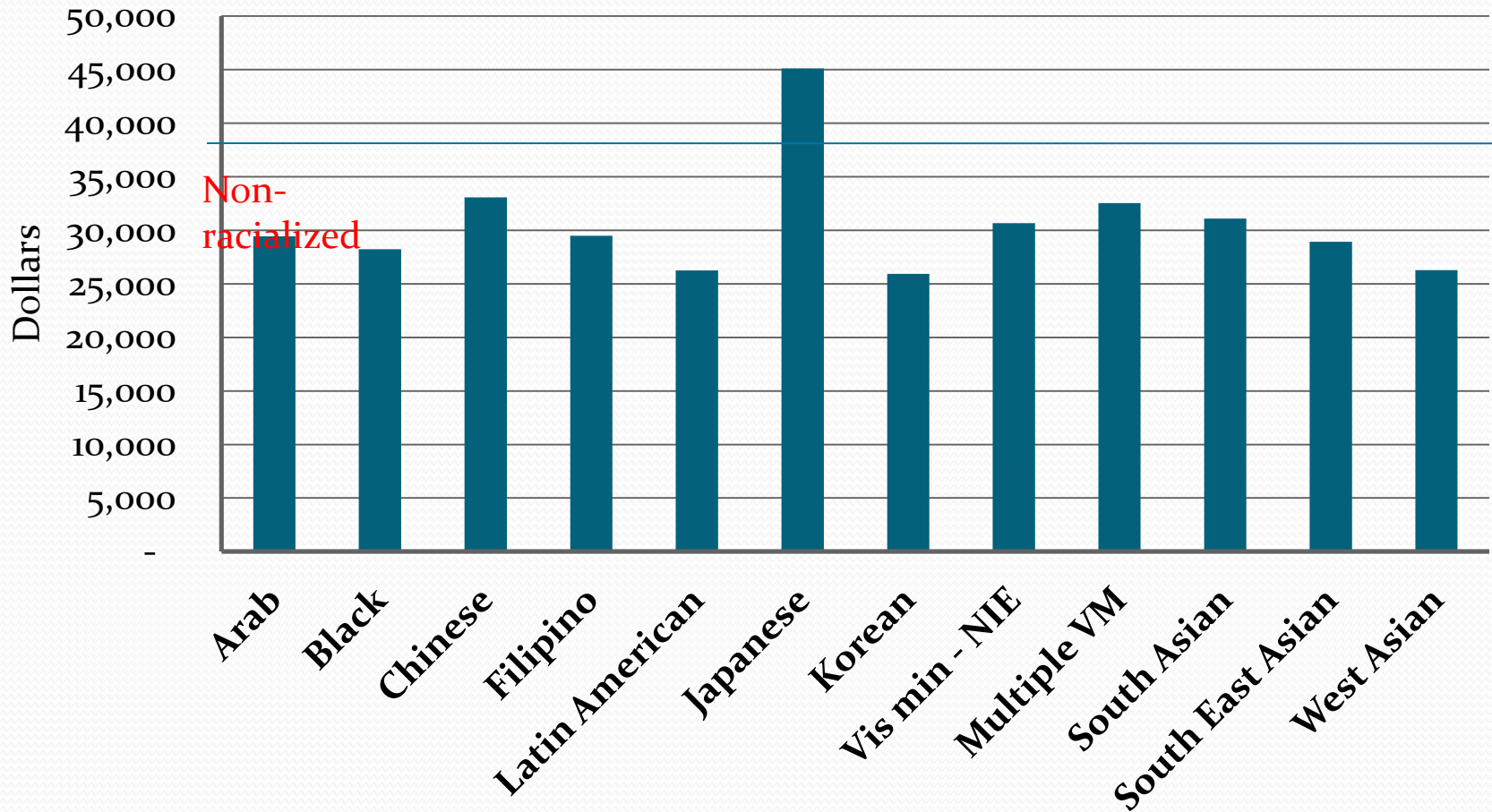
Unemployment Rate by Racialized Group in Canada, 2006



