

Table 1. Quotes from Minority Participants for Each Theme

Themes	Quotes
Perceptions of psychologists as a profession	<i>"I would say mental health is a very big challenge that everyone faces and especially when I was in university, I did face [it] So it was something like people helped me. So I wanted to like help others so that is the only reason that made me move towards this field."</i> <i>"it's just such an honourable profession. The help that psychologists provide to people with more serious mental health issues. I've always seen them as ...something to aspire to"</i> <i>"I'd like to be a psychologist and help people going through rough times, depression, anxiety, and all sorts of mental illness to help them feel better."</i> <i>"understand ... different behaviours, like why do people act the way that they do? Does it stem from trauma? Does it extend from ... the upbringing, etcetera"</i> <i>"I thought ... a good way of actually being able to help kids would be to do ... clinical research where I can actually diagnose and work with the different disorders."</i> <i>"I like working with people. I like talking to people. I'm empathetic."</i> <i>"I want to be able to provide racialized people with ... not just culturally sensitive, but ... culturally informed psychotherapy."</i> <i>"from a cultural perspective, I mean it's probably not ... common ... in my community that people seek out a psychologist for help, you know, a lot of people in denial, like they don't need help for whatever reason."</i> <i>"Within my family, especially within ... the Black community mental health is very taboo. There's a lot of stigmas. We don't talk about it or honestly just doesn't exist. We never really had the language for that, particularly in my culture"</i>
Experiences of the application journey	<i>"My grades first and foremost. I have an academic standing. I did really well."</i> <i>"I had a good GPA at 3.6. I took all the right classes."</i>

"this process is very long, and having ... more visibility of ... how candidates are being evaluated ... [would be helpful] ... I would say the exposure and the knowledge of how the applications work -- like what is the selection criteria like, things like that -- would have been more useful if I would have [known] about that."

"If anything, getting into this program, you need the supervisor to choose you. So already in the summer, pre-application, I was drafting emails and researching supervisors that were taking students and sending emails and expressing my interest and working with them and preparing my CV."

"It was a very generic response that it was a very competitive pool this year."

"I wasn't given any reasoning as to why it wasn't strong enough. I had reached out to an advisor at the faculty ...[to] review my application, but I didn't receive a response yet."

"they didn't even actually give a reason, which I was really shocked. They just said 'you did not meet the requirements.' I had actually emailed them to clarify that, to understand what was it that I didn't meet. But they didn't specify on that at all. It was just simply... 'you didn't meet the requirements' and to apply ... for the next term ... It was really brief. I'm not sure why; ... I don't know if it was my grading or maybe my application."

"For me, there wasn't too much information. It was just... 'it was very competitive. We had limited number of seats. We contacted the people ... for the shortlist, we interviewed them, they accepted. Unfortunately, we don't have any more seats.' So, it's going around that line ... of limited seats, very competitive ... thank you for applying.'"

"Because you have so many people apply. What are they really looking for other than what you read? OK, everybody has ... volunteer hours. Everybody has three references. Everybody has this and that. What is it that would make me stand out? Because I don't know right, ... there's only limited spots and that's the problem in Canada, all these programs have limited spots."

"I'm not sure if all the people who got in were close to 4.0, so I don't know all the variables that went into play. I can just assume that they had people that had higher GPAs, that had better work experience or volunteer work ... I always feel there's other variables that come into play, but I don't know for sure."

	<i>"I find most difficult from this whole experience is no reason."</i> <i>"I'm curious, myself, what are the deciding factors of who are the people they take in. How do they decide, right? ... Who are making ... the decisions? I don't want to say something that's wrong. ... Who's there at the top? Like, who? How much representation, diverse representation is there at the top? Who's making these decisions?"</i> <i>"I didn't feel like I was supported as much as I could have been. I approached a lot of my professors and some of them were reluctant to give me a recommendation. I didn't feel supported in the application process. It's more like 'prove yourself to us,' instead of 'we'll help you through it.' It was very nerve wracking, and you didn't feel like you had the support that you should have, as much as you should, I would say."</i> <i>"I didn't receive much support. I'm the first person in my family to pursue graduate studies, so it was pretty unmarked territory for me and I couldn't really turn to anybody to help me -- even the few professors that I had reached out too. They weren't that helpful for me, only because I feel like we hadn't established that kind of relationship ... because mostly we've been contacting just through emails or ... over Zoom classes or whatever. So I feel like they weren't as willing to help me ... For the most part, I was just doing it by myself and I couldn't even ask my parents because they have not been exposed to this level of schooling."</i> <i>"speaking to the other research assistants, as well as the professor that was in charge of the research, that was definitely more helpful than the actual courses."</i> <i>"Support? What a joke. So honestly it was just one TA. One TA and I will never forget her.[She] went above and beyond, and step-by-step ... explained to me ... what to do. She even sent me her submitted application materials that were successful and helped her get into the program. It was ... getting her one-on-one support and guidance that was really helpful."</i>
Concerns and challenges	<i>"Community involvement is something that was really important to me and I felt like it wasn't something that a lot of schools looked at. It was mainly just research or academic grades, but I felt like community involvement was something that I ... hope it would ... have been widely acknowledged."</i>

