

Getting diverse students and staff to talk about equality and social integration issues on higher education campuses in India and the UK.

Authors: Mary Thornton ^a, Patricia Bricheno ^a, Ponni Iyer ^b, Ivan Reid ^c, Govardhan Wankhede ^d and Roger Green ^e

Affiliation:

^a School of Education, University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 9AB, UK

^b Guru Nanak College of Education and Research, Shivaji Talav, Tank Road, Bhandup (West), Mumbai 400022, INDIA

^c University of Bradford, Richmond Road, West Yorks, BD7 1DP, UK

^d TATA Institute of Social Science, Deonar Campus, Sion-Trombay Road, Deonar, Mumbai 400 088, INDIA

^e Centre for Community Research, University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 9AB, UK

Corresponding Author

Prof. Mary Thornton

School of Education, University of Hertfordshire

College Lane, Hatfield

Herts. AL10 9AB

m.e.thornton@herts.ac.uk

Direct line: 01707 286373

Getting diverse students and staff to talk about equality and social integration issues on higher education campuses in India and the UK

ABSTRACT

This paper reports the early stages of a funded UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) project, 'Widening Participation: Diversity, isolation or integration in Higher Education?' The project is concerned with greater equity, social justice, integration and social cohesion within the global market of higher education (HE). The main aim of this three year project is to explore the nature of social integration and separation, equality and discrimination experienced by diverse, minority, disadvantaged and under-represented students attending higher education in UK and India. In year 1 students and staff from five HEIs across both countries were invited to keep a record of what for them were important and relevant events on campus relating to the teaching, learning and social situations they encountered. Getting the target sample of 90 respondents proved difficult and the researchers were left pondering whether the record keeping method was appropriate, if there were important local differences in gaining access to participants, and if there was a general reluctance to talk about diversity issues. This paper addresses the problems encountered in gaining that initial sample, how they were eventually overcome and with what result.

Keywords: widening participation; diversity issues; higher education; methods; India; UK

Introduction

This paper reports on the interim findings of a three-year funded UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) collaborative project between UK and Indian academics on Widening Participation in Higher Education, covering five different higher education institutions (HEIs), three in the UK and two in India. The project is primarily concerned with enhancing equity,

social justice, integration and social cohesion within the current globalised, market oriented context of higher education (HE). Its main aims are to explore the nature of social cohesion and integration, separation, equality and discrimination experienced by diverse, minority, disadvantaged and under-represented students attending HE in the UK and India.

The initial stages of our research involved inviting students and staff (both from academic and student support areas), located in the five HEIs, to keep a record (written and photographic) of what for them seemed to be important and relevant events relating to what they saw, heard, did and experienced on their campus for a period of one month, in teaching, learning and social situations; we cited possible examples they could use, such as interactions in classes and social settings; what seemed to be good experiences and what seemed to be negative ones; how and if their particular knowledge and experiences were used, valued and incorporated into their HE experience and learning or how they were negated.

Although a sample size of 90 record keepers was initially sought across the five participating institutions, obtaining that sample presented significant difficulties to all but one of the HEIs. This raised questions for the research team regarding the methods initially adopted, of cultural differences in ways of accessing respondents to take part in the research, and the general willingness (or not as it appeared in many cases) of HE students and staff to address and share issues relating to diversity, equality, social cohesion and integration on their campuses with researchers. As a result additional data collection methods were adopted and the intended sample size was almost met (88 of which 85 were used). This paper addresses the problems encountered in

gaining that initial sample, how they were eventually overcome and with what result.

Background

The project overall takes as its starting point that in order to be better prepared for and to thrive in social networks and work-related arenas which are increasingly diverse, multicultural, interdependent and global it is essential that students are helped to develop and value intercultural knowledge and skills during their education, and that all HE staff, students and campuses should model the integration, cohesion and social interaction that underpins their development. However, this desired outcome is not readily achieved. Advancement of disadvantaged people/ widening participation initiatives in both India and the UK have brought with them problems around lack of integration and social cohesion (Carroll & Ryan, 2005; Wankhede, 2002). The potential benefits of cross-cultural learning and enrichment really are being lost through student segregation, isolation, alienation and, in some cases, ghetto-isation (Hyland et al, 2008).

