

ACCENTuate the Positive

Perception of Accent and Authority among Classroom Instructors at Queen's University

The study was divided in 31 questions. Part one was a survey and part two was a series of focus groups/ interviews.

Participants

42% Tenure/Tenure track

31% Teaching Assistants

27% Adjunct/others

56% Female

41% Male

3% Did not disclose

1% Non-binary

English as a first language

73% YES

23% NO

Educators who self-identifies as accented

Participants were asked to self-identify in terms of accent. 24.4% self-identified as accented, whereas 75.6% self-identified as non-accented.

Accented participants had:

- Changed the way they communicate with students due to their accent: 65% no, 35% yes
- Experienced reactions to their accent: positive 49%, 32% negative, 19% other
- Felt their accent was respected: 42% unsure, 42% no, 16% yes

56.2% of the self-identified accented educators HAD NOT experienced harassment/discrimination due to their accent, while 43.8% HAD experienced it.

Global Citizen - Global English - Global Accent

56% of those who HAD NOT experienced accent harassment/discrimination were individuals who self-identified as being from European descent.

29% of those who HAD experienced accent harassment/discrimination were individuals who self-identified as Chinese, South Asian/West Indian, and West Asian.

Place and type of accent discrimination

93% of accented educators had experienced stress due to the negative responses to their accent.

29% felt they had been denied work, services, or opportunities at Queen's because of their accent.

Where is accent discrimination occurring?

All participants were asked to comment on the type of accent discrimination they had experienced or had witnessed.

Where?

Classroom:

- Undermining of academic ability
- Undermining of classroom authority
- Negative assumptions

USAT:

- Derogatory/Abusive language
- Stereotyping
- Undermining of academic ability
- Undermining of classroom authority
- Hostile/Disrespectful treatment
- Negative assumptions

37% of educators had witnessed ACCENT HARASSMENT in the classroom.

87% of educators indicated they had witnessed NEGATIVE ASSUMPTIONS about accent being made in an instructional setting.

57% of educators had witnessed UNDERMINING OF AUTHORITY towards accented instructors among colleagues.