

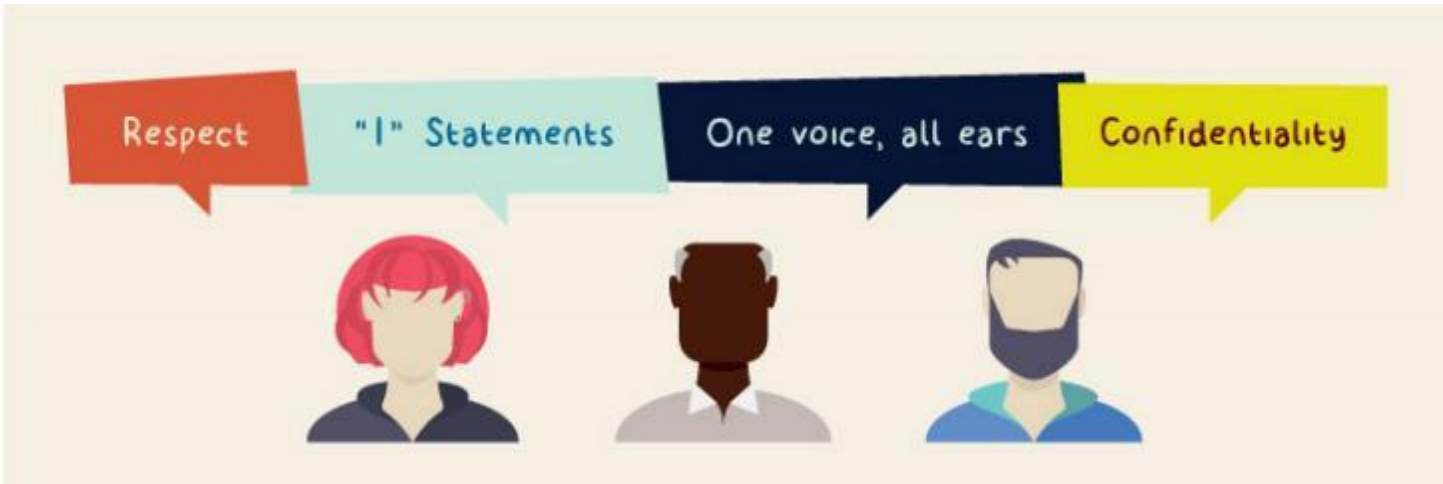


*Amplifying voices of Black Minority
Ethnic social care students.*

Key lessons for policy and practice

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Safe and Brave spaces

Introduction:

My Fullest Name

▶ **Instructions**

Take a few minutes to write out your fullest name.

▶ Who gave you your name? Why that name?

- Do you know the ethnic origin of your name?
- Do you have any nicknames? If so, how did you get them?
- What is your preferred name?
- Introduce yourself to the person next to you. How does it feel to have your full name acknowledged and understood? Is it important to your identity?

Motivation for research on experiences of Black Minority Ethnic students

Experience:

- ▶ working alongside African women in social care settings
- tutoring Black Minority Ethnic social care students

Observing:

- ▶ Black Minority Ethnic social care students' engagement in HE and how diversity is addressed (or not...)
- the challenges and difficulties they encounter



Aims and objectives

- 1. To investigate opportunities and challenges that Black Minority Ethnic social care students experience in Ireland
- 2. To give voice to these experiences
- 3. To advance lessons learned by the study.

The study

21 Social Care Students (all female)

- ▶ 5 colleges- TUD Tallaght and City Campus, DKIT, LIT, AIT
- ▶ Year 2, 3, 4 and recent graduates
- ▶ Age ranged from 19-52 years

2 distinct groups

- ▶ Six < 25, no children, migrated as children
- ▶ Fifteen > 25, all mothers (8 lone parents) migration paths varied (Asylum, trafficked, family reunification, unaccompanied minor)

Methodology

- ▶ Qualitative research
- ▶ Method of combined semi- structured interviews and storytelling (Delgado & Stefancic, 1992; Ladson- Billing, 1998)
- ▶ Transcribed and analysed in NVivo using Braun and Clarke (2021) six stages of reflective thematic analysis
- ▶ Participatory research approach (Freire, 1970; Bradbury, 2015; Vaughn & Jacquez, 2020).

