Looking In and Reaching Out

A research project to identify ways forward to increase access to education and early years education for BME communities in south west Wales

Key Findings and Recommendations
Conducted for

Trinity College Carmarthen
School of Early Years Education
School of Education Studies and Social Inclusion

by

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- AWEMA Wales

- CEMVO Wales

- EYST (Ethnic Youth Support Team) Swansea

- Family Housing Association (Wales) – Chinese Elders project team

- Filipino Community Drop-In & Information Centre

- MEWN Swansea

- Swansea Bay Race Equality Council

- Swansea Polish Saturday School

1. Introduction

1.1 The research project was commissioned by the School of Early Years Education and the School of Education Studies and Social Inclusion, Trinity College Carmarthen, as part of their widening access agenda. Traditionally, Trinity College has recruited very low BME[1] numbers and currently recruits below the national population levels. The research aimed to identify ways to widen access to higher education for BME students in south West Wales with particular reference to early years education and education based degree courses.

1.2 This report provides an overview of the key findings of the research project. The full research report will be available online or by request in the next few weeks.

1.3 The aims of the research project were to:

- Identify BME groups and organisations in south west Wales.
- Assess the BME population levels in south west Wales and identify the education and career choices of local BME groups.
- Identify and evaluate the issues important to BME groups in south west Wales during their education.
- Identify barriers to accessing higher education in Wales and south west Wales, especially in relation to education and early years based education.

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[1] 'BME' is used throughout the report as the accepted shorthand for 'Black and Minority Ethnic'.

- Provide recommendations to facilitate access by BME groups to higher education institutes in Wales and south west Wales.
- Provide recommendations to allow Trinity College to improve access to local BME communities.

1.4   The research took place between January and November 2007.

1.5   The study area was south west Wales which included Swansea, Carmarthenshire, south Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. This included urban Swansea and the more rural Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire providing an opportunity to highlight issues pertinent to larger more established communities such as the Bengali community in Swansea with that for new and recent Eastern European communities in Carmarthenshire.

2. Research methods overview

2.1   The project was divided into three phases. It began with an extensive literature review and exploration of quantitative data to provide background and context. A postal questionnaire of secondary schools in the research area was undertaken and local BME representative groups were identified and contacted.

2.2   The second phase consisted of a series of informal interviews carried out with individuals and groups and collation and analysis of this initial qualitative data.

2.3   The final phase of the project included a research seminar on 19[th]September 2007 which brought together research participants, Trinity College staff, education workers and other interested parties.

2.4   The research was biased towards female participation and reflects the fact that males across all ethnic groups are underrepresented in several education based courses and careers especially within the early year's sector.   The researchers felt that inclusion of young males in this study would further complicate issues and is an area requiring further research in its own right

2.5   Altogether 61 BME respondents were interviewed ranging from 12 – 56 years of age.

3. Background and context

3.1   The literature review and analysis of quantitative data showed that whilst some BME groups do have very high enrolment rates onto higher degree courses particularly those from Indian and Chinese backgrounds and are recruited beyond their proportion in the whole British population (Connor *et al.*, 2004), other ethnic minority groups are not as well represented. For those BME students that do enter higher education there is growing evidence that they attain less well when compared to their white British counterparts, which can have negative consequences when entering the job market (Department of Education and Skills, 2006). Understanding these differences in educational access and attainment is also complicated due to the difficulty of uncoupling socio-economic factors such as parents' socio economic class, the deprivation of the local community etc. from ethnicity.

3.2   Data consistently indicates BME groups are not choosing to study education based courses at higher education level suggesting that these courses and the careers they lead to are not appealing to particular ethnic groups in the UK. (Connor *et al.*, 2004). Table 1 demonstrates that a lower percentage of BME groups study education courses in Wales than in higher education institutes in the UK as a whole. In Wales, Chinese, Indian, and some Mixed heritage groups are not well represented. In the UK as a whole Pakistani applicants have the highest BME representation. Higher education institutes in Wales serve the UK as a whole; however these statistics suggest that in terms of education at least, they are not succeeding to attract BME groups as successfully as their other British counterparts. Data in the

main report suggests Cardiff and Swansea are areas attracting BME groups at higher rates confirming work by Connor et al., 2004 that most BME groups tend to choose the more urban organisations to study.   For those groups, such as Indian and Chinese, well represented in higher education generally it is very clear from the data for Wales that they are not recruiting well into education allied courses. The number of accepted students onto education based courses for most BME groups in the UK and Wales is much lower than for subjects such as Medicine, Computing, Science and Law (see main report) and is especially the case for several Asian groups. Such low recruitment rates appear to be compounding an under representation of BME teachers and child education professionals in Wales (Furlong, Hagger and Butcher, 2006).