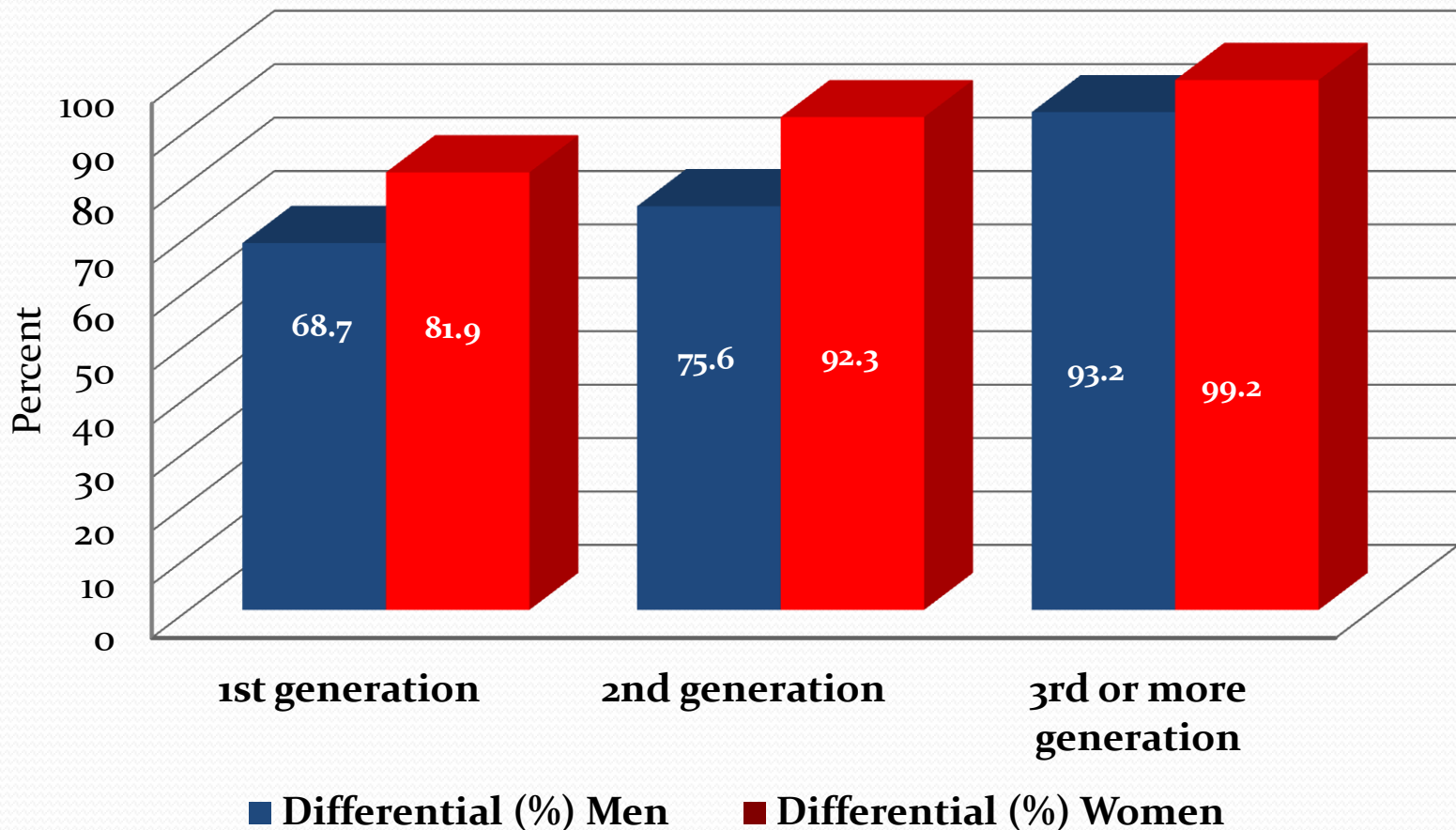
Average Employment Income in Canada, 2005



