



## Belonging on Campus:

An exploratory study of the continuities, the contradictions and the consequences for Black and Minority Ethnic students in higher education.

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctorate of Education Degree (EdD)

by

**FIONNUALA DARBY**

DEPARTMENT OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY  
EDUCATION

National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM)

**February 2020**

**Head of Department: Dr. Mary B. Ryan**

**Supervisor: Dr. Bernie Grummell**

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgments .....	
Abstract .....	
List of Abbreviations .....	
List of Figures .....	
List of Tables .....	
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging .....	1
Setting the scene: Demographic influences.....	2
Local demographics .....	3
Technological University Dublin.....	4
An understanding of the BME term in this research .....	7
The importance of belonging and inclusion for higher education.....	8
Aims of my research .....	10
Research questions.....	11
Structure and outline of the chapters.....	13
Conclusion: a metaphorical post script to this chapter.....	16
Chapter 2: Positionality and Conceptual Framework.....	17
Introduction .....	17
Positionality .....	17
Life-wide learning: The role and place of values in the research process .....	19
Critical reflection in my research .....	21
My writing voice .....	23
Ontological perspective and epistemological commitments.....	24
My ontological perspective .....	24
My epistemological commitments.....	25
Conceptual Framework .....	27
The bricolage approach .....	28
Inclusion and a bricolage inspired conceptual framework .....	30
Inclusion on campus .....	31
Dynamic diversity: The perimeter fence.....	32
Summary .....	33
Chapter 3: Theoretical Perspectives – Engaging with the Literature.....	35
Introduction .....	35
The dynamics of belonging and inclusion.....	37
Belonging: The experiences of places and spaces on campus .....	39

The hierarchies of belonging .....	42
Inclusive spaces.....	44
Contextualising the site: Dynamic diversity on campus .....	45
Campus climate and dynamic diversity .....	47
Cultural humility .....	49
Developing a race consciousness grounded in Critical Race Theory .....	50
Racialisation: Race and othering.....	53
White academy: White scholarship .....	55
Using CRT to develop a critical pedagogy lens inside the classroom.....	58
The psychological construct of microaggressions .....	61
Types of microaggressions .....	62
Higher education policy on diversity and inclusion.....	65
The systemic context: Privileged knowledge.....	67
Equality of conditions perspective: Diversity ≠ Inclusion.....	69
The hidden curriculum.....	75
Conclusion.....	78
Chapter 4: Methods and Methodology .....	80
Introduction .....	80
The methodological bricoleuse .....	80
Research design .....	82
Case study research .....	83
Research location .....	86
Research questions.....	86
Research methodologies .....	86
Photovoice methodology (PVM).....	87
Criticisms of PVM.....	90
Research methods .....	91
Photovoice Methods (PV).....	91
Focus groups and interviews.....	93
Recruiting research participants .....	94
Sampling approaches.....	94
Research participants .....	96
Characteristics of the student participants.....	97
Characteristics of the staff participants.....	99
Ethical approval .....	100
Summative account of dilemmas encountered.....	102

<b>Analytical approach</b> .....	108
<b>Thematic analysis</b> .....	109
<b>Criticisms of thematic analysis</b> .....	110
<b>Deductive thematic reasoning</b> .....	112
<b>Inductive thematic reasoning</b> .....	115
<b>The framework for my analysis</b> .....	116
<b>The coding process</b> .....	120
<b>Summary</b> .....	127
<b>Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion on Belonging, Spaces and Places</b> .....	128
<b>Introduction</b> .....	128
<b>Belonging on campus – Masked or unmasked?</b> .....	128
<b>Campus climate: Inclusion on campus</b> .....	129
<b>Belonging is linked to academic performance</b> .....	134
<b>Do BME students make changes to belong on campus?</b> .....	138
<b>Navigating between two or more cultures on campus for BME students</b> .....	139
<b>Diverse campus and commitment to diversity efforts</b> .....	142
<b>Patterns of socialisation</b> .....	144
<b>Campus wide respect for diversity and being a minority on campus</b> .....	146
<b>Spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus - ‘Islands of comfortable consensus or diversity discord?’</b> .....	151
<b>Inclusion and belonging: Setting/location (where on campus)</b> .....	152
<b>Exclusion and denial: Setting/location (where on campus)</b> .....	158
<b>The common room: A counter story of ‘in(ex)clusion’</b> .....	164
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	170
<b>Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion on</b> .....	173
<b>Name, Unmasking Microaggressions and Learning.</b> .....	173
<b>Introduction</b> .....	173
<b>Name – Identity – Misrecognition</b> .....	173
<b>Mispronunciation of name</b> .....	173
<b>Modification of name</b> .....	180
<b>Misrecognition</b> .....	181
<b>Unmasking microaggressions - From fieldwork to framework</b> .....	185
<b>Inside the classroom</b> .....	207
<b>Being a minority in the classroom</b> .....	208
<b>The classroom as a safe and collaborative learning space</b> .....	209
<b>Student perspective on inclusion inside the classroom</b> .....	212

<b>The need for understanding ethnicity in higher education curricula .....</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Ethnicity proofing the syllabus.....</b>	<b>217</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>220</b>
<b>Chapter 7: Conclusions .....</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>Belonging – Nurtured, Negotiated or Neglected? .....</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>A canter through the research process.....</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>Conceptual conclusions of the research: The 3 Ps of an inclusive campus .....</b>	<b>226</b>
<b>Place .....</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>Pedagogy.....</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>Power Imbalances.....</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>Pronunciation of Name .....</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>Microaggressions.....</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>Framework for an inclusive campus .....</b>	<b>238</b>
<b>Statement of contribution to knowledge .....</b>	<b>239</b>
<b>An agenda for further research.....</b>	<b>240</b>
<b>Research limitations .....</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Next steps .....</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Final words: The campus as a forest .....</b>	<b>243</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Student Participant Interview/Focus Group Questions (Phase 2).....</b>	<b>286</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Staff Focus Group Questions .....</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Information Sheets .....</b>	<b>290</b>

**Dedicated to Noel, Cassie and Rory, who occupy the chambers of my heart.**

## **Acknowledgments**

I have often described my doctoral studies as a long journey at sea, on a ship with many passengers and crew. I embarked with much excitement, enthusiasm and energy. I disembark a better researcher and educator, and never thinking the same again as I commit to always go assumption-hunting. The opposite of knowledge is not always ignorance, it can be wonder, or mystery or possibility. The things I did not know have lifted me up and pushed me forwards much more than the things I did know. I sailed through calm seas, stormy waters and uncharted territory, but always with guidance and support around me. There are a number of 'passengers' and 'crew' I would like to thank for this memorable voyage.

My supervisor, Dr. Bernie Grummell was my 'lighthouse' throughout the process. The torch was always shining, even if I could not see it at times in the foggy conditions. Bernie's depth and breadth of knowledge continues to amaze me. Her unwavering support, advice and serenity provided me with much direction, and I endeavour to emulate her supervisory style.

To the staff in the Department of Adult and Community Education at Maynooth University that I encountered during my doctorate studies, you have made me a better educator through your creative pedagogies and inclusive approach to learning.

My classmates have built friendships over our time together on the DHAE programme. We have been a constant source of encouragement and entertainment to each other. Our class collaborations and celebrations were a great source of joy to me. I found guidance, inspiration and rejuvenation from them throughout our time together. I thank them for this and wish each of them the very best personally and professionally.

To my work colleagues at Technological University Dublin and my friends who each in their own wonderful way supported and cheered me along, all the way into port.

To my father Thomas Darby and my late mother May Darby who built a family, where home was the safest place in the world, and the pursuit of educational attainment was highly valued. I am eternally grateful to them, and to my siblings for their endless love and support. My parents' strong emphasis on education has underpinned many of my life choices.

To my husband Noel, who has been my captain at sea, my daughter Cassie and my son Rory, who have navigated this journey with me the closest. I thank them the most for their kindness, gentleness and relentless support throughout, and in always guiding me into a safe harbour no matter what conditions prevailed.

Finally, I wish to extend my greatest gratitude to all the research participants, who gave so freely of their time, especially the students who spoke with such candour and openness about their experiences. It was an honour and a pleasure to listen to them. From them, I have learned the most. Thank you.

“The universe buries strange jewels deep within us all, and then stands back to see if we can find them. The hunt to uncover those jewels—that’s creative living.”  
(Elizabeth Gilbert, *Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear*).



## **Abstract**

What we know about Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students, on campus depends on where we look. Limited research exists documenting the lived experiences of BME students in Irish higher education institutions and an understanding of the components of the campus environment that affect a sense of belonging for BME students remains elusive. My overarching understanding of inclusion in the context of this research relates to students who have self-identified as being from ethnically and culturally diverse minority backgrounds and is situated in their experience of the campus as a place of belonging and inclusion at Technological University Dublin, Blanchardstown Campus.

My research highlights the prominence of Eurocentric curricula and a predominantly White academy which characterise the continuities of White privilege in this study, assimilation as means of fitting in (the contradictions) and underestimating the impact of misrecognition based on name and appearance along with the cumulative effects of experiencing microaggressions on a daily or weekly basis (the consequences).

In arriving at my conceptual framework through a bricolage research approach, a number of theoretical perspectives were adopted. Scholarship under review considered the impact of social geographies of inclusion and belonging, critical race theory (CRT), and the psychological impact of racial-ethnic microaggressions. My research is applied and is located within a framework underpinned by inclusion. Utilising photovoice methodology (PVM) and thematic analysis, the key findings presented emphasise contradictory ways in which the campus includes and excludes BME students. The participants' narratives suggest that the campus is diverse and inclusive while also experiencing it as discriminatory and exclusive.

Combining the components of my research permits me to establish conceptual links between the findings, to synthesise evidence into conceptual conclusions and to demonstrate an understanding of the academic content in which my research is

located in the chapters that follow. The findings inform an overarching narrative that recommends a campus wide environment assessment underpinned by a culturally conscious campus with brave spaces, to advance the belonging and inclusion of our diverse student population. The conclusions of my study demonstrate a lack of recognition of the ethnic and cultural differences that students bring to our classrooms; the need to connect our content, teaching and assessment for BME students; to increase our understanding of the points of pain and frustration that our students experience daily or weekly on campus, and to strengthen the academy to become ethnically literate educators. My research has implications for curriculum design and pedagogical reforms. It invokes creative controversy. The conclusions and recommendations provided advocate for a change in the cultural paradigm that currently influences the university. This requires the dissemination of the findings of my research at a local level and beyond, to raise awareness and to inform students and staff that only when a campus is truly inclusive, can it make a claim to excellence.

## List of Abbreviations

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CECE	Culturally Engaging Campus Environment
CoP	Communities of Practice
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CRC	Critical Race Curriculum
CRP	Critical Race Pedagogy
CRT	Critical Race Theory
DHAE	Doctorate of Higher and Adult Education
DIT	Dublin Institute of Technology
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
ERASMUS	EuRopean community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IoT	Institute of Technology
ITB	Institute of Technology Blanchardstown
ITT	Institute of Technology Tallaght
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PV	Photovoice
PVM	Photovoice Methodology
TA	Thematic Analysis
THEA	Technological Higher Education Association
TU	Technological University
UCCC	Unequal Capacity for Change Condition

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Bricolage inspired conceptual framework

Figure 2: Dynamic diversity on campus

Figure 3: A guide to my research design

Figure 4: My research design model adapted from Luttrell's reflexive model of research design (2010b)

Figure 5: Lens for viewing meaning and interpretation through photovoice methodology of inclusion and exclusion on campus (Adapted from Luttrell, 2010a)

Figure 6: Identity – The relationship between pronunciation of name and misrecognition

Figure 7: NVivo screenshot on coding 'Conversations of Difference'

Figure 8: NVivo screenshot of the core themes as coded from the fieldwork

Figure 9: A vista coding structure on identity – Revealing the relationship between pronunciation of name and misrecognition (first iteration)

Figure 10: Identity – The relationship between pronunciation of name and misrecognition

Figure 11: Elements of microaggression framework: Individual analysis

Figure 12: Inside the classroom – Aspects of inclusion and belonging

Figure 13: A framework for understanding microaggressions on campus: Collective view

Figure 14: Framework for an inclusive campus: The 3 Ps through cultural humility and brave spaces in the context of dynamic diversity

Figure 15: Inclusive campus tree schematic

## List of Tables

Table 1: Sampling strategies – Description and reasoning

Table 2: Student participants' interpretation of their ethnicity-nationality

Table 3: Characteristics of the student participants by gender, discipline of study and year of study

Table 4: Length of time in Ireland

Table 5: The suitability of TA as an analytic method that seeks to describe patterns as compared to IPA and Grounded Theory

Table 6: Adaptation of Ritchie and Spencer's qualitative framework analysis

Table 7: An example of a code from the coding manual

Table 8: Microaggression: "No, where are you really from?", Reactions and Emotional Response

Table 9: Microaggression: "So, what do you guys speak in Japan? Asian???", Reactions and Emotional Response

Table 10: Microaggression: "Courtney, I never see you as a Black girl." #open your eyes, Reactions and Emotional Response

Table 11: Microaggression: "Why do you sound White?", Reactions and Emotional Response

Table 12: Microaggression: "The limited representation of my race in your classroom does not make me the voice of all Black people", Reactions and Emotional Response

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging

Many people have asked me why I chose to research the topic of ethnic and cultural diversity on campus for my doctoral research. I found the answer when I reflected on key moments of my career in higher education. My initial interest for this research started about a decade ago when I was facilitating a case study session in a tutorial of second year business students in Human Resource Management in my current institution. As the students settled into the class activity, I observed the ethnic and cultural diversity in the classroom. Actually, with each passing year I was becoming increasingly aware of the student diversity on campus in relation to culture, ethnicity and nationality. Based on an initial ice-breaking activity on introductions, I counted 14 nationalities in the classroom. To paint a picture of the context with words, two African men from The Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo sat together at the top of the room and were engaged in a humorous conversation. An Afghan female Muslim student politely declined to join a group preferring to work alone at the back of the room. A Bosnian student and a Croat student sat far apart, the tension palpable between them. Both subsequently requested to be placed in different tutorial groups for all their modules that year. All the ERASMUS students from France, Germany and Spain who were taking this module were also in attendance. A jovial mature student from Nigeria playfully welcomed any students that were delayed to the tutorial. At the end of class, I wondered *what is it like for these students on campus in terms of their belonging and inclusion in higher education*, and so the research idea unfolded.

Central to this research are the voices and experiences of students on campus who self-identified as being from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds, which I refer to throughout using the acronym BME students (Black and Minority Ethnic). I interpret BME as a term used in the context of this study that draws from a contemporary literature base in describing minorities in higher education (Akel, 2019; Arday, 2018b; Bhopal & Chapman, 2019). BME is used to refer to the

collective ethnic minority student population on campus and reflects the rich diversity among the students at the university. I acknowledge the relationship of belonging to an ethnicity, a culture and a nationality when using this term.

In recent years higher education in Ireland has seen greater diversity among undergraduate students and universities throughout Ireland (Heinz & Keane, 2018; Highman, 2017). Previous studies researching this topic support the benefits of diversity on campus (Miller, 2015; Crisp & Meleady, 2012). An understanding of the connection between campus environment and sense of belonging is warranted. The concept of belonging offers a way to comprehend more deeply inclusion or exclusion on campus for BME students. When a person has a sense of belonging, they feel valued by others and they are given the opportunity to add value to the group (Frenk, 2016). "A student's feeling of belonging with her classmates extends beyond just being important; it is critical (Gillies, 2017, p. 19). At the university level, positive relationships between staff and students make institutional environments seem more academically and socially supportive, which enables belonging in higher education (Johnson et al., 2007). Motivated by changes in the student demographics on campus, my research aims to illuminate the issues and impacts that these changes are having on BME students. When we interact on campus with others who have different backgrounds and life experiences to us, this can serve to open up multiple perspectives and points of view in understanding difference. Integrating and celebrating our diversity, can foster a culture of inquiry and can challenge an "exclusionary definition of 'others'" (Frenk, 2016, p. 2).

## **Setting the scene: Demographic influences**

In the last two decades Ireland's population has become more diverse regarding national and cultural origins due to rapid immigration (Central Statistics Office, 2017a). This is from an historical context where the Republic of Ireland experienced high levels of emigration and relatively low levels of immigration overall in comparison to many of its European neighbours (Gilmartin, 2015; Loyal, 2013; Tovey & Share, 2003). This has changed considerably in the past two to three

decades (Mac Éinrí, 2001). The number of countries from which non-Irish immigrants arrived into the Republic of Ireland in the year to April 2016 is 180 (Central Statistics Office, 2017a). Immigrants also add to Ireland's diversity in terms of age profile, religious beliefs, foreign language competency and culture (Central Statistics Office, 2017b). This has had a considerable impact on Irish higher education; a sector which was changing dramatically during this time period (Heinz & Keane, 2018; Highman, 2017). It is also a key characteristic of the area in which my institution, the site for this research is located.

### **Local demographics**

The Blanchardstown campus of Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) is situated 10km northwest of Dublin city centre and is in Fingal, one of three counties into which county Dublin was divided in 1994. Fingal<sup>1</sup> in the Irish language translates as *Fine Gall* meaning 'foreign tribe' and is in reference to the Vikings who settled here. Fingal has a population of 296,214 and is the most rapid growing administrative area in Ireland which includes Blanchardstown, one of the fastest growing electoral divisions in the country (Murphy, Ní Chonaill, & Queenan, 2019). According to demographic statistics from 2015<sup>2</sup>, Fingal is ethnically diverse with non-Irish nationals accounting for 18.3 percent of the population, compared with a national average figure of 12.0 percent. Polish nationals (10,591 persons) were the largest group, followed by UK nationals (4,837 persons). Seven percent of the population of Fingal or 22,785 people identify as Black, Black Irish, Asian and Asian Irish. The Blanchardstown area has three electoral divisions<sup>3</sup> in Fingal with a population of more than 50% non-White Irish (Central Statistics Office, 2017a; Murphy et al., 2019). The demographic reality of Dublin 15 and Fingal County demands TU Dublin to respond accordingly in attracting students to study at our institution (Ryan, 2012).

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.fingal.ie](http://www.fingal.ie)

<sup>2</sup> <https://consult.fingal.ie/ga/system/files/materials/1016/585-Fingal%20Socio-Economic%20Profile.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Blanchardstown-Abbotstown, Blanchardstown-Tyrrelstown, Blanchardstown-Mulhuddart



Identifying migrants within a population is complex as often while nationality is used as an indicator, it can exclude naturalised citizens and second-generation migrants (McGinnity et al., 2018). According to Fahey, Russell, McGinnity and Grotti (2019) Blanchardstown has a foreign-born population of over 35% where migrants are identified by their country of birth rather than their stated nationality “in order to include the significant group of migrants who have become Irish citizens” (Fahey et al., 2019, p.i). “While birthplace and nationality presents an interesting profile of the population, it has been argued that it is ethnicity that has an impact on migrants’ experience” (Murphy et al., 2019, p. 15). Factors such as physical appearance, names and dress are significant in the perceptions formed of migrants and “the actual nationality of individuals is rarely a consideration” (Council of Europe, 1997, p. 94).

The students who participated in focus groups/interviews for this study self-identified their cultural and ethnic origin as other than White Irish (Table 2). This reflects the fact that nationality is no longer an indication of ethnicity and Western societies have become increasingly complex through blends of national, religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity dimensions (Crisp & Meleady, 2012; Plaut, 2010). Some of the participants in my research are from a White European context (often described as the White dominant culture) but define themselves as being from an ethnic minority. BME as a term is not simply a binary between White and non-White but also needs to address issues of minority ethnicities from within.

### **Technological University Dublin**

The Irish higher education system has traditionally been a dual system of universities and colleges providing academically oriented programmes on the one hand and the Institutes of Technologies (IoTs) providing more vocationally and industry oriented programmes on the other. TU Dublin was formerly designated as an Institute of Technology. A legal framework established under The Technological Universities Act (TU Act 2018) allowed for a third type of Irish higher education institution (HEI) to evolve, namely the Technological University (TU) which shifted the IoT sector to reformulate into a new university structure (Highman, 2019). This

Act occurred in the context of austerity where public service institutions including higher education were restructured and amalgamated into larger units (McCarthy, 2009). As part of these planned mergers the Dublin based institutes of technologies agreed to amalgamate after a long process of negotiation. TU Dublin came into being on 1st January 2019 from the merger of three IoTs; Blanchardstown (formerly ITB), Dublin (formerly DIT) and Tallaght (formerly ITT). This has created the country's largest HEI with close to 30,000 students registered across all campuses (Highman, 2019). The focus of my study is the TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus located in the Dublin 15 post code designation.

The ethnic and cultural dynamics of the wider community described previously are evident on the college campus within the institutions of higher education. Solís and Miyares (2014) in their approach to diversity efforts call for attention to the type, size, mission and location of the institution highlighting the importance of context. The figures for full-time student registrations for the past five years at TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus have been monitored as part of this research as an indication of student diversity based on nationality. When students register to study for each academic year, they are required to indicate their citizenship and birth country as mandatory fields on the registration form. Student registrations at the Blanchardstown Campus for the academic year 2019-2020 reveal that 60 different nationalities are represented across the student body, equating to 16.6% of the student population, approximately 385 students of 2308 full time registered students. These figures provide an indication of the diversity in nationality on campus but do not capture the further levels of diversity among those students whose nationality is Irish but whose ethnicity is not exclusively White Irish. Hence the Admissions Office figures capture nationality, but not the ethnic diversity of students. The top countries' citizens represented across our student population for the last five years are Poland, Lithuania, Nigeria and Romania. For the first time in our 20-year history, we had a non-Irish student union president for the academic year 2018-2019.

TU Dublin “is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion for students and staff in every area of the university’s work. This requires continual evaluation of our organisational culture, policies and procedures, and how these relate to the student experience, academic fulfilment and career progression.”<sup>4</sup> The university ethos embraces diversity as a strength and a selling point of studying at TU Dublin. The structural reality of shifting demographics on campus regarding our student population in terms of nationality and ethnicity reveals that the nature of our diverse student population on campus is fundamentally spatial and geographic because of the location of the campus. Such patterns in demographics clearly impact the ways higher education institutions in different parts of the country experience diverse student populations.

Tucker (2017) distinguishes between ‘sole metrics’ and ‘soul metrics’, the former as indicated by measures of success. This includes metrics concerning the advancement of a mission, alumni achievements, salaries and rankings. The latter, ‘soul metrics’ are those “indicators that capture the essence of what a college stands for; its hopes, its goals, its dreams for its students – metrics that speak to the very soul of an institution,” and align with the students’ experience of campus climate (Tucker, 2017, p. 29). An understanding of the relationship between students and their campus environment is essential to experience belonging and inclusion in higher education (Museus, Yi & Saelua, 2017; Vaccaro & Newman, 2016; Garces & Jayakumar, 2014; Antonsich, 2010; Yuval-Davis, Anthias & Kofman, 2005). TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus foundations were clear and specific; participation in higher education was grossly under-represented in the Dublin 15 area. The Blanchardstown Campus aimed to address inclusion from marginalised groups that traditionally did not attend university; “[T]he mission of the TU Dublin - Blanchardstown Campus is to...continue to offer a welcoming and supportive environment to students from all educational and social backgrounds...and increasing the level of participation in higher education and training, particularly in

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://tudublin.ie/current-students/student-life/equality-and-inclusion/>

Dublin North-West and its environs<sup>5</sup>” Many of our students are the first generation in their families to pursue higher education qualifications.

### **An understanding of the BME term in this research**

Using the term BME raises tensions in defining the participants in this research. The term is contested in the literature as it attempts to capture diverse experiences of students in one term that centres the racialised experiences of students from minority ethnic backgrounds (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2010; Roediger, 2002; Fusco, 1989). In so doing it highlights the racialised experiences of students from a non-White background as they navigate the dominant White culture. Some of the participants in my research are from a White European context, often described as the White dominant culture, (Brookfield, 2019) but define themselves as being from an ethnic minority. One of the limitations of the BME term is that often, it is understood to mean ‘not White.’ However, I contend that there are White ethnicities who experience discrimination and racialisation. A striking example of this which is beyond the scope of this thesis but is very pertinent is the experiences of Irish Travellers and European Roma.

In this study the BME term refers to all the research participants. Black and Asian ethnicity captures the majority of the research participants in phase two of the fieldwork (sixteen of the nineteen students interviewed) but the participants also includes three White European students who identified as ethnically and culturally diverse. “It is impossible to conduct any kind of research without using some form of categorising. Just the act of selecting a topic, recruiting participants, and deciding on relevant concepts involves categorizing” (Freeman, 2017, p. 25). As discussed later, the selection of participants is part of the theorising of this thesis, especially in terms of allowing participants to self-select by responding to the research call and then dealing with the theoretical issues which this raises in terms of including White Europeans in the research sample. Reflecting on this phrase in sociological and philosophical terms in chapter three, acknowledges the racialised

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/mission.html>

experiences of those from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds in dominant White cultures and environments. As discussed in chapter four on methodology, participants self-selected to participate in the study on the basis of identifying as being from an ethnic minority background. The student participants' interpretation of their ethnic identity is captured on table two in the methodology chapter. My subsequent decision to use tenets of Critical Race Theory in a race consciousness manner, poses theoretical challenges in terms of the inclusion of White Europeans which are discussed in chapter three. This points to a nuanced and complex reality where it can be argued - or at least problematised - that racialised experiences are also occurring within White European populations especially for those from Eastern European countries.

## **The importance of belonging and inclusion for higher education**

The focus of this research is to explore and interpret inclusion in an higher educational setting adopting a qualitative methodological approach through three distinct phases of fieldwork. The research question has been identified out of my practice. To create a climate of understanding with the research participants in applied settings like educational research, researchers are increasingly dependent on the local knowledge of their participants because "without understanding the lived experience of others" our knowledge is incomplete (Gergen, Josselson, & Freeman, 2015, p. 3).

TU Dublin along with higher education institutions has a compelling interest in diversity as it is central to the academic mission of the university. The strategic plan of TU Dublin refers to enrolling a greater number and a more diverse mix of students "a place that underpins equality, diversity and inclusion for all...we will be recognised as an exemplar in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)...with the largest number of diverse learners"<sup>6</sup>. There has been no primary research to date

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://tudublin.ie/explore/about-the-university/strategicplan/>

on the experiences of inclusion on campus for BME students which this study aims to capture. Thus, an understanding of diversity in the context of the campus location is vital as a starting point for this research.

Belonging is currently a notable discourse within higher education policy in Ireland on retention and progression; “[T]he system must be open to and supportive of all learners (HEA, 2016, p. 25) and “to promote an institutional habitus that is more open and welcoming to a diversity of students” (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2015, p. 22). Higher education’s ability to provide inclusive learning environments and to prepare graduates for settings that are more diverse upon graduation is a key objective (HEA, 2011). Meaningful engagement with diversity on campus constitutes an important means of preparing college graduates to participate and flourish in an increasingly complex and diverse society (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002). In addition, students from minority backgrounds often experience feelings of isolation and exclusion in the predominantly White environments of many higher education campuses (Arday, 2017; Rollock, 2016; Bhopal, 2014).

Inclusion and belonging on campus for BME students through a social geography lens, are central concepts for this research that is informed by Critical Race Theory (CRT) which allows for marginalised voices to be heard, appreciates the complexity of the lived experience of the participants and moves towards research that aims to awaken a critical race consciousness. To gain momentum context is vital for the success of diversity efforts, “[L]ike ‘global’, ‘sustainable’, ‘engaged’ and other pithy notions, ‘diversity’ has no real flavour until it marinates in institution-specific sauce” (Price, 2015, p. 497). Dimensions of diversity intersect adding a richness to the landscape of institutions. Intersectionality will not be considered as a specific conceptual frame in this study but is included as a recommendation requiring further investigation (Crenshaw, 1991). The intersectionality of students’ lives goes beyond the campus environment and impacts their wider experiences of inclusion and exclusion in society.

The evidence is compelling for leveraging the educational benefits of diversity. Among these benefits are challenging stereotypical preconceptions about others, elevating inclusive leadership skills, increasing levels of civic engagement and lowering levels of prejudice upon graduation (Bowman, 2011; Crisp & Turner, 2011; Engberg & Hurtado, 2011; Hurtado & Deangelo, 2012). Employers have also come to realise that they will be employing more graduates from minority ethnic groups. Studies have shown that interacting with different ethnic groups is a potent way for learners to augment the educational benefits of diversity (Rhodes & Douglas Lee, 2017; Antonio, 2004; Bickel, 1998). The unfavourable consequences associated with an institution's lack of appreciation of diversity are also well documented (Bowman, 2011; Denson & Chang, 2009; Laird, 2005). These include ethnic isolation (the use of the common room in this study by mainly African students), tokenism (symbolic efforts to include, e.g. diversity in promotional images), and various types of stereotyping (assumptions made based on name and appearance), that have the potential to exclude and marginalise BME students on campus.

### **Aims of my research**

The research project sought to open a space for the voices of ethnically and culturally diverse students to be heard, and to create awareness about their experience on campus. "Student voice as an emergent and complex concept refers to students in dialogue, discussion and consultation on issues that concern them in relation to their education" (Fleming, 2015, p. 223). Facilitating student voice, dialogue and empowerment is essential in a democratic educational system. This study integrates a social constructionist framing of student voice that questions and challenges inside and outside of the classroom through a post structural perspective that allows for complex, contradictory and challenging student voices to be heard (Fleming, 2015). Students' voices are an important source of information to consider in policy and strategic initiatives (Mitra, Frick, & Crawford, 2011; Thomson, 2011). The challenge is to "facilitate the creation of spaces in which student voice is not merely demonstrated as being present, but in which that presence also has power, authenticity, and validity" (Hall, 2017, p. 183). The research is intended to benefit students and staff to make TU Dublin a more

inclusive place to learn and flourish, by giving voice to the research participants' experiences in a democratic and empowering way.

The conceptualisation of my research emerged gradually using a bricolage approach that is interdisciplinary. I connect theories from social geography and CRT; photovoice and thematic analysis methodologies, and an understanding of the research context through dynamic diversity to build knowledge in arriving at a framework for an inclusive campus: The 3 P's; Place (belonging and inclusion on campus), Pedagogy (inclusive curricula) and Power Imbalances (microaggressions and pronunciation of name).

Included in this study are educational spaces that include or exclude, the educational implications of identity and belonging, and the development of a race consciousness from CRT as an approach to sensitise the experiences and outcomes of BME students on campus. These ideas serve as the connective tissue to explain my conceptual framework as they contain the rationale for the research. As student demographics shift, the challenge will be to identify and respond to policy and practice implications for Technological University Dublin, TU Dublin. By integrating diversity and inclusion efforts in situating the findings at the core of institutional functioning and sustaining these over time, the expectation is to mainstream diversity and inclusion policies and practices across the sector. Actionable research on diversity and inclusion are particularly needed to shape practitioners' efforts on the ground and inform institute and sector wide decision-making in higher education on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) efforts.

### **Research questions**

In this research I set out to explore the experiences of students who come from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds in Irish higher education by researching their sense of belonging and inclusion on the campus. I inquire how they feel the campus climate includes or excludes them and I investigate the students' perceptions of the teaching, learning and assessment environment. These



research questions are informed by existing literature, theories and my professional experience in higher education.

There is limited Irish research investigating ethnically and culturally diverse students' experience in higher education in Ireland (Ní Chonail, 2018; Highman, 2017). In order to address this lacuna, my research will focus on belonging and inclusion for BME students at TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus. Unearthing the distinctive atmosphere in the context of the campus and mapping these findings to perceived levels of institutional commitment to diversity brings a unique focus to this research which has not been completed before. I locate this within the broader field by reviewing the relevant scholarship pertaining to learners from ethnic minority backgrounds in the context of the higher education sector. By identifying the conceptual and theoretical frameworks I endeavour to understand and make sense of inclusion and belonging on campus through the lens of ethnic minority learners.

The research involved a multi-phase research design to examine inclusion and belonging on campus through the experiences of students and staff. Visual methods along with focus groups and interviews were used in this research. For the fieldwork in phase one, Photovoice (PV) offered alternative ways of finding out about places and spaces on campus that included and excluded students, by allowing the research participants to document their reality through images. In addition, the participants provided accompanying text so as to contextualise the images that they had taken, in order to provide meaning and interpretation. The second phase of the fieldwork was to invite students on campus to participate in focus groups and interviews. Samples of photos taken by the students from phase one were used in promoting the research to recruit participants who identified as being from BME backgrounds, requesting them to participate in an interview/focus group. The photos were also used in phase two and phase three as prompts to encourage students and staff to discuss places and spaces on campus that included and excluded students during the interview/focus group. The third phase of the fieldwork provided a summary of the feedback about the issues that emerged from

the student focus groups and interviews at phase two, to a purposive sample of academic staff and staff who work in student services at the university. The aim of phase three of the fieldwork was to gain an insight into staff responses and perceptions about belonging and inclusion for students in a focus group context.

General findings and common baselines “do not translate into one-size-fits-all solutions” (Taylor, Milem, & Coleman, 2016, p. 5). The research discussion aims to contextualise the findings and provide direction on how those findings may be applied or extended to other settings. By positioning the findings at the heart of how the institution operates, the intention is to support the mainstreaming of diversity and inclusion policies and practices across TU Dublin which would have implications nationally for the higher education sector. Actionable research on diversity and inclusion are particularly needed to shape practitioners’ efforts on the ground and inform institute and sector wide decision-making in higher education.

### **Structure and outline of the chapters**

This section explains the structure of the chapters. I describe the rationale for what I decided to include in each chapter. I also outline the sequence of the project. There are seven chapters in total, each one with a specific focus but all connected on the conceptual, methodological and contextual issues that form the backbone of the study.

Chapter one introduces the research topic of belonging and inclusion on campus in higher education, sets the scene in the context of relevant demographics, describes the purpose and relevancy of the research, outlines the research questions and provides detail on my writing voice in the study.

In chapter two I contextualise the site for my research. Then I discuss my positionality from an ontological and epistemological perspective in relation to the research. I explore the role and place of values in the research process and I examine the importance of critical reflection in the study. Finally, I reveal how I

arrived at my conceptual framework through a bricolage research design approach and I introduce my theoretical framework.

Chapter three brings the literature closer in its review, and how it has informed my theoretical and conceptual framework. I critique themes from the literature that I have included and how higher education policy in relation to diversity and inclusion translates at the local level.

Chapter four focuses in detail on methodology, methods and ethical clearance for the project. In this chapter I describe my methodological bricolage approach, photovoice methodology (PVM), and my analytical approach to identify key themes that commonly emerged from the participants regarding belonging, inclusion and exclusion on campus. I reached a number of decision points in the research process and they are described in this chapter in how they have influenced the study. In learning about the experience of BME students on campus I needed to access their world in a supportive, meaningful and creative way. PVM provided a mechanism for doing exactly this.

Chapters five and six impart my findings and discussion as a deliberate process of meaning-making through analysis and interpretation. The findings and discussion are presented together for structural reasons to highlight their importance when discussed together. In these chapters I identify five overarching themes of belonging on campus, spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus, name-identity-misrecognition, unmasking microaggressions and inside the classroom. Each broad theme contains multiple sub themes which are discussed.

Chapter seven communicates the conceptual conclusions from the study and how they have emerged from the previous chapter on findings and discussion. The conclusions distil the entire study to support my claims on an original contribution to knowledge. It combines factual and interpretative conclusions to arrive at conceptual conclusions and provides signposting for further research on the topic. The outcomes of this research are as a result of its collaborative and participatory

nature. It interrogates and analyses the lived experience of BME students on campus and in so doing provides an account of the more complex understandings of their experiences in terms of inclusion and exclusion on campus. Rather than simply examining strategy and policy in higher education on equality, diversity and inclusion, the research sought to look behind the objectives of strategy and policy in a participatory way, to learn from the voices on the ground, for an alternative understanding on what it is like to be a student from a BME background on campus.

Key findings from the research include a campus that is diverse and inclusive from a student perspective but this is opposed in the findings from a staff point of view, thus highlighting the contradictions from the student and staff responses. The students' views that the university includes them and that it is a place where they feel that they belong is antithetical to the research findings that reveals a disregard for the ethnic and cultural differences that students bring to the campus. Findings show an over-reliance on Eurocentric curricula, teaching and assessment methods; the continuities. In addition, there is neglect and a lack of understanding of the frustrations that our BME students experience on a daily and weekly basis on campus in relation to microaggressions and the mispronunciation of their names; the consequences. Findings also unmask the challenge of educating and training staff in the academy to deal with a diverse student campus inside and outside the classroom. If higher education's claims to be inclusive and diverse, a key challenge is ensuring that the curriculum reflects diverse world knowledge that can support and challenge students and staff. A limitation of the BME term from the research is the reality that a diverse mix of students attend Irish higher education institutions yet BME in the main does not account for the experiences of White people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Everyone has an ethnicity. It is important to discuss ethnicity in a way that is appropriate and inclusive to capture the subtle and complex nature of ethnic groups that includes the mix of students' ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

### **Conclusion: a metaphorical post script to this chapter**

Trees features in my research in a number of different ways providing identity, direction and therapy. 'Crown shyness' is a phenomenon observed in some tree species in which the crowns of trees do not touch each other but instead form a canopy, with channel-like gaps (Goudie, Polsson, & Ott, 2009). The spacing prevents abrasions or collisions with neighbouring trees. It is also known as canopy shyness or intercrown spacing (Thomas & Packman, 2007; Putz, Parker, & Archibald, 1984). Trees respect each other. We could learn something from them about how we interact together on an increasingly diverse campus in higher education.

I have used native Irish tree names as pseudonyms for the student participants (identity), the crown shyness phenomenon referred to above is included in the subtitle of chapter five on findings and discussion (direction), and on numerous occasions throughout my doctoral studies I took a 'forest bath' to unwind on some occasions, and to find focus at other times (therapy). Forest bathing is a form of ecotherapy that helps us to relax and clear the head surrounded by the restorative effects of nature (Hansen, Jones, & Tocchini, 2017). A timely reminder of the ecological nature of the world which needs to be at the heart of our society and educational system.

## **Chapter 2: Positionality and Conceptual Framework**

### **‘Planting the seeds’**

The positioning of the research is wholly dependent on my epistemological and paradigmatic assumptions (Wall, Higgins, Hall, & Woolner, 2013).

#### **Introduction**

This chapter details the overarching context for my research design (planting the seeds) and has guided me in my actions on how best to study inclusion and belonging on campus for BME students. In this chapter I detail my positionality as a researcher by unveiling the role and place of values in my research through a life-wide learning ecology approach (Jackson, 2016). This is followed by an exploration of my ontological and epistemological position, and how they have influenced the research design. I then demonstrate how I practice critical reflection throughout my research. Subsequent to this I describe and substantiate my conceptual framework and introduce the theoretical structure for the study. Combining all these different elements has helped me develop a more nuanced sense of critical reflection in my research decision-making and in how this study was completed.

#### **Positionality**

Reflection on how our identity, social location and positionality affects and influences our teaching especially around diversity issues, can assist us in becoming more effective educators (Bierema, 2010). This has led to a particular trajectory in arriving at my social positioning and location that has been influenced by my racial identity (Fitzsimons, 2019; Emirbayer & Desmond, 2012). I recognise that as a White, female middle-class researcher I lack the cultural literacy to grasp the experience of BME students on campus despite my desire to understand this at the college where I have worked for the past twenty years. As an outsider in terms of cultural and ethnic background I set out to explore the experiences of BME students on campus by centralising the student participant voices in the research process. I am also cognisant of the contradictory consciousness in my research whereby I am aware of the unacceptable status quo of practices that have the

potential to create barriers to belonging for BME students as “[U]ninterrogated values generally mask acceptance of the status quo” (Ryan, 2011, p. 100). The potential to challenge the status quo can take place inside the classroom where students can be encouraged to think critically. A key issue for educators is a duty to critically interrogate and interrupt the logic of conventional education. This disorients me and challenges me, but I also want to do this as learning is “ever inquisitive, ever exploratory and ever active” (Ryan, 2011, p. 86). Yet I am locked into compliance given my employment position. When to be judicious and agentic with the research findings is my challenge. Recent events in the US, and the galvanisation of the *Black Lives Matter* (#BLM) movement in response, have once again highlighted that racism and discrimination is a problem world-wide. #BLM has created an opportunity for me to be judicious and agentic as I have received requests from college authorities to disseminate the findings of my research through the university’s EDI blog on our website, to deliver information sessions for staff based on my study and at the President’s request, to contribute to the development of a strategic plan on anti-racism and multicultural inclusion at TU Dublin.

This research spans insider and outsider positions, with the research being *for them* our students, *for us* as educators and *for me* for my professional and personal development. When I decided who to research from the profile of students it was uneasy for me to accept that this cannot be done without the exclusion of other students (Houle, 2009). “As we know from Foucault, how we choose to name other people and groups – how we categorize them – often tells us more about us, about our stance on how things are, than it does about any truth of who they are” (Rinehart, 1998, p. 201). I needed to find a way to capture the diversity of students’ backgrounds and experiences in this research. Framing social spaces of inclusion and belonging on campus from social geography theory, that is sensitised through a CRT lens includes the experience of students who traditionally may have been quietened or silenced across the institution because of hegemonic power constructs in higher education.

### **Life-wide learning: The role and place of values in the research process**

Research is a situated practice because the doctorate process involves me, the researcher, who has a life beyond the pages of this thesis, whereby my “ideas and assumptions have been influenced by prior experiences and by the context in which [I] live and work” (Kennelly, 2017, p. 4). Considering identity in my writing reveals my positionality as a researcher along with the role and place of values in the research process. Exploring my positionality has created a deepened awareness of my values that have influenced my research. I have a better sense of self through clarifying my own learning pathways and articulating these for this thesis.

My ontological experience, or my particular version of the world, has been heavily influenced by my upbringing and the values that it espoused concerning the importance of education. My educational experiences have provided me with a particular way of being in the world that is my ontological orientation, and ways of knowing that world or my epistemological commitments (Usher, 2002). I have been very privileged with regard to access, funding and supports that afforded my education. Access to education has motivated and inspired me to lead a certain type of professional life. Reflecting on my career trajectory over two decades of experience in higher education and having encountered thousands of learners along the way, I find myself in a position of academic leadership and there is still much to learn.

Engaging in this research has challenged my intellectual and epistemological commitments to take into account the value of life-wide learning in higher education. Jackson (2016) writes about learning ecologies, i.e. the space in which learning occurs. In advocating for higher education to be inclusive of all learning contexts, he distinguishes life-long learning from life-wide learning. Lifelong learning is developed within formal learning environments and life-wide learning includes “all learning that emerges in multiple contexts and situations at any point in our life” (Jackson, 2016, p. 4). Acknowledging its background in adult education, Jarvis (2009) believes that our learning is a lifelong process that includes all stages and parts of the social context. This emphasises how learning occurs and



changes throughout the lifespan and community of every person. It extends our thinking about learning to acknowledge that it is far wider than the formal aspects of learning occurring within education systems. Martin (2003) and Fejes (2008) acknowledge the political context of lifelong learning as an economic model (especially in current policy discourses). They state that we must challenge the entrepreneurial citizen posing as lifelong learning. Field (2000) contends that reflexivity and trust is essential to lifelong learning.

Developing competency in life-wide learning recognises the need to involve ourselves in situations that create opportunities for learning, but also that we are able to identify these opportunities when they present themselves. It is the understanding of what it means to be a life-wide learner that individuals use in future settings or what Rogers refers to as “learner conscious learning” within learning situations (Rogers, 2003, p. 27). According to Jackson “it also requires self-awareness derived from consciously thinking about and extracting meaning and significance from the experiences that populate our lives” (Jackson, 2016, p. 5).

My learning ecology has presented many different environments for learning and influences on my learning to date. The pursuit of formal education was a core value of my upbringing and therefore central to my learning ecology. Formal education in my life experiences along with informal learning from events, emotions and learning moments which I capture privately and beyond these pages in photo albums and contemplative practice through personal journaling, capture my learning environments.

My challenge as an educator is to enable learners to understand and create their own learning ecologies through student-centred learning. I do this through scaffolded learning, whereby I provide guidelines on the concept and content of a learning ecology but leave it to the learner to determine the construction of their own learning ecology. Enabling factors include assisting the learner in identifying contexts for learning (e.g. recognition of prior learning), provide resources for learning (e.g. space, technology, course materials) and affordances for learning or

possibilities for action formed by an interactive relationship with the situation (e.g. work placement module). This challenge is compatible with Gergen et al., (2015) who accentuate “the advantage of knowing with others in addition to knowing about them” (Gergen et al., 2015, p. 1). It requires a more comprehensive orientation to inquiry and aligns with the bricolage approach I have taken to my research design through learning in a cognitive and creative way, by recognising the formal and informal instances where learning takes place (Johnson, 2012; Jackson, 2016). Reflecting through different lenses has been a useful way of articulating my life-wide learning ecology (Brookfield, 2017; 2002).

## **Critical reflection in my research**

Deep reflective thinking has been paramount to me throughout my doctoral studies to carry out the essential tasks of analysing, structuring and organising my research. The analysis and write-up of the thesis has been a creative process within the research, and not an automated and emotionless process of engaging with the fieldwork (Brown, 2019). I have engaged with critical reflection at every stage of the research journey in order to demonstrate my learning, dilemmas and decision points throughout the study (Bolton, 2018).

There are a number of critical reflection choice points that I encountered in the research process. When I enter a personal reflective space regarding an issue of concern or if I am feeling fearful about something in relation to the research, I stop and ask myself why, in order to work it out. I find that I examine the issue with a depth and clarity not previously available to me before my doctoral studies. I ask myself questions about the issue in an attempt to better understand it and its impact. Examples include becoming clearer on my positionality, the term used to describe the research participants, and how my methodology impacted the participants in seeking ethical clearance for the research. I found that the more questions I asked from different perspectives, the more likely it is that insight will be gained, which positions the issue very differently and facilitates new ways of dealing with it. The research process has been designed in a reflective way to

embed contemplative spaces throughout to explain decisions that I made. I provide a summative account of the dilemmas that I encountered in the conduct and analysis of the research in chapter four on methodology and methods.

Bolton (2018) describes the critical nature of reflective practice as “a life-changing enquiry into the assumptions that underpin our practice, rather than mere confession” (Bolton, 2018, p. 16). Reflective practice is a critical practice and a key component of employability in professions (Wharton, 2017). “Unearthing and questioning assumptions is often risky” but I am willing to ask the uncomfortable questions and sit with the uncertainty as the benefits have out-weighed the risks in my case, and blown my mind open with new knowledge and perspectives (Brookfield, 2013, p. 23). An example of this from my research has been unearthing the normative assumptions I made about student identity and diversity which lead to extensive engagement with literature on critical race theory and a lengthy consideration of terminology used throughout this thesis to capture the students’ complex sense of identity.

Reflection also buttresses diversity initiatives (Bolton, 2018; Brookfield, 2017). White privilege as a conceptual frame or reflective space, allows me to explore my learning, dilemmas and decision points that I encountered throughout the research. The diverse student population at TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus behoves a need to know about ethnic and cultural diversity and to challenge the assumption that non-dominant groups will adapt and assimilate into the dominant White privilege as the way of the world (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tatum, 2000). Historically as a child in Ireland you were socialised and educated on values, roles and assumptions about the way the world works as ‘Catholic, White and Gaelic’ (Parker-Jenkins & Masterson, 2013). White privilege, a subset of dominant privilege (Inglis, 2007) is defined as “an invisible package of unearned assets [that a person] can count on cashing in each day” (McIntosh, 2001, p. 95). Dominant privilege applies to most types of diversity. As an umbrella concept it “allows for oppression, inequality, and other ‘lesser-than’ treatment for non-dominant groups” (Rainer, 2015, p. 152). Rainer (2015) claims that for effective multicultural education an

“awareness of difference is a pre-requisite for understanding difference” (Rainer, 2015, p. 152). The challenge is revealing the perceptual difficulty that exists when someone occupies that privileged space in society. “Those who examine their racial heritage, its privileges, and the active role these play in the education process become less likely to rely on racial stereotypes and impose their own ethnocentric values on others” (Rainer, 2015, p. 151).

Completing this research has made me think critically and question fundamental assumptions I had about society and education (Brown, 2019). The importance of critical reflection throughout this whole process is a relatively new concept for me and never more warranted than in all aspects of my methodology and research design. The careful consideration of critical interpretation and reflection is omnipresent in my research. “Different social interests are favoured or disfavoured depending on the questions that are asked (and not asked), and on how reality is represented and interpreted” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2018, p. 13).

### **My writing voice**

My writing voice acknowledges my presence in this text, just like an accent or a word choice that reveals identity. Institutional and political voices have also influenced my research and writing. As my research is praxis-oriented in a social setting, what it says and what it does is significantly located within that context – student experiences of ethnic and cultural diversity in a contemporary Technological University campus based in a suburban area of extensive demographic change.

In attempting to understand what it is like for students on campus, it is also essential that I find my own writer’s voice in this study. “Memorable literature all concerns specific events and people, their thoughts and actions: never only abstract philosophising” (Bolton, 2018, p. 144). I lean on the constructivist perspective that “sees the process of writing as a generator of ideas and organiser of thoughts where the act of writing helps to construct knowledge” (Kennelly, 2017, p. 8). I also consider my writing as enabling an insight to my academic

identity and positionality that is a socially situated practice as the thesis has been influenced and shaped by its context (Kennelly, 2017). I engage in reflective practice to learn from experience about my work, my studies and myself and how those elements relate to social and cultural structures around me. Bolton refers to reflective practice as “the pearl grit in the oyster of practice and education” (Bolton, 2018, p. 1).

I occupy a reflective writing style throughout the study to unravel key points and shifts which emerged from critical reflection. Examples include; to understand the what and why of my research; to disinter and critique my personal values and assumptions in decision-making processes and taken-for-granted structures; to acknowledge how I can be agentic by using education as a site of learning and a creator of critical consciousness that challenges inequalities, and to reflect on the dilemmas I faced in securing ethical clearance for the research, in order to make the research ethical for participants.

## **Ontological perspective and epistemological commitments**

Every ontology and epistemology are culturally specific, historically located and value-laden (Usher, 2002). My research process is embedded in commitments to particular versions of being in the world (ontology) and ways of knowing that world (epistemology). My ontological and epistemological position has been shaped by my educational practice of lecturing and researching in higher education. My ontology is how I interpret the world and my epistemology is what I think constitutes knowledge and how I think I know things. O’Reilly and Kiyimba (2015) encourage reflexivity throughout the research process by examining ontological, epistemological and axiological perspectives so that I am in a better position to embark on my research and teaching with greater integrity.

### **My ontological perspective**

As a result of this research I am learning about my ontological position among the research paradigms. I am a social constructionist. This approach acknowledges the

social nature of the world, recognising the relationship between the researcher and the participant which permits the research participants to tell their stories (Gratton & Jones, 2015; Baxter & Jack, 2008; Crabtree & Miller, 1999). A socially constructed understanding also acknowledges the dynamic and changing nature of the world, which is echoed in my openness to transformation and adaptation as I move forward with my teaching and research processes. This provides me with a sense of stability and direction for my interpretations and actions in the world. According to Crotty (1998) instead of creating meaning I construct meaning from the collective rather than the individual, the latter being the focus of constructivism. Guba and Lincoln (1994) refer to constructivism as a relativist ontology. "Constructions are alterable, as are their associated 'realities'" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110). Constructionists hold that values enter into the research process at every turn, including the selection of the topic (Gergen et al., 2015). As constructions are subject to continuous revision and new interpretations they are suited to a bricolage research approach, which I have embraced in this study.

### **My epistemological commitments**

My epistemology is what I regard as acceptable knowledge or evidence in my discipline (Bryman, 2012; Mason, 2002). Understanding my epistemological stance can determine the underlying assumptions I make and tendencies I have as a learner, educator and researcher (Ryan, 2011).

As I worked through this research process, I aligned with the philosophical position of critical realism. Critical realist epistemological explanations offer the prospect of introducing change and challenging the status quo with a guiding principle of emancipatory interest in knowledge (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018). Critical realism in educational research is relevant because it prioritises agency, voice and real life experiences which Bhaskar (1998) claims are important determinants of theory and in empowering the participants by centralising their voices. Research informed by critical realism critiques oppressive social structures and promotes self-reflection to understand the broader socio-political context that embeds our professional lives (Egbo, 2005). Critical realism is compatible with a range of research methods,

implying that the choice of research method should be the one that best suits the study (Sayer, 2000). As a critical realist my research is influenced and shaped by its context. An important premise of this research is that the nature of diversity on campus is contextual and connected to place.

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) critical theorists believe in a lived experience that is constructed and arbitrated by power relations in social and historical settings. In the classroom I am a mediator for diversity and inclusion, whereby I am from the mainstream culture but I serve as a facilitator of existing research, theories, applied and experiential knowledge about the experiences of ethnically and culturally diverse people in a module that I teach on 'Diversity in the Workplace'. The pedagogical approach and content of my classes are intimately connected to my ontology and epistemology perspectives along with my value system. I want the students to use their knowledge to construct new meaning. In understanding what is meant by a diverse and inclusive workplace it is important that we as learners (educators and students) first understand our own perspectives on diversity and inclusion and what messages we convey about how we value diversity. This module requires critical thinking and reflection in order to create new learning. By critiquing sources of oppression we can clearly highlight groups in society that are privileged over others. During tutorials when the class sizes are smaller we engage the learners in activities that highlight privilege and oppression.

My research question has been identified out of these experiences and practices. The knowledge produced is what Nowotny, Scott, and Gibbons (2003) refer to as Mode two knowledge; knowledge generated by addressing an issue in my practice that is useful in the workplace. This knowledge is contextual, transdisciplinary and highly reflexive (Nowotny et al., 2003). My practice has a situated and contextual relevance to my research topic and to the relevance of the knowledge being created and used. The research participants named their own world leading to different forms of knowledge within specific contexts. This has allowed me to chart new territory in my analysis with implications for practice, which is a core focus of

this doctoral programme which seeks to enhance professional and practitioner-based knowledge.

By investigating my ontology and epistemology I can better understand my assumptions about knowledge and become aware of my position in relation to my practice with regard to teaching and research (Mason, 2002; O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015). It is important for me to understand the implications of adopting a particular ontological approach and epistemological position because it informs, influences and provides a boundary for my research and conceptual framework.

## **Conceptual Framework**

Adopting a bricolage approach has provided a space for interdisciplinary perspectives as I developed my theoretical framework. The bricolage approach has permitted methodological flexibility and responsiveness in my fieldwork, detailed in chapter four. From an ontological and epistemological perspective it substantiates my claims to build knowledge by using different frameworks to interpret my study, influencing the aims of the research and encouraging reflexivity to piece together my research process (Gunther & Rosa, 2016; Rogers, 2013).

I use the term bricolage, from the work of French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1972) as constructing something new from a diverse range of things that is context-sensitive and provides transferable knowledge. I engaged with two different theoretical approaches to explain my conceptual framework. I refer to bricolage as my research practice and to myself as the *bricoleuse* or agent in bringing about the process.

Bricolage as a research practice provides a source of creativity which can bring unique insights and is responsive to sensitising concepts in order to reveal new understanding (Papson, 2014). Etymologically, bricolage originates in the traditional French expression to explain crafts-people who creatively used left-over materials from other works to construct something new (Rogers, 2012). "This mode



of construction is in direct contrast to the work of engineers, who follow set procedures and have a list of specific tools to carry out their work” (Rogers, 2012, p. 1). Bricolage research is multi-perspectival, multi-theoretical, multi-methodological and critical in its approach to inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Kincheloe, 2005, 2001; Berry, 2011, 2006).

Denzin and Lincoln (1999) describe five types of bricoleurs; the methodological bricoleur, the theoretical bricoleur, the interpretative bricoleur, the political bricoleur and the narrative bricoleur. For the purposes of my research two of the aforementioned are relevant; firstly, the theoretical bricoleur which is explained in more detail below and in chapter three in the literature review and secondly, the methodological bricoleur described in chapter four on research methods and methodology. Next follows the justification for the bricolage approach that I have taken in my research.

### **The bricolage approach**

The roots of bricolage are to be found in Derrida’s (1972) post-structuralism philosophy. Constructing a conceptual framework from a diverse range of things using bricolage has become synonymous with poststructuralism (Scott, 1992). Bricolage as an approach to qualitative research has gained popularity in the academy, particularly in research approaches which emphasise the constructed nature of social reality. Phillimore, Humphries, Klaas, and Knecht (2016, p. 8) describe bricolage as “a way to learn and solve problems by trying, testing, and playing around,” where in that instance the authors used the concept of welfare bricolage as an opportunity to develop practical insights into the provision of tailored welfare services that focused on health in ‘superdiverse’ neighbourhoods in four European cities (Phillimore et al., 2016, p. 8). Kincheloe (2005) calls for attention to be directed in social research at the processes, relationships and interconnections among the phenomena being studied, all aspects that are at the heart of bricolage. Rogers (2012) describes bricolage as enabling the propelling of knowledge boundaries in his article on contextualising bricolage and introducing

influential theorists, by providing an overview of how the concept emerged in qualitative research.

Aspects of the social geographies of inclusion and belonging that are informed by critical race theory (CRT), are used to understand a race consciousness at the macro, meso and micro levels of exclusion and marginalisation for BME students in my research. This is combined with the psychological effects of experiencing racial microaggressions that serve as the connective tissue for my conceptual framework. As a result my research has interdisciplinary qualities which, at times, blend together and at other times stand in tension, but for the most part provide me with differing insights to explore and examine my research topic.

In Wibberley's (2012) personal account of 'Getting to Grips with Bricolage' as a PhD supervisor, he comments that "bricolage is particularly suitable, as an approach, for practitioners within health, social care and education...[allowing] for bit-size chunks of research to be carried out that have individual meaning for practice, which can then be pieced together to create a more meaningful whole" (Wibberley, 2012, p. 1). Bricolage has been used in nursing education by Gunther and Rosa (2016) in their research of using active problem-based learning methodology (PBL), in a health management nursing course. In business research the bricolage perspective has been used in many ways; value creation in service innovation in the context of resource constrained environments (Witell et al., 2017); entrepreneurial bricolage as a process for growth (Baker & Nelson, 2005), and innovation (Andersen, 2008; Salunke, Weerawardena, & McColl-Kennedy, 2013); social entrepreneurship (Desa, 2012); and organisational bricolage in helping to build the right organisational structures (Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2011). Wishart-Leard and Lashua's (2006) arts-based ethnographic study used a bricolage of methods such as participatory theatre and rap to communicate their findings of inner city youth's critical perspectives on schooling. "The mainstreaming of the term does not undermine the definition of the concept of bricolage, but instead resituates it – from a marginal to a central practice" (Phillimore et al., 2016, p. 13).

Bricolage as a research practice distinguishes between Western scientific knowledge and everyday practices or practical knowledge (Lévi-Strauss, 1966). The bricolage approach relies on the local perspective in a social setting as a distinct knowledge base (Phillimore, Bradby, Knecht, Padilla, & Pemberton, 2019). The knowledge comes from the ground up, rather than being imposed from the top down. In my research the BME student voice is central to the study, echoing the ground up, culturally specific and unique perspective that the bricolage approach brings to this research (Hall, 2017; Fleming, 2015; Mitra et al., 2011; Thomson, 2011). This ensures culturally specific and unique outcomes (Phillimore et al., 2019).

While bricolage requires some organisation and iterations in creating a framework for my research by interdisciplinary means, the advantage of that is, it denies any locked-in advanced planning and allows for negotiation and interpretation of the study by analysing the research from different perspectives (Gunther and Rosa, 2016; Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). The interdisciplinary approach has elevated the understanding of belonging and inclusion in higher education for BME students. The challenge has been to arrive at a conceptual framework that articulates how I moved between the modes of theoretical and methodological bricolage and how they have complemented each other in the research design and analysis.

### **Inclusion and a bricolage inspired conceptual framework**

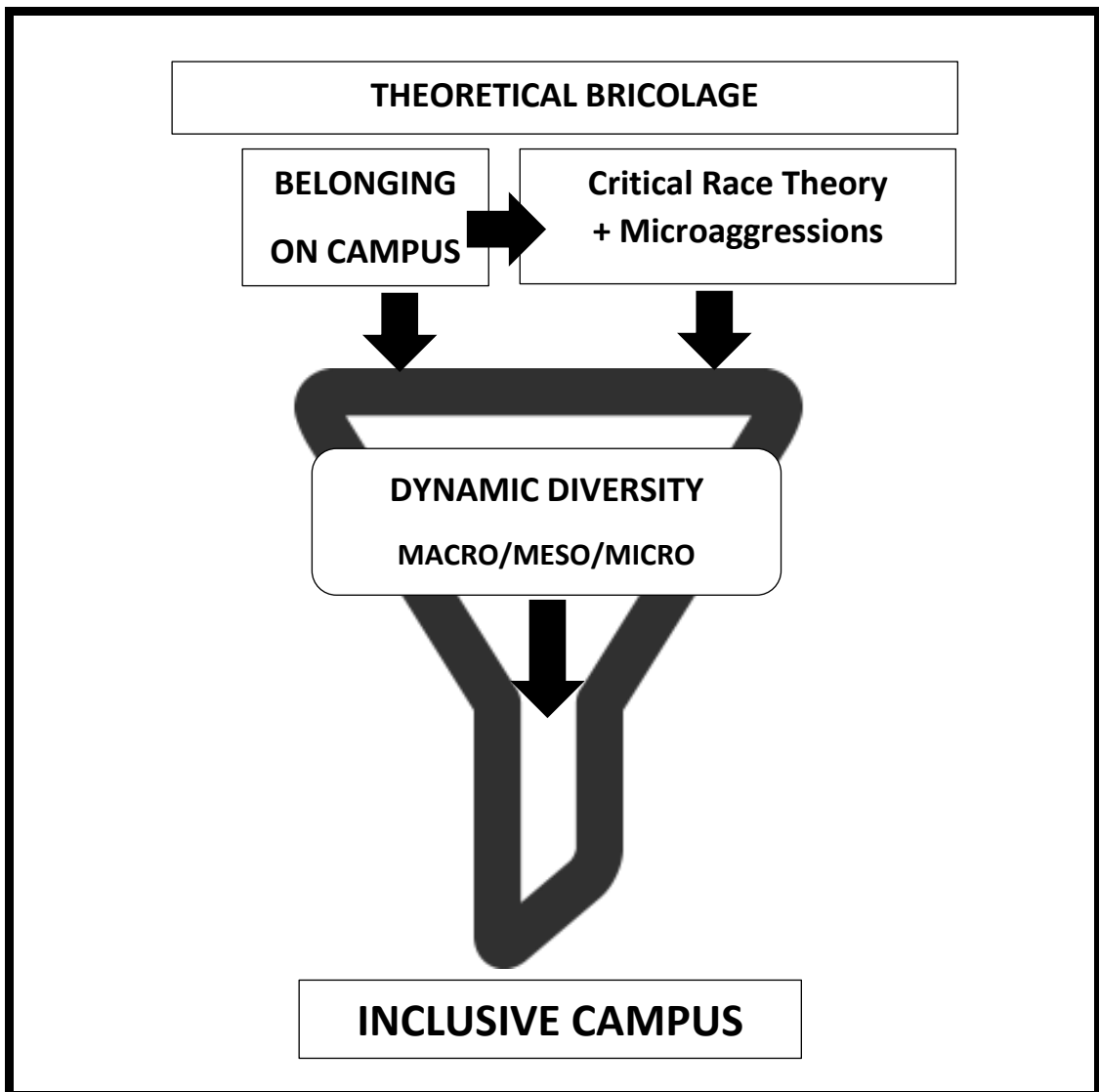
Conceptually for this research, a sense of belonging and feeling part of a place or 'fitting in' (Prince & Hadwin, 2013; Reay, Crozier, & Clayton, 2010) is more important than the term inclusion. Inclusion and belonging are not the same thing. An inclusive campus relates to compositional diversity that displays a proportional representation of different groups on campus in numbers. Belonging takes into consideration the daily and weekly experiences of BME students in traversing the campus culture. The dynamics of inclusion and belonging are discussed in chapter three. United by the everyday experiences of belonging this research explores what that feels like for BME students on campus. Inclusion, I contend, can be analysed

through belonging on campus from social geography theory (Gilmartin & Migge, 2016; Slaten, Ellison, Lee, Yough, & Scalise, 2016, 2014; Vaccaro & Newman, 2016), White as normalised from CRT (Fitzsimons, 2019; Carr, 2015; Hiraldo, 2010; Lentin, 2004; Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995) along with the everyday experiences of microaggressions and influenced by identity-presentation of self from psychology (Sue et al., 2008). Dynamic diversity (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014) provides a boundary for my conceptual framework within which I locate the theoretical approaches that I am drawing from to explore belonging and inclusion for BME students on campus.