Table 1 The percentage of applicants accepted onto undergraduate education based courses (JACS Code X) in 2006. Data sourced from UCAS. Some caution is needed when evaluating the data due to the high number of 'Unknown' responses

Ethnic origin	Wales (%)	UK (%)
Asian - Bangladeshi	0.435256	0.871309
Asian - Chinese	0	0.069396
Asian - Indian	0.108814	1.796592
Asian - Other Asian background	0	0.246742
Asian - Pakistani	0.54407	2.197548
Black - African	0.326442	0.932994
Black - Caribbean	0.217628	1.195158
Black - Other black background	0.108814	0.177346
Mixed - Other mixed background	0.217628	0.470352
Mixed - White and Asian	0.108814	0.354692
Mixed - White and Black African	0.108814	0.138793
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	0.435256	0.485774
Other ethnic background	0.326442	0.485774
Unknown	4.134929	4.896291
White	92.92709	85.68124

3.3 The early years sector is one area of the education and care sector where evidence supports an under representation of BME groups working within the area (Jeffels, 2005). There is

also research evidence indicating that some BME groups access early years provision for their own children less than White British groups with an indication that this is linked to linguistic, cultural, social, accessibility and economic reasons (Fitzgerald *et al*. 2002) depending on BME group.

3.4   A lack of practitioners from BME groups may also alienate parents in culturally diverse communities unsure about care and education in a predominately white British setting (MEWN, 1998).

4. Identifying BME groups and organisations in south west Wales

4.1   A broad definition of BME was used for the project based on the Commission for Racial Equality's guidance that BME should include any person who does not tick the White British box in a census or equality form.   The project therefore includes both non-white and white BME groups.

4.2   An early interview with the Director of the Swansea Bay Race Equality Council provided useful information on BME representative groups in the area. Additional information was gained through an internet trawl and through contacts in the voluntary and statutory social care sectors.

4.3   Initial contact was made with a range of groups and organisations through letters and phone calls. These were followed up by initial and subsequent visits. Networking with groups and individuals was a key aspect of the project and lengthier than first anticipated with some groups requiring several meetings before interviews were set up or undertaken. The method used to sample groups and interviewees was to some extent very subjective and depended to a great deal on the groups and schools willing to participate.   Swansea is represented by 40 participants, Carmarthenshire by 18, south Ceredigion by 2 and Pembrokeshire by 1. Therefore the qualitative data does not represent the population in its entirety or systematically. The data to some extent also reflects the fact that the BME population is higher in the Swansea area and also the fact that this area has far more well established groups and organisations representing the needs of BME groups. In some

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cases several BME groups based in Swansea had a remit for the whole of south west Wales. Despite these limitations the range of participants interviewed does provide an opportunity to identify the issues relevant to some BME groups living within the region in more detail than general statistical data. Information was also provided by two Head teachers and a Deputy Head teacher from three of the schools involved in the study with a high proportion (for the locality) of BME students. A full list of research participant groups and contact details is included at Appendix 1.

4.4 The project included interviews with parents, young people and people working with local BME community groups. Participants representing different BME groups included Bangladeshi, Polish, Chinese, African, Filipino, Singaporean, Hungarian, Mixed Pakistani/White, Mixed African/White, Mixed Black Caribbean/White, Mixed Sri Lankan/White, Indian, Nepalese and Guyanese people (see Appendix 2 – Table 2).

4.5 A number of secondary schools took part in the project. 12 completed the survey questionnaire and 6 facilitated interviews with female school students aged 12-17.

4.6 A total of 20 individual or group interviews were undertaken with 61 participants over a 4 month period. The profile of the interviewees is included in Appendix 2.

5. Assessing the BME population levels in south west Wales and identify the education and career choices of local BME groups.

5.1   Analysis of 2001 census information showed that Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion have less than 1.5% of the respective counties populations from BME groups, with only Swansea having a proportion over 2%. Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire have some of the UK's lowest proportions of BME groups (ONS, 2001). Ceredigion has the 6th highest level proportion of BME groups in Wales (still under 1.5%), which may be surprising for such a rural county and probably reflects the importance of having a university and hospital within the county.

