



# Exploring the relationship between minority ethnic student teachers' racialised experiences and thoughts about the teaching profession

**Balbir Kaur and Antonina Tereshchenko (Brunel University)**

**Alison Wiggins, Olga Cara, Claire Pillinger (IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society)**

UCET 2022, 2<sup>nd</sup> November



# Background

- Retention in the teaching profession is lower for people from all minority ethnic groups, and most significant ethnic disparities occur in the early career stages (Worth et al. 2022).
- Racism within educational institutions has a significant impact on retention of student teachers and teachers (Bhopal 2015, Tereshchenko et al, 2020, Kohli & Solórzano, 2012, 2018, Callender, 2020, Wallace, 2020).
- Centrality of mentor relationships in ITE and Early Career Framework (Hardman, 2020; Daly et al, 2021).



# Racial microaggressions measure

- Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (Nadal, 2011)
  1. **Assumptions of Inferiority** (e.g. I felt that someone assumed that I would have a lower education because of my race or ethnicity)
  2. **Second-Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality** (e.g. I felt that someone avoided me in social spaces because of my race or ethnicity)
  3. **Microinvalidations** (e.g. Someone implied that people of all racial or ethnic groups experience the same obstacles)
  4. **Exoticization/Assumptions of Similarity** (e.g. Someone objectified physical features of my racial or ethnic group)
  5. **Environmental Microaggressions** (e.g. I observed people of my race or ethnicity in senior positions at my placement schools)
  6. **Workplace and School Microaggressions** (e.g. I felt that a mentor or colleagues treated me differently to white teachers)



# Survey participants ( $N=42$ )

- **Ethnicity:** 29% Asian, 38% Black, 26% Mixed/Multiple, 7% Other
- **PGCE Programme:**
  - Primary Education 29%
  - Secondary Mathematics 19%
  - Secondary English 12%
  - Secondary Languages 10%
  - Secondary Social Sciences 10%
- **Gender:** 83% female, 17% male
- **Age:** 40%  $\leq$  25 y.o., 60%  $>$  25 y.o.
- **UK born:** 57% Yes, 43% No
- **UK compulsory education:** 71% Yes, 29% No
- **Location:** 68% London, 32% elsewhere in England



# Focus group & Interview participants ( $N=14$ )

- **Ethnicity:** 5 Asian, 4 Black, 1 Mixed Black and White, 4 Other
- **PGCE Programme:**
  - Primary Education 1
  - Secondary Mathematics 6
  - Secondary English 1
  - Secondary Chemistry 1
  - Secondary Psychology 2
  - Secondary Social Sciences 3
- **Gender:** 13 female, 1 male
- **UK born:** 6 Yes, 8 No
- **Location:** 14 London

# ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY ELEMENTS OF YOUR PGCE PROGRAMME.

This section asks about the subjective experiences of various events while studying and interacting with various individuals on the PGCE programme at University.



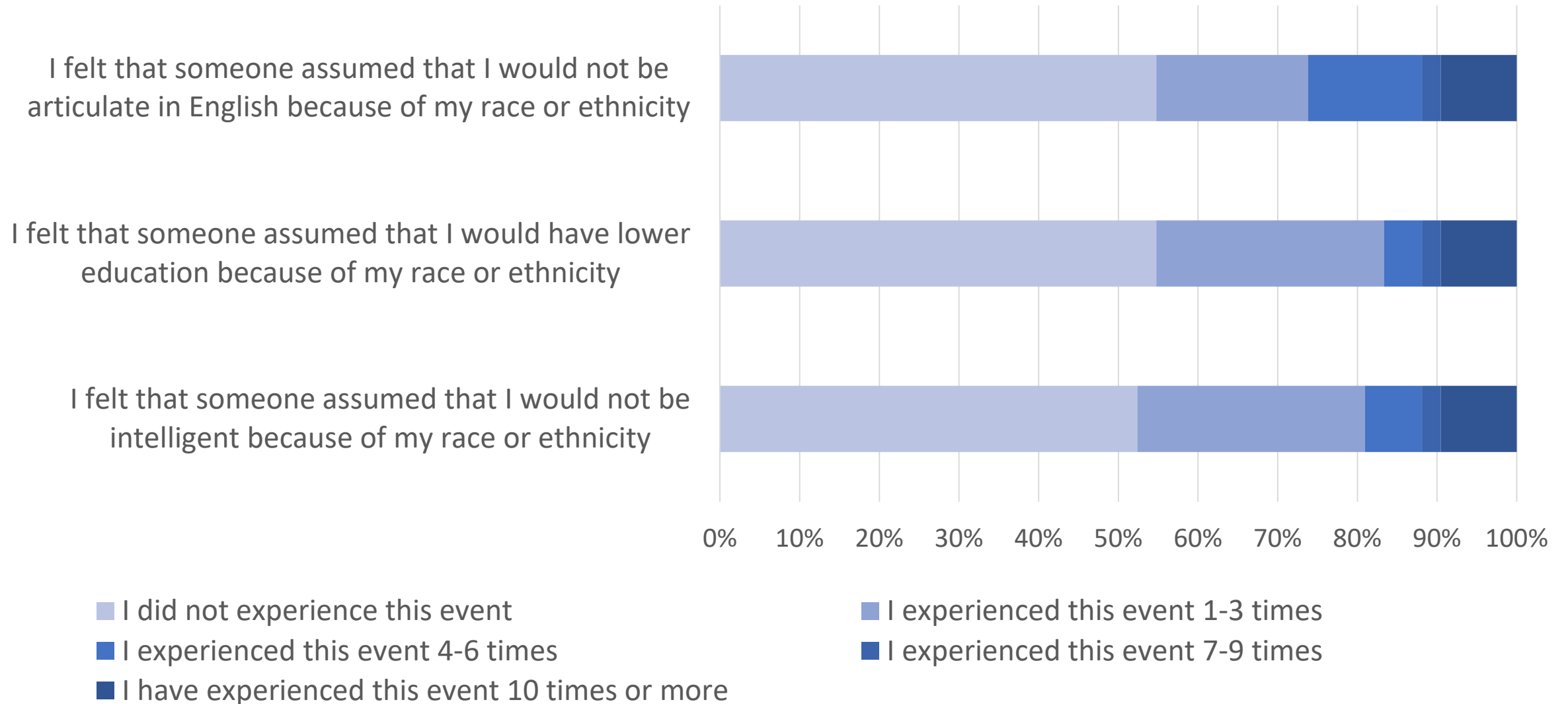
## More commonly experienced microaggressions at University based learning