### **Inclusion on campus**

Scholarship on inclusion in education disagrees with an all-encompassing approach to inclusive education that focuses on individual learning without having regard to the value and subjectivities of the social and collective identities that students or educators find themselves situated in (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Steele, 2011). The premise is to shift the focus from responding solely to the individual to an analysis of how organisational settings, policies, cultures and structures recognise and value diversity (Madriaga, 2018; Frenk, 2016; Johnson et al., 2007; Thomas & May 2010; Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006). For this study the significance of the participants' experiences of belonging on campus and the importance of storytelling to interrogate and analyse issues of belonging, inclusion and exclusion are emphasised.

In the conceptual framework I 'reframe' inclusion through the lens of experiential knowledge of BME students on campus to interpret their experience of belonging on campus. Belonging and inclusion are experienced, interpreted and understood in different ways; "whether particular spaces or practices are inclusive or not, very much depends on who is experiencing them, who is witnessing them, the experiential lens being used and cultural understandings held" (Dunne, Hallett, Kay, & Woolhouse 2018, p. 33). The funnel image below captures my conceptual framework diagrammatically.



*Figure 1: Bricolage inspired conceptual framework*

**Dynamic diversity: The perimeter fence**

Dynamic diversity as an alternative term for ‘critical mass’ requires a contextual understanding of diversity within educational institutions which gives a deeper understanding than numbers alone (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014). Percentages of people from diverse backgrounds in an institution to evidence compositional diversity are not enough. Several other factors within an organisation’s environment contribute to diversity, inclusion and belonging in higher education. Understanding at what point diversity moves from tokenism to a core element is found in exploring and capturing the macro, meso and micro levels of diversity in an organisation (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014). Examples of evidence of diversity that

are context specific to this research at the three levels include the intersection of national policy and diversity initiatives in higher education (macro), compositional diversity on campus (meso) and a multicultural contributions approach (Laird, 2011) to curriculum content (micro).

The concept of dynamic diversity from my conceptual framework serves as the perimeter fence to enable a contextual view of the study. Such an approach will indicate how inclusion and belonging operates for BME students on campus by identifying if diversity is welcomed and valued in the organisation, if student and staff engagement is encouraged, if diversity is more than tokenistic, achieves positive and fully inclusive experiences for students and staff, and that diversity efforts and initiatives are an integral and sustainable element. The macro, meso and micro levels of diversity as a dynamic process on campus provide an interrogative lens to view if diversity, belonging and inclusion are integrated into everyday campus functioning.

The educational environment needs to reflect on organisational culture, practices, policies and commitments to diversity in order to begin to see the real value in having dynamic diversity within higher education institutions. Purposefully creating inclusive environments, cultures and processes where diverse groups can interact and share diverse perspectives, is also critical in achieving dynamic diversity and a sense of belonging.

## **Summary**

The consideration of my ontology and epistemology is paramount within the research process (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015). The boundaries between theory, ontology, epistemology and methodology are fluid, permeating and influencing each other as is the case with bricolage research (Staller, 2013). My value system has an inescapable impact on the choices I make throughout the research process, aiding me to define my conceptual framework. Miles and Huberman (1994) note that the conceptual framework serves a number of purposes: in setting feasibility

limits to the research to identify who is and who is not included in the study; it has helped me to describe relationships that may be present based on theory and interpretation; and it anchors the study during the findings and discussion chapters.

My conceptual framework provides an overall theoretical and structural scaffold to the study. It guided me to the literature that I reviewed that was relevant to the topic and provided direction and signposting for the inclusion framework bounded by dynamic diversity in higher education, that I have adopted for the study. In the next chapter I synthesise the scholarship that provides the foundations for the literature review of the topic.

## **Chapter 3: Theoretical Perspectives – Engaging with the Literature**

### **‘Watering the soil’**

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter I review the scholarship pertaining to BME students in the context of higher education. The subheading of this chapter ‘watering the soil,’ is how I describe the literature review process. Soil holds a considerable volume of water and is a good metaphor for the amount of scholarship that was reviewed for this project. The ideas and lines of inquiry from existing theories and studies informed my research. Good soil like relevant scholarship provides a strong foundation to learn and grow. I define higher education as the provision of education beyond secondary school, in a college or university, leading to an award of an academic degree. When researching equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives, it is important to take into consideration the larger political and societal context when conducting research on specific student groups.

The definition of diversity for this research contextualises the factual nature of demographics by focusing attention on the experiences of ethnically and culturally diverse students on campus as recommended by Jones, Pringle, and Shepherd (2000). Ignoring the experiences, histories and cultures of students and staff from other ethnicities has negative consequences for both the dominant group and ethnic minorities on campus, because this approach reinforces and perpetuates racism, privilege and ethnocentrism (Banks & McGee, 2010). Recent publications of literature concerning the benefits of classroom and campus diversity advocate for multicultural curriculum reform (Miller, 2015; Crisp & Meleady, 2012). Without such reform, it is argued by a wide range of researchers that curricula will continue to reflect dominant social experiences and ideas and limit meaningful inclusivity (Andrews, 2016; Mirza, 2017; Arday, 2018a; Gutiérrez, Ali, & Henríquez 2010; Gotanda, 2004). In making a contribution to knowledge this research considers theoretical approaches and scholarship that connect with my conceptual structure,



which I describe as a framework of inclusion situated in dynamic diversity. I endeavour to understand and make sense of inclusion and belonging on campus through the voices and experiences of BME students at Ireland's first Technological University, TU Dublin.

I begin with a discussion on the theoretical frameworks and scholarship which have helped me make sense of my research. I review the literature on the dynamics of inclusion and belonging from social geography theory that examine educational spaces within social spaces. Inclusivity is determined by two overarching issues; namely student belonging in the classroom and belonging on the broader campus culture. Following this I describe the impact of dynamic diversity in the context of the campus location. This includes how campus climate and cultural humility relate to the study from a dynamic diversity perspective. Then, I engage with tenets of CRT to emphasise the importance of a critical race consciousness that sensitises us to the BME students' experience on campus. Finally, I review higher education policy concerning diversity and inclusion that includes systemic contexts of privileged knowledge relevant to TU Dublin, an equality of conditions perspective and an unveiling of the hidden curriculum as they relate to the study.

The challenge has been identifying assumptions underlying the literature reviewed, as according to Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2018), most writing is laden with unspotted assumptions which are confused with unproblematic starting or reference points. By considering the sections that follow in this chapter, it is possible to examine the interactions and influences that enable or constrain an institution in producing social change or reproducing inequality as they relate to the context of this research. Key concepts and ideas in the literature on the dynamics of belonging and inclusion in a higher education setting are discussed next.

## **The dynamics of belonging and inclusion**

Being included on campus is not the same as a feeling of belonging on campus. The conceptualisation of belonging used throughout this study is informed by Antonsich's (2010) approach to place-belongingness from a relational and cultural point of view. Belonging is the feeling of being welcomed and celebrated on campus (Neely & Samura, 2011). However, belonging can be masked as inclusion if attention is only paid to compositional diversity which fails to take into account the daily experiences of BME students in navigating the college campus (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014; Steel, 2010). Masking inclusion as belonging takes place when there is only regard for diversity as reflected in the numbers, i.e. an account of the number of nationalities on campus or a profile of student ethnicity by nationally or internationally defined categories. While the numbers are an indication of ethnic and cultural diversity, belonging on campus as a term is more important as the experiences of those who 'fit in' can feel a sense of belonging to the inner circles of society. Higher education as a sector represents one of these inner circles. Belonging refers to the BME students' sense of being part of the campus formally (compositional diversity) and informally (day-to-day experiences). "Universities can help improve a sense of belonging by setting clear goals, fostering inclusive environments, and challenging negative stereotypes about certain groups" (Frenk, 2016, p. 3). An inclusive campus is one that relates in a positive manner to a diverse cohort of students' sense of belonging. Murphy and Zirkel (2015) claim that a "sense of belonging" is a complex construct that relies heavily on students' perceptions of the educational environment, especially their relationships with other students (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015, p. 2). Inclusion ensures student representation on campus as a synergy of demographics and contextual factors (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014). Steele (2010) refers to 'critical mass', "the point at which there are enough minorities in a setting, like a school or workplace, that individual minorities no longer feel uncomfortable there because they are minorities, they no longer feel an interfering level of identity threat" (Steel, 2010, p. 135). Critical mass is a helpful term in understanding the conditions needed to harness the educational benefits of diversity. While the numbers matter regarding

compositional diversity, for critical mass the context-dependent nature of interactions among staff and students are also needed for an inclusive campus.

Numerous scholars emphasise institutional responsibility for integration and inclusion on campus (Rendón, Jalomo, & Nora, 2000; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Tierney, 1992). Rather than placing the responsibility on the student to adapt, Johnson et al., (2007) highlight the importance of the college in understanding a student's sense of belonging through their "integration into existing institutional structures" that privileges Eurocentric values (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 526). Problematising how the concept of belonging can victimise the victims and blame them for their marginality are bigger questions that need to be asked; how does this occur structurally, and who is responsible and/or complicit in the continuing tendency to individualise structural inequalities? In achieving the educational benefits of diversity close attention needs to be bestowed upon the broad campus climate. Belonging is an important construct in considering how to develop and reshape college campuses to better serve a diverse cohort of students.

A sense of belonging is socially constructed and informed by a student's experiences in a particular educational context (Gillies, 2017). Although feelings of belonging are important to all students, BME students may have especially salient concerns about belonging on campus because their social identities expose them to a higher risk of negative stereotyping by devaluing their social group in a particular setting (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Steele, 2011). Stereotype threat theory (Steele, 2011; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002) highlights the role that belonging to a stigmatized group plays in our lives. Within education, stereotypes about BME students can threaten their social identities about their intellectual capacities and about their standing and whether they "belong" in a variety of academic contexts inside and outside the classroom (Lee, 2005, 2011; Shimpi & Zirkel, 2012).

A sense of belonging is important to all students and has been linked to improved academic achievement (Pittman & Richmond, 2008; Slaten et al., 2014). Belonging studied as a universal construct as having the same meaning and influence on

educational experiences for all students, does not take into account that belonging in academic contexts may have different meaning for underrepresented racial and ethnic minority students. (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Slaten et al., (2014) identified four domains to understand the experience of belonging at college for undergraduate students: valued group involvement, meaningful personal relationships, environmental factors and interpersonal factors. Belonging and a social connection with BME's own ethnic culture, and belonging to the dominant culture are both needed for BME students' sense of belonging to their campus (Slaten et al., 2016; Yoon & Lee, 2010; Wei, Wang, Heppner, & Du, 2012). Belonging in this study identifies aspects of the lived experiences about whether BME students feel themselves to 'belong' in educational settings, due to their racial and ethnic group memberships.

### **Belonging: The experiences of places and spaces on campus**

The mechanisms and dynamics that determine belonging for my research draw from the scholarship of a number of authors who have researched the concept of belonging. The term belonging as used in this thesis is a product of places, processes and experiences for BME students. Gilmartin, McGing, and Browne's (2019) feminist analytical approach highlights the significance of this contextual and politicised understanding to place and landscape from social geography theory. Guided by these insights from feminist geography, the version of belonging that I use in this research captures the geographies of belonging from a place and space perspective and is informed by Antonsich's (2010) analytical framework for belonging. He refers to Yuval-Davis' (2006) 'place belongingness' as affective and emotional, a feeling of being at home and the 'politics of belonging' as the socio-spatial processes of inclusion and exclusion. The relational and affective aspects of belonging are key to the version of belonging used in my research. Place-belongingness is a feeling of being at home in a place which is affective and emotional (Gilmartin & Migge, 2016; Isakjee, 2016; Goodman, 2017).

According to hooks (2009) a sense of self is intimately connected to beliefs of place-belongingness. In exploring minority students' perceptions of belonging Vaccaro and Newman (2016) found that the themes of 'being comfortable', 'fitting in', 'safety' and 'respect' emerged from the findings (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016, p. 931). Gilmartin and Migge's (2016) research on migrant mothers' describes the term belonging "as a web of familiar people, practices and networks" (Gilmartin & Migge, 2016, p. 157). Examining the context and networks of students' lives becomes key, as their research reveals in its focus on the geographies of belonging and not-belonging for migrant mothers in Ireland. The reality of life for the migrant mothers in the study was as primary carer in the home. This restricted their possibilities for belonging and establishing connections with Ireland outside of mothering and caring networks (Gilmartin & Migge, 2016).

Place and space are explored for their potential to unveil a sense of belonging or exclusion on campus. Huizinga and van Hoven's (2018) findings on the everyday geographies of belonging for Syrian male refugees in the Northern Netherlands also "highlight that a sense of belonging is grounded and embodied in space and place" (Huizinga & van Hoven, 2018, p. 309). Museus et al., (2017) provide an analysis of aspects of the campus environment that influence students' sense of belonging, most notably "the relationship between culturally engaging campus environments and sense of belonging in college" (Museus et al., 2017, p. 188). My research findings reveal the experiences of BME students' use of the campus landscape through a sense of belonging and not-belonging with particular spaces and places on campus that they encounter in the everyday. Belonging has many shades of meaning and appreciating the complex distinctions of belonging or lack of belonging for the participants has been front and centre in this project. It is important for me to emphasise the context where belonging emerges and is experienced differently by various BME students on campus.

Belonging is paramount to understanding how a space is controlled socially (Sibley, 2002; Cresswell 2014; Calmore, 1995). By defining who belongs and what belongs in that space has social implications for inclusiveness. Calmore's (1995) research is

in the context of residentially segregated neighbourhoods from White culture and is contextualised for the users of spaces on campus for my research. Campus spaces can codify membership through the control of the space. The disruptive use of a space, as defined by those in power or by the dominant population, can dictate the terms of belonging whereby “transgressions are also consequences of power hierarchies, and occur when a dominant group objects to the actions of a subordinate group” (Trudeau, 2006: 434). Cresswell (1996) explains that transgressions are geographical as they represent a form of cultural trespass that is seen as disrupting the familiar. What is considered ‘out of place’ can often shine a light on challenging spatial boundaries and the possibility of social transformation by focussing on what are considered to be transgressions of the marginalised (Cresswell, 1996). By accepting the cultural trespass rationale or Calmore’s (1995) ‘culture of segregation,’ uses of a space or place and acceptable activities in that space can ignore freedom and respect for ethnic differences.

As specified by Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) a social field perspective reveals the difference between ways of being in a social field and ways of belonging. Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) claim that ways of belonging are understood by the practices which demonstrate a conscious connection to a particular group whereas ways of being are described as the actual social relations and practices that individuals engage in regardless of the identity associated with their actions. Their research was in the context of ways of belonging by using a social field approach to the study of migration.

According to Trudeau (2006) who belongs and who does not is written in the landscape. The spatial and temporal aspects proposed by Khanna (2006) and Mountz (2011) are of use when interpreting the experiences and use of places and spaces on campus. The daily dynamics of place-sharing in a diverse setting are important elements in belonging to that place (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016; Wise, 2010, 2005). The campus may convey physical spaces of inclusion/exclusion. Eco-cultural niches or habitats whereby “structural forces and environmental conditions combine with cultural beliefs in particular social contexts to guide

people's choices and activities" may be prevalent on campus (Auerback, 2006, p. 286). The challenge is to map belonging to the following; (1) the personal dimension, (2) place-belongingness in the social context, and (3) the politics of belonging in relation to discourses and practices on campus. Belonging at an individual level is interdependent on the social and political contexts.

### **The hierarchies of belonging**

The constructions of belonging explored above unveil the social and political context and nature of belonging, revealing how belonging is enmeshed in power and hierarchy of belonging. In this sense belonging is an 'hegemonic construction' (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005, p. 528) whereby for someone to belong they are pressured to assimilate to the behaviours and practices of the dominant group and even if they do, other dimensions like skin colour and accent maintain difference.

Yuval-Davis (2006) focuses the understanding of how the notion of belonging is constructed on three analytical levels. They are firstly social locations, i.e. belonging to a particular group combined with acknowledging the intersectional approach to social locations as constructed along multiple axes of difference, for example, a Black, female, middle-class, European. Secondly, belonging as a construction of self and identification reflecting "emotional investments and desire for attachments" (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 202). Identification is a narrative of who we are and who we are not and can be individual or collective, can change and shift, and can be contested. "Constructions of self and identity can, however, in certain historical contexts, be forced on people" (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 203). In such circumstances Fanon's (1967) politics of resistance may be useful in understanding the oppression of social location and the forced construction of self and identity. Thirdly, along with social location and constructions of individual and collective identities, are ethical and political values with respect to how identities are valued and judged. This can be a contested arena depending on perspectives which may rely on an 'us' or 'them' approach that judges 'others' belonging and not belonging.

I have adapted McDowell's (2009) 'hierarchy of acceptability' to analyse my research findings whereby there is a hierarchy of difference in terms of how race and ethnicity determine acceptability. The hierarchy of belonging investigates if BME students on campus feel they belong more as a result of country of birth, citizenship and skin colour among other factors, or if their difference results in experiences of marginalisation and exclusion. For example, Gilmartin (2013) claims British migrants are the most privileged groups of migrants in Ireland in terms of feeling included and belonging to Irish society. Yuval-Davis claims that the politics of belonging "has come to occupy the heart of the political agenda almost everywhere on the globe" (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 213). How we value and judge the construction of belonging in the political realm determines an 'us' or 'them' approach by hegemonic political powers, thereby maintaining and reproducing boundaries.

Frequently, belonging is used in the context of identity and in particular to refer to national or ethnic identity (Antonsich, 2010). Antonsich's (2010) review of the literature illuminates five factors that contribute to place-belongingness: (1) autobiographical, (2) relational, (3) cultural, (4) economic and (5) legal. In identifying a sense of belonging on campus I have focussed on how relational and cultural factors are linked to hegemonic power structures. Relational factors refer to the sense of connection or not, of sharing public spaces with friends and strangers. Cultural factors refer to language, habits and practices on campus that include and exclude (hooks 2009; Ameli & Merali 2004; Duruz 2002; Fenster 2005; Sidanius & Petrocik, 2001).

Museus (2014) offers a theoretical model of student success for ethnically diverse students. The Culturally Engaging Campus Environment (CECE) model is informed by Tinto's (1987, 1993) theory of student integration and makes space for the voices of diverse populations. The model has nine elements to a culturally engaging campus environment which include cultural relevance (campus environments that are relevant to cultural backgrounds and identities), cultural familiarity (contact with staff and students who understand their background), meaningful cross-



cultural engagement (opportunities for discussions with peers from diverse backgrounds) and cultural responsiveness (campus responsiveness to the needs of diverse students).

Museus et al., (2017) subsequent investigation provides a “comprehensive analyses of aspects of institutional environments that influence students’ sense of belonging,” indicating that all nine elements on the CECE model impact on a sense of belonging on campus. The statistical analyses involved a sample size of c.500 students by survey research methods in three American colleges. The research provides a useful tool to create a campus that is relevant and responsive to the ethnically diverse students with the aim of cultivating an increased sense of belonging on campus. Instead of explaining student behaviours on integration the research aims to understand the campus environment as an indicator of sense of belonging. While these approaches offer an understanding of the importance of cultural and relational aspects of belonging, how they play out in terms of the political context is also essential. Discourses of belonging that emerge in regulating citizenship for nations are a case in point regarding the politics of belonging (Cohen, 1999).

### **Inclusive spaces**

Inclusive spaces and opportunities for integration are evidenced at the micro level of dynamic diversity on campus (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014). Conceptualising the ethnic minority learner experience as taking place within social fields is important for understanding their sense of inclusion and belonging or not, on campus (Carter, Hollinsworth, Raciti, & Gilbey, 2018; Garcia, 2019, 2017). BME students live within a social field on campus. Harper and Hurtado (2007) accentuate the widespread presence of White spaces on college campuses that make it difficult for students from ethnic minorities to find a space of cultural ownership. Exclusion and denial can occur when there is a disconnect between a previous space for learning and a new space that is discordant for BME students (Morrice, 2014; Mezirow, 2000). This may affect BME students’ learning and identity (Morrice, 2014).

The human condition has a propensity to organise ourselves in to “islands of comfortable consensus” (Haring-Smith, 2012, p. 11). By gravitating to and affiliating with similarly like-minded individuals, integration efforts can be resisted over a preference for homogeneity and stability (Crisp & Meleady, 2012). Harnessing the educational benefits of diversity should not be left to chance but should be something that is valued by institutional leaders and evidenced in mission, vision, values and daily campus life. As a result, inclusion and belonging efforts need to be deliberate, require scaffolding and demand cultivation (Huizinga & van Hoven, 2018; Wilson, 2017; Tienda, 2013). “By organizing along national-origin lines, homogeneous student groups miss opportunities to learn about symbolic differences and fundamental similarities with others” (Tienda, 2013, p. 473). Opportunities for integration will vary according to the compositional diversity of the campus but it is the quality, frequency and context of the interactions that will determine success and further integration (Engberg & Hurtado, 2011; Hurtado, 2007).

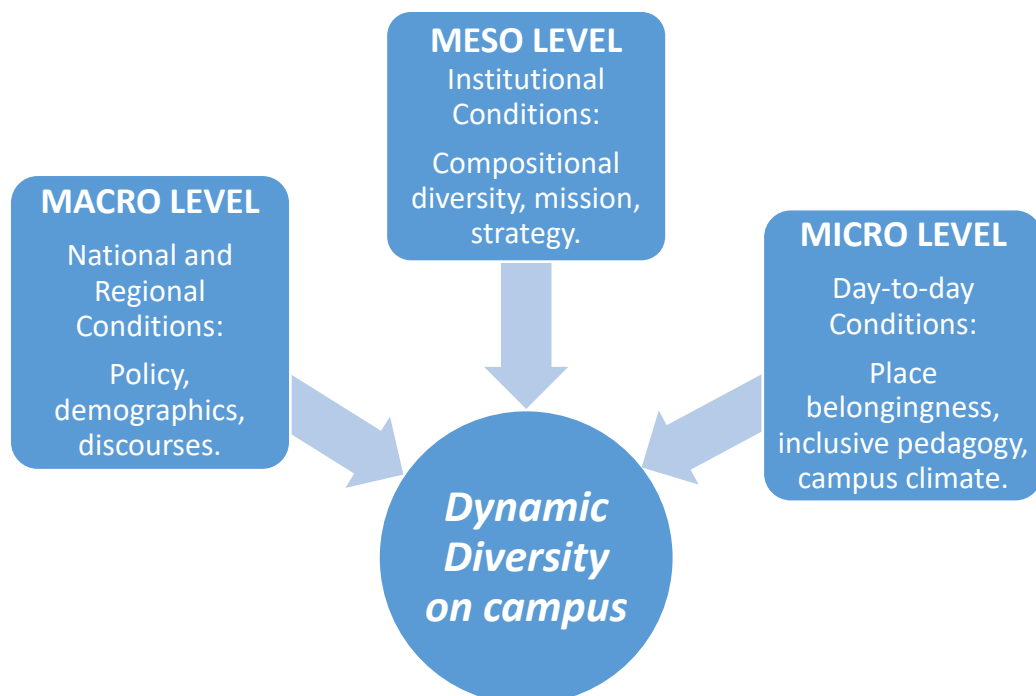
Higher education institutions are in a key position in terms of the power dynamics at play across people, processes and contexts. This can constrain and reproduce inequalities, but equally higher education institutions can be transformative in attending to a diverse student population and in establishing a fairer society, (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012). In attempting to explore these issues more deeply, I review the concept of dynamic diversity and critique the processes in relation to diversity, belonging and inclusion.

### **Contextualising the site: Dynamic diversity on campus**

The concept of dynamic diversity is based on an analysis of decades of EDI research that calls for a contextual understanding of critical mass, as it focuses on the dynamic and symbiotic relationship between students and their campus environment (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014). According to Garces and Jayakumar (2016, 2014) diverse student numbers are important in shaping campus climate and culture, but the campus climate and culture are also powerful influences on

students' experiences. "Dynamic diversity is *contextual* because it requires an understanding of the conditions needed for meaningful interactions and participation (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014, p. 120). The numbers along with contextual considerations such as "institutional signaling about commitment to diversity, and the broader social context, which includes local demographics...plays a significant role in the campus climate and culture" (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014, p. 120).

Dynamic diversity in context is captured at a macro, meso and micro level. The macro level of dynamic diversity discusses the national and regional conditions relevant to TU Dublin. At the meso level I adjust the lens to mission, strategy and compositional diversity on campus. On the micro level I focus on the day-to-day experiences of being a BME student on campus from pronunciation of name to experiences of inclusive pedagogy. Dynamic diversity as it relates to the campus researched in this study is captured in the figure below.



**Figure 2: Dynamic diversity on campus**

## **Campus climate and dynamic diversity**

Research on campus climate spans the macro, meso and micro levels of dynamic diversity on campus (Garces and Jayakumar, 2014). In their research Hurtado et al., (2012) establish a link between campus climate and a variety of student outcomes. While the research is based in very different context in the US, it still provides a powerful acknowledgment that higher education institutions are an ideal environment in which to build awareness and appreciation of difference. Demographic changes in the student population and day-to-day encounters, inside and outside the classroom; both key components of dynamic diversity have the potential to bring about higher rates of interaction with diverse peers. The compositional diversity of the student body coupled with college campuses' need to provide conditions for interaction can result in beneficial educational outcomes that advances student success and institutional transformation to meet the needs of a changing society (Zhang, 2016; Hurtado et al., 2012; Gurin et al., 2002).

Campus climate is palpable and measurable at institute and individual level with real consequences for students such as the success of diverse students at the institution; the role of the institution in reproducing inequality and an evaluation of campus climate assessments of students and staff experiences (Bensimon 2004; Harris & Bensimon 2007; Williams 2010). Additionally, it appears from the research that under-represented minority students experience greater exclusion in low diversity institutions resulting in many campuses being unaware of the problems faced by ethnic minority students in environments where they are under-represented (Hurtado et al., 2012). A campus culture that fosters positive diversity experiences is conducive to the feeling of belonging to a campus community.

Milem, Chang, & Antonio, (2005) persuasively make a case for diversity being viewed as a process towards better learning as well as an outcome. Instead of ticking a list that displays diversity in numbers or what Ahmed (2012) refers to as the 'Diversity Smile' the emphasis is on moving beyond the symbolic commitments to diversity and to the lived experience on campus as an indicator of belonging, inclusion or exclusion. The meaningful representation of BME students on campus

is central here to signal that diversity is valued. Plaut, Thomas, and Goren (2009) in a study of a large organisation of minority employees and diverse attitudes of White co-workers, propose that the cultural climate for minorities is a significant contributor to their experience beyond the compositional reality. Focusing only on getting the numbers up, and not on the climate for inclusion and belonging, weakens EDI initiatives (Plaut et al., 2009).

Drawing on the work of Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, (1998, 1999) and Milem et al., (2005) campus climate is multifaceted in approach. At an institute level, dimensions of campus climate can include paying close attention to (1) an historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion of an institution, (2) compositional diversity of student enrolments and staff, (3) organisational structures pertaining to policies, curriculum and processes. At an individual level, campus climate concerns psychological perceptions of discrimination and attitudes of individuals, and the behaviours that surround individual actions and intergroup dynamics, both formal and informal. Strange and Banning (2015) indicate that “the degree of person-environment congruence is thought to be predictive of an individual’s attraction to and satisfaction within an environment” (Strange & Banning, 2015, p. 74). As a consequence, BME students’ person-environment congruence may influence their sense of connection and belonging to the campus.

Externally forces such as government policy and socio-historical forces resembling events or issues in the larger society that can have an influence also have a role to play in shaping campus climate (Rankin & Reason, 2008; Williams, 2010; Plaut, Thomas, Hurd, & Romano, 2018). If one of the key tenets of higher education is to prepare students for engaging in a diverse democracy then there is a responsibility on educators and policy makers to create conditions that facilitate that purpose (Gurin et al., 2002; Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2012). Nora, Barlow, and Crisp (2005) highlight the many facets of student integration which notably includes student perceptions of the campus climate and a sense of belonging for attainment.

The greater the compositional diversity of the student population, the greater the satisfaction with the college experience (Hinrichs, 2011). As the previous discussion illustrates, quantitative representation of diversity can be limited in what they reveal. Student registration numbers will indicate how diverse the student population is on a campus. However, a diverse student population does not automatically guarantee equality of conditions for students. An equality of conditions perspective acknowledges the diverse conditions and resources that students bring to higher education which have the potential to enable and constrain them in relation to all aspects of the student experience (Bensimon, 2004; Lynch & Baker, 2005; Harris & Bensimon, 2007; Morrice, 2014). “The effectiveness of campus initiatives and programs at successfully engaging students with diversity also depends on a larger institutional context” (Milem et al., 2005; Hart & Fellabaum, 2008). A key indicator to campus climate regarding diversity will be evidenced in the mission, strategy and goals of an institution. “If demographic diversification of college campuses is merely a pragmatic first step toward realizing the pedagogic benefits of heterogeneous learning environments and fostering the broader societal goal of social integration, it is fair to ask what institutions are doing to achieve inclusion” (Tienda, 2013, p. 472). An outsider looking in may consider our progress on compositional diversity of the student population at TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus laudable. However, it is largely due to local demographics referred to in chapter two on defining and interpreting diversity in its context. It is also necessary to consider the contextualised nature of student experiences on campus, as the following section does through a focus on cultural humility.

### **Cultural humility**

Cultural humility has been researched as a concept in patient care and counselling but is adaptable to any setting where we encounter differences based on culture and ethnicity (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998; Davis et al., 2016; Masters et al., 2019). Not to be confused with cultural competence, which is defined by having an end point in the mastery of communicating with and interacting effectively with others who are ethnically and culturally different to us, cultural humility enlists a

lifelong commitment and engagement to understanding cultural nuances and confronting stereotypes (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998; Watkins & Hooks, 2016; Masters et al., 2019). Masters et al., (2019) propose the 5Rs approach to cultural humility in their research of addressing biases in patient care; reflection (what did I learn from the encounter?), respect (did I treat everyone with respect?), regard (were there any unconscious biases influencing the interaction?), relevance (how is cultural humility relevant in the situation?) and resiliency (how has my resilience and self-care been affected by the interaction?). I interpret relevance from the 5Rs of cultural humility, as translating to the quest for quality, promotion and advocacy for BME students on campus. Trevion and Murray-Garcia (1998) encourage the process of cultural humility at the elevated level of the organisation, not just to be reserved for individual encounters. Along with dynamic diversity (Graces & Jayakumar, 2014), a cultural humility process behoves a contextual understanding of students and their campus. An understanding of context is vital in relation to my research regarding the macro and meso levels of dynamic diversity on campus, campus climate and cultural humility. In understanding this I contend that aspects of CRT scholarship can deepen our comprehension of inclusion and belonging through its focus on a critical race consciousness.

## **Developing a race consciousness grounded in Critical Race**

### **Theory**

Critical Race Theory (CRT) provides a theoretical foregrounding to develop the race consciousness necessary to carry out the research. This is important in detecting subtle and nuanced forms of racism and discrimination on campus that may otherwise be overlooked. A race consciousness in this study furthers an understanding of racial inequity on campus and it is used to frame the findings of the research. A critical race consciousness acts as a counternarrative to the dominant student population and culture on campus. Race consciousness is a meaningful determinant in identifying belonging and inclusion for BME students in this study.

The linking of CRT to the dynamics of inclusion and belonging from social geography contributes to an understanding of belonging and inclusion on campus for students who come from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds in Irish higher education. “Critical Race Theory (CRT) has become increasingly prominent in educational research seeking to critically examine educational opportunities, school climate, representation, and pedagogy” (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015, p. 206). CRT’s foundations can be traced to the work of Bell in critical legal studies, who coined the term ‘racial realism’ to explain the oppression status experienced by Black Americans because of the persistence of White supremacy, in response to the slow pace of racial reform in the US (Bell, 1992, 1991, 1987).

The task of applying a CRT foundation to all the student research participants in this study is a complex one as the research profile of the participants reveals that the majority (sixteen of the nineteen students) self-identified as of African or Asian origin. The remaining three participants self-identified as European by nationality and are White immigrants to Ireland (see Table 2). The largest group of participants in my sample were of Nigerian origin (nine out of nineteen participants). Hence, the multiplicity of how the research participants self-identified themselves ethnically, culturally and nationally, challenges the application of CRT as a framework. “Racial identities are not only Black, Latino, Asian, Native American and so on...they are also white. To ignore white ethnicity is to redouble its hegemony by naturalizing it” (Fusco, 1989, p. 39). The social construction of whiteness as a racial category is included in the CRT conceptual lens in this study to capture the predominant experience of the research participants (Roediger, 2002). Relying solely on biological variances between people as categories of difference is a socially constructed process (Brzuzy, 1997; López, 2000; Weber, 2010). Racial differences that omit the socio-political context of White racial positions as superior, “where to be ‘White’ is to be normal and to be ‘non-White’ is to be other” are a socially constructed procedure of racialisation (Fitzsimons, 2019, p. 8; Carr, 2015; Lentin, 2004).



Fred Korematsu an American citizen of Japanese descent successfully challenged his conviction of detention which was based on being a military threat during World War II stating that, "According to the Supreme Court decision regarding my case, being an American citizen is not enough. They say you have to look like one, otherwise they say you can't tell a difference between a loyal and a disloyal American (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017, p. 144). To categorise a person's race is dependent upon external characteristics that we attribute to that race category like skin colour, hair texture and the shape of the eyes, all of which are not reliable indicators of any internal distinctions between people (Cooper, Kaufman, & Ward, 2003). Black students and Asian students have different experiences of being racialised based on how society has categorised them (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). The challenges encountered are taken into account in chapters five and six on findings and discussion but are worth noting at this juncture in terms of their implications for the application of a CRT lens in this study.

Researchers have relied on CRT both epistemologically and methodologically, to assist in researching the experiences of marginalised communities and a compelling bedrock of literature exists spanning the last three decades on CRT (Bell, 1980; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009). CRT helps us to assess how White people have been advantaged and Black, Asian and other ethnic minorities have been disadvantaged (Crenshaw et al., 1995). In this research I selectively draw on a number of key ideas in CRT in order to grasp important aspects of students' experience in the research site and in order to critically reflect on my positioning as a researcher (Hiraldo, 2010). In particular I connect with the tenets of (1) counter-storytelling (centralising the experiential knowledge of marginalised people by developing counter-discourses); (2) the permanence of racism (challenging the dominant ideology of White privilege) and (3) the social construction of race (othering based on biological differences), (Hiraldo, 2010; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano, 1998; Lynn, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso et al., 2009).

A central tenet of CRT is bringing to the fore, through analysis and interpretation, the experiential knowledge of marginalised groups. This is pivotal when researching 'up' or turning the gaze back on what is considered normal and accepted among the dominant population (Madriaga, 2018; Blaisdell, 2016; Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva, 2008; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). CRT in this research is used to develop a race consciousness to analyse the experiences and outcomes of BME students on campus. The CRT focus for this study is on racialisation, whiteness in the academy and a CRT pedagogical lens inside the classroom, all of which are discussed below.

In using CRT I am mindful that my knowledge is partial. I am also cognisant that CRT has been subject to "accusations of simple identity politics and conjecture" (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015, p. 207), and that race has been "elevated to a theoretical construct, despite the fact that the concept of 'race' itself has remained under-theorized" (Darder & Tores, 2004, p. 99). Darder and Tores (2004) criticise CRT for its emphasis on race as "the central category of analysis" to the exclusion that the role of "a substantive critique of capitalism" has to play in educational debates on racism (Darder & Tores, 2004, pp. 97-99). CRT scholars (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Tate, 2005) advise the inclusion of CRT's legal roots in CRT research because to disregard this coupling, diminishes the authority of CRT's claims. Critical race praxis is "a critical pragmatic analysis of racial realities and their intersections with other forms of oppression, combined with educating for democracy, and organising for social justice and change" (García, 2015, p. 315). While CRT offers a potent lens for viewing institutional racism, it has been criticised for not offering any resolutions (Su, 2005; Ledesma & Calderón, 2015).

### **Racialisation: Race and othering**

Based on the diverse ethnic and cultural profile of the research participants in this project, it was imperative for me to include scholarship pertaining to racialisation in the construction of race and othering. Racialised thought and actions involve processes of ascribing ethnic or racial identities to an individual, group, relationship

or social practice (Emirbayer & Desmond, 2012). Characteristics of the student research participants were collected at the start of the interviews/focus groups in phase two of the fieldwork when participants completed a one-page form that aimed to capture a profile of the student participants (Appendix 1). There are considerable differences in identity expressed among the student research participants with an ethnicity other than White Irish (Table 2). It is necessary to critically reflect on the unique and specific identities that the student participants ascribed to themselves, because identity and racialisation are experienced differently and uniquely by different groups (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

Akel's (2019) recent report highlights the role race plays in the encounters of BME students regarding their experiences both socially and academically at Goldsmiths College, University of London. The lines of inquiry in her research are on decoloniality and representation in academia, racism and microaggressions, academic attainment and hate crime on campus. The students interviewed for her research revealed the continuous daily struggle of racism, inside and outside the classroom. She calls for Goldsmiths College as an institution to become a better listener, and to hear what their BME students have to say about their sense of belonging on campus (Akel, 2019). From a staffing point of view Arday's (2018b) research gives insight to the challenges in the academy for BME academics who are underrepresented in senior leadership positions, which at times mirror BME student challenges in higher education.

Racialisation and othering exist outside higher education with socio-economic implications like access to employment opportunities for BME graduates and 'acceptance' into society based on differences in appearance, nationality and accent. McGinnity et al., (2018) research provides a detailed overview of attitudes to diversity in Ireland with results revealing an 'ethnic hierarchy' for migrants in Ireland. Irish born respondents in the study were most supportive of and preferred allowing "immigrants of the same race or ethnicity over those of a different race or ethnicity" into Ireland, and this view persisted over time (McGinnity et al., 2018, p. 20). A comparison can be drawn to Pérez Huber's racist nativism – "the

institutionalized ways people perceive, understand and make sense of contemporary US immigration, that justifies native (White) dominance, and reinforces hegemonic power” (Peréz Huber, 2011, p. 380). Joseph’s (2018) research confirms the racial ordering for people of migrant origin regarding their employment status - the Black Nigerian migrants in her study in Ireland were overrepresented at the bottom of the labour market. “While every group is impacted by race, the effect appeared to be more pronounced along colour lines based on nationality, race and skin colour” (Joseph, 2018, p. 70). Afrophobic racism in Ireland whereby people of African descent are targeted, mostly during daytime as they encounter public spaces at work, in educational settings, shopping and so on account for 30% of the total reported cases submitted to iReport.ie (Michael, 2015). iReport is the system that encourages the reporting of racist incidents from members of the public, established in 2013 to contend with the void in the recording of racist incidents and discrimination nationally (Michael, 2015).

Brubaker refers to ‘analytical groupism’ in cautioning against isolating discrete groups from their social setting (Brubaker, 2006, p. 45). Racialised groups do not exist in isolation from one another in the context of this research. Drawing on the literature on racialisation is to support and understand the experiences of students of African descent, to help illuminate the specific experiences of these students because society racialises their biological attributes in ways that White students from European cultures do not experience. “Hardly free-floating or socially disembodied, students of race are deeply shaped, privileged, or disadvantaged by a society in which racial domination is prevalent, and their social experiences condition the very perspectives they assume upon the racial world” (Emirbayer & Desmond, 2012, p. 578).

### **White academy: White scholarship**

Racialisation is also in evidence in the academy in what we teach, and how we teach in ways that are predominantly Eurocentric in approach (Andrews, 2019; Kendall, 2013; Emirbayer & Desmond, 2012; hooks, 2012; Dei, 2010). Campaigns like “Why is My Curriculum White?” and “Rhodes Must Fall” galvanised by

students' reactions to the Eurocentric nature of university knowledge, has led to a movement to decolonise the curriculum (Andrews, 2019; Arday & Mirza, 2018; Rhodes Must Fall, 2015; Why is My Curriculum White, 2015). One of the aims of these campaigns is to capture and include scholarship and representation other than the predominant White scholarship that currently exists in the academy globally. The transnational movement includes grievances beyond the classroom from the removal of colonial iconography to mandatory anti-racist training for staff (Rhodes Must Fall, 2018; Why is My Curriculum White, 2015). Campus based activism led by students is "directed at confronting the university as a key site in the creation and perpetuation of institutional racism and white supremacy" (Pimblott, 2019, p. 2).

From a student perspective, Yancy states that BME students have "come to internalise the white gaze, a gaze that...has negative implications for how they see their own epistemic credibility" by accepting the normalcy of White knowledge production and White knowledge sources in the curriculum (Yancy, 2019, p. 32). The university's role in perpetuating Eurocentric paradigms has been made visible by these movements, includes renewed calls "for the recognition and development of alternative knowledge (and knowledge bearers) capable of moving us beyond the distortions and erasures of hegemonic eurocentric paradigms" (Pimblott, 2019, p. 4).

The Rhodes Must Fall Oxford (RMFO) manifesto calls for a "more intellectually rigorous, complete academy" that integrates "subjugated and local epistemologies" (RMF Oxford, 2015). At the core of these campaigns is the deep dissatisfaction with the lack of race equality in staff and student recruitment and across the curricula and pedagogy (Pimblott, 2019; Knudsen & Andersen, 2019). When curriculum content is accessible and intellectually challenging for students they are more "likely to actively engage in (and therefore benefit from) university learning environments" where they experience "educational environments as spaces where they feel themselves...and within which they believe they can speak and be heard" (Rowan, 2019, p. 98). Including diverse voices that have been

silenced due to “phallogentric, Eurocentric, xenophobic educational environments is “central to transformative education” (Rowan, 2019, p. 98).

From a pedagogical context this means inviting risk in pedagogy. As stated by Leonardo and Porter (2010) disruption and risk is vital ahead of safety in race dialogue because a “subtle but fundamental violence is enacted in safe discourses on race, which must be challenged through a pedagogy of disruption, itself a form of violence but a humanizing, rather than repressive version” (Leonardo & Porter, 2010, p. 139). Collectively as White educators and White students, we underestimate the fact that the lived experience of race dialogue is almost never safe for BME people in diverse racial company (Leonardo & Porter, 2010). Fanon’s pedagogy of fear and critical race pedagogy are risky and uncomfortable for everyone involved but felt particularly by Whites like me because pedagogies that tackle racial power will be most uncomfortable for those who benefit from that power (Fanon, 2004; Lynn, 1999).

Developed by Arao and Clemens (2013), Pawlowski (2019) provides a brave space paradigm for the classroom as an alternative to safe spaces, to explore racial identities and antiracist pedagogy. Safe spaces allow a retreat from an uncomfortable challenge, agree to disagree scenarios, not to take ‘it’ personally narratives, and neutralise the situation rather than challenging the inherent risks in teaching racialisation like brave spaces do (Pawlowski, 2019). Brave spaces offer alternatives such as “[I]nvite and embrace controversy – wade into the difficulty. Critically interrogate reasons why we want to opt out...acknowledge when a perceived attack is in fact just a challenge” (Pawlowski, 2019, p. 66). At the core of learning about racialisation is a welcoming of the risk, tension and conflict that it brings so we can expand our reasoning and ultimately our learning and transformation on the matter.

“Black studies proposes a counter hegemonic and liberatory knowledge basis for education” (Andrews, 2019, p. 2). Black studies advocate for transparency in the degree attainment gap conversation wherein “BME students face a 13.6% degree

attainment gap in first/2.1 classifications compared to their White counterparts in UK higher education” (Akel, 2019, p. 10; Advance HE, 2018). ‘Degree awarding gap’ is considered a more appropriate term than ‘degree attainment gap’. The ‘degree attainment gap’ is based on ‘the deficit model’ by placing the onus on the student to adapt to a system that has created barriers for them while privileging others. The ‘degree awarding gap’ places the obligation on the institution to ensure an inclusive environment for all students to study (Jones, Pampaka, Swain, & Skyrme, 2017; Cotton, Joyner, George, & Cotton, 2016). Instead of the student in need of ‘fixing’, the lens needs to shift to “eradicate racial bias in degree attainment” by unmasking the barriers created overtly or covertly by the institution, that allow some students to progress and others to face additional obstacles in their educational achievements based on ethnicity (Akel, 2019, p. 12). Equivalent Irish research in higher education is currently not available.

The challenge is for predominantly White educators to interrogate their knowledge sources and not to disconnect their social positioning from their racial identity (Fitzsimons, 2019; Zembylas, 2007; hooks, 1994) as this can impact directly on students from diverse backgrounds in terms of inclusion and belonging in a learning environment (Rowan, 2019). Reflexivity is at the core of race studies resulting in an expansion of our perspectives, “...our understanding of the racial order will remain forever unsatisfactory so long as we fail to turn our analytic gaze back upon ourselves” (Emirbayer & Desmond, 2012, p. 574). Emirbayer and Desmond (2012) call for an observation of our social position along with “racial reflexivity” as a critically important intervention when conducting research that challenges the passive acceptance of White supremacy (Emirbayer & Desmond, 2012, p. 578; hooks, 2012).

### **Using CRT to develop a critical pedagogy lens inside the classroom**

Engaging with CRT permits me to look inside the classroom with a critical pedagogical lens for divergent thinking, group composition for teamwork, controversial classroom-based discussions, evidence of ethnicity proofed syllabi and racial literacy in delivery where matters of race are foregrounded as is the

impact of being a minority in the classroom (Blaisdell, 2016; Gunn, Morrison, & Hanesworth, 2015).

Blaisdell (2016) employs CRT by using racial space analysis and posits from her research that by analysing “school and classrooms as racial spaces can help uncover embedded racial hierarchy and can help shed light on teachers’ agency within it” (Blaisdell, 2016, p. 249). CRT inside the classroom requires engaging in pedagogy that brings race and racism to the fore (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015). Lynn’s Critical Race Pedagogy (CRP) is defined “as an analysis of racial, ethnic, and gender subordination in education that relies mostly upon the perceptions, experiences and counter-hegemonic practices of educators of color” and champions CRP practices that have the potential to dismantle dominant knowledge claims in favour of alternative epistemologies (Lynn, 2004, p. 154; Asimeng-Boahene, 2010).

Inclusive teaching in higher education can develop a sense of belonging where all students can participate.

“Pedagogies are shaped by and through different formations of knowledge, as well as identity, and so it is crucial that we think through teaching and learning in relation to questions about curriculum and assessment. These are not separate entities of practice but relational practices in higher education and are connected to questions of equity, inclusion and recognition” (Burke & Crozier, 2013, p.7).

Joseph (2012) and Brookfield (2019) advances inclusive pedagogy for social justice by examining the concept of internationalising the curriculum in the context of Australian higher education and American higher education respectively, by exposing issues of privilege and marginalisation through feminist pedagogies (Maher and Tetreault, 1994) and post-colonial pedagogies (Santos, 2008). By adhering to a critical and inclusive pedagogy we confront the construction of knowledge and curriculum content (Brookfield, 2019, 2002; Goodman, 2017; hooks, 2003).



Asimeng-Boahene (2010) argues for alternative epistemologies to be included specifically in relation to the use of counter storytelling developed in CRT “that utilize African proverbs to explore the conceptual and pedagogical landscapes of the non-dominant cultures' narratives” (Asimeng-Boahene, 2010: 437). CRT’s counter storytelling provides a voice for the lived experiences of ethnically and culturally diverse minorities who often struggle to be heard within the dominant group (Joseph, 2020). Matias (2013) advises that we teach White people about how their identity developed through the process of othering in a socio-historical context, in much the same way that Black people understand themselves in relationship to White people. Yosso (2002) proposes a Critical Race Curriculum (CRC) in education that acknowledges the tenets of CRT and allows educators to historicize and contextualize.

Fostering an ‘intellectual awakening’ around these concepts and ideological differences are favourable for achieving pedagogic benefits but are difficult to document because they are largely invisible and take place at casual informal meeting points like at the water cooler or over a coffee break (Slaten, 2020; Gillies, 2017; Tienda, 2013; Neely & Samura, 2011). In transforming the curriculum, emotions of fear, threat and resistance can surface for faculty who have limited knowledge on diversity issues and have experienced a predominantly monocultural curriculum. There can be concerns from the academy about the ‘watering-down’ of the curriculum when integrating diversity into the content (Ukpokodu, 2010), faculty lacking the training and knowledge on how to integrate diversity into the curriculum (Darlington, 2008; Ukpokodu, 2010), the academics’ belief that students’ responsibility for academic literacy rests with the individual (Benzie, 2010) and a debate among academics that all students should be treated the same regardless of their ethnicity (Leach, 2011; Sawir, 2011). The ethnic minority student must not be placed in the role of educator at the expense of their own growth. This is an unhelpful strategy that can impede their learning (Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo, & Rivera, 2009). It assumes that the ethnic minority student is the racial or ethnic expert and often reflects “the lack of awareness, knowledge, and

understanding of the instructor on racial matters” (Sue et al., 2009, p. 188). Next I review the scholarship on microaggressions and its relevance to my research.

## **The psychological construct of microaggressions**

Essed and Goldberg (2012) express that recent thinking about racial bias has a tendency to propose that racism matters less now than before. Critical race scholarship contrasts that view advising that racism manifests in hidden and often invisible ways today, as is the case with microaggressions, but that racism is still deeply embedded in society and can be disguised as colourblindness or race neutrality (Brookfield, 2019; Yanow, 2019; Akel, 2019; Bonilla-Silva, 2014, 2006; Emirbayer & Desmond, 2012; Sue et al., 2007; Essed & Goldberg, 2002). As the findings in chapter six reveal, this became a very pertinent issue in this research study.

As a result of the seminal article by Sue et al., (2007) on the construct of microaggressions, the scholarly interest on this topic continues to increase, based on the review by Wong, Derthick, David, Saw, and Okazaki (2014). Sue et al., (2007) define racial microaggressions as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group” (Sue et al., 2007, p. 273). In the intervening years, scholarship in counselling advances the argument that microaggressions can be applied to a range of identities like gender, religion and sexual orientation (Charles & Arndt, 2013; Nadal, 2011; Owen et al., 2011; Shelton et al., 2013; Tran & Lee, 2014). The most harmful microaggressions occur between those who hold power and those who are most disempowered (Sue et al., 2008). The research demonstrates that microaggressions have a negative impact for ethnic minorities concerning psychological distress, depression and anxiety and physical health (Mekawi & Todd, 2018; Liao, Weng, & West, 2016; Nadal, Griffin, Wong, Hamit, & Rasmus 2014; Wong et al., 2014). Two examples from the research illustrate this below.

Torres and Taknint (2015) in their study of 113 adults who self-identified as being from the Latino population living in a mid-western city in the US claim that repeated exposure to ethnic microaggressions accumulate over time and impact mental health and well-being that “lends further credence to the type of psychological injury associated with covert forms of discrimination” (Torres & Taknint, 2015, p. 18). Notably, racial and ethnic microaggressions were associated with traumatic stress symptoms related to arousal, avoidance, and hypervigilance, further emphasising the negative impact microaggressions can have on individuals (Torres & Taknint, 2015). Nadal’s (2011) US based study creates a measure that evaluates the types of racial microaggressions that individuals experience in their everyday lives. The Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS), uses both theory and statistical methods whereby Nadal identifies 45 microaggression incidents and categories them into six major subscales. The study posits “that people of color experience microaggressions in their everyday lives and are able to identify such instances as being racially related” (Nadal, 2011, p. 477). His participants were recruited by way of an undergraduate psychology course and through internet based non-profit community websites.

### **Types of microaggressions**

Psychology has, over time, advanced the understanding of racial microaggressions and their impacts. For example, Wong et al., (2014) conducted a review of the “enormous scholarly interest in psychology on this construct of racial microaggressions” (Wong et al., 2014, p. 181). For Wong et al., (2014) most of the studies they reviewed “utilized Sue et al., (2007) taxonomy of racial microaggressions as the framework for interpreting their data, attesting to the influence this conceptualisation has had in a short time period” (Wong et al., 2014, p. 184).

By reviewing the literature Sue et al., (2007) created the first comprehensive taxonomy of microaggressions experienced in everyday life. They built upon the work of McConahay’s (1986) term ‘modern racism’, Sears’ (1988) ‘symbolic racism’ and Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, and Hodson (2002) ‘aversive racism’, to

introduce the concept of microaggressions. Sue et al., (2007) categorised the aggressions as microassaults, revealed through a verbal or non-verbal attack that is not meant to be hurtful (e.g. name-calling or avoidance behaviour), microinsults, identified by communications that are rude and insensitive to an individual's identify or ethnicity (e.g. asking someone where they are really from!), and microinvalidations, indicated by excluding, negating or nullifying a person based on their ethnicity (e.g. complimenting an Asian Irish student on their English language competency).

An individual experience of being on the receiving end of a microaggression is not necessarily striking when viewed as an isolated incident. In many cases, the microaggressions are never meant to hurt. In several instances the offender is often unaware that they are performing a microaggression (Sue et al., 2007; DeVos & Banaji, 2005). The acts are committed with little conscious awareness of their meanings and effects. It is however their slow accumulation over time that creates a marginalized experience and can make the person feel like a perpetual foreigner by excluding, negating or nullifying a person based on their ethnicity (Devos & Banaji, 2005).

Lilienfeld (2017) states that the conceptual and methodological research foundations for microaggressions are too underdeveloped for use and goes on to suggest that the term 'microaggression' be discarded, and that training programmes incorporating microaggression training content be suspended. Mekawi and Todd (2018) have developed a scale to "assess attitudes about the acceptability of White individuals saying racially microaggressive statements to racial and ethnic minorities," in an attempt to answer a larger question of whether racial microaggressions are ever permissible statements (Mekawi & Todd, 2018, p. 346). Sue's (2017) compelling rebuttal to these critiques and to the broader question of what constitutes evidence brings to the fore the dominance of "empiricism to determine truth...the more we try to achieve internal validity, take a reductionist approach, and eliminate confounding variables, the greater the possibility that we move away from real-world phenomena, so that our findings

have little external validity” (Sue, 2017, p. 171). Microaggressions are about the “experiential reality” of those on the receiving end of the microaggression, and by “applying the accepted scientific principle of *scepticism* to the study of microaggressions, may intentionally dilute, dismiss, and negate the lived experience of marginalized groups in our society” (Sue, 2017, p. 171).

For the purposes of my research the microaggressions experienced focus on the context of the campus environment and are placed within the broader conceptual framework of this thesis. This bricolage approach is relevant as it enables me to address this issue from multiple perspectives and lenses, and hence brings a theoretical depth and systemic analysis from critical race theory and geography, which critics like Lilienfeld (2017) contend is lacking in current psychological approaches to microaggressions (see above). An analysis of microaggressions does bring the empirical evidence and context to the fore and with Akel’s (2019) report of higher education starkly revealing that many respondents in her study experienced “being interrupted or overlooked when attempting to contribute to academic discussion...found their contributions under disproportionate scrutiny by white peers and staff...and described the lack of protection and safety in the classroom, where racist language and microaggressions have gone unchecked by the relevant staff member” (Akel, 2019, p. 7).

Smith, Allen, and Danley (2007) describe ‘racial battle fatigue’ as “the physiological and psychological strain exacted on racially marginalized groups and the amount of energy lost dedicated to coping with racial microaggressions and racism” (Smith et al., 2007, p. 555). In their study there was consensus agreement that Black African American males experienced a hostile college environment in the three US universities in the research whereby respondents “experienced racial microaggressions in three domains: (a) campus–academic, (b) campus–social, and (c) campus–public spaces” with themes emerging on Black misandry (anti Black stereotyping and marginalisation), hyper surveillance and control (Smith et al., 2007, p. 551). ‘Academic adjustment’ is reported as an active coping strategy in a White patriarchal academy for scarce Black males on White campuses (Smith,

Mustaffa, Jones, Curry, & Allen, 2016). In Akel's study respondents' coping strategies and adoptive approaches, "where white voices are plat-formed and Black and brown voices are subordinate," are "code-switching, remaining uncritical of white peers' perspectives and not presenting their true self" (Akel, 2019, p. 29). The cumulative effect of these microaggressions along with the coping strategies and adoptive approaches are a core focus of this research.

As a background theoretical influence, I find Goffman's (1954) work on micro-psychology of everyday life helpful. Using Goffman's presentation of self in daily life, I adjust the inclusion gaze to belonging in higher education, as my research is concerned with everyday behaviours and interactions experienced by BME students on campus. Goffman (1954) believes that participants in social interactions engage in certain practices to avoid revealing or embarrassing themselves or others. Goffman's theories have been adopted in ethnic tourism research of impersonation (Yang, Ryan, & Zhang, 2016). My interpretation of Goffman's theory is that inclusion for BME students on campus is relevant for how people respond to microaggressions and how they adopt their behavior to 'cope' or 'fit in' with the mainstream student population. However, this micro level also fits into a bigger picture and I turn attention to the broader policy context in the next section to review policy knowledge on diversity in higher education.

## **Higher education policy on diversity and inclusion**

In August 2018 THEA (Technological Higher Education Association) launched and promoted its gender and diversity statement; "The sector recognises the importance of a diverse student body and staff cohort to its mission to deliver high-quality education, research, and innovation in support of society and the economy<sup>7</sup>." According to Tate and Bagguley (2017) a predominantly White academy makes it difficult for BME students to highlight race-ethnicity related issues because of a cultural and contextual separation.

---

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.thea.ie/press-releases/publication-of-gender---diversity-statement/>

As demographics change at national level, this brings opportunities and challenges in our society. According to Garces and Jayakumar (2014) the context in which the educational experiences occur for students is “determined by both socio-historical forces on campus and the larger policy context, including government programs and the national policy landscape” (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014, p. 118). The multidimensional framework presented by Hurtado et al., (2012) acknowledges the important role that national policy plays in campus climate for a diverse student population. While the context of the paper is in American higher education all “institutions operate within the policies and practices of the states in which they are situated” (Hurtado et al., 2012, p. 93).

The campus is shaped and influenced by many factors; relations between staff, students and alumni, procedures, policies, structures, systems, institutional mission, vision and core values along with larger social contexts (Hurtado et al., 1998). “College campuses are complex social systems”, in fact our higher education institutions can often function as microcosms of the wider society (Rankin & Reason, 2008, p. 262). If one of the primary missions of higher education is the discovery of and distribution of new knowledge then we need to be working with other ways of knowing in pedagogic practices to ensure that diversity and inclusion become a central value in how we do our work.

Embracing diversity in Ireland is a constant and provocative debate publicly, politically and scholarly. In his informative paper on educational policy Ball (2008) refers to the ‘policy ratchet’ whereby policy and practice become legitimate solutions for tackling societal challenges. What once seemed impossible or unimaginable becomes overt and necessary. An example of this is the public spending cuts in Ireland that followed the 2008 crash and financial crisis as the new age of austerity and how higher education responded to ensure economic competitiveness and survival (Pritchard & Slowey, 2017; HEA, 2016). Institutional resilience as a response to the impact of funding cuts affects the provision of undergraduate education that delivers quality outcomes and provides for an

increase in student numbers. Educational decisions appear to be based on the availability of resources instead of academic grounds.

Policy is often responsive and aspirational, composed of broad statements of intent to value and implement diversity strategies and initiatives. Yet often diversity implementation is reduced to compliance as the “most readily-implemented common denominator” often evidenced in the use of compositional diversity for positive public image and/or accommodation of diversity measures that are legally compliant (Price, 2015, p. 298).

### **The systemic context: Privileged knowledge**

According to Inglis (1997) “power constitutes knowledge; resistance deconstructs truth” (Inglis, 1997, p. 6). By recognising whose knowledge is privileged and therefore influential, is an important perspective to have on an organisation. The knowledge that maintains the power becomes the organising discourses.

Subsequently the infrastructures are organised around the discourses. In higher education the ‘coloniality’ of power and knowledge can be viewed as the reduction of knowledge and education to ‘specialist higher education’ for industries in the region so as ‘to continue to serve its students and the community by meeting the skills needs in the economy<sup>8</sup>.’ Santos’ (2007) appeal for ‘learning from the south’ opens up the canon of knowledge for different ways of knowing (Santos, 2007, p. 508). Identifying curriculums, content and learning outcomes that are predicated on fort pedagogy makes me conscious of what knowledge is privileged and what remains hidden (Donald, 2012). Donald refers to ‘fort pedagogy’ as epistemological and social conformity to “Eurowestern standards established and presumably held in common by insiders. Outsiders and their knowledges have been actively excluded from meaningful participation” (Donald, 2012, p. 21).

Knowledge is partial, local and contextual. I find it compelling to consider ‘employability’ and ‘graduate attributes’ as the ‘pedagogy of the fort’ for TU Dublin

---

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.itb.ie/AboutITB/mission.html>



(Donald, 2012). Curriculum content and learning outcomes that drive employability and contribute to graduate attributes represent the ‘pedagogy of the fort’ at TU Dublin. According to Marginson (2018) neo-liberal governments in relation to higher education emphasise employability of graduates and innovations for industry and are less concerned with ‘social literacy’ and social equity in higher education (Marginson, 2018, OECD, 2018; Department of Education and Skills, 2016). Employability is systemic in the learning outcomes of education programmes and linked to accreditation, limiting and framing learning and life possibilities for many people (Fitzsimons, 2017a). In March 2018 the government through the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI), published its revised research priorities for 2018-2023<sup>9</sup>. The assertion is that the research priorities referred to are crucial to the social and economic progress of Ireland, yet all of them promote business interests at the expense of the wider public good and social justice intentions. A rethink of the research priorities with reference to arts, humanities and the social sciences needs to take place for an open and democratic society to include all of us. Higher education goals drive to be congruent with an entrepreneurial market system often to the neglect and at the expense of social justice goals (Marginson, 2018; Lynch & Grummell, 2018; Finnegan, Fleming, & Loxley, 2017; Pritchard & Slowey, 2017). Lynch and Baker (2005) advocate for the inclusion of participant groups in the design of educational programmes as paramount to learning about equality and in “minimising the danger of privileged experts colonizing the experience of subordinate groups” (Lynch & Baker, 2005, p. 147). Our educational system is embedded in society. Increasing a sense of inclusion and belonging on campus will not manifest unless there is inclusivity in our economic, cultural and political systems.

Higher education programmes, syllabi and modes of assessment are biased and weighted in favour of the elite classes. “Knowledge has been institutionalised by the elite in society, especially the male elite” (Lynch & Baker, 2005, p. 139). Abilities and intelligences associated with subordinated groups are excluded or minimally assessed. The biases embedded in the structures are unlikely to be challenged

---

<sup>9</sup> Revised Research Priorities for 2018-2023 <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Research-Priority-Areas-2018-to-2023.pdf>

because those supported by the dominant structure are unaware of the biases or developed the biases and benefit from them. Lynch (1999) calls for democratic structures to identify what has been made invisible due to hegemony in the academy. Finnegan et al., (2017) in examining access policy in higher education is also germane for inclusion and belonging of BME students. If the numbers of BME students as a target group increase in accordance with TU Dublin's mission and strategy, can we assume that the system is becoming more equitable? Currently, we do not know enough about what is experienced by BME students in higher education. Are BME students as agents of equality themselves, enabled or constrained as a result of their status/categorisation/self-ascription? (Finnegan et al., 2017). While the procedures and systems may appear fair and just, an account must be taken of agency and actors for inclusivity that is sustainable. This is relevant not only for higher education but also regarding the destination of BME students upon graduation about which there is very little data available (Fleming, Loxley, Kenny, & Finnegan, 2010; Finnegan & O'Neill, 2015).

