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Racism and Othering in International Higher Education: Experiences of Black Africans in England

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Abstract

Although a cursory glance at the extant literature on 'race' and higher education reveals the racialized nature of the UK higher education sector, issues of racial discrimination rarely appear in UK research literature on the experiences of international students. Top university administrative positions, especially chancellor and vice chancellor, 'remain a white enclave' and only 85 of the UK's 18,500 professors are black, and only 17 of them are women. Black women and men achieve the lowest percentage of first-class degrees (5.7% and 6.9% respectively, compared to 18.3% of white women and 19.4% of white men), and both black groups are over-represented in lower class degree categories. This study explored the role 'race' and racism play in the lived experiences of black African international students (BAIS) while they study and live in the UK. In particular, it analyses how three aspects of their identity – being black, being from Africa and being international (or foreign) shaped their experiences of exclusion through racism and Othering. The analysis draws on 21 semi-structured interviews with BAIS studying in ten different universities located in eight English cities. The findings show that racism and Othering pervade all aspects of BAIS's lived experiences, both inside and outside the university. This study argues for the need to reimagine current unproblematized depiction of international education and the need to foreground 'race' and racism in research and scholarship on the experiences of international students.

Keywords: racism, othering, black Africans in England

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Introduction

Education has historically been one of the main drivers of Africans' migration to the UK, and African students have been in British education since the 18th century (Daley, 1998). However, the movement of students as we know it today perhaps started in the 1940s. Keith (1946:65) documented the growing numbers of African students in British universities

To-day [sic], the scholarship students alone number over 600, about 200 of whom are Africans; 80 from Nigeria, 65 from Gold Coast, 25 from Sierra Leone, and the remainder from the Gambia, East Africa and Northern Rhodesia. Private African students probably number from three to four hundred.

At present, 1 in 16 international students in the UK comes from Africa. According to HESA (2019), there were 27,815 African international students (49.9% postgraduate (13,870) and 50.1% undergraduate (13,945) studying in UK universities in the 2017/18 academic year. This is 6.1% of the total (458,490) non-UK domiciled students and 8.5% all non-EU domiciled students (325,665). The 13,945 undergraduate African international students represented 5.5% of the total (255,705) non-UK domiciled undergraduate students, a 1% reduction from the figure five years earlier.

Table 1: The proportion of undergraduate African international students in the UK 2014/15 and 2017/18

Year	UK total	Africa total	Percentage of UK total
2014/15	232,105	14,790	6.4%
2017/18	255,705	13,945	5.4%

Source: (HESA, 2019): HESA Student Statistics

Despite the reduction in the overall numbers of undergraduate BAIS, Nigeria still remains in the top ten non-EU sending countries. However, there is a steep decline in the number of BAIS from Nigeria, from 17,920 in 2014/15 to 10,540 students in the

2017/18 academic year – a reduction of 41.2% in just five years. The evidence from this study suggests that the quality of the student experience could be one main factor for the reduction.

Why do BAIS come to the UK?

There is limited literature on the motives of African international students to come and study in the UK. In a rare study, Maringe & Carter (2007) investigated the reasons why BAIS come to the UK to study. They conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) with 28 African students studying in two universities in Southern England. Their sample included students mainly from Southern Africa, and some from North and West Africa. They did not differentiate the students by 'race'/ethnicity and we do not know how many were black Africans and how many Asians and/or white Africans. This is significant because white and Asian Africans have a different experience from black Africans while studying in the West (Lee & Opiyo, 2011). Maringe & Carter (2007:459) conclude, 'The data suggest that African students come to study in England on the promise of getting a truly international HE experience. Questions are however raised about whether this promise is delivered in full.' Brown & Holloway (2008) also reported that students' very high expectations, when not met, may turn into stressors blighting their experiences. In fact, Hyams-Ssekasi et al., (2014:1) documented BAIS's experiences of isolation and alienation left them '...feeling disillusioned and cynical about the value of an international education.' In October 2019 The UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission reported 'there was a strong theme of feeling unwelcome, isolated and vulnerable' (p.28) among international students.

This study builds on these research and explores how racism and Othering contribute to such disillusionment and cynicism and documented BAIS's racialized discriminatory and exclusionary lived experiences, which demonstrate the inadequacies on the part of the host institutions and the community in general leading to poor and at times traumatic experiences.

Understanding Racism and Othering

'Race' is a social construct and, as (Carbado, 2002:181) would argue, its meaning '...does not exist "out there," ontologically prior to its production and instantiation in discourses'. Racial meaning (i.e. what it means to belong to a certain 'race') is constituted in societal discourses that change over time and place. Although, the concept of 'race' is coded and recoded in response to ever-changing societal contexts, the purpose remains the same – the creation and recreation of racialized social hierarchies and/or categories. The significance of this is that the categorization of social groups into different 'races' is a categorization of power that affects the life chances of and opportunities available to the different social groups through processes of racism and Othering. Categorization into 'races' entails different social expectations and differences in social status.

Racism and Othering are two intertwined and overlapping processes (Dervin, 2015) that reify domination and subordination, especially in the West, where the legacy of historical oppressions such as slavery and colonialism evidently influence and shape practice in major institutions including universities. This is particularly significant in the context of this study as BAIS come to study in UK universities- institutions strongly implicated in historically providing justifications for racism. Emejulu (2017 , March 29) argues '... to speak of universities is to recognize them as spaces of exclusion and discrimination which hide their epistemic violence behind a rhetoric of meritocracy, collegiality and the "free exchange of ideas".' The stories of BAIS in my study reveal the spaces and the processes of these exclusions and discriminations, which shaped their lived experiences while studying and living in the UK.

Review of the Literature

While there is a relatively significant amount of research on Asian international students such as Chinese students, by comparison there is very little research literature on the experiences of BAIS. Researchers from the US (Beoku-Betts, 2004; Pruitt, 1978; Constantine et al., 2005; Lee & Opio, 2011) report that black students face quite a serious problem of racism and discrimination in addition to the problems

of isolation, financial difficulties, and separation from family and friends, which are faced by all international students. There is a paucity of such research in the UK context. Hyams-Ssekasi et al. (2014) reiterate that despite quite a significant amount of research on the experiences of international students in UK universities, very few of these studies looked at the educational experiences of BAIS. This is interesting in view of the evidence of a long history of BAIS presence in UK higher education spanning nearly 300 years (Daley, 1998). There are even fewer studies exclusively on the experiences of BAIS from English-speaking Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries.