- Microinvalidations
  - 43% experienced once or more the implication from tutors that 'all racial groups experience the same obstacles'
- Inferiority assumptions
  - 42% experienced once or more an assumption that 'I would not be intelligent because of my race or ethnicity'
  - 42% experienced once or more an assumption that 'I would have lower education because of my race or ethnicity'
- Environmental microaggressions
  - 50% never interacted with tutors of the same race and ethnicity.

## Less commonly experienced microaggressions on school placements

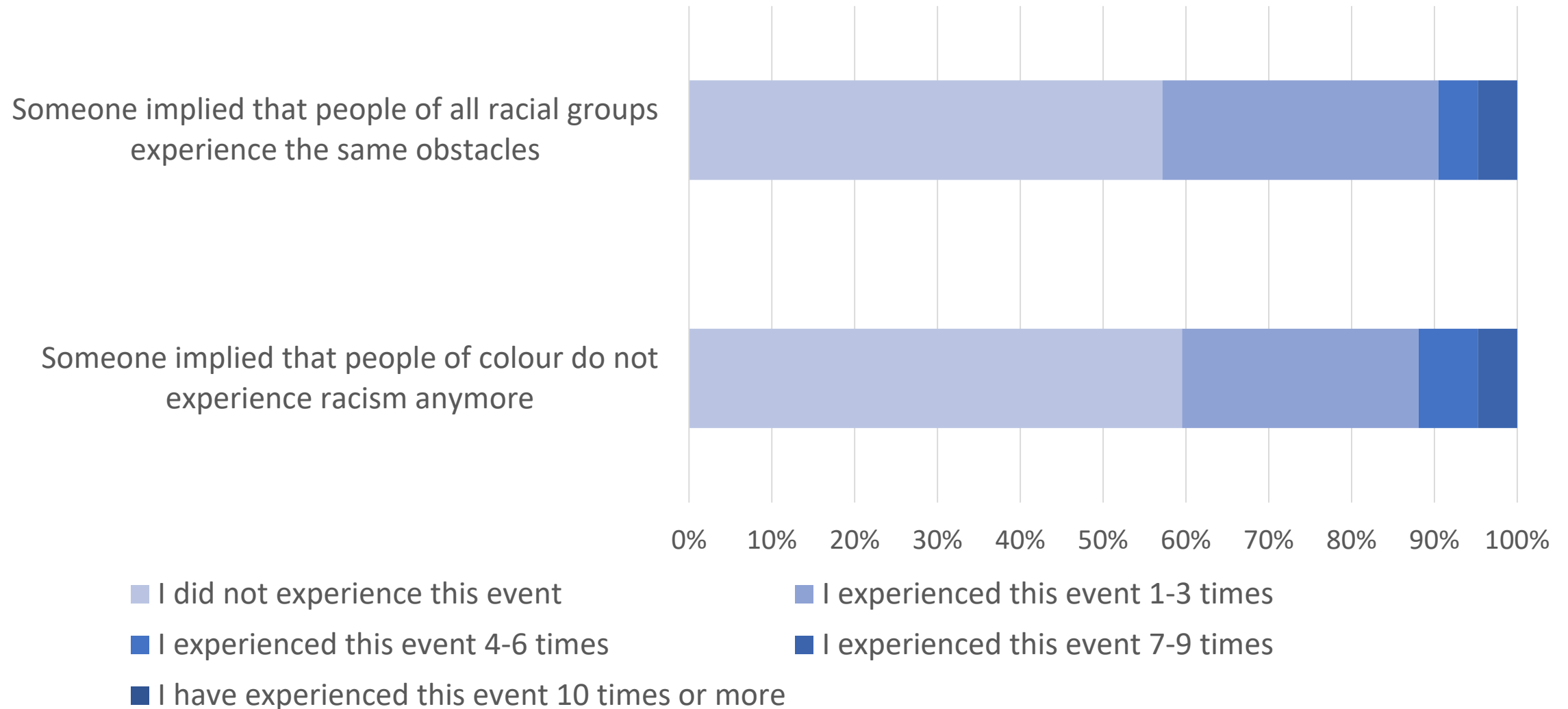
- University based microaggressions
  - 74% did not experience being 'treated differently to white students'