### **Equality of conditions perspective: Diversity ≠ Inclusion**

Much of the discussion around inclusion and belonging in higher education focuses on widening access and increasing participation for different social groups (Lynch & Baker, 2005; Grenfell, 2014; Finnegan et al., 2017). An *equality of conditions perspective* (Lynch & Baker, 2005) widens the perspective to ensure that all learners on campus have equal prospects not only in access to higher education but with regard to all aspects of the student experience. The equality of condition's perspective aligns with Stahl's (2017) *unequal capacity for change condition* (UCCC), whereby oppressive conditions can "create obstacles for members of disrespected groups that keep them from challenging social rules" (Stahl, 2017, p. 482).

Inclusion and belonging are also about appreciating and accepting differences. Ravitch (2005) and Bishop (2003) call for caution to be exercised in the labelling of 'non-traditional' students as deficient and in need of being fixed. Cabrera (2014) cautions the terminology that is permeating the discourse where issues of ethnicity

are “reframed from minimally important (color-blind) to not important at all (‘post-racial’)” (Cabrera, 2014, p. 1). The ethnic and cultural dynamics of the larger society are regularly mirrored on the college campus within the institutions of higher education. There is a need to understand the differences through what Lynch and Baker (2005) refer to as the ‘critical interculturalism’ approach or engaging in critical dialogue with others. If the experiences of BME students on campus are viewed as less relevant then they may face obstacles whenever they want to bring up their experiences as reasons for why a rule, system, practice or relationship should change. The ‘post-racial’ discourse is not a licence to accept without critique that diversity and inclusion efforts have been satisfied. The idea of a post-racial America became prominent with the election of Barack Obama as the first Black President bolstering the argument that race no longer mattered.<sup>10</sup> A post-racial discourse celebrates an end to racism by assimilating racial identities into the dominant culture, yet in so doing masks a lot of the ways race is denied and dismissed in society and culture (Bhopal, 2018; Bonilla-Silva, 2015; Cabrera, 2014). Enduring racism in the US is evident in the #BLM (Black Lives Matter) movement which has been sparked by recent events due to the killing of George Floyd, an African American and others, by a White police officer<sup>11</sup>. The response has been a global protest to racism and oppression. A race consciousness approach *at the individual, structural, and institutional levels* is warranted to identify and dismantle embedded racial injustices in our society.

Morrice (2014) provides a useful critique regarding the experience for students from ethnic minorities in education which “will vary significantly depending on the category of entry, country of settlement, country of origin and educational attainment” (Morrice, 2014, p. 50). Her paper presents an insightful approach in illuminating the connection between learning and identity when learners establish themselves in a new context. Morrice’s (2014) critique corresponds with Rainer’s work (2015), whereby ethnic minorities can be “compelled to conform to middle-class, Eurocentric cultural norms...Minority groups are constantly aware of the

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/02/post-racial-is-racism/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/racism-protests-international-black-lives-matter>

privileges denied them. Persistent confrontation with a system of unearned privileges, such as those provided by the patriarchy serves as a fundamental reminder of class difference and social status” (Rainer, 2015, p. 159). By focusing on those who benefit from discrimination and the complexities of the maintenance of identity, power and privilege is a contemporary approach to multicultural education. This moves the primary focus away from the discrimination and disempowerment of the non-dominant groups to a transformational approach to multicultural education through which the curriculum enables students to view the content from diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives (Banks & McGee Banks, 2010).

When we attempt to ‘other’ the culturally or ethnically different, according to Reid (2018), “we can become entrapped in language and behaviour that smothers difference in words such as diversity, inclusion and integration” (Reid, 2018, p. 232). The notion of difference is important here. By omitting a critical lens on discourse and the language we use, this in turn becomes oppressive. The challenge is to balance unity with diversity (Gurin et al., 2004). Banks (2011) captures the dilemma effectively; “[U]nity without diversity results in cultural repression and hegemony. Diversity without unity leads to Balkanization and the fracturing of the nation-state. Diversity and unity should co-exist in a delicate balance” (Banks, cited in Leach, 2011, p. 250). According to Lynch and Baker (2005), the inclusion of subordinated groups in the design of educational programmes is “paramount to learning about equality and in minimising the danger of privileged experts colonizing the experience of subordinate groups,” (Lynch & Baker, 2005, p. 147). Our educational system is embedded in society. Increasing a sense of inclusion and belonging on campus will not manifest unless there is inclusivity in our economic, cultural and political systems, (Lynch & Baker, 2005). From an environmental conditions perspective “compositional diversity alone is insufficient to disrupt campus balkanization,” (Cabrera, 2014, p. 11). Tienda (2013) appreciates that a diverse student cohort is a logical starting point for the wider societal objective of inclusion but questions whether campus diversity is aligned with pedagogic goals. By focusing on ethnic programming and students’ social interaction patterns she

recognises that integration and inclusion are not concomitant with a diverse student population.

Syllabi need to be proofed for inclusion and belonging on a number of levels, e.g. ethnicity-proofed, gender-proofed, abilities-proofed etc. (Baker et al., 2004). This requires a paradigm shift where according to Capra (2011), the paradigm that is now abating is that of the “belief in unlimited material progress to be achieved through economic and technological growth...and a society in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male” (Capra, 2011, p. 6). He advocates making way for an ‘ecological literacy’ where there are many different approaches and diversity is viewed as a strategic advantage (Capra, 2011, p. 289).

Finnegan (2016) refers to the practices of participation and critical reflection that aid in the creation of dialogical learning in social spaces that allows full participation so as to break down social, cultural and economic barriers. While the context Finnegan refers to is with regard to adult education, similarities can be extrapolated for BME students and inclusivity. Tapp’s (2014) research on academic identity that advances a sense of belonging promotes a collaborative participatory pedagogy but Masika and Jones (2016) recognise is not without its tension and challenges. Tapp focussed on how students positioned themselves in relation to academic practice in a first year academic writing module with the intention of constructing their academic selves within a collaborative and supportive environment.

Maiska and Jones (2016) argue for the development of communities of practice (CoP), to stimulate a sense of belonging and that students who continue to talk about the content of their course outside the classroom in their CoP are more likely to progress in their course (DeAngelo, 2014). However “classroom tensions occurred in situations where different learner preferences, identities and motivations conflicted over learning tasks,” and these tensions, conflicts and potential exclusions need to be anticipated and managed when dealing with a diverse student population (Maiska & Jones, 2016, p. 145). In Pechenkina’s (2016)

doctoral study investigating the drivers of indigenous Australian academic success in higher education, for some indigenous students challenging non-indigenous students' beliefs and privileges became a form of transformational resistance. This form of resistance is empowering and needs to be balanced with constructive dialogue so that it does not become a destructive classroom environment for students.

Our diverse student population presents a challenge for us to see the White landscape as the hegemonic norm, and the tension lies in making an academic home where everyone belongs and diversity is the norm. This involves decolonising the curriculum. In the context of this research decolonisation refers to "the changing geopolitics of knowledge whereby modern epistemological framework for knowing and understanding the world is no longer interpreted as universal and unbound by geo-historical and biographical contexts" (Baker, 2012, p. 2). The larger the gap between a student's cultural norms and the educational space they occupy in order to learn, then the greater the disconnection for those from minority cultures while advancing the dominant culture (Ahmed, 2012). "Greater representation in the curriculum should provide all students with the opportunity to personally relate to their subject content, whilst also giving students the opportunity to learn outside of their lived experiences" (Akel, 2019, p. 18).

Relying on Fraser's (2005) reframing of justice from distribution to recognition to representation, institutions need to insist on participation "in deliberations and decisions concerning the 'who'," to ensure representation and a democratic process that includes us all (Fraser, 2005, p. 85). Higher education is not immune from this representation. As stated by Fitzsimons, 'us' versus 'them', or othering is a 'manifestation that is socially constructed by scholars and imperialists' (Fitzsimons, 2017b, p. 264). Currently, 'us' is the capitalist economies of Western Europe and 'them' is often viewed as the Middle East and Far East in relation to an anti-Muslim discourse. Fitzsimons then goes on to identify the othering of Muslim identity in adult education with regard to exclusionary forms of assessment and teaching approaches (O'Connor, 2010) and the evasion of intercultural group work

(Moore & Hampton, 2014; 2015). I believe that this also applies to higher education. Islam is viewed through the lens of extremism thereby presenting limited versions of reality (Kundnandi, 2015). Including syncretic literacies (Gutiérrez et al., 2010) in curriculum content allows educators to construct pedagogic practices that give meaning to all learners rather than relying on a monolingual lens of what Gotanda (2004) refers to as White innocence, a term used to describe the dominant subject-position. Syncretism refers to a combination of different beliefs and practices. In this context syncretic literacy is interpreted as an intermingling or merging of culturally diverse traditions to inform the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment (Duranti & Ochs, 1996).

Clark (1996) encourages educators to create a space to learn where the core feelings of significance (I matter), solidarity (I belong), and safety (free from physical and psychological harm) are experienced. As educators if we do not include knowledge and pedagogies from outside the global north then the dominant student group will continue to interpret their identity as the normal version of reality. Eurocentric curricula often overlook the contributions to knowledge globally, especially the rich and diverse heritage of learning from countries and continents in the global South (Andrews, 2016; Mirza, 2017). “Curricula becomes a significant catalyst for ethnic minorities developing a sense of belonging within universities particularly if that curriculum reflects their worldview or life experience historically and presently” (Arday, 2018a, p. 8). For BME students’ successful integration into campus life is the duty of the university, achieved by understanding and protecting/securing their wellbeing inside and outside the classroom (Arday, 2018a; Alexander, 2017; Law, 2017).

Advancing Freire’s approach of a student-centred curriculum, hooks (1994) explains that an education system is not separate from society in how it functions; “[The] politics of domination are often reproduced in the educational setting” (hooks, 1994, p. 39). In warning us against exclusion based on ethnicity in an educational setting, hooks (1994) calls for an education system that interrogates marginalisation inside and outside the classroom to create an equality of conditions

perspective. Plaut proposes a diversity science that “requires a critical examination of majority group perspectives, minority group perspectives, and their dynamic interaction,” (Plaut, 2010, p. 77). For Plaut (2010), sources of inequality are to be found not only in individuals but crucially also in excavating systems within institutions that sustain and preserve inequality through practices and policies. In the context of this dissertation, this includes interrogating the privilege(s) that the dominant student group on campus enjoy(s).

### **The hidden curriculum**

The hidden curriculum (Lynch, 1989) in higher education comprises the values of society, the institution and/or the educator that are conveyed in a non-deliberate manner to the learner. By making the hidden curriculum visible, we can better understand how cultures and structures enable some learners to succeed and others to be less successful in a pedagogic and environmental sense (Cotton et al., 2013).

Recognising our positionality can reveal privileges, oppressions or both depending on the individual and the context. “Reflecting on how our positionality affects our teaching, particularly around diversity issues, helps us be more effective educators” (Bierema, 2010, p. 318). Alexander-Floyd (2012) advocates for an understanding of the organisation that goes beyond structural diversity and student composition numbers to an intersectional perspective that examines ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status among other factors. This allows for unique experiences of oppression to emerge and to be understood in an organisation. “As instructors prepare students to enter the workforce, teaching intersectionalities is necessary for a more dynamic, sensitive, and diverse workforce” (Martinez, Berkshire Hearit, Banerji, Gettings, & Buzzanell, 2018, p. 19). Students, through transformational learning concerning issues of diversity and inclusion become “critically reflexive of [their] point of view”, an approach to learning that often results in a change in perspectives (Mezirow, 2000, p. 21).



A good starting point to unveiling the hidden curriculum is Laird's (2011, 2005) model of course diversity and inclusivity. Lecturers can estimate the diversity inclusivity of their courses with regard to diversity inclusivity items ranging from content emphasising contribution to the field from many cultures, multiple theoretical underpinnings, teaching methods that allow for different types of learning, multiple types of evaluation, connecting learning with societal challenges, addressing own potential biases around content, delivery and management of the classroom (Laird, 2011). This attempts to address the historical context where "[i]nstructional materials, pedagogies, and activities that students encounter have been narrow and limiting in their perspectives of the world," as the traditional canon of knowledge in higher education has been monocultural and Eurocentric in its content (Ukpokodu, 2010, p. 27).

Banks and Banks (2005) champion a transformed curriculum that eliminates hegemonic content and initiates expanding the traditional canon to include "other" voices that have been side-lined so as to liberate and empower the curriculum and student experience to promote balance, equity and social justice. "Our learning is impoverished when we are in a homogenous group of like-minded individuals who share the same kinds of experiences, beliefs, and aspirations" (Haring-Smith, 2012, p. 6). Opponents to curriculum transformation cite the lack of minority students or no classroom diversity as justification for not infusing diversity, or that diversity in the curriculum only applies to arts and humanities and that including other perspectives waters down the scholarship (Grant, 1994; Ukpokodu, 2010). Aragón, Dovidio, and Graham (2016) propose a link between colour-blind attitudes and lower take up of inclusive teaching practices by educators.

By viewing the classroom in the context of local conditions and cultural values then it becomes a site where the context of difference can be explored, engaged with and critiqued through the curriculum (Giroux, 2001). Blaisdell (2016) and Warikoo (2016) accentuate the importance of educators acquiring racial literacy, in order to understand and avoid structural racism in the classroom through the curriculum. Emdin (2016) emphasises reality pedagogy or culturally sustaining practices in

order to avoid Eurocentric content and practices as the norm. Reality pedagogy recognises students' belongingness to a culture, ethnicity and community. The teaching and learning are based on the reality of the student's experience (Emdin, Adjapong, & Levy, 2016). The benefit of culturally sustaining pedagogies is that they confront the issue of ethnic minority groups having to deny or lose their cultures, histories, language and literature in the classroom (Paris & Alim, 2017; Paris, 2012). In support of culturally sustaining pedagogies is the perspective of decreasing whiteness within the classroom, with respect to teaching and learning. The content on what to include on educating staff and students on issues of diversity is contested (Bierema, 2010). Accentuating differences can impede the integration of groups. In other cases failing to address issues of power in an authentic manner can perpetuate those who feel marginalised. According to Merryfield (2000) the academy in particular, because of the lack of heterogeneity, are ill-prepared to address diversity issues in the classroom. However "most faculty members can learn to teach diversity if they open themselves to the required self-introspection and reflective practice common among effective diversity educators" (Bierema, 2010, p. 318). Through diversity education we can help learners to recognise the impacts of privilege and oppression.

As claimed by Yusof, Hashim, Valdez, and Yaacob (2018) in the context of higher education in Malaysia, learner diversity depends on following four principles; equity – challenging the dominant culture in the interests of fairness and social justice; equalisation – consistency of approach in how we treat others to ensure equal opportunities; integration – providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all; inclusion – an ideology that values diversity. All educators need to ask themselves a fundamental question; is the curriculum content and assessment that they deliver exclusionary of the knowledge of minority groups and the assessment biased in terms of traditional intelligence? Madriaga's research (2018) on the race equality action plans of six UK universities, reveals that only one university "stated efforts in attempting to decolonise its curricula...with heavy emphasis on challenging traditional notions of pedagogy and curriculum" (Madriaga, 2018, pp. 9-10).

While TU Dublin's student population represents cultural diversity, this does not equate to epistemological diversity. By adopting an 'equality of conditions' perspective advanced by Lynch and Baker (2005) in changing curricula and assessment patterns to make them more inclusive as educators we need to engage in a 'critical interculturalism' approach with others through critical dialogue to integrate difference in our work (Lynch & Baker, 2005, p. 133). The mindset must be open to embrace the principles and practices of diversity among students and staff (LaRocque, 2016). Fung's (2017) connected curriculum for higher education highlights engagement with diverse students to inform the curriculum so that both "education and research will be able to contribute more effectively to the global common good" (Fung, 2017, p. 3).

## **Conclusion**

Student composition numbers alone are not enough in realising the educational benefits of diversity on campus although they are an important first step on the journey. According to Housee (2011) "students feel less alienated and more at ease in an institution that has a sizable number of minorities" (Housee, 2011, p. 79). Finnegan (2016) refers to the practices of participation and critical reflection that aid in the creation of dialogical learning in social spaces that allows full participation so as to break down social, cultural and economic barriers. While the context Finnegan refers to is with regard to adult education, similarities can be extrapolated for my research apropos ethnic minority learners and inclusivity. By harnessing the educational bounty from exposure to different experiences, viewpoints and opinions, we liberate their education by offering students a distinctive social and intellectual atmosphere where they can learn and develop.

Although the literature illuminates many factors that may influence a sense of belonging on campus, there is a lack of research that furnishes a localised and contextualised understanding of inclusion and belonging on campus for BME students in the Irish higher education sector. This chapter describes the rationale

for focusing on the scholarship reviewed and how it has been sensitised to the concept of dynamic diversity at the macro, meso and micro levels, as it relates to BME experiences of inclusion and belonging on campus. Institutional conditions concerning compositional diversity, and the day-to-day conditions around campus climate, pedagogy and belonging frame my interpretation of inclusion in higher education allowing for a race consciousness, refined through a CRT lens. Higher education policy should be guided by a vision of inclusion and belonging that engages and values the contribution of all learners.

Numeric diversity and a positive campus climate for all students is central when setting diversity goals in relation to evidence of inclusion or exclusion in supporting the concept of dynamic diversity. The symbiotic relationship between the campus and its students plays a significant role in shaping the campus climate. Beyond the contributions of each article reviewed and critiqued in this literature review, if read collectively, when a campus is truly inclusive it can then state a claim to excellence in diversity. In the next chapter I describe the approach to my research design and I substantiate the methodological and research methods choices that were appropriate for the study to explore these issues for students on the TU Dublin campus.

## **Chapter 4: Methods and Methodology**

### **'Composting'**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter outlines the approach to my research design, the methodological direction I took, and the research methods that I used in the project. In addition, I critically analyse the implications of these components for my research topic. The subheading of this chapter 'composting,' is how I describe my methodological process. I noted and played around with ideas for months, letting it all mulch down until something new was ready to emerge. This is typical of a methodological bricolage researcher.

In order to contextualise my research topic I will first outline the bricolage perspective that influenced my research design and informed my research questions. This is followed by the methodologies that I used, including links to their theoretical underpinnings that were relevant to my research. Then I provide detail into my research methods along with a review of the university level ethical clearance process that I encountered when seeking ethical approval for the research, which influenced decisions that I took in the study. A summative account ensues on the dilemmas and choices that I encountered in the conduct and analysis of the research. Finally, I conclude the chapter with a description of my analytical approach to the fieldwork.

#### **The methodological bricoleuse**

New approaches to synthesising qualitative data are constantly developing. Rather than drawing from one particular approach a variety of approaches were used to address the research question. Lévi-Strauss (1972) refers to this approach as bricolage. Johnson (2012) explains the bricolage research practice as "a technical metaphor for a cognitive and creative process" (Johnson, 2012, p. 358). In determining my methodological approach I have been judicious in choosing the most suitable fit that develops the research process most appropriately (Costley & Fulton, 2019). Methodological bricolage uses a range of research methods in

fieldwork, an approach that aligns with poststructuralism and the sensitised CRT lens that I am using to view in the study (Kinn, Holgersen, Ekeland, & Davidson, 2013; Kincheloe, 2005, 2001; Scott, 1992).

Lévi-Strauss' (1972) concept of the bricoleur facilitated my methodological process by identifying variety in my methodological approaches to address the research question. Intrinsic malleability is at the heart of the concept of bricolage (Phillimore et al., 2016). To understand the potential of the concept of methodological bricolage, the prism is a useful metaphor. By using different methods and methodologies that speak to each other, the prism provides clarification afforded by a particular viewpoint through which my research is viewed. "As a structuralist, Lévi-Strauss likened such transforming processes to the art of bricolage" (Kinn et al., 2013, p. 1286). Kincheloe (2005, 2001) uses the term bricolage to indicate the use of multiperspectival research methodological strategies that are needed and unfold depending on the context of the research situation. "Bricolage is frequently viewed as being associated with originality and innovation, and the act of bricolage as embodying individual agency and conscious" (Phillimore et al., 2016, p. 7). My research acknowledges context and situatedness.

Checking for the dissimilarities that have the potential for comparison on a deeper level is crucial to abductive reasoning and for the bricolage approach (Shotter, 2011). Underpinning my approach to using the bricolage concept is having "the courage to play with opportunities for recognising relationships between apparently unrelated ideas and facts" to create original knowledge, acknowledging in this context that the authors are referring to abductive reasoning (Kinn et al., 2013, p. 1289). I begin with a drive and instinct about connections between a set of what may appear to be unrelated findings from a variety of participants as evidenced by mixing and re-mixing the findings.

"Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). My research has been motivated by changes in the

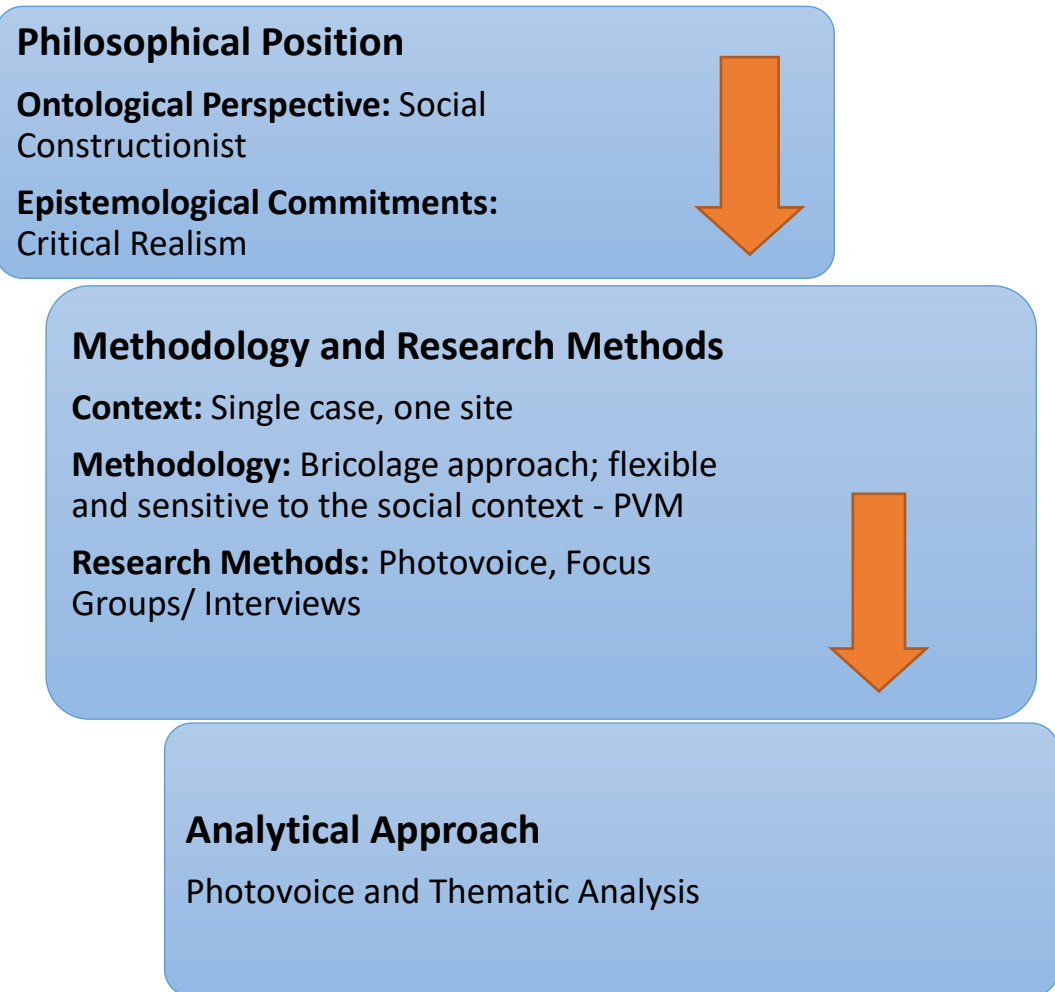
student demographics at TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus and aims to illuminate the experiences of BME students on campus. The concepts of bricolage research in my methods and methodology opened a space for these students to be heard, tell their stories and uncover their experiences through photovoice methodology (PVM). I relied on different research methods that speak to each other (photovoice (PV), interviews/focus groups) and unique insights into everyday practices on campus viewed through different lenses (students and staff), to reveal new understandings.

## **Research design**

The salient features of qualitative research that occur in my research design include the natural setting where the research is conducted and therefore allows for flexibility and responsiveness to the circumstances. The fieldwork was gathered through direct contact with participants by way of three research methods; PV, interviews and focus groups. My own positionality both professionally and personally has influenced the selection of the topic and shaped the choices I made throughout (Patton, 2002; Goodman, 2017). Insider knowledge and an awareness of current practice are key in my research process. I am embedded in the research site as an employee and I have agency due to my organisational status as a long-serving and senior academic staff member, making me conscious of my positionality in the research which was detailed in chapter two under positionality and critical reflection.

By illuminating the various stages of the research, this has allowed me to plan my research and understand how my research methods connects with my research questions. An awareness and understanding of the range of research methods that can be undertaken has sensitised me to the choices that are available for my research (Bryman, 2012). The fieldwork involves a combination of experiencing, enquiring and examining features of campus life. The goals of my research aim to make visible and chart the systems of inclusion and exclusion on campus for BME

students. Based on how Mason (2002) defines the elements of qualitative research, a guide to my research design is presented in the diagram below.



*Figure 3: A guide to my research design*

### **Case study research**

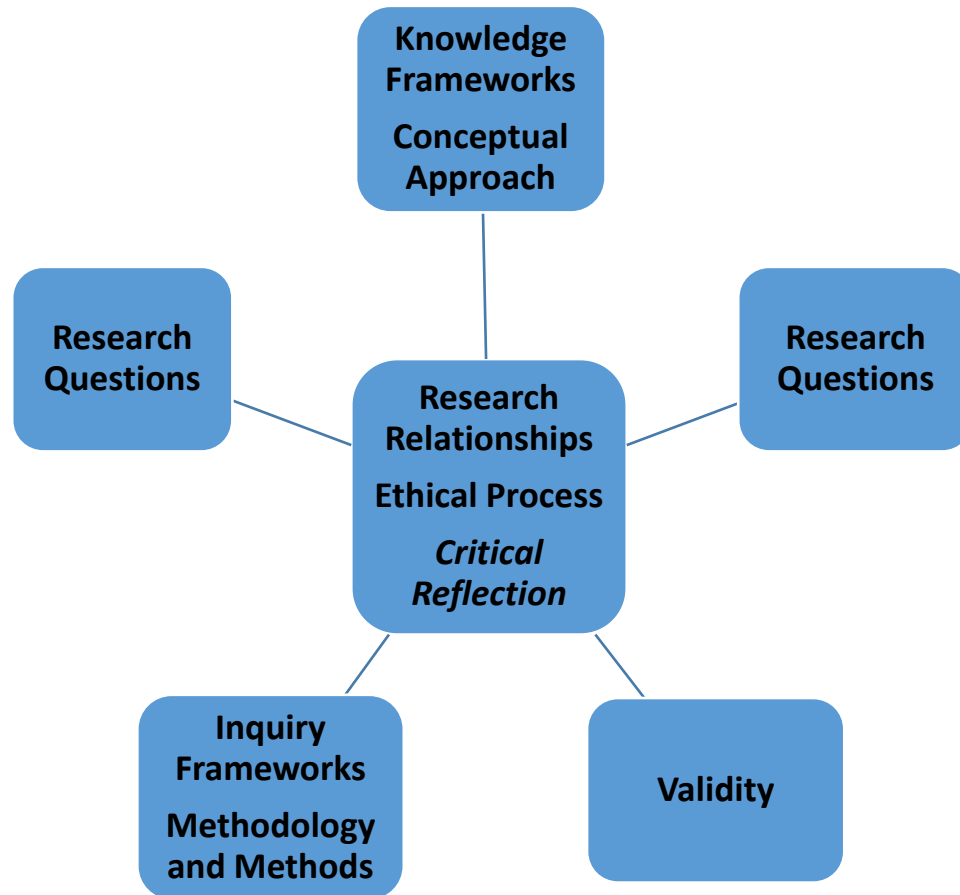
Merriman (1998), Yin (2006) and Creswell (2013) advance the features of case study research. Creswell (2013) details case study research as one of the five main qualitative approaches to inquiry defining it as “a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and reports a case description and case themes” (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). My research fits within case study research as it is a means of viewing students’ life on campus in relation to ethnicity and culture through a social lens. It gives important matters a life and voice that might not



otherwise be discussed (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). According to Merriman (1998) a case can be a specific phenomenon like an institution (Blanchardstown campus of TU Dublin). My research is descriptive and contextual leading to descriptions within a culturally-ethnic and social context seeking to “illuminate a particular situation, to get a close understanding of it” (Yin, 2006, p. 112). I attempt to build patterns based on the fieldwork and analysis to substantiate my claims on a single case to understand a specific issue; inclusion and belonging on campus (Creswell, 2013).

Yin (2006) and Stake (1995) propose two approaches that guide case study methodology that is based on a constructivist paradigm and broadly aligns with my ontological commitments referred to in chapter one. Yin (2006) believes that a case study design should be considered when the focus of the study is to find out the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ answers to questions, e.g. I inquire how BME students feel the campus climate includes or excludes them. Case study design is also useful as I want to incorporate relevant contextual conditions (Yin, 2006). My research cannot be considered without the context within which it occurred. The case is my unit of analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In Yin (2006) and Stake’s (1995) categorising of case studies, my case study type is exploratory (what are the situations when BME students experience inclusion/exclusion), and intrinsic (the case itself is of genuine interest and the research questions have arisen out of my practice). In my research I use a single case from one site with the fieldwork collected from multiple perspectives to illuminate inclusion/exclusion on campus for BME students.

Luttrell’s (2010b) reflexive model of research design has guided me to adapting it to my analytical approach as represented in the diagram below (Luttrell, 2010b). I subscribed to Simon’s bounded rationality, in Selten (2001) which advocates for satisfying rather than optimising in the data collection, i.e. knowing what does ‘enough’ look like in the data collection process. I defined ‘enough’ as data saturation, the point when no new information or themes were observed in the fieldwork (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).



**Figure 4: My research design model adapted from Luttrell’s reflexive model of research design (2010b).**

A range of factors influence our research relationships and the decisions we make concerning practical, theoretical, ethical, moral, and political issues (Luttrell, 2010b). Research relationships are at the centre of the research design emphasising the important roles of ethical clearance and critical reflection in my research. The research questions appear twice as they are likely to change and evolve throughout the process. The knowledge frameworks or knowledge sources stem from theory, practice, personal experience and participants’ knowledge, among others. Included in knowledge frameworks is the conceptual approach taken in the research. Inquiry frameworks refer to the methodologies and methods that will best enable me to answer the research questions. Finally, validity refers to the analytic claims that I make to support or challenge the research topic.

## **Research location**

The site where the research occurred was on the Blanchardstown campus of TU Dublin, Dublin 15. I selected my own place of employment for reasons of accessibility, familiarity and contribution to knowledge about practices of belonging and inclusion in higher education. Research has not been conducted on this topic on the campus to date. The motivation for this inside view is to achieve 'thick descriptions' whereby as the researcher I am part of the research process and have engaged in critical reflection throughout the research (Geertz, 1983; Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2018).

## **Research questions**

The research questions below aim to express the essence of my inquiry while incorporating Mason's (2002) advice around clarity, intellectual interest and selecting an area that is researchable. The lines of questioning in my research are to explore the experiences of students who come from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds in Irish higher education, studying their sense of belonging and inclusion on the campus. I inquire into how they feel the campus climate includes or excludes them, their sense of belonging on campus and I investigate the students' perceptions of the teaching, learning and assessment environment.

## **Research methodologies**

It is important that my methodology represents the "most informed and sophisticated view" and that it is persuasive, compelling and of relevance (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). Qualitative data gathering tries to avoid context stripping and provides contextual information for the research. As I intended to research social phenomena, meaning and purpose needed to be included to provide a rich insight into the research topic.

I included the discovery dimension in my research which aligns with qualitative methodologies (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). By developing an open-ended set of questions in a semi structured interview/focus group context and using photovoice

methodology, I wanted to hear the participants' points of view and to gain insights into what they see as relevant and important from their perspectives (Bryman, 2012). By applying a conceptual framework of inclusion situated in dynamic diversity, informed by a number of theoretical approaches (CRT and social geography), and pairing this with a social constructionist ontology, has guided me to question aspects of inclusion, exclusion and belonging on campus for BME students. The rationale for choosing photovoice methodology (PVM) and a critique of this approach follows in the next section.

### **Photovoice methodology (PVM)**

Tempted by PVM, a unique adventure for me and curious about how it might work, my goal was to create knowledge and contribute to understanding the reality of campus life for BME students by embedding PVM in my research. I reconfigured the traditional authority of the researcher-participant relationship by divesting the power in favour of a collaborative relationship by adopting PVM as this allowed the students to name their own world through the images that they took (Darby, 2018; Dunne et al., 2018; MacDougall, 2006). I observed that this activity promoted a sense of allied support among minority students as the participants from phase two of the research were in broad agreement with the images taken by participants in phase one regarding places and spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus.

Since its inception by Wang and Burris (1994) PVM is becoming increasingly attractive as a participatory action research approach. The PV concept was initially used to enable women in Chinese villages to portray their lives through photography (Wang & Burris, 1994). At its core photovoice is activist research combined with problem-based inquiry (Burris & Wang, 1997; Wang, Burris, & Ping, 1996). As a methodology it is enticing as a means of engaging research participants to speak competently about their lives through photography (Slutskaya, Simpson, & Hughes, 2012). Photography is useful to research participants "for thinking about how we read our social worlds, construct ourselves in relation to others, and express matters of the heart" (Luttrell, 2010a, p. 225). Including visual representation in research has the ability to transmit messages (Wang, Morrel-

Samuels, Hutchison, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004) and encourage discussion on uncomfortable realities for students (Dunne et al., 2018; Stanczak, 2007).

Photovoice is epistemologically flexible. Limiting photovoice to one epistemology is a “gross simplification” of the approach (Wall et al., 2013, p. 16). The epistemological roots of photovoice are located in empowerment education, feminist theory and documentary photography (Ciolan & Manasia, 2017). Each of these theoretical frameworks can ignite individual agency; photovoice methodology is rooted in Freire’s (1972) approach as a leading advocate of critical pedagogy and connects with feminist educators and activists (hooks, 2009; Blunt & Wills, 2000), along with participatory action research through photography (Wang & Burris, 1994; Wang, 1999; Oliffe, Bottorff, Kelly, & Halpin 2008; Luttrell, 2010a; Luttrell & Chalfen, 2010; Luttrell, Dorsey, Hayden, & Shalaby, 2011). The intersection of Freire (1972) through liberating education with feminist theory and participatory action research endeavours to challenge the social domination of race and class in the education system or what he refers to as the ‘culture of silence’ by providing a platform for marginalised voices to be heard.

This methodology seeks to validate the lived experience of the research participants and allows them to name and see their own world and to hear from voices that may have been overlooked (Harley, 2012; Sutton-Brown, 2014). Photovoice has liberatory potential as it helps to centralise marginalised voices within dominant knowledge claims (Malherbe, Suffla, Seedat, & Bawa, 2017). Participants have the autonomy over choice and what they decide to reveal in the images that they take. Along with the supporting text, the visual image opens up our imagination to deeper levels of comprehension of the obvious and the hidden (Rose, 2012).

In relation to the field of education PVM has been used a research method (Hernandez, Shabazian, & McGrath, 2014; Madden & Smith, 2015; Moss & Pini, 2016; Popa & Stan, 2013), and as an instructional method to improve the quality of academic performance (Bailey & Van Harken, 2014; Cook & Buck, 2010; Lichty,

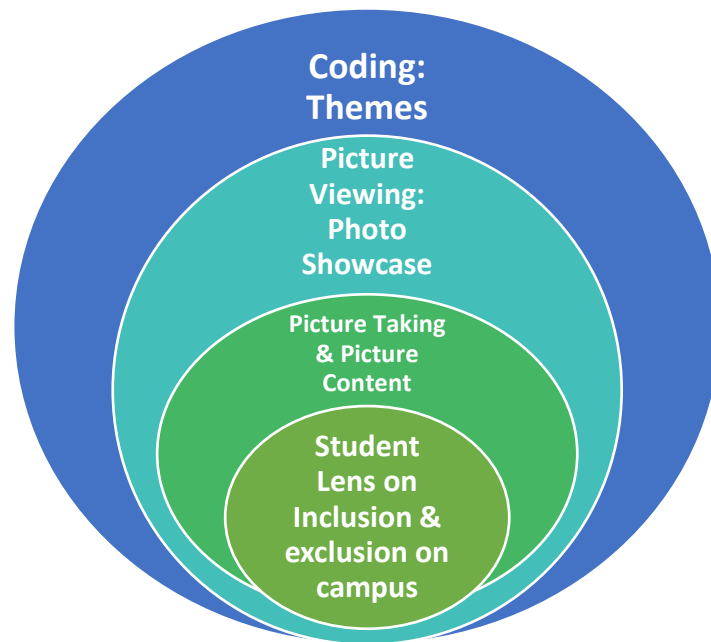
2013; Stroud, 2014). However, it still remains underused as a methodology in the field of education (Stroud, 2014).

According to Wang (1999) PV can be a powerful enabler in influencing policy. Photographs can reveal content and topics regarding what has been left out or overlooked from the policy makers' viewpoint, triggering new information and meanings. If the images find the appropriate audiences, this can influence policy makers to improve a situation and promote critical dialogue for social change, reflecting participatory action research's commitment to social change. While the photos aim to capture and reflect on personal experience, they will also shed light on what has been overlooked or ignored from the students' perspectives. At a local level the output of the assignment may have the ability to destabilise territorial spaces on campus.

In my research the students' use of photography through the images that they have taken and the explanations that they have provided puts a face on what includes and what excludes, who includes and who excludes on campus. It also proved enticing to the students as a form of assessment that was an alternative to an 'another' essay, report or business presentation. Further details will be provided in the research methods section regarding this point.

In figure 5, which I have adapted from Luttrell's (2010a) lens for analysing young people's 'visual voices,' I visualise the dynamics of the students' meaning making of their images and text and my role as researcher in interpreting the images and text into themes. Representing the students' voice and agency in completing the assignment, by deciding what places and spaces they consider include and exclude students on campus, is at the centre of the lens. The *picture taking* and the *picture content* is the student's representation of what they have chosen to make visible with regard to inclusion and exclusion on campus through images and text. The images constitute the social realities of occupying place and space and provide meaning regarding how the students experience belonging and denial. The *picture viewing* promotes dialogue and discussion during class time through a photo

showcase of the collective efforts of the students' images and explanatory text (Tolia-Kelly, 2007). My challenge was to apply an analytic approach to coding the emerging *themes* identified through the images and the narratives in order to explore the social connections and spaces that the students have placed value on and the spaces and places that are hidden, overlooked or subjugated.



**Figure 5: Lens for viewing meaning and interpretation through photovoice methodology of inclusion and exclusion on campus. (Adapted from Luttrell, 2010a).**

### **Criticisms of PVM**

While acknowledging the many pluses of PV methodology, it does have its critics. Harper (2002) articulates his description of photovoice as “a waif on the margins rather than as a robust actor in a developing research tradition” (Harper, 2002, p. 15). Ballerini (1997) argues that meanings and interpretations of visual images can “reinforce the *status quo* rather than question it” (Ballerini, 1997, p. 169). Another factor to consider is whether this type of research method can do more harm than good to the participants. O’Reilly (2012) in her doctoral research using photovoice as a tool to allow asylum seekers to speak about the spaces they inhabit in the asylum process encountered fear and vulnerability among the participants of

exhibiting their work to outside audiences. Despite examining these perspectives and critiques I have chosen to work with PV as a participatory action research method as it is congruent with my research question and aims of the project while also cognisant of the need to take these criticisms board. In the next section I will describe the research methods most were suited to my thesis topic.

## **Research methods**

Different methods may be used at different stages in research, with one informing the other (Barbour, 2001). An essential question to answer is how the two methods communicate with one another (Morgan, 2007). My aim is to seek greater completeness based on the assumption that the data collected through each method will reveal multi-dimensional aspects of what I am researching (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008; Morse, 2010). The research involves a multi-phase research design to examine inclusion and belonging on campus. PV methods, along with focus groups and interviews, were used to generate data. The selection and use of these research methods are explained below.

### **Photovoice Methods (PV)**

Phase one of the data collection involved students enrolled on one of my modules in the academic year 2018/19. They were required to complete a PV assignment. In using the photovoice technique as my research method I followed the following process;

1. Introducing PVM to the students

When I first met the students at the beginning of semester two, 2018 I introduced them to PV as an innovative participatory research action (PAR) method. The participants for this phase of the fieldwork were year three business students who were required to complete a PV assignment as part of the 'Diversity in the Workplace' module. Forty students registered for the module were required to take two pictures each. The location for the photos was on campus. The key concepts of PV were explained as outlined earlier. A discussion followed whereby students clarified any issues and asked questions on the assignment. Questions



were raised about the fear of their photos coming across as racist in their depiction or in the text. Others struggled to see how they were included or excluded on campus until I put forward some examples. Some students found the grounding theme of nationality and/or ethnicity too limiting. A number of students would have preferred if the assignment could take into account all nine grounds of the equality legislation<sup>12</sup> as anchoring themes.

## 2. Obtaining informed consent

Consent to use the photos and text for research purposes was obtained from all the participants. In order to minimise conflict of interest, as per my ethical approval, the marking of the assessment was completed and grades communicated to the students prior to my request for their consent to use the photos they had taken for the purposes outlined below. Consent to use their material was optional and they could withdraw their materials at any time from the research (Wang & Redwood Jones, 2001).

## 3. The photo theme

Students were prompted to photograph their surroundings from their own perspective regarding inclusion and exclusion on campus. The first photo had to represent inclusion and belonging and the second photo had to portray exclusion and denial. The context was inclusion and exclusion on campus with regard to ethnicity and culture. While a picture may be worth a thousand words, photographs do not speak for themselves; they are constructed and interpreted. Both photos were accompanied by a text piece, (c.300 words) explaining the 'the when, the where and the why,' the photo was taken. Adding text to the photo conveys the knowledge needed to appreciate what is going on and to provide context (Rose, 2012). The students had four weeks to complete the assignment. 35 assignments were completed providing 70 images, 12 from female students and 23 from male students.

---

<sup>12</sup> The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 defines discrimination as treating one person in a less favourable way than another person based on any of the following 9 grounds: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, membership of the traveller community.

#### 4. Photo Showcase

All assignments were graded according to the criteria for the project and individual feedback was provided to each student on their grade. The assignments were graded under the criteria of photo validation, evidence of reflection and reflexivity and a demonstration of critical thinking that supports a growth mindset. The assignments were returned to the student with detailed feedback. Following this the photos were exhibited during class time as a photo showcase of the collaborative work of the class. The photo showcase also allowed a critical in-class discussion on the photos using Wang's (1999) SHOWeD acronym; What do you really See here? What is really Happening here? How does this relate to Our lives? Why does this situation, concern or strength exist? What can we Do about it?

#### **Focus groups and interviews**

The second phase of the fieldwork was to invite students on campus to participate in focus groups and/or interviews (Appendix 1). With students' permission a selection of the images collated during phase one were used as prompts for the focus groups and interviews in phase two. Not all images taken by the students in phase one were used in phase two of the fieldwork due to the repetition of the places and spaces photographed. Focus groups as a technique helped me to understand why the students and staff felt the way they do by emphasising particular themes, in this case inclusion and exclusion on campus. The focus group approach "offers the opportunity of allowing people to probe each other's reasons for holding a certain view" (Bryman, 2012, p. 503). Madriz (2000) advances the benefits of focus groups in allowing voices of marginalised groups to surface as participants will control the direction of the session. One-on-one interviews were available should the participants not wish to share information in the group setting but still be involved in the research.

In the third phase of data collection, I provided a summary of the feedback from the themes that emerged from the student focus groups and interviews to a purposive sample of academic staff and staff who work in student services to discuss their responses and perceptions about belonging and inclusion for BME

students on campus. The summary of the student feedback was formed from an initial analysis of the findings. Also, in the staff focus groups/interview, they were asked to reflect on what they saw (and did not see) in the students' images (Appendix 2 and 3).

## **Recruiting research participants**

Specific students and staff were recruited for the research. "A sampling frame is the source from which you draw your sample" (Bergin, 2018, p. 39). Any student who participated in the research self-identified as a BME student on the TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus. My intention was to promote the research to students in three ways, namely: (1) at an artery on campus with a high footfall of students on a number of days over two weeks at morning coffee and lunch break times. I approached students in groups or individually as they passed by my research promotion stand. Some students I knew from attending my classes in previous years and others were approached randomly; (2) to visit classes of students in other departments whom I do not teach and promote the research by way of a short presentation regarding what the research is about and what their participation would mean for them and (3) the use of a social media outlet through the Diversity and Equality Committee on campus where I could promote the research. In reality I used only the first approach to recruiting participants as this yielded suitable numbers of participants from the student population. Research participants from the staff group were selected on the basis of their work in the 'front-line' as they deal with students, daily or weekly in a classroom-lecture setting or through the delivery of professional student services.

## **Sampling approaches**

The two sampling approaches used during the fieldwork were purposive sampling and snowball sampling (Bryman, 2012). Purposive sampling is deliberate as it is based on participants for the research that have particular characteristics. The sampling of student participants was strategic as they were relevant to the research based on self-identification. Self-identification depended on ethnicity

and/or nationality of the participants. These students self-identify as not being from the mainstream/majority student population which is currently White-Irish. All participants were undergraduate students who had been studying on campus for at least one year. The reason for this was that the fieldwork took place in semester one of 2018 and first time students enrolled in the college were considered not to be in a position to provide insight on inclusion and belonging on campus as they had only been enrolled for a number of weeks in most cases.

After initial recruitment of participants who agreed to be interviewed for the research, they were asked if others that they knew would be interested in being interviewed. My email was provided as a source of contact. This snowball sampling approach proved invaluable for increasing the number of student participants for the research. The two sampling strategies that I used are presented in table one below.

**Table 1: Sampling strategies – Description and reasoning**

Sampling Strategy	Description and Reasoning
<p><b>1. Purposive Sampling</b></p>	<p>A deliberately selected sample with certain characteristics;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Undergraduate students who self-identified as a BME student and who had been enrolled as a full-time student for more than one year.</li> <li>(ii) Staff who with deal directly with students as academics or in the provision of professional student services on campus.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Snowball Sampling</b></p>	<p>During the promotion of the research to students, and at the conclusion of the interviews with early stage student participants, they were asked to consider other students who would be interested in participating in the research.</p> <p>The promotion of the research at a strategic location and times on campus and snowball sampling proved more effective at recruiting</p>

	student participants for the research. As a result classroom visits and the use of social media to promote the research were not required.
--	--

Members of staff who work in student services and academic staff involved in programme delivery were contacted by email to participate in the research. The email was sent to all staff. Fourteen staff members replied to the request and agreed to take part in a focus group. One staff member did a one-to-one interview due to annual leave time constraints. Two focus groups were completed with the academic staff involving ten lecturers. One focus group and one interview took place with professional services staff involving four people in total.

## Research participants

The research participants include the following:

1. Forty students on the specific module assignment by way of the images they provide for the research focus groups and interviews.
2. Nineteen full-time registered students from September 2018 across all programmes and disciplines who agreed to participate in a focus group and/or interview. The students self-identified as ethnically and culturally diverse and are referred to collectively as BME students. As recruitment of participants took place at the start of the 2018 academic year, only those students who were in year two of their studies and onwards could take part in the research. First year students had only arrived on campus in September 2018 and were acclimatising to life in higher education and therefore deemed not in a position at this early stage of their college journey to comment on places and spaces of inclusion or exclusion due to their lack of familiarity with the campus.
3. Fourteen members of staff who work in the delivery of professional student services (four), e.g. student admissions, library staff, student supports staff and academic staff (ten), involved in programme delivery. All the staff who participated in the research are White, and all but one has Irish nationality.

## **Characteristics of the student participants**

Nineteen students took part in the research in phase two of this research. Given the confidentiality and anonymity that I assured them in line with my ethical approval, student participants are unidentifiable in the study. I initially referred to them as P01 to P19, the 'P' standing for participant. However, this labelling approach subsequently felt like a clinical and detached way to reference the students considering their candid and open conversations with me and in some cases their bravery in describing their experiences on campus. As a result I decided to use the names of native trees of Ireland as pseudonyms for the participants. According to the Irish Tree Council<sup>13</sup> "Our native trees are the trees that reached here before we were separated from the rest of Europe." For me, trees symbolise enduring strength and stability, are rooted in the earth but have branches to reach and explore. These characteristics resonated for me regarding the 'uprooting' and the 're-planting' of BME students in terms of inclusion and belonging on campus. Only two of the nineteen student research participants in phase two of the fieldwork were born in Ireland. The names of the trees were assigned randomly to the participants and examples include ash, hazel and yew. Characteristics of the student participants are detailed below by ethnicity-nationality, gender, discipline of study, year of study and length of time in Ireland. My research aims to avoid homogeneous representation of BME students in the context of this study whilst also retaining confidentiality for students involved. The identities given to the group of students who participated in my research as contained in table two are drawn from their own interpretation of their ethnicity-nationality. However for the purposes of writing the thesis when I refer to the participants collectively I use the acronym BME students. Accounting for repetition in responses, table two details the participants' responses to their interpretation of their ethnicity-nationality as an ethnically and culturally diverse student on campus.

---

<sup>13</sup> <https://treecouncil.ie/tree-advice/native-species/>

**Table 2: Student participants' interpretation of their ethnicity-nationality**

<b>African Irish</b>
<b>African Nigerian</b>
<b>Nigerian Irish</b>
<b>Irish Nigerian</b>
<b>Irish - Nigerian Parents</b>
<b>Nigerian</b>
<b>African</b>
<b>Black African</b>
<b>South East Asian</b>
<b>Irish - Philippine Parents</b>
<b>Filipino</b>
<b>Irish Pakistani</b>
<b>Indian</b>
<b>Polish</b>
<b>Romanian</b>

**Table 3: Characteristics of the student participants by gender, discipline of study and year of study.**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>No. Participants</b>
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	11
Male	8
<b>Discipline of Study</b>	
Humanities	3
Business	9
Engineering	1
Computing	6
<b>Year of Study</b>	
Year 2	1
Year 3	5
Year 4	13

**Table 4: Length of time in Ireland**

Length of time in Ireland	No. of Participants
Since Birth	2
1-5 years	2
6-10 years	5
11+ years	10

### **Characteristics of the staff participants**

Staff members who participated in the research were from the academic staff cohort and from the staff involved in the delivery of professional services to students. Fourteen staff numbers were interviewed; 10 lecturers took part in focus groups across three disciplines; humanities (5), business (3) and engineering (2) and four professional services staff took part in a focus group or interview who are based in academic administration, the library and student supports. I decided to conduct lecturer only focus groups and professional services staff only focus groups/interviews as I wanted to separate the classroom based lines of inquiry from the professional delivery of student services.

Staff research participants are unidentifiable in the study in line with the ethical approval for the project. I initially referred to the staff as E01 to E14, with the 'E' standing for employee. However, like with the student participants I decided to use lakes of Ireland as pseudonyms for the staff to increase an attachment to their responses from the fieldwork and to connect them symbolically with the student participants. Lakes have reflective powers and mirror a sense of self contemplation with the potential for a chance for revelation. I hope that the staff involved in my research and through the subsequent dissemination of the findings, are motivated to create opportunities for reflection and reflexivity in higher education about how we manage the BME students we encounter in our careers. One staff member commented in a focus group; "This is making me think as well" (Derg). Every lake has its own geographic character and influence on local life just like the potential influence that every staff member has when they encounter students. The names



of the lakes were assigned randomly to the staff participants and examples include Allen, Corrib and Derg.

## **Ethical approval**

My ethical application went through a number of iterations for clearance at Maynooth University, in order for my research to progress to the fieldwork stage. I also required ethical approval from my own organisation for the research. The following process was adhered to for ethical clearance for the research.

1. I requested consent from a number of students (c.12-15), who completed a PV assignment that took place in semester two, 2018 in the module 'Diversity in the Workplace' which I delivered and graded. Their consent allowed me to use a selection of images and accompanying text in my research as follows: (1) as an exhibition in promoting the research to encourage students who identify as BME students to participate in the research, (2) for thematic analysis of the spaces and environments they have photographed, (3) in subsequent focus groups and interviews as prompts for discussion and (4) to be included in the dissertation, publication, presentation and dissemination of the research findings. Only a selection of images was requested to be used, subject to consent as common themes and repetition emerged in the content of the photos. Consent was requested from these students upon ratification of their exam results on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018. An information sheet (appendix 3) and consent form accompanied the request. Students were contacted by email. By taking this approach my intention was to eliminate the risk of conflict of interest as I no longer taught or supervised these students in my role as senior lecturer from June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The process outlined and adhered to above ensued after my ethical approval from the Social Research Ethics Sub Committee at NUIM.
2. I invited students on campus to participate in a focus group/interview through the promotion of my research at a strategic location on campus - the canteen - at focal break times. I approached students I knew and others

randomly. Some students approached me and/or to view the photos I used from phase one to advertise the research at my stand. I also used a question in big font to attract attention at my stand that asked; 'Does ITB include me?' (TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus, formerly ITB, Institute of Technology Blanchardstown). I explained the aims of my research to them, asking them if they would like to participate. Students who agreed to participate in the research were asked to attend one focus group/interview. These interviews and focus groups were audio-recorded. In advance of this, they were provided with an information sheet and were requested to take a photo of a place/space on campus that includes and one that excludes them based on their nationality and/or ethnicity. Guidelines on best practice in taking their photographs was provided to students on the information sheet (appendix 4). The number of student participants interviewed for the research was 19. The consent form clearly indicated the third parties to whom participants can bring their concerns expressed. I did not teach or supervise these students in the academic year 2018-2019. Only two of the nineteen students took photos on their phones of places and spaces that included and excluded them in campus. I did not use these images as they had already been captured through the PV assignment.

3. All staff were supplied with an information sheet (appendix 3) and the purpose of the research was fully explained to them in advance. All staff completed and signed consent forms. The fieldwork with staff took place in May-June 2019. The focus groups and interviews were recorded by audio tape. I transcribed all the audio files. The data collected was encrypted and stored on a PC on a secure server. Hard copy Information sheets/consent forms and data collected are held securely in a locked cabinet in a room with limited access on campus.
4. The intention to create a safe space for staff and students to participate in the research was achieved by booking rooms on campus that were familiar but provided a private environment for the fieldwork to take place.
5. All 33 research participants have been anonymised and given pseudonyms in the project. The nineteen students are referred to as native Irish trees.

The fourteen staff are referred to using the names of lakes of Ireland. The potential conflict of interest with staff is minimal as I do not have any reporting authority over the staff that got involved in the research.

6. Consistent with my ethical approval, all students were given a lunch voucher to be redeemed at the campus canteen for taking part in the research. All staff were provided with light refreshments during the focus groups and interview.

The interviews and focus groups were conversational in nature and designed to put the participants at ease in a familiar setting which is why I booked meeting rooms that are used by staff and students on campus. Ice-breaking questions were used to settle participants in, like asking what they were studying (student participants) and for how long they have been employed at the university (staff participants). At times during the interview I used the laddering technique to explore responses more deeply and to draw the participant out more on something, by asking for a specific example or a time when something like that happened. For the student interviews and focus groups I introduced microaggression photos to trigger discussion. I found these photo prompts successful in engaging students to discuss candidly and openly their experiences of being microaggressed or observing microaggressions.

## **Summative account of dilemmas encountered**

The mental gymnastics involved in reflective practice that is widely used in professional education (Costley & Fulton, 2019) has been a challenge for me to articulate during this research. I believe that the reason for this is based on my personality. I am someone who is action-oriented and solution focussed. Reflective practice in research is a relatively new process for me. It disorients me to accept that writing up an account that tries to explain, interpret and understand the situations that challenged me throughout this study leaves me with more questions than answers. An excerpt from my reflective journal that I kept over the last four years as I conducted this research encapsulates this approach:

“My research is a questioning process, not a series of tasks to be completed in a logical and sequential manner.”

I reveal my discordance in the accounts I give below of key dilemmas I experienced during the conduct and analysis of this research. My intention of critically reflecting on these moments as a practitioner-researcher is to learn from the experience for future research endeavours, understand my vulnerabilities, be ready for self-examination at every opportunity and hopefully offer some thoughts and guidance for other practitioner-researchers engaging in similar inquiries. These dilemmas are evident in the following areas of: ethical clearance for the project, developing a race consciousness in my research orientation that engages with my White privilege and fragility, and using participatory visual methods that was inclusive of the voices of students in this research.

Ethical clearance for the project was a long and protracted process, with a key ethical dilemma emerging in relation the fact that I was researching my own students in phase one of the fieldwork. For me this illuminated the power dynamics inherent in the lecturer-student relationship in terms of being responsible and respectful in all teaching, learning and assessment engagements. These responsibilities were now being translated to an additional research relationship between my students and I, where I was asking students to share very personal experiences which are not normally given voice in the pedagogical relationship. Thinking through these ethical concerns was challenging for me and I was supported by the several iterations of my ethics application which carefully considered and questioned my responsibilities and responses. This process gave me a structure to think through the implications of involvement in my research from the perspectives of my participants as well as my own positionality. It enabled me to develop a rigorous and ethical process which could safeguarded the students and staff when they become research participants. As a practitioner I deliberated if my students would feel obliged to give me their consent to use their assignments in my research because I was their lecturer and in a position of power as I graded their assignments. If they did not oblige with their consent, did they think I would

look unfavourably on them in any potential future encounters on campus. I often contemplated what they thought about my research topic especially those who represented the majority of the students on campus that were not BME students but White and Irish. I became aware of the subtle but visible power connected to my employment status and length of service in the organisation and questioned how this also influenced my students and the staff research respondents throughout their participation in my study. Did they feel that they had to participate and/or give particular types of responses? I feel that I was able to use the processes of the university research ethical review and my research design, to work through a reflective consideration of these issues which kept an ethic of care and respect for all research participants at the core.

Concentrating on the development of a race consciousness from the theoretical nuances of CRT has been another challenge in this research. This excavated deeper underlying assumptions regarding higher education as a racialised form of knowledge and makes me question my position of White privilege in the academy. Everything about me as a researcher was under review by adopting this approach. This includes my blind spot of not realising the necessity of a race consciousness initially in this research. As I progressed through the interviews and no overt forms of racism and discrimination on campus were emerging as per my expectations, I began to think that maybe CRT as a theoretical framework is not going to fit here. My journal entry around this time was the following:

“Some colleagues have been asking me what is coming out in the research from the BME students’ perspectives. I reply that there are no big reveals but lots of subtle things going on for BME students that are discriminatory and offensive to them.”

I remember being initially disappointed with the interviews and focus groups because the students were describing a campus that was overwhelmingly inclusive according to them. I had not been expecting this reaction. I was locating my deeper expectations of finding overt racism on campus on informal and casual conversations with colleagues over the years about their experiences, and on

sweeping stereotypes communicated by some staff and students on the behaviours of 'non-nationals' at the student information desk, during group work for assignments and in socialising around the campus. This was the subconscious advance assumption that I had made about what I thought was happening on campus, yet I had no evidence of this being the case.

Instead, the findings revealed subtle but persistent and deeply granular experiences of exclusion and difference. A gradual shift in my thinking surfaced as I considered these findings. It was only by re-engaging with literature and developing a greater race consciousness and consideration of the dynamics of inclusion and belonging that I began to see a way of interpreting the findings. This incremental re-adjustment in my focus made me reflect on the students' experiences on campus more deeply. I began to ask the following questions: Who includes students? Who excludes students? How is this experienced? What includes students? What excludes students? How is this manifested? Who do students feel they belong with? How is this evident?

As I explored students' answers to these questions I became aware of the personal nature of their feelings that they shared, along with their honesty and candour. I wanted to make sure that I respected their contribution to this research and ensured that their voice – not mine – was central in the findings, discussion and conclusions. This remained a continual tension throughout the writing process as I tried to ensure that my participants' voices are clearly evident. I was conscious of my limited relationship with student as I met with each student participant once, either during a one-to-one interview or in a focus group of two to four people, lasting in duration an average of forty-five minutes. For this time together I was not in 'lecturer mode' but had to quickly build a new relationship with them as a researcher. 'Lecturer mode' stayed in a residual sense with some of the participants who were former students of mine, when they commented throughout the interview or focus group on course content that they recalled which I had covered in lectures with them the previous year, e.g. studying microaggressions. The students gave me personal accounts of their experiences

and talked about details that would not be accessible to me as a lecturer inside the classroom. From their accounts of daily life on campus, I have learned the most.

In the conduct of the research, I also felt moments of uncertainty and discomfort. Approaching the students who use the common room on campus was the time I felt most uncomfortable during the fieldwork. I felt like a 'fish out of water' on the three occasions that I attempted to get these students to engage in my research. This was a space that I previously used to catch up with colleagues over a coffee and where I bumped into my students and engaged in casual conversations with them. Now it had become a place where the atmosphere was unfamiliar to me and a space where I felt I did not belong. It appeared to me like I was intruding in the common room. How the tables had turned on me in these micro exclusionary moments. It has been interesting for me to experience these micro-moments of not belonging which is what I am trying to research from a BME student perspective. Was this a subconscious lesson to me to imagine what it feels like to experience exclusion and not fitting in? A journal entry I made at this time displays how I felt in the common room:

“How could I as a White, middle class, female researcher possibly understand what it is like on campus for a student of African or Asian heritage? Who did I think I was with my White identity and privilege trying to do such research?”

Upon critical reflection I felt that I represented the White academy and the 'good White person' wanting to research them. I epitomised White privilege in those moments. My White fragility (D'Angelo, 2011), was well and truly present here in my uncomfortableness of trying to access the students that I believed were most disenfranchised on campus but who it transpired did not want to talk with me about this. I had to respect their decision, but I also felt a sense of responsibility as a staff member. Did these students think that nothing will change for them in the institute or were they just not interested in my research that involved them?

Switching to participatory visual methods made me question the validity of doctorate research in the social sciences. Borrowing from photographic terminology, I shifted the gaze from one aperture to another (verbal to visual), by using complementary research methods to disclose richer findings. I read a doctoral thesis (O'Reilly, 2012), that caught my attention because of the researcher's use of Photovoice (PV) methods with the research participants. At first I thought the use of photos might seem juvenile and not 'doctorate' enough. This opinion was based on my assumption of what rigorous research should be and it certainly did not involve photographs according to my thinking at the time. Looking back it was the use of PV that led me to engaging with aspects of cultural humility in my approach with the students throughout the fieldwork (Tervalon & Murray, 1998). I wanted to create conditions so that I could ask questions in a supportive environment and mode that was safe and welcoming, expressed empathy and compassion to the students, was non-judgmental and allowed them to communicate in as open a way as possible. Did I achieve this? I think yes for the most part, while acknowledging the power dynamics at play referred to earlier. From my perspective the students appeared relaxed during the interviews and focus groups, enthused by the photos to talk about their experiences, speaking in an informal conversational manner and thanking me for the opportunity to comment on the topic. For many of them they said that they had never been asked about this before.