Research on the Experiences of International Students

The extant limited research literature on the experiences of international students more often than not continues to ignore the role of 'race' and racism and also includes either very few Africans or no Africans at all. Most studies shun the role of 'race' and racism in favor of color-blind analysis and frame the experiences of international students as simple socio-cultural adjustment challenges. In their analysis they argue 'anything but racism' and report their research findings using 'assorted explanations' that serve as semantic substitutes for the word 'racism' (Harper, 2012).

For example, BAIS in the UK have been reported to experience greater challenges to adapt to their new social and academic environment. This includes feelings of isolation and alienation in various social settings in the host society. Keith (1946) is one of the earliest studies to document the lived experiences of African international students (then called overseas and/or colonial students) in UK higher education. While discussing the serious lack of accommodation for overseas students, especially in London, Keith (1946:69) highlights that African students suffer more from accommodation problems than other overseas students do:

Owing to colour prejudice, the African student has been, and still is being, denied free access to lodgings which may be available to other classes of

students, and attempts to draw up satisfactory lists of lodgings which take non-European students have not been very successful.

Keith also mentions that African students face serious challenges making friends with home students, and depend on churches and charities for socialization. It is interesting to note that Keith (1946) never mentions racism as a possible cause, even in 1940s England where society was openly hostile and racist to black people (Small & Solomos, 2006). This tradition of being oblivious to racism is reflected in much of the educational research literature in the UK.

Maundeni (2001) looked at the role of social networks in the adjustment of African students in a Scottish university, using semi-structured interviews with 29 African students from seven African countries. They reported that African students had little or no contact with both home students and also their neighbors in the community, which jeopardized their adjustment. This shows that not much progress seems to have been made in the six decades since Keith's (1946) research, in terms of making friends for Africans who come to study in the UK. Maundeni (2001) argues these 'adjustment challenges' caused BAIS mental health problems and BAIS in the study somatized their psychological stress as physical symptoms, and sought medical help instead of psychiatric help. Despite several instances of social isolation and alienation Maundeni (2001) frames the African students' lived experiences as 'adjustment challenges' solely caused by 'problems of social network', but not structural disadvantages such as racism and/or Othering.

Hyams-Ssekasi et al. (2014) explored the challenges postgraduate BAIS face in adjusting to UK culture and educational systems. They find that African students, among other things, experience being stereotyped, and have difficulty making white friends in particular. Two quotations from Hyams-Ssekasi et al. (2014:8) are revealing:

The values we have in Africa are looked down on. Talk about our traditions, they are still considered backwards only good enough for

research. [She laughs loudly] I don't want to say so much about this because it makes me angry. (Ade, Uni. 2)

I try to socialize and have tried to befriend a number of White people but there is a limit. I know it and I feel it. I have been left alone in a pub by my so-called friends. (Tobi, Uni. 3)

Despite this, Hyams-Ssekasi et al. (2014:10) report, 'The students in this study did not report overt racial harassment, but did feel socially excluded and unwanted by the local student population.' Feelings of isolation and being unwanted could be a direct result of racism, but the authors' narrower conceptualization of 'racism' as only 'overt harassment' seems to have prevented them from considering racism and led them to frame the students' experiences as being just the result of difficulty 'integrating into the UK system'.

In another UK study, Brown & Holloway (2008) explored the adjustment journey/process of postgraduate international students on a one-year course at a university in the south of England. They observed the whole cohort of 150 postgraduate students at the university but interviewed only 13. There is only one South African student interviewee quoted in their report. They found loneliness and anxiety caused by the need to adjust to a new academic and sociocultural environment to be main adjustment issues for most participants. In fact, they say that two students left because they felt too stressed and homesick. They argued adjustment is not a linear and generalizable process, as it works by 'cultural distance, language problems, academic demands, loneliness and homesickness' (Brown & Holloway, 2008: 244), but ignored the possible role of discrimination and racism. This is regrettable because of their finding their participants' words about their struggle to make friends, and the resulting isolation and loneliness that they experience, clearly indicates their position of domination and subordination.

Similarly, Pritchard & Skinner (2002) explored the adjustment experiences of international students in the UK (Northern Ireland) and reported that they do not adjust properly and thus suffer isolation. Their participants were from the EU, the

Asian continent and Americans, and included no Africans at all. They approach their research with a highly deficit-view, and assert that international students stick to people from their own countries and 'fail to make contact with home students and local people' (Pritchard & Skinner, 2002:323). They place the failure to adjust squarely on the international students and fail to consider a host of factors on the part of UK society that makes adjustment an upheaval.

Research on Experiences of Racism

Few studies looked at how 'race' and racism shape the lived experiences of international students globally (Fries-Britt et al., 2014) and there is a dearth of it in the UK, particularly concerning undergraduate BAIS. This is very surprising in view of the significant evidence of racial discrimination both in society and in education (Modood & Acland, 1998; Law et al., 2004 ; Gillborn, 2008; Gillborn, 2014; NUS, 2011; ECU, 2017; BBC, 2010) and the racialized nature of the higher education sector (Bhopal, 2016). For example, top university administrative positions, especially chancellor and vice chancellor, 'remain a white enclave' (Gulam, 2004) , and only 15 black academics are in senior management roles (Alexander & Arday, 2015). Only 85 of the UK's 18,500 professors are black, and only 17 of them are women (Black, 2014). Black women and men achieve the lowest percentage of first-class degrees (5.7% and 6.9% respectively, compared to 18.3% of white women and 19.4% of white men), and both black groups are over-represented in lower class degree categories (Shilliam, 2014). However, higher education institutions are complacent (Pilkington, 2014) and researchers and continue to ignore investigating the role of 'race' and racism.

One of the few studies in the UK, Brown & Jones (2013) explored experiences of racism of postgraduate students studying at a university in the south of England. This is a significant and welcome development for one of the authors, who previously framed issues of isolation and discrimination in international students' experiences in the UK as being caused by 'cultural differences' and ignored considerations of racism (Brown, 2008; Brown & Holloway, 2008). In this latest study, Brown & Jones

(2013) investigate racist incidences among 149 postgraduate students and the impact on the international student experience using a mixed method study.