# Experiences of inferiority assumptions (N=42)

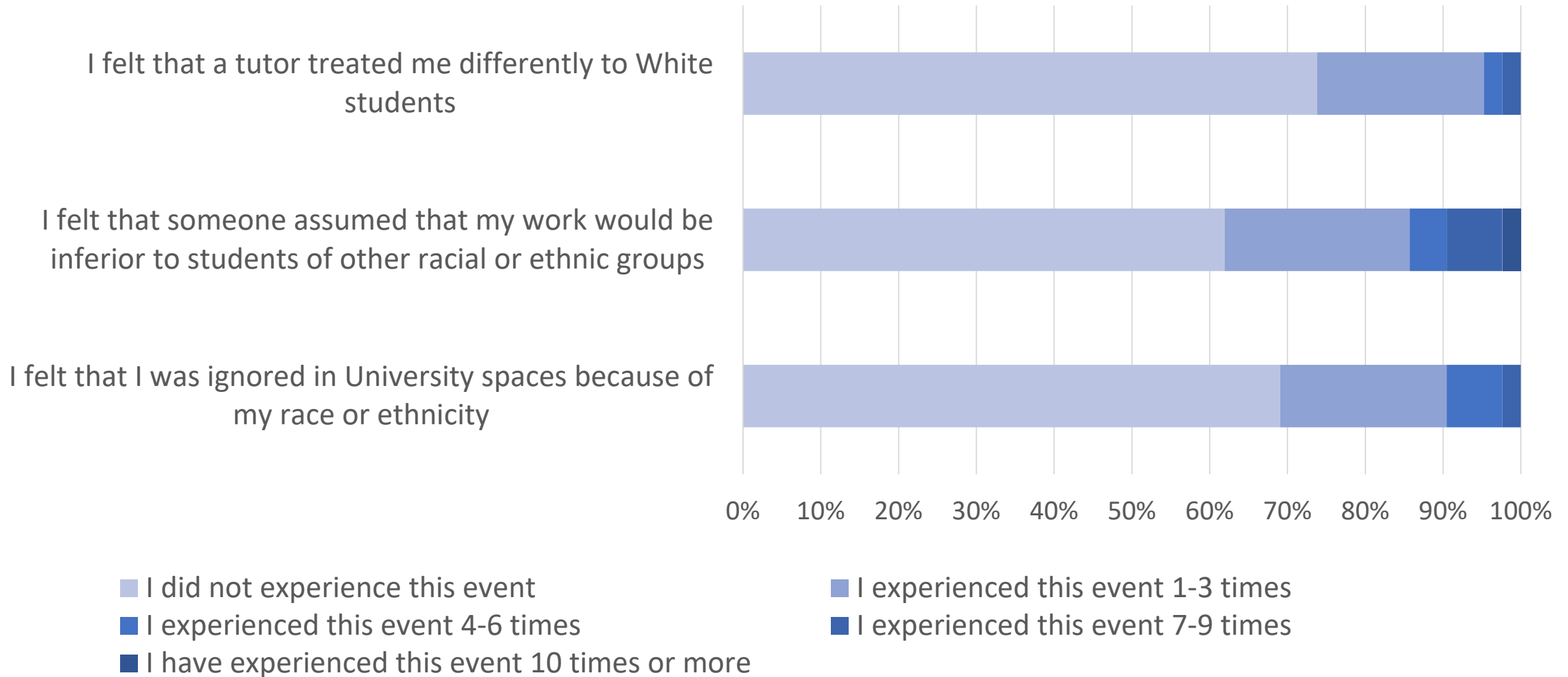




# Experiences of microinvalidations (N=42)

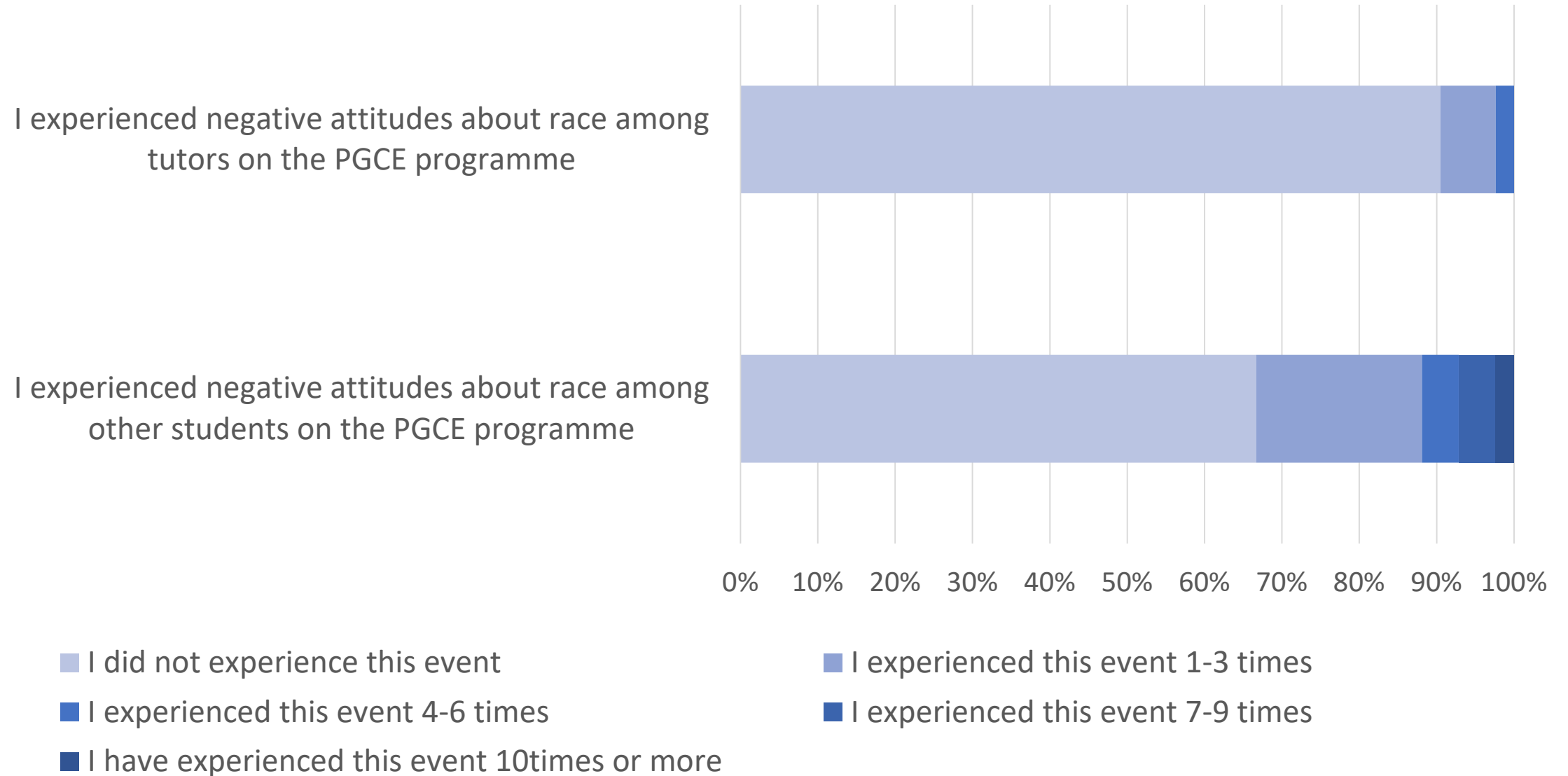


# Experiences of university based microaggressions (N=42)



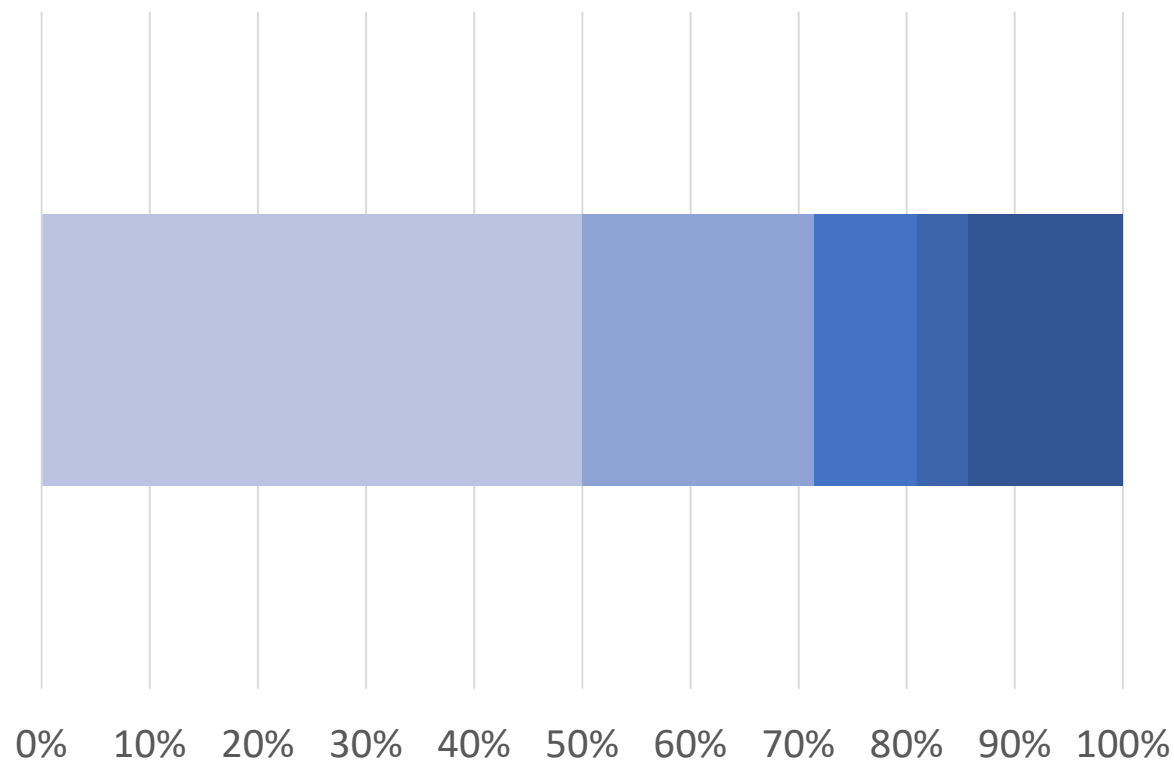


