Title: The quest for greater equity: A national cross-sectional study of the experiences of Black Canadian medical students
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Reviewer 1: Kenneth Fung
Institution: University of British Columbia, School of Public & Population Health

General comments (author response in bold)

This type of research should be appreciated and supported by every university institution.
Thank you. (N/A)

Reviewer 2: Édouard Kouassi
Institution: Université de Montréal, Faculté de médecine

General comments (author response in bold)

This is a quantitative, descriptive study of the experiences of racial discrimination lived by Black medical students in Canada. An online, anonymous, and self-administered questionnaire was used. A total of 52 participants consisting essentially of undergraduate medical students from 13 of the 17 Canadian faculties of medicine distributed in the four geodemographic regions of Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic and Western were recruited through the newly founded Black Medical Students Association of Canada (BMSAC). The research questions are explicitly stated. The methodology is adapted from previous studies of experiences of minorities in US and UK. The authors find that Black medical students are significantly affected by racism during their training in Canadian medical schools, most notably from patients. This probably reflects the notion of the existence of systemic racism in the Canadian health system, as in the whole society. The limitations of the study, including the relatively small sample size are discussed. The literature review is complete and up-to-date. The overall interpretation is excellent, and the potential impact of the results on institutional policies to address inequities in medical education is high. A few typos need to be corrected (as for example (i) the word "Students" is lacking in the complete name of the Black Medical Students Association of Canada in page 7 of 24; (ii) page 14 of 24, line 17: the word "intuitional" should read "institutional"). In total, the findings of this study contribute to identify inequities for underrepresented minorities in medical education in Canada.
Thank you. The typos were corrected. (See reviewer's comment; now found in page 11, line 14 (students added) and page 18, line 18 (inuitional changed for institutional).)

Reviewer 3

General comments (author response in bold)

1. Table 3 - Please clarify this title, awkward sentence structure unclear meaning "actors by which students report experiencing discrimination from". "N.B" section would also benefit from further clarity as it is subject to misinterpretation.

2. Interpretation - This section would be benefited from more in depth discussion on the temporal relationship between incidence of poor Black medical learner experience and stage of medical training. Consider discussing perceived contributors to such outcomes and next steps to minimize impact on the learner experience.

Thank you. These formulations were reviewed.

Only descriptive statistics could be kept therefore, therefore the temporal relationship could not be developed in this reviewed version. We did add updated references to show how discrimination rates in other regional Canadian studies on Black medical learners rise between student and resident/staff status. (Table 3. Page 18, line 8. Page 21, line 54 – Page 22, line 5. Page 22, line 42 – Page 23, line 3.)

Reviewer 4: Eliseo Orrantia

General comments (author response in bold)

Congratulations on carrying out this important study. You have designed it well, analyzed your data reasonably and provided us with a well written exposition of the work, clearly framing the important messages that our medical education establishment and Canadians must hear. You have provided us with an important measure from which we can now judge our future progress on this equity issue.

Thank you (N/A)