Of the 149 students surveyed, 49 said that they have experienced racism – only two were BAIS. And only one of the BAIS volunteered to take part in a personal interview. The mainly Asian postgraduate interviewees reported various encounters with racism, ranging from physical assault to swearing and aggressive laughing. One BAIS (a Ghanaian student) reported his personal experience of racism, and the experience of a fellow BAIS who was unable to deal with the racism and had to leave the UK:

There was this aged man, I think he was drunk. He saw me in the bus and he said 'hey you Nigger, you black man. Do you have some weed on you?' I just looked away and everyone had their eye on me. He kept on asking and shouting on me. (Ghanaian student) Brown & Jones (2013:1011).

I have a friend who was abused. He went back home. I think most of them when they have this issue they can't stand it. (Ghanaian student) (Brown & Jones (2013:1012).

The Ghanaian student also explained that these experiences of racism had a profound emotional impact on them, as they induced a feeling of being unwanted:

For two days I was crying in my room. I felt like just running back to Ghana. What I realise is that they saw me not to be part of them. I don't belong with them. They didn't want to see me. They don't like my presence. (Ghanaian student) Brown & Jones (2013:1013).

The Ghanaian student also said that they will not recommend fellow Africans study in the South of England, believing that London, the Midlands or the North are better regions in which to study. Although all the international students, including white Europeans, suffered some form of racism in their study, the black Africans have been affected most. Brown & Jones (2013:1010) write, 'This study therefore confirms

that physical distinctiveness from the host community increases a sojourner's vulnerability to abuse.'

US studies fare a lot better in investigating the racism experiences of black Africans. Boafo-Arthur (2014a) in a review of the research literature on the experiences of BAIS in US higher education, identifies racial prejudice and discrimination is the most serious issue affecting their adjustment, causing them a great deal of stress. The review shows that BAIS suffered prejudice and discrimination based on their black skin color, culture and accent, and stereotypes about their countries of origin and their way of life, both from home students and other international students (including black home students).

Constantine et al., (2005) examined the cultural adjustment problems of 12 African students from Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria studying in the US. The students experienced racism, including direct racial attack from teaching staff and from other international students. They found 'prejudicial or discriminatory treatment' by Americans based on 'race' to be a serious problem for black African international students. For example, while a Kenyan student said, 'It's frustrating to know that people think less of you because of the color of your skin' (Constantine et al., 2005:62), a female Nigerian interviewee said that a white teaching assistant called her a 'stupid nigger' in a seminar class (Constantine et al., 2005:61) She left the session immediately and also dropped out from the module altogether. The researchers also report that the African students experienced discriminatory treatment from other non-white international students.

BAIS also experience racial discrimination and stereotyping by other black students. In a study of the experiences and adjustment problems of African international students, Blake (2006) finds that even in a historically black institute such as Delaware State University, black Africans experience racial discrimination from black American peers and their lecturers alike.

Lee & Opio (2011) using neo-racism as theoretical framework, explored the lived experiences of 16 African student athletes from seven different African countries

studying in US universities. Their sample contained 12 black Africans, one Arab African and three white South Africans. They found that the students faced discrimination based on their 'race' and negative stereotypes about Africa from teachers, students, administrators, their sport teammates, and members of the local community. However, the white South Africans in the study did not report experiencing any racism and discrimination. In fact, a white South African swimmer said that they 'blend in pretty well here' (Lee & Opio, 2011:640). Even Americans' identification of their foreign accent did not entail discrimination as it normally does for black Africans. The authors rightly reflect that this finding may challenge their use of neo-racism (racism based on nationality) as a theoretical lens. The negative stereotype about the continent of Africa affected only the black and the Arab Africans and not the white Africans. They write, 'discrimination based on race may supersede discrimination based on national order when it comes to neo-racism ...[and] neo-racism may not apply to migrants who are of the majority race' (Lee & Opio, 2011:641).

The review above shows much of the research is informed by a deficit-view and tends to place the responsibility for change or adaptation on the students. Researchers often fail to critically look at the societal and educational conditions under which international students are placed upon arrival in a foreign country. Many UK studies rarely consider the role of 'race' and ethnicity in shaping international students' lived experiences, and international students are often considered as one group, imposing homogeneity on what is actually a heterogeneous group. This study contributes to filling this gap by exploring the lived experiences of a specific group of ethnic black African international undergraduates from English-speaking Sub-Saharan African countries.

Methodology

A qualitative research methodology in conjunction with a critical race theory framework that foregrounds 'race' and racism is used to explore the stories of 21 BAIS studying in ten universities located in eight English cities. The study involved audio

recording of in-depth interviews, and a self-completed ‘contextual information sheet’ to secure some demographic information about BAIS. This design allowed the exploration of the everyday lived realities of BAIS from their own perspectives in their own words, as well as the collection of some important demographic data. The use of qualitative interviews allowed the generation of stories that capture the complexities of the lived realities of BAIS and produced powerful data that provided valuable insights into how they understand and make sense of their everyday experiences while living and studying in the UK.

Table 1: Participants Demographics in Pseudonyms

Participant	Nationality	Gender	Age	University
Tibu	Nigerian	Male,	18	Canal
Bena	Nigerian	Female	19	Canal
Poni	Nigerian	Female	19	Canal
Jaka	Kenyan	Male	20	Castle
Beku	Kenyan	Male	21	Castle
Astu	Kenyan	Female	21	Castle
Baso	Serra-Leonean	Male	28	Downtown
Domu	Serra-Leonean	Male	29	Chapel
Rosa	Nigerian	Female	19	Hillside
Lara	Nigerian	Female	19	Song
Ruth	Nigerian	Female	19	Hillside
Wasa	Nigerian	Male	22	Port
Yomi	Nigerian	Female	19	Port
Demba	Nigerian	Male	20	Woods

Olu	Nigerian	Female	20	Woods
Katu	Nigerian	Female	22	Canal-Great
Pala	Serra-Leonean	Male	36	Canal-Great
Mufti	Nigerian	Male	24	Canal-Great
Arno	South African	Male	26	Canal-Great
Ade	Nigerian	Male	19	Canal-Great
Wanja	Kenyan	Male	31	Parkside

The research participants were recruited using a combination of criterion and snowball sampling strategy (Patton, 2002) from BAIS who came from English-speaking Sub-Saharan African countries to study in the UK. While the former determines inclusion in the study, the latter informs recruitment of research participants. I developed a 'call for research participants' advertisement which I posted on the Facebook pages of over twenty African student societies, as well as emailing it to all my existing contacts. No mention of 'race' or experience of racism was made in the 'call for research participants' to avoid the tendency of recruiting only participants who have experienced racism. The advertisement simply asked if they were a BAIS and if they were willing to share their views on 'what it is like for them to study at a UK university'. Those who came from an English-speaking sub Saharan African country, self-identify as black, were international students in their second year or above, and have had their secondary education in their home countries were included in the study.