# Experiences of difference in attitudes (N=42)



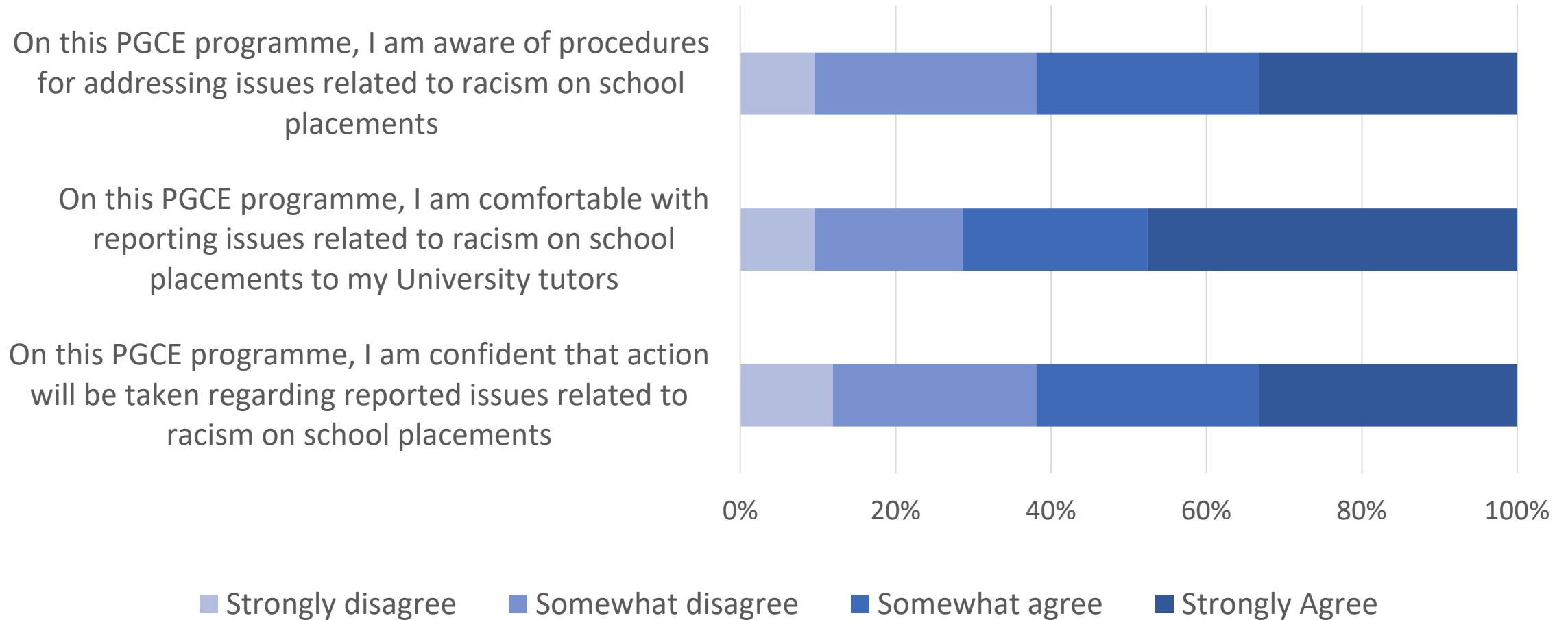
# Experiences of environmental microaggressions (N=42)

I interacted with tutors of my race or ethnicity on the PGCE programme



- I did not experience this event
- I experienced this event 1-3 times
- I experienced this event 4-6 times
- I experienced this event 7-9 times
- I have experienced this event 10 or more times

# Support on your PGCE programme



# ABOUT THE PLACEMENT ELEMENTS OF YOUR PGCE PROGRAMME.

This section asks about the subjective experiences of the PGCE students  
while on school experience placements.