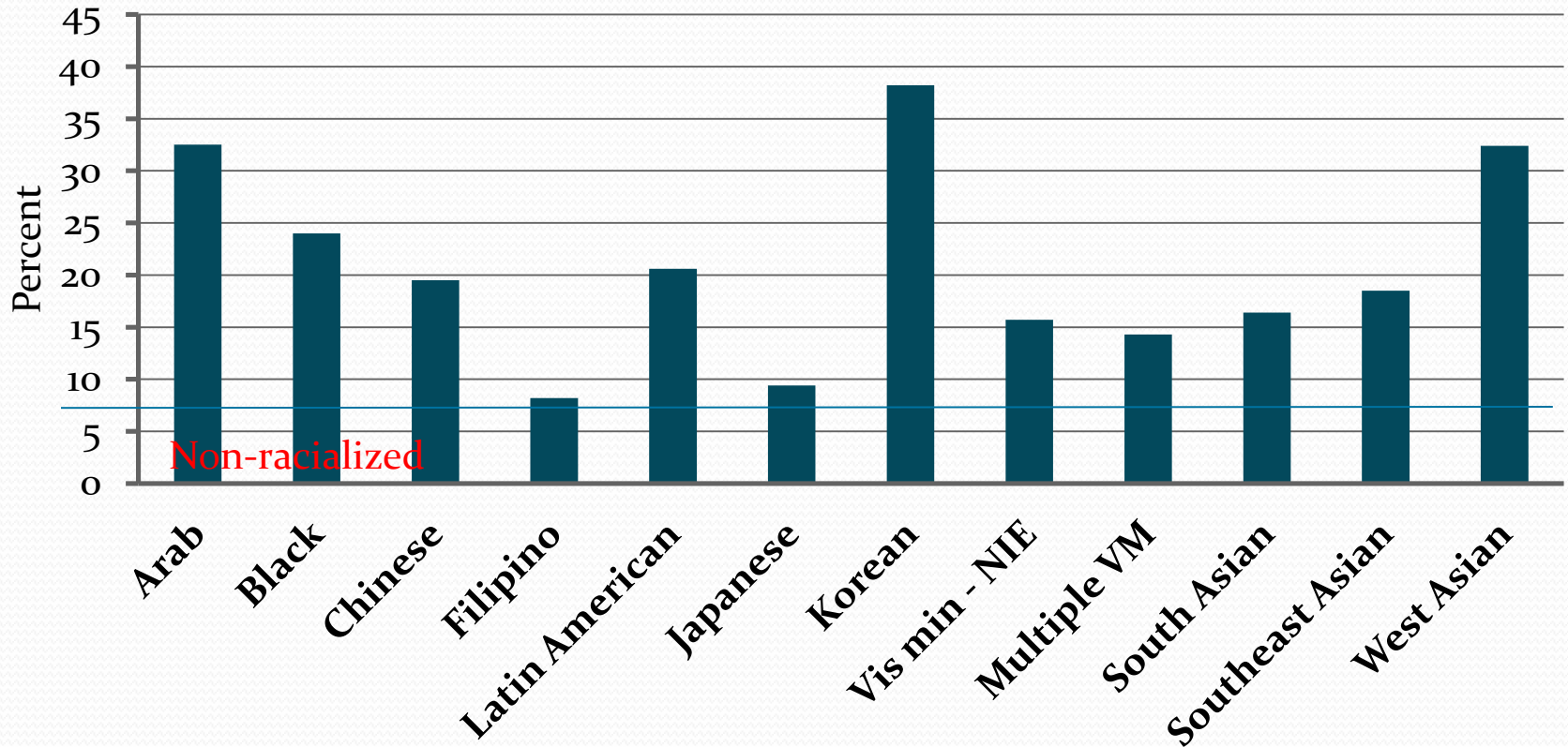
Average Employment Income by Racialized Group



Employment Income Differential 2005: Immigration Status, 25-44 yrs, University degree or certificate



After-tax Low Income by Racialized Group in Canada, 2005



Inequality in Employment: Employment Incomes, 2005

- Employment earnings for racialized workers are lower than non-racialized workers across all racialized groups – except for the small number of Canadians who identify as Japanese.
- A number of groups fare particularly poorly, including:
 - **Korean:** They earn 69 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an annual earnings gap of \$11,403
 - **Latin Americans:** They earn 70 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an earnings gap of \$11,091
 - **West Asian:** They earn 70 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an earnings gap of \$11,053
 - **Black:** They earn 75.6 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an earnings gap of \$9,101
 - **South East Asians:** They earn 77.5 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an earnings gap of \$8,395

Labour Force by Occupation and Industry: Some Insights

- Labour market segmentation along racial lines
 - Over representation of racialized workers in private sector services with high levels of precarious work
 - Concentration in light manufacturing, security services, accommodation and food services, janitorial services, and other low paying service sector jobs
 - Under representation in public service and unionized workplaces
 - public administration, educational services, Arts, Culture and entertainment, mining, utilities, heavy manufacturing, and other well paying jobs
 - Differences in construction of gender between racialized and non-racialized women
- Limitations: was not broken down by racialized group, or by detailed industry or occupation