The research was conducted within UCL/IOE's ethical standards and guidelines. Ethical clearance was sought and obtained before commencing all research activities, including pilot work. The study was conducted on the basis of obtaining informed consent, which was achieved using a written consent form signed by every participant after reading an information sheet about the study. The information sheet detailed what the study was about, what participants could expect, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Data analysis involved producing verbatim transcriptions and ‘thick descriptions’ (Ponterotto, 2006) and the transfer of data into NVivo qualitative data analysis software (Version 11) for ease of retrieval, organizing and reorganizing, and multiple coding and recoding. In the main, I used two methods of coding: a priori codes derived from my theoretical framework and a highly iterative data-driven coding.

This study is part of my PhD research that more broadly explored how cultural capital, habitus, field, previous education and ‘race’ and ethnicity shape the lived experiences of BAIS. However, this paper deals only with some of the main findings regarding two research questions that were presented to the research participants:

1. What is it like to be a BAIS at your current university?
2. And to what extent, if any, have ‘race’ and racism played a role in your lived experiences while living and studying in the UK?

Findings

The findings show that BAIS experienced exclusion through overt, blatant racism and through other forms of Othering based on nationality, accent, stereotypes about Africa – ‘coded’ ways of talking about ‘race’ and difference that exclude and marginalize BAIS.

Experiences of Overt Racism

Main themes about BAIS’s experiences of overt racism include: being called a racial slur, being told to go back to Africa, and racist missile attacks.

Being called a racial slur

Arno from Canal-Great shares two experiences of racism with a white classmate. On one occasion, he was publicly called one of the most offensive racial slurs, and on another occasion, he was made an object of sarcastic ridicule:

Encounter 1

The last character I have played was a servant in the show [as part of his acting course], and I was walking up the stairs and one of the guys at the school was like 'hello slave!' He is a student in my same year; and I said [long pause and very disturbed], and he came out and apologized, 'oh, no, no, I am sorry, I didn't mean it, I meant servant for your show', and I just said don't explain, that for me is just deep-rooted; he probably was trying to say servant, but the fact that I was a black individual walking in the school, the first thing that comes to his mind is 'hello, slave' tells me that's racist, that's core racism.

(Arno, male, 26, Canal-Great)

Encounter 2

And another one is, it's the same person, actually. He said, 'oh yeah, I am not racist, I just have a racist penis'. And, I am like ... 'ehhhhh! What do you mean? What does that mean?' ... It irritates me; it frustrates me. It's the second time he has done something like that. It tells me something. No, it does! It says to me that this person is racist; I know, I have an idea of how he sees me; I am not under any false ideas or any illusions ... I know that there is something there that makes him feel superior or better, or whatever it is, and it has got to do with my 'race'.

(Arno, male, 26, Canal-Great)

The moment that Arno described this experience during the interview was one of the most difficult times, not only for him but also for me. Arno was visibly distressed, and his voice was shaking while sharing this specific experience with me. I had to comfort him. I had to fight tears looking at the anguish in his tearful eyes while he shared this terrible experience. Understandably, Arno feels disrespected by this public humiliation. As he described, he was not impressed with the apology offered and believes that the racial slur is a sign of something 'deep-rooted' and a manifestation of 'core racism' – a notion that alludes to the idea of the hierarchy of races. The white student's sarcastic reference to the word 'penis' also evokes

historical negative narrative of the sexualization of black masculinity as nothing more than a penis. In *Black Skin White Masks* (Fanon, 1952:130) describes white Europeans imago of the black man as, ‘...one is no longer aware of the Negro but only of a penis; the Negro is eclipsed. He is turned into a penis. He is a penis.’ This historical link could explain the white student sarcastic use of the word ‘penis’ in his encounter with Arno. The fact that the white student used the racial slur publicly inside the university space might be indicative of a negative campus racial climate, which Solorzano et al. (2000:62) define as ‘... the overall racial environment of the college campus’. This is very significant in view of the fact that the same white student used slurs twice against Arno. Whatever his friend meant by using the word ‘slave’, the impact I observed that it had on Arno should serve as an apt reminder of the profound effect of such unambiguously offensive slurs on black African students. In addition to emotional impact, studies have established that black students’ college success and persistence to graduation could be highly affected by such a negative racial campus climate (Harwood et al., 2012; Solorzano et al., 2000).

Being told to go back to Africa

The second theme of experiences of overt racism that emerged during analysis concerns students being told to go back to Africa as they do not belong here in the UK. Poni shares her racialized encounter while she was working in a city center:

I got this Christmas job, and I was meant to pitch the sales to people, like ‘oh do you have internet at home?’, ‘we are selling internet’, ‘get surprises’, stuff like that, and I kept approaching people. So I was about to approach this white guy, and he just raised his hand and dismissed me saying that I ‘should go back to where they brought me from’, I ‘should go back to Africa where I came from’, and that I am not needed here. It was so funny because it had never happened to me before. I was just like ‘ah! wow!; sorry, I didn’t mean to offend you’, ‘if you are having a bad day, just go and educate yourself’, that kind of thing, that was what I said. And then, like, it was so funny, like when I was telling people that one mad man did

something to me today because it was, like, genuinely really, really funny, because I never imagined people presently say that out, as people should be more informed or more sensitive of these things.

(Poni, female, 19, Canal)

Poni has been subject to very aggressive hostility by a white man, and was told to go back to Africa as she is not needed here. This echoes current debates on immigration issues and discourses that depict immigrants in the UK as a burden and as scroungers who are here to benefit from the country and therefore are not needed. The Economist (2014) in its 8 November issue seems to have captured this view succinctly:

Pesky immigrants: They move to Britain, taking jobs, scrounging welfare benefits, straining health services, overrunning local schools and occupying state-subsidised housing. That, at least, is the story recounted by politicians from the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and, increasingly, by members of the Conservative Party. A new study by two economists tells a very different tale.

