



Teaching About Inequality: The Psychological Impact on Students

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Disparities in Student Outcomes

- BAME students less likely to obtain a 1st class degree (Stevenson, 2019; McMaster, 2021).
- White students 2x as likely as Black graduates to achieve a 1st class degree (39.4% vs 20%) (GOV.UK, 2022).
- Inequality persists even after accounting for entry grades and socio-economic status (Mahmud, & Gagnon, 2023).

Slow Progress in Closing the Gap

- The gap between White and Black students is narrowing, however, progress is slow.
- At this pace, it would take over 64 years to close the gap completely.
- The gap is not projected to close until 2087 (ECU, 2018)



LGBTQ+ Students Face Additional Challenges

- Many LGBTQ+ students report a lack of visible commitment to LGB and trans equality.
 - 1 in 10 report a lack of commitment to LGB equality.
 - 1 in 4 say their university fails to show a commitment to trans equality (Stonewall, 2018).
- LGBTQ+ students more likely to declare a mental health condition
- Transgender students face almost 10x the risk of mental health issues (UCAS, 2021)





Why is EDI Important?

- Essential to create a welcoming and inclusive environment
- More enriching learning experience for all students
- Ensures fair treatment, regardless of background.
- Socially responsible graduates
- University KPIs

EDI in Social Psychology

We cover a range of topics related to discrimination, racism, prejudice, and stereotypes.



Bad news stories:

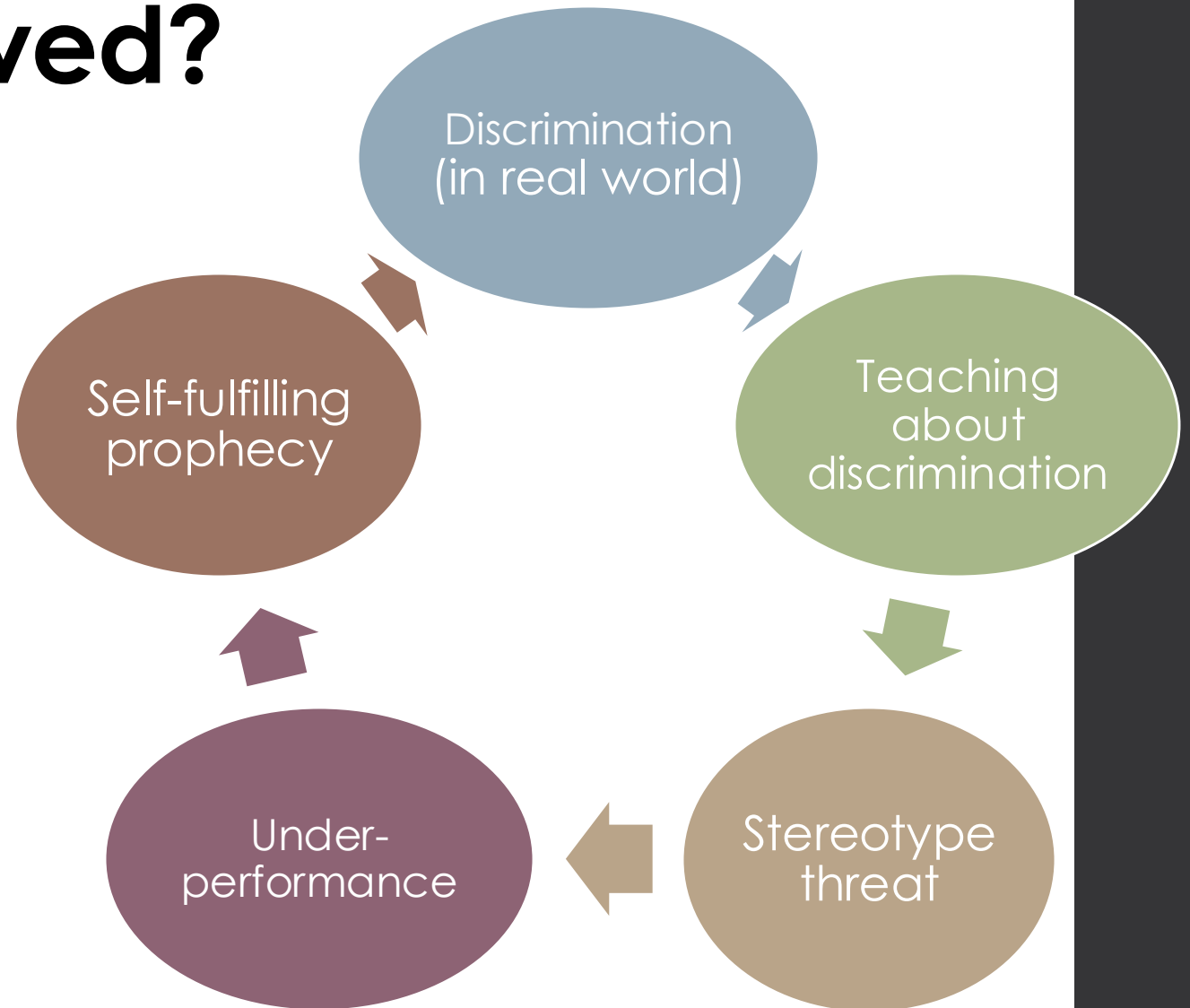
Labour market discrimination (Flage, 2019)