Implications for Employment and Income Inequality

- Income insecurity
- The racialization of poverty
- Employment related health disparities
- Neighbourhood segregation

Poverty is not Colour Blind: *Racialization of Poverty*

- The **racialization of poverty** refers to the persistent and disproportionate exposure to low income experienced by racialized group and Aboriginal people in Canada.
- It points to the significance of racialization as a key structural determinant of poverty in Canada and the **differential experience** of poverty.
- Racialized groups and Aboriginal people are **two to three** times more likely to be poor than other members of the community – for racialized families in 2005 that meant 19.8% compared to 6.4% for non-racialized families.

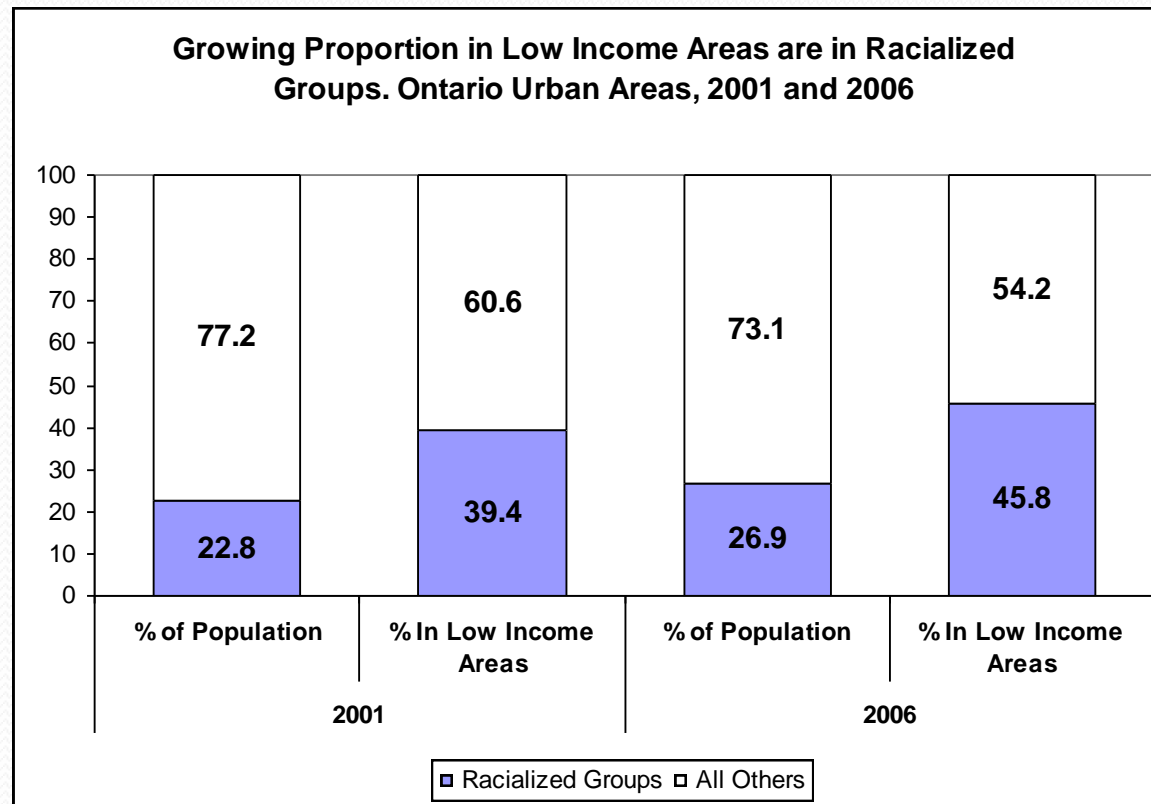
Aboriginal and Racialized Poor as a Proportion of Low Income in Ontario

Low income population in Ontario distributed across age groups, Aboriginal and racialized groups

	Aboriginal	Racialized	White/Other	Total
Under age 15	0.9%	11.7%	10.5%	23.1%
Age 15-24	0.5%	7.3%	8.9%	16.7%
Age 25-44	0.7%	12.9%	14.8%	28.4%
Age 45-64	0.5%	6.8%	13.9%	21.2%
Age 65+	0.1%	2.5%	7.9%	10.5%
Total	2.7%	41.3%	56.0%	100%