I also contemplated if the students thought the use of photographic images was unexpected. This did not appear to be the case or at least there was no comment from them about my approach to use visual methods. The initial discomfort with the use of photos in research seemed to be on my part.

I followed this same visual approach in my subsequent use of microaggression images taken by another researcher, during the interviews and focus groups. These images seem to enable participants to discuss the subtleties of everyday life for



them when they are microaggressed in a way that the initial interviews did not. I was aware that these images were taken in a different socio-historic context and I explained this to the students before showing them the images. I wanted them to focus on the action and experience of being microaggressed rather than specifics of these images.

The timely publication of Sofia Akel's report on the experiences of BME students at Goldsmith's College, University of London shows the prevalence of the role of race and ethnicity as a global experience and of the scarcity of details and data on this issue in Ireland (Akel, 2019). This is further highlighted by subsequent events and movements globally and in Irish education in 2020 in the wake of George Floyd's murder and the Black Lives Matter movement. The issues that the students raised have always been there but were never talked about as a number of the participants noted during all phases of the fieldwork. Key learning for me as the researcher in this process is a deepened and emotional understanding of a critical race consciousness that has real consequences for people. I am acutely more aware of my White privilege and how this makes it easier for me to belong, feel included and access unearned privileges in the academy through networks and contacts. Examples of this include my lack of being able to recall experiencing a microaggression based on my ethnicity since my employment at the university and in compounding my view of the dominance of Western knowledge in the curriculum. I notice the normative dominance of Whiteness in the academy. I am sensitive to not becoming the 'White saviour' as I disseminate my findings. Instead, what I wish for is to develop a heightened race consciousness and an appreciation of including student voice and participation in my ongoing efforts to work on EDI initiatives at TU Dublin as a key outcome of this research.

## **Analytical approach**

My analytical approach used to interpret the findings is described in this section. The fieldwork garnered, was rich in detail and the challenge was to unpick the answers to the research questions with clarity and in a coherent and accessible way. To substantiate my claims and to enable confidence in my findings I

undertook a combined technique of inductive and deductive thematic analysis to interpret the fieldwork. Flexibility, driven by the research design allows for my methodological approach to be integrative and iterative (Alhojailan, 2012). This process aligns with other researchers who have used this approach in that my approach integrated participant driven codes or inductive reasoning that begin with observations and propose theory, with theory-driven ones or deductive reasoning based on existing theory (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Firth & Gleeson, 2004; Hayes, 2000). Both approaches to my analysis are anchored philosophically in social constructionism.




### **Thematic analysis**

Braun and Clark (2006) acknowledge thematic analysis (TA) as a widely used qualitative analytic methodology yet, it warrants increased acknowledgment and distinction as an accessible and theoretically-flexible approach to analysing qualitative data. In this section I will outline what TA is in the context of my research, the rationale for its use in my study and the downsides of TA. This will be done in relation to other qualitative analytic methods that also search for themes or patterns in the data.

As a novice researcher TA instils confidence as I go about my research. “TA is accessible, flexible, and involves analytic processes common to most forms of qualitative research. Students can progress from TA to grounded theory, IPA and discourse analysis” (Braun & Clark, 2014, p. 123). TA is a methodology for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns or themes within data, organising and describing data within a data set in rich detail and in interpreting the various aspects of the research topic (Clark & Braun, 2013; Braun & Clark, 2006). TA also aligns with my social constructionist ontological position whereby meaning and experience are socially produced and reproduced and TA within this framework seeks to theorise the socio-cultural context and structural conditions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Crotty, 1998; Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2018). TA also aligns with my critical realist epistemology whereby I seek to connect context with explanation by capturing meaning through human interaction and make sense of what is perceived

as reality (Mason, 2002). Other analytic methods that aim to describe patterns in data are Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and Grounded Theory. While I considered these, table five below highlights their unsuitability to my research (Bryman, 2012).

**Table 5: The suitability of TA as an analytic method that seeks to describe patterns as compared to IPA and Grounded Theory.**

Analytic Methods →  Characteristics ↓	1. IPA	2. Grounded Theory	3. Thematic Analysis
Pattern Seeking	Seek patterns in the data but theoretically bounded	Seek patterns in the data but theoretically bounded	Seeks patterns in the data but not bound to any pre-existing theoretical framework
Epistemology	Aligns to a phenomenological epistemology	Aims to generate a useful theory that is grounded in the data	Aligns to a social constructionist epistemology
Experience of reality	Great detail required in understanding everyday experience of reality	Objectivist – aims to uncover a reality that is external to the social actors	Works both to reflect reality and unpack the surface of reality in collaboration with the research participants, researcher is active in the research process
			

### Criticisms of thematic analysis

I am cognisant that using TA in my research does not come without its critics and disadvantages. Being aware of these will help me to mitigate the downsides. A number of ‘warning signs’ are provided below (Braun & Clark, 2006; Holloway & Todres, 2003; Bryman, 2012).

1. Potential to paralyse me as the researcher when trying to decide what aspects of the data to focus on. To mitigate this, I immersed myself in the raw data by re-listening to audio files and re-reading transcripts to become familiar with the data before open coding. I focussed on broad and generic codes. This helped me to distinguish the raw data from the noise (Gläser & Laudel, 2013).
2. TA, while not bound to an existing theoretical framework has limited interpretive influence beyond description unless I anchor the analytic claims that I will make within an existing theoretical framework. By combing the unique properties of my research that inform the bricolage approach to my methodology and methods I have sensitised a number of theoretical approaches to define my theoretical framework; concepts of social geographies of belonging, critical race theory (CRT) in understanding the macro, meso and micro levels of exclusion and marginalisation for BME students, and a taxonomy of racial microaggressions as a typology. This differentiates bricolage as the right approach for my study over other methodologies.
3. Methodolatry – committing to method for its ease and accessibility as a novice researcher rather than finding an approach that is best suited to the research topic (Holloway & Todres, 2003). As described above, I have carefully considered and created a methodological approach as a bricolage researcher, which justifies their applicability for my research.

My research requires an explanation of how I demonstrate rigour within my methodological framework. “Rigour is described as demonstrating integrity and competence within a study” (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p. 82). The integrity and competency of the research is evidenced in the following principles;

1. Logical consistency involved in-depth planning, careful attention to the phenomenon of the study with useful results. My choice of research methods is appropriate to the research questions and transparency in how I arrived at overarching themes from the findings (Higgs, 2001).

2. Subjective interpretation importantly preserves the participant's subjective point of view and explains the context of the research. According to Rice and Ezzy (1999) interpretative rigour clearly demonstrates how the researcher interpreted the fieldwork and illustrates findings with quotations from the interview transcripts. The validity and credibility of the research is strengthened by imparting the participants' own words on their reflections to the lines of inquiry in the research.
3. This study involved a combined technique of inductive and deductive thematic analysis to interpret the fieldwork. To demonstrate adequacy I validate participants' responses to the researcher's conclusions (Cutliffe & McKenna, 2002) and/or to confirm findings with primary sources (Leininger, 1994).

I refer to these principles as charting in step four of my framework for analysis on table six that follows. How I engaged with thematic reasoning in a deductive and inductive manner is detailed in the next sections respectively.

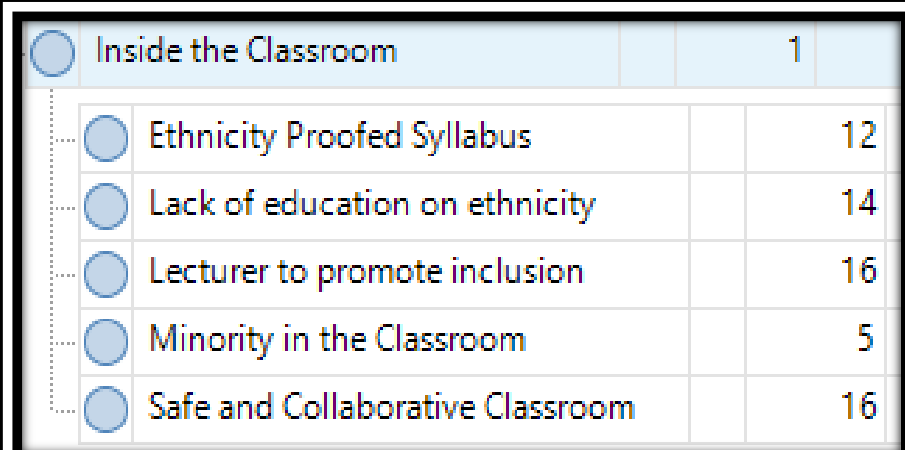
### **Deductive thematic reasoning**

This process demonstrates my approach by analysing the interview transcripts and progressing onwards to the identification of overarching themes from the theory that captured the phenomenon of inclusion and belonging on campus as described by the participants in the research. During the process of analysis I demonstrate how overarching themes from the scholarship have been supported by excerpts from the participant data "to ensure that data interpretation remains directly linked to the words of the participants" (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p. 82). The deductive analysis started with several open readings of the transcripts, which were transferred into overarching predetermined themes from the scholarship and my experience in higher education. These repeated readings provided me with a deeper understanding of the issue under analysis. Subsequently, the transcripts were abstracted into predetermined codes and grouped for similarities and differences, while focusing on the aim of the particular line of inquiry at that time (Andersson, Sjöström-Strand, Willman, & Borglin, 2015). An example of my deductive thematic reasoning is provided next.

## Example of deductive thematic reasoning on a predetermined line of Inquiry

### Line of Inquiry: The Hidden Curriculum

Module content includes diverse theoretical perspectives and contributions to the field by people from multiple cultures (Laird, 2011, 2005; Blaisdell, 2016; Madriaga, 2018; Emdin, 2016; Paris & Alim, 2016; Paris, 2012).



The screenshot shows a hierarchical tree structure in NVivo. The root node is 'Inside the Classroom' with a count of 1. It branches into five sub-nodes: 'Ethnicity Proofed Syllabus' (12), 'Lack of education on ethnicity' (14), 'Lecturer to promote inclusion' (16), 'Minority in the Classroom' (5), and 'Safe and Collaborative Classroom' (16). Each node is represented by a blue circle icon.

Node	Count
Inside the Classroom	1
Ethnicity Proofed Syllabus	12
Lack of education on ethnicity	14
Lecturer to promote inclusion	16
Minority in the Classroom	5
Safe and Collaborative Classroom	16

Screen shot from NVivo on the Hidden Curriculum/Inside the Classroom



### Scholarship:

1. A good starting point to unveiling the hidden curriculum is Laird's (2011, 2005) model of course diversity and inclusivity. Lecturers can estimate the diversity inclusivity of their courses with regard to diversity inclusivity items ranging from content emphasising contribution to the field from many cultures, multiple theoretical underpinnings, teaching methods that allow for different types of learning, multiple types of evaluation, connecting learning with societal challenges, addressing own potential biases around content, delivery and management of the classroom (Laird, 2011).

2. Blaisdell (2016) promotes how essential it is for educators to acquire racial literacy, an understanding of structural racism to help us "see how [our] classroom can either exacerbate or resist white supremacy, how [we] as teachers can either limit or increase [our] students' access to curriculum...In analysing the white

supremacy underlying the economic and political system, it focuses the connection between race and space” (Blaisdell, 2016, p. 258).

3. Employing the tenets of critical race theory (CRT) Madriaga’s (2018) research on the race equality action plans of six UK universities reveals that only one university “stated efforts in attempting to decolonise its curricula...with heavy emphasis on challenging traditional notions of pedagogy and curriculum” (Madriaga, 2018, pp. 9-10). Otherwise piecemeal examples of decolonising curricula were taking place sporadically in the form of including isolated modules on diversity and inclusion, the use of TED talks and celebrating cultural events.

➔ **Fieldwork:** Academic staff who participated in the focus groups commented in this in their context when I asked them if their content emphasises contributions to the field by people from multiple cultures and multiple theoretical perspectives and whether they critique the module content so that it includes diverse content.

*“With every topic that we discuss I would try to look at different **cultures and how it’s viewed** in different cultures...but I should do more. I always ask the students what’s it like in your country? I was trying to find articles that were written in different parts of the world...there isn’t much, that was my effort” [Allen]*

*“[Module changes because] of an increase in French speaking African students in our classes who are coming from a post-colonial context which is very, very, different and over time we’ve had to introduce things looking at French speaking countries in Africa, the culture, the literature...and to get that voice of the person writing through French who was pretty much a slave to some extent...the north African population who are second class citizens, increasingly we have included a lot on that, to include the voice of the immigrants...I’m not sure that would be done in the [traditional] universities but [on BN campus] when you have 3 or 4 African students in your class from Cameroon or where ever...we are a post-colonial country too, we identify with that too” [Corrib]*

*“I have to look at multiple theoretical perspectives in what I teach...but I do agree on ‘the usual suspects theory’ in sampling...in that the sample is from the same pool all the time...there is a tendency to do that, I’d agree” [Ennell]*



**Discussion:** From the responses I interpret this to be happening in an unsystematic way and not as a university wide action. As educators we need to know our students to engage with a reality pedagogy approach. Reality pedagogy (Emdin, 2016) also brings the benefit of critical thinking by creating situations and engaging

students to think critically thereby allowing them to express their views and have their voice heard that originates in their opinion or ideas. Emdin (2016) warns that cultural differences between educators and their students will magnify if we do not intentionally recognise and support these differences. In a similar vein culturally sustaining pedagogies address the issue of ethnic minority groups having to deny or lose their cultures, histories, language and literature in the classroom (Paris & Alim, 2016; Paris, 2012).

### **Inductive thematic reasoning**

Using inductive thematic reasoning the majority of the data collected during the fieldwork for a particular line of inquiry starts with precise content and then moves to broader generalisations and finally to theories or frameworks (Andersson et al., 2015). By coding the participants' feelings or attitudes and generating theory or a framework combined with its analytical element permits me to examine the data in order to discover common themes and patterns from more than one participant (Braun & Clarke 2006; Crawford et al., 2008; Andersson et al., 2015). An example of my inductive thematic reasoning is provided below.

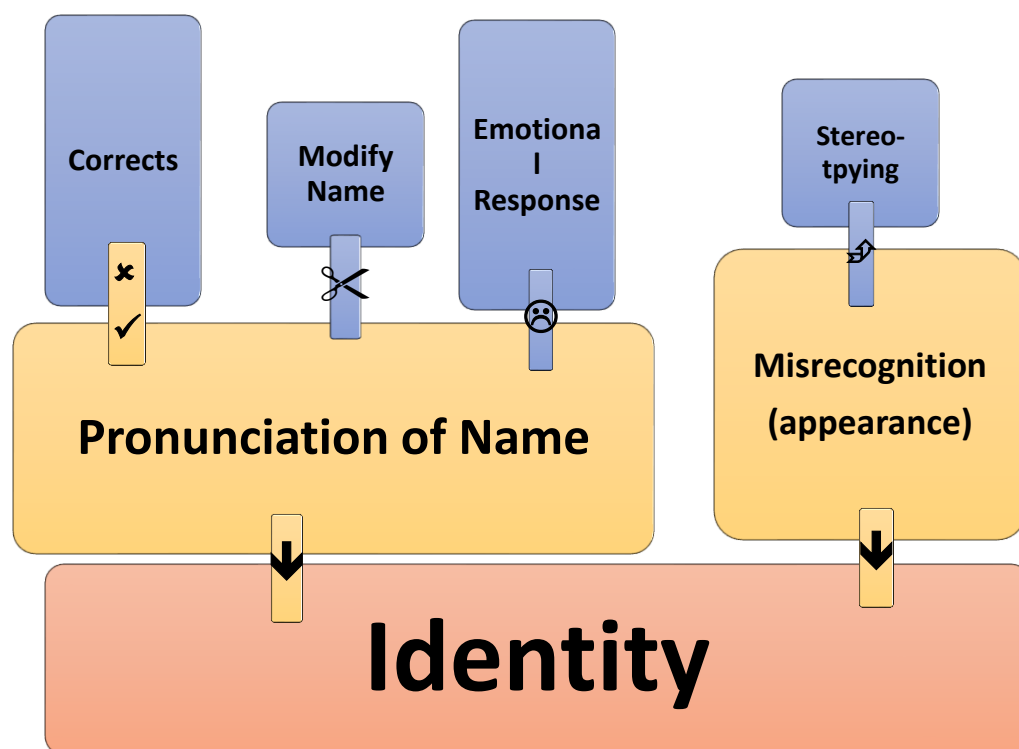
#### **Example of inductive thematic reasoning on a line of Inquiry**

**Line of Inquiry:** Pronunciation of name

The pronunciation of name is a pre-determined code in the data set (Gläser & Laudel, 2013). In analysing this code a concept emerged as to what it stood for from the data and I was able to identify dimensions to the concept that include correcting people when the name is mispronounced, modifying the name to make it easier for others to pronounce and how it feels when the name is continuously mispronounced. I then axial coded this concept to explore the relationship between it and the codes of misrecognition-identity to identify a link between the two themes (Charmaz, 2015). Identity has emerged as an over-arching theme in the findings, developing, when I asked the students if their name was pronounced correctly and if they were misrecognised based on their appearance. It is located at the bottom of the diagram representing a foundational theme as this was the line of inquiry that elicited most responses from the fieldwork, 47 responses across 19



participants. The two arrows leading from the boxes on pronunciation of name and misrecognition enabled the identity concept to emerge from the analysis. All nineteen participants had something to say on this line of inquiry. The boxes on the top represent the students' responses when I probed further on the mispronunciation of their name and how misrecognition based on appearance can lead to stereotyping. In the figure they indicate if students correct the mispronunciation of their name (18 references across 17 participants), whether they have modified their name to make it easier for others to pronounce (6 participants) and how the mispronunciation of their name makes them feel (17 references across 17 participants). Further analysis of this theme takes place in chapter six. The figure below captures the coding diagrammatically in a proportionate manner to the participants responses.



**Figure 6: Identity – The relationship between pronunciation of name and misrecognition**

### The framework for my analysis

The analysis of the data was informed by Ritchie and Spencer's (2002) framework for analysing qualitative data. I undertook a number of steps which I modified from

the framework as a mechanism for the analysis of the fieldwork in this study. Step one was characterised by familiarisation with the fieldwork. I immersed myself in the data by re-listening to audio files and re-reading transcripts. In step two I engaged in open coding by identifying key issues and themes forming the basis of a thematic framework. Mauthner and Doucet (1998) describe the different emphases required in four readings of interview transcripts. The first reading concerns the overall story being told and the researchers' own intellectual and emotional response to the narrative. The second reading is for the 'I' voice, tracing how the respondent experiences, feels and speaks about herself. The third reading is devoted to listening for how participants speak about relationships, familiar and unfamiliar, while the fourth reading involves placing people within cultural contexts and social structures (Mauthner & Doucet, 1998). I found this perspective useful as I familiarised myself with the transcripts.

Open coding is the earliest phase of the coding process and permitted a preliminary identification of a thematic framework. I focussed on broad and generic codes and I applied descriptive labels to the dataset or units of meaning to identify key themes present within the dataset. Boyatzis (1998) defines a theme as "a pattern in the information that at a minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at a maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 161). This helped me to distinguish the raw data from the noise (Gläser & Laudel, 2013). For example, with the line of inquiry on whether the student participants had conversations of difference on campus with someone whose religion, philosophy of life or personal values were different from their own, sub themes emerged on the number of friends students had of different ethnicities, whether they socialised or studied with other ethnicities, if they made an effort to get to know people from diverse backgrounds and their exposure to diversity before attending college.

Conversations of Difference	18	18	07/01/
Ethnic Minorities Study Lunch Coffee		13	
Know people from diverse backgrounds		15	
Number of Friends of a Different Ethnicity		15	
Pre-ITB exposure to diversity		19	

**Figure 7: NVivo screenshot on coding 'Conversations of Difference'**

While open coding identified themes and patterns, in step three, axial coding helped me to explore relationships between the different themes/codes by probing the themes/codes and findings in the data (Charmaz, 2015). This allowed me to structure the raw data by detailing the link between the data and the research questions. I completed this process of axial coding by extracting content of relevance from the text and carrying it to themes identified for further processing to identify relationships among the themes in the data, see example above on pronunciation of name-identity.

Step four, I refer to as charting, or testing, the reliability of my coding in the previous steps. I paid careful attention to record the detail produced for key themes from the data and to link this to individual participants. This meant that the integrity and competency of my research is demonstrated by adopting the principles of logical consistency, subjective interpretation and adequacy to chart the themes that emerged that I referred to earlier at the start of my analytical approach.

Finally, in step five I investigated the emerging themes. The emerging themes formed an integral part of the third phase of data collection in providing a summary of the feedback about the issues that emerged from the student focus groups and interviews to a purposive sample of academic staff and staff who work in student services. For example, there is a contradictory response from staff when asked if

they believe the campus is inclusive for BME students. All the students answered this question in the affirmative, in that they believed that the campus is inclusive;

“You don't like see anyone really left out or anything [on campus]. Even the Irish they bring you into anything that they are doing” (Beech, Nigerian).

“It's an open college...Whoever it is that needs to ask questions in the library or student information whether you're Black, Asian, if you look completely lost they will help you out, it doesn't matter where you are from. It's a very friendly place, very open” (Chestnut, Irish-Filipino parents).

“Just by the sheer amount of diversity would think yeah it's a good college” (Willow, Irish Nigerian).

“Actually it is pretty diverse and I do see groups, you know, different ethnic groups together, like they study together, work together, football wise, basketball and in the canteen as well I see a mix of cultures that are sitting together at a table...so I think they do embrace diversity” (Pine, Filipino).

None of the staff believed this to be the case;

“Hand on heart, probably not as much as I would like to see them included...you see them in their own little pockets when they are sitting, in the canteen, in the communal areas and in the sports I don't think there's enough variety that includes every ethnicity minority” (Derg).

“I'm not sure we do enough on campus to include all ethnic minorities because we see people grouped together between classes...we acknowledge that there is diversity but there are no activities to further include them” (Allen).

**Table 6: Adaptation of Ritchie and Spencer’s qualitative framework analysis**

<b>STEP 1: Familiarisation with the data set</b>	Immersion in the raw data by re-listening to audio files and re-reading transcripts.
<b>STEP 2: Open Coding - Identifying a thematic framework</b>	Open coding identified key issues and themes forming the basis of a thematic framework. I focussed on broad and generic codes and I applied descriptive labels to the dataset or units of meaning to identify key themes present within the dataset.
<b>STEP 3: Axial Coding - Specifying patterns and identifying relationships between different concepts</b>	Axial coding helped me to explore relationships between the different themes/codes, by probing the themes/codes and findings in the data and detailing the link between the data and the research questions (Charmaz, 2015).
<b>STEP 4: Charting – Testing the reliability of the code</b>	Careful attention was paid to record the detail produced for key themes from the data and to link this to individual participants.
<b>STEP 5: Testing emergent themes</b>	The emerging themes formed an integral part of the third phase of data collection in providing a summary of the feedback about the issues that emerged from the student focus groups and interviews to a purposive sample of academic staff and staff who work in student services.

### **The coding process**

Using qualitative data analysis software (NVivo), I developed an iterative coding design. This process allowed for the identification of common words and phrases among the participants, the development of key themes and the exploration of relationships between codes. My analysis involved searching for themes that emerged as being important to the description of inclusion and belonging on campus. The methodology incorporated data-driven inductive analysis and deductive pre-determined codes. The transcripts were coded according to the key themes identified (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

After the interpretative phase of analysis, ten overarching or core themes were identified that captured the phenomenon of the study; inclusion and belonging on campus. This was achieved after several iterations of the interactions of text, code and themes from the study. Zooming in and zooming out of the data allowed me to ‘adjust my gaze’ so that I could get close to perspectives of the participants (zoom in) but also allowed me to step back with the distance providing sense-making in how the data related to a larger context (zoom out), (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019, p. 66).

Nodes		Files	References
Name			
Advice to ITB			10 12
Belong to campus community			19 22
Link between grades and belonging			14 14
Live between 2 or more cultures on campus			15 15
Made changes to belong			18 19
Campus Climate Diversity on Campus			15 15
Being a minority			15 22
Campus Wide Respect			10 11
Commitment to Diversity			15 15
Describe campus culture			13 13
Invisible Nationality Ethnicity			5 6
Patterns of Socialisation			5 5
Conversations of Difference			18 18
Exclusion Photos			0 0
Identity Misrecog Neg-Stereotyping			19 19
Inclusion Photos			0 0
Inside the Classroom			1 1
Ethnicity Proofed Syllabus			12 12
Lack of education on ethnicity			14 14
Lecturer to promote inclusion			16 16
Minority in the Classroom			5 5
Safe and Collaborative Classroom			16 16
Metaphors			6 7
Pronunciation of Name			19 47
Correcting name pronunciation			18 23
Emotional Response			17 18
Modifying Name			6 6
Spaces used to learn			8 9

Figure 8: NVivo screenshot of the core themes as coded from the fieldwork

In my approach I became a ‘lumper’ more than a ‘splitter’ (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). I began with broad brush themes in my first pass through the data and in subsequent passes through the data I coded in more detail. I got into the habit of checking and rechecking the connections and combinations in the data as I progressed rather than waiting until the end to verify and substantiate the connections and combinations that the data was making as I queried it. This gave me the capacity to develop an ‘interrogative mindset’ to interpret and challenge preliminary findings and final results; “the secret to analysis is in asking questions of the data, and then thinking through how you might pursue ways of answering them from the data” (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019, p. 201).

Following data collection from three phases of the fieldwork; PV assignments, interviews/focus groups with nineteen students and four focus groups/interviews of staff, all of the data was initially manually coded before being entered into NVivo data management software. A comprehensive process of data coding and identification of themes was undertaken. The process is presented as a linear step-by-step procedure but in reality was iterative and reflexive. Tobin and Begley (2004) describe this interactivity in qualitative inquiry as the underlying principle of ‘goodness.’ Twenty-six broad codes were developed. These were then collapsed into ten nodes. Before searching for over-arching themes in the data it was imperative to develop codes first as illustrated in the previous sections. A “good code” is one that captures the qualitative richness and essence of the line of inquiry (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 1). Some of the codes were pre-determined and others emerged from the data spontaneously. Each code was labelled or named. I defined what each code meant in the context of this research and had a description of how to know when the theme occurs (Boyatzis, 1998). This process allowed me to develop a codebook and provided me with a template before commencing any in-depth analysis of the data. Crabtree and Miller (1999) claim that the template provides a clear trail of evidence for the credibility of the research and serves “as a data management tool for organizing segments of similar or related text to assist in interpretation” (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p. 84). For this research the codebook was based on the research questions, the theoretical framework and a

preliminary scanning of the transcripts. This approach mirrors a combined technique of inductive and deductive thematic analysis to interpret the fieldwork. I spent the vast majority of my time as an NVivo user working in the nodes area of the software. I subjected nodes that were central to the project and that were focussed on a core idea to a metacoding process to investigate if they still 'stood up' in the analysis. Metacoding in this context is data that describes the meaning of other data to 'test' if the original nodes adequately reflected the broader concept of merging the nodes in the first place. This process of iterative searching benefitted me in seeking further clarification or detail in the metacoding. For example; "Was it true for everyone? Did it depend on some other factors being present? What characterises the cases where this is not true?" (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019, p. 217).

This process moved me forward in my analysis to provide an enriched understanding of inclusion and belonging on campus supported by the fieldwork. NVivo software was used to help enable my claims. The software allowed me to keep track of developing ideas, query data sets and to make links between their parts. I did not auto code the data but instead manually went through an iterative process of reading, categorising, testing and refining, until all codes were compared against all participants' responses. Auto coding tools are optional in the NVivo software but the advice is to use auto coding with caution because with qualitative research "human coding is more valid" (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019, p. 177). NVivo is designed with an emphasis on the researcher's duty to carefully examine all the fieldwork and become close to the fieldwork which manual coding permitted me to do. Even experienced researchers using NVivo have found auto coding only "moderately useful" and mainly useful for managing very large data sets in projects (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019, p. 113). The auto coding procedure can fail to capture all the responses. Manual coding is a more accurate procedure when dealing with a smaller number of participants as in my case.

I acknowledge Jackson's 'methods with mantra' approach where there can be mutual influence between the software and my research claims (Jackson, 2017, p.



824). However, NVivo was used to inform the goals of my research rather than the software leading me (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019). I ‘triaged’ some information to customise my use of NVivo to fit the theoretical and methodological traditions relevant to my research. To explain further, in some instances I took a deductive reasoning approach to developing themes, e.g. inclusion inside the classroom, and in other cases, inductive reasoning led me to an overarching theme, e.g. belonging to a campus community.

The stages that I went through in the coding process are described below:

#### Stage 1: Open Coding

NVivo software refers to themes or concepts as nodes. The creation of nodes allowed me to see the data differently. As I moved through the nodes I became aware of patterns that were central to the experiences and stories that the participants told. The nodes created, also assisted me in noting discrepancies and outliers. By using the nodes to build hierarchies I was able to make theoretical and conceptual connections with the data. The hierarchies created order in the chaos of the data, gave meaning to concepts, added a richness to my coding and contributed to my analysis (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019). To illustrate an example of coding in my data analysis I have taken the findings from the line of inquiry on pronunciation of participants’ names and explored the relationship of the responses to the line of inquiry on identity, misrecognition and stereotyping. The pronunciation of name is a pre-determined code in the data (Gläser & Laudel, 2013).

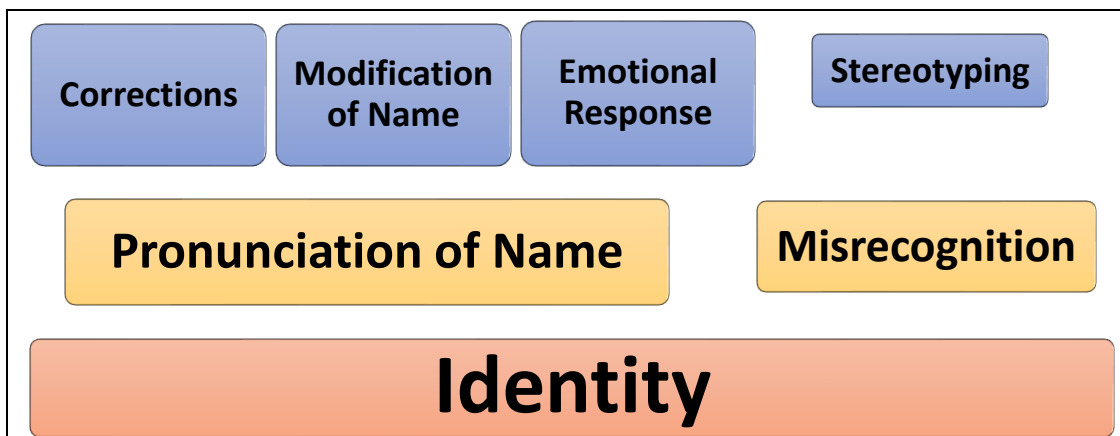
**Table 7: An example of a code from the coding manual**

<b><i>Code Label (code name)</i></b>	<b>Pronunciation of name.</b>
<b><i>Definition (what does the code stand for)</i></b>	As a mark and verification of our identity (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012).
<b><i>Description (the concept identified or developed in terms of properties and dimensions)</i></b>	Our names provide us with roots, origins and meaning. Our names define us in their significance, attributes and individuality (Gómez, 2012).

In analysing this code a concept, or node, emerged as to what it stood for from the data and I was able to identify dimensions of the concept that included correcting people when the name is mispronounced, modifying the name to make it easier for others to pronounce and how it feels when the name is continuously mispronounced. Jackson and Bazeley (2019) refer to this coding structure as a ‘vista’ coding structure; taking “a stance at particular angles on multiple platforms and to look at the data from these angles and code accordingly” (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019, p. 108). This metaphor emanates from the reality of standing on the rim of a canyon.

### Stage 2: Axial Coding

Once the initial open coding was complete I then axial coded this concept to explore the relationship between it and the theme of misrecognition-identity to identify a link between the two themes (Charmaz, 2015). The figure below captures the first iteration of coding diagrammatically.



**Figure 9: A vista coding structure on Identity – Revealing the relationship between pronunciation of name and misrecognition, (first iteration).**

Further analysis of this theme and the relationships referred to above were advanced in an earlier section on how I approached inductive thematic reasoning.

### Stage 3: Charting

My method of how I charted is based on one example, the theme of ‘pronunciation of name’. This stage involved testing the reliability of the code against the research principles of logical consistency, interpretative rigour and adequacy. A procedure to ensure inter-rater reliability was to share the analysis with my supervisor. Logical consistency involved the highest degree of clarity through in-depth planning and

careful attention to the line of inquiry in the findings to provide useful results. For example, the pronunciation of name is a pre-determined code in the data (Gläser & Laudel, 2013). There were 47 references to this line of questioning in the data across all 19 student participants. For interpretative rigour I grounded the subjective meaning that the mispronunciation of name had for the participant. For example, in analysing this code a concept emerged as to what it stood for from the data and I was able to identify dimensions of the concept that include correcting people when the name is mispronounced, modifying the name to make it easier for others to pronounce and how it feels when the name is continuously mispronounced. I then axial coded this concept to explore the relationship between it and the theme of misrecognition-identity to identify a link between the two themes (Charmaz, 2015), see Figure 10. Finally, for adequacy I validated the participants' responses to confirm findings with primary sources and/or to validate a finding. All participants had something to say on the pronunciation of their name. Below is an example of adequacy by providing student responses to modification of name from the data, to validate the participants' responses and to confirm the finding with primary sources;

The modification of name appeared in the data. The correct pronunciation of name can be internalised as an imposition on others for them to learn the name correctly and so the name was changed to make it easier for others to pronounce. Additionally it can be an embarrassment to have to continue correcting the mispronunciation.

"...so after a few times I just give up, you can call me whatever you want, 'X,' 'Y' but the correct one is 'Z.' Most of the staff they pronounce my name correctly" (Aspen, South East Asian).

"I don't mind being called 'X'...I had one lecturer who was calling me 'Z' instead of 'X'...I only changed it when I first came to [campus] because they struggle to say my name even the shortened down version, so it's easier to call me X" (Beech, Nigerian).

"I just changed my name" (Holly, African).

The findings provided evidence that all participants save one (Beech, Nigerian), were misrecognised based on appearance and name. The participants' responses reflect the conception that Irish identity is implicitly synonymous with being White.

According to this view ethnic minority learners may experience what Sidanius and Petrocik (2001) refer to as “exclusionary patriotism” reflecting the hegemony of the White Irish. Bonilla-Siliva’s (2014) colourblind ideology is relevant here as it is extended in this research to include difference along lines of ethnicity and not just skin colour. As a result the colourblind ideology is applied to White Irish habitus as dominant on campus.

## **Summary**

As I move on to chapters five and six on findings and discussion, I do so with a confidence in my research methodology and research methods along with a critical conceptualisation of how they relate to my study and evidenced in scholarship as explained in this chapter. The challenge has been to articulate this in an authentic and accessible manner. The readers of my research are entitled to know about the aims, expectations, hopes and attitudes that I brought to the research, as these will influence my research process from the choice of research area to formulation of research question, choice of method, research design, data collection techniques, analysis and interpretation of the fieldwork and conclusions. PVM created an opportunity for students to become active social agents in describing the places and spaces on campus that includes and excludes them. TA was appropriate for my research because my sample was determined and defined before proceeding with the study and, importantly TA provided me with the flexibility for approaching my reasoning of research patterns both inductively and deductively. In the next chapters I analyse and discuss my findings.

## **Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion on Belonging, Spaces and Places.**

### **‘Crown Shyness’**

#### **Introduction**

The discussion of the findings of the study is divided into two chapters; five and six. The findings are presented across five broad themes of belonging on campus, spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus, name-identity-misrecognition, unmasking microaggressions and inside the classroom. Each broad theme contains multiple subthemes which are discussed. Where relevant, and organised around a particular line of inquiry, discussions of the findings include both student participants’ and staff participants’ responses together. I took this approach to explore the perspectives of both sets of participants about diversity on campus. In some cases the staff and student responses are in agreement with each other, and at other times in opposition to each other.

In this chapter I present the findings and implications on two broad themes; (1) students’ experiences of belonging on campus and (2) perceptions of spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus. The subheading ‘crown shyness’ is used as a metaphor for this chapter’s intention of exploring student experiences on campus in a holistic and ecological sense. This is reflective of a forest where the crowns of a diverse range of fully stocked trees give each other space to thrive, thus avoiding colliding and damaging each other (Goudie et al., 2009).

#### **Belonging on campus – Masked or unmasked?**

This research question focuses on micro level of dynamic diversity, or the day-to-day conditions of belonging on campus. It addresses the research question on exploring the students’ perceptions of belonging and inclusion on campus for BME students and overlaps with the line of inquiry on how the campus climate includes or excludes BME students.

The concept of belonging is pivotal in this research in understanding a deeper meaning of inclusion on campus for BME students. Trudeau (2006) claims that who belongs, and who does not, is written in the landscape, and that the context in which the educational experiences occur for students is influenced by both social and historical factors on campus. As the daily dynamics of place-sharing in a diverse setting are important elements in belonging to that place, the participants were asked if they felt that they belonged to the campus community, whether or not their sense of belonging is linked to their academic performance, if they had made changes to belong on campus and whether they navigated between two or more cultures on campus. I view the multiple findings on the belonging theme through a CRT lens relying on the tenet “*whiteness* as the preferred norm in society, *white people* as the natural authorities in any situation, and *white knowledge* (and white forms of knowledge production) as the most valid of humankind,” all of which is often denied by White people (Brookfield, 2019. p. 4). This led me to develop a race consciousness that is necessary in interpreting the findings. Belonging is experienced differently by participants depending on how their ethnic background was being perceived. As revealed throughout chapters five and six on findings and discussion, key differences are evident between the experiences of students from a Black African background, an Asian background and an Eastern European background. For this reason, the pseudonyms of each participant are followed by a descriptor indicating if they are from an African, Asian or Eastern European background. In some cases this also notes specific country (if mentioned in the quote). The ethnic background of staff is White and Irish except for one staff participant who is White but with another EU nationality other than Irish.

### **Campus climate: Inclusion on campus**

The interaction between the student and their educational environment is an important one to assess in relation to belonging. It is a mutually beneficial relationship for the student and our claims<sup>14</sup> of a diverse and inclusive campus. Student integration for belonging and attainment includes student perceptions of

---

<sup>14</sup> <https://tudublin.ie/current-students/student-life/equality-and-inclusion/>

the campus climate (Nora et al., 2005). Belonging is a feeling that can be imposed by the dominant or majority group. Students can thrive and so can those around them, where people feel they belong for their uniqueness and are valued for who they really are on campus.

Relying on Yuval-Davis' (2006) definition of belonging in my research, place-belongingness is a feeling of being at home in a place, is affective and emotional and intimately connected to a sense of self (Gilmartin & Migge, 2016; hooks, 2009). Inclusion and/or exclusion define the politics of belonging through socio-spatial processes and practices. All nineteen student participants in phase two of the fieldwork agreed that they belonged and described it as an inclusive campus. The image that follows emerged from the data collected from the photovoice assignment in phase one of the fieldwork. It is a photo taken by a student of the campus at dusk, highlighting it as place where students belonged. The students provided evocative accounts of what the campus meant to them in terms of inclusion to accompany the photo they took. The text and image were used as a prompt in phase two of the fieldwork.



*No better photograph to describe inclusiveness of the college campus.*

*The moment we entered...there was a sense of being welcomed and included.*

*Large varieties of ethnicities and backgrounds at [TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus].*

### **Image 1: An Inclusive Campus**

A selection of student responses from the interviews and focus groups, from phase two of the fieldwork are included below that display their sense of belonging and inclusion on campus.

“Yes, I do and actually and I think that I feel more comfortable here as a student than I feel like a student in secondary school when I was in Poland and that’s awkward because that’s my own language, I feel that I am belonging here more than in my secondary school” (Alder, Polish).

“Yes I do, I feel included, everyone is just so friendly, lecturers don’t care where you are from, who you are, the colour of your skin, they teach the class the same way, like they make you feel appreciated, and they make you feel like you are here to learn, it’s just really really nice” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“I do like the fact that it is diverse and I feel like I'm included. The fact that they have societies so everyone can join no matter what age you are, what nationality you are” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

“Yeah I do...I feel welcome here. I don't have a feeling that it's for certain type of people. I feel very welcome in the campus” (Sycamore, Black African).

“Obviously, definitely I do. I've been here for three years. I enjoy the course, lifestyle here, it's a nice college, it makes me feel at home” (Willow, Irish Nigerian).

“I do...every time I come in here it makes me feel like I belong to an actual college...” (Pine, Filipino).

The findings reveal a diverse campus where students belong using terms like feeling more ‘comfortable’ at college than secondary school; describing everyone as ‘friendly’ on campus; feeling ‘appreciated’ and ‘included’ and ‘very welcome’ at college; that they ‘belong’ and how the place feels like ‘home.’ Our compositional diversity in student numbers communicates evidence of a diverse student population but a better indicator of inclusion or exclusion, is to move beyond the



symbolic commitments of Ahmed's (2012) 'diversity smile,' and on to the lived experience on campus for BME students (Antonsich, 2012; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Combining high levels of diversity with high levels of inclusion ensure belonging for all in higher education (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014; Miller, 2015; Ahmed, 2012; Clark, 1996). The fieldwork reveals a campus that overwhelmingly values and respects difference based on the student responses. However, the exact opposite is found in the staff responses to this question.

Staff who participated in the focus groups were asked if they believed that the campus was inclusive based on their experience of dealing with BME students. All the replies to this question from the staff participants claim that the campus is not inclusive. A number of their responses are included below;

"Even sitting in the canteen, there's different cohorts and pockets and even the way they sit in class...everybody has their own sections in class and there's not as much mixing as I would like...I would say no" (Ree).

"I agree...they do seem to pocket themselves off into different ethnic groups, even in the canteen and as they are strolling around the campus" (Owel).

"I would agree with other observations here of how they 'clique' around campus" (Sheelin).

Hand on heart, probably not as much as I would like to see them included...you see them in their own little pockets when they are sitting, in the canteen, in the communal areas and in the sports. I don't think there's enough variety that includes every ethnic minority" (Derg).

I found this tension between the staff and student responses significant. The students believe the campus to be inclusive and a place where they belong and the staff responses reveal a contradictory account of campus inclusion.

The avoidance of group work with other ethnicities (Moore & Hampton, 2014; 2015), was also observed by some of the staff;

“...yes they do tend to group themselves into ethnically similar groups and even when they are choosing [groups to work with for assignments], when the option is given to them to choose [assignment] groups, in first year, they tend to gravitate towards friends, people they feel comfortable with, might work well with...” (Tay).

One staff member made an interesting comment about the age of the student when they arrived in Ireland as a factor of them being included:

“Inclusion I believe depends on the age of arrival in Ireland, if they arrive with their parents when they were small children...they tend to mingle with Irish students and it’s not important for them to be close to people from their own ethnic background... there were different factors like personality, or likes and dislikes were factors that bound people together, not the ethnic background...However if they came to Ireland as teenagers then probably the level of English is a factor that they tend to stick together with who speaks the same first language” (Allen).

The student and staff responses to the campus being inclusive are in opposition to each other. To parse the contrast, is it a case that the students that I interviewed, felt included because they had assimilated or adapted to the mainstream student population culture of *whiteness* (Rainer, 2015; Joseph, 2011; Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tatum, 2000; hooks, 1994) and/or that there was a high level of congruence between the student participant and their environment (Strange & Banning, 2015) as observed by this staff member’s comment;

“I get the sense that there is still an assimilationist perspective in this college...that we are just waiting for the students to just become like the Irish students and then we won’t have any issues, instead of creating a truly diverse campus” (Corrib).

Being aware of the ethnic and cultural differences of students in this study is necessary to understand the differences (Rainer, 2015). Challenging the assumption that BME students will conform to the mainstream student population perspectives is imperative, inside and outside the classroom (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tatum, 2000). Steele's (2010) 'critical mass' term is valuable in exploring belonging on campus for our BME students; it is the point where it no longer feels uncomfortable or threatening to be in a minority because there are enough minorities on campus to make this the case. Continued exploration and research are needed with both students and staff ensuring a full dialogue to explore the potential reasons for the differences in viewpoints between student and staff responses on this issue, as well as differences and discrepancies within accounts as revealed in later findings.

### **Belonging is linked to academic performance**

Participants were asked if their sense of belonging was linked to their academic performance. In phase two of the fieldwork, fourteen responses were received to this question with half of the participants replying with a clear 'no', that their academic performance is not linked to a sense of belonging on campus. A selection of responses from the other half of the participants' representing all the ethnicities and cultures, who replied in the affirmative to this question are provided below;

"Yes, if you are not getting good grades clearly you are going to feel a certain way, I don't know if you want to interact with them [other students]. But if you are open-minded and ask for help then eventually your grades will go up as well" (Ash, African Irish).

"Definitely, because if you don't feel like you belong here you don't want to come back. If you feel there is no place for you here you don't want to go to lectures and sit down, so definitely" (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

"There is a direct connection between feeling a sense of belonging and student satisfaction obviously when you're satisfied in the college you tend to do better and well in your studies" (Chestnut, Irish-Filipino parents).

“It's very important to feel good where you are, in order to function at your full potential, so yes I can see a link” (Larch, Romanian).

“Some teachers might have favouritism to other cultures but sometimes you do feel that, let's say sometimes I'll be trying to ask a question in class, putting my hands up, but they tend to pick other people and I feel a little bit belittled. That's just how it feels like, maybe they don't mean it or they didn't see me, but it just felt like that. [Is that often?] No, thank God, it's not often” (Hazel, African Nigerian).

The last response above echoes Akel's (2019) findings from the students of Goldsmith College in London; “...some respondents feel academically trapped by their ethnicity which they feel is connected to how their work is understood and assessed” (Akel, 2019, p. 36). “Diversity is not only the ethnicity of the voices you include or exclude, it is also the presentation of these voices, the diversity of opinion and perspective that respondents often considered was missing” (Akel, 2019, p. 20). As educators we can be an enabler in our curricula and pedagogies to include students who may have felt marginalised in the past (Andrews, 2019; Gunn et al., 2015; Joseph, 2012; Santos, 1995; Maher & Tetreault, 1994).

As we prepare students to participate in a diverse democracy, then we have a responsibility to create conditions that facilitate that like the provision of English language classes (Gurin et al., 2002; Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2012). Competence in the English language was cited as a challenge for staff;

“Are they actually understanding what is going on all the time in terms of the material they are getting, in terms of the discussion...and how to do an assignment. I just feel that there is this little gap. This would be for students whose first language isn't English. Even for students from Africa or India where they believe English is one of their first languages, it's still a different level of English to what they really need to engage in academic work. And I

find sometimes correcting exams, they really didn't get that...concerned about their level of achievement" (Corrib).

A staff member had the following to say regarding the potential underachievement of BME students;

"I recall this morning at the exam board meeting, a student was discussed. There was a general consensus that the student was a really hard worker...and not far away from a 1.1. My own evaluation of it was that if that student's English was a little bit better they probably would have got that 1.1..." (Owel).

Ladson-Billings (2013) refers to the 'achievement gap' or the pattern of underachievement for African American students who "need to 'catch up' to their White counterparts without acknowledging that the ways that catching up is made near impossible by the many structural barriers that society has imposed on them" (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 105). She and others argue that the 'achievement gap' approach be replaced by the 'educational debt' approach, whereby we unmask the additional barriers that our BME students may face as a result of historical inequities (Akel, 2019; Jones et al., 2017; Cotton et al., 2016; Ladson-Billings, 2013).

While not a direct focus of this research, the 'achievement gap' can also filter through to consequent workplace opportunities, and research is required as to what happens BME students upon graduation regarding employment prospects (McGinnity et al., 2018; Joseph, 2018; Fleming et al., 2010; Finnegan & O'Neill, 2015). Two staff members commented on employment and employability prospects in the context of BME students;

"I was doing some research recently on where our graduates are going to specifically in relation to [programme named], what kind of jobs are they getting, where are they going to...I became alarmed...very few Black students came across to me as getting 'good jobs' in industry...I was going through LinkedIn...but I struggled to find any of them. The most showing up as 'successful' from here were White, male, predominantly Irish, maybe a

handful of Eastern Europeans. I found it very difficult and very discouraging that I couldn't find sufficient numbers of them who could be regarded as Africans or Black students" (Owel).

"I am going to make a comment about a previous student who was here, a Nigerian student, who got an Honours business degree, who started working in a company my sister works in...when internships come up [on campus], she didn't even bother, knew they wouldn't have a chance. Now maybe that was just her personal opinion but I think the feeling was 'I am Nigerian, I've done my business degree, I've done very well, but I'm not going to get the job.' [Were you surprised to hear that?] No, I wasn't actually and not against any particular person. The reason I am not surprised is because we have very few [staff from other ethnicities/nationalities]" (Dan).

Antonsich's (2010) economic factors that shape a personal sense of belonging emphasise if someone is economically embedded in society. Staff responses above reveal a different story for ethnic minorities to their White Irish counterparts concerning the recruitment process and access to employment opportunities. Zwysen and Longhi (2017) report that ethnic minorities in the UK are more likely to experience worse labour market outcomes when compared to their White counterparts, as regards access to employment and earnings. The study focused on the largest ethnic minority groups in the UK - Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Black Caribbeans, Black Africans and Chinese as "these ethnic categories are common to most UK surveys and build on historic migration patterns to the UK" (Zwysen & Longhi, 2017, p. 157). Furthermore, Arday (2018) in his research claims that the lack of access to opportunities for employment can heighten mental health issues for ethnic minorities. Cabrera (2014, 2011) calls for us to be circumspective where ethnic differences are concerned in higher education classrooms, but also beyond, in terms of access to employment and employment opportunities which requires further research.

### **Do BME students make changes to belong on campus?**

In identifying a sense of connection on campus, I asked the participants if they had made any changes at an individual level to belong. All participants (18 responses from 19), replied that they had not made any changes to belong. A selection of responses are outlined below. This is a positive and encouraging finding from this line of inquiry which has not been the case in similar research on the matter, whereby many students reported presenting “a moderated version of themselves in the hopes of creating a deterrent to racially-charged targeting” (Akel, 2019, p. 34).

“No, I really feel comfortable...I missed the college for these few months when we were off. I really couldn’t wait for today” (Alder, Polish).

“I’m just me, and people accept me if they want to. I don’t think I needed to change just to be here. That’s what I really like, it makes me want to become a better person, but not that I have to change my personality or pretend that I’m this and I’m not...from my experience I am part of two cultures” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“Maybe in first year, after time went on I’m not bothered, I’m with who I am with, I don’t really think about it anymore to be honest” (Hazel, African Nigerian).

“I feel like I am just who I am really...I tend to hold back on religion. But I still tend to associate with them” (Pine, Filipino).

The students interviewed feel comfortable on campus, the staff findings challenge the campus as an inclusive one for BME students. In part this can be explained by the educational spaces that the students occupy on campus which provide a connection for the participants, while the dominant culture on campus does not appear to disconnect or concern them (Ahmed, 2012). This highlights the importance of place connection in creating a sense of belonging. It mirrors Antonsich’s (2010) concept of place-belongingness from a relational and cultural

point of view. A sense of connection to sharing public spaces on campus with friends and strangers and the cultural habits and practices on campus that include and exclude apply here as the participants felt comfortable and accepted on campus (hooks 2009; Ameli & Merali 2004; Antonsich, 2010).

### **Navigating between two or more cultures on campus for BME students**

Bicultural stress is experienced when there is a feeling of pressure to adopt the majority culture in addition to preserving one's own minority culture simultaneously (Romero & Roberts, 2003). These stressors are represented as being intergenerational gaps, discrimination, pressure to speak multiple languages, and dealing with negative stereotypes (Romero & Van Campen, 2011; Romero, Carvajal, Valle, & Orduna, 2007; Berry, 2003). I asked the participants if they lived between two or more cultures on campus. No pattern in responses was revealed from the student experiences that was based on their ethnicity or culture. For some participants (8 from 15 responses), they navigated between two cultures, on and off campus;

“Actually, that’s a good question. Whenever I’m with my Filipino friends I feel different. But whenever I am with Irish or other ethnic groups, it’s different as well...With my classmates we’re just focused on work and have a bit of fun here and there but with the Filipino guys, when they are not from my class whenever I see them it’s all about ‘how’s everything, it’s different.’ There is a different dynamic. I think it depends on how close you are to the person, I feel like that’s the case because I have a classmate from the [country named]...we’re pretty close. No equivalent Irish friend like that” (Pine, Filipino).

“It's mixed. It's different when you're in college and then when you go home, it is different...In college I am more Irish, I feel that. It's hard to explain, outside of here I am more Indian” (Rowan, Indian).

The responses are at variance to the previous finding on participants not making changes to belong and reveals how different questions gives voice to different



aspects of students' experiences of belonging and inclusion. The belonging is nuanced here and experienced through feelings and relationships with others. The significance of the students' feelings of belonging impacts how they behave and depends on the company that they are in at a particular time. In Goffmanian (1959) terms, ethnographic theory on the presentation of self comes to bear here, where it can be argued that the participants' modify their identities in order to facilitate front stage (mainstream) encounters;

"Sort of....because you can't really act the way you act around your culture, the way you would with a different culture. For the Irish culture most people like to go out for drinks, all that stuff and have the 'craic' and be loud, but the [ethnicity named] side, it's just banter within the group it's not like you have to go out. You feel more comfortable within your own group, but outside they might not understand. If I put you in the middle of Nigeria and there's another Irish person there, who would you get on well with?" (Elm, Nigerian).

"You can alter yourself to Irish humour which is top notch for me but when it's with your people, you're not trying to change, it's natural" (Holly, African).

"I say I live between two cultures on campus [country names] and Irish. I am used to it because I am doing it since I was a kid. When I first came over it was different, I have to go to extra English classes...I just got used to it, it's like when you are outside you speak differently" (Beech, Nigerian).

For some students based on their responses above, they appear to be chameleons of sorts, by behaving according to the 'rules' of the company they were in. The two responses below suggest bicultural stress for the students; the pressure and need to retain the culture of their country of birth/early years or the culture of their parents' country of birth coupled with expressing Irish identity and culture (Romero et al., 2007; Romero & Roberts, 2003).

"I am part of two cultures Filipino and Irish. I was just thinking about it a few weeks ago and it was a bit upsetting. Like I don't know anything about Filipino culture" (Chestnut, Irish-Filipino parents).

“I have two identities myself. I say I am Romanian because I live here [for 18 years]. I breathe Irish culture here and I don't want to forget about my own culture and I am very proud of my roots of my own culture. At home I try to keep it alive as much as possible. So saying that I am Romanian culture more than Irish, it's like my way of keeping my identity alive. I am afraid if I say I'm Irish with Romanian background I would lose that” (Larch, Romanian).

Levitt and Glick Schiller's (2004), ways of belonging and ways of being resonate here. The ways that the students feel that they belong is understood and interpreted by practices that demonstrate a connection to a particular group;

“In college I am more Irish...outside of here I am more Indian” (Rowan, Indian).

Yet the student responses acknowledge their identity and culture as they navigate the campus environment, and they do notice the difference. Identity is not disregarded;

“I only went back once just to visit and it's a little bit upsetting because I'm neither Filipino and a lot of people think I am not Irish” (Chestnut, Irish-Filipino parents).

“I say I live between two cultures on campus Nigeria and Irish” (Beech, Nigerian).

Students describe how they feel and live between and with dual ethnicities. With a sense of complex diversity expressed by the student population at TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus, there is a need to know and appreciate the complexity of ethnic and cultural diversity for students. Furthermore, to challenge the assumption that non-dominant groups will adapt and assimilate into the dominant White privilege as the way of the world is warranted (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tatum, 2000). There is always a need to go assumption hunting.

### **Diverse campus and commitment to diversity efforts**

Students were asked if they considered the campus to be diverse. Fourteen participants replied to this question in the affirmative. Their basis for believing the campus to be diverse is grounded in ethnicity, nationality, skin colour and religion.

“Yes, I think it is especially when you look at the canteen area, there is a lot of different ethnicities, different groups and different religions in the same space, so in that aspect yes” (Fir, Nigerian).

“Yes, a good few Black people... in the [students union] hierarchy there are already three Black people who are in high positions” (Holly, African).

“[name] is the first Black [nationality] to be in the students’ union so I do feel visibility for my ethnic group” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“Actually the other day I was in the common room and I seen some girls there getting their hair braided. I thought it was only Black girls who usually do that stuff but I have noticed some of the new White girls they are doing it too, so that's pretty new for me to see...It's pretty diverse I think” (Elm, Nigerian).

“Yes it is. I can see all kinds of people usually at lunch time. I don't see groups of the same. I see Irish people with Polish, a mixture all the time” (Larch, Romanian).

“Actually it is pretty diverse and I do see groups, you know, different ethnic groups together, like they study together, work together, football wise, basketball and in the canteen as well I see a mix of cultures that are sitting together at a table...so I think they do embrace diversity” (Pine, Filipino).

“We are valued. You can see us in a lot of stuff like the football” (Beech, Nigerian).

The students’ responses above are at an individual level on campus climate concerning their perceptions of the campus being diverse. Fifteen student participants also agreed that we are committed to diversity efforts on campus but

reflect a more nuanced sense of the university's commitment to diversity and its limits in their responses.

"They do embrace [diversity] because they have a prayer room to accommodate students of Islam faith, that's the number one commitment you could do to accommodate anyone, make them feel at home, they wouldn't have to go to the mosque" (Ash, African Irish).

"[Campus] has been doing great work, but little bit of improvement they could do like in the café because there are Muslim students, I'm not Muslim but I know the way that practices of halal food which the canteen don't really provide" (Aspen, South East Asian).

"The commitment to diversity is obvious for example...[campus] have the quiet space for the Muslims, that's respect. You're showing respect to other people's religion and culture" (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

"The masses that come to the college, that's really good for Catholics. That's respect and it's clearly shown that [the campus] does care about diversity" (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

The commitment to efforts on diversity and inclusion described above were on religious grounds. In this case the historical context is Ireland's strong association with the Catholic religion and the current socio-cultural conditions with regard to accommodating the Islam faith. The space for religions to be practiced on campus is interpreted using Yuval-Davis' (2006) politics of belonging dimension, in that she refers to the socio-spatial practices of inclusion or exclusion. The participants' responses have been positive in relation to the campus being viewed as diverse. The evidence is grounded in a commitment to diversity efforts based on religious grounds. There is broad agreement regardless of the ethnicity of the participants, that the campus is diverse on religious, ethnic and cultural grounds, but not entirely inclusive when the food offerings in the canteen are taken into account in relation to the lack of halal food.

## **Patterns of socialisation**

A key test of integration can be found in patterns of socialisation. According to Haring-Smith (2012) as humans we are drawn to people like ourselves and tend to assemble ourselves in to “islands of comfortable consensus” (Haring-Smith, 2012, p. 11). The students’ responses confirm this;

“I think Black people would go rather more with Black people for some reason, I just see that pattern, in the classroom, I don’t really speak too much with other people outside the classroom and I think Irish people wouldn’t mind to work with other European nationalities” (Alder, Polish).

“Most people socialise with themselves [same ethnic group], unless you are in the same class, but outside, unless they know someone from the same ethnic group...someone has to reach out” (Ash, African Irish).

“When I first came I prefer to stay with the same ethnic group because I feel more comfortable, we are the same ethnicity, we know each other but after that I get to know more friends, [name] is my first Asian friend in my life” (Beech, Nigerian).

“...see both, Irish with Irish...Sometimes the odd Irish group with maybe one or two persons that's different...but mostly Irish...and in terms of a mature students; Black older people with Black older people. I have never seen Black older people mixed with Irish or Irish older people with young people. As well as age, they all tend to go with the group” (Fir, Nigerian).

Housee’s (2011) research demonstrated that by staying in their own ethnic groups, students felt a sense of safety and empowerment and that ‘being amongst your own’ is what makes for conducive learning spaces in higher education (Housee, 2011, p. 86). Staff responses validated this when asked about their biggest challenge when dealing with BME students;

“To get them to mix with other students...to get them to have a conversation together, it’s really hard, just to get them to integrate and not

to sit in the same seats with the same crowd, it's very hard to get them to mix" (Derg).

"To integrate them, especially in tutorials" (Allen).

Unless sport is the context, then students tend to socialise with their own ethnicity. Sport as medium which facilitates greater inclusion is discussed in the next theme of spaces and places of inclusion and exclusion on campus. "By organizing along national-origin lines, homogeneous student groups miss opportunities to learn about symbolic differences and fundamental similarities with others" (Tienda, 2013, p. 473). This impedes integration and promotes affinity bias.

"Mostly on their own but stuff that they relate to like football in the hall you see Asian people, Black people, Irish people all playing football, all mixed up...I guess like its affinity bias, boys talking about GAA" (Beech, Nigerian).

Fifteen of the student participants claimed that they make an effort to get to know people from diverse backgrounds and eighteen student responses confirmed that they had conversations in college with people from diverse backgrounds. The content of the conversation was around religious differences for eight of the students.

"Oh yeah I'm involved with everybody, all my friends are from completely different nationalities; Irish, Poland, Libya, Russia. Inside and outside of the class" (Sycamore, Black African).

"For me I am interested to know about their culture out of curiosity. I asked [name] because he is Christian what practices do you guys do? Church every Sunday? What other things do you do? Like special occasion like Christmas or Easter" (Aspen, South East Asian).

In terms of studying with, spending break times with and socialising with other ethnic minorities on campus, thirteen students replied that they had done so. There was no obvious pattern of socialisation based solely on ethnicity evident in

their responses except for two students, who stated that they did not have close friends of a different ethnicity on campus and one participant who had one Irish friend and the rest of their friends were Nigerian.

“my friends that I have are all from different backgrounds, ethnicity, everything, and that brings us closer because we get to all learn each other's culture, different things about each other, and that's what I like, and that is inside and outside the class” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

“Oh yeah, I'm involved with everybody, all my friends are from completely different nationalities; Irish, Poland, Libya, Russia. Inside and outside of the class” (Sycamore, Black African).

“Most of my friends are from different backgrounds. Growing up I had different friends from East Asia or Irish background or African background so I would say it's half and half” (Ash, African Irish).

“At [college] just one and they are from Ireland, the rest are Nigerian” (Beech, Nigerian).

### **Campus wide respect for diversity and being a minority on campus**

I wanted to explore the participants' views as to whether there was evidence of discrimination on campus. The background to this line of inquiry is that higher education can be a site of learning and a creator of critical consciousness, to challenge inequalities (Akel, 2019; Arday, 2018b; Arday & Mirza, 2018; Bhopal & Chapman, 2019). I wanted to bring the individual and personal to the fore from the student experience and hear from voices that may not have had an opportunity to be heard regarding this issue. All the responses (11 references from 10 student participants), to this question were polite but with an air of reservation. However, when I interrogated the responses further, this allowed me to see the responses differently, or to what Jackson and Bazeley (2019) refer to as 'vista' coding, whereby I adopted “a stance at particular angles on multiple platforms and to look at the data from these angles and code accordingly” (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019, p. 108).

Responses reveal evidence of respect, disrespect and discrimination on campus regarding diversity. The findings are pertinent to all participants who answered this question regardless of ethnic or cultural self-identity.

“No I don’t think so. It’s not about the ethnicity or nationality, more it’s about the people, who you are basically, because you can be great Irish person, great [nationality] person, and then not get on well with other [nationality] person. I am not always looking at ethnicity, I don’t care about that. I care about what the person is like and the character and [if] we going to go well with each [other] or not. I don’t think I ever think about the first place, oh he is from [country named] I won’t talk to him, although I was thinking Asian people are more, not more intelligent but they really...put work into something, they really work hard, so I was thinking in the back of my mind to get to know [name] more because [he/she] is going to be a hard worker” (Alder, Polish).