Such discourses of 'pesky immigrants' might have contributed to the abuse that students such as Poni receive despite the evidence. The white man clearly seems hostile towards people from Africa, as indicated by the words 'go back to Africa where they brought you from'. It is interesting to note the phrase 'where they brought you from', which suggests that the man thought that Poni was a refugee seeking asylum in the UK. His remarks are ignorant, disrespectful and disparaging. Without any knowledge of who she is, he seems to have relied on his ignorance, and chose to abuse her. Her fault was nothing other than coming from Africa, which he presumably surmised because of her skin colour and accent. The truth is that Poni is one of the nearly half a million international students in the UK, who make significant contributions to the economy. Poni's reaction to the racial abuse as being 'funny' needs some nuanced understanding. When she said 'it was so funny', she was not saying it was a happy experience. What I read from her face was not a big smile of happiness, but a rueful grin expressing feelings of shame and humiliation. She also

says, 'it never happened to me', which suggests that she has not experienced any such racism before in her life. Previous studies on BAIS report that most of them have been members of the dominant cultural group in their home countries, and have not experienced racism prior to arriving in the West (Constantine et al., 2005; Fries-Britt et al., 2014).

In fact, another BAIS, Olu, describes her first experience of racism in the UK, which is very similar:

I think for me I didn't know I was black. OK, I knew I was black, obviously, but I didn't know what it meant to be black because in Nigeria everyone is black. My first racial experience was when I went for my sister's graduation in a different city and we were walking with my friend and the family. We are all black, and we were walking and looking around, and the white guy was just, like, 'oh go back to your country Africa!' I was just, like, 'OK, Africa is not a country though'. We were with girls 8, 9 and 7 year olds, so those are, like, young children and they are British, so they will probably have more knowledge [experience] than I did, but for me that was my first racial experience. It was really sad because the youngest one knew what was going on, and she was, like, 'oh, why is he racist?' I didn't know what that was at that age. that's all we could talk about for the rest of the day; it affects.

(Olu, female, 20, Woods)

Olu and her all-black group, many of whom were black British, were told to 'go back to Africa' while walking in the street. This suggests that even citizenship may not matter for black people. All the white person could see was that they were black, so they do not belong and should go back to Africa, although many of them were born in the UK, and the UK is perhaps their only home. Race seems to have trumped everything else. Olu was the most shocked, since it was her first experience of racism in the UK. Olu says, '... they will probably have more knowledge [experience] than I did', suggesting that she is unprepared and had not developed skills to manage and/or cope with experiences of racism.

Olu not only had an encounter with racism for the first time, she also seems to have experienced an epiphany in realizing that she is black, or, in her own words 'what it meant to be black.' For Olu, being black was perhaps never a degrading experience while she was in her home country, Nigeria. Thus, she sympathized with the young child, who had to face and endure racism from such a young age. The experience spoilt their day and, as Olu said, it affected them. In addition to the emotional distress it causes, researchers have documented that some BAIS who experience racism have gone back home (Brown & Jones, 2013) withdrawn from modules (Constantine et al., 2005) and suffered mental health problems (Bradley, 2000).

Racist missile attacks

Another main theme of experiences of overt racism concerns stories of racist attacks involving throwing missiles. Demba of Woods and Rosa of Hillside share similar stories of violent racist missile attacks on their friends by white people:

Some of my friends here that are girls have actually experienced something like that [racist attacks]. They said there was a time they were going back to their hostel at night and apparently a car actually drove by and white guys threw eggs at them. I will probably say that was the only time that I probably thought people might look at me differently because I am black ... They felt really bad about it. I mean, if I was walking on the street and a group of white people drove by and kind of threw eggs at me, definitely I will feel really bad about it.

(Demba, male, 20, Woods)

Demba relates a story where his female friends were attacked by a missile while walking to their hostel. Understandably, this violent physical attack could affect the girls in more ways than one. One could argue that this dangerous and hostile attack might have made the girls feel less safe to walk at night, and feelings of insecurity could go a long way in undermining self-worth and sense of belonging. In fact, despite not experiencing any such overt racism himself, Demba says the racist

attack on his friends made him think for the first time that people might look at him differently because he is black.

Rosa of Hillside shared a similar story of a missile attack on one of her friend.

One of my friends was telling me a story that she was stoned with egg. She is Malaysian, and she had the hijab on and was walking on the road when a couple of white guys from a car stoned her, and they are like 'go back to your country'. She just stopped wearing the hijab, and she didn't tell her parents because she feared they might take her back. That disturbed us all.

(Rosa, female, 19, Hillside)

Rosa's Malaysian Muslim friend was attacked by a missile, and was told to go back to her country. The effect was profound. The girl was forced to adjust her behavior and stopped wearing hijabs. Rosa was very angered, and also scared, while relating this story. The girl did not report the incident to university officials or to the police, nor did she tell her parents. As Rosa explains, the girl feared that her family might decide to take her back, fearing for her life. This experience caused fear and insecurity for BAIS like Rosa. Truong et al. (2016:227) write, 'When individuals experience second hand racism, they can come to the realization that they are also vulnerable to the racism that they have vicariously experienced and they can encounter harmful emotional, psychological, or physiological consequences as a result of these experiences.' Rosa seems to have suffered exactly that when she says, 'That disturbed us all'.

One could argue that the attack in this case appears to be based on hostility towards the girl's religion, Islam, and not to her 'race'. However, it is possible that 'race' intersected with religion and played a role in the attack. Interestingly, Moosavi (2015), in his study of white converts to Islam, found that they are re-racialized as non-white, giving us deeper insights into how 'race' can be conflated with religion to shape non-white people's lived experiences.

Experiences of Othering

Some of the main specific processes of Othering identified include: homogenization of BAIS's experiences and identities; Othering through exoticization; Othering and exclusion from social spaces/friendship circles; Othering based on immigration status; Othering in the labour market.

Othering through Homogenization

Interviewees shared experiences where their identities have often been homogenized. Olu, Jaka and Yomi all said international students from Africa are very often described as an undifferentiated mass originating from 'one country' called Africa – a country that does not even exist. Olu below describes the lack of recognition for her country of origin, or the lack of decency shown in failing to ask her the name of her country and the willful assumption that the continent of Africa is her country:

Then the worst thing is white British people's remark '... your country Africa ...' I hate it! Africa is a continent with 54 or 57 countries – the largest continent, with the most countries and so many different cultures, so many languages. How can you go and mistake the whole thing as one country? It's just weird; it's just very ignorant.