Participatory Action research approach

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is an approach to enquiry which has been used since the 1940s (*Paulo Freire, The pedagogy of the oppressed*) and fits well with the core principles of social care practice.

Nothing about me without me



How the
participants
shaped the
study

Language and terminology

Rapidly changing landscape

Asylum seekers/
Unaccompanied minors/ SGBV

Caring and mothering role of
migrant women

My position as a White
researcher

CRITICAL

RACE

THEORY

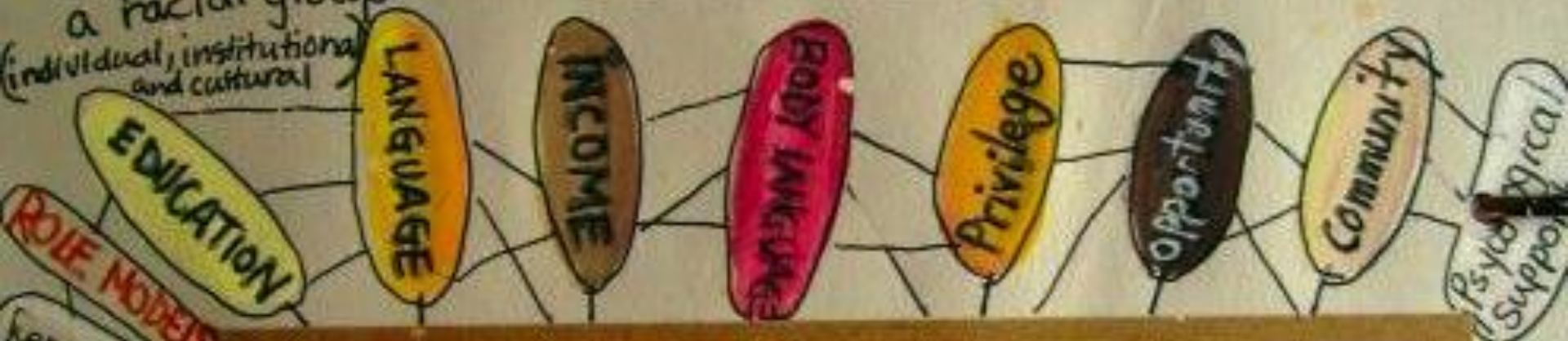
EXCLUSION AND OMISSION

WHO CREATES the ACCEPTABLE NORM!

RACISM: an action or policy that suppresses a racial group
(individual, institutional and cultural)

- Prejudice
- Discrimination
- Privileges
- POWER

Concepts in Critical Race Theory



ROLE MODELS
represent

Race is constituted and perpetuated within a system of advantages



people are so blind. They pretend it doesn't exist... because you haven't experienced it, you haven't seen it first-hand, it doesn't mean it does not exist” (Bethane)

“They (White people) just don't want to help ... just prefer to not say anything just watch and they tell us it's not fair ... but they are not willing to actually make a difference or make a change” (Raelene)



BAN
CRT

STOP

PYLUS

Positionality and White privilege

- ▶ *I see a pattern running through the matrix of white privilege, a pattern of assumptions that were passed on to me as a white person. There was one main piece of cultural turf; it was my own turf, and I was among those who could control the turf.*
- ▶ *My skin color was an asset for any move I was educated to want to make. I could think of myself as belonging in major ways and of making social systems work for me. I could freely disparage, fear, neglect, or be oblivious to anything outside of the dominant cultural forms. Being of the main culture, I could also criticize it fairly freely.*
- ▶ Unpacking the invisible knapsack (Peggy McIntosh, 2003)





