Experience of BME Students in HE

The Development and Contextualisation of Black Consciousness – finding safe places to enable the genius to grow

Fair for All

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Experience of Black Students in Education

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Activity

- Think of issues that adversely impact on BME students:

- What are they/issues

- What ideas do you/we have to tackle them

- What obstacles

- How might these be overcome

Outline

- Rationale
- Research methods
- Emerging themes
- Implications
- Student
- Tutors
- HEIs

- Widening participation
- Student retention
- Disparity in degree attainment
- Progression beyond graduation

Some Questions

- What is the context in which the BME Students experience emerge?

- How is this experience recognised, validated and articulate?

Image of our student

- Consider for a brief moment your image of the (a) student

- What does your typical student look like

- What are some of the main ideas associated with the Black student in education

- What is the basis of this image

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Working with BME Students

- Have you ever had a student that was having unexplained difficulty in class?

- Did you consider the prospect that these difficulties related to the student's status as a member of a minority group?

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Arising Issues

- Emergence of need to negotiate
- Risk of 'domestication'
- Recognition of shifting boundaries
- Need to sustain notion safe space
- Engage together in a process of discovery
- (Crosby in Deer Richardson, L. and Wolfe, M. Principles and Practice of informal education, Oxon: Routledge Falmer. (2005: 59)

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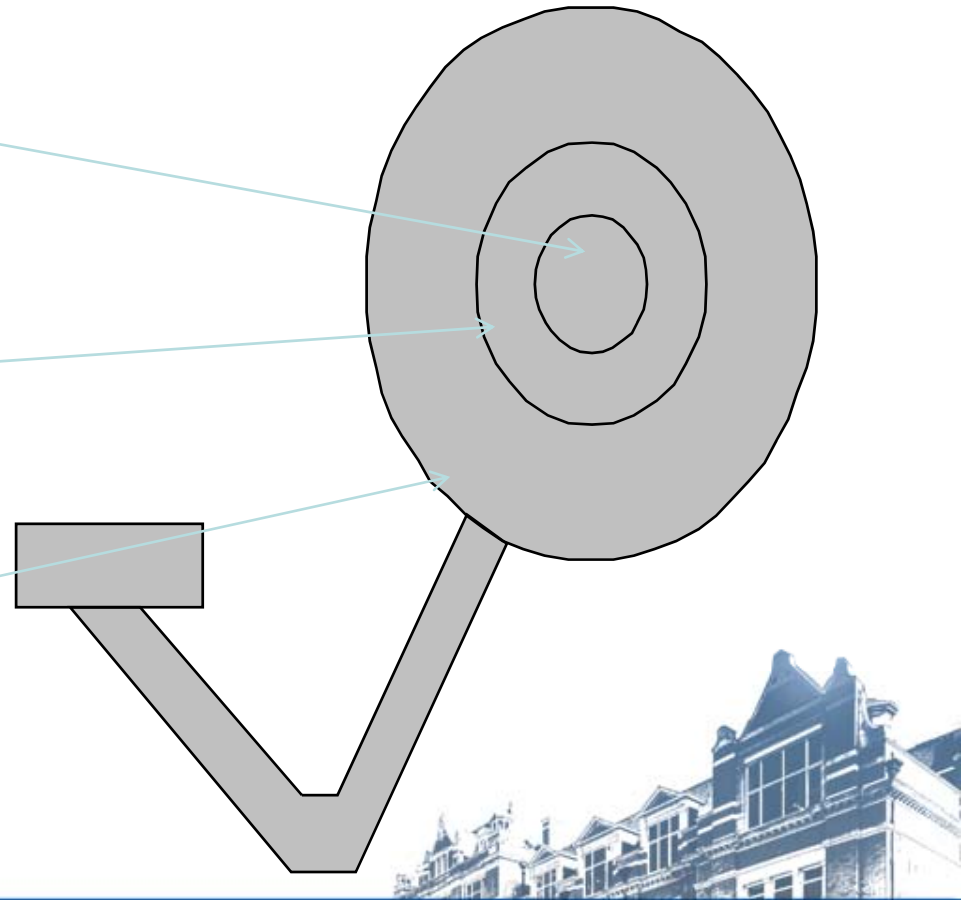
Underlying Principles

- Freirian principles of dialogue
- Purpose of process is transformative
- Technologies of participatory development
- Issues concerning critical research practices

What is our experience of education?

- 3 groups reflected on their experience of education: primary, secondary, tertiary, HE

- 2 Themes emerged:
  - A continuation of discrimination that had pervaded a whole educational career
  - Differences identified by students who had experienced educational institutions elsewhere

Discriminatory themes at all levels

- Individual

- Scio –Cultural

- Structural

How does it feel when we look at all experiences in one place

- Sense of lots of issues not clear where to start
- Sense of carrying a lot of baggage, sometimes a lifetimes' worth
- Upset at how systematic it is and how hard it has been to survive within it
- Ready to challenge
- More determined to succeed and to challenge for positive change

Way forward

- Narratives
- Mentoring systems
- Learning agreements
- Radical curriculum

- Paradoxically
- Increased determination