## **More commonly experienced microaggressions on school placements**

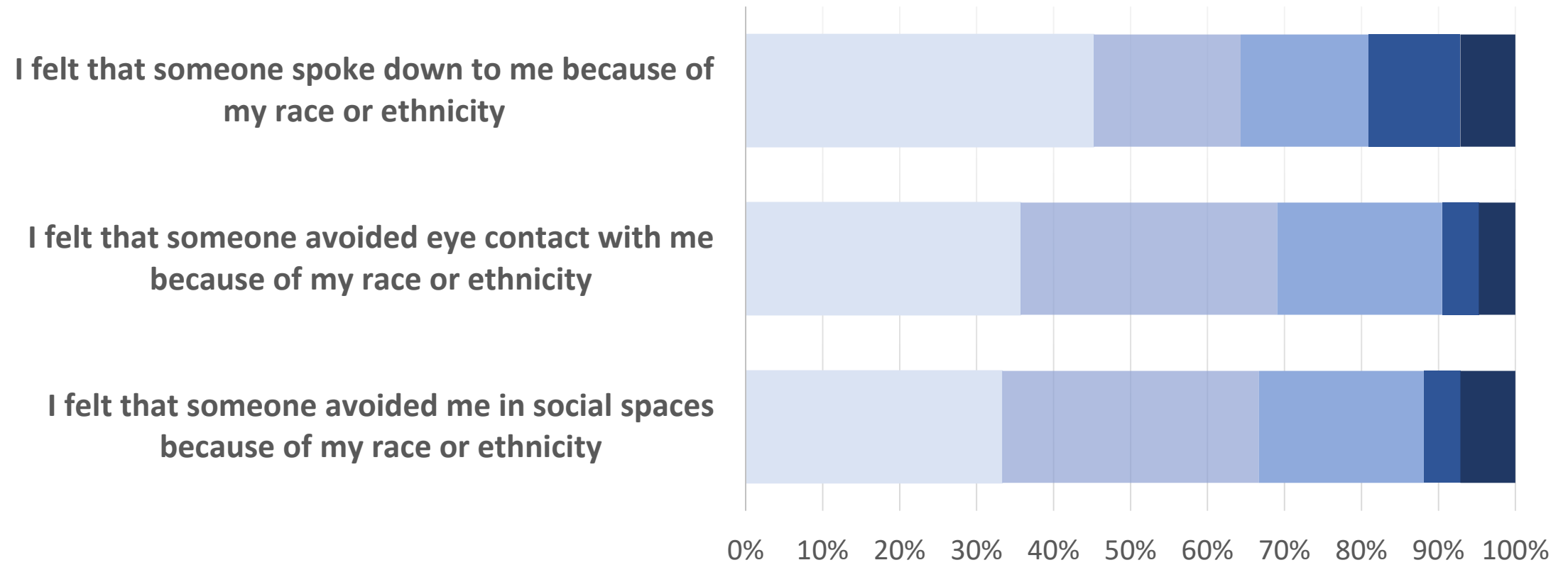
- **Second-class citizen**
  - 65% experienced once or more 'avoided in social spaces' or 'avoided eye contact'
- **Inferiority assumptions**
  - 57% experienced once or more an assumption that 'I was not a teacher because of my race or ethnicity'
- **Workplace microaggressions**
  - 60% experienced once or more being 'treated differently to white teachers'
- **Environmental microaggressions**
  - 57% never 'observed people of my race or ethnicity in senior positions'

## **Less commonly experienced microaggressions on school placements**

- **Microinvalidations**
  - 60% never experienced 'someone implied that people of colour do not experience racism anymore'
- **Exoticization/Assumptions of similarity**
  - 60% never 'heard negative or insulting comments about my race or ethnicity'



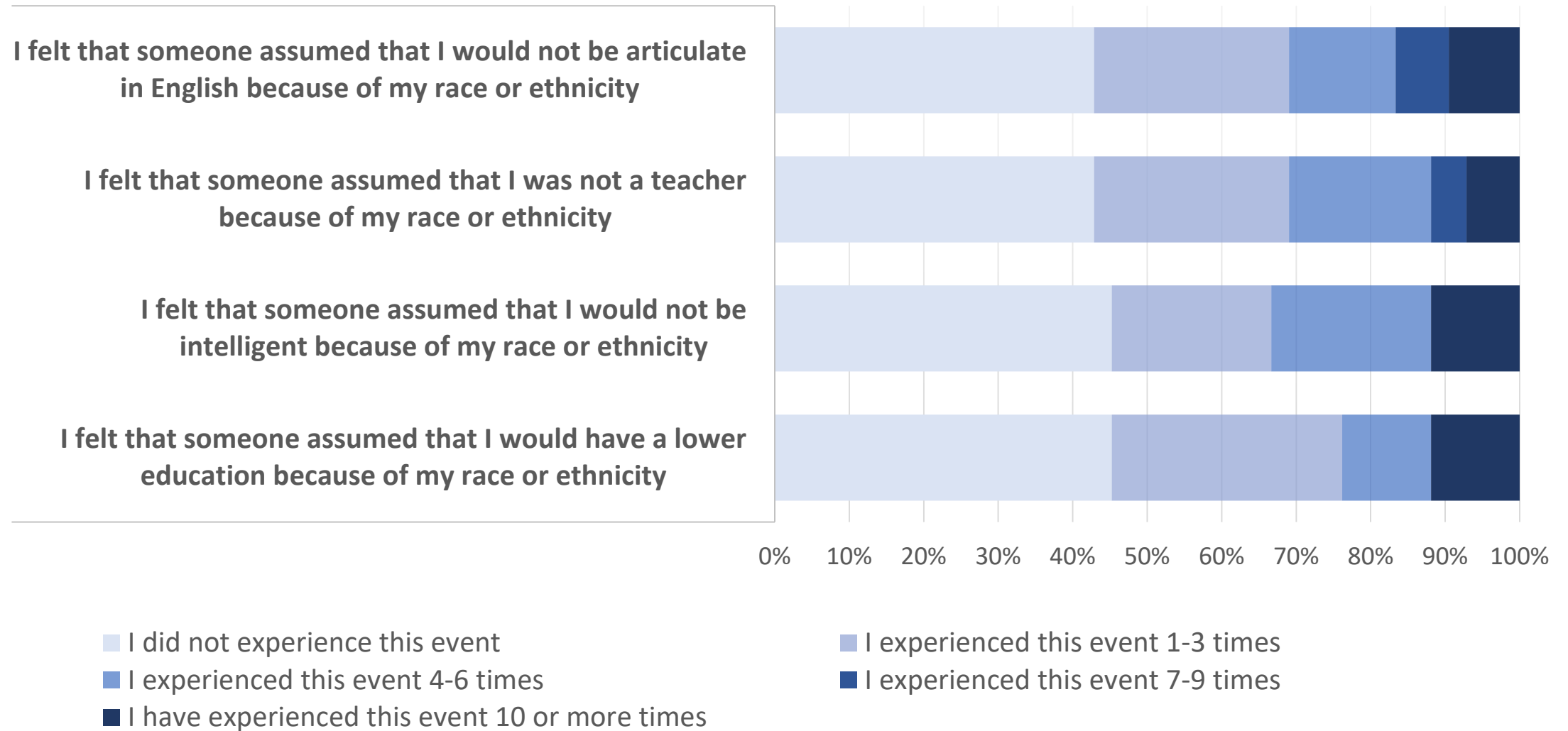
# Experiences of being a second-class citizen (N=42)