Yet educational environments are potentially important sites for the development of intercultural knowledge and skills, and for the enhancement of social cohesion and integration. Research reported by Bloom (2008:42) found that 'school friendship groups were more diverse than out-of-school groups' in the secondary schools studied, and it seems likely that this might also be the case in further education and HE environments as well. They are, in most instances, places where people from diverse backgrounds and cultures come together, and as such offer opportunities for intercultural mixing and greater

diversity within study, work, friendship, and social groupings, from which greater integration and social cohesion might emerge and through which those important inter-cultural skills and perspectives might develop.

'The cultural diversity of the modern university provides us with rich opportunities to learn about each other. Such learning cannot only prepare students to cope in a world that is multicultural and interdependent (OECD, 2004) but can also ensure that academics operate beyond local and national perspectives.' (Hyland et al, 2008:3)

Intercultural learning, understanding, competence and communication are important skills for graduates of the future, and they are desired outcomes for HE (Killick, 2009). Our students need to be better prepared for, and enabled to thrive in social networks and work-related arenas which are increasingly diverse, multicultural, interdependent and global.

The lack of integration or mixing between students from diverse backgrounds and cultures on HE campuses is widely acknowledged in the literature (Deakins, 2009; Hyland et al, 2008; Carroll & Ryan, 2005; UKCOSA, 2004). Much has been written about minority, disadvantaged or under-represented groups of students experiencing feelings of isolation (Daniel, 2009; Hockings et al, 2008, Furnham, 1997), marginalisation (Read et al, 2003), exclusion (Hockings et al, 2008), and invisibility (Coram, 2009).

Being invisible, or isolated, is another aspect of mistreatment, or discrimination on the basis of some difference, such as race, religion, sex etc. but is equally exclusionary and damaging in terms of individuals (and groups) sense of belonging, of equal worth and of being valued and treated with respect. Minority, disadvantaged, 'non-traditional' and international students

in HE often feel powerless, like interlopers or outsiders, even that HE 'is not their place'. They can be made to feel lacking in some way, and treated as deficient when compared to the ideal or 'traditional', majority HE student. For such students, as Coram (2009) notes, HE implicitly 'says "come"', through statements of equity and diversity, inclusion and opportunity, but then says "no" - they are drawn in then rejected.

Actual divisions or groupings may variously form around, for example, race, class, caste, sex, age, language, religion, culture, marital status, educational background, qualifications, course and cohort, but form they do, and students grouped by age, race, sex, nationality and language, for example, can be seen and heard within most student facilities on most HEI campuses albeit alongside some mixed groupings. Hyland et al (2008:1-2) note,

'how far we still have to go in encouraging some students to break out of their familiar cultural groups to socialise cross-culturally'.

Opportunities for intercultural learning and social mixing are readily available in HE, and if taken are likely to benefit all – students, staff in HEIs, employers, economies, societies and the global world. If they are deemed a social good, readily accessible through education environments and are not being availed of by choice (conscious or unconscious) then understanding why, and how greater integration might be facilitated or enhanced is important, and is the focus of this three year research project.

The experiences and perceptions of individual students and staff members lie at the core of this initial research phase, but the ultimate purpose is to illuminate our understanding as to how these are mediated, shaped and formed, in relation to and in interaction with the structures and contextual

features of the HE environments in which they are located, and to identify ways in which they might be addressed by and within HE. Our work is thus framed by socio-cultural rather than psychological or therapeutic theories and is located within a social-constructivist perspective (Moore, 2000). Social constructivism facilitates the development of improved understandings of educational and social environments that shape (but do not determine) individual dispositions and responses toward the social diversity that they encounter on their campuses. It is highly suited to the understanding of perceptions, and exploring resonances with actions, reactions and interactions.

Planned Methodology

Five HEIs are involved in this research, three in the UK and two in India (see Table 1, below). However, data were obtained from only four of these HEIs in the first phase of the project due to problems encountered in accessing willing participants.