“I think it is OK, but you have to know when to stop. When you see someone is getting too upset...I understand your opinion I have my own opinion but there is a limit to what you can cross. There is respect but you have to know when to stop” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“Not ignored based on their ethnicity but based on their religion, because some people are more religious than others and that might be a conflict between them” (Alder, Polish).

“Probably people are not really exposed to [other ethnicities] so there won’t be any disrespect towards anyone because they don’t know anyone or anything about another person’s religion so they probably keep to themselves instead of saying something you don’t know anything about. You have to engage with that person in order to learn” (Ash, African Irish).

“...I mean for me as a minority, I know that people not from around here they always prefer to stay with their own group” (Aspen, South East Asian).



“I think we just keep to ourselves most of the time. If you see just a lot of Black lads, it's them in a group or something, or some Black lads with some Asians because they have more in common they can relate to each other, they have cultural relativism” (Beech, Nigerian).

“it's not on purpose...for example the common room; there is one section you would see so many Blacks, another section Filipinos, and then are the Irish, the Whites...I have friends of different colours of skin and ethnicities but if I go to common room, where am I supposed to go, so it is segregated” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

“I guess we feel fine because our class as a whole has a good relationship and foundation and everyone is supportive of that. You don't feel the differences but sometimes I am cautious about this when we go into a room. All the Whites and Irish sit together. A good example of this is when we go to [module named] and we come into this room and the classroom is not very big and limited in space. So there would be the three of us...sitting at one table with a lot of space for people to sit but they would never [sit beside us], and they would take a chair and sit by the window with no table and these are people that we have been with for four years. Why? There's a table and space for you to sit right there but they would rather sit on their own, and I always wondered why is that? Why won't you sit with us? [Groupwork], When they [lecturers] ask us to pick our own groups, I went up to a group of girls who were Irish and asked them could I be in their group for a certain project. At first they said yes, sure no problem and then later on during the week I reminded them and they were like, ‘oh yeah sorry, we kinda went with different people,’ and that left me isolated...sometimes I wonder why does that happen...I guess it's not the college, it's individuals. [So is that negative stereotyping?] It feels like negative stereotyping because why won't you just sit at the table with us? Is there something wrong with us? There is a seat and space” (Fir, Nigerian).

The findings in this context, disclose key challenges for belonging and inclusion with students experiencing a keen sense of where, with whom and in what context inclusion and exclusion occurs. It highlights a race consciousness for some students and that integration efforts need to be deliberate and depending on the situation (inside or outside the classroom), may require nurturing and encouragement (Tienda, 2013). More importantly the quality, frequency and context of the interactions, is what will indicate success and foster further integration among diverse groups (Engberg & Hurtado, 2011; Hurtado, 2007). Ancillary, tokenistic and isolated incidents of integration and inclusion are not sufficient. Along with compositional diversity, prominent and visible participation and engagement are necessary for belonging and inclusion efforts on campus. . A staff member commented on the need for evidence on the impact of campus diversity for students and provided advice on what to do;

“We have diversity on campus but I am unconvinced [if] the students benefit from that diversity and in what way, we get bits and pieces anecdotally, and what we gather from reflective journals but I would like an evidence base to see the benefits they gain from it, which should be transferable skills into the workforce or just for life or personal development. [Advice?] Training, best practice and making that more widespread, but also listening to their voices or having a strategy in place that is weaved through and part and parcel of what we do. Diversity on a whole load of levels, not just ethnic diversity...there’s intersectionality...but that we are thinking outside the box and maybe not teaching the way we would have liked to have learned. My one piece of advice to TU Dublin would be to listen to the voice of ethnic minority students and then respond” (Gill).

This staff comment above is pertinent to developing a campus climate that goes beyond inclusion and to a place of belonging and connection for all students. Meaningful participation and involvement from our BME students can foster and

create a campus environment that has no in-groups and out-groups based on ethnic and cultural differences.

Opportunities for contact with diverse people on campus is significant in this context. Wilson (2017) contends that it is encounters between individuals and groups that are 'different' that has the potential to increase familiarity and change attitudes and beliefs. These are the moments "where new ideas and thoughts arise, where power relations surface, where boundaries are drawn or lifted, or where hope grows or fades away" (Huizinga & van Hoven, 2018). Arday (2018) points out that "establishing networks of ethnic minority friends from similar cultural backgrounds within universities was considered to foster a sense of community" (Arday, 2018a, p. 12). His research was in the context of BME communities assessing mental health services at university in the UK. Carter et al., (2018) study on a sense of belonging and identity for indigenous students in Australian universities state that the "quality of their relationships with teaching staff and supervisors appears fundamental to fostering their sense of place-attachment and identity as a learner" (Carter et al, 2018, p. 251).

Belonging on campus includes the campus climate at an individual level and focuses on perceptions of discrimination, attitudes of individuals and the behaviours of individuals and groups in that context. If we have a cultural exchange with others we have "an evolved propensity to think categorically about social groups" (Crisp & Meleady, 2012, p. 853). The campus environment provides many opportunities to accommodate dimensions of social diversity for integration and inclusion on nationality, ethnicity and religious grounds among others. The defining boundaries of the past of categorising people today keep shifting. "It is the conflict between this changing social ecology and evolved preferences for defined category boundaries that can explain generalized resistance to multicultural ideologies, avoidance of intercultural contact, and negative reactions to social diversity" (Crisp & Meleady, 2012, p. 854). Harnessing the educational benefits of diversity need to be deliberate and valued at leadership level through strategy, mission and vision as a first step. Then visibility of these efforts on daily campus life will ensue (Rankin &

Reason, 2008; Williams, 2010; Plaut et al., 2018; Tienda, 2013). An atmosphere, feeling and mood of inclusion should be embedded in all aspects of our university and not just in isolated spaces and places (Bhopal & Chapman, 2019).

## **Spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus - ‘Islands of comfortable consensus or diversity discord?’**

By bringing the campus landscape into focus, this theme specifically addresses the participants’ perceptions of inclusion and belonging on campus for BME students. It looks at the location of this study in more detail, anchoring the discussion of inclusion and exclusion through photovoice methodology (PVM). Year three students in a module on a business programme completed a PV assignment as part of their course work which is detailed in chapter four on methodology. These students’ use of photography through the images that they have taken and the explanations that they have provided, puts a face on what and where includes and excludes on campus. Conventional approaches to qualitative research methods often do little to express “the intangible and complex feelings and experiences” that accompany concepts like inclusion and exclusion from a place or space (Muncey, 2010, p. 2). Relying on a research and pedagogical practice that Fontaine and Luttrell (2015) refer to as ‘collaborative seeing,’ this theme zooms in on the gap between how students interpret inclusion and belonging on campus, and how staff might respond to the interpretations from students in practice (Luttrell, 2010a; Luttrell & Chalfen, 2010; Luttrell et al., 2011; Luttrell et al., 2012). The images make visible student contexts around inclusion and exclusion on campus, which includes particular spaces and places that they inhabit, and relationships that matter in these spaces. The key places and spaces that were identified by the students as including and excluding are discussed below.

Findings from phase one and phase two are presented alongside each other with a discussion and are linked to the literature. As noted earlier the findings and discussion are presented in two phases; phase one are the findings from a photovoice assessment and during phase two of the research I displayed these

photovoice images of inclusion and exclusion to the self-identified research participants during interviews and focus groups. The participants commented on the images and in some cases engaged in a discussion on the images. The photos are divided into two broad themes; inclusion/belonging and exclusion/denial. Following this, they are sub-coded. The following list of sub-codes emerged from the photos: setting/location (where on campus), people (gender, ethnicity), and genre (landscape, portrait, inside/outside).

### **Inclusion and belonging: Setting/location (where on campus)**

The top seven places and spaces that were identified by the students in phase one as most inclusive on campus were the college canteen (place, 8 images), inside the classroom (spaces, 5 images), the library (place, 4 images), sports facilities (places and spaces, 7 images), C block common room (place and space), D block common area (space) and Ciúnas/Quiet Space (space). Collectively the top four places represented 24 of the 35 photos apropos inclusion and belonging.

#### **Inclusion: Canteen C Block**

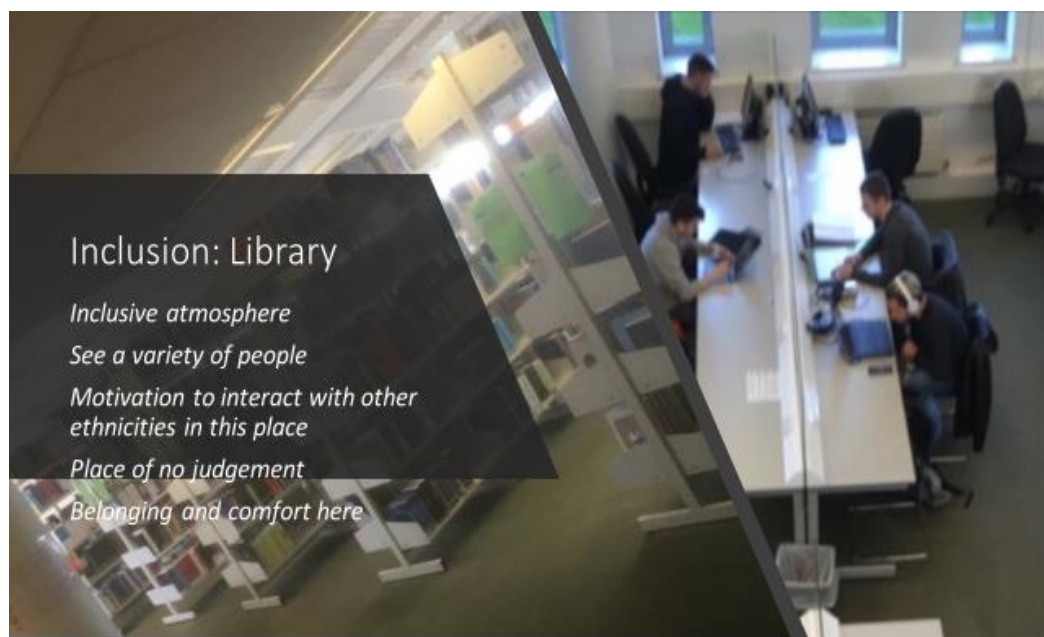
*Many different people  
Sit wherever you like  
Learning about other  
cultures through food  
Design – layout – seating  
Diversity in the canteen  
No dominant nationality  
Feel included here since  
first year  
Intriguing space to observe  
different cultures*



### **Image 2: Inclusion/Belonging - College Canteen**

During phase one the canteen was identified as inclusive, diverse and with no dominant nationality. Of note, were the references to the physical layout of the canteen and its use as a social space. The college canteen was the second most popular space photographed as a place of inclusion. Recent restructuring on layout and location on campus make this place more inclusive. In phase two, two thirds of the students (11 participants) interviewed agreed with the canteen designated as a

place of inclusion on campus. Birch (Nigerian Irish) finds the canteen “a laid back place to go to but it depends on the time you go.” Holly (African) recounts that the “canteen [has] no dominant nationality.” Tucker’s (2017) ‘soul metrics’ apply here in connection with the students’ experience of campus climate. The canteen is located in the heart of the campus and is a dominant thoroughfare for students. The college canteen provides place-belongingness for students at a relational level (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Antonsich, 2010; Gilmartin & Migge, 2016) and as a landscape (Trudeau, 2006).



**Image 3: Inclusion/Belonging - The Library**

The library is a core space to our activities on campus. The library usage policy ensures that the library is a comfortable environment for all, which is conducive to study. The Library is divided into study zones: group work area, quiet study area and silent study room. Library users are requested to respect the different zones and behave accordingly. The use of mobile phones in the library is strictly forbidden. The responses in phase one referred to the climate of the library has “an inclusive atmosphere” and is viewed as a place of “belonging and comfort” for all. In phase two when prompted by the library image as a place of inclusion the respondents (10 participants) agreed categorically and without need for further discussion. Of all the spaces on campus this is one that is monitored by library staff and campus security most closely. This suggests that the more control and security exercised over a space

encourages and promotes appropriate behaviour by those who use the library (Sibley, 2002; Cresswell, 2014).



#### **Image 4: Inclusion/Belonging - Inside the Classroom**

The classroom is regarded as treating everyone equally from phase one participants. Gunn et al., (2015) advocate inclusive practices in how we teach and learn thereby enhancing the learners' experience. Inclusive teaching in higher education can develop a sense of belonging where all students can participate. Interestingly smaller learning spaces (classroom, tutorial) are preferred over lecture theatres; "smaller learning spaces are more comfortable," "easier to speak than in a lecture," "I belong here." Best educational practice recommends that dialogue and learning is easier in smaller spaces as it encourages students to vocalise and discuss their views and understandings with an increased opportunity for student-led learning and discussion (Keppell, Souter, & Riddle, 2011; Bennett, 2007).

There was a line of questioning in phase two regarding whether the classroom was a safe and collaborative learning space. I have decided to analyse these findings from the participants here as they are relevant to this section and the participants felt that they had answered this question in advance of the image being produced for comment. The classroom is regarded as a safe and collaborative space to learn. Typical responses included; "[I] feel safe in the classroom" (Elm, Nigerian); "[the] classroom is a safe and collaborative place" (Alder, Polish; Birch, Nigerian Irish;

Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents; Fir, Nigerian; Willow, Irish Nigerian and Pine, Filipino). Clark (1996) encourages educators to create a space to learn where the core feelings of significance (I matter), solidarity (I belong) and safety (free from physical and psychological harm) are experienced.

Of all the spaces represented in this phase of the research, it is noteworthy that only one of them refers to what goes on inside the classroom. All the others are areas on campus relating to non-teaching spaces. Inclusion is broader than the classroom. If one of the key tenets of higher education is to prepare students for engaging in a diverse democracy then there is a responsibility on educators and policy makers to create conditions that facilitate that purpose (Gurin et al., 2002; Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2012).

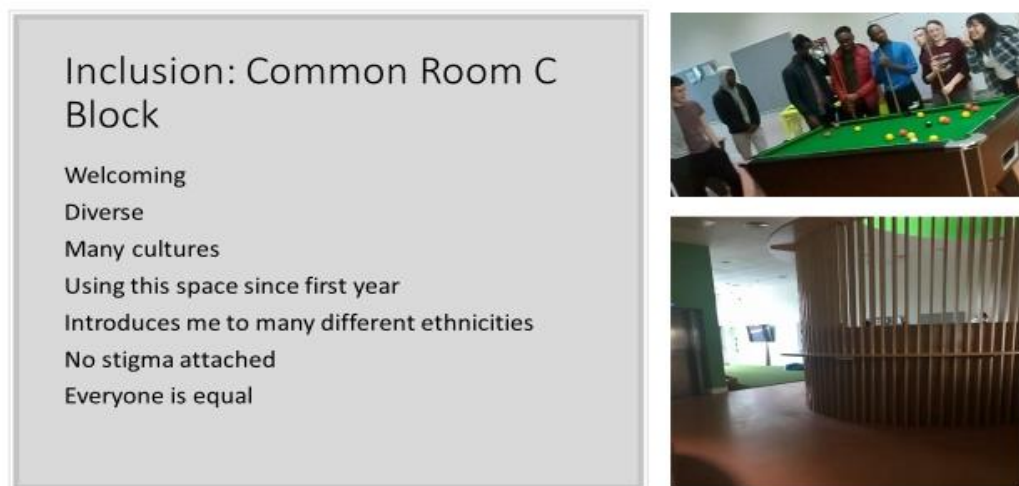


**Image 5: Inclusion/Belonging - Sport**

Sport was identified as including people regardless of background. This reveals the unifying properties of sports that facilitates greater inclusion; “shared interest through sport,” “includes all nationalities.” Mapping belonging in the context of sport is congruent with Auerback’s (2006) environmental conditions that guide students’ choices on place-belongingness and social context. Of significance is that all the images relating to sport as inclusive were taken by males suggesting a gendered use of spaces and places requiring further investigation.



Collectively the images of inclusion show a sense of fitting in, feeling included and a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to students' experiences, integration and success in higher education (Rankin & Reason, 2007; Nora et al., 2005). "Be', as in being, signifies authenticity and freedom from the need to cover aspects of one's identity. 'Longing' reminds us of the profound human yearning to connect with others and be part of something that transcends us" (Frenk, 2016, p. 2).



**Image 6: Inclusion/Belonging – Common Room C Block**

The common room in C block is a contentious space on campus. It was highlighted as inclusive and exclusive. It is inclusive as highlighted by the many cultures that use the space and in how it has introduced students to different ethnicities on campus. The space is viewed as welcoming and diverse. When shown this picture during phase two of the fieldwork Alder (Polish) said that they knew "why [it's] a place of inclusion for them," but for Alder (Polish) they are "more stressed there," due to the fact that not many if any people they knew used this space. Birch (Nigerian Irish) and Aspen (South East Asian) would have used this space in first year but much less so, if at all now; "place of inclusion when you come to college for the first time, interact with other students" (Birch, Nigerian Irish), "mostly where I spent my time back in first year, in this room, get to know more people so I'd say it's inclusion...playing games, getting to know people and have fun at the same time, used room back in first year, not really in fourth year because we don't really have time" (Aspen, South East Asian). The exclusive elements are discussed later.

## Inclusion: Common Areas D Block



**Image 7: Inclusion/Belonging – D Block Common Area**

Similar to the common room in C block, the D block common area was viewed in phase one as an overlooked space of inclusion that is welcoming, diverse and representative of ethnicities.

“This area was where I spent many free times when I had a variety of classes in Block D during second year...This area is almost always in use by various groups of people composed of a variety of ethnicities. I have never felt unwelcome due to my ethnicity within this area” (Year 3 business Student, phase one fieldwork).

“I chose the common area in the D Block for my place of inclusion for this assignment because it seemed a place of leisure that to me welcomed all students no matter what course they done, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture or age. In my three years here at ITB I haven't felt much desire to socialise around the campus after classes ended but this area always appealed to me as welcome” (Year 3 business Student, phase one fieldwork).

When this image was viewed by participants in phase two there were no comments of it being an inclusive space, leading to two conclusions that either the participants do not use the space and therefore had no comment or they see it as a space that excludes.



**Image 8: Inclusion/Belonging – Ciúnas, Quiet Space**

Originally this space was the oratory on campus but subsequently renamed and refitted, so that it could be used by all faiths and none. The quiet space has been a response by the college authorities to student requests based on religious beliefs. The Quiet Space or Ciúnas in Irish, is viewed as a peaceful and inclusive space/place during phase one. The predominant responses to this image in phase two were twofold in nature:

- (i) Lack of awareness that the space existed or that that they never use the space (Holly, African; Sycamore, Black African and Willow, Irish Nigerian).
- (ii) A space for one faith only; “thought it was just for Muslims” (Fir, Nigerian).

### **Exclusion and denial: Setting/location (where on campus)**

The top two places that were identified by the students as most exclusive on campus, as represented by 60% of the images for exclusion/denial were firstly, the campus common room (place, 15 images) and secondly, the quiet space (place, 6 images). Collectively they accounted for 21 of the 35 photos apropos exclusion and denial. The canteen was also identified as an excluding space as discussed below.



Exclusion: Quiet Space, C106, Ciúnas:  
*A space mainly for Catholics,  
 I am not religious so no point in me going there,  
 Sign needs to go, Religion has no place in education,  
 I was intruding on people in the room, I had never been in this room before.*

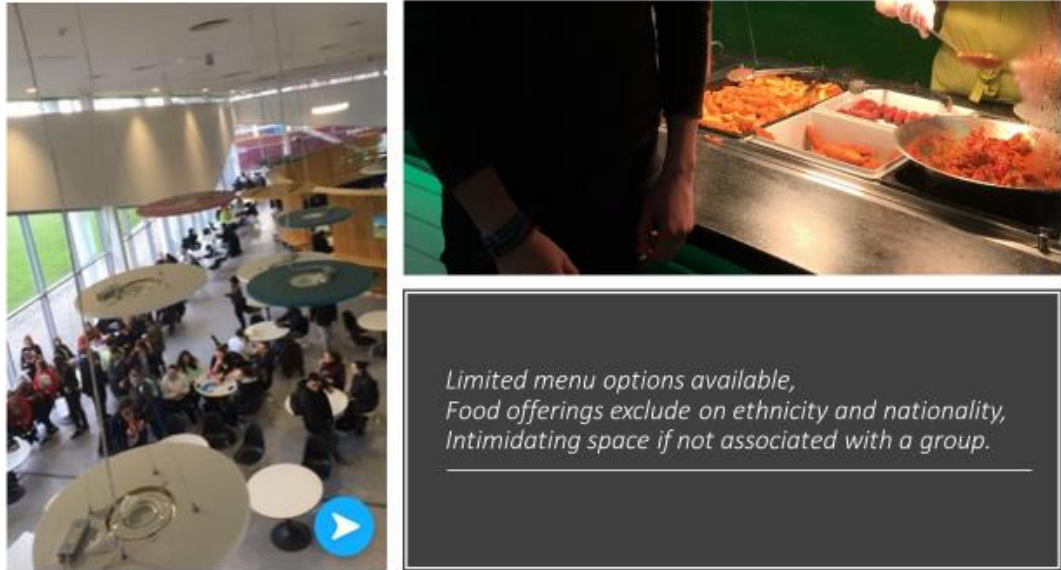
### **Image 9: Exclusion/Denial – Quiet Space (Ciúnas), C106**

The quiet space on campus, formally the oratory was identified by the students as an exclusionary place based on religion. Historically this space was the oratory on campus and was renamed so that it could be more inclusive for students. The quiet space has been a response by the college authorities to the diverse student population as a space for all faiths and none to use. However, this space does not appear to be meeting its intended purpose;

“mostly I have Muslim friends who go there... I don’t really use it, I feel [like I am] intruding” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“thought it was just for Muslims” (Fir, Nigerian).

It is likely that signage and historic context has played a role here in its use. Cultural practices, habits and religious beliefs have made this space exclusionary, as it is now used mainly by students from the Muslim religion. This has resulted in making it an unusable space for some students.



**Image 10: Exclusion/Denial – Canteen**

Exclusion becomes problematic in the canteen concerning the food offerings and being alone when using the canteen. During phase one a small number of students commented on the canteen as a place of exclusion, if you do not belong to a group. This resonated with participants in phase two;

“Definitely [exclusive] if [friend’s name] wasn’t here I would never go in to the cafeteria, ever, because I would literally be on my own” (Fir, Nigerian).

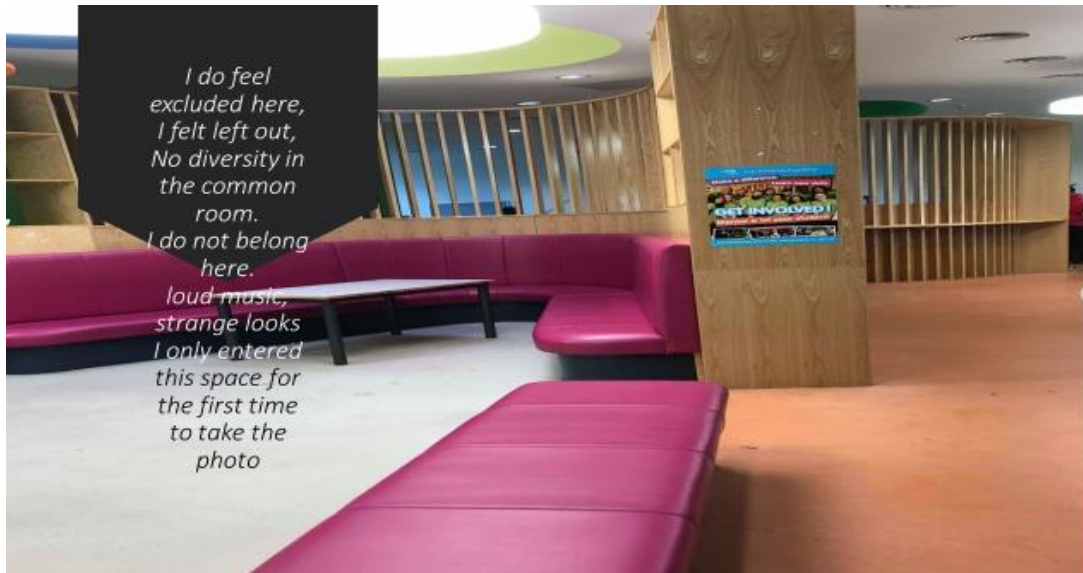
“If you are not with somebody, what am I doing here” (Pine, Filipino).

The menu on offer is limited for different ethnicities and religions and thereby excludes (Rankin & Reason, 2008; Hurtado et al., 1998, 2012). Three students commented on the food offerings in the canteen;

“menu small for Muslim faith, it’s not including things they would normally eat” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“...there’s only chips and goujons” (Holly, African).

“...limiting food yes. Last year was worse than this year. This year’s a bit better with the possibilities of having healthy wraps and salads” (Larch, Romanian).



**Image 11: Exclusion/Denial - Common Room (C Block)**

The most photographed place on campus across both categories of inclusion and exclusion is one of the campus common rooms. Based on the student responses in phase one it was identified as a place “as dominated by two ethnicities”, “the ambience doesn’t include”, “no diversity in the common room”, and identified as a place of “feeling left out.” Student integration is reliant on a sense of belonging on campus (Nora et al., 2005). It is evident that one of the college common rooms appears to exclude the mainstream student population, “even though I am in the majority group on campus I do feel excluded here.” On the contrary, this is a place that students of ethnic minorities can occupy and feel included in line with place belongingness and the politics belonging (Antonsich, 2010). The responses from staff participants in this research uncover the ways our BME students can be excluded or discriminated against, yet many college authorities are unaware of the problems faced by BME students on a campus where they are under-represented (Hurtado et al., 2012). The findings from participants in phase two of the fieldwork concur with the findings in phase one.

“I know why, the majority of the Blacks they go here so it's like Africa when you walk in” (Holly, African).

“I feel...more space will lead to more diversity...One nationality is strongly there and if another ethnic background comes in they will feel intimidated, but if there's more of a space it wouldn't feel as intimidating” (Elm, Nigerian).

“[same] Group of people always there, sitting there together, always laughing everyone feels excluded there” (Spruce, Romanian).

“I never use that place, I wouldn't feel included there. I don't feel included there. I remember I used it once just to have my food” (Sycamore, Black African).

C block common room has been clearly identified as a place that determines who belongs and who does not (Trudeau, 2006; Auerbach, 2006). This space is identified by the students as a place to socialise if you are from certain ethnicities. The result of this perception by a majority of the student population renders the space exclusionary, yet I claim in the next section that counter storytelling from CRT is important in uncovering this room as a place that includes and where there is a sense of belonging for some of our ethnic minority students. A discussion on this is provided in the next section.

The social control of this space helps us to understand who belongs here and who feels excluded (Sibley, 2002; Cresswell, 2014; 1996);

“You go in and you have friends of different ethnicities and you don't know where to sit, where you belong, that needs to change...we haven't been there since peer mentoring” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“When you walk in, they look at you and you just feel unwanted, everyone looks at you as if what are you doing here, and in my mind I feel like what am

I doing here, it's upsetting", [participant finds this section emotional] (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

"Even though you think we would be more comfortable going up there since all the people in there is the same ethnicity as us but I feel really uncomfortable being up in the common room. As soon as you go in there everyone already has their little cliques, their little groups and literally the whole place is taken and there is nowhere for you to even go up even if you wanted to... you get the look, what are you doing here" (Fir, Nigerian).

According to Garces and Jayakumar (2014) "at the campus level, students can sometimes retreat to or create counter spaces to overcome harms of stereotypes and isolation" (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014, p. 118). The common room in C block provides evidence of a counter space in this context, an unspoken Black space. This is akin to Bhopal and Chapman's (2019) idea of the 'unspoken White space' referring to their research of the experiences of minority ethnic academics in higher education in predominantly White American institutions (Bhopal & Chapman, 2019, p. 105). The common room appears to mark clear group boundaries as evident by the ethnic groups using this space. The participant responses above claim no interaction, mixing or drifting between groups (Housee, 2011). The common room is in stark contrast to the campus canteen which was identified as the most inclusive space on campus. The library and classrooms emerge as the only spaces where group boundaries and mixing are encouraged, occurring and required.

The social interaction patterns emerging from the fieldwork from the use of spaces and places on campus has implications for meaningful integration and inclusion. Currently, social interaction patterns reflect compositional diversity on campus concomitant with our diverse student population but not structural diversity unless directly managed in the classroom. It is the quality and frequency of interactions with people from diverse backgrounds that leverages the educational benefits of diversity. Feelings of inclusion and belonging become apparent through meaningful



interaction with different ethnic groups whereby students and staff strengthen the educational benefits of diversity in a worthwhile way.

### **The common room: A counter story of ‘in(ex)clusion’**

Counter storytelling is a tenet of CRT that sensitises the common room to a race consciousness narrative in this study. I adopt the term ‘in(ex)clusion’ from the literature to describe a counter story that emerged from the common room during the course of my research (Dunne et al., 2018, p. 22). Researchers use the term ‘in(ex)clusion in the belief that inclusion and exclusion are not binary opposites (Dunne et al., 2018). Dunne et al., (2018) study was on a quest to understand the concept of inclusion in schools and colleges in northeast England, using images taken by students and subsequently commented upon by staff to garner their viewpoints. The study interpreted spatial justice “as part of the struggle for a rights-based education; exposing and challenging marginalisation, pupil segregation and the ways in which educational spaces and practices can be exclusionary” as intersecting concepts in exploring different interpretations of in(ex)clusion in educational settings (Dunne et al., 2018, p. 23). Similar to the methodology in this research photos were used in Dunne et al., (2018) study to determine the “use of space, and how it is subject to encultured and normalised understandings of school practice that can create injustices” (Dunne et al., 2018, p. 34). For my research the most photographed place on campus for the photovoice assignment in phase one of the fieldwork used was the common room. In this contested space PVM provided “a helpful and insightful analytical tool to explore the complex and often contradictory ways in which ‘inclusion’ is experienced, interpreted and understood” as is the case with common room (Dunne et al., 2018, p. 33).

These findings reveal how some students felt that the common room was a place of exclusion for them (described above). However, we can also shift the gaze on this space to reveal a counter story (Asimeng-Boahene, 2010). CRT embraces counter-narratives as one of its tenets that “are contextualized within particular experiences that critically examine what it means to bring nondominant voices” in to view (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015, p. 209). Dixson and Rousseau (2005) address

the importance of voice to challenge the stories and normative assumptions of the dominant group. Guided by CRT concepts to counteract the stories of the dominant group, I adapt Calmore's (1995) 'culture-of-segregation' in interpreting the users, the observers and discourse of the common room on campus (Calmore, 1995, p. 1244). Calmore's 'culture-of-segregation' describes residentially segregated neighbourhoods from White culture. In an Irish context an analogy is that the Dublin 1 postal code is now known as 'Little Africa' and Dublin 15 is known for a concentration of residents from Eastern Europe, Poland in particular. Similarly, a "culture-of-segregation" has taken place in the common room which is predominantly occupied by our African students. A student response followed by two staff responses as to who uses this space are included below;

"Different minorities mostly go there. They have their own different cultures. So let's say if you are an Irish person to go in there, there are a lot of African people, some Asian people...The Irish wouldn't really go there because it's been taken over by the Africans and the Asian population" (Beech, Nigerian).

"Common room, students have told me that there's a crowd in there that they don't like associating with. They stay out of it, they feel intimidated, when they go in to that room. [Have they identified that crowd to you?] No" (Derg).

"A student came to me [since memorial service], we had a good talk and through her I got an insight. They come here and they feel part of a family, they don't delve into one another's problems. It's a happy place, but for some of them it's the only happy place in their life. So they come here, they have good fun, they have their peers, their friends, they look after one another, they communicate with one another, but it's all on a level that doesn't go down to a deeper level" (Mask).

There are parallels to Akel's (2019) study whereby the students form their own racially homogeneous groups for solidarity and support because they feel society "is suppressing them and their life experiences and their stories, so why would they not come together as a form of strength and solidarity?" (Akel, 2019, p. 34). Similar

to Arday's (2018) research, social isolation was relevant for the participants of his research "who lived alone or whose family structure was fractured for varying reasons" (Arday, 2018a, p. 13). This has a relevance here due to what was revealed by a critical incident with a student who frequented this common room area which is described later in this section and had a profound impact for their peers as well as the wider community.

The staff research participant comments about students perceiving the common room on campus as 'the only happy place in their life', a place where they felt they belonged and could be themselves (Akel, 2019; Arday, 2018a). Isakjee's (2016) research is relevant here on young Muslim men in Birmingham, a city in the UK where more than a fifth of the population describe themselves as holding to a Muslim faith. His research involved a combination of ethnography and participatory walked interviews (Evans & Jones, 2010), with young Muslim men using an inductive approach to draw out important themes from the data, and concludes by theorising, that young Muslim male identities experience a dissonance between the emotional place-belongingness that evokes for them a sense of inclusion, and the politics of belonging that marks out their exclusion between 'Britishness' and 'Muslim-ness,' (Isakjee, 2016; Yuval-Davis, 2006). In a similar way the common room provides a place of inclusion for those students who currently use it while at the same time it is viewed by other students as a place of exclusion, not belonging and an intimidating space.

A traumatic event in the untimely death of a student, who frequented this space draws attention to the students associated with using this space in particular. This enabled me to research 'up' from their experience (Madriaga, 2018, p. 7). Two staff members that participated in the research had the following to say on the common room;

"I am aware of the discourse around that space...There was a ceremony in that space and for a space that gets a lot of negative discourse at institutional level, the ceremony was led pre-dominantly by the African society and a group of Black students and was absolutely fabulously done but I think what really

resonated that day was the sense of inclusion they felt in that space, how welcoming...they just spoke so frankly about them belonging in that space, it was very poignant what they were saying that day...if you could have recorded what they said that day about the sense of family and community at [TU Dublin], it was unbelievably powerful that sense of belonging as a group to a particular space. They felt a community within the campus” (Gill).

“[Some students] would never have [engaged with student services] only for the death of a student. Worked very hard that week with those students to mind them and look after them but ...very much respecting their space, and I think we’ve built up a trust. We created a presence that week without stepping on their toes...those students now are engaging with me, where they never have before. When [student named] died I was very aware we were dealing with something very different...[Did the student who died use that space?] Yes, very much a part of that space. And this is how I’ve got to know about the students who use this space. The students were very engaged in doing something and it was handed over to students’ union to run...we had a lot of grief. We opened a memorial book in the Connect building. The students were very upset over there and I was called over...But at the same time I saw that as a bit of a ‘buy-in’, some of the young men were high-fiving me and hitting me on the knuckles, that was really big engagement for them, that’s a real sign of their acceptance and acknowledgment” (Mask).

Ahmed (2012) explains that building relationships with BME students is imperative for the purposes of creating spaces of belonging and disclosure for those that may have felt marginalised or on the periphery in the past.

“Thursday morning they were all here...They were here from 10am and they worked very hard, they set the whole thing up with no help from anyone...set up the room, had pictures of [student named], video clips, the music...rehearsing all morning. They set their own rules around it; if you get upset you leave and come back. The strongest people involved in it [organisers] were put in Black hoodies so that they were identifiable and they were the

people who were going to manage the whole thing. It was all student-led. I cannot explain the sympathy, the empathy, the compassion that we saw from students that week...this was extraordinary, cohesion, family...they looked after one another” (Mask).

The common room is an important site of social interaction and belonging, providing a rich experience of local belonging and attachment for some students on campus. A staff member involved in the delivery of professional services on campus had the following to say about the common room from her perspective;

“So, it’s a really interesting group of students who are using this space. It’s a group of students across a load of disciplines...how are they all interconnected? They are friends who went to school together, are friends of friends, are friends of brothers and sisters...they are all of African descent. Some of them are very successful and doing very well. Some of them are in college and not engaging at all but they are coming to college every day. They are coming to the common room, that is their inclusive space” (Mask).

Carving out a space on campus, which has happened with the common room cannot be ignored concerning discussions of ethnicity and understandings of belonging and inclusion on campus. The common room has become an ethnic enclave for young Black-African students on campus. This place is a location that is surrounded by the larger campus and culture. The inhabitants of the room are culturally or ethnically distinct;

“[Who uses that room predominantly?] A group of young African students. They are young, Black and the overarching thing is that some of them obviously have nowhere else because they are there all day” (Mask).

“In my opinion I didn’t really feel excluded in this place but for other people they get intimidated by the people that are there. [Do they exclude because of who is in there?] There’s a large number of African students in there...so it depends on how the person sees it” (Pine, Filipino).

While exclusion and intimidation are identified as a pattern of feelings associated with the common room through the photovoice assignment and subsequent questioning of participants in phase two of the fieldwork (these findings are presented in the spaces of inclusion and exclusion section), connecting cultural inferiority to that space is not apparent in the data set (Blaisdell, 2016). However, Calmore's (1995) "culture-of-segregation" argument relies on White norms to judge the non-White behaviour in this space which has been identified as exclusionary, intimidating and deviant, from participants. Yet when we turn the gaze on viewing the space as a space of inclusion and belonging for some students, a staff member comments resonate;

"I know quite a lot of the students who use the common room, I have them in class...I wonder to what extent did Irish, indigenous students, did they feel intimidated for no good reason initially about going in there, that maybe there wasn't a question of them taking over the entire common room, that maybe they would have liked to have taken over a corner of the common room and everybody else could have used it as well. [A student's death recently] there was huge solidarity and it was a beautiful event and you could see that whatever has been going on in that common room for how long, it has created a real community for those students which is really, really important for them. So maybe the space is just too small or maybe there needs to be more spaces but I wonder to what extent did Irish students feel, 'oh I'm not going in there because they are different and I'm a bit intimidated without any good reason initially, now may be over time then it became exclusively for that group, but that might not have been the action of that group. It might have been a sense from other students...there is reticence on the part of the Irish students to get involved with students of other cultures" (Corrib).

This particular space is inclusive for some of our students. This inclusiveness and sense of belonging depends on who is using this space, who is observing the use of this space, and their interpretation of this space. As Pine (Filipino) recounted earlier "it depends on how the person sees it [the common room]" and so it can be a case of 'in (ex)clusion' (Dunne et al., 2018). The common room has developed a bedrock

of belonging for ethnically diverse students to locate themselves in “an environment where [they felt they] could be their authentic selves,” (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016, p. 933). A comparison can be drawn to Visser’s (2017) research who posits that to manage the emotions associated with a sense of not belonging to a country or a city, UK migrants tend to develop a stronger sense of belonging to their locality. I speculate that the common room on campus is akin to the ‘locality’ for the students who use it within the wider ‘city’ that is representative of the college campus.

By framing student life on campus as a participatory visual piece of research using photovoice methodology it displays how students view their relational and emotional connection to the college based on inclusion and exclusion in campus spaces. This section has illuminated the social, and in some cases emotional connections that the students have to spaces and places on campus. A recognition that the dimensions of space and place matter as sites of inclusion and exclusion have to be understood both in their own right and within the overall logic of an open-ended discussion of ideas and opinions. In order to create a better understanding of spaces of inclusion and exclusion it was necessary to focus on the everyday lived experiences of BME students, and to listen to them in order to create alternative representations from those that dominate the mainstream student population, speaking with, rather than speaking for the participants of this research.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I presented the findings and discussion on two themes from the fieldwork; belonging on campus and spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus. Each theme is substantiated by combining relevant scholarship along with analysis, interpretation and discussion.

The first overarching theme of belonging on campus focussed on the day-to-day conditions of feeling included as experienced by BME students, in the context of

the micro level of dynamic diversity. The daily dynamics of place-sharing in a diverse setting are important elements in understanding inclusion and belonging on campus. Seven sub themes emerged from the analysis and interpretation of the fieldwork; campus climate, belonging and academic performance, making changes to belong, navigating between two or more cultures on campus, campus commitment to diversity, patterns of socialisation and campus wide respect for BME students. The findings are differentiated to identify if patterns emerged for different ethnicities on lines of inquiry. In summary, the campus climate sub theme describes an inclusive campus according to the students, although some of the examples cited from students reveal a more complex or mixed experience of this, while staff findings stand in stark opposition, based on their perceptions of BME students experiencing marginalisation, difference and racialisation. The belonging and academic performance sub theme, depicts these differences in the findings affirming and disputing that a sense of belonging is linked to academic grades, as reported by the student participants, along with the 'achievement gap' for BME students and level of English language competence according to the findings from staff. The making changes to belong sub theme, as reported by student participants, state that no changes were made to fit in. However, when I asked the question on whether the participants navigated between two or more cultures on campus as a sub theme, there is evidence of adaptation to the dominant culture, to not feeling the need to adapt along with navigating between two cultures on and off campus. The campus commitment to diversity sub theme acknowledges campus diversity and a commitment to diversity efforts is evidenced on ethnicity, nationality, skin colour and religious grounds. The patterns of socialisation sub theme, when taking sport as the exception, shows that students tend to socialise with their own ethnicity. Finally, the campus wide respect for BME students as a theme reports no discrimination on campus but integration efforts need to be deliberate and depend on the situation.

The second overarching theme addresses spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus. Using PV methods, student participant images made visible the contexts where inclusion and exclusion on campus take place in the landscape. The top



places and spaces that were identified by the students as including and excluding were discussed. A counter story of in(ex)clusion also emerged from the findings about the space known as the common room on campus. The common room offers a place of inclusion for some students while at the same time it is viewed by many students as a place of exclusion. As the common room is mainly used by the African students on campus a “culture-of-segregation” has taken place in this space (Calmore, 1995, p. 1244). By relying on a tenet of CRT in my approach by alternating the gaze a counter story was uncovered. It has become clear that the common room is an inclusive for some of our African students.

In the next chapter I discuss the findings on three more themes from the research; name-identity-misrecognition, the unmasking of microaggressions and students’ experiences inside the classroom.

## **Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion on Name, Unmasking Microaggressions and Learning. 'The Ecosystem'**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter I present the findings about students' experiences on campus concerning their name, encounters with microaggressions and their impressions of their learning environment. The subheading 'the ecosystem' is used as a metaphor for this chapter to reflect the complex networking and interacting of the research participants with their campus environment much like in biological terms, the community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.

### **Name – Identity – Misrecognition**

In this section I discuss the findings from the exploration of the pronunciation of participants' names by others they encounter on campus. I considered the relationship from the responses to the lines of questioning on identity, misrecognition and stereotyping. This theme addresses the research question in identifying what contributes to denial and exclusion on campus for BME students.

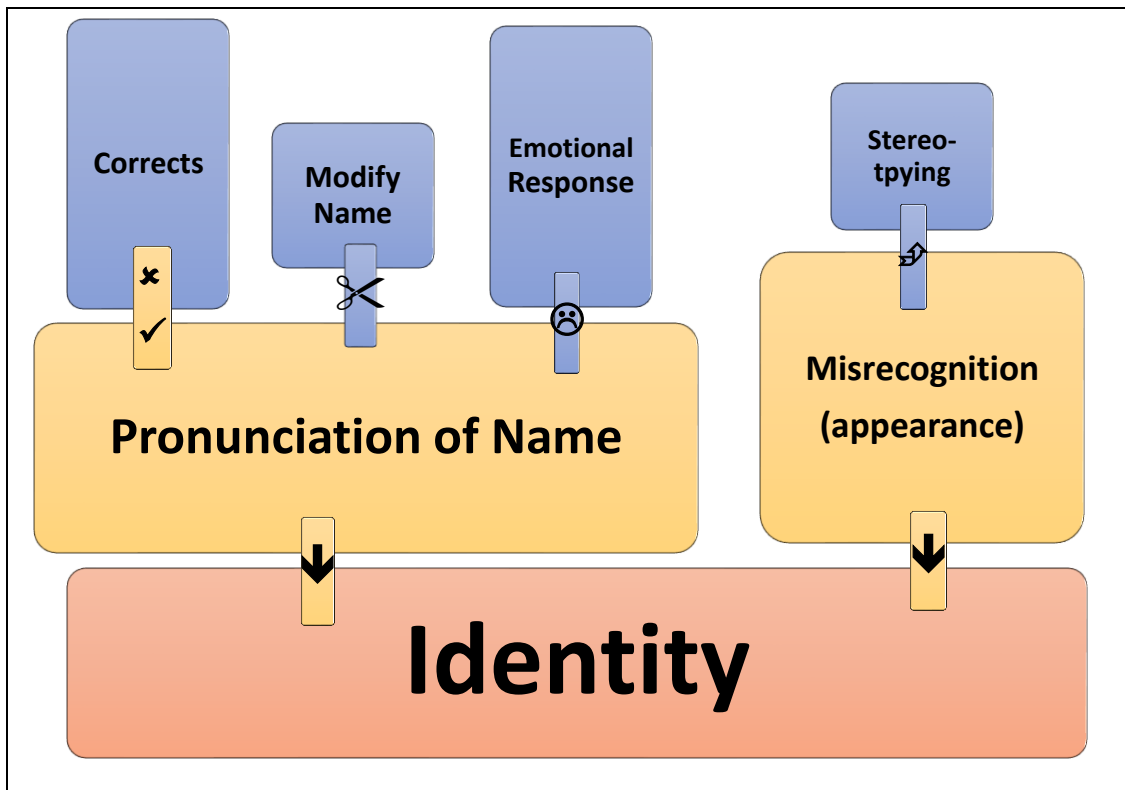
### **Mispronunciation of name**

The mispronunciation of a name is one of the numerous steps by which a person's cultural heritage is devalued (Gómez, 2012). When I encounter a new class of students for the first time, I use a small portion of the class time during the first tutorial to get the students to engage with an ice-breaker activity. The aim of the exercise is ultimately, to allow us to get to know each other a little bit better. I endeavour to learn all their names by the end of our first week together. Every year, it happens whereby I am clarifying the pronunciations of students' names due to the diversity of ethnicities on our campus. It never fails to surprise me that every year a number of students will have two possible pronunciations or variations of their name. When I asked them for the correct pronunciation, they tend to respond with "Whatever, is fine." When this happens, as it does every year, I look up from my class list, make eye contact, and say, "[No], it's not fine for me, because it's

your name and I would like to know how to say it the way you would like it pronounced.” I have positioned myself firmly in this line of inquiry, and this has allowed me to engage in the research process in a more meaningful way, by ensuring that I accurately represent the viewpoints of the participants and re-interpret these for a wider context (Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Scott & Garner, 2013). This particular line of questioning in my research resonated with me. I can empathise with the students, as I have a name that is more often than not misspelled, mispronounced, and confused with variations of the name.

Historically our names have functioned as a mark and verification of our identity. Our names define us and can open up a treasure trove in their significance, attributes and individuality. Our names provide us with roots, origins and meaning (Gómez, 2012). It is a matter of simple civility to try to pronounce everyone’s name correctly. It shows you are paying attention to them in that moment.

According to Kohli and Solórzano (2012), it is a sign of a “microaggression” when a teacher mispronounces, disregards, or changes a child’s name, “it is disrespect to both their family and their culture” (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012, p. 15). The pronunciation of name is a pre-determined code which I adopted from the literature in the data set (Gläser & Laudel, 2013). In analysing this code a concept emerged as to what it stood for from the responses, and I was able to identify dimensions to the concept that include correcting people when the name is mispronounced, modifying the name to make it easier for others to pronounce and how it feels when the name is continuously mispronounced. I then axial coded this concept to explore the relationship between it and the codes of misrecognition-identity to identify a link between the two themes (Charmaz, 2015). The figure below captures the coding diagrammatically.



**Figure 10: Identity – The relationship between pronunciation of name and misrecognition**

Of all the questions I asked the students this was the one that elicited the most responses, by double. There are 47 references to this line of questioning. All participants had something to say on the pronunciation of their name. A sample of responses when asked if people on campus pronounce their name correctly are provided below;

“the surname was harder for them” (Alder, Polish).

“my last name, it’s not too hard to pronounce, it’s ‘X’, so they just sometimes mis-pronounce it” (Ash, African Irish).

“Most of the staff, they pronounce my name correctly” (Aspen, South East Asian).

“Yes my name is actually very easy it’s ‘Y’, so I have never had no problems, people say, ‘oh wow that’s so unique, it’s really pretty, nice name’” (Fir, Nigerian).

“...my name is ‘Z’ but my surname, sometimes lecturers pronounce it wrong...” (Hazel, African Nigerian).

Our names are powerful yet we give them little conscious thought unless they are mispronounced which can cause anxiety and resentment (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). Correcting someone who mispronounces our name makes us feel uncomfortable especially if there are power dynamics at play as in the case between a lecturer and a student (hooks, 1994). The participants whose names were mispronounced did correct the person, and their emotional responses range from being indifferent to annoyance, to accepting the mispronunciation as a normal occurrence. Rather than seeing the person mispronouncing the name at fault, students subscribed to the belief that this was expected, and that they would do the same in another context.

“I don’t really [mind] because that’s not their fault and obviously if I would be Irish, or if I would be British or whatever, I would pronounce it the same as you all do, so I don’t mind that...I don’t feel awkward” (Alder, Polish).

“A few times I correct them...but I understand them so they don’t really get familiar with names like this because not much people has names like this here, so after a few times I just give up, you can call me whatever you want...” (Aspen, South East Asian).

“...sometimes lecturers pronounce it wrong, and I would often correct them especially in third year or second year if they get my surname mixed up, I don’t really mind, I just correct them and it’s nothing personal...” (Hazel, African Nigerian).

“*[Did you correct them?]*... Not really because people are prone to making mistakes and sometimes they don’t like to be corrected, but a few of them, they asked me did I say that correctly and I tell them” (Larch, Romanian).

“Sometimes I correct them, it's ok, it's normal, it's something that I'm used to, I don't mind” (Sycamore, Black African).

“Yea, I do, I do [correct them]...students know how to pronounce it after two tries or three tries, but in general it's a simple name” (Ash, African Irish).

“I don't feel upset when someone asks to spell it” (Chestnut, Irish-Filipino parents).

“Some people I know for a year, they still mispronounce it. Sometimes I correct them, depends on who it is” (Rowan, Indian).

While often unconscious and unintentionally upsetting, mispronunciation of name or comments on name can reach to a microaggression and take its toll when repeated. It can also have a cumulative effect on recipients (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012).

“What do they expect my name to be?...[they ask] is that your full name, how do you spell, it is it short for something? No it's just 'X' [How does that make you feel?] Upset sometimes but I just have to do with it, I don't let it get to me anyway too much” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“People tend to spell your name by the way it sounds which is a bit irritating. When they say it wrong it kind of annoys me, but I am used to it because it has been happening a lot. [Do you correct them?] Sometimes, but sometimes I leave it, they would probably get it wrong again. So there is no point correcting the same person twice. It is frustrating but I'm used to it now” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian Parents).

“[do you correct them?] I don't bother anymore... well now I don't really care anymore but before it used to piss me off so much” (Holly, African).

“I didn't really like people using my full name because they butchered it too much...” (Elm, Nigerian).

“I've gotten used to that, struggle with that all throughout my life, in college, in school. Only my friends call me X instead of Y. It used to annoy me but I can't blame the person because it's the way my name is spelled. It's fine, I'm used to it now...[Do you correct them?] No, I only correct my friends” (Oak, Irish Pakistani).

“When they mispronounce it I close my eyes. It's OK, I tell him to call me 'X' or whatever it doesn't bother me” (Spruce, Romanian).

Staff were asked if they experienced difficulty pronouncing the names of students from ethnic minority backgrounds. In line with Burke and Crozier (2013) if staff are open and curious to look inwards and reflect on what it must be like for BME students, they become more effective diversity educators. It is encouraging to see that from the staff interviewed, both lecturing and professional services staff, they make an effort to get the pronunciation of the name correct and appear to be aware of the importance of name for identity;

“I lived in [country named] for a few years so I feel like I have a little bit of a head start with [country named] names, but eastern European names, I would struggle more” (Ramor).

“I would usually ask the student if they were with me, how to pronounce their name” (Conn).

“Oh yeah...I ask them what they want to be called so I do. For the most part, most of them have abbreviated names...you're going to be able to pronounce them, but yeah I have to ask them. How I get around it in my office is to ask for their student number, then I type it in and the name pops

up in front of me and I say, 'What do you like to be called?', and so that's a good way around it..." (Mask).

"Initially yeah, but I really make a point of learning how to pronounce their name, and I also make a point of continually calling by their name even if they say, 'you can call me' [anglicised version or easier to pronounce version]...[Would like to add] that I have heard in quite official positions where an academic staff member might just not bother to say the person's name and might start reading it and say 'Al or whatever...in a dismissive way. I think that is very wrong, or to laugh or make a joke about it" (Corrib).

"I think some Eastern European names can be very difficult [what do you do?], if I have difficulty I go straight to the student and say 'would you mind saying your name for me a few times,' they are not all phonetic...I'll go to the internet [to help with pronunciation]. I'll make it my business to try and figure it out...it's a great ice-breaker in a class. I've never had a student offended by asking [them to say their name]. I've had a lot of students say to me, 'that was really nice of you to ask,' because they have complained about lecturers mangling their names for the best part of a semester" (Ennell).

"I will make a note phonetically" (Tay).

"When you reach out to get the pronunciation correct you are fighting against the fact that they have already dealt with that...particularly Chinese students" (Key).

"I come from a different point of view because I know how it feels when people struggle to pronounce my name...I know how important it is for identity [participant's name is often mispronounced]. I always try to make an effort to pronounce [students' names] right... For me it is difficult to pronounce Irish surnames. Students in class see it, that I do not always



struggle with African surnames but I also struggle with Irish surnames, so it goes both ways. I always ask them to pronounce it for me...they see it's not only restricted to ethnic minorities but it goes for everybody" (Allen).

### **Modification of name**

The modification of name appeared in the responses. The correct pronunciation of name can be internalised as an imposition on others for them to learn the name correctly, and so the name was changed to make it easier for others to pronounce. At Goldsmiths College, University of London "34% of BME students have attempted to modify their ethnic or cultural identity...in order to 'fit in' more closely into prevailing Western norms" (Akel, 2019, p. 8). Modifications include changing their name, appearance, deciding not to wear clothing depicting religious affiliation and adjusting their accent (Akel, 2019).

"I don't mind being called [name]...I had one lecturer who was calling me [name] instead of [name]...I only changed it when I first came to [campus] because they struggle to say my name even the shortened down version, so it's easier to call me [name]" (Beech, Nigerian).

"I get sick of it so I changed my name to my other name my parents gave me which was [name] and I changed my Facebook name and people did not know who I was...so I stick with [name] (Elm, Nigerian).

"My name is [name], still nobody is going to say that so they just say [amended name] because that's the English [pronunciation]" (Spruce, Romanian).

Additionally, it can be an embarrassment to have to continue correcting the mispronunciation.

"...so after a few times I just give up, you can call me whatever you want, 'X,' 'Y' but the correct one is 'Z.' Most of the staff they pronounce my name correctly" (Aspen, South East Asian).

“I just changed my name” (Holly, African).

“I told him to call me [name] and I don't mind that...surname, not an issue”  
(Yew, Nigerian Irish).

Staff also commented on students' modification of name;

“I try to learn their name as well but it could take me until week seven to get it right. But I find that, say take the Chinese people, they take an Irish name...which I feel is a pity because it is taking some of their identity away and they are just trying to fit in” (Derg).

“But there is also a problem...they will tell you their name in class and then you look at your class sheet and that doesn't match, so they'll take an Irish version and then you are trying to match up [the two names]. You are calling them that name all semester and then you are doing your data entry for the exams and it's like 'who is this student?' So, there's two names then that I have to try to remember” (Ree).

“I have a Chinese student and he adopted the name 'X' but genuinely he is not offended by people mangling his name, he adopted it because he was tired of people mangling it” (Ennell).

“They often shorten it [their name], call me 'Jimmy' or 'Michael'” (Dan).

The staff responses above to students' modification of their names appears to demonstrate an awareness of what it feels like for the students to change their name to 'fit in.'

### **Misrecognition**

The findings provided evidence that all participants save one (Beech, Nigerian), were misrecognised based on appearance and name. The participants' responses reflect the idea that Irish identity is implicitly synonymous with being White.

According to this view ethnic minority learners may experience what Sidanius and

Petrocik (2001) refer to as “exclusionary patriotism” reflecting the hegemony of the White Irish. Bonilla-Siliva’s (2014) colourblind ideology is relevant here as it is extended in this research to include difference along lines of ethnicity and not just skin colour. As a result the colourblind ideology is applied to White Irish habitus as dominant on campus when compared to African students, Asian students, Central and Eastern European students and Muslim students. Misrecognition was based on appearance and name.

Misrecognition based on appearance;

“I would say yea, most of the time, sometimes they think I am from Nigeria because they probably think Africa is one country instead of different countries and probably if I tell them I am from [country], they are like what, they haven’t really studied geography...They compare me to Kenyan, Kenyans are quick at running so it’s a positive thing for me because I’m into sports” (Ash, African Irish).

“For me they just mistake me as Chinese, actually I am [nationality] but [mixed nationality] but for them it’s oh you’re Chinese...Asian people are smart, like good at math, I’m Asian but I’m not good at math” (Aspen, South East Asian).

“No misrecognition off the top of my head, no. If I was, I wouldn't notice it because it wasn't like a proper major deal. They assume I am Nigerian because I think there’s a lot of Nigerians on campus as well” (Beech, Nigerian).

“I was born here but by my blood I am Nigerian. I feel people stereotype every time they hear a Nigerian. They go ‘fraud’ or ‘loud’. We're not the kind of people and if they see a Black person they say she's Nigerian. There are other parts of the world that are Black and not Nigerian. For example in the common room it's more to do with the Africans. If an African person sees me they will say you're a Nigerian, that's the first thing they will think. You know

Nigeria is not the only country in Africa. In first year I feel like I tried to change myself because my secondary school was not diverse” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

[So is that negative stereotyping?] “It feels like negative stereotyping because why won’t you just sit at the table with us, is there something wrong with us, there is a seat and space” (Fir, Nigerian).

“Sometimes they assume I am South African because I am Black” (Hazel, African Nigerian).

“Yes...they think I am Nigerian” (Holly, African).

“...it happens everywhere you can't get rid of it” (Elm, Nigerian).

“Not in here...but I had a nice saying by one of my lecturers. Being in [discipline] studies, he says all the Romanian people he met, they are very kind and caring people and he had loads of students from Romania and he thinks we are kind and caring and it was nice to hear, and it made me feel good” (Larch, Romanian).

“I like to know where people think I am from. Not many people guess I am from Pakistan, though I look Pakistani. I think many people guess Spanish.” (Oak, Irish Pakistani).

“Someone ask me if I am from this place, I can't remember where, another country. I corrected them.” (Rowan, Indian).

“Everybody thinks I am from India or Pakistan, everyone. I correct them.” (Spruce, Romanian).

“Yes sometimes, they always think I am Nigerian. I don't know why. The first thing is...are you from Nigeria, no I was born in [country]” (Sycamore, Black African).

“No not really, most people think first Nigerian” (Willow, Irish Nigerian).

“Yeah, quite a lot, every now and then it's a joke...but from people that don't know me...there was one time they thought I was from Korea, I don't even look Korean. One guy said I was Chinese but I don't really have those eyes but again that's stereotypical of Asians...I don't take it to heart” (Pine, Filipino).

Antonsich's (2018) research on the children of migrants born and raised in Italy resonates in this context. Being Italian is assumed “to be exclusively linked to Whiteness and Christianity, and a national space which in reality encompasses ethno-racially different people” (Antonsich, 2018, p. 456). As with the participants' responses above, when you 'look different' but sound 'the same' as the majority population, the encounter can leave a sense of “dis-orientation, puzzlement and displacement” (Antonsich, 2018, p. 461). Nations' citizens can no longer be recognised by ethno-racial identities in the age of migration. Parallels can be drawn to what it means to be Irish in Ireland today, and to Lynch's (2013) research on British muslim youths' emergence of new transcultural identities and generational change in the UK, so that they can comfortably situate themselves in their local environment. 'Irishness' today is related to identity, culture, residency, citizenship; all of these characteristics that can accommodate and embrace difference due to changing demographics. For the student research participants in this study, interpreting their identity involves cultural and religious traditions of their families while also navigating the public notion of Irishness being White (McGinnity et al., 2018). One staff member observed misrecognition in the classroom;

“I would also hear students' opinions [talking about] their parents who came to Ireland but they were born here but they are still called Russian or Nigerian” (Allen).

Misrecognition based on name;

Yea, maybe a little bit [on campus] but more outside [campus], so they would think that I would speak Russian or [name] was thinking that I am from Ukraine, makes me feel bad, same for Irish, if they think you are from UK, sometimes feel offended. If they only knew me [just met me] it's fine but if they know me for three months, do you speak Russian, I'm not, I'm Polish, it's completely different...[Do you correct them?] Yes, yes, yes" (Alder, Polish).

Our names are very personal and carry a great deal of meaning for us. It is very necessary that staff in higher education learn to pronounce the names of our students even if that takes a number of attempts to get it right and if it places us outside our comfort zone.

## **Unmasking microaggressions - From fieldwork to framework**

In this section I investigate what contributes to denial and exclusion on campus for BME students in the context of microaggressions. Sensitised through an engagement with CRT lens for viewing I gain an understanding of the various ways that student participants in the study are oppressed when they experience microaggressions, based on their ethnic and cultural identity. A CRT framework and a critical race consciousness deepens the understanding of BME students' unique and marginalised position on and off campus as revealed in their responses. CRT challenges the need for social change about our beliefs and behaviours on cultural world views on the perception of diversity and power (Haque, Tubbs, Kahumoku-Fessler, & Brown, 2019). A photographer at Fordham University, New York, USA asked her peers to write down the microaggressions they encountered on campus. I selected the photos<sup>15</sup> below as prompts for exploring microaggressions experienced by the participants on campus during my fieldwork. Underneath each photo I have captured the microaggression as a microassault, microinsult,

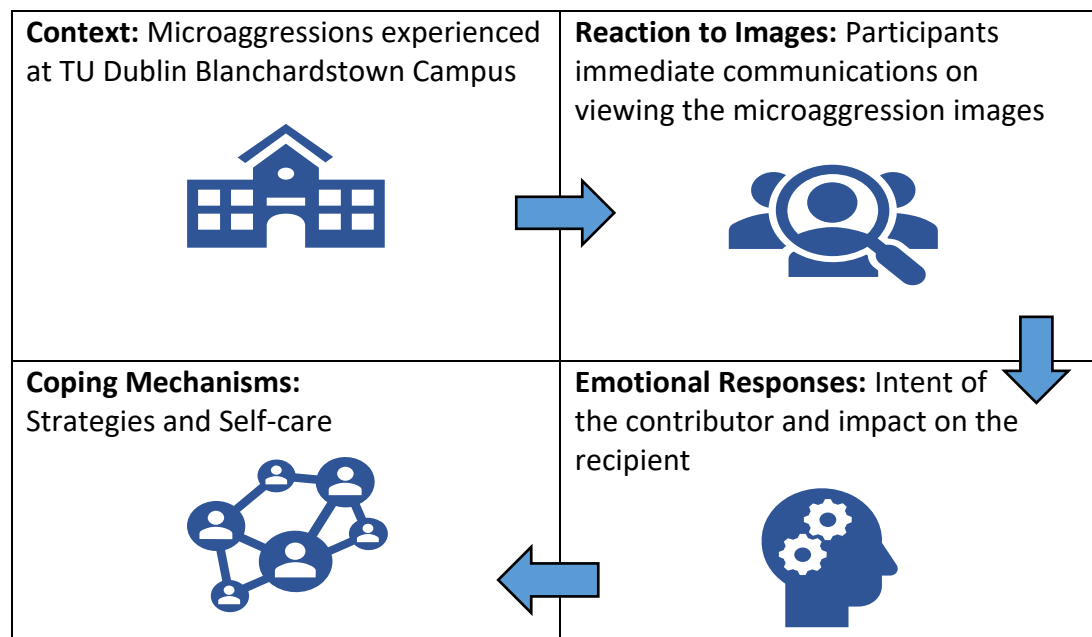
---

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>

microinvalidation or a mixture based on the literature’s description of microaggressions (Sue, 2010; Sue et al., 2009, 2007).

