

## Who is Canadian?

### Beauty Standards and National Identity among women of colour



PRESENTER:

**Margarita Tellez Espana**

Faculty of Sociology

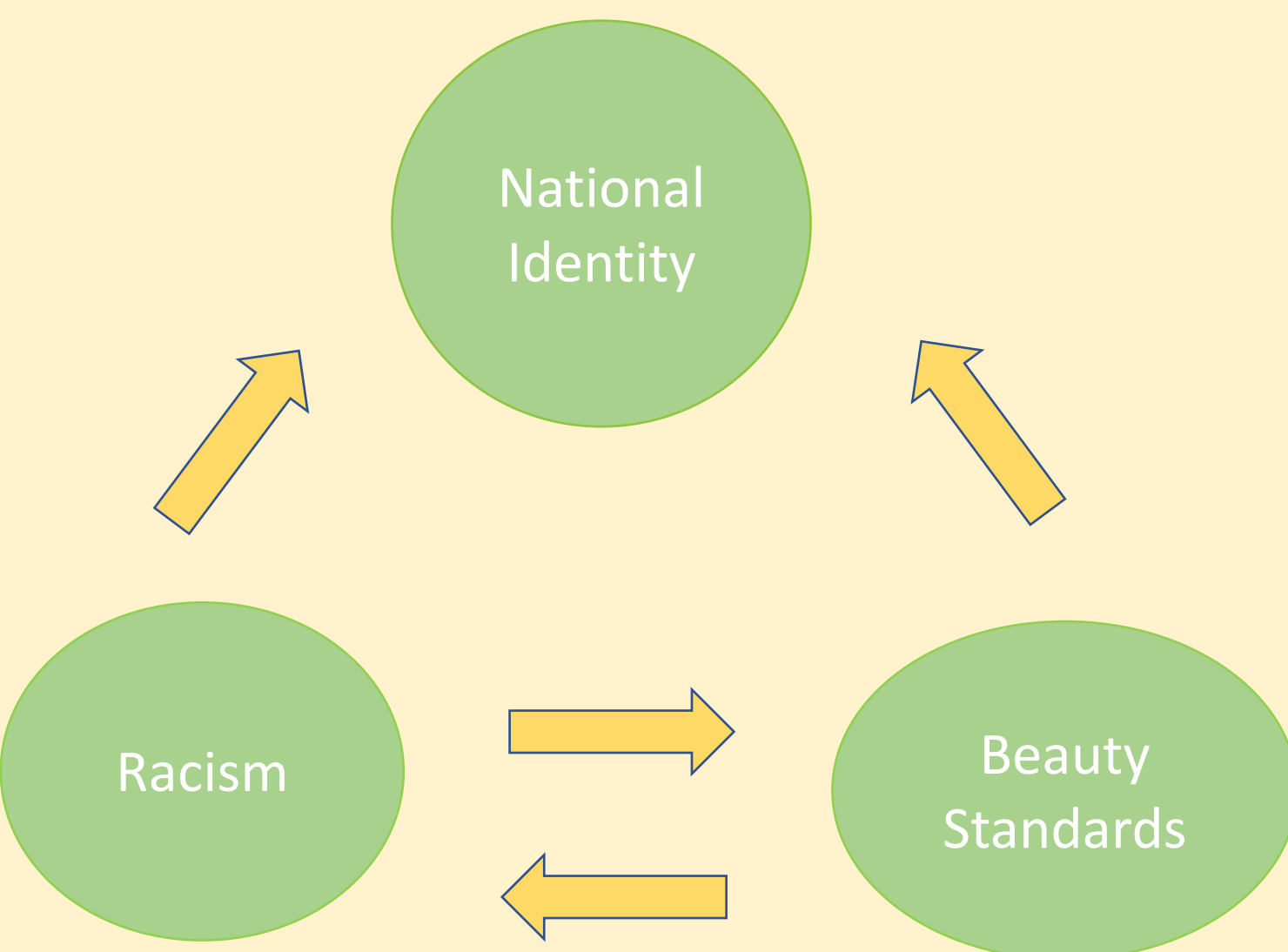
**BACKGROUND:** This study aims to explore the relationship between beauty standards and national identity for women of color. It aims to centre the voices of my participants and their personal experiences.

#### METHODS

Conducted 6 semi structured interviews with:

- ❖ Young women of colour
- ❖ From three ethnic groups: South Asian, Persian, East Asian
- ❖ Who are Canadian citizens
- ❖ And who were born here to immigrant parents or who immigrated as children

#### RESULTS



#### DISCUSSION

- ❖ My research diverged from my original hypothesis.
- ❖ Instead of beauty standards having a strong direct impact on national identity, participants experiences with beauty ideals were often racist in nature and this made participants feel alienated which in turn contributed to their feelings of alienation from Canada.

# Participants experiences with racism and beauty standards led to feelings of alienation from themselves, others, and their national identity.



#### PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES:

- ❖ Participants experience with beauty standards were often racist in nature.
- ❖ Participants internalization of racism and beauty standards lead to low self-esteem and self hatred.
- ❖ When asked about not belonging participants point to experiences of racism.
- ❖ Participants experience with alienation (racism and beauty standards) made it difficult to feel like they belonged.
- ❖ Often, participants experiences with racism and beauty standards took place in school.

#### POSITIONALITY:

This research is fueled by my own experiences as an immigrant woman of colour. Instead of being a weakness, I find this to be a strength allowing me to understand and sympathize with my participants.

#### REFERENCES:

- ❖ Mangsaabguru. (2017). *Passport* [Drawing]. The Noun Project. <https://thenounproject.com/icon/passport-1291261/>
- ❖ Ibrandify. (2019). *Beauty* [Drawing]. The Noun Project. <https://thenounproject.com/icon/beauty-2438559/>
- ❖ Sanb. (2018). *Arrow* [Drawing]. The Noun Project. <https://thenounproject.com/icon/arrow-2171851/>

 **Margarita Tellez Espana,**  
[mtelleze@sfu](mailto:mtelleze@sfu).