(place Table 1 here)

We began our project by inviting students and staff (academic and support) from five HE colleges and universities in England and India to keep a record (written and photographic) of what for them seemed to be important and relevant events relating to what they saw, heard, did and experienced on campus for a period of one month, in teaching, learning and social situations; namely interactions in classes and social settings; what seem to be good experiences and what seem to be negative ones; how and if their particular knowledge and experiences were used, valued and incorporated into their HE experience and learning or how they were negated. Through analysis of these

accounts it was hoped to illuminate any resonances with particular social and educational experiences occurring within the HE context that challenge or reinforce stereotypes, discrimination, separate or parallel learning; that enhance or hinder full interaction, or a sense of community, social cohesion and equality of opportunity.

At the first team meeting the methods of accessing and gathering the sample were agreed. Team members would advertise and invite students and staff from within their own institution to 'Information Meetings' about the project, targeting Social Science/ Social Studies and Education students, plus staff from these or any other Schools or Faculties. The sample could include students from any year, level or type of course provided they were studying at HE level. Each Institution was to select a sample of diverse students and staff to be 'Event Recorders' (hereafter referred to as diarists) from those who completed consent forms at the meetings. They would be invited to a briefing session where the purpose, nature and extent of event recording required would be explained.

Difficulties experienced in acquiring the sample

Invitations to participate were issued to students and staff in September 2008 and it was anticipated that all diaries would have been completed and collected by January 2009. HEIs in India and UK have different academic years, in India the academic year runs from June or July to April but in UK it runs from September to May. This meant that students and staff were invited to take part at different points within the academic year depending on whether they were in India or UK: participants in India were invited at least two months into their

academic year, whereas participants in UK were invited at the very beginning of their academic year. The Indian students at SHEC were all studying on one year post-graduate courses. However, the Indian students at IDU were in either their first or second year of a two year course, and some of the UK students were involved in three year under-graduate study programmes, so some of these students may have been returning for their second or third year of study when invitations were issued. A sample size of 90 record keepers was sought across the five participating institutions, but achieving that sample presented significant difficulties to all but one of the participating institutions.

By the beginning of November it was clear that there were difficulties in attracting sufficient participants: in the UK only one student and seven staff diarists had come forward (all from NSS), although the HEIs in India were more successful. SHEC was able to recruit fourteen students and two staff, all of whom kept diaries for one month, some with photographs; the other, IDU, recruited two students and one staff member, but none of these provided photographs.

The team had agreed a common approach to acquiring the sample but the different sizes and structures of the HEIs affected team members' ability to make contact with students and staff. Those working within the two large UK HEIs (NSS and ONC) were not in a position to contact all students and staff personally, instead having to rely on email and internet to advertise and make contacts. Strenuous efforts were made to attract students and staff to the information meetings but in the end there was no response at all from ONC or NNC, and only one student came to the meeting at NSS. There was a better response from staff at NSS, who knew the team member contacting them;

sixteen staff attended the information meetings and seven became participants and produced diaries (although one of these was not used, being an account of home life rather than life on campus).

The contact method at IDU in India was in some ways similar to that within the UK in that personal contacts were limited and most staff contact was via email, but students were contacted in a more personal way: students who were well known to the team member were told about the project and were asked to contact other students to let them know about it. Most staff were informed by email although some were personal contacts. Initially the response seemed hopeful: twenty students volunteered to keep diaries, but in the end only two students completed them. In addition one staff participant, known personally to the team member, was acquired.

The situation in SHEC, a very small institution, was quite different. A poster advertising the meeting was placed in the lecture hall where everyone would see it, and an announcement was made so that students would read the notice. All seven staff were told about the project by the team member and a notice about the meeting was posted in the staff room. In addition the team member making the presentation was well known and respected, holding a senior position within the institution. Fifteen students volunteered to take part, although only fourteen submitted diaries, two of which were not substantial enough to use. Two of the small staff of seven also volunteered and submitted diaries.

In essence, successful recruitment to the project seems to have occurred where there was a personal relationship or approach: at SHEC the students and staff all knew the team member and there was a good response; at

NSS the team member knew the staff members well but did not have personal contact with the students; at IDU, where students had a personal relationship to the team member, there was initially a large group of student volunteers, even though the final response was poor.

