ENTRANTS Closing Event:

Enhancing the transition of non-traditional students

Theoretical framing

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6 September 2023

Setting the scene: Sense of belonging

Belonging is described as the **students' connectedness to the institution, staff and other students** (Thomas, 2012).

Tinto (1975) identified 4 barriers to belonging:

- the nature of the academic work and workload
- educational success
- anxiety
- self efficacy

Source

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The flip side – Dropout

The failure to become or remain incorporated in the intellectual and social life of the [higher education] institution "is one of three reasons for student departure" (Tinto 1993)

Other two reasons: academic difficulties, having chosen wrong study programme

"I felt isolated from other students, did not manage to create a connection to my subject and did not feel like I was a Uni-Student. I often thought I was the only one doing bad and not being able to adapt to the situation."

[ENTRANTS survey 2022]

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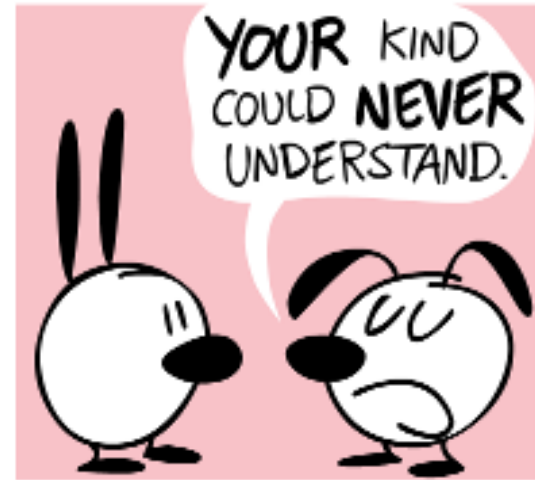
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Target group

Essentially all students.

No singling out - although certain groups are perceived as needing more support

Project aims

- Fostering social and academic integration among beginner students
- While avoiding "Othering" effects or stereotype threat
- Using an anticategorial approach

Source

Project outputs - https://entrants.eu/

- O1: Needs Assessment: Survey on sense of belonging and social/academic integration among beginner students
- O2: Student Experience Platform: Anonymously available support materials stored on a platform embedded in a student app
- O3: Community Building Course: course format focusing on community/team building, social skills, getting to know one's place of studies, etc.
- O4: Staff Sensitivity Trainings

Relationships are crucial

- Students are less likely to leave if they have **positive relationships with their peers and educators** (Thomas, 2012).

- **Academic staff play a key role** in a sense how they can help or break the fragile sense of self and capability that many students have as they begin university (Burke et al., 2016).

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Diving into the theoretical foundations …

"What seems to be clear from our data is that existing pedagogy has done little to challenge the raced, classed and gendered stereotypes, antagonisms and behaviours that are displayed by white middle-class students within this HE setting." (Crozier et al., 2016, p. 50)

➢ Reflection on the unconscious biases

➢ Effects of othering and stereotype threat

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Unconscious bias

- Implicit or unconscious bias happens by our brains making **quick judgments** and assessments of people and situations without us realising.

- Our biases are **influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences**.