(Olu, female, 20, Woods)

A conversation that Yomi reports further illustrates how people from the West generally continue to homogenize the identities of black African students. A white American assumes that Yomi knows all of Africa, even when she clearly says that she is from Nigeria. The American girl continues the conversation by homogenizing all Africans, and expects Yomi to know all the countries in Africa:

I met one white American girl one time and we were having a conversation. She asked me where I was from, and I told her 'Nigeria', and she just went on to tell me how her mom works in African countries, and

then she started mentioning different African countries I have never heard of. And I was, like, 'What has it to do anything with me?' That's what most people do when you tell them where you are from; they just say 'oh, I have a friend that does this in this country ...'

(Yomi, female, 19, Port)

Jaka related how black African students' behaviors have been homogenized by a career adviser of his university. She singles him out and asks him, as a black student, to explain the behavior of other black African students whom he does not know and with whom he has had no relations:

I have heard of cases at Castle where people have been treated differently just because of their color. One of the Castle career officers singled out black students as being late to submit applications and disadvantaging themselves; and then put the question as to why that happens to one of the black students in the seminars she was giving. So, of course, that not only reminds you of that you are different from everybody else, it also shows you how they actually think of you. So I think as a black international student, it's going to be very difficult to truly believe that you are 100% accepted.

(Jaka, male, 20, Castle)

These three accounts show that Olu, Yomi and Jaka are essentialized and Othered through homogenization of their behavior and/or place of origin. Dervin (2015:187) explains that 'Othering consists of "objectification of another person or group" or "creating the other", which puts aside and ignores the complexity and subjectivity of the individual (Abdallah- Pretceille, 2003).' Rather than being asked which country she comes from, Olu's country is assumed to be Africa. Yomi is assumed to know all the countries in Africa. Jaka's account shows how the discourse of 'lazy Africa' is used to single out and publicly embarrass a fellow black student by a white career adviser, which reifies a stereotype that marginalizes black African students. BAIS are ascribed a common identity or behavior of being 'lazy' black students who do not apply to university on time. Although Jaka was not present in the seminar in

question, the effect on him is evident when he says that it is very difficult to truly believe that BAIS 'are 100% accepted'.

These three lived experiences suggest that there is a tendency to deny the individuality of black African international students by representing them as one group, usually stereotyped as inferior or lesser beings. This is a rejection of individuality and individual identity as a person having his/her own personality, social location, talents, likes and dislikes. Coupland (2010:248) describes the discourse of homogenizing as 'a productive means of out-grouping and minoritisation'. Thus, through homogenization of their behaviour and identities, BAIS are Othered, paving the way for marginalization, exclusion and reduced opportunities to fully participate in their universities' academic and social life.

Othering through exoticization

Fanon (1952) explains that racism and white supremacy can be reinforced and perpetuated through expressions of seemingly positive complimentary comments that fetishize and exoticize black people as the Other, outsiders and strangers who have qualities of being intelligent, or beautiful or successful – qualities traditionally associated with whiteness (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Astu from Castle shares an interesting encounter with a white peer at her university where her black body was fetishized.

And there's this idea that you're unique. You meet some of those people who say to you, 'oh, I would love to date an African girl, just kind of just for experience'. I am, like, 'noooooo' [laughs, bemused]. I remember in my first year a white guy literally asked me, 'Oh my God, I would love to know what this hakuna matata lifestyle is by dating an East African girl', and I was like, 'is that really your pick, is that really how you want to approach me?' I feel like this is because of the media, which always portrays this over-sexualized image of what the African girl is in music videos. There's that expectation that you will be very loose, and all you are focused about

is maybe like shaking (slightly shakes her waist) and all that stuff, and if you are not, that it's just like almost a disconnect.

(Astu, female, 21, Castle)

Scholarly theories about Orientalism (Crozier et al., 2016:45) explain that 'Historically, the White view of Black and Minority Ethnic people, is as Said (2003) observed, "fascinatingly strange and entertaining"'. Similarly, Astu's black body is fetishized as an entertainment through a stereotype of 'an oversexualized image' of what an African girl should be – a loose, easy-going, and waist-shaking girl. Astu is bemused by the way she was approached by the white guy, 'kind of just for experience', rather than for a genuine interest in her character or personality. Astu reacts to this dehumanizing, degrading objectification as a submissive, exotic piece of entertainment with an exercise of strong agentic self, and says, 'is that really your pick, is that how you want to approach me?' Astu recognizes the stereotype and resists it or, as Althusser (1971) would say, did not respond to the hail. That is significant, as Althusser says that the moment of self-recognition is the moment when identity comes into being. Turning to the hail (Althusser, 1971) is a metaphor for an ideology that women are encouraged to internalize and accept as if it is their own through an invisible but consensual process.

Othering and exclusion from social spaces

BAIS also reported feelings of alienation caused by white and/or home students not wanting to interact or to sit down with them, even in a classroom context. When asked what it has been like studying at her current university, Buti emphasized the challenges she faced making white friends and reiterated, 'I feel like if you are an Australian, you blend in well more because it's easier for them to be friends'. This suggests 'race' trumps being international and white international students enjoy a more positive friendship experience with white home students. Buti narrates her experiences of making friends at her university:

Racism is kind of like an undertone thing. To be fair, white home students won't talk to you. I don't know if they are afraid of you or they don't know

what you're like, but, like, they won't talk to you. Chinese, Asians, all of them, they will talk to you. International students will talk to each other, but white home students will not talk to you. They don't engage with me unless, like, they are looking for something. Like yesterday, someone saw me on the road and asked me for directions, but talking to me, as in getting to know me or want to be my friend, no! In my first year, I did want to have diverse friends and I had one white friend, but the way his white friends kind of treated me and kind of spoke to me or looked at me wasn't nice, so I just closed the whole idea. If you want to talk to me, you can talk to me, but if you want to give me odd looks, then don't talk to me, that kind of thing.

(Buti, female, 19, Canal)

Buti's account gives an insight into the friendship patterns operating at her university. She explains that in her experience white home students fail to establish meaningful collegial warm relationships with her, but she seems to have had no problems making friends with other international students, mainly Asians. This finding challenges previous research (Brown, 2009b) that argued that international students stick together and form co-national friendship and fail to gain from the benefits that international education has to offer. Buti's account gives us some evidence that white and/or home students not only refuse to engage and get to know her as a friend, but also appear to respond negatively to overtures from a BAIS such as Buti. That seems to be the case when she met the friends of her white friend, who she perceived as being unfriendly and uninterested. Madrid (1988:56) writes, 'Otherness means feeling excluded, closed out, precluded even disdained and scorned.'