The difficulty in attracting students to projects concerned with diversity and integration has been remarked upon elsewhere (Hyland et al, 2008; Johnston, 2007; Pelletier, 2003; McDowell and Marples, 2001).

‘Although all the Subject Centres, and therefore all subject disciplines, were invited to take part, getting academics and students on board was problematic’
(Hyland et al, 2008:25)

Pelletier (2003) noted that getting the co-operation of groups of international students is a problem faced by all researchers. But she also observed that this was less problematic where the researchers themselves were international students, and suggested that personal contacts and *cultural and situational affinity* helped them to gain co-operation. In contrast, Hyland et al (2008) contacted students across a number of different locations by means of advertisements on websites rather than through more personal approaches. They consider that their difficulties in recruiting students could ‘suggest that home students may not consider intercultural learning as an important outcome of their HE experience’ (Hyland et al, 2008:28), but perhaps the lack of personal contact was also an issue. McDowell and Marples (2001), discussing the issue of acquiring student volunteers for research purposes, suggest that students in large HEIs having limited contact with lecturers may be less likely to volunteer to participate in educational research, and Johnston

(2007), describes ways in which research studies working with hard to reach samples found that the use of personal contacts was an effective approach.

Use of additional methods

By mid-November the team was discussing a methodological shift:

I continue to struggle to find students willing [or even perhaps able] to take part in our research. Should we consider a methodological shift away from 'diaries' and towards individual interviews and or focus groups? (ONC & NNC member of the UK team email communication - 18th November 2008)

Even I am struggling with diaries...I agree with you for shift in methodology to personal interview or FGD (IDU member of the India team email communication -19th November 2008)

And at the beginning of December the whole team had agreed that some sort of supplement/ alternative method was required. But, since SHEC in India had successfully recruited diarists we felt we should not abandon the data we already had and were in the process of collecting. We would instead adopt mixed data collection methods (using different tools and different sources).

Additional data collection methods were agreed and adopted: focus groups and group interviews would be used in HEIs where there had been little take-up of invitations to keep a diary (all except SHEC). Again each of the HEIs obtained their additional samples in different ways. At NSS purposive sampling was used; students were chosen to reflect a range of backgrounds comprising minority and majority ethnic UK students, European Union students and overseas fee paying students. The sample also included full-time undergraduates, as well as some part-time and postgraduate students. In terms

of gender, thirteen women and twelve men were interviewed spanning an age range of students entering HE from school leavers through to mature students. Ten interviews were conducted in total and ranged in number of respondents from individual interviews to groups of up to four students.

At IDU senior students and the student union helped to enlist participants for two focus groups, each of ten students. They included first and second year male and female students from a range of castes, including reserved and non-reserved groups. These focus groups were also video-recorded.

Three informal focus groups were conducted at NNC in January 2009 with education undergraduates: two groups of female students, one group in their first year and another group in their second year, and one group of two male students in their third year.

Common questions for focus groups and group interviews were agreed by the team. These were used at IDU in India in late December 2008 and at NNC and NSS in the UK in January 2009. However, the questions were used in slightly different ways within each institution: at NSS a group interview style was used, at NNC an informal FG approach was taken, but not all the questions were addressed, whereas at IDU in India all questions were addressed using focus group discussions but in a much more formal setting which had similarities to a group interview. By January 2009 the intended sample size of 90 was almost achieved: 88 respondents were involved (see Table 2, below), but, as noted above, data from three of these was not suitable for inclusion.

(place Table 2 here)

Although not originally planned, the additional methods of acquiring data could be regarded as a strength.

‘Focus Groups, used increasingly in educational research, have been shown to be a useful tool to generate data in the form of facts, opinions, experiences and feelings.’ (Chionel, Van Der Veen, Wildemeersch & Jarvis, 2003) and... can stimulate memories and debate.’ (cited by Hyland et al, 2008:7).

By adopting the methods outlined above and accessing the sample through a variety of methods, as recommended by Johnston (2007), we were able to avoid sole reliance on “joiners” who might bias the sample.