- We may not even be aware of these views and opinions or be aware of their full impact and implications.
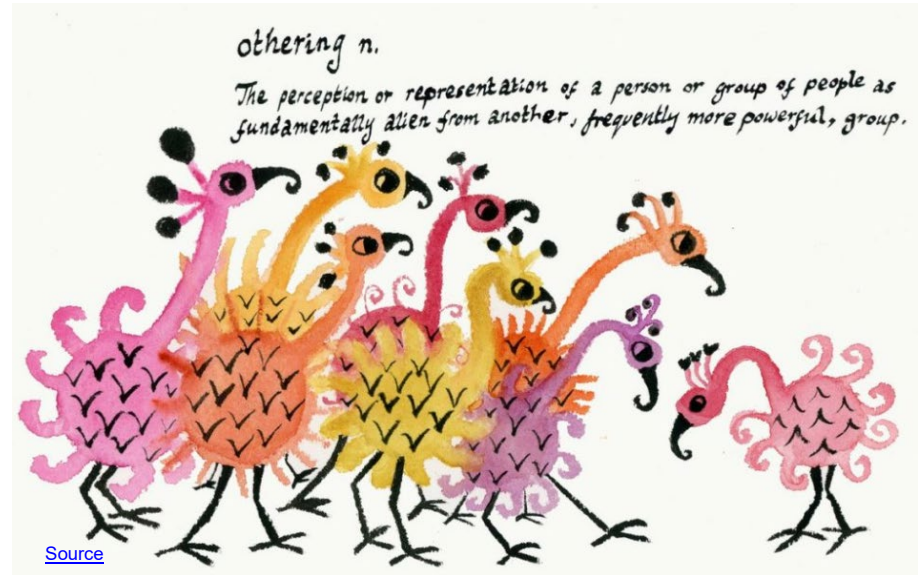

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Othering and stereotype threat

Certain groups [at risk cohorts (Kahu & Nelson, 2018)] are perceived as needing support and having certain deficits (e.g. language, behaviour).

Minority students often report either feeling invisible in the classroom or **feeling hyper-visible** as the token minority.

Due to othering, students are less likely to participate (because of being anxious to fail and thus giving proof of not being in the right place).

othering n.
The perception or representation of a person or group of people as fundamentally alien from another, frequently more powerful, group.

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Othering and stereotype threat

- "Those identifies as such find themselves in the 'ascription-trap'. Namely, they are confronted with the permanent demand for their 'integration', while simultaneously being excluded from society through the processes of 'othering' " (Karakaşoğlu & Doğmuş, 2016, p. 89).

- Stereotype threat is when worry about conforming to a **negative stereotype leads to underperformance** on a task by a member of the stereotyped group (i.e. women, people of colour).

Source

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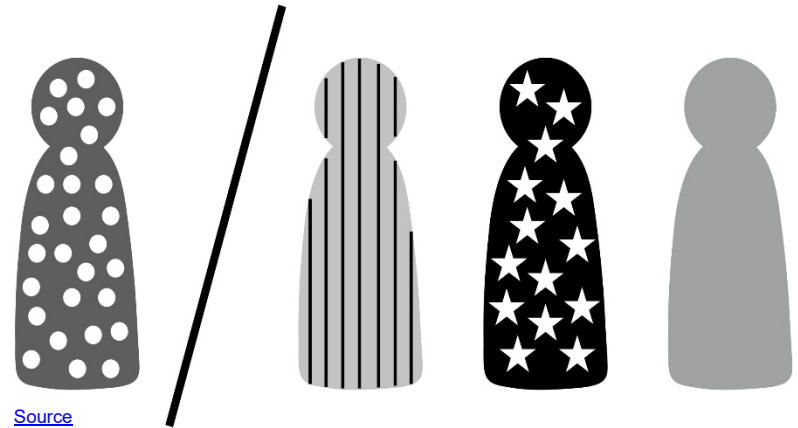
Reflecting on (my) unconscious biases and discrimination