When analysing the fieldwork in this section I looked in detail at the participants’ responses to microaggressions and how this reflects their quotidian experience. I unpack the emotional responses of the participants in terms of intent of the giver and impact on the receiver with Sue et al., (2007) taxonomy as a guide.

Subsequently, I recount both the rationale and the coping mechanisms that ensues. Combining these elements has allowed me to develop a theoretical framework for microaggressions and their cumulative effects. The meaning of the images presented are interpreted differently by the participants that is grounded in a critical race consciousness based on their ethnicity and culture. In the figure below I capture and describe the elements that I have included in my microaggression framework, in order to analyse the participants’ responses.



**Figure 11: Elements of microaggression framework: Individual analysis**

The photos became a means for discussion with the participants. By exploration of their various encounters with the microaggressions presented in the images, the everyday experiences of the participants emerged through the process. For the most part the microaggressions encountered were from personal experience but in

some instances the participants observed the microaggression occurring on another in their company or vicinity.

The research participants were shown a selection of photos and were asked if they had any personal experience of what they saw in the images. Their answers are collated as a reaction to the microaggression and where applicable their emotional response is revealed as recipients of the microaggression. With a race consciousness focus I was specifically looking for patterns and commonalities in how the microaggressions were experienced based on the ethnic identity groupings of the student research participants as self-ascribed; African, Asian and White European. I also analysed how they responded to the experience.

In discussing the findings regarding microaggressions I have taken a different approach to the format from the other themes in this chapter. Under each microaggression image I discuss the findings, and the participants' reactions and emotional responses to the microaggressions. According to O'Reilly (2012), this approach "brings the reader to the present and immediacy of the fieldwork process, in a way that a single voiced 'write-up' after the event can often lose" (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 217). This approach endeavours to enrich and sensitise the discussion in this section so that the findings represent the students' voices and their ways of knowing. I feel this style suits the responses and emotions which the photographs evoked for participants, as distinct from the conversational flow of the interviews which is represented by the quotations used earlier. Consistent with a CRT approach, both stylistic conventions present the findings from the position of giving a voice to a minority population (Haque et al., 2019).





**Microaggression Image 1<sup>16</sup>: “No, where are you really from?”**

Microaggression image one is a microinsult that is identified by communications that are rude and insensitive to an individual’s identify or ethnicity. Ten participants responded to this image. Seven responses were from students of African origin and all revealed that they get asked this question frequently and can understand this based on their skin colour (Birch, Nigerian Irish; Beech, Nigerian; Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents; Fir, Nigerian; Holly, African; Sycamore; Black African and Yew; Nigerian Irish). Differentiating between intent and impact is important with this microinsult as it is layered and nuanced. Non-Black people are attributed to asking this question (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents) whereas Black people will ask where are your parents from (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents; Sycamore; Black African), thereby acknowledging that the parents were born elsewhere but that the

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>

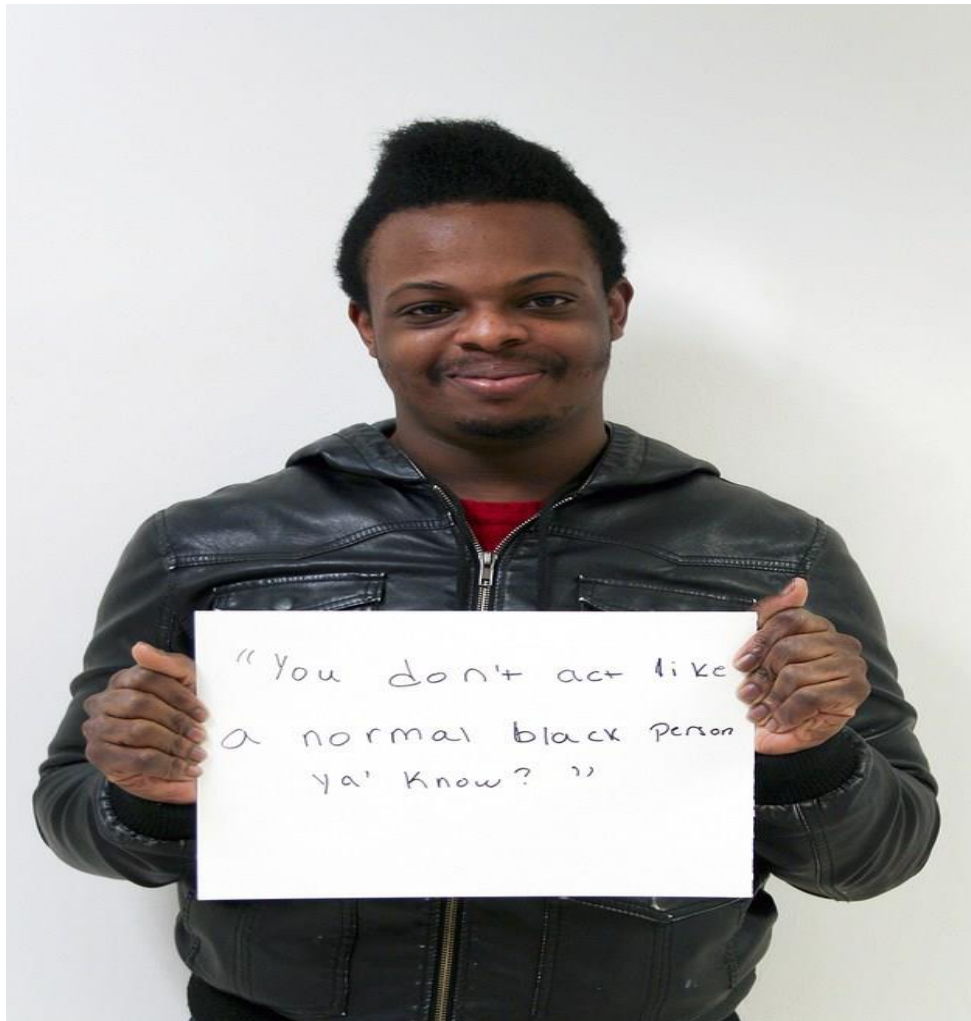
participant was born/resides in Ireland. The intention here is to figure out heritage by asking where the parents are from and the impact is not to insult when Blacks ask Blacks this question. However, non-Blacks asking where are you really from is attributed to being a microinsult (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents; Elm, Nigerian) along with the manner of how the question is asked (Holly, African). The remaining three responses were from an Asian student who felt that the microaggression was an over-reaction; 'It's a bit too much really' (Pine, Filipino) and two White European students who commented that they can understand why this question is asked, that it has not been asked of them on campus but that off campus it has been frequently asked (Spruce Romanian, Larch, Romanian)..

Participants' emotional responses range from not concerned and understanding (Beech, Nigerian; Elm, Nigerian; Yew, Nigerian Irish) to agitated (Fir, Nigerian; Holly, African; Elm, Nigerian; Pine, Filipino). Other responses include coping and self-care strategies; 'Sometimes I just say that I am Irish' (Birch, Nigerian Irish), 'they don't mean it but it's just they want to know more' (Holly, African), 'Depends who's asking, if it's a good friend, you don't mind. Someone else says it, [it is] stereotyping' (Elm, Nigerian).

**Table 8: Microaggression: "No, where are you really from?", Reactions and Emotional Response**

Reaction	Emotional Response
<p><b>I get that a lot</b> (Birch, Nigerian Irish).</p> <p>I would agree with that, mostly non Blacks [will ask] where are you really from. Blacks will say where are your parents from (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).</p> <p><b>Oh my God, I get asked that a lot, even when I am trying to rent a room and that just happened recently, I call up the number and asked her is the room available, when I can see it, view the room,</b></p>	<p><b>Sometimes I just say that I am Irish</b> (Birch, Nigerian Irish).</p> <p>Blacks acknowledge the difference of being born here, but parents from Nigeria (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).</p> <p><b>You can't do that now, that's discrimination</b> (Fir, Nigerian).</p>

<p><b>and she goes where are you from? I said I am from Meath and she said no, what is your nationality? I said I am Nigerian and she said Oh, I will let you know and hung up the phone</b> (Fir, Nigerian).</p> <p>I get what she means, obviously she's Asian (Holly, African).</p> <p>I get that a lot, my country is a very small country... I say I'm from [country named], they say; where is that? (Sycamore, Black African).</p> <p><b>I've got that a couple of times</b> (Yew, Nigerian Irish).</p>	<p>It's not that it comes across as condescending or anything...they don't mean it but it's just they want to know more but they ask it weirdly...it's the tone of voice, the gestures (Holly, African).</p> <p><b>Depends who's asking, if it's a good friend, you don't mind. Someone else says it, [it is] stereotyping</b> (Elm, Nigerian).</p> <p>I don't mind it's a small country I don't expect people to know where is [country named]... I don't describe myself as Irish (Sycamore, Black African).</p> <p><b>Obviously I understand</b> (Yew, Nigerian Irish).</p>
--	--



**Microaggression Image 2<sup>17</sup>: “You don’t act like a normal Black person, ya’ know?”**

Microaggression image two is an example of a microinvalidation indicated by excluding, negating or nullifying a person based on their ethnicity. Consistent with the literature the students’ emotional responses in many cases go unchallenged and the stress caused by the microaggression is managed through ‘emotion-focused coping’ and is passive and accepting, indicative of internal self-care (Sue et al., 2019, p. 16; Lazarus, 2000). Sue et al., (2019) encourage microinterventions to disarm microaggressions and to “enhance psychological well-being” in the right context especially if a power imbalance exists between the perpetrator and the target (Sue et al., 2019, p. 16). For Beech, Nigerian; Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents; Elm, Nigerian; Sycamore; Black African and Pine; Filipino, it was the stereotype of

---

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>

Black people and Asian people (Oak, Irish Pakistani) that resonated and the familiarity with hearing the stereotype.

“They expect us to play loud music...walk around playing loud music and dressing They expect us to play loud music...walk around playing loud music and dressing like they do in hip hop” (Beech, Nigerian).

“That’s highly stereotypical, because you are African or Nigerian or whatever you must shout, or you must argue back at people, or you have to be the best at dancing, or you must love Afro beads...I can’t stand the music myself” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

“What’s a normal Black person, stereotyped from music? You hear Black people on the TV saying this and that. I don’t fit that” (Elm, Nigerian).

“Yeah that’s true as well people would say that to me a lot. [What does a normal Black person act like?] I don’t know how to explain it, it’s a different culture” (Sycamore, Black African).

“People in the common room...the stereotype as in loud, hip-hop, it’s a different culture” (Pine, Filipino).

“...this statement is judging a book by its cover, you don’t act like the normal Black person. Ok, what does a normal Black person act like, they are seeing it from TV” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

“I don’t act like a typical Asian girl,’ I get that...” (Oak, Irish Pakistani).

I find it significant in the responses above that the students’ reveal that they can become the stereotype projected of their ethnicity, based on lack of knowledge and lack of contact with difference.

For Willow (Irish Nigerian) the stereotype had more of a negative impact when they were younger.

“When I was younger it annoyed me” (Willow, Irish Nigerian).

Birch (Nigerian Irish) was quick to declare their dislike for afro beads in hair and to disassociate with the stereotype.

“I don’t like Afro beads” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

For Spruce (Romanian) the stereotype was interpreted as positive and justified because their nationality, in their experience have always been negatively stereotyped.

“It has happened me in a positive way because most Romanians are stereotyped in a negative way...people say I would not have thought you were Romanian because you are so X,Y and it’s positive” (Spruce, Romanian).

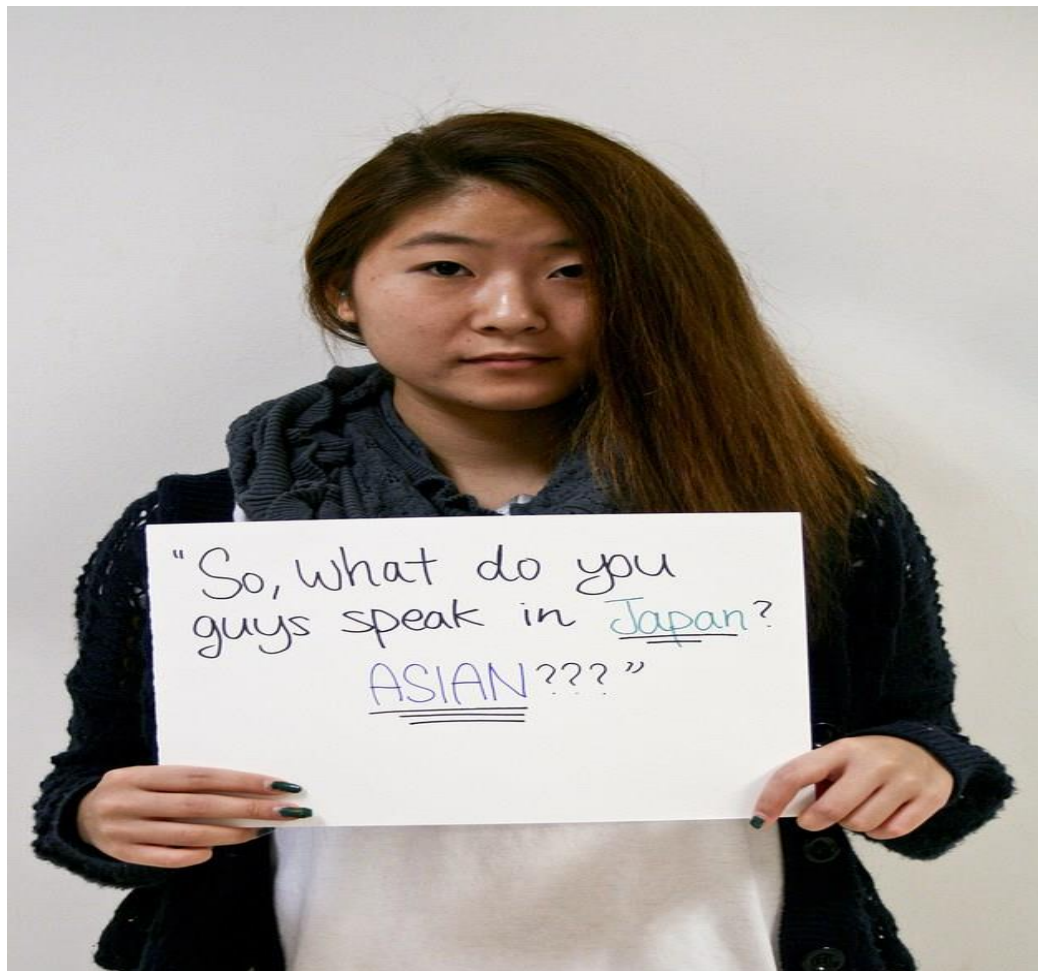
Beech (Nigerian) rationalised the comment as a quip but acknowledged that it was in earnest too, depending on the tone. Beech (Nigerian) internalised the comment through self-care by admitting that they are not concerned by it.

“as a joke, but you can tell they're trying to be serious but I don't really care” (Beech, Nigerian).

A higher education environment is an ideal context to build awareness and appreciation of difference. Sue and Sue (2016) claim that the majority White culture go about daily life in an invisible veil of whiteness. “Their naiveté about race and racism and lack of development of a critical race consciousness makes it very difficult for them to recognize bias or discrimination” (Sue et al., 2019, p. 133). The *Oreo* biscuit metaphor discussed by Elm (Nigerian) below reflected integration for him, acceptance into to the dominant culture and I interpreted from the smile on Elm’s face when discussing this metaphor, that it was almost a badge of honour. Snævaar (2010) states that a metaphor transforms reality through a mental image and that helps us to better understand what a participant is trying to articulate

when describing something. “Metaphors disclose, i.e., they show rather than say” (Snævarr, 2010, p. 379).

“My friends call me an *Oreo* [biscuit], I'm Black on the outside but White on the inside. It's me it's my personality I choose to be this way. If I was to speak to my family members back home I would feel disconnected...It's not that bad to be different. I'd rather be different than the same to everyone else, my own uniqueness that makes me stand out” (Elm, Nigerian).



**Microaggression Image 3<sup>18</sup>: “So, what do you guys speak in Japan? Asian???”**

Microaggression image three represents a microinsult, identified by communications that are rude and insensitive to an individual’s identify or ethnicity. The assumptions made and the lack of education and knowledge

---

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>

concerning national languages anchored the meaning that I interpreted from this microaggression. Seven of the participants from all ethnicities revealed the blatant lack of knowledge from people on languages spoken in their country. ‘African’ and ‘Indian’ were referred to as languages from the participants’ experiences. (Beech, Nigerian; Birch, Nigerian Irish; Holly, African; Elm, Nigerian; Sycamore, Black African; Willow, Irish Nigerian; Oak, Irish Pakistani and Rowan, Indian). Santos’ coloniality of power and knowledge is mirrored here by “reducing the understandings of the world to the logic of Western epistemology” (Santos, 2005, p. xxxiii).

The participants’ emotional responses vary from justification for the lack of knowledge on behalf of the giver of the microaggression (Beech, Nigerian; Holly, African; Pine, Filipino) to annoyance (Birch, Nigerian Irish), ignorance (Larch, Romanian) and shock (Oak, Irish Pakistani). The range of emotions demonstrate the impact on the participants (Sue et al., 2019).

**Table 9: Microaggression: “So, what do you guys speak in Japan? Asian???”, Reactions and Emotional Response**

Reaction	Emotional Response
<i>Nigerian is not a language, but a lot of people ask me do you speak Nigerian</i> (Beech, Nigerian).	<i>I guess they just don't know it's not a language</i> (Beech, Nigerian).
<b><i>I'm like African, it's not even a language, it's a continent</i></b> (Birch, Nigerian Irish).	<b><i>That one really annoys me</i></b> (Birch, Nigerian Irish).
<i>I'm South African, we've eleven languages in our country</i> (Holly, African).	<i>You did it to me...the cliques.</i> (Holly, African).
<b><i>Yeah, I've heard that</i></b> (Elm, Nigerian).	<b><i>I heard this; tribes trying to fight another tribe, is that your tribe?</i></b> (Elm, Nigerian).



<p><i>In the campus, no (Larch, Romanian).</i></p> <p><b><i>Assuming that because you're Indian you speak Indian, no it's Hindi (Oak, Irish Pakistani).</i></b></p> <p>[People] <i>Assume I speak Hindi, I don't (Rowan, Indian).</i></p> <p><b><i>They ask me what I speak I tell them I speak Spanish, they are very surprised in Ireland .... [Do they ask if you speak African?] they do yes (Sycamore, Black African).</i></b></p> <p><i>They would ask what I speak in Nigeria...Nigerian? When there's three main languages [in Nigeria] (Willow, Irish Nigerian).</i></p> <p><b><i>They ask me what do you speak in the Philippines, I say Tagalog, that's the native [language] (Pine, Filipino).</i></b></p>	<p><i>But outside it is unbelievable how some people are so ignorant (Larch, Romanian).</i></p> <p><b><i>Where I work is a very diverse place. When they hear me speak in Pakistani they're quite shocked (Oak, Irish Pakistani).</i></b></p> <p><b><i>...they find it hard to pronounce so I say Filipino (Pine, Filipino).</i></b></p>
--	--



**Microaggression Image 4<sup>19</sup>: “Courtney, I never see you as a Black girl.” #open your eyes**

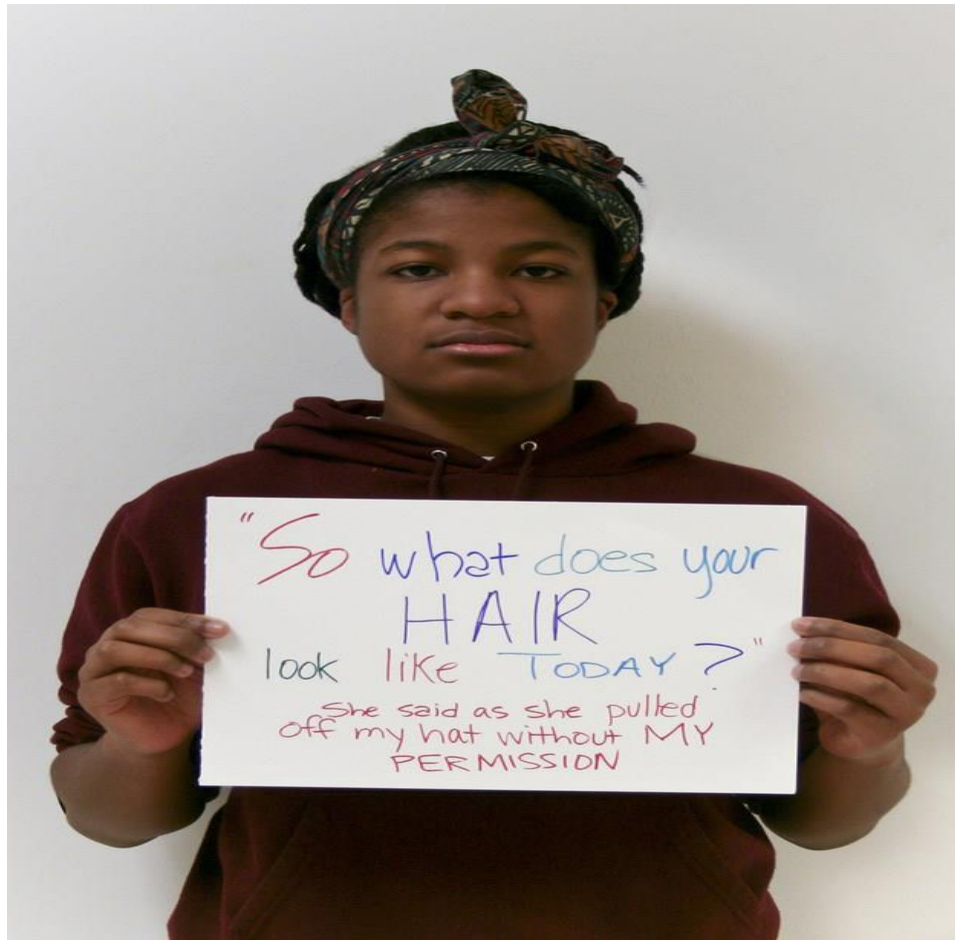
Microaggression image four represents a microinsult, identified by communications that are rude and insensitive to an individual’s identify or ethnicity. An isolated incident of being on the receiving end of a microaggression is not necessarily striking. It is the slow accumulation over time that creates an isolating experience for the African students in this study (Beech, Nigerian; Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents; Holly, African and Yew; Nigerian Irish). It can be difficult to identify a microaggression when other explanations seem perfectly acceptable and reasonable in the context (Sue et al., 2007). At times it may even appear as what Thomas refers to as “macrononsense” and thereby minimise the harmful impact of microaggressions (Thomas, 2008, p. 274; Lilienfeld, 2017). This appears to be the case with two participants’ emotional responses in table ten below (Spruce, Romanian; Pine, Filipino).

---

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>

**Table 10: Microaggression: “Courtney, I never see you as a Black girl.” #open your eyes, Reactions and Emotional Response**

Reaction	Emotional Response
<p>If you don't act the way they think you are meant to act then they think he's one of us. So they don't see you as Black because you don't act like the Black stereotype, what's the stereotype. [What's the stereotype?] I guess loud bossy (Beech, Nigerian).</p> <p><b>That is just not smart, it's a stereotype</b> (Spruce, Romanian).</p>	<p>If you're real passionate about something they think you are angry but you're just passionate about something (Beech, Nigerian).</p> <p><b>I'm getting really annoyed.</b> [Upsetting for participant] (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).</p> <p>There's a fine line between banter and disrespect (Holly, African).</p> <p><b>It's not too bad</b> (Elm, Nigerian).</p> <p>Even though the words are nice it's a really mean thing to say because it's like, that's who I am, it's me (Larch, Romanian).</p> <p><b>A lot of these comments seem like they're not thought through, they are dumb. I've never really taken offense, I don't care, it doesn't matter</b> (Spruce), Romanian.</p> <p>More and more people need to actually see that, what she said...(Yew, Nigerian Irish).</p> <p><b>I don't really get this...people don't really mean it (Pine, Filipino).</b></p>



**Microaggression Image 5<sup>20</sup>: "So what does your hair look like today?", she said as she pulled off my hat with my permission.**

Microaggression image five represents a microassault, revealed through a verbal or non-verbal attack that is not meant to be hurtful. It was the discussion of this microassault through the visual prompt above that reverberated with eleven of the participants of African origin. Instances of this occurring were quick to come to mind with vivid descriptions accompanying their reactions. An invasion of personal space appears to be violated and causes the participant to experience discomfort and threatened;

"I said, do you mind...I would not go up and touch your hair, so please be respectful" (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

---

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>

“I have an irritation of people touching my hair...it does annoy me...and people stare at you” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

“To be honest you get so used to it, it’s been happening for so long that you are just numb to it now” (Fir, Nigerian).

“People touch it and he’s really sensitive to comments, for me I throw it off, for him it affects him, he says stop doing that” (Pine, Filipino).

One student strongly suggests that the same would happen me in Africa as my hair would be novel and would draw attention;

“Trust me, if you were in Africa they would be touching your hair too because it’s different...” (Elm, Nigerian).

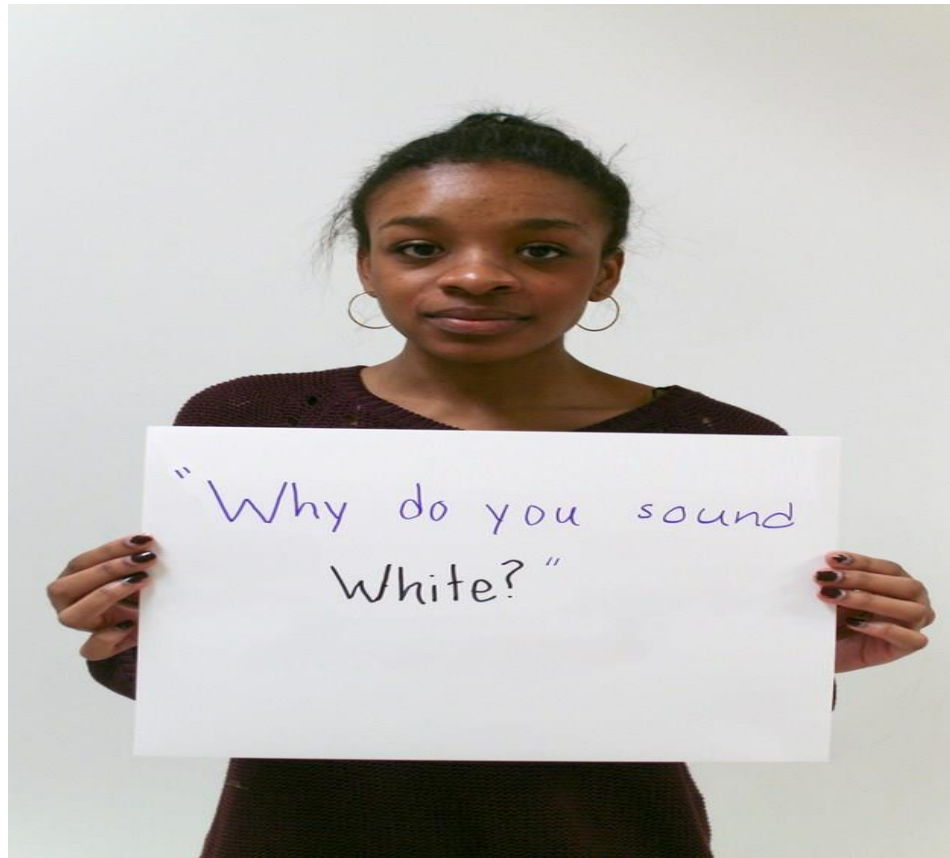
The symbolic domain from Integrated Threat Theory in this case points to an acceptable norm in a culture that is challenged or undermined when two different ethnic groups come in to contact with each. This questions the appropriate balance between curiosity and causing offence (Stephan & Stephan 2000, Stephan et al., 2005). More un-provoking responses have been not to care, allow others touch their hair, and attribute it to curiosity and not get offended;

“When they ask to touch it, I just go yeah sure, go on” (Fir, Nigerian).

“I don’t care, I just let them touch it” (Hazel, African Nigerian).

“It’s curiosity I don’t find it too offensive” (Elm, Nigerian).

“Just curious, but not much. No, I don’t really mind” (Sycamore, Black African).



**Microaggression Image 6<sup>21</sup>: “Why do you sound White?”**

Microaggression image six represents a microinvalidation, indicated by excluding, negating or nullifying a person based on their ethnicity. The concept of liminality is useful for understanding inclusion and exclusion that some participants experience on campus. Coined by Arnold van Gennep (1909), and advanced further by Turner (1967) a cultural anthropologist, liminality in this context refers to “in between-ness”, “neither here nor there”, a time and feeling of transitioning for some participants (Turner, 1967, p. 95). This feeling of transitioning is evident from the student participants from all ethnicities;

“Somebody on the bus told me you sound proper Irish. The Black people in my class tell me you don't even sound Irish at all. Which one is it....,”  
(Beech, Nigerian).

---

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>

“My friends were asking me, chilling one of the days and a conversation come up, Why does ‘X’ not sound Irish? He’s been here the majority of his life and he sounds American but he’s never been to America. I learned my English watching American TV” (Elm, Nigerian).

“I have been told I sound American, I’m not from America” (Spruce, Romanian).

“Yes they do, but not to me. For example some Africans born here, they say you have a good Irish accent, where do you come from, but not to me” (Sycamore, Black African).

Accent and English language competence came up as a marker of identity and integration (Tran and Lee, 2014);

“Even if you speak English it's a totally different dialect just the way you pronounce stuff out...Even Black people do it as well they say she sounds real White or something” (Beech, Nigerian).

“I’ve gotten that at work when I am talking in English...your accent is so nice...why do they expect my English to be bad” (Oak, Irish Pakistani).

“My English is better than my Romanian because I have been here so long” (Spruce, Romanian).

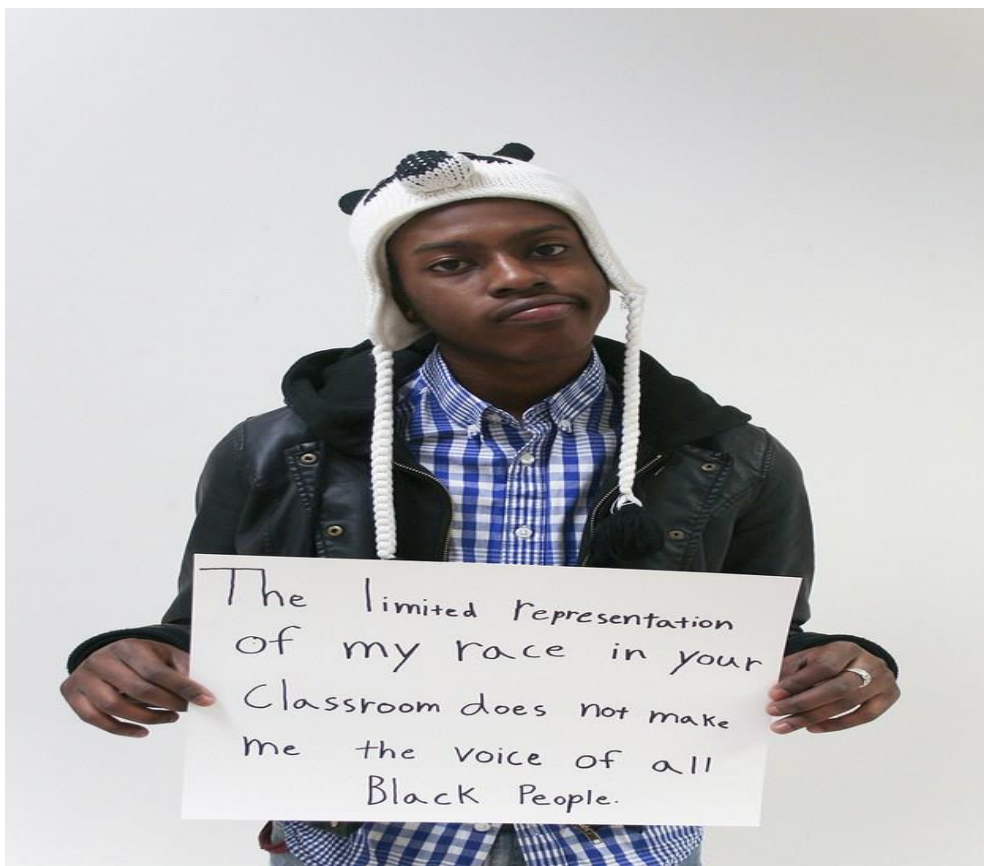
The above are examples of categorising people into groups is based on low conceptual mapping (Crisp & Meleady, 2012). The categorisation operates when adapting to a largely monocultural ancestral environment. Environments where there is diversity in nationality, ethnicity and religion require a move away from coalition detection and instead to coalition building in order to resolve and reclassify people (Crisp & Turner, 2011; Cosmides, Tooby, & Kurzban, 2003). Coalition building becomes necessary to accommodate multiple dimensions of diversity for social affiliation.

**Table 11: Microaggression: “Why do you sound White?”, Reactions and Emotional Response**

Reaction	Emotional Response
<p>Somebody on the bus told me you sound proper Irish. The Black people in my class tell me you don't even sound Irish at all (Beech, Nigerian).</p> <p><b>My friends were asking me, chilling one of the days and a conversation come up, Why does 'X' not sound Irish? He's been here the majority of his life and he sounds American but he's never been to America. I learned my English watching American TV (Elm, Nigerian).</b></p> <p><b>I've gotten that at work when I am talking in English...your accent is so nice (Oak, Irish Pakistani).</b></p>	<p>Which one is it...Even if you speak English it's a totally different dialect just the way you pronounce stuff out...Even Black people do it as well they say she sounds real White or something (Beech, Nigerian).</p> <p>That's again nice words, cruel meaning. I didn't come across this here either, but I guess in America even though they come from all kinds of cultures they can be a bit culture ignorant. And they stick only on their own culture. And they see only in front. But here in Ireland it's different I am one of the people which didn't really come across racial comments, maybe once or twice, but in 18 years I think that's OK. I didn't really feel discriminated (Larch, Romanian).</p> <p><b>...why do they expect my English to be bad (Oak, Irish Pakistani).</b></p>



<p>I have been told I sound American, I'm not from America (Spruce, Romanian).</p> <p><b>Yes they do, but not to me. For example some Africans born here, they say you have a good Irish accent, where do you come from, but not to me</b> (Sycamore, Black African)</p> <p>If somebody grows up in a specific area their accent will sound like that (Yew, Nigerian Irish).</p> <p><b>I've seen that</b> (Pine, Filipino).</p>	<p>My English is better than my Romanian because I have been here so long (Spruce, Romanian).</p>
---	---



**Microaggression Image 7<sup>22</sup>: The limited representation of my race in your classroom does not make me the voice of all Black people.**

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>

Microaggression image seven represents a microassault, revealed through a verbal or non-verbal attack that is not meant to be hurtful. The perpetual foreigner stereotype as a racialised term is pertinent to this microaggression whereby naturalised and native-born citizens are perceived as foreign because they belong to minority groups in a country (Dei & Hilowle, 2018). The perpetual foreigner of immigrant versus native born status is a compelling reminder of the connections among policies, institutions, and the individual lives and identities of students whereby the policing of whiteness can be palpable at times for the participants (Dei & Hilowle, 2018; Devos & Banaji, 2005).

**Table 12: Microaggression: “The limited representation of my race in your classroom does not make me the voice of all Black people”, Reactions and Emotional Response**

Reaction	Emotional Response
<p>You might just be coming to college to get a degree get a job. You don't want to be the next Martin Luther King (Beech, Nigerian).</p>	<p>Some people just want to make you the voice because you are the only Black guy. Even for the photo voice you made us do some guy came up to me and asked me to go to the common room to take a picture for him because all the Black guys would accept me going over to them I said no just go take a picture of the...He knows me I'm not the ways of a typical Black guy (Beech, Nigerian).</p>
<p><b>The majority of people think I am Nigerian...[has] happened before, but not [on campus] (Holly, African).</b></p>	<p><b>I understand it (Holly, African).</b></p>
<p>Maybe because I am the only Romanian in the class. It's not really sticking out my</p>	

<p>Romanian ethnicity you know (Larch, Romanian).</p> <p>I was only Black person in my class in secondary school from first to third year...I was the representation of a Black person. In [county named] especially you wouldn't see a lot of Black people especially in primary school (Willow, Irish Nigerian).</p> <p><b>That relates to the other one on 'you don't act like a Black person'</b> (Yew, Nigerian Irish).</p> <p>They ask me what is it like in the Philippines...the Asian stereotypical thing that I get asked is do you really eat dogs, that's the biggest thing and for me (Pine, Filipino).</p>	<p><b>The information that you got from one Romanian person should not be judged as the whole community, that's big for me too! A lot of things people assume of me are very inaccurate</b> (Spruce, Romanian).</p> <p>I didn't really care, that's the way it was (Willow, Irish Nigerian).</p> <p>I do get offended...comparing food in Philippines and Ireland, there's more diversity of food in Philippines...it's not legal. In China they do eat dog and we're stereotyped (Pine, Filipino).</p>
--	---

Coping mechanisms and self-care are evident from the participants through an understanding of why the question is asked that constitutes the microaggression to a numbing and normalisation of the comments because they have been so frequent in nature. The new strategic framework developed by Sue et al., (2019) addresses microaggressions through microinterventions and displays effective

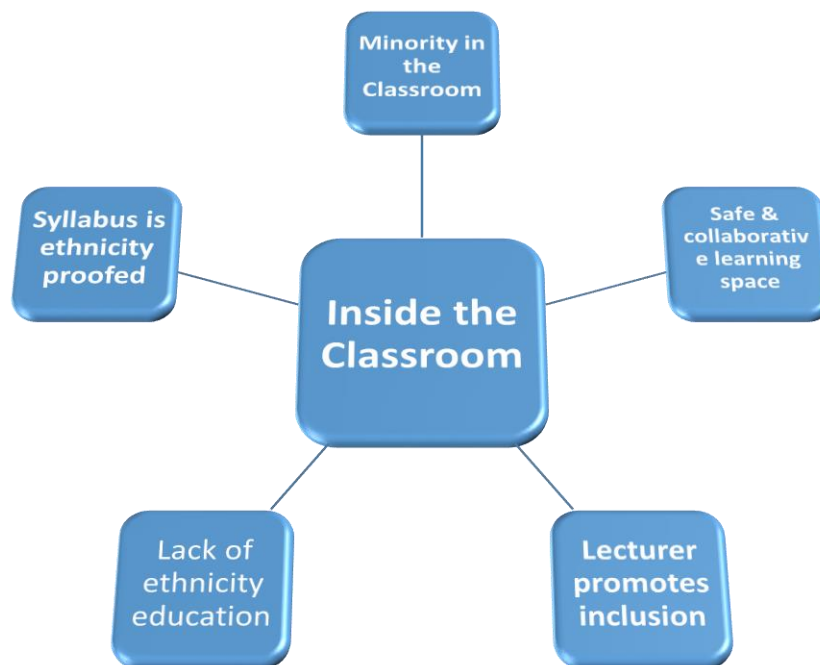
action steps and dialogues for targets, allies and bystanders; “the strategic goals of microinterventions are to (a) make the ‘invisible’ visible, (b) disarm the microaggression, (c) educate the offender..., and (d) seek external support when needed” (Sue et al., 2019, p. 8).

It is important to acknowledge that context and environmental considerations are recommended before pursuing microintervention strategies. Racial microaggressions can have a different meaning in an intra-racial setting (Mekawi & Todd, 2018). Microaggressions are reflections of biases and stereotypes that we have learned, acquired or been told. While microinterventions can lead to greater understanding and knowledge about microaggressions, an internal self-awareness is vital. Inattention to acknowledging acts of exclusion as a result of microaggressions can result in a failure to take action in minimising their occurrence in the future (Bhopal & Chapman, 2019). Cultural humility competence (Masters et al., 2019) challenges us to effectively approach the BME students we encounter, by connecting with and understanding the cultural nuances in our context and also to resist the stereotypes that we may have assembled, by adopting the stance of other stance (Davis et al., 2016). Cultural humility holds a mirror up to microaggressions to help mitigate their negative impacts (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998).

## **Inside the classroom**

One of the key opportunities for integration on campus is inside the classroom (Gillies, 2017; Tienda, 2013; Ahmed, 2012; Fraser, 2005; Lynch & Baker, 2005). This research question investigates BME students' perceptions of teaching, learning and assessment environments on campus. The concept of belonging inside the classroom is reviewed next guided by CRT principles of the social construction of race; different disciplines integrating knowledge using CRT to form a new holistic approach; challenging the dominant ideology of White privilege and a commitment to social justice in education (Brookfield, 2019; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

In analysing this section of the fieldwork, the concept of inclusion or exclusion inside the classroom was a main code. Sub-codes were generated from this line of questioning on; being a minority in the classroom, if the classroom is a safe and collaborative learning space, how the lecturer promotes inclusion, if there is a lack of education on ethnicity and whether the syllabus is ethnicity proofed. Addressing this theme of BME students' perceptions of inclusion inside the classroom in captured diagrammatically below.



**Figure 12: Inside the classroom – Aspects of inclusion and belonging**

### **Being a minority in the classroom**

Five participants in total answered this question of what it feels like to be a minority in the classroom. The responses came from a White European, African and Asian perspective, representing all the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the participants in this study. Two of students communicate a positive association with

being a minority or the 'only one' in the classroom. It made them feel unique and provided a source of curiosity to their classmates.

"Not bad, sometimes you even have some advantages, people don't really know the culture, what it's like and they really want to know, so you feel like an interesting person for them when you are the only one who can talk about this, and they want to know what places to visit in Poland and you feel really good then, and you tell ten people sitting beside you and they listen to you and you are the only one that knows this basically, so yeah, it's very good" (Alder, Polish).

"I am from [country named] and there's not that many [nationality disclosed] in Ireland so I feel like I would use the word unique. I don't feel any different because I know that what I bring to the table is different to what other people bring because...I bring something else" (Ash, African Irish).

For another student they had a less positive experience of being a minority in the classroom but got used to it over time.

"It's a little bit difficult but as time passes you get to settle in and stuff" (Aspen, South East Asian).

If our students continuously find themselves in homogenous groups of like-minded people for classroom discussions and teamwork, then our learning may lack other perspectives. Furthermore, BME students can feel like they are the only one in the classroom which may affect their sense of belonging (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016).

### **The classroom as a safe and collaborative learning space**

Fifteen of the nineteen participants acknowledged the classroom as a safe and collaborative learning space based on the maturity levels of students, respect for each other, lecturer initiatives and module content.

"For me, it's safe places, we're of a certain age now, you cannot be just going around saying anything you want, you have to respect the other person, mutual respect" (Ash, African Irish).

“I remember back in the tutorial, the lecturer asked me to read out a sentence, and I mis-pronounced some words and other students [started] laughing and I kinda’ feel like I shouldn’t do that next time. I should just keep quiet to myself. The lecturer actually stood up for me and said this is not a good thing to do and at that time I feel safe that the lecturer stand up for me” (Aspen, South East Asian).

“I'd say yeah I don't feel body language that I'm discriminated. Lecturers are doing the best they can to make us feel included” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

“Yes, especially I find that really interesting because one of our modules is [name of module] and the debates and the conversation we have in the classroom, I find it so interesting and it just opens your mind to more stuff. You might think I was always open-minded about that. The way you talk about something completely different to someone else, hearing their opinion. It's a wow and it is completely safe to do that you feel like your voice is heard at its OK to speak” (Fir, Nigerian).

It is encouraging to reflect on the students’ responses. They find that the classroom is a safe place to learn, that their voice is heard and that the lecturer protects them. I asked staff members if they had noticed discrimination in their classrooms based on ethnicity.

“I have discrimination...a lack of respect sometimes, occasionally if a non-Irish student is making a presentation I sometimes find that the Irish students just don’t bother listening or stop paying attention in a way that they wouldn’t [if it was an Irish student]...I do find that students from ethnic minorities sit closer to the front and might ask more questions [other two participants in agreement] and I can find Irish students impatient...but actually the questions are relevant...but it is not wasting class time in any way, and I find that offensive” (Corrib).

“When they pick their own groups...they gravitate towards each other and naturally there’s exclusion...[example from a number of years ago follows]...they had to go in groups of 4 for a project...[another lecturer had same problem]...they all gravitated towards each other and invariably there were people who were left out and they wrote a letter to me [and the other lecturer]...saying they felt they had been excluded and they felt that it was on the grounds of race...we ended up re-jigging the thing to sort it out...and it caused rifts in the class that carried into the following year, talking to other lecturers, there were things said that couldn’t be unsaid amongst the students. We sorted it out eventually but that was first year” (Sheelin).

“There would be incidences of racial slurs and I’ve also noticed exclusion in [module named]...in the first exercise they are allowed to form their own groups and it’s done deliberately between myself and [another colleague] to see how they form groups but then we realise very quickly, we assign groups...to stop that behaviour, it is very blatant, the exclusion is really quite painful to watch” (Ennell).

If educators continue to let or allow students organise themselves along national or ethnic origins for breakout sessions, activities and team assignments then this becomes a missed opportunity to learn about and from others (Tienda, 2013). A Fanonian approach to pedagogy calls in to question safe spaces for discussion in the classroom as this ultimately maintains a comfort zone for White people. Disruptive pedagogies that confront racial power are most disorienting for White people who benefit from racial power. (Leonardo & Porter, 2010). Critical race pedagogy is risky and uncomfortable (Lynn, 1999). Leonardo and Porter maintain that “race dialogue is almost never safe for people of color in mixed-racial company” (Leonardo & Porter; 2010, p. 147). A brave space pedagogical approach (Arao & Clemens, 2013; Pawlowski, 2019) offers an alternative to conventional safe spaces by “redefining classroom space as a place of risk, educators encourage students to experiment with their self-understanding, and to promote the



audacious notion that they may change their minds by the end of term” (Leonardo & Porter, 2010, p. 153). Brave spaces do not promote a hostile classroom environment but rather support conditions for developing a growth mind-set through race dialogue.

### **Student perspective on inclusion inside the classroom**

There were mixed responses from the student participants to this question. They range from the lecturer trying to do their best, to a feeling of being singled out or marginalised based on ethnicity.

“I think they are doing the best they can to make us feel included” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

“I don't like it when they say join with this person, I prefer to join groups by myself but don't pinpoint me, ‘Oh I'm the Black girl join with the Black girl’” (Holly, African).

“Some teachers might have favouritism to other cultures but sometimes you do feel that, let's say sometimes I'll be trying to ask a question in class, putting my hands up, but they tend to pick other people and I feel a little bit belittled. That's just how it feels like, maybe they don't mean it, or they didn't see me but it just felt like that. [Is that often?] No, thank God, it's not often” (Hazel, African Nigerian).

“Sometimes the lecturer would give a little bit more detailed answers to Irish students who asked the same question. That happened a couple of times and it's upsetting. I remember, one of my classes [name] asked the teacher a question and the teacher said ‘I can't help you, it's your [assessment],’ and a White girl went up to her and she explained it to her straight away and [name] was so upset. We were all upset” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

When singled out in the classroom based on their ethnicity, for some BME students in this study it manifests in being interrupted or overlooked when contributing in class to an academic discussion, and that their contributions were under more scrutiny by White peers and staff. Many lecturers are ill-equipped to address diversity issues in the classroom. Merryfield (2000) cites the lack of heterogeneity as the reason for this ill-preparedness. Another student commented on preferential treatment for White students and felt terrible after the incident;

“[lecturer] pays more attention to the White students than the Black students. I don’t think [lecturer] was being racist but I felt really shite after the conversation with [the lecturer] that day. My overall view of [the campus] is they are inclusive and they are really good in terms of different ethnicities but there are incidents that are from individuals, and that has nothing to do with [overall campus]” (Hazel, African Nigerian).

It is pertinent to observe that the student above views the campus as inclusive but when they encounter a racist or discriminatory experience they blame the individual for their behaviour without an acknowledgment that this may be a systemic campus culture issue rather than an isolated incident, that needs to be explored from a critical race consciousness perspective.

When students lack the awareness of racial inequalities embedded within the campus climate and curriculum and pedagogical approach, this can be symptomatic of the prevalent majoritarian view of whiteness as a concept in higher education (Madriaga, 2018; Bain, 2018; Warikoo, 2016). One student’s response was that the mainstream culture should be the one to follow in the classroom, and that the Eurocentric view, in this case, is the standard to adhere to, based on geographic location;

“I would not like them to go out of their way to make us feel more comfortable. They should have a certain standard they can't just like change some aspects of cultural teaching because of us the general culture is good enough” (Beech, Nigerian).

When I asked academic staff if they believed that as the campus becomes more ethnically diverse, they felt pressure to include diversity content in their courses. Their responses captured issues concerning the intersectionality of ethnicity with religion, and the influence of professional industry standards and societal developments on curriculum content.

“I know for myself I do, for example when I am teaching ‘X content’ I have taken out as much as I can about gambling, and adjusted my own content [refers to students’ religious beliefs and haram] because it makes everything more clear cut...inclusive...” (Key).

“One of the interesting things is whether to teach something or not because it’s haram or not...I think it’s more mindful...I’d be aware of who is in front of me, but I’m not sure I’d avoid having an example of something that might offend or cause discomfort in my classroom...I’m not sure that is being authentic...I don’t think you should ignore a topic just because it might not sit well with everyone in the room” (Ennell).

“Our modules are underpinned by equality, diversity and inclusion guidelines in practice and that comes all the way through in all the modules because they are dealing with children and trying to teach that equality piece from here up so absolutely, from our end” (Ree).

“I would say we have made changes based out of the needs in the professions and practice where we prepare students...and we have pushed for those changes but it is also comes from external panels that they need to work in multicultural contexts and they need to be prepared for that” (Gill).

“I would say societal developments have driven it as much as being sensitive to the students sitting in front of you. Societal changes link in with [participant comment] about industry, they are feeding into things that are happening in society so that they can be properly reflected and they are relevant to them

industry. I'd look at society, macro as well as micro, as much as who is sitting in front of me...no point teaching something that is irrelevant" (Tay).

Based on academic staff responses, multicultural content in the curriculum is: sensitised to the audience by omitting potentially offensive examples; attempts to favour authenticity over feelings of uncomfortableness; is driven by industry standards and influenced by societal developments regarding diverse classrooms. As the "topic of race often provokes discomfort and defensiveness" (Akel, 2019, p. 4), a cultural humility approach among staff is pertinent here as it can ameliorate feelings of exclusion and marginalisation for BME students in conjunction with a brave spaces approach to pedagogy (Arao & Clemens, 2013; Pawlowski, 2019). Piecemeal attempts at inclusive curricula content appear to be taking place sporadically in the form of including isolated modules on diversity and inclusion, the use of TED talks and celebrating cultural events by the academic staff in this study. This echoes Madriaga's research of decolonising curricula in UK universities

### **The need for understanding ethnicity in higher education curricula**

According to Lynch and Baker (2005), by including marginalised groups in all aspects of the design and control of educational programmes we can learn about equalities and in so doing curtail privileged knowledge receiving all the recognition, at the expense of not including other ways of knowing. Goodman contends that connecting education to culture has the potential to confront how insular the traditional curriculum can be, by linking the classroom to the homes and cultures of students (Goodman, 2017).

"Maybe there should be more because not a lot of people [do not] understand other people's backgrounds, cultures" (Willow, Irish Nigerian).

"Should be foundation set in first year (to study ethnicity)" (Hazel, African Nigerian).

"I think definitely there is [lack of education on ethnicity/diversity] because we have never studied [module named] until now [fourth year]. If you are

doing accounting or stuff like that, you can't but like if you are studying childcare, youth & community & applied social studies they should have that foundation since first year" (Fir, Nigerian).

"I would say yes, unless you are studying culture, geography or things like that they won't really know unless they are educated" (Ash, African Irish).

One student responded with there being no need to educate on diversity for fear of backlash and thereby accepting the status quo;

"If you keep on poking at it [and] keep going on about it, it's gonna get a lot weirder but I feel like at this point it's OK. If you feel offended just tell the person I don't like what you're saying and that should resolve the problem but if you keep poking at it, it's going to get worse" (Elm, Nigerian).

Another response was that there was no expectation to make changes to the core teaching or assessment because of ethnicity but acknowledging diversity in the student profile in class was welcome;

"I think there's a good standard, they recognise you are from a different background but we still have to do the same [assignment] at the end of the day. They can't really change the core teaching" (Beech, Nigerian).

Through self-awareness of our own cultural identity, biases, prejudices and stereotypes as educators, we are in a prime position to then adopt teaching approaches that are intercultural and designing curricula that reflects the diversity and social mix of our student demographics (Fitzsimons, 2017b; Masters et al., 2019). Working with a broad range of experiences that emerges from the compositional diversity of the student population presents a challenge for university teachers who want to move beyond academic knowledge and use knowledge generated from personal experience (Housee, 2011; Bowl, 2005).

## **Ethnicity proofing the syllabus**

Laird's (2011, 2005) model of course diversity and inclusivity is a good attempt at revealing the hidden curriculum. Student participants were asked if the content of the modules that lecturers delivered is diverse and inclusive.

"You can't expect it to really change that much because it is this region of the world. So, you can't expect them to be learning about the Asian stock exchange or something" (Beech, Nigerian).

"Actually, now you bring that up, most of our subjects...I don't think it has a lot of ethnicity except [name of module]" (Fir, Nigerian).

"Too many [diversity/culture] and too imposing to bring them all into one space...too much conflict. Celebrate with your group but no point to telling someone else who is from another culture" (Spruce, Romanian).

"Oh yeah it's mostly Ireland, there's no different examples from different countries, mostly it's on European or American [content] and you won't find anything else from other countries" (Sycamore, Black African).

"No not really, I feel like in this country they like to use what they have. If Nigeria had their own knowledge they would use that also...[Advice to include knowledge on other places]" (Yew, Nigerian Irish).

These findings show limited contributions from other cultures or multiple theoretical underpinnings as advocated by Laird (2011). Coupled with that was the finding that the students interviewed did not expect it to be any other way, due to geographical location or discipline of study. Eurocentric curricula often overlook the contributions to knowledge from ethnic minorities (Rowan, 2019; Andrews, 2019, 2016; Mirza, 2017). When I asked academic staff who participated in the focus groups if their content reflected multiple perspectives, they commented on this in their discipline specific context. Adopting different perspectives was challenging for the academic staff due to the lack of material, or their inability to locate knowledge from other parts of the world. There was also a fear of causing

upset due to the biased nature of the material on the reading list. From the responses, I interpret the inclusion of multicultural content to be happening in an unsystematic way and not as an institution wide action;

“With every topic that we discuss I would try to look at different cultures and how it’s viewed in different cultures...but I should do more. I always ask the students what’s it like in your country? I was trying to find articles that were written in different parts of the world...there isn’t much, that was my effort” (Allen).

“[Module changes because] of an increase in French speaking African students in our classes who are coming from a post-colonial context which is very, very, different, and over time we’ve had to introduce things looking at French speaking countries in Africa, the culture, the literature...and to get that voice of the person writing through French, who was pretty much a slave to some extent...the North African population who are second class citizens, increasingly we have included a lot on that, to include the voice of the immigrants...I’m not sure that would be done in the [traditional] universities but [on campus] when you have 3 or 4 African students in your class from Cameroon or where ever...we are a post-colonial country too, we identify with that too” (Corrib).

“It is very biased [reading list]. I teach on [programme named] as a White female and I’m trying to teach this diverse group and I just want to get out in that hour alive...I have to say that anything that I say here is not directed at anybody, this is just what we are teaching and the students get very upset by you naming it” (Ree).

The traditional canon of knowledge in higher education has been mono-cultural and Eurocentric in its content (Rowan, 2019; Ukpokodu, 2010). A curriculum is diminished if hegemonic content is normalised and does not include ‘other’ voices that have been marginalised. “We can tell students we understand that they are a diverse group, and that we recognise that they will certainly bring different hopes

and fears and skills and abilities into the environment. We can remind them this diversity reflects the reality of the wider population and that we are genuinely committed to ensuring that everyone is able to feel included and valued” (Rowan, 2019, p. 105). In an effort to better understand the enduring traditional canon of knowledge in Irish higher education, King’s (2015, 1991) dysconscious racism is helpful in understanding miseducation. Dysconscious racism in the classroom can limit a student’s outlook by maintaining the acceptance of social beliefs and standards that inadvertently bolster racial inequality (Anderson, 2019).

“We do accounting and finance so there isn't such a need to go into ethnicity or anything like that” (Birch, Nigerian Irish).

On the contrary, this student’s comment feeds into opponents of including diversity in the curriculum in that it only applies to arts and humanities. It is also evident in a general approach to teaching with one lecturer describing the normative tendency;

“I have to look at multiple theoretical perspectives in what I teach...but I do agree on ‘the usual suspects theory’ in sampling...in that the sample is from the same pool all the time...there is a tendency to do that, I’d agree” (Ennell).

Some dissent to opening up the curriculum to include other voices, cites the lack of minority students or little to no classroom diversity as justification for not infusing diversity (Grant, 1994; Ukpokodu, 2010). Proofing syllabi for inclusion and belonging is paramount on so many levels, e.g. ethnicity-proofed, gender-proofed, abilities-proofed etc. (Baker et al., 2004). Acknowledging Santos’ (2007) plea for ‘learning from the south’ will open up the canon of knowledge for different ways of knowing as normative and expected among the academy and the student population (Santos, 2007, p. 508). By including literature from outside the global north then the dominant student group will be encouraged to reinterpret their identity as the normal version of reality. According to Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017) large amounts of our socialisation is so internalised that we take for granted the norm of a given culture as natural, powerful and unavoidable, and in this case are not critical of Eurocentric curricula as the norm.



In Fung's *Connected Curriculum for Higher Education*, (2017), "...if diverse students are empowered to collaborate actively in research and enquiry at every level of the curriculum, engaging others with their ideas and findings, both education and research will be able to contribute more effectively to the global common good" (Fung, 2017, p. 3). Our diverse student population is a distinguishing characteristic that presents a challenge to us to make the campus an academic place of belonging for all and to challenge the White landscape as the norm. Clark's (1996) core feelings resonate here to encourage educators to create spaces to learn where the core feelings of significance (I matter), solidarity (I belong) and safety (free from physical and psychological harm) are experienced. This is evident in the responses of research participants;

"To be honest I didn't feel excluded so they are all great" (Larch, Romanian). ***I matter (significance).***

"There is a direct connection between feeling a sense of belonging and student satisfaction, obviously when you're satisfied in the college you tend to do better and well in your studies" (Irish-Filipino parents). ***I belong (solidarity).***

"...for me it's a safe place" (Ash, African Irish). ***I feel safe (no threat of harm).***

"To genuinely value the voices of an individual, an environment must be sufficiently intellectually charged to make participation worthwhile, and sufficiently hospitable to make participation likely" (Rowan, 2019, p. 123). This occurs in a multiplicity of ways and everyday processes as explored in the conclusions chapter.

## **Conclusion**

The research process produced broad and over-arching themes. In this chapter I presented the themes of name-identity-misrecognition, unmasking microaggressions and student experiences inside the classroom for the participants. Sensitised to a CRT approach that is race conscious, all the findings

and discussions were presented by advocating the interests of those who experience exclusion based on ethnicity and culture, by centralising the student voice.

Name, identity and misrecognition provide the foundations for an overarching theme. This theme includes the sub themes of mispronunciation of name, modification of name and misrecognition based on appearance or name. All student participants commented on the mispronunciation of their name. The mispronunciation of name or comments on name can become a microaggression even if unintentional. All staff involved in the research made an effort to learn the correct pronunciation of name, although they observed that this was not a campus wide staff approach. The imposition of not learning the correct pronunciation of name, was removed by students who modified their name. They did so to avoid embarrassment of having to continuously correct the mispronunciation of their name. All student participants except one were misrecognised based on appearance or name, reinforcing that that Irish identity is implicitly synonymous with being White.

The experience of microaggressions on campus was a central theme from the research. Microaggressions are experienced by the participants as microinsults, microassaults or micro invalidations. The focus has been on the intent of the question asked, which played out as a microaggression. The impact of the microaggressions for the recipient captures a range of emotions from offensive and annoyed to not caring and not minding.

The theme on inclusion inside the classroom can have an important effect on a student's experience in higher education. Subcodes emerged from this line of inquiry on; being a minority in the classroom, if the classroom is a safe and collaborative learning space, student perspective on inclusion inside the classroom, an understanding of education on ethnicity and whether the syllabus is ethnicity proofed. Higher education has been mono-cultural and Eurocentric in its content (Ukpokodu, 2010). Underpinning culturally sustaining pedagogies is the approach

of decreasing whiteness within the classroom concerning teaching and learning so as not to impoverish learning (Emdin, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 2013).

In chapter seven that follows, the analysis, interpretation and discussion from chapters five and six lead to the conclusions of my research and a framework for an inclusive campus.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusions**

### **Belonging – Nurtured, Negotiated or Neglected?**

Diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, and belonging is having that voice heard (Fosslien & Duffy, 2019).

#### **Introduction**

This study was designed to explore inclusion and belonging on campus for BME students. Using a bricolage inspired conceptual framework with a contextual understanding of dynamic diversity, I explore the subtleties of inclusion and belonging on campus for BME students. The research is foregrounded by a social geography theoretical approach to belonging and is influenced by a critical race consciousness from CRT. The focus is on the experiences of BME students on campus from the perspectives of a range of students and staff who agreed to be part of this study. This research gives voice to the reality that a diverse mix of students attend Irish higher education institutions, yet BME in the main has not been problematised from within the experiences of White people from minority ethnic backgrounds. To reach the conclusions of the research, I have distilled all the previous chapters into the focussed discussion presented here.

My conclusions are assembled from the interpretation and analysis of the fieldwork which are guided by my conceptual framework. By asking the students about times and places that they felt they belonged and did not belong within an educational space, sensitised by a race consciousness from CRT reveals the predominant findings in the study. The students in the study have different experiences of inclusion and belonging that are nuanced depending on their ethnicity and nationality. For Black and Asian students in the study critical race consciousness is of use to present a counternarrative in the findings. There is no focus on the intersectionality of the student participants' lives in the study. Therefore, the claims I make reflect the dynamics of belonging and inclusion in social spaces within an educational setting only.

To distil and filter the outcomes of my research into one broad perspective, this study claims that a one-size-fits-all approach to diversity and inclusion for BME students is not recommended. By exploring who is racialised and who is not among the student population on campus has been complex and nuanced. This has implications for an educational model, learning experiences, pedagogy, and for relationships and engagements within campus environments that are all underpinned by inclusion and belonging in higher education. By centralising the BME student voice, using a dynamic diversity approach that allows for context and campus sentiment, we can understand and interpret belonging and inclusion, or not, for BME students in an attempt to make meaningful changes to benefit all (Yusof et al., 2018). The BME term is not just two-fold referring to White and non-White. The BME needs to capture the complexities of minority ethnicities as reflected in the student sample in this research. The student participants in the study report significant differences in their experiences of belonging and inclusion on campus based for the most part, on their skin colour. I also problematised how race and ethnicity theories respond with hierarchies within dominant cultures. This includes in this instance, the diversity within the experiences of White Europeans (McGinnity et al., 2018; Morrice, 2014; Gilmartin, 2013; McDowell, 2009).

## **A canter through the research process**

Consistent with a bricolage approach (Levi-Strauss, 2012) to the research, the outcomes and significance of my conclusions have been constructed from a diverse range of elements in my conceptual framework. The conceptual framework has provided an overall theoretical and structural scaffold to the study that is bounded by dynamic diversity in higher education. The conceptual approach that I took guided me to the literature that I reviewed that was relevant to the topic and provided direction and signposting for the inclusion framework that I have adopted for the study. Conceptually, the concept of dynamic diversity requires a contextual understanding of the research location that captures the macro, meso and micro levels of diversity on campus which are vital to move beyond evidence of compositional diversity (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014). Dynamic diversity at the three

levels is viewed through the theoretical framework of inclusion in higher education. This is underpinned by the social geography of belonging along with a critical race consciousness that includes the psychological impact of racial-ethnic microaggressions.