Discussion

The development of this mixed methods approach and the subsequent additions to data collection procedures was a complex process that evolved over time through negotiated agreement amongst the research team, having of necessity to take into account the different contexts and circumstances of each participating researcher and institution.

The communication media and contact points available at each of the five participating HEIs varied considerably. MLE’s (web-based Managed Learning Environments) were present in all three UK institutions but none of the researchers had access to a full email list of students. General ‘adverts’ on the various MLE systems were in some cases an option but, where used, provided just a single student response (at NSS). Alternative contact points such as posters and invitations displayed on notice boards, and leaflets left on tables in libraries, resource centres and refectories (NSS & ONC) proved

equally unproductive. Accessing potential staff diarists through a general staff email list was reasonably successful at NSS but far less so at IDU, NNC and ONC, while at SHEC, given its small size, direct personal contact was used successfully to recruit both staff and students.

The use of staff and student contacts to obtain participants for focus groups/ group interviews (at IDU, NNC & NSS) was somewhat more productive and contributed significantly to increasing the sample size. However it failed to work at ONC. The additional use of a research assistant, at NSS, to randomly approach student's produced a reasonably good response. All this appears to indicate that the use of face-to-face contacts rather than written requests, plus professional contacts and influence, are more likely to result in successful sample acquisition (Basit, 2009). Potential respondents may be more willing to engage with sensitive research such as this if they can see, or know, the person who is asking them, if they trust and respect them, or if they perceive them to be senior, powerful figures.

There are also likely to be cultural differences in gaining access to respondents. It is somewhat difficult to identify them with any precision, because in reality the processes and factors involved are complex and overlain by other contextual influences. These would certainly include institutional size, student demographics and course provision (professional, vocational), plus the roles and positions held by the researchers (including seniority, and degree of personal contact with staff and students).

For instance, HE students in India could potentially be considered more likely than UK students to be amenable to requests for help and participation, given a tradition of respect for academics, and a similar case

might be made for HE staff, regarding Indian researchers seniority within an institution. However, problems experienced acquiring diarists who would deliver at IDU undermines this proposition. Given that IDU is a large HEI and SCHE a very small one the differences that occurred might be better explained via the notion of face to face contact. By way of contrast, at NSS in the UK, the largest of all the participating HEIs, the researcher had a wide range of personal staff contacts due to her role and functions within the institution, which lent itself to acquiring staff (but not student) volunteers. A further contextual influence on response rates might be the professional nature of programmes of study on which potential student participants were enrolled. Students studying professional programmes in both countries, such as teacher or social work training, are more likely to encounter equity issues as an important part of their studies, and to have a professional commitment engendered within them to address such issues. The four participating HEIs that produced data are strongly represented in these fields whereas ONC is less so. However, there are other factors involved as well.

Questions about the general willingness (or not) of staff and students to address and share issues relating to diversity, equality, social cohesion and integration on HE campuses with researchers need to be raised. Although we have no conclusive answers to give, there is some evidence, in the literature and elsewhere, that activities and events carrying an 'equality' or 'diversity' label are avoided by a large number of their target audiences. This applies to CPD (Continued Professional Development) for HE staff and governors in schools (Bagley, 1993) in the UK; to home students who don't attend things with an international/ multicultural label – seeing it as 'not for them' (Hyland

et al, 2008; Carroll & Ryan, 2005); and to some international students (Pelletier, 2003). Lack of volunteers in our own and others related research, as cited above, suggests that there is an undercurrent of reluctance to share issues relating to diversity, equality, social cohesion and integration on HE campuses.

The type of help initially sought, namely 'event recording', may also have led in some instances to a low response rate, possibly leading to a perception amongst potential participants that a great deal of time and effort would be involved. Indeed some who did volunteer apologised for not completing their record, or to the standard they had set themselves, because of time constraints and workloads. In addition, event recording involves self-direction and a longer time commitment from participants than the focus group/ group interviews that were later adopted.

While we had hoped to generate more in-depth individually selected observational and reflective data from the diarists than we might have expected from the later focus groups/ group interviews, in the end that was not the case. We have found that the initial sample of committed and concerned volunteer diarists do not have substantially different views from the more opportunistic groups involved in the later focus groups and interviews. Similar issues and themes run through each of the different data sets.