- I did not experience this event
- I experienced this event 1-3 times
- I experienced this event 4-6 times
- I experienced this event 7-9 times
- I have experienced this event 10 or more times



# Experiences of inferiority assumptions (N=42)

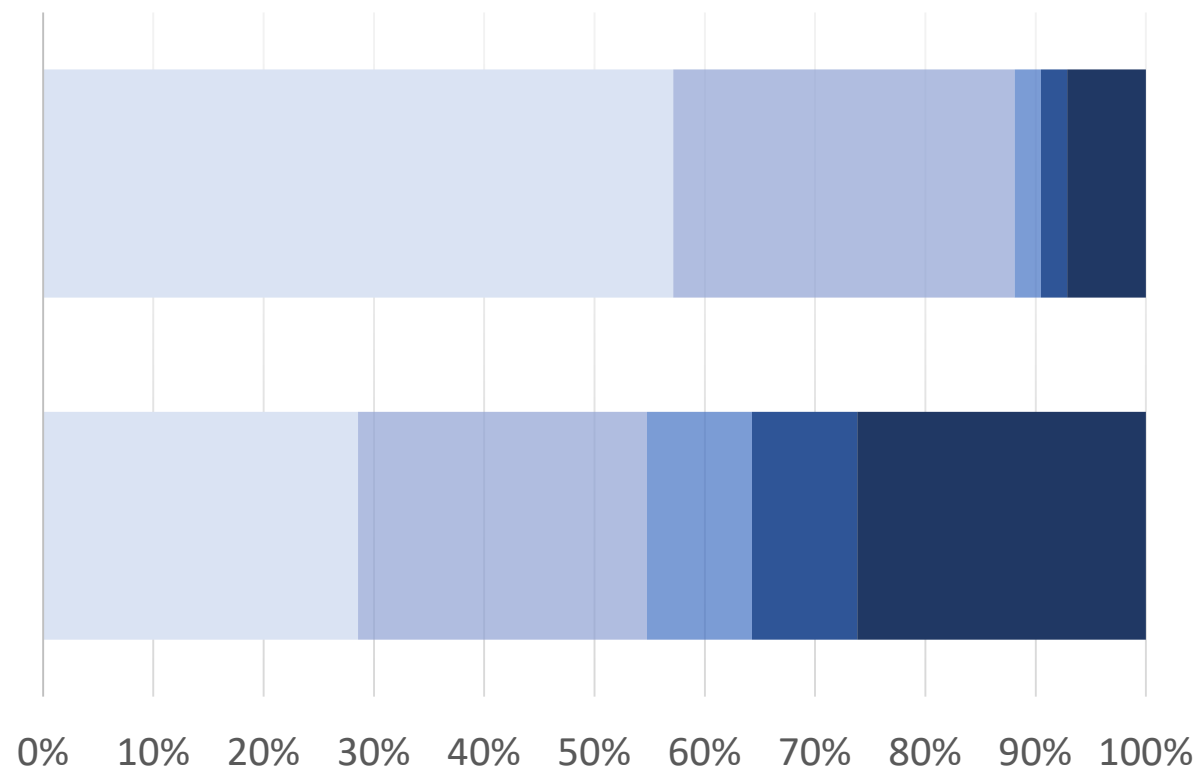




# Experiences of environmental microaggressions ( $N=42$ )

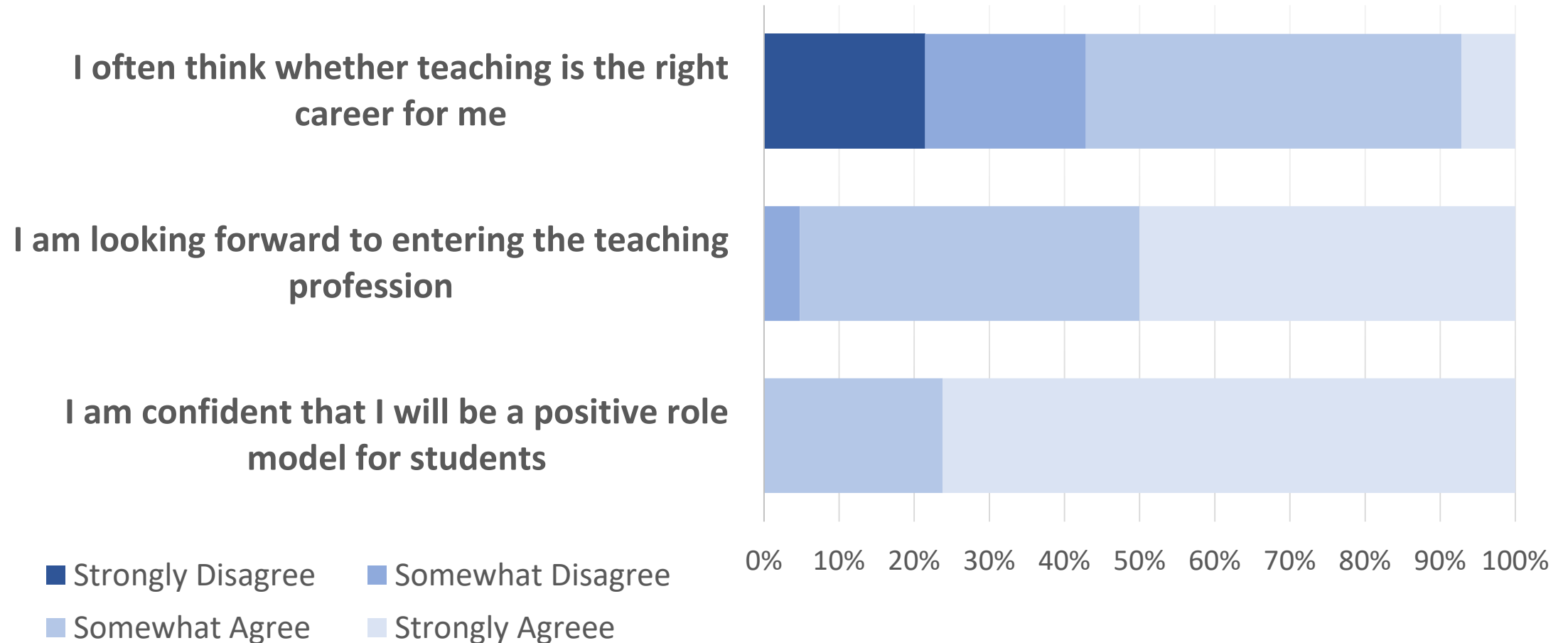
I observed people of my race or ethnicity in senior positions at my placement schools

I interacted with teachers of my race or ethnicity at my placement schools



- I did not experience this event
- I experienced this event 1-3 times
- I experienced this event 4-6 times
- I experienced this event 7-9 times
- I have experienced this event 10 or more times

# Future outlook on teaching ( $N=42$ )



# Recommendations based on findings

- **AWARENESS:** Raising awareness of the scale and implications of micro-aggressions faced by students on PGCE programmes with BOTH PGCE tutors and School based mentors/PCMs (infographic/leaflet)
- **UNDERSTANDING:** “Increase staff and students’ understanding of racism, racial harassment and microaggressions, through training that is developed from an anti-racist perspective” (Tackling Racial harassment in HE - recommendation 6 : Universities UK, 2020)
- **REPORTING & SUPPORTING:** “Where these do not already exist, universities should develop and introduce clearly defined channels for reporting incidents of racial harassment, including the option for anonymous reporting where possible. Details of the system should be communicated routinely to all staff and students to encourage usage. The provision of appropriate support to the reporting party should be a key consideration in designing reporting systems” (Tackling Racial harassment in HE -recommendation 8 : Universities UK, 2020)