Compatible with theoretical bricolage, I moved between intersecting concepts to explain my understanding of inclusion as a theoretical framework. I have taken tenets from the scholarship in the following fields; the subtleties and nuances of belonging and inclusion from social geography theory (Gilmartin et al., 2019; Gilmartin & Migge, 2016; Huizinga & van Hoven, 2018; Museus et al., 2017; Vaccaro & Newman 2016; Slaten et al., 2016; Slaten et al., 2014; Antonsich, 2010), sensitised to a race consciousness from CRT (Phillimore et al., 2019; Madriaga, 2018; Blaisdell, 2016; Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva, 2008; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), and the experience of microaggressions that create excluding encounters for BME students from the research literature in psychology (Wong et al., 2014; Sue, 2017; Sue et al., 2007, 2019; Nadal, 2011; Lilienfeld, 2017). These are the foundations from the scholarship that informed the bricolage approach for the integrative theoretical framework of inclusion and belonging on campus.

The methodological direction that I pursued with my research design relied on methodological bricolage, an approach constructed by inherent flexibility (Lévi-Strauss, 1966; Phillimore et al., 2016; Kinn et al., 2013; Johnson, 2012; Kincheloe, 2005, 2001). I used three different research methods; photovoice (PV), interviews and focus groups. Using a bricolage approach my methodology relied on PV methodology (Wang & Burris, 1994) and thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006) in the context of a case study design where the campus became the case or unit of analysis. I chose methodologies and methods that communicated to each other, and that were sensitised to the research location. This provided a rich source of insights about the research questions on students' perceptions of belonging on campus for BME students, how the campus landscape includes or excludes BME students, in identifying what contributes to denial and exclusion on campus for BME students, and exploring inclusion and belonging inside the classroom. The

research location was the Blanchardstown campus of TU Dublin. Research participants were recruited in three phases using purposive and snowball sampling; students who completed a PV assignment (phase one) in a business programme, students from diverse programmes on one campus of the university who self-identified as BME students and agreed to participate in a focus group/interview (phase two), and members of staff involved in lecturing and the delivery of professional student services, who by the nature of their work come in contact with students on a daily or weekly basis, (phase three).

In writing the findings and discussion chapters five and six, the descriptive conclusions of the research are presented, through the broad themes of belonging on campus and spaces of inclusion and exclusion on campus in chapter five, followed by a focus on aspects of name-identity-misrecognition, unmasking microaggressions and experiences inside the classroom in chapter six. The themes emerged from my approach to the analysis of the fieldwork and the research questions. My analytical approach to the fieldwork involved a combined technique of inductive and deductive thematic analysis. Informed by Ritchie and Spencer's (2002) qualitative framework analysis, I went through a number of steps in analysing the qualitative data. Open coding identified themes and patterns. Subsequent to this, axial coding explored relationships between the different themes. This allowed me to progress to answering the research questions and onwards to this chapter of meta-level thinking that characterises conceptual conclusions.

### **Conceptual conclusions of the research: The 3 Ps of an inclusive campus**

The most significant issues that emerged from the interconnectivity of the parts of my research are described as my conceptual conclusions or the three P's of an inclusive campus; Place, Pedagogy and Power Imbalances. Each one is detailed below. The conceptual conclusions moved me away from describing the leaves on the tree or the descriptive conclusions, and instead to focus on the roots, trunk and

branches, or the conceptual conclusions. Using the factual and interpretative conclusions as stepping stones from chapters five and six on findings and discussion, this chapter demonstrates how I arrived at my conceptual conclusions.

## **Place**

The concept of belonging to an educational environment investigated the student perceptions of our declaration of being a diverse and inclusive campus. Campus inclusion focuses on connection and relationship and on the everyday lived experiences of BME students. The findings from the research unmasked for BME students, their perceptions of belonging and feeling included on campus. The participants' sense of belonging to their educational environment was captured and revealed in the campus landscape through their use and interactions with places and spaces, through a feeling of place belongingness (Yuval-Davis, 2006) or a feeling of being at home in a place due to the presence of a diverse student population.

The research unveils a campus where the student participants say that they belong (all student participants replied in the affirmative that they felt they belonged during phase two of the fieldwork). However, engaging with tenets of CRT (Solórzano & Tosso, 2002; Crisp & Meleady, 2012) as a framework of analysis with regard to 'fitting in,' the findings uncovered complexities, contradictions and nuances on the meaning of 'fitting in' and belonging that was underpinned by a race consciousness. Participants' responses revealed that for some of our BME students of African and Asian heritage, when they were asked if they had made changes to belong, they were chameleons of sorts (to use the analogy with the animal kingdom), as they made changes to belong to their environment depending on who they were with. This is evidenced in their navigation of two cultures on campus; the White majority culture and the culture(s) of their ethnicity, altering their behaviour to align with the mainstream culture on campus.

“In college I am more Irish, I feel that. It's hard to explain, outside of here I am more [nationality named]” (Rowan, Indian).



“...you can't really act the way you act around your culture, the way you would with a different culture” (Elm, Nigerian).

This gives a sense of how BME students shift between different cultures within and outside college. Several participants described how they modified their name so that it is easier for English speakers to pronounce it

“My name is [name], still nobody is going to say that so they just say [amended name] because that's the English [pronunciation]” (Spruce, Romanian).

Of all the questions that were asked at the interviews and focus groups with students, every one of them had a comment to make on the pronunciation of their name. Modifying or not correcting pronunciation of your name is significant not only for what it says about care in communication, but also because our names are a core part and expression of our identity.

BME students' patterns of socialisation on campus indicate little integration but instead confirm congregation around “islands of comfortable consensus” with the onus on those from ethnic minorities to adapt their behaviours to be part of the group or be excluded from groups based on their ethnic diversity (Haring-Smith, 2012, p. 11). Academic staff responses corroborated this finding and stated that integrating groups ethnically for in class discussions and teamwork was their biggest challenge inside the classroom;

“they had been excluded [from group work] and they felt it was on the grounds of race...” (Sheelin).

“to see how they form groups...it is very blatant, the exclusion is really quite painful to watch” (Ennell).

Housee (2011) explains how there is a sense of group identity and safety in “being amongst your own” (Housee, 2011, p. 86). Nevertheless, integration efforts need to be overt and pronounced (Huizinga & van Hoven, 2018; Wilson, 2017; Tienda,

2013; Engberg & Hurtado, 2011) for the educational benefits of diversity to be harnessed (Plaut et al., 2018; Crisp & Meleady, 2012; Williams, 2010; Rankin & Reason, 2008). Visibility of these efforts on a daily basis needs to become the norm over time on campus. An added challenge to this is the ongoing pivot to online teaching, learning and student socialisation for the academic year 2020-2021 due to the Covid-19<sup>23</sup> pandemic.

Unfolding the experiences of BME students' use of the campus landscape reveal a complex and nuanced sense of belonging, and not-belonging with particular spaces and places on campus. Of all the spaces and places identified in phase one of the fieldwork using PV methods, only one of the spaces identified was with reference to the classroom. All the other places and spaces were social spaces outside of the classroom regarding inclusion and exclusion. Guided by counter storytelling, a tenet from CRT, a counter story of 'in(ex)clusion' (Dunne et al., 2018) emerged from the findings. A space used by mostly African students in a predominantly White college has created a culture of segregation (Calmore, 1995), for students who experience a lack of belonging on campus (Arday, 2018a; Isakjee, 2016; Yuval-Davis, 2006). The common room has become an ethnic enclave for some students on campus, a space of inclusion yet overwhelmingly viewed by others as an exclusionary space in the fieldwork. Creating an alternative representation of this space in chapter five has been important in understanding why the common room has become a contested space.

Belonging in a place ensures that BME students feel welcomed and not ancillary, included and not tokenistic, integrated and not isolated. This means having positive learning experiences, and a feeling that they can participate and engage, and not be invisible or marginalised inside the classroom. All these elements individually and collectively contribute to the micro level of dynamic diversity (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014) and along with the compositional diversity, reveal the day-to-day conditions of belonging on campus. The student participants state that they

---

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/>

belong, yet the fieldwork reveals that they continually have to assimilate, adapt, integrate and thereby conform to the dominant culture as the daily norm (Jayakumar, 2015). They also respond by socialising with people like themselves (Haring-Smith, 2012). This is the truest test of integration or not;

“Most people socialise with themselves (same ethnic group), unless you are in the same class but outside...someone has to reach out” (Ash, African Irish).

“Celebrate with your own group but no point to telling someone else who is from another culture” (Spruce, Romanian).

When BME students adapt to or assimilate the behaviours and practices of the dominant group then the dominant White privilege remains the way of seeing the world (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tatum, 2000). Place is a combination of belonging on campus, inclusion/exclusion as evidenced in the physical campus landscape and campus climate with reference to compositional diversity. The cautionary tale is that the campus needs to move on from the outward ‘diversity smile’ to an appreciation of the complexity of what full inclusion means in terms of the lived experience of our BME students (Ahmed, 2012). Efforts at closing the gap between students’ diverse cultural and ethnic norms and the education space that they occupy provides an academic home that includes everyone.

The *Oreo* biscuit metaphor illustrates a sense of belonging in overwhelming whiteness. The student participant revealed that his peers refer to him as an *Oreo*, described by the participant as being of African ethnicity but sounding White and acting White. This was indicative for him of a badge of honour and evidence of assimilation and acceptance of the Eurocentric paradigm as the norm. This reveals the complexity of racialisation and recognition where internalisation of dominant cultural norms can be contradictory and deeply felt.

Staff participants disagreed with the students that the campus is inclusive for BME students, problematising it as exclusionary based on ethnicity;

“When they pick their own groups...they all gravitated towards each other and invariably there were people who were left out...saying they felt they had been excluded and they felt that it was on the grounds of race” (Sheelin).

On the far side of tension, lies progress for an inclusive campus that examines the discourses at organisational level versus the contradictions, continuities and consequences of the lived experience for BME students. Morrice (2014) highlights how the experience for ethnic minorities in education “will vary significantly depending on the category of entry, country of settlement, country of origin and educational attainment” (Morrice, 2014, p. 50). Her paper illuminates the connection between learning and identity in the migration process as learners establish themselves in a new context. Morrice’s (2014) explanation corresponds to Rainer’s work (2015) in that BME students are still compelled to conform to the dominant middle-class, Eurocentric cultural norms which is echoed in the findings of this research. While not all are migrants some BME students on campus are required to learn new behaviours, understand new rules, potentially adapt to new values in the social and learning space on campus. Even though this is relevant for many of the students in this study it is important to note that a small number of the participants were born here (two), and can find themselves positioned within cross-cultural and racialised discourses for BME students.

BME students in my sample also include White European students. This directs attention to a situation that is nuanced and complex where it can be claimed that racialised experiences are also occurring within White European populations especially for those from Eastern European countries. A theory is warranted in Irish higher education that can take this mix of ethnic and cultural diversity of our students into account.

### **Pedagogy**

Inclusive education is not systemic by any means and is still in its embryonic phase on campus as evidenced by fragmented and isolated initiatives. This includes a

sprinkling of EDI modules delivered in business and humanities courses, along with sporadic and infrequent staff training on issues of diversity in recent years. Student responses varied regarding inclusive pedagogy; some not expecting any changes to be made to teaching, learning, assessment and feedback and to continue with the traditional Eurocentric curriculum, while others welcomed contributions to knowledge from other parts of the world and on learning about different ethnicities. Ukpokodu's research (2010) provides evidence that a "true institutional transformation must be targeted in curriculum offerings, classroom environment, and pedagogy, to provide for a sustained, systematic, and inclusive learning experience that prepares students for responsible and rewarding citizenship" (Ukpokodu, 2010, p. 27). Staff responses to adopting different theoretical perspectives was a challenge due to difficulties accessing material and knowledge from other parts of the world. The inclusion of multicultural content in the curriculum appears to be taking place in an uncoordinated and irregular way. Unmasking and critically reconstructing the curriculum and pedagogy needs to become a visible event to ensure we build and sustain a campus-wide inclusive curriculum as a strategic priority (Bezrukova et al., 2012; Capra, 2011).

Decolonising the curriculum as a driver of change renews the content being taught in higher education classrooms. By critically reconstructing "what is included in the curriculum – the voices, narratives and different sources of knowledge - education could be transformative...and the impact this might have on the subject discipline and society" (Charles, 2019, p. 5). Charles (2019) claims that this will not be an easy task, but that it is long overdue. Charles' perspective is as a librarian, who is compelled to reflect on the decolonisation of content that is purchased or subscribed to along with the tools that are used to "categorize and label knowledge" (Charles, 2019, p. 5). Colourblind ideology can be found throughout the curriculum (Jayakumar, 2015), and requires a critical review of majority group perspectives (Plaut, 2010). Fuelling the 'achievement gap' (Ladson-Billings, 2013) of our BME students regarding academic performance, access to workplace opportunities and career progression (Joseph, 2011; Finnegan & O'Neill, 2015), is an impoverished curriculum that is predominantly Eurocentric. "The need to

unpack a topic, understand some of the philosophical and cultural underpinnings and how this affects the application of concepts illustrates an openness to interrogate the politics of knowledge production” (Joseph, 2011, p. 244). Curricular and pedagogical transformation has to be a collective and shared task across the institution and education system (Yusof et al., 2018; LaRocque, 2016). The students we teach come from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds. This has implications for a pedagogical approach that reflects that diversity and inclusion in the content of courses. A deviation from learning that bolsters Eurocentric scholarship that is predominantly White above other perspectives is required.

There is a need for a critical mass of faculty, committed to diversity with whom to transform courses to reflect diversity. The submission of a syllabus to be infused on content, pedagogies, activities, assessment, resources, and questions so as to understand and investigate cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline, creates a multicultural curriculum (Zhang et al., 2016). According to Ahmed (2012) by narrowing the space between our students’ cultural and ethnic backgrounds and the educational space they inhabit on campus in order to learn, we can alleviate the disconnection for minority cultures.

Of all the 3 Ps, pedagogy poses the largest collective effort to effect change. It requires strengthening academic staff capabilities in syncretic literacies (Gutiérrez et al., 2010; Gotanda, 2004), racial literacy (Blaisdell, 2016), reality pedagogy (Emdin, 2016), the decolonising of curricula (Charles, 2019; Madriaga, 2018; Santos, 2007; Banks & Banks, 2005), the infusion of culturally sustaining pedagogies (Goodman, 2017; Paris & Alim, 2016; Paris, 2012), the use of knowledge generated from personal experience, (Housee, 2011; Bowl, 2005) and self-awareness through an identification of positionality (Masters et al., 2019; Fitzsimons, 2017b; Bierema, 2010). Staff are ill-equipped to deal with these challenges due to the lack of training and critical awareness in these areas (Merryfield, 2000; Young, 2003).

When we leverage the diversity of our student population “inclusive pedagogic developments may grow” (Gibson, 2015, p. 884). Minority groups’ acceptance of the status quo can be made invisible when the dominant culture is the lens we use to educate and learn inside the classroom (Stahl, 2017; Jayakumar, 2015; Lynch & Baker, 2005). By embracing a critical and inclusive pedagogy we challenge the norm of viewing whiteness as the invisible benchmark in the curriculum.

### **Power Imbalances**

Power imbalances are evident in the context of mispronunciation of name and the experience of microaggressions on campus for BME students. Gibson advocates the need for “constant political chatter amongst diverse and ‘non-diverse’ voices. Chatter evolves to constructive dialogue amongst stakeholders...Previous silenced voices tell their diverse stories and, in so doing, challenge hegemonic power constructs” (Gibson, 2015, p. 884). Power permeates structures, systems and discourses. Dominance is often reproduced in educational settings (hooks, 1994, p. 39). Attributing cultural deficits as an explanation of inequality only serves to support White privilege (Jayakumar, 2015; King, 2015, 1991). A critical examination of the sources of inequality are required at individual and organisational levels (Plaut, 2010). Marginalisation inside and outside the classroom occurred in this research from the mispronunciation of name and the daily experience of microaggressions for BME students. Interrogating these two issues in an education system reveals an understanding of the daily power imbalances that BME students can experience.

### **Pronunciation of Name**

The incorrect pronunciation of name is interpreted as a power imbalance because the failure to pronounce a name correctly depicts a form of power (Gómez, 2012). By learning to pronounce names correctly we are creating environments on campus that recognise and appreciate ethnicity, culture and reciprocal learning between staff and students (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). Taking the time to learn how to pronounce the name properly is better than avoiding an attempt to pronounce it. Kohli and Solórzano’s (2012) advice is not to avoid names that are “unfamiliar or

difficult to say” as doing this causes a student to feel invisible or that their culture is less important or inferior (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012, p. 14). The pronunciation of name was the question that gleaned most responses from the participants. All of the students had something to say regarding the pronunciation of their name. The continuous and pervasive impact of mispronunciation of name amounts to moments of exclusion and a sense of not belonging. Staff participants acknowledged experiencing difficulties in the correct pronunciation of student names. Staff stated that they do make an effort to rectify this, but from their observations not all colleagues try to pronounce names correctly. The term micro actions<sup>24</sup> was coined by the US based consulting firm SYPartners, an organisation that helps leaders develop thinking on creating positive change around diversity and inclusion. Micro actions are belonging interventions such as small gestures that act as social signals to build meaningful belonging like taking the opportunity and time to pronounce a name correctly.

### **Microaggressions**

Sue et al., (2007) created the first comprehensive taxonomy of microaggressions, thereby subdividing microaggressions as microassaults, microinsults, microinvalidations. BME students in this study were microaggressed hourly, daily, weekly and monthly. Microaggressions were experienced by the student participants as microinsults, microassaults and microinvalidations. Whether intentional or unintentional, prolonged and repeated exposure to microaggressions belittles participants based on their ethnicity. This was particularly the case for the Black students whose experiences of microaggressions were more pronounced and direct because of their ethnicity.

“They expect us to play loud music, walk around playing loud music and dressing like they do in hip hop, but why would I have to do that. I have experienced more as a joke, but you can tell they're trying to be serious but I don't really care...” (Beech, Nigerian).

---

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.sypartners.com/news/diversity-at-work-actions-speak-louder-than-words/>

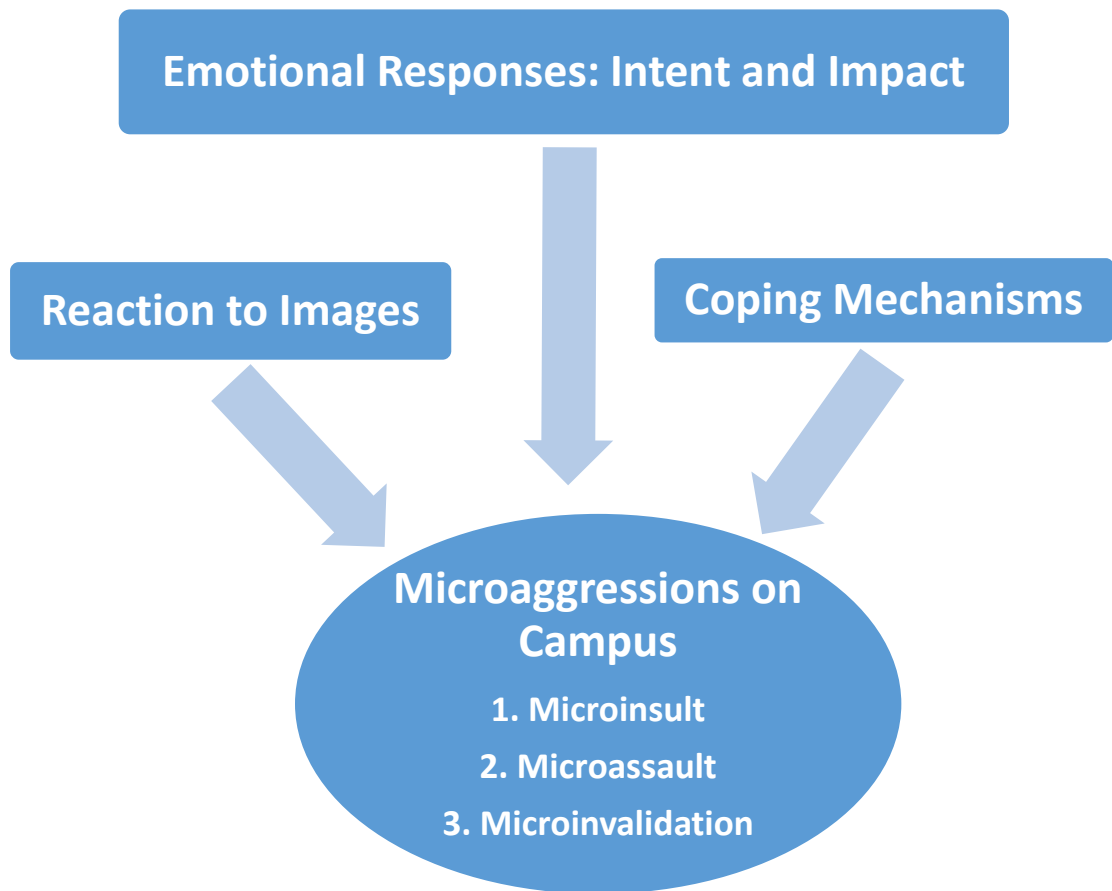


These types of racial discriminations “are difficult to identify, quantify, and rectify because of their subtle, nebulous, and unnamed nature” (Sue et al., 2007, p. 272). We are ill-prepared in academia to deal with microaggressions when they occur, feel uncomfortable about topics related to ethnicity, and lack the skills required to navigate constructive dialogues on diversity (Young, 2003). Student participants found it difficult to identify a microaggression but were very clear in expressing it.

“It’s not that it comes across as condescending or anything ...they don’t mean it but it’s just they want to know more but they ask it weirdly...it’s the tone of voice, the gestures” (Holly, African).

“I would agree with that, mostly non Blacks [will ask] where are you really from. Blacks will say where are your parents from” (Cherry, Irish-Nigerian parents).

I extracted meaning from the collective responses concerning the experiences of microaggressions on campus. The microaggression images offered an “alternative means to the achievement of one main purpose in qualitative research that being, getting closer to the lives of the people being studied” (Glass, 2008, p. 2). The emotional responses of the participants validate Glass’ point and allowed for a different type of communication with the participants through visual knowledge as a “different knowledge, stubborn and opaque, but with a capacity for the finest detail” (MacDougall, 2006, pp.5-6). The findings revealed personal narratives that were rich with examples and incidents of racial microaggressions, consistent with the taxonomy of microaggressions experienced in everyday life; microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations (Sue et al., 2007). Mapping the findings from the fieldwork to the framework revealed intent and impact from the emotional responses and coping mechanisms regarding survival strategies and self-care. The cumulative examples of microaggressions and racialisations occurring as a consequence of the dominant normative White culture are striking in the study and echo the international findings for BME students (Akel, 2019; Smith et al., 2016; Jones et al., 2017; Cotton et al., 2016; Ladson-Billings, 2013).



**Figure 13: A framework for understanding microaggressions on campus: Collective view**

With our diverse student population at TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus there is a responsibility to be sensitive to the comments and actions we make and the questions we ask that have the potential to microaggress. This avoids what Sidanius and Petrocik (2001) refer to as exclusionary patriotism for BME students and being constantly viewed as the perpetual foreigner (Devos & Banaji, 2005). Naming and microaggressions are social practices. As the majority of academics on campus are White, they often do not understand the worldview of ethnic minorities and can be “unaware that microaggressions may trigger difficult dialogues in the classroom” (Sue et al., 2009, p. 184). Social practices that oppress will continue if we accept them as normal social practices (Stahl, 2017). This research highlights the need for all in higher education to be more critically aware and agentic in responding to

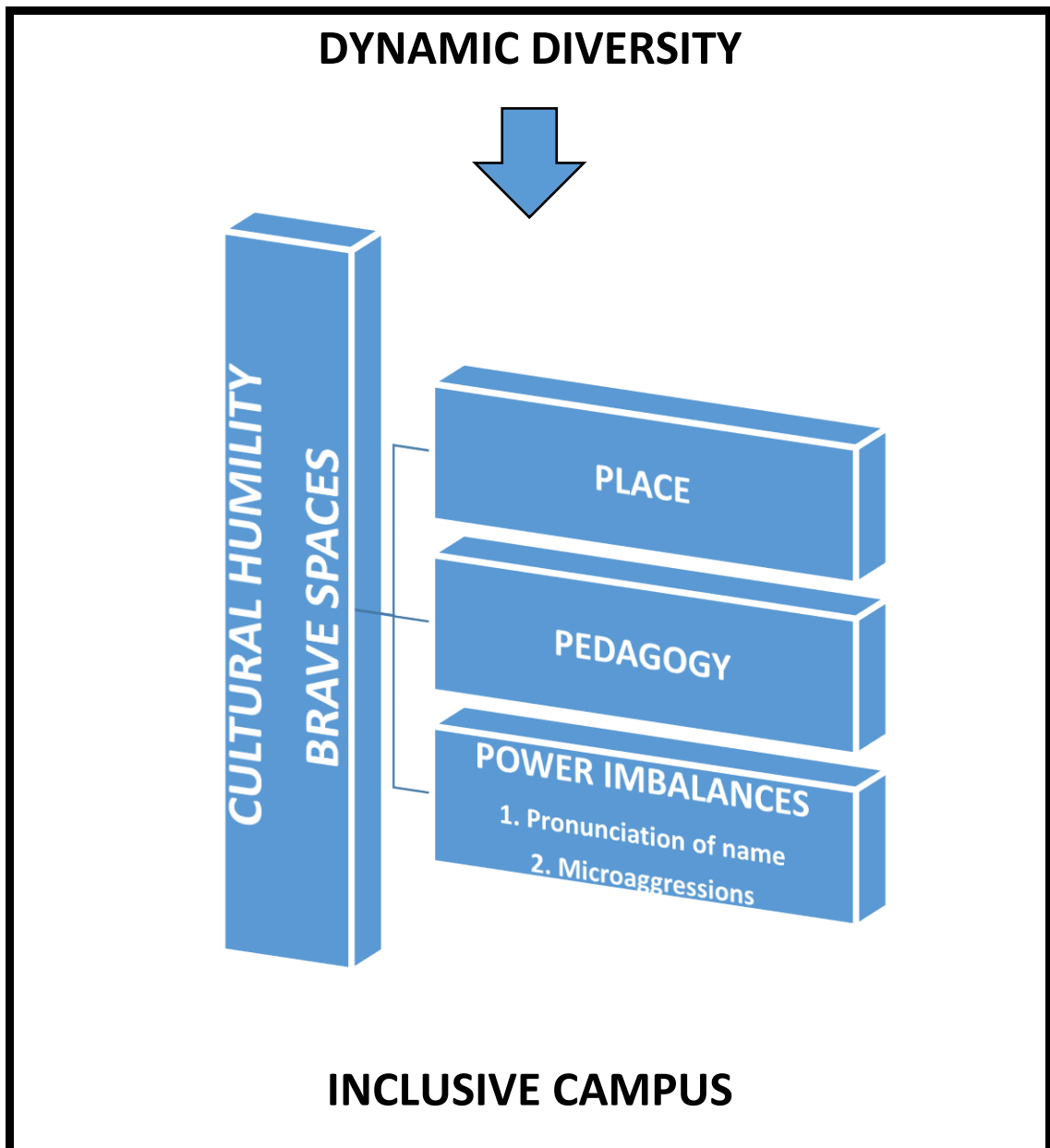
microaggressions and their destructive cumulative effect for individuals and the culture of an institution.

## **Framework for an inclusive campus**

Belonging and inclusion are subtle and slippery concepts; their location is often different from how they appear. A sense of belonging is not the same as 'fitting in' by being similar to everyone else. Belonging values difference, embraces difference and creates a culture of inclusion on campus. The participant narratives in this research tended to rely upon a context where whiteness is the norm or hegemonic (Cabrera, 2014). This is highly significant and needs to be problematised and challenged. An approach that values diversity coupled with critical mass can support BME students' sense of inclusion and belonging on campus. An understanding of context is fundamental. It is not simply a matter of compositional diversity. Dynamic diversity is relevant as a synergy of contextual factors and a function of numbers (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014). The bottom-up approach of learning from the student experience provides us with a critical perspective on what is coming to the fore from within the heart of the university campus.

The connective tissue of the 3 Ps is a cultural humility attitude rather than cultural competency mastery (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998; Davis et al., 2016; Masters et al., 2019) and includes a brave spaces pedagogical approach when teaching racialisation (Pawlowski, 2019). Making cultural sensitivity part of the educational experiences for students involves pursuing a recruitment strategy where the staff profile reflects our student diversity, and purposefully focusing the curriculum around non-White theorists, authors, scholars and producers of knowledge. Using a cultural humility process, higher education institutes through self-reflection and self-critique can shift the gaze to actively look at; the profile of staff demographics, the resourcing and provision of staff training to deal with a diverse student population, and to get an understanding of the university's ethos on inclusion and belonging, inside and outside the classroom. "Every aspect of an educational environment – curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and the hidden curriculum

associated with interpersonal communications, cultural norms, expectations, rewards, and so on – plays a role in either challenging or reproducing patterns of educational advantage or alienation” (Rowan, 2019, p. 70).



*Figure 14: Framework for an inclusive campus: The 3 Ps through cultural humility and brave spaces in the context of dynamic diversity.*

### **Statement of contribution to knowledge**

“Each time we learn something new, the edges of our world expand” (Clifford, 2018, p. 129). The evidence from this study allows me to make a contribution to

knowledge by combining disparate concepts from my bricolage inspired conceptual framework, in order to create an inclusive campus. The most important story told within the research is as simple as it is complicated. The simple part is that the student participants who identified as BME students felt that the campus was inclusive and that they felt a sense of belonging. The complicated part is that the findings are premised in a normative assumption of whiteness as evidenced by numerous and incremental moments of exclusion in the daily experience of microaggressions, the mispronunciation of name, curriculum and pedagogical exclusions. There are differences within the BME category. While BME reflects the majority student participant in the sample, we also need to take into account the experiences of White Eastern Europeans from ethnic minority backgrounds who come from the third wave of accession countries and can experience derogatory attitudes and a reluctant acceptance from the majority culture into society. The reality is that this mix of students is to be found in Irish higher education today and while CRT provides a strong foundation to view this research from a race consciousness perspective, a more sophisticated theoretical tool is required to capture the subtleties of the student experiences and demographics.

As a practitioner scholar who is active in this area, I hope that this research will aid campus leaders, the academy, policy leaders and those involved in providing professional student support services to make higher education a more inclusive place for all ethnicities. An inclusive campus is part of a connected campus that centralises all voices. Fragmented pockets of good practice are not enough. It requires an organisation wide approach that is strategic and systemic. The governance of a campus where we all belong and are included is everyone's responsibility.

## **An agenda for further research**

I hope that the research will serve a base for future studies on the following areas: investigate the research questions in a cross-case analysis of all the TU Dublin campus locations to explore similarities and differences; document an assessment

of policies, procedures and communications to ensure a culture of support for all our students; conduct an audit of our print advertising and social media messaging to ensure that TU Dublin's diverse student populations are represented, diverse students' clubs and societies and diversity events are lauded and celebrated (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016); explore the intersectionality of ethnic minority status with gender and other identities; inquire as to the positive benefits of exposure to campus diversity lasting beyond college; address whether the ethnicity of the instructor might affect difficult dialogues on ethnicity; conduct an audit of our curriculum and assessment to ensure that it is culturally diverse and relevant; use CRT to investigate the experiences of ethnic minority academic staff in Irish higher education institutions; investigate the link between ethnic discrimination and mental well-being among ethnic groups which has been largely understudied (Molina et al., 2013).

The CECE model referred to in chapter three provides a mechanism for conducting a campus environment assessment that could be adapted to further my research on campus (Museus, 2014). Reality pedagogy also brings the benefit of critical thinking by creating situations and engaging students to think critically thereby allowing them to express their views and have their voice heard (Emdin, 2016). As educators we need to know our students to engage with a reality pedagogy approach. Reality pedagogy is an authentic teaching method that promotes culturally sustaining practices in order to avoid Eurocentric content and practices as the norm. This approach focuses on the understanding of students by the teacher. Here the teaching and learning is based on the reality of the student's experience. The teacher recognises each student and from where they have come, it can be their culture, ethnicity or the community they belong to. Emdin (2016) warns that cultural differences between educators and their students will magnify if we do not intentionally recognise and support these differences.

## Research limitations

An important final step in the research process is to identify and discuss the limitations of my research. This was a small scale qualitative study with a small number of self-selecting participants, my own students and a number of staff selected because of their daily interaction with students. As the research focused on the theme of belonging on campus it is important to acknowledge that students who were feeling extremely alienated or disengaged did not volunteer to be part of the research. This appears to be the case with some of the students who use the common room and who I could not get to engage with my research despite a number of attempts. They are not present in the first person in the findings. However I did manage to give them a voice via staff who were involved with these students. Senior leaders are not part of the staff participant group nor are recent graduates of the university. After the first three student interviews, visual prompts on microaggressions were used to encourage the participants that followed to engage in more discussion. The findings in the study do not represent the entire campus population but are indicative of the campus demographics. In addition, I speculate that an emphasis on intersectionality regarding gender, age, class, disability and sexual orientation among other grounds may have permitted a richer analysis of inclusion and exclusion to emerge. As Ireland shifts into a second generation of migration, the complexities of ethnic identity will be worth exploring further in an education setting and in accessing the labour market.

## Next steps

According to Kamler and Thomson (2008, 2014) producing a doctoral dissertation encompasses both *becoming* and *belonging*; becoming a doctoral scholar and belonging to an academic community. Becoming and belonging is manifested through conducting research, engaging in academic writing and publishing that contributes to scholarly knowledge and opens up conversations for debate. Initial dissemination of my research has taken place through a published research

paper<sup>25</sup>, an invitation to be a conference<sup>26</sup> speaker on photovoice methods as an alternative methodology in STEM educational research, and the presentation of a research poster at a symposium<sup>27</sup>. At a local level my research has been requested for distribution and presentation through campus level structures to help inform policy and practice<sup>28</sup>. It is envisaged that this research will aid campus leaders, the academy, policy leaders and those involved in providing professional student support services to make higher education a more inclusive place for all ethnicities. I also plan to disseminate my research at relevant conferences and to target journals to publish the research. Future writing will include collaboration with colleagues to develop a report on the experiences of BME students in higher education in Ireland to capture the student voices and experiences in other higher education institutions on inclusion and belonging on campus.

## **Final words: The campus as a forest**

To close the circle that I started with in my introduction chapter on trees, I offer the campus as symbolic of a forest made up of many tree species. This research focused on the BME tree ‘species’ as part of that forest. To borrow from science, I use photosynthesis as a metaphor. Photosynthesis is a chemical reaction that takes place inside a plant, producing food for the plant to survive. Carbon dioxide, water and light are all needed for photosynthesis to take place. The sun sustains and nourishes, but that is only one part, the tree needs to be able to take that life-support in the form of energy from the sun and transform it into growth.

An inclusive campus for BME students is displayed through the tree schematic in figure 18. The sunshine represents higher education strategy (sustains and nourishes), that advances inclusion for BME students (Tienda, 2013; Plaut, 2010). Policy is the raincloud that ‘hydrates’ the strategy and makes it operable on a day

---

<sup>25</sup> Darby, F. (2018). Belonging at ITB – The use of Photovoice Methodology to investigate inclusion and belonging at ITB based on ethnicity and nationality from a student perspective. Ebook: *Transforming our World Through Design, Diversity and Education*.

<http://ebooks.iospress.nl/volumearticle/50613>

<sup>26</sup> <https://morseportal.wordpress.com/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://uelcelt.wordpress.com/symposium/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://tudublin.ie/explore/about-the-university/equality-and-diversity/blog/>



to day basis (Highman, 2019; HEA, 2018; Hurtado et al., 1999.) The roots are symbolic of compositional diversity of our students and staff (the energy), (Cabrera, 2014; Hinrichs, 2011). The tree trunk illustrates dynamic diversity (strength, flexibility, growth), regarding the importance of the understanding of context (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014; Solís & Miyares, 2014). The branches signify the conceptual conclusions of my research as demonstrated by the 3 P's; Place (Ahmed, 2012; Yuval-Davis et al., 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tatum, 2000), Pedagogy (Madriaga, 2018; Santos, 2007; Banks & Banks, 2005), and Power Imbalances (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012; Gibson, 2015; Sue et al., 2019, 2007). The branches have many off shoots which represent the sub themes from the fieldwork and analysis. The deadwood typifies any resistance to the achievement of a diverse campus be it, lack of resources (Merryfield, 2000), lack of self-awareness and recognition of positionality among staff (Masters et al., 2019; Fitzsimons, 2017b; Bierema, 2010) or an assimilationist ideology (Jayakumar, 2015). The leaves signify the relationships and activities of students and staff. The buds represent cultural humility and a brace spaces pedagogical approach (photosynthesis happens in the leaves of a plant), that requires a lifelong commitment and engagement to understanding cultural nuances and confronting stereotypes on campus in everything that we do (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998; Watkins & Hooks, 2016; Masters et al., 2019; Pawlowski, 2019). Finally, the fallen twig suggests caution on what we might have neglected or overlooked in our collective efforts. Minimising fallen twigs or broken branches, requires a continuous cycle of reflection and reflexivity in not viewing whiteness as the norm in higher education (Stahl, 2017; Jayakumar, 2015; Lynch & Baker, 2005). Trees respect each other by observing the phenomenon of 'crown shyness' (Goudie et al., 2009). By giving each other respect and space, we can still work together to form a canopy and be inclusive. While we must make an effort, it is then that diversity and inclusion will embrace us, and we receive its benefits. Culture matters, voice matters, place matters.

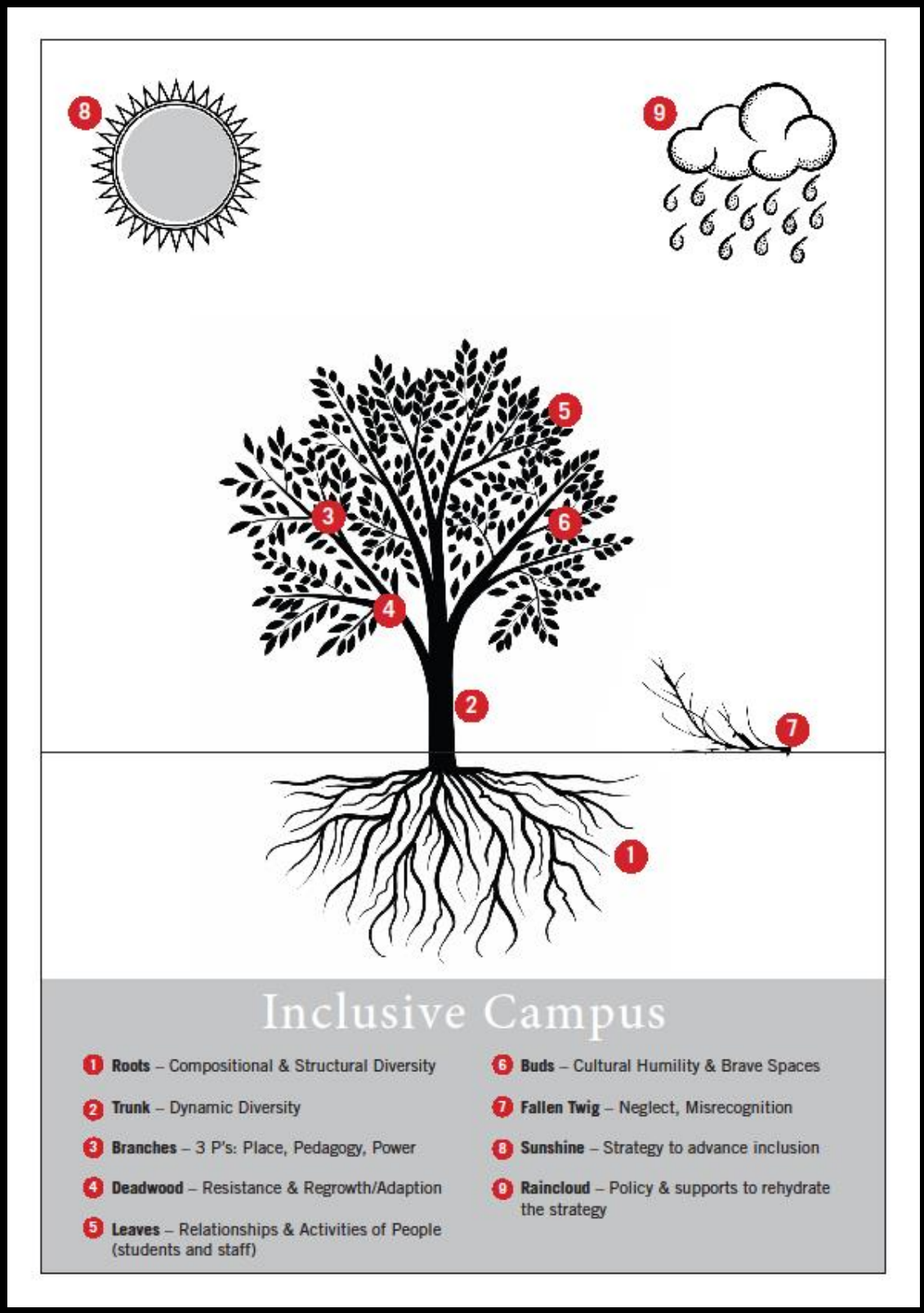


Figure 15: Inclusive campus tree schematic

## References

- Acquah, E., & Commins, N. (2016). Methods that matter in addressing cultural diversity with teacher candidates. *Teaching in Higher Education, 22*(5), 501-518.
- Advance Higher Education, 2018. Equality in higher education: Statistical report 2018. London: Advance HE. Retrieved from <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-higher-education-statistical-report-2018/>
- Ahmed, S. (2012). *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Ainscow, M., Booth, T., & Dyson, A. (2006). *Improving schools, developing inclusion*. London: Routledge.
- Akel, S. (2019). *Insider-Outsider: The role of race in shaping the experiences of Black and minority ethnic students*. London: Goldsmiths, University of London. Retrieved from <https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/docs/reports/Insider-Outsider-Report-191008.pdf>
- Alexander, C. (2017). Breaking Black: The death of ethnic and racial studies in Britain. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 41*(6), 1034-1054.
- Alexander-Floyd, N. (2012). Disappearing acts: Reclaiming intersectionality in the social sciences in a post-Black feminist era. *Feminist Formations, 24*(1), 1-25.
- Alhojailan, M. (2012). Thematic analysis: A critical review of its process and evaluation. *West East Journal of Social Sciences, 1*(1), 39-47.
- Alvesson, M., & Sköldbberg, K. (2018). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Ameli, S., & Merali, A. (2004). *British muslims' expectations of the government*. Wembley: Islamic Human Rights Commission.
- Andersen, O. (2008). A bottom-up perspective on innovations: Mobilizing knowledge and social capital through innovative processes of bricolage. *Administration and Society, 40*(1), 54-78.
- Anderson, E. (2015). The White space. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity, 1*(1), 10-21.
- Anderson, B., Narum, A., & Lynn Wolf, J. (2019). Expanding the understanding of the categories of dysconscious racism. *The Educational Forum, 83*(1) 4-12, DOI: 10.1080/00131725.2018.1505015

- Andersson, E., Sjöström-Strand, A., Willman, A., & Borglin, G. (2015). Registered nurses views of caring in coronary care – a deductive and inductive content analysis. *Journal of clinical nursing*, 24(23-24), 3481-3493.
- Andrews, K. (2019). Blackness, empire and migration. How Black studies transforms the curriculum. *Area*, doi:10.1111/area. 12528
- Andrews, K. (2016). At last, the UK has a Black studies university course. It's long overdue. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/may/20/black-studies-university-course-long-overdue>
- Andrews, K. (2013). *Resisting racism: Race, inequality and the Black supplementary school movement*. London, UK: Institute of Education Press.
- Antonio, A. (2004). The influence of friendship groups on intellectual self-confidence and educational aspirations in college. *Journal of Higher Education*, 75(4), 446-471.
- Antonsich, M. (2018). The face of the nation: Troubling the sameness-strangeness divide in the age of migration. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 43(3), 449-463.
- Antonsich, M. (2010). "Searching for belonging – An analytical framework." *Geography Compass*, 4(6), 644-659.
- Aragón, O., Dovidio, J., & Graham, M. (2016). Colorblind and multicultural ideologies are associated with faculty adoption of inclusive teaching practices. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 10(3), 201-215.
- Arao, B., & Clemens, K. (2013). From safe spaces to brave spaces: A new way to frame dialogue around diversity and social justice. In L. Landreman (Eds.), *The art of effective facilitation: Reflections from social justice educators* (pp.135-150). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Arday, J. (2018a). Understanding mental health: What are the Issues for Black and ethnic minority students at university? *Social Sciences*, 7(10), 1-25.
- Arday, J. (2018b). Understanding race and educational leadership in higher education: Exploring the Black and ethnic minority (BME) experience. *Management in Education*, 32(4), 192-200.
- Arday, J. (2017). *University and College Union (UCU): Exploring Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) Doctoral Students' Perceptions of a Career in Academia: Experiences, Perceptions and Career Progression*. London: Creative Commons.
- Arday, J., & Mirza, H. (2018). *Dismantling race in higher education: Racism, whiteness and decolonising the academy*. London, UK: Palgrave.

Asimeng-Boahene, L. (2010). Counter-story telling with African proverbs: A vehicle for teaching social justice and global understanding in urban, U.S. schools. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 43*(4), 434-445.

Auerback, S. (2006). "If the student is good, let him fly": Moral support for college among Latino immigrant parents. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 5*(4), 275-292.

Bailey, N., & Van Harken, E. (2014). Visual images as tools of teacher inquiry. *Journal of Teacher Education, 65*(3), 241-260.

Baker, J., Lynch, K., Cantillon, S., & Walsh, J. (2004). *Equality: From Theory to Action*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Baker, M. (2012). Decolonial education: Meanings, contexts, and possibilities. In *Interpreting, Researching, & Transforming Colonial/Imperial Legacies in Education*, American Educational Studies Association, Annual Conference Seattle, Washington, October 31 - November 4, 2012. Retrieved from [http://www.academia.edu/download/31114089/Decolonial\\_Education](http://www.academia.edu/download/31114089/Decolonial_Education)

Baker, T., & Nelson, R. (2005). Creating something from nothing: Resource construction through entrepreneurial bricolage. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 50*(3), 329 - 366.

Bain, Z. (2018). "Is there such a thing as 'White ignorance' in British education?" *Ethics and Education, 13*(1), 4-21.

Ball, S. (2008). The legacy of ERA, privatization and the policy ratchet. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 36*(2), 185-99.

Ballerini, J. (1997). 'Photography as charitable weapon: Poor kids and self-representation'. *Radical History Review, 69*, 160-188.

Banks, J., & McGee, C. (2010). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*, New Jersey: Wiley.

Banks, J., & Banks, C. (2005). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*. New York: Wiley.

Barbour, R. (2001). Mixing qualitative methods: Quality assurance or qualitative quagmire? *Qualitative Health Research, 8*(3), 352-361.

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(4), 544-559.

Bell, D. (1992). Racial realism. *Connecticut Law Review, 24*(2), 363-379.

Bell, D. (1991). Racism is here to stay: Now what? *Howard Law Journal, 35*(1), 79-93.

Bell, D. (1987). *And we are not saved: The elusive quest for racial justice*. New York, NY: BasicBooks.

Bell, D. (1980). Brown vs. Board of education and the interest convergence principle. *Harvard Law Review*, 93(3), 518-533.

Bennett, S. (2007). First questions for designing higher education learning spaces. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 33(1), 14-26.

Bensimon, E. (2004). The diversity scorecard: A learning approach to institutional change. *Change: The magazine of higher learning*, 36(1), 44-52.

Benzie, H. (2010). Graduating as a “native speaker”: International students and English language proficiency in higher education. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 29(4), 447-459.

Bergin, T. (2018). *An introduction to data analysis: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods*. London: Sage Publications.

Bernard, H., & Ryan, G. (2010). *Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Berry, J. (2003). Conceptual approaches to acculturation. In K. Chun & P. Organista (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement and applied research* (pp.17-37). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Berry, K. (2011). Embracing radical research: A commentary on ‘To the next level: Continuing the conceptualization of the bricolage’. In J. Kincheloe, K. Hayes, S. Steinberg, & K. Tobin (Eds.), *Key works in critical pedagogy* (pp. 279-284). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Berry, K. (2006). Research as bricolage: Embracing relationality, multiplicity and complexity. In K. Tobin & J. Kincheloe (Eds.), *Doing educational research: A handbook* (pp. 87-116). Rotterdam: The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Bezrukova, K., Jehn, K., & Spell, C. (2012). Reviewing diversity training: Where we have been and where we should go. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 11(2), 207-227.

Bhaskar, R. (1998). General introduction. In M. Archer et al., (Eds.), *Critical Realism: essential readings*. London: Routledge.

Bhopal, K. (2018). *White privilege: The myth of a post-racial society*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

- Bhopal, K. (2014). The experience of BME academics in higher education: Aspirations in the face of inequality. Stimulus Paper. London: Leadership Foundation for Higher Education. Retrieved from <https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/364309/1/>
- Bhopal, K., & Chapman, T. (2019). International minority ethnic academics at predominantly White institutions. *The British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 40(1), 98-113.
- Bierema, L. (2010). Diversity education: Competencies and strategies for educators. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 12(3), 312-331.
- Bishop, R. (2003). Changing power relations in education: Kaupapa Māori messages for 'mainstream' education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Comparative Education*, 37(3), 129-39.
- Blaisdell, B. (2016). Schools as racial spaces: Understanding and resisting structural racism. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies*, 29(2), 248-272.
- Blunt, A., & Wills, J. (2000). *Dissident geographies: An introduction to radical ideas and practice*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Bochner, A., & Ellis, C. (2003). An introduction to the arts and narrative research: Art as inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(4), 506-514.
- Bolton, G. (2018). *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development*. London: Sage.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2015). The structure of racism in color-blind, "post-racial" America. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 59(11), 1358-1376.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2014). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States* (4ed). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2006). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bowl, M. (2005). Valuing diversity in the social science curriculum. *LATISS – Learning and Teaching in the Social Sciences*, 2(2), 121-136.
- Bowman, N. (2011). Promoting participation in a diverse democracy: A meta-analysis of college diversity experiences and civic engagement. *Review of Educational Research*, 81(1), 29-68.

Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2014). What can 'thematic analysis' offer health and wellbeing researchers? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Wellbeing*, 9(1), 121-132.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Brookfield, S. (2019). *Teaching race: How to help students unmask and challenge racism*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, S. (2017). *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, S. (2013). *Powerful techniques for teaching in life-long learning*. Maidenhead: OUP.

Brookfield, S. (2002). Using the lenses of critically reflective teaching in the community college classroom. *New Directions for Community Colleges*. Summer 2002 (118), 31-38.

Brown, N. (2019). "Listen to your gut": A reflexive approach to data analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 24(13), 31-43.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka. 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

Brubaker, R. (2006). *Ethnicity without groups*. Harvard University Press.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Brzuzy, S. (1997). Deconstructing disability: The impact of definition. *Journal of Poverty* 1, 81-91.

Burke, P., & Crozier, G. (2013). Teaching inclusively: Changing pedagogical spaces. Retrieved from

[https://www.newcastle.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/305968/UN001\\_Teaching\\_Inclusively\\_Resource\\_Pack\\_Online.pdf](https://www.newcastle.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/305968/UN001_Teaching_Inclusively_Resource_Pack_Online.pdf)

Burris, M., & Wang, C. (1997). Application of photovoice to participatory needs assessment. *Health, Education & Behaviour*, 24(3), 369-387.

Cabrera, N. (2014). But we're not laughing: White male college students' racial joking and what this says about 'post-racial' discourse. *Journal of College Student Development*, 55(1), 1-15.



- Cabrera, N. (2011). Using a sequential exploratory mixed-method design to examine racial hyperprivilege in higher education. In K. Griffin & S. Museus (Eds.), *Using mixed-methods approaches to study intersectionality in higher education* (New Directions for Institutional Research No. 151, pp. 77-91). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Calmore, J. (1995). Racialized space and culture of segregation: "Hewing a stone of hope from a mountain of despair". *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 143(5/3), 1233-2330.
- Capra, F. (2011). *The web of life: A new synthesis of mind and matter*. London: Harper Collins.
- Carr, J. (2015). *Experiences of Islamophobia: Living with racism in the neoliberal Era*. London: Routledge.
- Carter, J., Hollinsworth, D., Raciti, M., & Gilbey, K. (2018). Academic 'place-making': Fostering attachment, belonging and identity for indigenous students in Australian universities. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 23(2), 243-260.
- Central Statistics Office (2017a). *Chapter 5 Diversity*, Dublin: Central Statistics Office. Retrieved from [https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/population/2017/Chapter\\_5\\_Diversity.pdf](https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/population/2017/Chapter_5_Diversity.pdf)
- Central Statistics Office (2017b). *Census 2016 Summary Results – Part 1*, Dublin: Central Statistics Office. Retrieved from <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2017/census2016summaryresults-part1/>
- Charles, E. (2019). Decolonizing the curriculum. *Insights*, 32(24), 1-7. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.475>
- Charles, M., & Arndt, L. (2013). Gay and lesbian identified law enforcement officers: Intersection of career and sexual identity. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 41(8), 1153-1185.
- Charmaz, K. (2015). *Constructing grounded theory*. Sage Publications.
- Ciolan, L., & Manasia, L. (2017). Reframing photovoice to boost its potential for learning research. *International Journal of Qualitative Method*, 16(1), 1-15.
- Clark, D. (1996). *Schools as learning communities. Transforming education*. London: Cassell Education.
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: Over-coming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26(2), 120-123.

- Clifford, A. (2018). *Forest bathing*. Canada: Conari Press.
- Cohen, J. (1999). Changing paradigms of citizenship and the exclusiveness of the demos. *International Sociology, 14*(3), 245-268.
- Cook, K., & Buck, G. (2010). Photovoice: A community-based socioscientific pedagogical tool. *Science Scope, 33*(7), 35-39.
- Cooper, R., Kaufman, J., & Ward, R. (2003). Race and genomics. *New England Journal of Medicine, 348*(12), 1166-1170.
- Council of Europe (1997). *Measurement and Indicators of Integration*, Strasbourg: COE. Retrieved from [https://www.coe.int/t/dg3/migration/archives/documentation/Series\\_Community\\_Relations/Measurement\\_indicators\\_integration\\_en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg3/migration/archives/documentation/Series_Community_Relations/Measurement_indicators_integration_en.pdf)
- Cosmides, L., Tooby, J., & Kurzban, R. (2003). Perceptions of race. *Trends in Cognitive Science, 7*(4), 173-179.
- Costley, C., & Fulton, J. (2019). *Methodologies for practice research: Approaches for professional doctorates*. Sage Publications.
- Cotton, D., Joyner, M., George, R., & Cotton, P. (2016). Understanding the gender and ethnicity attainment gap in UK higher education. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 53*(5), 475-486.
- Cotton, D., Winter, J., & Bailey, I. (2013). Researching the hidden curriculum: Intentional and unintended messages. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education, 37*(2), 192-203.
- Crabtree, B., & Miller, W. (1999). A template approach to text analysis: Developing and using codebooks. In B. Crabtree & W. Miller (Eds.), *Doing qualitative research* (pp. 163-177). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Crawford, P., Brown, B., & Majomi, P. (2008). Education as an exit strategy for community mental health nurses: A thematic analysis of narratives. *Mental Health Review Journal, 13*(3), 8-15.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*(6), 1241-1299.
- Crenshaw, K., Gotanda, N., Peller, G., & Thomas, K. (1995). *Critical race theory: The key writings that formed the movement*. New York: New Press
- Creswell, J. (2013). *Creative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cresswell, T. (2014). *Place: An introduction*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

- Cresswell, T. (1996). *In place/out of place: Geography, ideology, and transgression*, University of Minnesota Press.
- Crisp, R., & Meleady, R. (2012). Adapting to a multicultural future. *Science*, 336(6083), 853-855.
- Crisp, R., & Turner, R. (2011). Cognitive adaptation to the experience of social and cultural diversity. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137(2), 242-266.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage Publications.
- Cutcliffe, J., & McKenna, H. (2002). When do we know that we know?: Considering the truth of research findings and the craft of qualitative research. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 39(6), 611-618.
- D'Angelo, R. (2011). White fragility. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 3(3), 54-70.
- Darby, F. (2018). Belonging at ITB – The use of photovoive methodology to investigate inclusion and belonging at ITB based on ethnicity and nationality from a student perspective. [EPub] *Transforming our World Through Design, Diversity and Education*. Retrieved from <http://ebooks.iospress.nl/volumearticle/50613>
- Darder, A., & Torres, R. (2004). *After race: Racism after multiculturalism*. New York: New York University Press.
- Darlington, M. (2008). Contrasting views: Embedding cultural diversity in the FE art and design curriculum. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 32(3), 263-274.
- Davis, D., DeBlaere, C., Brubaker, K., Owen, J, Jordan, T., Nook, J., & Van Tongeren, D. (2016). Microaggressions and perceptions of cultural humility in counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 94(4), 483-493.
- DeAngelo, L. (2014). Programs and practices that retain students from the first to second year: Results from a national study. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2013(160) 53-75.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical race theory: An introduction*. New York University Press, New York.
- Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, DBEI (2018). *Research Priority Areas 2018-2023*. DBEI: Dublin. Retrieved from <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Research-Priority-Areas-2018-to-2023.pdf>

Department of Education and Skills (2016). *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*. Department of Education and Skills: Dublin. Retrieved from [https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/PolicyReports/pub\\_national\\_skills\\_strategy\\_2025.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/PolicyReports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf)

Dei, G. (2010). Engaging race, anti-racism and equity issues in the academy. In J. Newson & C. Polster (Eds.), *Academic callings: The university we have had, now have and could have* (pp.170–177). Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press Inc.

Dei, G., & Hilowle, S. (2018). *Cartographies of race and social difference*. Springer, Switzerland.

Denson, N., & Chang, M. (2009). Racial diversity matters: The impact of diversity-related student engagement and institutional context. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46(2), 322-353.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (1999). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Derrida, J. (1972). Structure, sign, and play in the discourse of the human sciences. In R. Davis, R. Con & R. Schliefer (Eds.), *Contemporary Literary Criticism: Literary and Cultural Studies* (pp.229-248, 1989). New York: Longman.

Desa, G. (2012). Resource mobilization in international social entrepreneurship: Bricolage as a mechanism of institutional transformation. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, 36(4), 727-751.

DeVos, T., & Banaji, M. (2005). American = White?, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88(3), 447-466.

Dixson, A., & Rousseau, C. (2005). And we are still not saved: Critical race theory in education ten years later. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 7-27.

Donald, D. (2012). 'Forts, colonial frontier logic, and aboriginal Canadian relations: imagining decolonising educational philosophies in Canadian contexts'. In A. Adbi, (Eds.), *Decolonising Philosophies of Education* (pp.91-112). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Dovidio, J., Gaertner, S., Kawakami, K., & Hodson, G. (2002). What can't we just get along? Interpersonal biases and interracial distrust. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 8(2), 88-102.

- Dunne, L., Hallett, F., Kay, V., & Woolhouse, C. (2018). Spaces of inclusion: Investigating place, positioning and perspective in educational settings through photo-elicitation. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 22(1), 21-37.
- Duranti, A., & Ochs, E. (1996). Syncretic literacy: Multiculturalism in Samoan American families. *UC Berkeley: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence*. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5np8688p>
- Duruz, J. (2002). Rewriting the village: Geographies of food and belonging on Clovelly, Australia. *Cultural Geographies*, 9(4), 373-388.
- Egbo, B. (2005). Emergent paradigm: Critical realism and transformative research in educational administration. *McGill Journal of Education*, 40(2), 267-284.
- Emdin, C. (2016). *For White folks who teach in the hood...and the rest of y'all too: Reality pedagogy and urban education*. Boston MA: Beacon Press.
- Emdin, C., Adjapong, E., & Levy, I. (2016). Hip-hop based interventions as pedagogy/therapy in STEM: A model from urban science education. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, 10(3), 307-321.
- Emirbayer, M., & Desmond, M. (2012). Race and reflexivity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 35(4), 574-599.
- Engberg, M., & Hurtado, S. (2011). Developing pluralistic skills and dispositions in college: Examining racial/ethnic group differences. *Journal of Higher Education*, 82(4), 416-443.
- Essed, P., & Goldberg, D. (2002). *Race critical theories: Text and context*, Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Evans, J., & Jones, P. (2010). The walking interview: Methodology, mobility and place. *Applied Geography*, 31(2), 449-858.
- Fahey, E., Russell, H., McGinnity, F., & Grotti, R. (2019). *Diverse neighbourhoods: An analysis of the residential distribution of immigrants in Ireland*, Dublin: The Economic and Social Research Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.esri.ie/publications/diverse-neighbourhoods-an-analysis-of-the-residential-distribution-of-immigrants-in-ireland/>
- Fanon, F. 2004. *The wretched of the earth*, Edited by: Philcox, R. New York: Grove Press, 1963.
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Black skin, White masks*. New York: Grove Press.

Fassett, D., & Warren, J. (2007). *Critical communication pedagogy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fejes, A. (2008). 'Historicizing the lifelong learner'. In A. Fejes, & H. Nicoll, *Foucault and lifelong learning* (pp. 87-99). London: Routledge.

Fenster, T. (2005). Gender and the city: The different formations of belonging. In L. Nelson & J. Seager (Eds.), *A companion to feminist geography* (pp. 242-257). Oxford: Blackwell.

Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigour using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 80-92.

Field, J. (2000). *Lifelong learning and the new educational order*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Finnegan, F. (2016). The Future is unwritten: Democratic adult education against and beyond neoliberalism. *The Adult Learner: The Irish Journal of Adult and Community Education*, 46-58.

Finnegan, F., Fleming, T., & Loxley, A. (2017). Access and participation in higher education. Chapter 5: *The purpose of access: Equality, social mobility and the knowledge economy*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Finnegan, F., & O' Neill, J. (2015, November 25 – 27). A critical approach to employability: Paper read at roundtable at ESREA (European Society for the Education of Adults) conference continuity and discontinuity in learning careers: Potentials for a learning space in a changing world: Access, learning careers and identities network, University of Seville, Spain.

Firth, H., & Gleeson, K. (2004). Clothing and embodiment: Men managing body image and appearance. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 5(1), 40-48.

Fitzsimons, C. (2019). Working as a White adult educator, using our own life stories to explore symmetries of power and privilege. *Studies in the Education of Adults*. DOI: 10.1080/02660830.2019.1587876

Fitzsimons, C. (2017a). *Community education and neoliberalism: Philosophies, policies and practices in Ireland*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Fitzsimons, C. (2017b). Adult education responses to the 'othering' of Muslim identity: Perspectives from Ireland. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 23(2), 263-280.

Fleming, D. (2015). Student voice: An emerging discourse in Irish education policy. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 8(2), 223-242.

Fleming, T., Loxley, A., Kenny, A., & Finnegan, F. (2010). *Where next? A study of work and life experiences of mature students in three higher education institutions*. Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency.

Fontaine, C., & Luttrell, W. (2015). Re-centering the role of care in young people's multimodal literacies: A collaborative seeing approach. In M. Hamilton, R. Heydon, K. Hibbert, & R. Stooke (Eds.), *Negotiating spaces for literacy learning: Multimodality and governmentality*. Bloomsbury Books.