The data sets, from diaries, focus groups and interviews, reveal that students and staff from both UK and India, in all four of the contributing HEIs, share common experiences regarding integration and separation on HE campuses although the degree of emphasis on particular lines of division varies between institutions and countries. Understanding the characteristics of

the different institutions (see Table 1) and respondents (see Table 2) helps in some ways to explain such differences, given variations in institutional foci, recruitment policies and the subsequent make-up of their student bodies.

All data give commentary on four main aspects of student life and their impact on integration or isolation on HEI campuses. These were people and their attitudes, places where people meet, the teaching experienced, and the structures that affect their HE life. All those who spoke to us, whether diarists, in focus groups or in group interviews, said separation of groups was pervasive and ubiquitous. Some described this as being for supportive reasons, some suggested for convenience, some due to inertia, and some due to overt discrimination on the grounds of race, region, nationality, caste, class, religion, age or gender. However, most also said that greater integration was both desirable and possible.

Conclusions and ways forward

Getting diverse students and staff to talk about equality and social integration issues on higher education campuses has not been easy. Research in this field will always be deemed sensitive, and the reluctance of respondents to come forward, as perceived and experienced by others as well as ourselves, is likely to remain an issue. Nevertheless we have found that at least some of these problems can be overcome.

The adoption of a mixed methods approach for the initial stage of this project, through necessity rather than pre-planning, has enabled us to establish a baseline understanding of the nature of social integration and separation,

equality and discrimination experienced by diverse, minority, disadvantaged and under-represented students in four of our five HEIs. Despite obvious concerns that differentially gathered data may not articulate well this has not proved to be the case. The mixed methods approach and the congruence of themes and issues arising from it has, paradoxically, strengthened our confidence in the data, and the perceptions and experiences of those involved that the data reveal to us. It is also in keeping with our social-constructivist approach

What we have learnt, clearly and unequivocally, is that HE contexts for researching diversity and integration vary. Our methods evolved over time through negotiated agreement amongst the research team, and they continue to evolve. They must and will continue to take into account the different contexts, circumstances and responses of different institutions and prospective participants in order for us to be able to access the experiences and perceptions of individual students and staff members, which lie at the core of this research.

Notes

1. This document is an output from the UKIERI (UK India Education and Research Initiative) project funded by the British Council, the UK Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), Office of Science and Innovation, the FCO, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, the Scottish government, Northern Ireland, Wales, GSK, BP, Shell and BAE, for the benefit of the Indian Higher Education Sector and the UK Higher Education Sector. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the funding bodies.

2. Some of the work described in this paper was presented as work in progress at the European Educational Research Association Annual Conference - ECER 2009: Vienna 28th – 30th September.

References

Bagley, C. (1993) *Governor Training and Equal Opportunities*, Berkshire: NFER.

Basit, T. N. (2009) 'White British: dual heritage; British Muslim: Young Britons' conceptualisation of identity and citizenship', *British Educational Research Journal* 35, 5:732-743.

Bloom, A. (2008) '18 pals make a teenager really popular: boys claim a longer list of friends but are not as good at providing names', *Times Education Supplement*, 5th December, 2008:42.

Carroll, J. and Ryan, J. (eds) (2005) *Teaching International Students: Improving Learning for All*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Coram, S. (2009) 'Encountering disregard in Australian academe: the subjective perspective of a disaffected 'other'', *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 30, 3:275-287.

Daniel, B. (2009) *Conversations on race in teacher education cohorts*, *Teaching Education* 20, 2:175-188

Deakins, E. (2009) 'Helping students value cultural diversity through research-based teaching', *Higher Education Research* 28, 2:209-226.

Furnham, A. (1997) 'The experience of being an overseas student' in D. McNamara and R. Harris (eds.) *Overseas Students in Higher Education*, London and New York: Routledge.