Racial disparity in a shoot/don't shoot task (James, 2018)



How are these bad news stories received?

- Stereotype threat - a psychological phenomenon in which individuals experience anxiety or concern about confirming negative stereotypes associated with their social group.
- This anxiety can negatively affect their performance and engagement in various tasks, as they may feel pressured to disprove those stereotype (Steele et al., 1995).





Guidelines

Current EDI Guidelines

- Lots of EDI guidance:
 - e.g. Moving away from WEIRD-centric approach
- Despite this, guidance remains abstract and doesn't address the practicalities of teaching sensitive or controversial topics.
- Current guidance isn't fit for purpose (ours anyway) and others broaching these difficult, but important issues in HE



Our Aim

To address this, we've partnered with students to create a new framework for sensitive teaching.



Best Practice Framework for Sensitive Teaching

In response three stage approach:

1. Small focus group (diverse groups of students: minority and non-minority)
2. Led to larger survey to all students
3. Then interns working on that data to produce the beginnings of a best practice framework for sensitive teaching

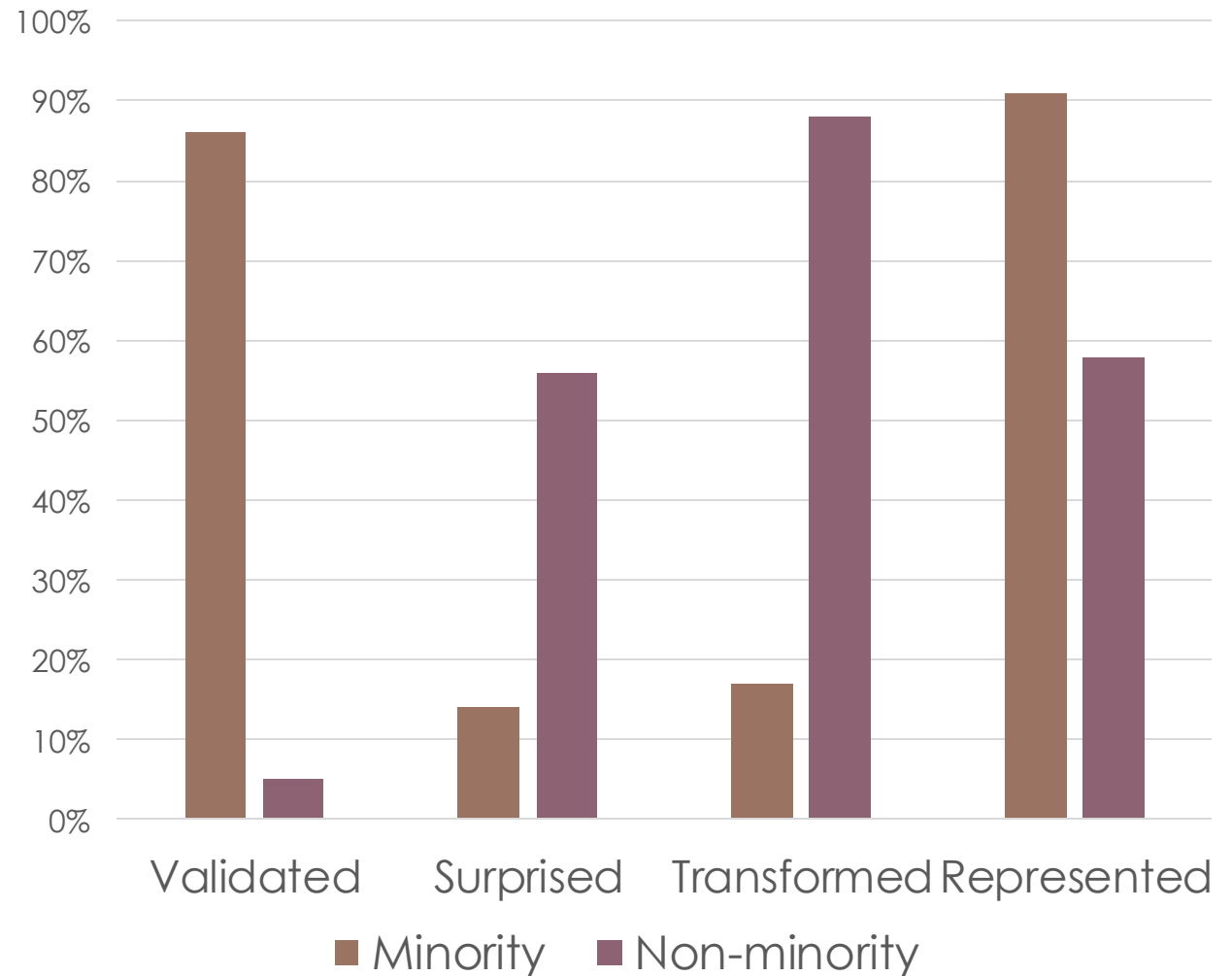
Impact of Sensitive Teaching

“They’re incredible in promoting inclusivity. As a brown student, I felt heard and acknowledged. They’re sensitive to my cultural experiences.”

H.Alapati

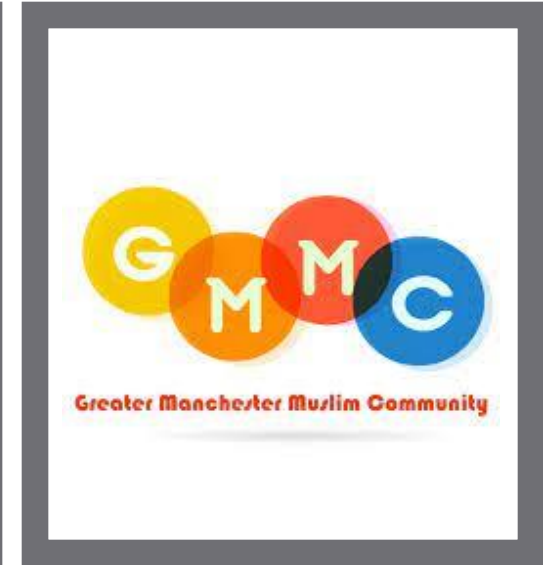
H. Karmali

Impact of Sensitive Teaching



Best Practice Framework for Sensitive Teaching: Findings So Far

- Debrief (office hours for specific content if affected).
- Teaching explicitly about stereotype threat
- Good news stories for balance/hope for change
- Hear voices of these marginalised groups (Proud trust, Manchester pride, currently working on guest speakers).
- Not allowing over-identification from one particular group of students



Moving forward...

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Any Questions?