Stories and themes

- ▶ The participants stories about their histories, culture, motivations and expectations
- ▶ Experiences of personal, structural and institutional racism, discrimination and microaggressions in Ireland
- ▶ Stories about student life, formal learning, informal interactions and placement experiences

Whistle-stop tour of the findings

- ▶ Key themes: Loss, fear, distrust and adaptations
- ▶ Racism and discrimination: Overt and microaggression in college, class, groupwork, placement
- ▶ White privilege and fragility: Unconscious bias, colour-blind approach, capital as a White person
- ▶ Intersectionality: Migration, trauma, poverty, loss of capital, DP, homelessness motherhood, single parents, remittances, global care chains, language competency, mental health
- ▶ Anti-racist praxis: Discussion, reflection, honest and open examination of privilege, words and actions

Theme: Loss

Personal:

- ▶ Loss of family
- ▶ Loss of capitals
- ▶ Loss of power/ choice
- ▶ Loss of sense of justice/ fairness

Academic:

- ▶ Loss of equal opportunities
- ▶ Loss of social justice
- ▶ Loss of social care principles enacted in practice

Professional:

- ▶ Loss of equality, work and progression opportunities

LOSS

- ▶ *“they cannot see past you being a cleaner or being a toilet cleaner” (Zanib)*
- ▶ *“you’re never actually you! We’re seen as just Black woman, Black mother, Black single mother and we’re never just Florence”.*
- ▶ *“once they hear your voice, your accent on the phone they tell you ‘Oh, sorry we’re already booked we have student’ ... because you’re Black, you won’t get it (Mary)*

Theme: Fear and distrust

Personal:

- ▶ Migration journey
- ▶ Trauma and GSBV
- ▶ Motherhood, lone parenting, sole family responsibility-
- ▶ Untrustworthiness feedback loops
- ▶ Intergenerational reduction of trust levels

Academic:

- ▶ Wider college
- ▶ Class and groupwork
- ▶ Social care principles are not enacted

Professional:

Global care chains, precarious work, career cul de sacs

Fear

- ▶ *“Anything can happen to you when you're outside ... like you always need some sort of security around you when you're walking alone. It's just not very safe. I am actually planning to leave here if I get a degree or become successful enough ... I want to move my parents out of here because it's not safe for them either.”(Chris)*
- ▶ *Racism is still strong these days. So, we were outcasted a lot by most people ... it was very scary ... in shops we'd always be followed because of the stereotypes ... on the AstroTurf someone spray-painted out the N words (Afia)*
- ▶ *... it's a different and strange place, I remember when I went into my car I actually start crying, I burst out weeping, I'm like 'God what did I put myself into', I said 'Oh I don't think I will be able to continue'.(Dorothy)*

Distrust

- ▶ *My manager actually came to me and told me 'Jojo, you'll be the one to fit into that position' and I said, 'Thank you' ... but every time I mention it to her, she just says hold on and the position is still empty. (Jojo)*
- ▶ *They were twisting it for me, they were sending me care assistant forms and care assistant badges ... I send them an email ... I am not a Health Care Assistant; I am a Social Care Worker. Change it! If you do not do that, I am not working for you. (Furula)*
- ▶ *... they don't want the outsider to be the best ... Black students can be a bit intimidating ... when they see someone not of their culture trying to get better grades ... they don't want them to do as well. (Raelene)*
- ▶ *it wasn't said, but it was there! Its actions! The actions speak ... but they don't say to your face". (Zanib)*

Theme: Adaptations

- Emotional adaptations: Avoidance, anger, confusion, uncertainty.
- Work ethic, determination, resilience.
- Code switching and identity formation, changing names and other efforts to integrate.
- Sticking together- safe spaces/ counterspaces
- Making brave decisions
- Adapted expectations