Hockings, C., Cooke, S. Bowl, M. Yamashita, H. and McGinty, S. (2008) 'Learning and teaching for diversity and difference in higher education: towards more inclusive learning environments', TLRP/ESRC Research Project, TLRP Research Briefing Number 41, April 2008, at <http://www.tlrp.org/dspace/handle/123456789/1440> (accessed: 13 August 2009).

Hyland, F., Trahar, S., Anderson, J., and Dickens, A. (2008) *A Changing World: the internationalisation experiences of staff and students (home and international) in UK Higher Education*, York: Higher Education Academy.

Johnston, B. (2007) *Methodological Review: mapping the literature in relation to the challenges for the non-participation project*, Working Paper: Non-Participation in HE Project, Southampton: University of Southampton.

Killick, D. (2009) 'Globalisation and Internationalisation', Conference workshop, Manchester: Higher Education Academy Conference, July 2009.

McDowell, L. and Marples, G. (2001) 'First catch your student – qualitative approaches to research on information and learning technologies',

Paper presented at the Higher Education Close Up Conference 2,
Lancaster University, 16-18 July 2001.

Moore, R. (2000) 'For Knowledge: tradition, progressivism and progress in
education', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 30, 2:17-36.

Pelletier, C. (2003) 'The Experiences of International Students in Higher
Education: a review of unpublished research – report', UKCOSA, 27
June 2009, at <http://www.ukcosa.org.uk/images/ioereport.doc> UTH
(accessed 27 June 2009).

Read, B., Archer, L. & Leathwood, C. (2003) 'Challenging Cultures? Student
Conceptions of 'Belonging' and 'Isolation' at a Post-1992 University',
Studies in Higher Education, 28, 3:261-277.

Wankhede, G. (2002) 'Dalits in India: A Critique of the Issues and
Challenges', *Think India*, 5/4:38-55.

Table 1. Characteristics of participating HEIs 2007/8 (all in principle English medium)

HE Institution	Size	Std Composition	Provision	Priorities/orientation
UK: New South Shire University (NSS)	22,550 UG & PG students , full and part-time	15% International 85% UK & EU 55% female 53% white	The Arts; Health & Human Sciences; Engineering; ICT; Business; Law; Humanities and Education	‘New model uni. , business like and business facing, shaping graduates futures in a global environment’; entrepreneurial, engendering international & MC understanding
UK: Old North City University (ONC)	14,464 UG & PG students , full and part-time	17% International 83% UK & EU 50% female 47% white	Health & Life Sciences; Design, Engineering & Technology; Comp, Informatics & Media; Social & Int. Studies; Management	‘Making Knowledge work’; transformative role of HE, outward-facing, confronting inequality & celebrating diversity
UK: New North City University (NNC)	5,581 UG & PG, full and part-time	5% International 95% UK & EU 71% female 95% white 45% mature	The Arts; Education; Theology; Business; Health & Life Sciences	‘Excellent, open & progressive HE that embraces difference, challenges prejudice and promotes justice’; Anglican foundation, personal/professional development, life-long learning, sustainable
INDIA: International city-based Deemed University (IDU)	994 UG & PG (PG big majority) students, full-time	3.5%International 96.5% Indian 50% female 1% white 50% reservation (15% SC, 8% ST, 27% OBC)	Social Science & Social Work; Health; Rural Development, Management; Media; Cultural & Education	‘Towards a people-centred tomorrow’; Social Justice; Professionals for practice; research and teaching, reaching out to the wider community
INDIA: Specialist HE city-based College (SHEC)	100 PG students, full-time, studying UG course	1% International 99% Indian 80% female 0% white 50% reservation for Punjabi students	1yr Full-time secondary BEd (teacher education) under Faculty of Arts	‘Share, Care, Learn & Grow’; : secular environment; special attention to academically challenged and vernacular students

Table 2. Respondent data sources

	Student Diaries	Staff Diaries	Student Focus groups	Staff Focus groups	Total
NSS (UK)	1	6+1 not used	25	3	36
NNC (UK)	0	0	13	0	13
ONC (UK)	0	0	0	0	0
SHEC (INDIA)	12 + 2 not used	2	0	0	16
IDU (INDIA)	2	1	20	0	23
Total	15	10	58	3	88