# Recommendations based on findings

- PREVENTION: A clear statement in the Partnership Agreement with schools about racism towards visiting Black and global majority staff or students on placement detailing how to deal with racist incidents and reporting and recording racist incidents
- Ensure that anti-racism and anti-discrimination is part of all mentor development training and partnership management training
- Embed anti-racist practice and pedagogy in the PGCE curriculum at subject and programme level to develop the racial literacy of student teachers
- Add support with dealing with issues of racism to the student safety and wellbeing agenda
- Develop course and placement evaluation tools to give students the opportunity to share their experiences of racism (even if these were not reported) and use this information in monitoring, assessment and planning

# Challenges/success

## Challenges

- Severe shortage of placements
- Poor attendance to mentor development sessions
- Working with schools which do not have clear anti-racist policies
- Anti-racism not being on the agenda for schools in the same way as it is at some universities

## Success

- Programme and subject specific anti-racist training
- Lead mentor scheme at UCL which will allow for peer learning on anti-racism
- More students willing to report and discuss issues
- Better reporting and recording of incidents
- Alison has FTE to support ST's experiencing racism on the secondary PGCE programme at UCL
- Bal has worked on embedding a student equality placement policy across ITE programmes that involve partnership management teams, senior leaders in school and mentoring .

Thanks and questions