Fosslien, L., & Duffy, M. (2019). *No hard feelings: The secret power of embracing emotions at work*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*, edited by C. Gordon. New York: Pantheon.

Fraser, N. (2005). Reframing justice in a globalising world. *National Left Review*, 36, 69-88.

Freeman, M. (2017). *Modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis*. New York: Routledge.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Penguin.

Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: Continuum.

Frenk, J., (2016). Why we need a 'scholarship of belonging'. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 62(36), 1-5.

Fuglsang, L., & Sørensen, F. (2011). The balance between bricolage and innovation: Management dilemmas in sustainable public innovation. *The Service Industries Journal*, 31(4), 581–595.

Fung, D. (2017). *A Connected Curriculum for Higher Education*. London UCL Press. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.9781911576358>

Fusco, C. as quoted by bell hooks in "Representing whiteness: Seeing wings of desire," *Zeta*, 2 (March 1989), p. 39.

Garces, L., & Jayakumar, U. (2016). Dynamic diversity: How campus leaders can respond to student protests. *Higher Education Today*, a blog by the ACE, American Education Council. Retrieved from <https://www.higheredtoday.org/2016/04/20/dynamic-diversity-how-campus-leaders-can-respond-to-student-protests-across-the-country/>

Garces, L., & Jayakumar, U. (2014). Dynamic Diversity: Toward a contextual understanding of critical mass. *Educational Researcher*, 43(3), 115-124.

- Garcia, C. (2019). They don't even know that we exist: Exploring sense of belonging within sorority and fraternity communities for Latina/o members. *Journal of College Student Development*, 60(3), 319-336.
- Garcia, C. (2017). Latinx college student sense of belonging: The role of campus subcultures. Educational administration: Theses, dissertations, and student research. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cehsedaddiss/279>
- García, J. (2015). Using a critical race praxis to examine and resist the discursive practices that reproduce racism, misogyny, and homophobia. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 21(3), 315-323.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Geertz, C. (1983). *Local knowledge*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gergen, K., Josselson, R., & Freeman, M. (2015). The promises of qualitative inquiry. *American Psychologist*, 70(1), 1-9.
- Gibson, S. (2015). When rights are not enough: What is? Moving towards new pedagogy for inclusive education within UK universities. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 19(8), 875-886.
- Gillies, A. (2017). Teaching pre-service teachers about belonging. *International Journal of Whole Schooling*, 13(1), 17-25.
- Gilmartin, M., McGing, C., & Browne, K. (2019). Feminist and gender geographies in Ireland. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 26(7-9), 1111-1118.
- Gilmartin, M., & Migge, B. (2016). Migrant mothers and geographies of belonging. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 23(2), 147-161.
- Gilmartin, M. (2015). *Ireland and migration in the twenty-first century*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Gilmartin, M. (2013). British migrants and Irish anxieties. *Social Identities*, 19(5), 637-652.
- Giroux, H. (2001). *Theory and resistance in education: Towards a pedagogy for the opposition*. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.
- Giroux, H. (1992). *Border crossings: Cultural workers and the politics of education*. New York: Routledge.



- Gist, C. (2014). A culturally responsive counter-narrative of effective teaching. *Cultural Studies of Science in Education, 9*(4), 1009-1014.
- Gläser, J., & Laudel, G. (2013). Life with and without coding: Two methods for early-stage data analysis in qualitative research aiming at causal explanations. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 14*(2), Art. 5.
- Glass, N. 2008. Interrogating the conventional boundaries of research methods in social sciences: The role of visual representation in ethnography. *Forum for Qualitative Social Research, 9*(2), Art. 50.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Doubleday.
- Gómez, C. (2012). Telling our stories, naming ourselves: The lost María in the academy. In B. Stockdill & M. Danico, *Transforming the ivory tower: Challenging racism, sexism, and homophobia in the academy* (pp. 53-65). University of Hawaii Press.
- Goodman, C. (2017). Landscapes of belonging: Systematically marginalized students and sense of place and belonging in outdoor\experiential education. (MA) Retrieved from <https://pqdtopen.proquest.com/doc/1904936001.html?FMT=AI>
- Gotanda, N. (2004). Reflections on Korematsu, Brown and White innocence. *Temple Political and Civil Rights Law Review, 13*, 663-674.
- Goudie, J., Polsson, K., & Ott, P. (2009). An empirical model of crown shyness for lodgepole pine in British Columbia. *Forest Ecology and Management, 257*(1), 321-331.
- Grant, C. (1994). Challenging the myths about multicultural education. *Multicultural Education, 2*(2), 4-9.
- Gratton, C. & Jones, I. (2015). *Research methods for sports studies* (3ed.). Oxford: Routledge.
- Grenfell, M. (2014). Ireland and the field of higher education: A Bourdieusian perspective. In A. Loxley, et al., (Eds.), *Higher education in Ireland: Practices, policies and possibilities* (pp.96-109). UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Guba, E., & Lincoln, Y. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln, (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp.105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods, 18*(1), 59-82.

Gunn, V., Morrison, J., & Hanesworth, P. (2015). Equality and diversity in learning and teaching at Scotland's universities. Higher Education Academy. Retrieved from <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/equality-diversity-learning-teaching-scottish-universities.pdf>

Gunther, L., & Rosa, M. (2016). The DIY research in nursing education: Experience report. *Escola Anna Nery*, 20 (3) e20160071. [Epub] June 07, 2016. Retrieved from <https://dx.doi.org/10.5935/1414-8145.20160071>

Gurin, P., Nagda, B., & Zuniga, X. (2013). *Dialogue across difference: Practice, theory and research on intergroup dialogue*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Gurin, P., Nagda, B., & Lopez, G. (2004). The benefits of diversity in education for democratic citizenship. *Journal of Social Issues*, 60(1), 17-34.

Gurin, P., Dey, E., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2002). Diversity and higher education: Theory and impact on educational outcomes. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(3), 330-366.

Gutiérrez, K., Ali, A., & Henríquez, C. (2010). Syncretism and hybridity: Schooling, language, and race and students from non-dominant communities. In M. Apple, S. Ball, & L. Gandin (Eds.), *International handbook sociology of education: Critical research for social justice* (pp.358-369). London: Routledge.

Hall, V. (2017). A tale of two narratives: Student voice—what lies before us? *Oxford Review of Education*, 43(2), 180-193.

Hansen, M., Jones, R., & Tocchini, K. (2017). Shinrin-Yoku (Forest Bathing) and nature therapy: A state-of-the-art review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 14(8), 851.

Haque, A., Tubbs, C. Kahumoku-Fessler, E., & Brown, M. (2019). Microaggressions and Islamophobia: Experiences of Muslims across the United States and clinical implications. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 45(1), 76-91.

Harding, S. (1987). *Feminism and methodology*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Haring-Smith, T. (2012). Broadening our definition of diversity. *Liberal Education*, 98(2), 6-13.

Harley, A. (2012). Picturing reality: Power, ethics and politics in using photovoice. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 11(4), 320-339.

Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures: A case for photo elicitation. *Visual Studies*, 17(1), 13-26.

- Harper, S., & Hurtado, S. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. *New Directions for Student Services*, 120, 7-24.
- Harris, C. (1993). Whiteness as property. *Harvard Law Review*, 106(8), 1707-1794.
- Harris III, F., & Bensimon, E. (2007). The equity scorecard: A collaborative approach to assess and respond to racial/ethnic disparities in student outcomes. *New Directions for Student Services*, 120, 77-84. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hart, J., & Fellabaum, J. (2008). Analysing campus climate studies: Seeking to define and understand. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 1(4), 222-234.
- Hayes, N. (2000). *Doing psychological research: Gathering and analysing data*. Open University Press.
- Heinz, M., & Keane, E. (2018). Socio-demographic composition of primary initial teacher education entrants in Ireland. *Irish Educational Studies*, 37(4), 523-543.
- Hennink, M., Kaiser, B., & Marconi, V. (2017). Code saturation versus meaning saturation: How many interviews are enough? *Qualitative Health Research*, 27(4), 591-608.
- Hernandez, K., Shabazian, A., & McGrath, C. (2014). Photovoice as a pedagogical tool: Examining the parallel learning processes of college students and preschool children through service learning. *Creative Education*, 5(22), 1947-1957.
- Higgs, J. (2001). Charting stand-points in qualitative research. In H. Byrne-Armstrong, J. Higgs & D. Horsfall (Eds.), *Critical moments in qualitative research* (pp. 3-16). Oxford, UK: Butterworth Heinemann.
- Higher Education Authority (HEA), (2018). *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020*. HEA: Dublin. Retrieved from <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/higher-education-system-performance-framework-2018-2020.pdf>
- Higher Education Authority (HEA), (2016). Investing in National Ambition: A Strategy for Funding Higher Education. Retrieved from <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Investing-in-National-Ambition-A-Strategy-for-Funding-Higher-Education.pdf>
- Higher Education Authority (HEA), (2016). *A Study of Progression in Higher Education 2012/13 to 2013/14: A Report by the Higher Education Authority* HEA: Dublin.
- Higher Education Authority (HEA), (2011). *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030: Report of the Strategy Group* HEA: Dublin.

Highman, L. (2019). Irish technological universities and the binary divide: A qualitative study. *Higher Education*, Published online 4 July 2019. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00428-x>

Highman, L. (2017). *The European Union's modernisation agenda for higher education and the case of Ireland*. College of Europe Studies. Peter Lang Publishers.

Hinrichs, P. (2011). The effects of attending a diverse college. *Economics of Education Review*, 30(2), 332-341.

Hiraldo, P. (2010). The role of critical race theory in higher education, *The Vermont Connection*, 31(1), 53-59.

Holloway, I., & Todres, L. (2003). The status of method: Flexibility, consistency and coherence. *Qualitative Research*, 3(3), 345-357.

hooks, b. (2012). *Writing beyond race: Living theory and practice*. London: Routledge.

hooks, b. (2009). *Belonging: A culture of place*. New York: Routledge.

hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*. New York: Routledge.

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Houle, K. (2009). Making strange: Deconstruction and feminist standpoint theory. *Journal of Women Studies*, 30(1), 172-193.

Housee, S. (2011). What difference does 'difference' make? A discussion with ethnic minority students about their learning experience in higher education. *Learning and Teaching*, 4(1), 70-91.

Huizinga, R., & van Hoven, B. (2018). Everyday geographies of belonging: Syrian refugee experiences in the Northern Netherlands. *Geoforum*, 96, 309-317.

Hurtado, S. (2007). ASHE Presidential Address: Linking diversity with the educational and civic missions of higher education. *Review of Higher Education*, 30(2), 185-196.

Hurtado, S., Alvarez, C., Guillermo-Wann, C., Cuellar, M., & Arellano, L. (2012). A model for diverse learning environments: The scholarship on creating and assessing conditions for student success. *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, 27, 41-122.

Hurtado, S., & Deangelo, L. (2012). Linking diversity and civic minded practices with student outcomes. *Liberal Education*, 98(2), 14-23.

- Hurtado, S., Milem, J., Clayton-Pedersen, A., & Allen, W. (1999). Enacting diverse learning environments: Improving the campus climate for racial/ethnic diversity in higher education. *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report Series*, 26(8). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Hurtado, S., Milem, J., Clayton-Pedersen, A., & Allen, W. (1998). Enhancing campus climates for racial/ethnic diversity through educational policy and practice. *Review of Higher Education*, 21(3), 279-302.
- Hurtado, S., & Carter, D. (1997). Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus racial climate on Latino students' sense of belonging. *Sociology of Education*, 70(4), 324-345.
- Inglis, T. (2007). Catholic identity in contemporary Ireland: Belief and belonging to tradition. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 22(2), 205-220.
- Inglis, T. (1997). Empowerment and Emancipation. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 48(1), 3-17.
- Isakjee, A. (2016). Dissonant belongings: The evolving spatial identities of young Muslim men in the UK. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 48(7), 1337-1353.
- Jackson, K., & Bazeley, P. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo*. London, UK: Sage Publications.
- Jackson, K. (2017). Where qualitative researchers and technologies meet: Lessons from interactive digital art. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 23(10), 818-826.
- Jackson, N. (2016). *Exploring Learning Ecologies*. Chalk Mountain.
- Jarvis, P. (2009). *Learning to be a person in society*. London: Routledge.
- Jayakumar, U. (2015). The shaping of postcollege colorblind orientation among Whites. *Harvard Educational Review*, 85(4), 609-645.
- Johnson, C. (2012). *Bricoleur and bricolage: From metaphor to universal concept*. *Paragraph*, 35(3), 355-372.
- Johnson, D., Soldner, M., Leonard, J., Alvarez, P., Kurotsuchi Inlelas, K., Rowan-Kenyon, H., & Longerbeam, S. (2007). Examining sense of belonging among first-year undergraduates from different racial/ethnic groups. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(5), 525-542.
- Johnson, H., & Shapiro, T. (2003). Good neighborhoods, good schools: Race and the "good choices" of White families. In A. Doane & E. Bonilla-Silva (Eds.), *White out: The continuing significance of racism* (pp. 173-187). New York: Routledge.

Jones, S., Pampaka, M., Swain, D., & Skyrme, J. (2017). Contextualising degree-level achievement: An exploration of interactions between gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status and school type at one large UK university. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 22(4), 455-476.

Jones, D., Pringle, J., & Shepherd, D. (2000). "Managing diversity" meets Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Personnel Review*, 29(3), 365-380.

Joseph, C. (2012). Internationalizing the curriculum: Pedagogy for social justice. *Current Sociology*, 60(2), 239-257.

Joseph, E. (2020). Composite counterstorytelling as a technique for challenging ambivalence about race and racism in the labour market in Ireland. *Irish Journal of Sociology*, July 2020. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0791603520937274>

Joseph, E. (2018). Whiteness and racism: Examining the racial order in Ireland. *Irish Journal of Sociology*, 26(1), 46-70.

Kamler, B., & Thompson, P. (2014). *Helping doctoral students write: Pedagogies for supervision*, (2nd ed.). Abingdon UK: Routledge.

Kamler, B., & Thomson, P. (2008). The failure of dissertation advice books: Toward alternative pedagogies for doctoral writing. *Educational Researcher*, 37(8), 507-514.

Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, R. (2000). Participatory action research. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln, (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 567-595). SAGE Publications.

Kendall, F. (2013). *Understanding White privilege; Creating pathways to authentic relationships across race*. New York: Routledge.

Kennelly, I. (2017). Writing with purpose(s): A reflection on different conceptions of academic writing in contemporary higher education. *Irish Journal of Academic Practice*, 6(1), Article 6. Retrieved from <https://arrow.dit.ie/ijap/vol6/iss1/6>

Keppell, M., Souter, K., & Riddle, M., (2011). *Physical and virtual learning spaces in higher education: Concepts for the modern learning environment*. IGI Publishing (IGI Global), Hershey, PA. United States.

Khanna, R. 2006. 'Asylum'. *Texas International Law Journal*, 47, 471-490.

Kincheloe, J. (2005). On to the next level: Continuing the conceptualization of the bricolage. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(3), 323-350.

Kincheloe, J. (2001). Describing the bricolage: Conceptualizing a new rigor in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(6), 679-692.

Kincheloe, J., McLaren, P., & Steinberg, S. (2011). Critical pedagogy and qualitative research: Moving to the bricolage. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (4th ed.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 163-178). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Kincheloe, J., & Berry, K. (2004). *Rigour and complexity in educational research: Conceptualizing the bricolage*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

King, J. (2015). *Dysconscious racism, Afrocentric praxis, and education for human freedom: Through the years I keep toiling*. New York, NY: Routledge.

King, J. (1991). Dysconscious racism: Ideology, identity, and the miseducation of teachers. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 60(2), 133–146. doi: 10.2307/2295605

Kinn, L., Holgersen, H., Ekeland, T., & Davidson, L. (2013). Metasynthesis and bricolage: An artistic exercise of creating a collage of meaning. *Evidence for Practice*, 23(9), 1285-1292.

Knudsen, B., & Andersen, C. (2019). Affective politics and colonial heritage, Rhodes Must Fall at UCT and Oxford. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 25(3), 239-258.

Kohli, R., & Solórzano, D. (2012). Teachers, please learn our names!: Racial microaggressions and the K-12 classroom. *Ethnicity and Education*, 15(4), 441-462.

Kundnandi, A. (2015). *The Muslims are coming! Islamophobia, extremism, and the domestic war on terror*. New York: Verso.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2013). “‘Stakes is high’: Educating new century students.” *The Journal of Negro Education*, 82(2), 105-110.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2000). Racialized discourses and ethnic epistemologies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 88-104). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record*, 91(1), 47-68.

Lambert, S., & Loiselle, C. (2008). Combining individual interviews and focus groups to enhance data richness. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62(2), 228-237.

Laird, T. (2011). Measuring the diversity inclusivity of college courses. *Research in Higher Education*, 52, 572-588.

Laird, T. (2005). College students’ experiences with diversity and their effects on academic self-confidence, social agency and disposition toward critical thinking. *Research in Higher Education*, 46(4), 365-387.

- LaRocque, C. (2016). *Mindset is everything: If you want to be the best you have to continually progress*. Bloomington: Balboa Press.
- Law, I. (2017). Building the anti-racist university, action and new agendas. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 20*(3), 332-343.
- Leach, L. (2011). "I treat all students as equal": Further and higher education teachers' responses to diversity. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 35*(2), 247-263.
- Ledesma, M., & Calderón, D. (2015). Critical race theory in education: A review of past literature and a look to the future. *Qualitative Inquiry, 21*(3), 206-222.
- Lee, S. (2011). *Unraveling the "model minority" stereotype: Listening to Asian American youth*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Lee, S. (2005). *Up against Whiteness: Race, school and immigrant youth*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Leininger, M. (1994). Evaluation criteria and critique of qualitative research studies. In J. Morse (Eds.), *Critical issues in qualitative research methods* (pp.95-115). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lentin, A. (2004). *Racism and anti-racism in Europe*. London: Pluto Press.
- Leonardo, Z., & Porter, R. (2010). Pedagogy of fear: Toward a Fanonian theory of 'safety' in race dialogue. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 13*(2), 139-157.
- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1972). *The Savage Mind*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson.
- Levitt, P., & Glick Schiller, N. (2004). Conceptualizing simultaneity: A transnational social field perspective on society. *The International Migration Review, 38*(3), 1002-1039.
- Liao, K., Weng, C., & West, L. (2016). Social connectedness and intolerance of uncertainty as moderators between racial microaggressions and anxiety among Black individuals. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 63*(2) 240-246.
- Lichty, L. (2013). Photovoice as a pedagogical tool in the community psychology classroom. *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community, 41*(2,) 89-96.
- Lilienfeld, S. (2017). Microaggressions: Strong claims, inadequate evidence. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 12*(1), 138-169.
- Loden, M., & Rosener, J. (1990). *Workforce America! Managing employee diversity as a vital resource*. McGraw Hill.



- López, I. (2000). The social construction of race. In R. Delgado & J. Stefancic (Eds.), *Critical race theory: The cutting edge* (2nd ed., pp. 163-175). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Loyal, S. (2013). Welcome to the celtic tiger: Racism, immigration and the state. In C. Coulter & S. Coleman, *End of Irish History?: Critical Approaches to the "Celtic Tiger"* (pp.74-94). Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Luttrell, W. (2010a). 'A camera is a big responsibility': A lens for analysing children's visual voices. *Visual Studies*, 25(3), 224-237.
- Luttrell, W. (2010b). *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice*. London: Routledge.
- Luttrell, W., Restler, V., & Fontaine, C. (2012). Youth video-making: Selves and identities in dialogue. In E. Milne, C. Mitchell, & N. de Lange (Eds.), *Handbook of participatory video*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Luttrell, W., Dorsey, J., Hayden, J. & Shalaby, C. (2011). Transnational childhoods and youth media: Seeing with and learning from one immigrant child's visual narrative. In J. Fisherkeller, *International perspectives on youth media: Cultures of production & education* (pp.192-208). New York: Peter Lang Publishers.
- Luttrell, W., & Chalfen, R. (2010). Hearing voices: An introduction to dilemmas in visual research. *Visual Studies*, 25(3), 197-200.
- Lynch, K. (1999). Equality studies, the academy and the role of research in emancipatory social change. *The Economic and Social Review*, 30(1), 41-69.
- Lynch, K. (1989). *The hidden curriculum: Reproduction in education, a reappraisal*. London: Falmer Press.
- Lynch, O. (2013). British Muslim youth: Radicalisation, terrorism and the construction of the "other." *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 6(2), 241-261.
- Lynch, K., & Grummell, B. (2018). 'New managerialism as an organisational form of neoliberalism'. In F. Sowa, R. Staples, & S. Zapfel (Eds.), *The transformation of work in welfare state organizations: New public management and the institutional diffusion of ideas*. Routledge: London
- Lynch, K., & Baker, J. (2005). Equality in education: An equality of condition perspective. *Theory and Research in Education*, 3(2), 131-164.
- Lynn, M. (2004). Inserting the "race" into critical pedagogy: An analysis of "race based epistemologies." *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 36(2), 153-165.

- Lynn, M. (1999). Toward a critical race pedagogy: A research note. *Urban Education*, 33(5), 606-626.
- MacDougall, D. 2006. *The Corporeal Image. Film ethnography and the senses*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Mac Éinrí, P. (2001). *Immigration into Ireland: Trends, policy responses, outlook governance models and new migration patterns: Local strategies to foster social cohesion in a changing labour market*. EU Commission Contract VS/2000/0312 February-December 2001, Ireland.
- Madden, L., & Smith, A. (2015). Using photographs to integrate liberal arts learning in business education. *Journal of Management Education*, 39(1), 116-140.
- Madriaga, M. (2018). Antiracism in English higher education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 08/2018, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2018.1512660
- Madriz, M. (2000). Focus groups in feminist research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 835-850). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maher, F., & Tetreault, M. (1994). *The feminist classroom*. New York: Basic Books.
- Malherbe N., Suffla S., Seedat M., & Bawa, U. (2017). Photovoice as liberatory enactment: The case of youth as epistemic agents. In M. Seedat, S. Suffla, & D. Christie (Eds.), *Emancipatory and participatory methodologies in peace, critical, and community psychology* (pp.165-178). Peace Psychology Book Series. Springer Publishing.
- Marginson, S. (2018). Public/private in higher education: A synthesis of economic and political approaches. *Studies in Higher Education*, 43(2), 322-337.
- Martin, I. (2003). Adult education, lifelong learning and citizenship: Some ifs and buts. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 22(6), 566-579.
- Martinez, E., Berkshire Hearit, L., Banerji, D., Gettings, P., & Buzzanell, P. (2018). Raising awareness of campus diversity and inclusion: Transformationally teaching diversity through narratives of campus experiences and simulated problem solving. *Communication Teacher*, 32(1), 19-24.
- Masika, R., & Jones, J. (2016). Building student belonging and engagement: Insights into higher education students' experiences of participating and learning together. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 21(2), 138-150.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. London: Sage.

- Masters, C., Robinson, D., Faulkner, S., Patterson, E., McIlraith, T., & Aziz, A. (2019). Addressing biases in patient care with the 5Rs of cultural humility, a clinician coaching tool. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 34(4), 627-630.
- Matias, C. (2013). Who you callin' White?! A critical counter-story on colouring White Identity. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 16(3), 291-315.
- Mauthner, N., & Doucet, A. (1998). Reflections on a voice centred relational method of data analysis: Analysing maternal and domestic voices. In J. Ribbens & R. Edwards (Eds.), *Feminist dilemmas in qualitative research: Private lives and public texts* (pp. 119-144). London: Sage.
- McCarthy, C. (2009). *Report of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (An Bord Snip Nua Report)*. Dublin: Social Justice Ireland. Retrieved from <https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/publications/bord-snip-nua-report-full-text>
- McConahay, J. (1986). Modern racism, ambivalence, and the modern racism scale. In J. Dovidio & S. Gaertner (Eds.), *Prejudice, discrimination and racism* (pp. 91-126). Orlando, Florida, USA: Academic Press.
- McDowell, L. (2009). Old and new European economic migrants: Whiteness and managed migration policies. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(1), 19-36.
- McGinnity, F., Fahey, É., Quinn, E., Arnold, S., Maître, B., & O'Connell, P. (2018). *Monitoring Report on Integration 2018*, Dublin: The Economic and Social Research Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.esri.ie/publications/monitoring-report-on-integration-2018>
- McIntosh, P. (2001). White privilege and male privilege. In M. Anderson (Eds.), *Race, class, and gender* (4th ed., pp. 24-40). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning.
- McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women's studies. Working paper 189. Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women.
- Mekawi, Y., & Todd, N. (2018). Okay to say?: Initial validation of the acceptability of racial microaggressions scale. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 24(3), 346-362.
- Merriman, S. (1998). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Merryfield, M. (2000). Why aren't teachers being prepared to teach for diversity, equity, and global interconnectedness? A study of lived experiences in the making

of multicultural and global educators. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16(4), 429-443.

Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as transformation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bassey.

Michael, L. (2015). *Afrophobia in Ireland; racism against people of African descent*. Dublin: ENAR Ireland.

Milem, J., Chang, M., & Antonio, A. (2005). Making diversity work on campus: A research-based perspective. Association of American Colleges and Universities. Retrieved from [https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/mei/milem\\_et\\_al.pdf](https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/mei/milem_et_al.pdf)

Miles, B., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded source book* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miller, K. (2015). *Organisational communication: Approaches and processes*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.

Mirza, H. (2017). One in a million: A journey of post-colonial woman of colour in the white academy. In *Inside the Ivory Tower: Narratives of Women of Colour Surviving and Thriving in Academia*. Edited by Deborah Gabriel & Shirley Anne Tate. London: Trentham UCL Press.

Mitra, D., Frick, W., & Crawford, E. (2011). The ethical dimensions of student voice activities in the United States. In G. Czerniawski & W. Kidd (Eds.), *The student voice handbook: Bridging the academic/practitioner divide* (pp. 367- 378). London: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.

Molina, K., Alegría, M., & Mahalingam, R. (2013). A multiple-group path analysis of the role of everyday discrimination on self-rated physical health among Latina/os in the USA. *Annals of Behavioural Medicine*, 45(1), 33-44.

Moore, W. (2012). Reflexivity, power, and systemic racism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 35(4), 614-619.

Moore, P., & Hampton, G. (2014; 2015). 'It's a bit of a generalisation, but ...': Participant perspectives on intercultural group assessment in higher education. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 40(3), 390-406.

Morgan, D. (2007). Paradigms lost and pragmatism regained: Methodological implications of combining qualitative and quantitative methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), 48-76.

Morrice, L. (2014). The learning migration nexus: Towards a conceptual understanding. *European Journal for Research and Learning of Adults*, 5(2), 149-159.

- Morse, J. (2010). Simultaneous and sequential qualitative mixed method designs. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*(6), 483-491.
- Moss, J., & Pini, B. (2016). *Visual research methods in educational research*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mountz, A. (2011). Where asylum seekers wait: Feminist counter-topographies of sites between states. *Gender, Place and Culture, 18*(3), 381-399.
- Murphy, C., Ní Chonail, B., & Queenan, P. (2019). *Migrant integration and social cohesion strategy 2019-2024*, Dublin: Fingal County Council. Retrieved from <https://www.fingal.ie/sites/default/files/2019-11/migrantintegrationstrategy.pdf>
- Murphy, M., & Zirkel, S. (2015). Race and belonging in school: How anticipated and experienced belonging affect choice, persistence, and performance. *Teachers College Record, 117*(12), 1-40.
- Museus, S., Yi, V., & Saelua, N. (2017). The impact of culturally engaging campus environments on sense of belonging. *The Review of Higher Education, 40*(2), 187-215.
- Museus, S. (2014). The culturally engaging campus environments (CECE) model: A new theory of college success among racially diverse student populations. In M. Paulsen (Eds.), *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research* (pp. 189-227). New York: Springer.
- Nadal, K. (2011). The racial and ethnic microaggressions scale (REMS): Construction, reliability, and validity. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 58*(4), 470-480.
- Nadal, K., Griffin, K., Wong, Y., Hamit, S., & Rasmus, M. (2014). The impact of racial microaggressions on mental health: Counseling implications for clients of color. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 92*(1), 57-66.
- National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, (2015). *Why Students Leave: Findings from Qualitative Research into Student Non-Completion in Higher Education in Ireland*. Dublin: National Forum/UCD, 2015.
- Neely, B., & Samura, M. (2011). Social geographies of race: Connecting race and space. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 34*(11), 1933-1952.
- Ní Chonail, B. (2018). Interculturalism in higher education in Ireland: An analysis from a strategy, policy and practice perspective. *Studies in Health Technology and Informatics, 256*, 624-633.
- Nora, A., Barlow, L., & Crisp, G. (2005). Student persistence and degree attainment beyond the first year in college. In Seidman, A. (Eds.), *College student retention: Formula for success* (pp. 129-153). Westport, CT: Praeger Publications.

- Nowotny, H., Scott, P., & Gibbons, M. (2003). INTRODUCTION: 'mode 2' revisited: The new production of knowledge. *MINERVA*, 41(3), 179-194.
- O'Connor, F. (2010). Institutional racism in Irish adult education: Fact or fiction? *The Irish Journal of Adult and Community Education*, 29-52.
- Odena, O. (2013). Using software to tell a trustworthy story, convincing and useful story. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 16(5), 355-372.
- OECD (2018), The Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030. Retrieved from [http://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/transformative-competencies/Transformative Competencies for 2030 concept note.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/transformative-competencies/Transformative%20Competencies%20for%202030%20concept%20note.pdf)
- Oliffe, J., Bottorff, J., Kelly, M., & Halpin, M. (2008). Analyzing participant produced photographs from an ethnographic study of fatherhood and smoking. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 31(5), 529-539.
- O'Reilly, Zoe (2012). 'In between spaces': experiences of asylum seekers in the 'direct provision' system in Ireland. (PhD). <http://eprints.maynoothuniversity.ie/6740/>
- O'Reilly, M., & Kiyimba, N. (2015). *Advanced qualitative research: A guide to using theory*. London: Sage.
- Owen, J., Imel, Z., Tao, K., Wampold, B., Smith, A., & Rodolfa, E. (2011). Cultural ruptures in short-term therapy: Working alliance as a mediator between clients' perceptions of microaggressions and therapy outcomes. *Counselling & Psychotherapy Research*, 11(3), 204-212.
- Papson, S. (2014). Scholars, intellectuals, and bricoleurs. *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education*, 13(4), 377-394.
- Parker-Jenkins, M., & Masterson, M. (2013). No longer 'Catholic, White and Gaelic': Schools in Ireland coming to terms with cultural diversity. *Irish Educational Studies*, 32(4), 477-492.
- Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 41(3), 93-97.
- Paris, D., & Alim, H. (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*. New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
- Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Pawlowski, L. (2019). Creating a brave space classroom through writing. In S. Brookfield, *Teaching race: How to help students unmask and challenge racism*, (pp. 63-86). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pechenkina, E. (2016). "It becomes almost an act of defiance": Indigenous Australian transformational resistance as a driver of academic achievement. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 20(4), 463-477.

Pérez Huber, L. (2011). Discourses of racist nativism in California public education: English dominance as racist nativist microaggressions. *Educational Studies*, 47(4), 379-401.

Phillimore, J., Bradby, H., Knecht, M., Padilla, B., & Pemberton, S. (2019). Bricolage as a conceptual tool for understanding access to healthcare in superdiverse populations. *Social Theory and Health*, 17(2), 231-252.

Phillimore, J., Humphries, R., Klaas, F., & Knecht, M. (2016). Bricolage: Potential as a conceptual tool for understanding access to welfare in superdiverse neighbourhoods. IRiS (Institute for Research in Superdiversity, University of Birmingham) Working Paper Series, No.14/2016.

Pimblott, K. (2019). Decolonising the university: The origins and meaning of a movement. *The Political Quarterly*, 91(1), 210-216.

Pittman, L., & Richmond, A. (2008). University belonging and friendship quality during the transition to college: Links to self-perceptions and psychological symptoms. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 76(4), 343-361.

Plaut, V. (2010). Diversity science: Why and how difference makes a difference. *Psychological Inquiry*, 21(2), 77-99.

Plaut, V., Thomas, K., Hurd, K., & Romano, C. (2018). Do color blindness and multiculturalism remedy or foster discrimination and racism? *Current Directions on Psychological Science*, 27(3), 200-206.

Plaut, V., Thomas, K., & Goren, M. (2009). Is multiculturalism or colorblindness better for minorities? *Psychological Science*, 20(4), 444-446.

Popa, N., & Stan, L. (2013). Investigating learning space with photography in early childhood education. A participatory research approach. *Revista de Cercetare și Intervenție Socială*, 42, 248-261.

Price, P. (2015). Race and ethnicity III: Geographies of diversity. *Progress in Human Geography*, 39(4), 497-506.

Prince, E., & Hadwin, J. (2013). The role of a sense of school belonging in understanding the effectiveness of inclusion of children with special educational needs. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 17(3), 238-262.

- Pritchard, R., & Slowey, M. (2017). Resilience a high price for survival? The impact of austerity on Irish higher education, south and north. In E. Heffernan, *Debating austerity in Ireland: Crisis, experience and recovery* (pp.175-190). Dublin, Ireland: Royal Irish Academy.
- Putz, F., Parker, G., & Archibald, R. (1984). Mechanical abrasion and intercrown spacing. *American Midland Naturalist*, 112(1), 24-28.
- Rainer, J. (2015). Understanding and challenging White privilege in higher education as a means of combatting and neutralizing racism. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, 10(2), 149-161.
- Rankin, S., & Reason, R. (2008). Transformational tapestry model: A comprehensive approach to transforming campus climate. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 1(4), 262-274.
- Ravitch, S. (2005). Pluralism, power and politics: Discourses of diverse pedagogies and pedagogies of diversity. In N. Peters-Davis & J. Shultz, *Challenges of multicultural education: Teaching and taking diversity courses* (1-19). Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Reay, D., Crozier, G., & Clayton, J. (2010). 'Fitting in' or 'standing out': Class students in UK higher education. *British Educational Research Journal*, 36(1), 107-124.
- Reid, H. (2018). Telling tales: a transformative space for alternative discourses in research. In S. Jackson (Eds.), *Developing transformative spaces in higher education. Learning to transgress* (pp.229-243). Oxon: Routledge, Taylor Francis.
- Rendón, L., Jalomo, R., & Nora, A. (2000). Theoretical considerations in the study of minority student retention in higher education. In J. Braxton (Eds.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 127-156). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Rhodes, S., & Douglas Lees, N. (2017). Dean, chairs and faculty: A team for enhancing faculty diversity. *The Department Chair*, 27(3), 11-13.
- Rice, P., & Ezzy, D. (1999). *Qualitative research methods: A health focus*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Richardson, L., & St. Pierre, E. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 959-978). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Rinehart, E. (1998). Fictional methods in ethnography: Believability, specks of glass, and Chekov. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 42(2), 200-224.



Ritchie, J., & Spencer, L. (2002). Qualitative data analysis for applied policy research. In A. Bryman & B. Burgess (Eds.), *Analyzing Qualitative Data*. London, UK: Routledge.

RMF Oxford (2015, 4 November) 'Oxford Students Call for Cecil John Rhodes Statue to Fall', Rhodes Must Fall Oxford. Retrieved from <https://rmfoxford.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/041115rmfpressrelease1.pdf>

RMF Oxford (2015), #RHODESMUSTFALL. Retrieved from <https://rmfoxford.wordpress.com/2016/07/27/oxford-university-has-no-regard-for-black-life/#more-719>

Roediger, D. (2002). Whiteness and Ethnicity in the history of "White Ethnics" in the United States. In P. Essed & D. Goldberg (Eds.), *Race Critical Theories* (pp. 325-343). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Rogers, A. (2003). What is the difference? A new critique of adult learning and teaching. Leicester, NIACE.

Rogers, M. (2012). Contextualizing theories and practices of bricolage research. *Qualitative Report*, 17(48), 1-7.

Rollock, N. (2016). How much does your university do for racial equality? Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2016/jan/19/how-much-does-your-university-do-for-racial-equality>

Romero, A., & Van Campen, K. (2011). Bicultural stress among adolescents. In R. Levesque (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of adolescence* (pp. 263-274). Springer US.

Romero, A., & Roberts, R. (2003). Stress within a bicultural context for adolescents of Mexican descent. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 9(2), 171-184.

Romero, A., Carvajal, S., Valle, F., & Orduna, M. (2007). Adolescent bicultural stress and its impact on mental well-being among Latinos, Asian Americans, and European Americans. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 35(4), 519-534.

Rose, G. (2012). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials*. London, UK: Sage.

Rossmann, G., & Rallis, S. (2003). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rowan, L. (2019). *Higher education and social justice: The transformative potential of university teaching and the power of educational paradox*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Ryan, A. (2011). 'Conscientization: The art of learning'. In A. O'Shea, & M. O'Brien (Eds.), *Pedagogy, oppression and transformation in a 'post-critical' climate* (pp. 86-101). London: Continuum.
- Ryan, C. (2012). *Socio-Economic Profile of XXX*. Dublin: Blanchardstown Area Partnership (BAP).
- Ryan, L. (2010). Becoming Polish in London: Negotiating ethnicity through migration. *Social Identities*, 16(3), 359-376.
- Said, E. (1995). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Vintage.
- Salunke, S., Weerawardena, J., & McColl-Kennedy, J. (2013). Competing through service innovation: The role of bricolage and entrepreneurship in project-oriented firms. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(8), 1085-1097.
- Santos, B. (2008). *Another knowledge is possible: Beyond northern epistemologies*. London, UK: Verso.
- Santos, B. (2007) 'Opening up the cannon of knowledge and recognition of difference'. In B. Santos (Eds.), *Another knowledge is possible: Beyond northern epistemologies* (pp. xix-lxii). London: Verso.
- Santos, B. (1995). *Toward a new common sense: Law, science and politics in the paradigmatic transition*. New York: Routledge.
- Sawir, E. (2011). Dealing with diversity in internationalised higher education institutions. *Intercultural Education*, 22(5), 381-394.
- Sayer, R. (2002). *Realism and social science*. London: Sage Publications.
- Scott, L. (1992), Playing with pictures: Postmodernism, poststructuralism and advertising visuals. In J. Sherry & B. Sternthal (Eds.), *Advances in Consumer Research* (pp. 596-612), Vol.19. Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research.
- Scott, G., & R. Garner, R. (2013). *Doing Qualitative Research*. Boston: Pearson.
- Sears, D. (1998). Symbolic racism. In P. Katz & D. Taylor (Eds.), *Eliminating racism: Profiles in controversy* (pp. 53-84). New York: Plenum Press.
- Selten, R. (2001). What is bounded rationality? In G. Gigerenzer & R. Selten (Eds.), *Bounded rationality: The adaptive toolbox* (pp. 13-36). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
- Sensoy, Ö., & DiAngelo, R. (2017). *Is everyone really equal?: An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education*. New York; London: Teachers College Press.

Shelton, K., & Delgado-Romero, E. (2013). Sexual orientation microaggressions: The experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer clients in psychotherapy. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, 1*(S), 59-70.

Shimpi, P., & Zirkel, S. (2012). One hundred and fifty years of "The Chinese question": An intergroup relations perspective on immigration and globalization. *Journal of Social Issues, 68*(3), 534-558.

Shotter, J. (2011). Embodiment, abduction and expressive movement: A new realm of inquiry? *Theory & Psychology, 21*(4), 439-456.

Sibley, D. (2002). *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and difference in the West*. London, UK: Routledge.

Sidanius, J., & Petrocik, J. (2001). Communal and national identity in a multi-ethnic state: A comparison of three perspectives. In R. Ashmore, L. Jussim, & D. Wilder (Eds.), *Social Identity, intergroup conflict, and conflict resolution* (pp. 101-129). UK: OUP.

Slaten C., Ferguson J., Hughes H., & Scalise D. (2020). 'Some people treat you like an alien': Understanding the female athlete experience of belonging on campus. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist, 37*(1), 11-19.

Slaten, C., Ellison, Z., Lee, J., Yough, M., & Scalise, D. (2016). Belonging on campus: A qualitative inquiry of Asian international students. *The Counseling Psychologist, 44*(3), 383-410.

Slaten, C., Yough, M., Shemwell, D., Scalise, D., Elison, Z., & Hughes, H. (2014). Eat, sleep, breathe, study: Understanding what it means to belong at a university from the student perspective. *Excellence in Higher Education, 5*, 1-5.

Slutskaya, N., Simpson, A., & Hughes, J. (2012). Lessons from photoelicitation: Encouraging working men to speak. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal, 7*(1), 16-33.

Smith, W., Mustaffa, J., Jones, C., Curry, T., & Allen, W. (2016). You make me wanna holler and throw up both my hands!: Campus culture, Black misandric microaggressions, and racial battle fatigue. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 29*(9), 1189-1209.

Smith, W., Allen, W., & Danley, L. (2007). Assume the position . . . you fit the description: Psychosocial experiences and racial battle fatigue among African American male college students: PROD. *The American Behavioral Scientist, 51*(4), 551-578.

Snævarr, S. (2010). *Metaphors, narratives, emotions: Their interplay and impact*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

- Solís, P., & Miyares, I. (2014). Introduction: Rethinking practices for enhancing diversity in the discipline. *The Professional Geographer*, 66(2), 169-172.
- Solórzano, D. (1998). Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experience of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 121-136.
- Solórzano D., & Yosso, T. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 23-44.
- Stahl, T. (2017). Collective responsibility for oppression. *Social Theory and Practice*, 43(3), 473-501.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage Publications.
- Stallar, K. (2013). Epistemological boot camp: The politics of science and what every qualitative researcher needs to know to survive in the academy. *Qualitative Social Work*, 12(4), 395-413.
- Stanczak, G. (2007). *Visual research methods: Image, society and representation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Steele, C. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi: How stereotypes affect us and what we can do*. London, UK: Norton.
- Steele, C., Spencer, S., & Aronson, J. (2002). Contending with group image: The psychology of stereotype and social identity threat. In M. Zanna (Eds.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (pp. 379-440). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Stephan, W., & Stephan, C. (2000). An integrated threat theory of prejudice. In E. Oskamp, *Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination*. Mahwah, US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Stephan, W., Renfro, C., Esses, V., Stephan, C., & Martin, T. (2005). The effects of feeling threatened on attitudes towards immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(1), 1-19.
- Strange, C., & Banning, J. (2015). *Designing for learning: Creating campus environments for student success* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Sage Publications.
- Stroud, M. (2014). Photovoice as a pedagogical tool: Student engagement in undergraduate introductory chemistry for nonscience majors. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 43(5), 98-107.

- Su, C. (2005). Cracking silent codes: Critical race theory and education organizing. *Discourse Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 28(4), 531-548.
- Sue, D. (2017). Microaggressions and “evidence”: Empirical or experiential reality? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 12(1), 170-172.
- Sue, D., Alsaidi, S., Awad, M., Glaeser, E., Calle, C., & Mendez, N. (2019). Disarming racial microaggressions: Microintervention strategies for targets, White allies and bystanders. *American Psychologist*, 74(1), 128-142.
- Sue, D., & Sue, D. (2016). *Counselling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Sue, D., Lin, A., Torino, G., Capodilupo, C., & Rivera, D. (2009). Racial microaggressions and difficult dialogues on race in the classroom. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 15(2), 183-190.
- Sue, D., Nadal, K., Capodilupo, C., Lin, A., Rivera, D., & Torino, G. (2008). Racial microaggressions against Black Americans: Implications for counselling. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 86(3), 330-338.
- Sue, D., Capodilupo, C., Torino, G., Bucceri, J., Holder, A., Nadal, K., & Esquilan, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist*, 62(4), 271-286.
- Sutton-Brown, C. (2014). Photovoice: A methodological guide. *Photography & Culture*, 7(2), 169-186.
- Tapp, J. (2014). I actually listened, I’m proud of myself. The effects of a participatory pedagogy on students’ constructions of academic identities. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 19(4), 323-335.
- Tate, S., & Bagguley, P. (2017). Building the anti-racist university: Next steps. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 20(3), 289-299.
- Tatum, B. (2000). The complexities of identity: Who am I? In M. Adams, W. Blumenfeld, R. Castandea, H. Hackman, M. Peters, & X. Zuniga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice: An anthology on racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and classism* (pp. 186-224). New York: Routledge.
- Taylor, T., Milem, J., & Coleman, A. (2016). Association of American colleges and Universities. *Bridging the research to practice gap: Achieving mission-driven diversity and inclusion goals. A review of research findings and policy implications for colleges and universities*. Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/node/16225>

- Tervalon, M., & Murray-García, J. (1998). Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. *Journal of Health Care for Poor and Underserved, 9*(2), 117-125.
- Thomas, K. (2015). Rethinking belonging through Bourdieu, diaspora and the spatial. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning, 17*(1), 37-49.
- Thomas, K. (2008). Macrononsense in multiculturalism. *American Psychologist, 63*(4), 274-275.
- Thomas, L., & May, H. (2010). *Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education*. York: Higher Education Academy. Retrieved from [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/inclusivelearningandteaching\\_finalreport.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/inclusivelearningandteaching_finalreport.pdf)
- Thomas, P., & Packham, J. (2007). *Ecology of woodlands and forests: Description, dynamics and diversity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Thomson, P. (2011). Coming to terms with 'voice'. In G. Czerniawski & W. Kidd (Eds.), *The student voice handbook: Bridging the academic/practitioner divide* (pp. 19–30). London: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.
- Tienda, M. (2013). Diversity ≠ inclusion: Promoting integration in higher education. *Educational Researcher, 42*(9), 467-475.
- Tierney, W. (1992). The college experience of native Americans: A critical analysis. In L. Weis & M. Fine (Eds.), *Beyond silenced voices: Class, race, and gender in United States schools* (pp. 309-323). Ithaca: State University of New York Press.
- Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (2nd ed). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tinto, V. (1987). *Leaving College: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tobin, G., & Begley, C. (2004). Methodological rigour within a qualitative framework. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 48*(4), 338-396.
- Tolia-Kelly, D. (2007). Participatory art: Capturing spatial vocabularies in a collaborative visual methodology with Melanie Carvalho and South Asian women in London, UK. In S. Kindon, R. Pain. & M. Kesby (Eds.), *Participatory action research approaches and methods: Connecting people, participation and place* (pp.132-140). New York, London: Routledge.
- Torres, L., & Taknint, J. (2015). Ethnic microaggressions, traumatic stress symptoms, and Latino depression: A moderated mediational model. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 62*(3), 393-401.

- Tovey, H., & Share, P. (2003). *A sociology of Ireland*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.
- Tran, A., & Lee, R. (2014). You speak English well! Asian Americans' reactions to an exceptionalizing stereotype. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 61*(3), 484-490.
- Trudeau, D. (2006). Politics of belonging in the construction of landscapes: Place-making, boundary-drawing and exclusion. *Cultural Geographies, 13*(3), 421-443.
- Tucker, J. (2017). Measuring outcomes without sacrificing our souls: Substantively measuring institutional impact. *About Campus, 22*(4), 28-31.
- Turner, V. (1967). Betwixt and between: The liminal period in rites de passage. In V. Turner, *The forest of symbols* (pp. 93-111). Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press.
- Turner, V. 1969 (2008). 'Liminality and communitas'. In V. Turner, *The ritual process, structure and anti-structure* (pp.94-130). NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Ukpokodu, O. (2010). How a sustainable campus-wide diversity curriculum fosters academic success. *Multicultural Education, 17*(2), 27-36.
- Usher, R. (2002). A critique of the neglected epistemological assumptions of educational research. In D. Scott & R. Usher (Eds.), *Understanding educational research* (pp. 9-32). New York: Routledge.
- Vaccaro, A., & Newman, B. (2016). Development of a sense of belonging for privileged and minoritized students: An emergent model. *Journal of College Student Development, 57*(8), 925-942.
- van Gennep, A. 1909 (1960). *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Visser, K. (2017). "Because we're all different" – everyday experiences of belonging among young people from immigrant background in Tottenham. *Geoforum*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.02.002>
- Wall, K., Higgins, S., Hall, E., & Woolner, P. (2013). 'That's not quite the way we see it': The epistemological challenge of visual data. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 36*(1), 3-22.
- Wang, C. (1999). Photovoice: A participatory action research strategy applied to women's health. *Journal of Women's Health, 8*(2), 185-192.
- Wang, C., Morrel-Samuels, S., Hutchison, P., Bell, L., & Pestronk, R. (2004). Flint Photovoice: Community building among youths, adults and policymakers. *American Journal of Public Health, 94*(6), 911-913.

- Wang, C., & Redwood-Jones, Y. (2001). Photovoice ethics: Perspectives from flint photovoice. *Health Education & Behaviour, 28*(5), 560-572.
- Wang, C., Burris, M., & Ping, X. (1996). Chinese village women as visual anthropologists: A participatory approach to reaching policymakers. *Social Science & Medicine, 42*(10), 1391-1400.
- Wang, C., & Burris, M. (1994). Empowerment through photo novella: Portraits of participation. *Health Education Quarterly, 21*(2), 171-186.
- Warikoo, N. (2016). *The diversity bargain*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Watkins, C. & Hooks, J. (2016). On a culturally humble psychoanalytic supervision perspective: Creating the cultural third. *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 33*(3), 478-517.
- Weber, L. (2010). *Understanding race, class, gender, and sexuality: A conceptual framework* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Wei, M., Wang, K., Heppner, P., & Du, Y. (2012). Ethnic and mainstream social connectedness, perceived racial discrimination, and post-traumatic stress symptoms. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 59*(3), 486-493.
- Wharton, S. (2017). Reflection in university and the employability agenda: A discourse analysis case study. *Reflective Practice, 18*(4), 567-579.
- Why is My Curriculum White? (2015). Retrieved from <https://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/why-is-my-curriculum-white/>
- Wibberley, C. (2012). Getting to grips with bricolage: A personal account, *The Qualitative Report, 17*(50), 1-8.
- Williams, D. (2010). Campus climate and culture study: Taking strides towards a better future. Florida Gulf Coast University: Centre for Strategic Diversity Leadership and Change Inc. Retrieved from [https://www2.fgcu.edu/president/files/FGCU\\_Climate\\_Culture\\_Report\\_2010.pdf](https://www2.fgcu.edu/president/files/FGCU_Climate_Culture_Report_2010.pdf)
- Wilson, H. (2017). On geography and encounter: Bodies, borders and difference. *Progress in Human Geography, 41*(4), 451-471.
- Wise, A. (2010). Sensuous multiculturalism: Emotional landscapes of inter-ethnic living in Australian suburbia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 36*(6), 917-937.
- Wise, A. (2005). Hope and belonging in a multicultural suburb. *Journal of Intercultural Studies, 26*(1-2), 171-186.



- Wishart-Leard, D., & Lashua, B. (2006). Popular media, critical pedagogy, and inner city youth. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 29(1), 244-264.
- Witell, L., Gebauer, H., Jaakkola, E., Hammedi, W., Patricio, L., & Perks, H. (2017). A bricolage perspective on service innovation. *Journal of Business Research*, 79, 290-298.
- Wong, G., Zane, N., Okazaki, S., & Saw, A. (2017). Decreases in implicit self-esteem explain the racial impact of microaggressions among Asian Americans. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 64(5), 574-583.
- Wong, G., Derthick, A., David, E. Saw, A., & Okazaki, S. (2014). The what, the why and the how: A review of racial microaggression research in psychology. *Race and Social Problems*, 6(2), 181-200.
- Yancy, G. (2019). Guidelines for Whites teaching about whiteness. In S. Brookfield, *Teaching race: How to help students unmask and challenge racism*, (pp.19-41). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Yang, J., Ryan, C., & Zhang, L. (2016). Impersonation in ethnic tourism – The presentation of culture by other ethnic groups. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 56, 16-31.
- Yanow, W. (2019). Teaching against colour blindness. In S. Brookfield, *Teaching race: How to help students unmask and challenge racism* (pp. 213-231). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Yin, R. (2006). Case study methods. In J. Green, G. Camilli, & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 111-122). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Yoon, E., & Lee, R. (2010). Importance of social connectedness as a moderator in Korean immigrants' subjective well-being. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, 1(2), 93-105.
- Yosso, T. (2002). Toward a critical race curriculum. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 35(2), 93-107.
- Yosso, T., Smith, W., Ceja, M., & Solórzano, D. (2009). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate for Latina/o undergraduates. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(4), 659-690.
- Young, G. (2003). Dealing with difficult classroom dialogues. In P. Bronstein & K. Quina (Eds.), *Teaching gender and multicultural awareness* (pp. 337-360). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Yusof, N., Hashim, R., Valdez, N., & Yaacob, A. (2018). Managing diversity in higher education: A strategic communication approach. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, 28*(1), 41-60.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Belonging and the politics of belonging. *Patterns of Prejudice, 40*(3), 197-214.

Yuval-Davis, N., Anthias, F., & Kofman, E. (2005). Secure borders and safe haven and the gendered politics of belonging: Beyond social cohesion. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 28*(3), 513-535.

Zembylas, M. (2007). Mobilizing anger for social justice: The politicization of the emotions in education. *Teaching Education, 18*(1), 15-28.

Zhang, M., Fan, D., & Zhu, J. (2016). Managing student diversity in business education: Incorporating campus diversity into the curriculum to foster inclusion and academic success of international students. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 15*(2), 366-380.

Zuberi, T., & Bonilla-Silva, E. (2008). *White logic, White methods: Racism and methodology*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield.

Zwysen, W., & Longhi, S. (2017). Employment and earning differences in the early career of ethnic minority British graduates: the importance of university career, parental background and area characteristics. *Journal of ethnic and migration studies, 44*(1-2), 154-172.

## **Appendix 1: Student Participant Interview/Focus Group**

### **Questions (Phase 2)**

#### SECTION 1 - Demographics

Name:

What programme are you studying?

What year of your studies are you in?

What is your age?

How would you describe your ethnicity-nationality?

How long have you been living in Ireland? Since birth (underline) or for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

Please specify your gender?

#### SECTION 2 - Breaking the Ice – Making the Participant Comfortable:

Can you describe what a typical day is like for you at ITB/TU Dublin?

Do members of staff or peers ask you how to pronounce your name correctly?

Do you feel that you are a member of the campus community, that you belong at ITB/TU Dublin?

What spaces do you use to learn? Lectures, library, group projects.

#### SECTION 3 - PHOTO PROMPTS NEXT

#### SECTION 4 – Socialisation, exposure to diversity:

Do you make an effort to get to know people from diverse backgrounds?

How many close friends of a different ethnicity do you have on campus?

Have you studied with/gone for lunch or coffee break with/interacted with/socialise with other ethnic minorities on campus?

Did you have much pre-ITB (TU Dublin) exposure to ethnic diversity?

Do you live between two or more cultures on campus?

### Section 5 - Campus Climate:

Do you believe ITB (TU Dublin) has a long-standing commitment to diversity?

Is there a campus-wide respect on campus for the expression of diverse beliefs and experiences?

How would you describe the campus culture?

What does an inclusive campus look like to you?

Who is more likely to socialise with other groups? (Patterns of socialisation)

Is there interethnic interaction and socialisation on a daily basis? (Formally or informally?)

### Section 6 - Inclusion and Belonging:

Have you made changes to belong?

Does your personality change when you are on campus?

Do your grades at college have anything to do with your sense of belonging?

What steps would make ITB (TU Dublin Blanchardstown) a more inclusive campus?

### Section 7 - Inside the Classroom:

Are there safe and collaborative learning spaces on campus?

What can a lecturer do to make you feel more included in class?

How does it feel to be an BME student in the classroom?

Have you/are you subject to negative stereotyping or misrecognition?

Is your ethnic group invisible or devalued?

Is there a lack of education about ethnicity?

Is your syllabus ethnicity-proofed?

## Appendix 2: Staff Focus Group Questions

### Professional Service Staff Questions

1. There are about 55 different nationalities on campus. How frequently would you deal with/interact with students from BME backgrounds?
2. What tend to be their top 3 requests or issues?
3. Based on your experience of dealing with culturally and ethnically diverse students, do you believe that they are included on campus?
4. What do you think was the space on campus as identified by the students that is most inclusive for them?
5. What do you think was the space on campus as identified by the students that is most exclusive for them?
6. Do you experience difficulty pronouncing their names?
7. Biggest challenge for you when dealing with BME students?
8. Have you received any training on dealing with a diverse student population?

### Lecturing Staff Questions

1. There are about 55 different nationalities on campus currently. How would the modules that you have been teaching over the years reflect that level of diversity in your classroom?
2. Based on your experience of dealing with BME students do you believe that they are included on campus?
3. What do you think was the space on campus as identified by the students that is most inclusive for them? And most exclusive for them?
4. Do you experience difficulty pronouncing the names of BME students?
5. Biggest challenge for you when dealing with BME students?

### Curriculums/Module Content:

1. Do you think that the more diverse the campus becomes around ethnicity the more staff may feel pressure to include diversity in their courses?
2. Does your content emphasise contributions to the field by people from multiple cultures and multiple theoretical perspectives? Do you critique

module content so that you include diverse content or topics (what materials are you using?)

3. Specific references to diversity? Content – diverse readings? Feminist or minority perspectives?
4. Does class discussion invoke creative controversy?
5. What makes it difficult to discuss ethnicity or ethnic minorities in the classroom? How was the situation handled?
6. How diversified are your assignments and do they allow for divergent thinking?
7. Do you find it difficult to give critical feedback to BME students?

To conclude

1. Have you received any training on dealing with a diverse student population?
2. What one piece of advice would you give to TU Dublin to make the campus a more inclusive place?

## Appendix 3: Information Sheets

### Information Sheet (Students)

#### Study Title

Does ITB (Institute of Technology Blanchardstown) include me?  
Inclusion and belonging for ethnically and culturally diverse students.

#### Invitation to part-take in the research process:

*I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide, I would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part. Thank you.*

#### What is the purpose of the study?

My research will focus on belonging and inclusion for ethnic minority learners at the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown, (ITB). This research defines ethnic minority learners as those students enrolled full time on undergraduate programmes at ITB who are from the student population that is in the minority to other students studying on campus based on ethnicity and/or nationality. This research is for my doctoral thesis at Maynooth University.

#### Why have I been invited?

My research has been motivated by the increased diversity among our students at ITB. I would like to investigate the issues and impacts that these changes have and are making on ethnic minority learners at ITB. The research aims to benefit students and staff to make ITB a more inclusive place for students to learn and flourish.

I recently promoted my research at a stand on campus or visited your class and gave a short presentation about my research. You spoke with me at the stand or in class and agreed to be contacted to take part in a focus group and/or interview.

**Do I have to take part?** Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide. I will describe the study and go through the information sheet with you. You will be given a copy of the information sheet. I will then ask you to sign a consent form to show you agreed to take part.

#### What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to participate in one focus group/interview lasting 60-90 minutes at an agreed date between October 2018 - May 2019. The focus group and interviews will be recorded by audio-tape. All participants will remain anonymous in the write up of the research.

In advance of the focus group you are requested to take two photographs on campus at ITB. One photo should represent a place or space where you feel included on campus. The second photo should represent a place or space where you feel excluded on campus. Please read the guidelines provided on best practice for taking your photographs.

#### **Guidelines on best practice for taking your photographs:**

- (i) In advance of the focus group you are requested to take two photographs on campus at ITB.
- (ii) One photo should represent a place or space where you feel included on campus.
- (iii) The second photo should represent a place or space where you feel excluded on campus.
- (iv) Please avoid people in the photos if possible.
- (v) If you are taking a photo with people in them please remove their identity through shading/blackout.
- (vi) You may decide not to take the photographs but would still like to participate in the focus group/interview. This is entirely your decision.

***All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and your anonymity assured. The data will be retained for a period of ten years from publication.***

Only the researchers listed on this application will have access to the personal information and data collected from participants. Electronic Information sheets/consent forms and data collected will be encrypted and stored on a PC on a secure server. Hard copy Information sheets/consent forms and data collected will be held securely in locked cabinets, locked rooms or rooms with limited access on campus.

*You will be offered a lunch voucher to be used at the canteen in ITB as a small token of gratitude for taking part in the research.*

You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. If you withdraw from the study all the information and data collected from you to date will be destroyed and removed from all the study files.

If during the focus group we discuss or explore sensitive issues for you, the student counsellor is available should you require this service.

The student counsellor can be contacted at:

**Clodagh Ní Ghallachóir, Room A2, Block A.** Phone: 01 885 1321

Email: [counsellor@itb.ie](mailto:counsellor@itb.ie)

If you would prefer to access support services outside of ITB the following providers of services may be of help to you:

1. **Jigsaw Dublin 15** is a free, non-judgemental and confidential service supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people working or studying in Dublin 15. They provide guidance and support for young people who are going through a difficult time. Jigsaw is located on the 2nd Floor of Blanchardstown Library at the Shopping Centre and are contactable on Telephone: 01 890 5810 and Email: [dublin15@jigsaw.ie](mailto:dublin15@jigsaw.ie)
2. **Cairde** is a community development organisation based in Dublin 1 and Balbriggan working to address inequalities in health for ethnic minority communities in terms



of access to services, participation, planning and delivery. Cairde can be contacted at;

City Centre Office:  
19 Belvedere Place, Dublin 1.  
Balbriggan  
Phone: 01-8552111  
8020785  
Email: [info@cairde.ie](mailto:info@cairde.ie)  
[balbriggan@cairde.ie](mailto:balbriggan@cairde.ie)

Balbriggan Office  
Hampton Street,  
Phone: 01-  
Email:

3. **AkiDwA** (Swahili for sisterhood) is a national network of migrant women living in Ireland who address issues of isolation and racism among others for the promotion of an equal opportunity and equal access society for migrant women living in Ireland. AkiDwA can be contacted at;

Unit 2, Killarney Court, Buckingham Street, Dublin 1.

Phone: 01-8349851  
Email: [info@akidwa.ie](mailto:info@akidwa.ie)

*If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth University Ethics Committee at [research.ethics@mu.ie](mailto:research.ethics@mu.ie) or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.*

## Information Sheet (Staff)

### Study Title

Does ITB include me?

Inclusion and belonging for ethnically and culturally diverse students.

### Invitation to part-take in the research process:

*I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide, I would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part. Thank you.*

### What is the purpose of the study?

My research will focus on belonging and inclusion for ethnic minority learners at TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus. This research defines ethnic minority learners as those students enrolled full time on undergraduate programmes who are from the student population that is in the minority to other students studying on campus based on ethnicity and/or nationality. This research is for my doctoral thesis at Maynooth University.

### Why have I been invited?

My research has been motivated by changes in the student demographics on campus and aims to illuminate the issues and impacts that these changes have and are making on ethnic minority learners (EMLs) at TU Dublin. The research aims to benefit students and staff to make TU Dublin a more inclusive place for students and staff to learn and flourish. Your work brings you in direct contact with the student population. I would like to hear your insights from a staff perspective on what the student focus groups and interviews has revealed.

### Do I have to take part?

Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide. I will describe the study and go through the information sheet with you. You will be given a copy of the information sheet. I will then ask you to sign a consent form to show you agreed to take part.

### What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to participate in one focus group/interview at an agreed date in between March 2019 - July 2019. The focus group and interviews will be recorded by audio-tape. All participants will remain anonymous in the write up of the research.

***All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and your anonymity assured. The data will be retained for a period of (ten years) from publication.***

Only the researchers listed on this application will have access to the personal information and data collected from participants. Electronic Information sheets/consent forms and data collected will be encrypted and stored on a PC on a secure server. Hard copy Information sheets/consent forms and data collected will be held securely in locked cabinets, locked rooms or rooms with limited access on campus.

You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. If you withdraw from the study all the information and data collected from you to date will be destroyed and removed from all the study files.

If during the focus group we discuss or explore sensitive issues for you, the HR support services can be contacted at 01-885 1018.

*If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth University Ethics Committee at [research.ethics@mu.ie](mailto:research.ethics@mu.ie) or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.*