Rosa's account below echoes similar experiences of white home students not wanting to have a meaningful, genuine friendship with BAIS other than for the exchange of pleasantries. Rosa's statement shows that she has internalized this, and seems to have given up trying to make white home student friends, just like Buti:

For me, it's hard. I say, 'hey, hi how are you?' but to make people like my close friends, it's really hard because people tend to annoy me. I am sorry,

but, like, it's really hard to get someone close to you, do you get it? ... to open your heart to someone, but I am really, like, if I see everyone, 'hi, how are you doing, how is your weekend?' ha haa ... but that's it, that's where it ends.

(Rosa, female, 19, Hillside)

Many UK university websites reveal they pride themselves on being international or global campuses offering opportunities for developing intercultural communication skills, including opportunities for making new friends (Killick, 2016). However, Rosa's and Buti's accounts show how seemingly diverse social spaces may remain highly stratified. There may be diversity of population, but not so much diversity of interaction. Rosa explains how her interaction with white home students ends at a very basic level with the exchange of greetings and nothing more. Vincent et al. (2018:367) in their study of friendship, diversity and class (albeit in a school context), conclude that 'cultural and social hierarchies remain intact' even when white and minoritized British nationals 'access and share social space and resources'. Similarly, BAIS's experiences in this regard show that there are processes of Othering that insulate white spaces within their universities.

Othering based on Immigration status

Contemporary discourses of immigration control and bringing down net immigration to tens of thousands in the UK (Partos & Bale, 2015) appear to pervade the international student experience throughout their stay. Some BAIS have particularly stressed how they felt Othered because of the UK Home Office's policy requiring international students to sign periodically as a checking mechanism of their compliance with the conditions of their student visa. This requirement is not uniform and varies by nationality – a concept conflated with 'race' in the case of BAIS:

International students are supposed to comply with the rules of the Home Office. They would like to know what you do. So when you come to campus as an international student, you have to do a check-in always. You go to the counters and you give them your card and put it on top of a

machine for a scan. But home students don't have to do this. And I was dating a white girl and she once asked me, 'Domu, why is it that you always have to give them your card so that they have to check you in? What is wrong with you?' I said, 'well I am an international student and I have to do this always. If I don't do it two or three times, they will report me to the Home Office and my visa will be cancelled.' And sometimes, when we are at home together, she may not want me to go to some classes; but I will just say, 'please let me go quickly before they close, so that I can give them my card to check me in so that I will be safe.' As I said, if you miss more than twice or three times, they send you a letter to know why you didn't check-in and you have to explain.

(Domu, male, 29, Chapel)

Domu feels he is being monitored and put under surveillance, as opposed to home students and also European nationals (until Brexit at least) who are free from signing-in requirements. In a way, international students seem to have been treated like 'failed asylum seekers' who are required to sign-in periodically until they are deported to their country of origin. As Domu told me, the signing process can take more than an hour, especially at the beginning of the academic year, since there will be a long queue of continuing and new international students. It could be a bit humiliating. In addition to the risk of deportation, Domu's experiences gives us insight that this controlling government policy intervention can have an impact on students' social lives. Domu feels the signing in requirement has singled him out and caused him feelings of embarrassment and shame when his white British girlfriend wondered if something was wrong with him as she sees him signing regularly. He had to interrupt having quality time with his girlfriend and leave to go and sign when he clearly did not want to.

Pala also expresses his frustration with the signing on policy, which he believes is discriminatory:

The other thing which I am not happy about is in this university, every month you have to go to what they call UKBI, and sign. They say it's

immigration control policy or something. You have to go and sign. To me, that's discrimination. I tell them, like, 'OK, you are telling us that we are not part of you, that's why you are making us sign'. And they are asking us questions, 'blah, blah, blah ... yeah'. So if you fail to sign, I have forgotten how many times, they will report you to the Home Office, saying this person has not been calling or signing for the past two or three or four months. They will send some email reminding you that they will report you to the UKBI. I don't like it, honestly. I am not happy about that, because it's just telling us that we are not part of them.

(Pala, male, 36, Canal-Great)

Pala feels alienated because he and his international colleagues are subject to a signing-on requirement. Such feelings of skepticism about belonging reflect the feelings of many BAIS in this study, who doubt if they are accepted one hundred per cent. The dividing, controlling and policing of BAIS through regular signing-on immigration policy of seems to have Othered black African students, further blighting their lived experiences in the UK. Students treated as Other seem more likely to experience exclusion, limited opportunities and poor mental health (Bradley, 2000; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2003).

Othering in the labour market

BAIS identified labour market as one of the social spaces where they are Othered and discriminated. Securing a work experience placement and/or a part-time job emerged as one of the most serious challenges almost all BAIS faced during their UK sojourn. This phenomenon mirrors the UK national labour market context where black Africans have the highest unemployment rate even among ethnic minorities especially in big cities and inner London boroughs (The University of Manchester, 2017).

All BAIS in this study voiced their frustrations with the discriminatory practices of the UK labour market. Being international coupled with their racialized status have put

them at a disadvantage. The following statements from across universities illustrate these challenges:

It has been really hard to get a part-time job and also getting internships. It's not good to be international student. I don't know why, but none of my friends that are black that have applied for internship and got one. Most black students even discourage against applying and encourage that we just rather go home and do our internships. They wouldn't want to actually take an international black student for work, and when you go to, like, all these law firms, you don't see enough black people there. There's no wide representation of blacks.

(Ruth, female, 19, Hillside)

When I tried to look for jobs, I can't find any. I feel, like, certain stores would rather have white people than black people, that's what I think. It took a while for me to think about it 'oh this is the reason [racial discrimination] why this happened'. I go for many interview, but eventually they don't call you back to come and work. I heard somewhere that it's because I had my natural hair out – they didn't want that, they want straight hair. It was just some very, quote unquote, racist things.

(Buti, female, 19, Canal)

At present, I am looking for work placement. I think I am at a disadvantage here. I don't get interviews.

(Lara, female, 19, Song)

I don't know if it's my colour or my blackness or my Africanness, but it has been really hard to get a part-time job just to get extra cash. It has been really hard. I don't really need the money that much, but it has been really hard to get a job. I apply for jobs, but I barely get an interview.