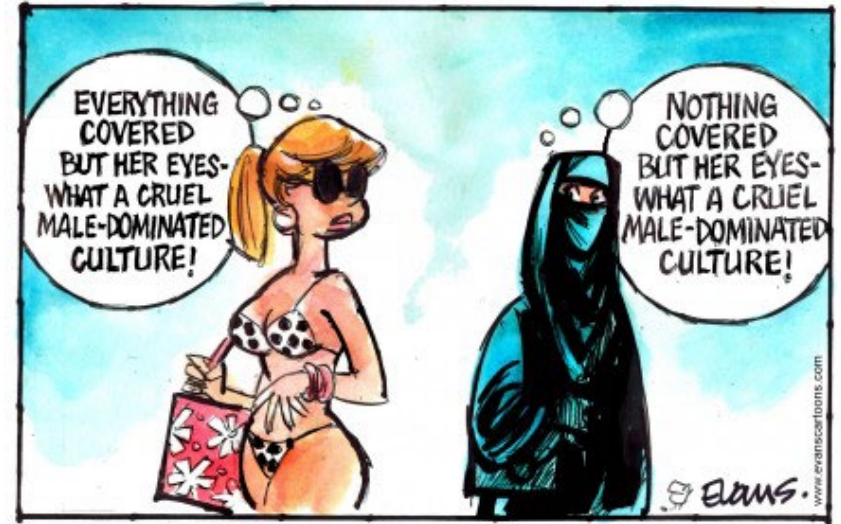1. Think about the following questions on your own (5 min):

Which biases do I think I hold?

Where does discrimination begin for me?

When was I discriminated against?/ When did I discriminate?

2. Discuss these questions in the group and visualise the result on the flipchart (20 min).

You might want to consult the e-learning course. Got to: Theoretical foundations → Unconscious bias

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Reflecting on othering and stereotype threat

1. Think about the following questions on your own (5 min):

> Can you recall circumstances when you felt othered?

> Can you recall circumstances when you othered?

> Have you witnessed effects of stereotype threat in your daily practice? If so in what way? Could you think of situations that might trigger stereotype threat in your institutions?

2. Discuss these questions in the group and visualise the result on the flipchart (20 min).

You might want to consult the e-learning course. Got to: Theoretical foundations → Othering & Stereotype threat as barriers to belonging

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Create a flipchart

Discuss the questions in your group and visualise the result on the flipchart (20 min).

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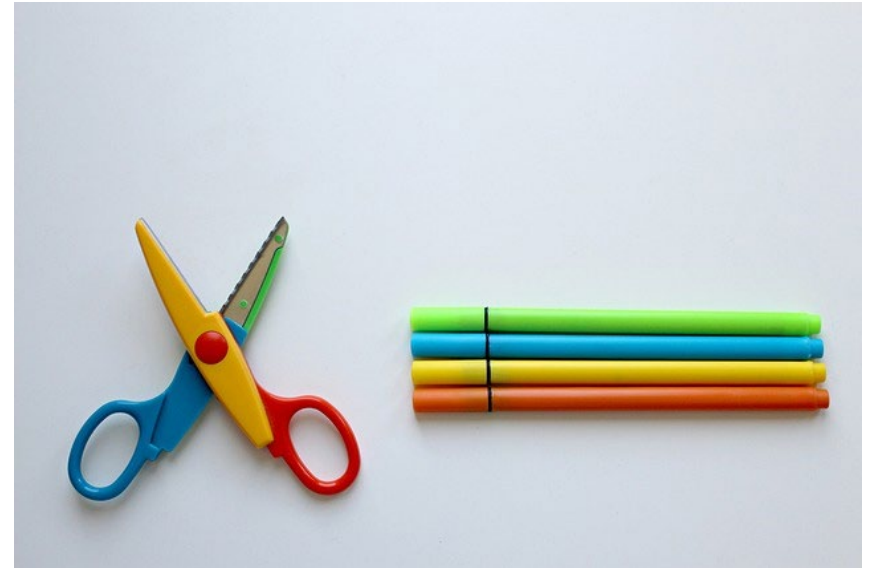
Othering and stereotype threat

- Can you recall circumstances when you felt othered?

- Can you recall circumstances when you othered?

- Have you witnessed effects of stereotype threat in your daily practice? If so in what way? Could you think of situations that might trigger stereotype threat?

E-learning course:
Theoretical foundations → Unconscious bias

Unconscious biases and discrimination

- Which biases do I think I hold?

- Where does discrimination begin for me?

- When was I discriminated against?/ When did I discriminate?

E-learning course:
Theoretical foundations → Othering & Stereotype threat as barriers to belonging

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Sources

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Questions?

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