Adaptations

- ▶ *“I didn't want to talk ... to scare them away or anything. So, I would just try please them or like I'd always agree. So, it was more of finding their common ground” (Chris 19 years old)*
- ▶ *“As time goes on the Whites would gravitate towards the Whites and the Blacks would gravitate towards the Blacks” (Dorothy)*
- ▶ *I felt at home, and I felt really comfortable and I felt I actually belonged here because we started to share stuff ... stuff is safe ... this is my clique and has been my clique since the first year. (Zalika)*

Advancing lessons learned for policy

Open discussion forums

Informed Common
Space Race Equity
Community of Practice

How PAR can support
research and action

Amplify Voices:
Representation and
data, widening
participation, rewarding
allyship

Spaces: creating safe
and brave spaces
acknowledging and
working with counter
spaces

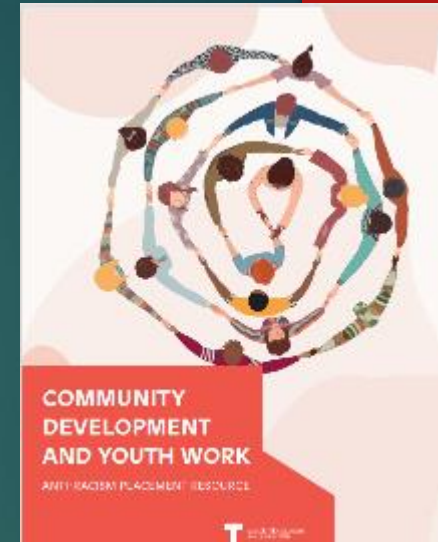
Specific initiatives:
Places of sanctuary,
Race Equality Charter,
EDI initiatives,
UDL(Universal design for
learning).

Advancing lessons learned for Social Care education

- ▶ Re-imagining the social care curriculum
- ▶ Bring *care* into social care education-
Matching principles - Trauma informed
pedagogical approach to teaching to
support healing and restorative justice
- ▶ PAR approach embedded in social care
research- good fit with principles- a
vehicle for ensuring principles are
integrated across all elements of the
program and learning
- ▶ Role of placements and external partners
in shaping the way forward

Exemplar: Embedding Anti-Racism in the Community Development and Youth Work programme: **Dr. Brid Ni Chonail**

- ▶ Year 1 IMPACT funded project 2020/2021
- ▶ Year 2 EDI funding for development of – Anti-Racism Placement Resource 2021/2022
- ▶ On-going work to embed from Year 1 in programme modules



Lessons learned from developing anti-racist practice in professional education: Dr. Brid Ni Chonail

- ▶ Involves learning what racism is (INAR 2020) and unlearning
- ▶ Create space for reflection on positionality and associated power and privilege (E.g. Activity 1.5 of Resource) – from Year 1
- Starts the analysis around associated power and privilege - impacts professional practice
- Centers race in the context of an intersectional approach (Crenshaw 1989)
- Students from dominant groups are unlikely to self-identify with advantaged social groups e.g., male, White... (Tatum 2021; Rolón-Dow et al 2020).
- The inability to connect individual positionalities to the histories of, and power attached to, dominant identities or social groups (Brookfield & Hess 2021) - use of storytelling





Lessons learned and Taking Action

- Developing a more **structured approach** to introducing key activities, concepts, and theoretical frameworks, which **incrementally** build student knowledge and confidence to 'develop a deeper understanding and discourse that can propel them to action' (Sealey-Ruiz 2021)
- Anti-racism - 'a verb not a noun' (Moore 2021)
- Focus on whiteness in the Irish context – develop anti-racist allies
- Transformative learning takes **time** and **patience**, requires **intentional scaffolding** and **constant learning and unlearning** on the part of educators themselves
- Our actions – using counterstories (Joseph 2019) from students to use as case studies

Action time!

Call for action – can you identify some change that you can make or some anti-racist action that you can take in your professional practice?





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS


SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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