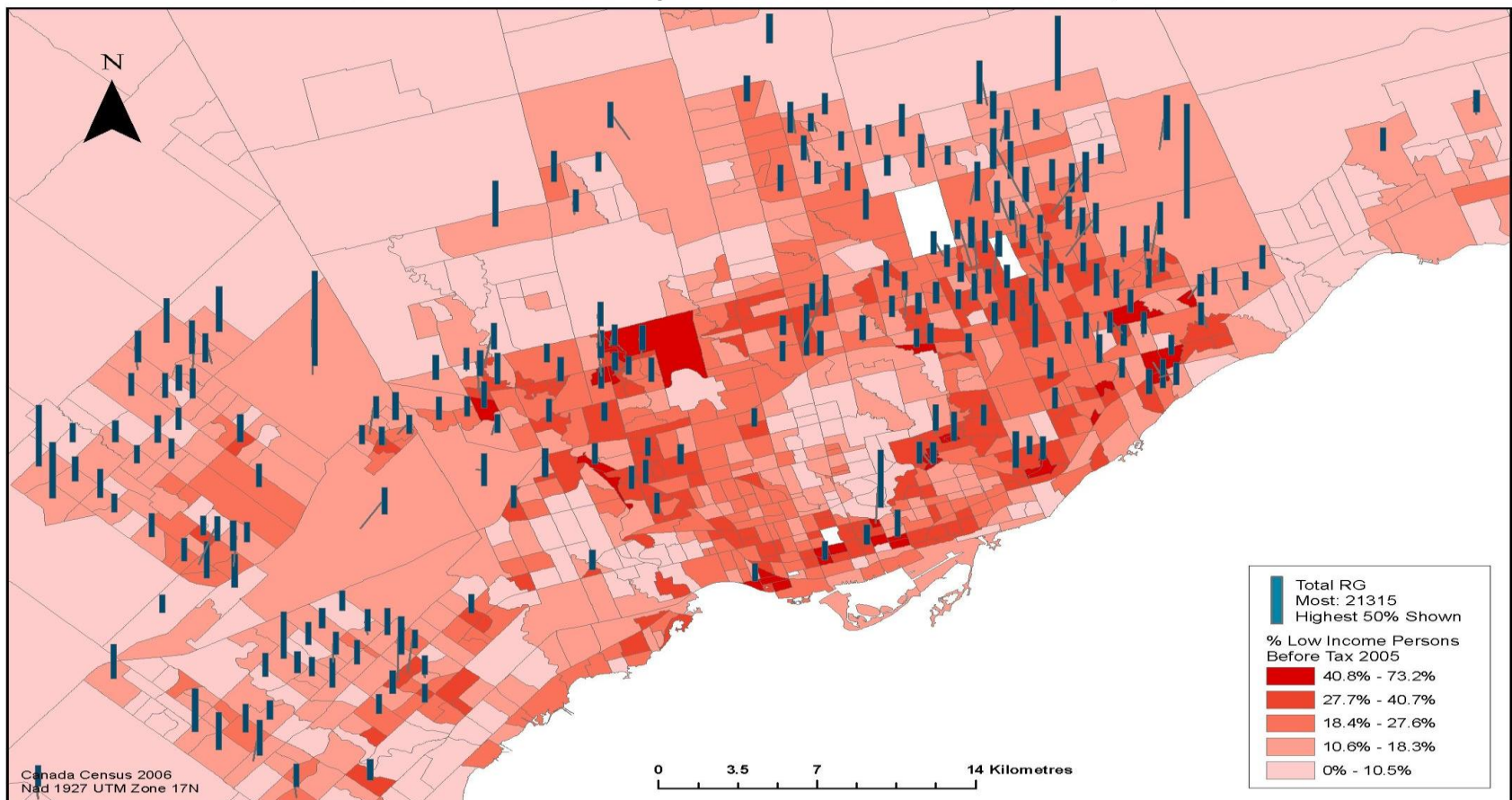
Statistics Canada, 2006 Census, Before Tax LICO, Community Social Data Strategy (D. Patychuk, Access Alliance, Feb 2010)