(Rosa, female, 19, Hillside)

I don't think there are, like, a lot of opportunities. So, for example, we have careers fairs now. I am international and I am black, and then I walk up to one of the companies that they bring and ask them, 'how can I actually get into your firm as an international student?' And they give me the whole generic information. What I am asking them is how can I get into your firm and work for your firm long-term because I want to actually have experience in the legal sector in the UK, but they do not have that much information on it. They refer me back to the fact, 'oh, yeah, we have a couple of openings now in Africa', stuff like that, but I am asking you specifically for you to be able to tell me how I can get into your job market, but most of the firms never have that information to give me.

(Poni, female, 19, Canal)

BAIS's experiences seem to demonstrate the seemingly insurmountable problem of securing employment as black Africans. They tell a story of rejection that has frustrated them and have, as a group, decided to seek opportunities at home than in the UK. A recent BBC article reported the magnitude of the discriminatory nature of the labour market in the West, particularly for people from Africa and Asia (Coughlan, 2019). Exclusion of BAIS from the labour market has serious implications for their adjustment, economic security and progress. In particular, being Othered and left out of placement opportunities could be very damaging to their self-esteem, sense of belonging and, above all, their educational success and career trajectories.

Pala's experiences show that BAIS experience even greater discrimination than other international students in the labour market:

They structure their society in hierarchical class, so it's very difficult, especially if you are a black. If you apply for job, you will see they will ask you if you are a black African or a black British, so there is a motive behind that. They will prefer their own black British than black African, so you find out that black African will always be at the bottom. You have limited options in the work place. If you are an EU student, when it comes to work, they treat you differently. You find out if you are a white, you get certain

types of jobs; if you are a black, you get certain jobs. For example, in cleaning jobs, most of the time you find lots of blacks than whites; to serve people in the restaurant, you will see a lot of white Europeans; so there you can see the discrimination and racism – you can see it. If you are black and you go and register with an agency, what is easier for you to get is to become a cleaner or a kitchen porter, but if you are white, they will send you to the bar, you go and help them serve, OK. ... Yeah, it's clear. Well, they would pretend as if they are doing it equally, but it's not like that.

(Pala, male, 36, Canal-Great)

Pala believes being asked to fill in ethnic monitoring forms is the government's method of structuring UK society by social class, and suspects that there may be some sinister motive behind its use. It could be a relatively new experience for many BAIS to be asked to classify themselves by skin color as tribal ties probably have more prominence while living in their home countries in Africa. Irungu (2013:170) writes, 'For most African students marking a box that identifies them as "foreign" and also as Black, White, Multiracial, or otherwise can be a confusing experience and its effects should not be underestimated.'

Racial discrimination in the labour market could well have its roots in the way immigrants from different nations to the UK have been historically racialized based on skin color. Carter et al. (1996:135) write:

Through immigration and nationality laws, governments ranked human populations into hierarchies of assimilability, in which some groups were regarded as more likely to 'fit in' than others. Once racialized in this way, migrant workers found themselves allocated to particular areas of the labour market and confined to particular positions within the labour process.

Hanassab (2006) reports that Africans in the US reported the highest incidences of discrimination in the job market, and that employers prefer white Americans or Europeans.

Conclusion and implications

Analysis of the data shows BAIS's experiences of racism and Othering while studying and living in the UK happened both inside and outside the university, and the perpetrators were people from various walks of life. BAIS experienced overt and violent racist attacks, where they were called racial slurs, told to go back to Africa, and attacked by missiles. This finding is consistent with the limited existing literature in the UK on the racism experiences of postgraduate international students who experienced overt racist attacks (Brown & Jones, 2013). This study extends the literature, finding that undergraduate BAIS from ten different universities in England experienced overt racism.

BAIS's stories demonstrate the depth and breadth of subordination they experienced through such processes of Othering as homogenization, exoticization, exclusion from friendship circles, immigration policy, and the workings of the labour market. The double Othering based on 'race' and their international student status demonstrates not only the disadvantages experienced by BAIS, but also the privileges of being a white home student. This complicates the terrain of the educational landscape that BAIS need to navigate on an uneven playing field. This double Othering of BAIS often goes unchallenged, as it is very rarely reported or talked about. This study fills that lacuna by giving BAIS voice. This study also contributes to the debate on the international student experience by producing evidence that disrupts universities' complacent views of themselves as being post-racial and meritocratic. Mills(2017:69) captures the pervasiveness of such complacency when he articulated "In whatever discipline that is affected by race, the "testimony" of the black perspective and its distinctive conceptual and theoretical insights will tend to be whited out. Whites will cite other whites in a closed circuit of epistemic authority that reproduces white delusions." However, the empirical findings in this study challenge or, in Popperian terms, falsify any theorization of UK universities as spaces offering an objective, post-racial, meritocratic student experience. If universities want to truly project an image of being global spaces and progressive centers of excellence promoting equality and social justice, they must address this pervasive problem of alienation

and exclusion. They cannot claim otherwise when the lived experiences of BAIS show that they are not all-inclusive and welcoming spaces for all groups of students.

Implications

The findings of this study have implications for universities, their staff and teachers, and the students themselves. First, the empirical findings could deepen institutions' and teachers' knowledge and understanding of BAIS's overall lived experience, and help them reflect on their practices. Second, there needs to be acknowledgement on the part of universities that 'race' and racism affect BAIS's adjustment and shape all aspects of their lived experiences. Universities need to place race consciousness at the center of institutional policy and practice. This would mean ensuring that considerations of 'race' and racism are central and not marginal in universities' planning, design and implementation of internationalization policies, from recruitment to placement and graduation. Third, universities need institute a system to regularly assess the racial climate for black and other minoritized groups within their campuses and take actions. It is impossible to fight racism by avoiding talking about it.

Universities often develop diversity initiative such as Race Equality Charter (REC) (ECU, 2016) in the UK to tackle the problem of racial inequality in higher education. However these initiatives often fail to recognize white supremacy and institutional racism (Bhopal & Pitkin, 2018) that perpetuate racism and Othering in universities. Most such initiatives are content with tackling individual racism which lulls universities into believing that they are tackling racism. In fact some of the well-intentioned aims of diversity initiatives end-up producing discourses that construct minoritized people in higher education as the Other, the outsider, the at-risk group (Iverson, 2007). In view of this, any institutional effort to tackle racism and Othering in higher education should aim to challenge and dismantle the whiteness of universities not just overt and extreme cases of racism and Othering.

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