"I remember a prof that I had, or a supervisor I had, had once told me that I had ... the lowest GPA ... in my cohort, and they were just going to get in and I think from their perspective they're ... just letting me know they're ... concerned about me getting admitted to the program but not realizing that they just told me I'm like the stupidest person in my cohort. And that can kind of play into the imposter syndrome, do I belong here?"

"I always see discrimination in terms of hiring and whether it's in the school district, they always talked about how inclusive they are, how much they value diversity, but that is saying something is one thing and then action is totally different."

"a lot of the faculty members are definitely [from] ... European backgrounds. Even [when] you read about the master's students or the PhD candidates ... they're mostly European backgrounds."

"I took a look at the faculty just to see if I was reflected, and in the whole faculty I ... saw just one Black girl there and one other person of colour, and they were Asian. I'm not sure if I would have even been fully supported in the program, just given the history that I've seen."

"what that meant for me [was] kind of feeling like I had to ... educate others in certain contexts. Or having different opinions compared to my peers and maybe advocating for certain things that should be happening in the school. And that was tiring, and that was draining at times."

"They asked certain questions about race, and the amount of times that I had applied to get in to the program. And once I told them my ethnicity, which is Black, and that I've been rejected ... I didn't feel that they were really too enthusiastic about having me in that program ... It ... made me feel a little bit discouraged and I was even thinking about not pursuing it after that. It made me feel discouraged for a while, and I had to overcome that before I kept going through it 'til maybe somebody accepted it."

"I really stressed in my application how important it was for me to have my identity as a person of colour at the forefront, and I was very adamant that I wanted to help people like me who might be coming to the country newly, like with different backgrounds like immigrant backgrounds or other racialized groups, ethnic minorities, because it's an added layer to mental health that [needs] addressing. For example, some therapies or some theories of practice would be more beneficial to different cultures ... so that

	<i>was something that I really put at the forefront of my application... I don't know if this hindered or made my application stronger. Sometimes I wonder if I made the right choice in doing that and if I should have just made it more general, and ... keep that mindset ... to myself. Sometimes I feel like maybe I should have just not included that at all."</i> <i>"I would say maybe research, right? ... if I would have done it more, I would have, I think, had a good chance."</i> <i>"there was something that I was lacking, and I think it was research. I think I didn't have much research experience and that was a challenge for me."</i> <i>"I would say research exposure would be my main one. Even though I was part of a research lab, I don't think I had as much research experience as the ideal candidate. ... But the research exposure, if I could have had more of that, I think it would have made me a more competitive candidate."</i>
Making a difference in their experiences	<i>"my current university was not offering Master's in psychology programs, so ... having other universities come and visit students in those departments, right? So, people want to pursue professional degrees. They can get support from there."</i> <i>"[Students can] know what to expect and know what to plan for and how to apply for scholarships and how that process works, how to reach out to profs, how to draft those emails. Those are [That's] all information that I think we need really early and I don't think was accessible for me at the time and made it difficult."</i> <i>"If there were ... a course in my undergraduate degree, that was all about preparing for a master's or the PhD level in clinical psych, I would have taken that, absolutely. Just to have a little bit more direction and understanding of what to do to help your application, what to expect, things like that, that would have been helpful."</i> <i>"support from the teacher who's reading my work, sending me in the right direction"</i> <i>"I think they should have more, stronger mentorships – like, somebody who has actually been through it before, that can tell you the problems that you might have to face going through that experience. So yes, when you mention mentorship, I feel if they had more mentorship, they would make the process a lot easier for myself and I think for a lot of other people as well."</i>

	<i>“I wish I had more support from maybe an application advisor specifically for graduate studies having some kind of mentor or even being able to speak to current graduate students or people who have already graduated ... [who went through] the same kind of process or journey as me would have been helpful.”</i> <i>“Not much is said about scholarships and things like that. I remember having to go speak to the advisor”</i>
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