Racialization of Poverty in Urban Ontario



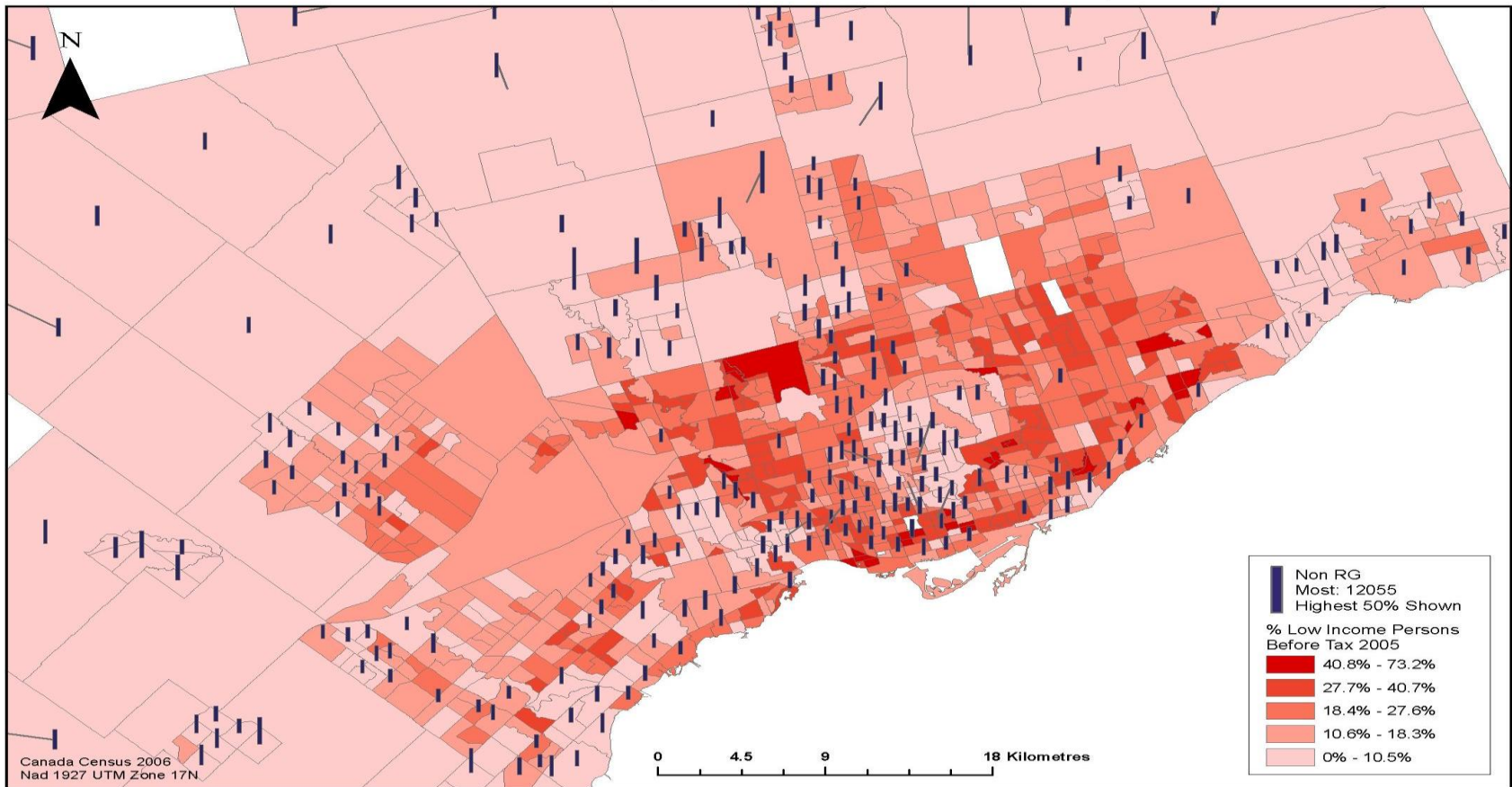
Racialized Patterns of Neighbourhood Selection

Total Racialised Population in Toronto CMA, 2006



Racialized Patterns of Neighbourhood Selection

Non Racialised Population in Toronto CMA, 2006



Employment Earnings for Racialized and Non-racialized Populations, 2000 and 2005

			% change	%NR	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	
Total Canadian	35,619	36,301	1.9		
Total Non-Racialized	36,353	37,332	2.7		
Total Racialized	30,451	30,385	-0.2	84	81
Chinese	32,354	32,981	1.9	89	88
South Asian	31,486	31,103	-1.2	87	83
African Canadian	28,215	28,012	-0.7	78	75
Filipino	28,542	29,393	3.0	79	79
Latin American	26,034	26,241	0.8	72	70
Southeast Asia	28,958	28,880	-0.3	80	77
Arab	30,452	29,441	-3.3	84	79
West Asian	27,101	26,279	-3.0	75	70
Korean	27,149	25,892	-4.6	75	69
Japanese	42,579	42,177	-0.9	117	113
Racialized (nie)	32,841	30,666	-6.6	90	82

Source: Canada Census 2006

After-tax Low Income by Select Racialized Group, Canada 2005 (Families)

	Men	Women	Total
Arab	32.0	33.1	32.5
Black	22.3	25.5	24.0
Chinese	19.6	19.4	19.5
Filipino	8.0	8.3	8.2
Latin American	19.8	21.3	20.6
Japanese	8.5	10.1	9.4
Korean	38.1	38.2	38.2
South Asian	16.1	16.6	16.4
South East Asian	17.7	19.1	18.5
West Asian	31.5	33.4	32.4
Total Racialized	19.4	20.1	19.8
Total Non-Racialized	5.9	6.9	6.4

Income Inequality and Health Disparities

- A recent report from Statistics Canada provides a stark example of the impact of income and income inequality on health outcomes:
 - It showed that the more you earn, the longer your life expectancy in Canada.
 - The difference in life expectancy between the poorest 10% and the richest 10% of Canadians was 7.4 years for men and 4.5 years for women.
 - A clear socio-economic gradient emerges for life expectancy at age 25 for both men and women, based on data from 1991 to 2001.
 - While these differences are striking, an equally important finding is that life expectancy increases with each and every decade.

Source: McIntosh C, Fines P, Wilkins R, Wolfson M. Income disparities in health-adjusted life expectancy for Canadian adults, 1991 to 2001.

Health Reports, 2009; 20 (4), p.58 .

Social Inequality and Health Disparities

- A social determinants of health approach (SDOH), considers the full range of modifiable economic and political conditions that lead to poor health outcomes and systemic health disparities
- *“Health inequalities result from the differential accumulation of exposures and experiences that have their sources in the material world.”* - JW Lynch, et al. (2000)
- *“The effect of income inequality on health reflects a combination of negative exposures and lack of resources held by individuals, along with systemic disinvestments across a wide range of human, physical, health and social infrastructure.”* - Lynch, et al. (2000:1220-1224)

Employment and Health

- There is a connection between the way work is organized and workers health - employment relationships can create health risks or improve health status.
- The concept of *job strain* - workers experience stress and ill health when their jobs are characterized by high demand and low levels of control over how the work is performed.
- Workers exposed to job strain are more likely to be exhausted, depressed and dissatisfied with their job, and have stress-related illness and cardiovascular disease.

Employment and Health

- Work affects our health through a number of different pathways. These include:
 - The nature of work we do -- whether it is full-time, part-time or contract
 - The income we get from work – low income
 - The physical or psychological strain of work
 - The conditions of work – occupational health and safety concerns

Differential Labour Market Outcomes as a Social Determinant of Health

- *“Employment and working conditions have powerful effects on health and health equity. When these are good they can provide financial security, social status, personal development, social relations and self-esteem and protection from physical and psychological hazards – each important for health. In addition to the direct health consequences of tackling work-related inequities the health equity impact will be even greater due to work’s potential role in reducing gender, ethnic, racial and other social inequities.”*

- World Health Organization Commission on the Social Determinants of Health

Employment as a SDOH

- According to a recent systemic review, the majority of studies show that immigrant workers are at high risk for occupational injuries, diseases and death
- While these studies do not deal directly with the social distinction related to race, they provide an indication of the health impacts of the outcomes of labour market inequality for racialized Canadians.
- This is an area that requires future research to deepen our understanding of the problem of racialized poverty and barriers to good paying work in Canada

Colour Coded labour Market Policy Implications

- Multi-sector response - various levels of government, employers and civil society
- Policies geared towards elimination of barriers to access to employment and professions and trades
- Employment equity principles - transparency, competency based evaluation of human capital
- Creation of well paying jobs with standard employment contracts
- Regulation of working conditions especially in sectors where precarious employment is prevalent