5.2   There is some variability in terms of the BME group profile for the counties within the study area. Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion have people from mixed backgrounds as the highest represented BME group (over 35%) followed by the Asian group (under 30%). Carmarthenshire has similar proportions of BME groups from mixed and Asian backgrounds. Swansea's profile in terms of BME group reflects that for Cardiff and the UK more closely than the other counties in the study region, having over 40% Asian BME groups in the population and only 23% of mixed background BME groups. This may reflect the urban nature of this county and the fact that the areas have far more distinct established communities than the more rural counties (see Appendix 2 - Table 2)

Table 3 The BME population of Wales and the counties within the study area of this report in terms of non white groups (ONS, 2001). Table a) shows the actual numbers and percentages compared to the total population of Wales or county respectively b) shows the percentages of each BME group making up the none white population

a)

Area	All People	Non White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Chinese
Wales	2,903085	**61,580 (2.1%)**	17,661 (0.61%)	25,448 (0.88%)	7,069 (0.24%)	11,402 (0.395)
Carmarthenshire	172, 842	**1,623 (0.94%)**	527 (0.30%)	550 (0.318%)	138 (0.080 %)	408 (0.24%)
Pembrokeshire	114,131	**1,026 (0.90%)**	366 (0.32%)	302 (0.265%)	88 (0.08%)	270 (0.24%)
Swansea	223,301	**4,806 (2.2%)**	1,106 (0.5%)	2,215 (1.00%)	290 (0.13%)	1,195 (0.54%)
Ceredigion	74,941	**1,037 (1.38%)**	397 (0.53%)	272 (0.36%)	115 (0.15%)	253 (0.34%)

b)

Area	Non White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Chinese
Wales	61,580 (2.1%)	17,661 (32%)	25,448 (41%)	7,069 (11%)	11,402 (19%)
Carmarthenshire	1,623 (0.94%)	527 (32%)	550 (34%)	138 (9%)	408 (25%)
Pembrokeshire	1,026 (0.90%)	366 (36%)	302 (29%)	88 (9%)	270 (26%)
Swansea	4,806 (2.2%)	1,106 (23%)	2,215 (46%)	290 (6%)	1,195 (25%)
Ceredigion	1,037 (1.38%)	397 (38%)	272 (26%)	115 (11%)	253 (24%)

5.3   1.3% of Wales indicated in the Census, 2001 that they belonged to White groups other than British or Irish. However due to no specific categories provided in the

Census it was not possible to assess who these groups represented. Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion have Other White groups representing over 1.2% of their population; the highest individual BME group. Only Swansea had Other White groups representing a smaller proportion (1.55%) than the non-white BME population in the city (at 2.2%). Since 2004 there have been major changes in migration into parts of Wales linked to the accession of the A8 (former eastern block countries) into the European Union and therefore the figures taken in the 2001 Census probably underestimate the numbers of other white groups who have migrated into Wales since 2004. In the context of this study it is significant that Carmarthenshire is the county in Wales which is the top destination for migrants from A8 accession countries. Since 2004 until the first of April 2007, 2635 migrants (over two thirds being Polish) have applied for worker registration within the county, with the most being residents in the Llanelli area. The numbers do not include those yet to register or self employed people, therefore the numbers could be higher (see Table 4).

Table 4
a) Numbers and percentages of White Other groups apart from White British and Irish (ONS, 2001)
b) Numbers of migrants from A8 countries in Wales and the counties important to this study in terms of number of applications to join the worker registration scheme

a)

Wales	Carmarthenshire	Pembrokeshire	Swansea	Ceredigion
37,211	2,141	1,558	3,469	1,408
1.3%	1.24%	1.37%	1.55%	1.88%

b)

	2004-2005	2006	2007 (first quarter)	Cumulative total to date
Wales	7,920	6,870	1,435	16,225
Carmarthenshire	1,260	1,080	295	2,635
Pembrokeshire	245	250	55	550
Swansea	235	250	70	555
Ceredigion	135	130	25	285

5.4 A quantitative data overview demonstrates an inequality within attainment, progression and participation for some BME groups in the UK and Wales at all levels of education (explored by various authors including Cassen and Kingdon, 2007; Department of Education and Skills, 2006). Statistical Directorate, 2006; WAG, 2006; Connor *et al*., 2004; Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair, 2003; EALAW, 2003; Kerr *et al*., 2002; and reviewed in detail in the full report). Early years, compulsory, further and higher education also have an under representation of BME professionals entering these sectors, ensuring that educational and learning settings remain overly dominated by the white

British majority, even in areas where the proportion of the population from BME backgrounds is high or the majority (Daycare Trust, 2004;2007; Scanlon, Earley and Evans, 2002). This is explored in further detail in the full report.

5.5   In Wales only 3.5% of the childcare workforce is from an ethnic minority (with 2% from a non white group) (CCW, 2004). 2.1 % of the whole population was recoded as a non-white group in the 2001 Census (ONS, 2001). However the proportion of children from BME groups is more than in the White British group suggesting that the BME workforce in early years and child care setting should increase further to reflect the needs of these children's communities (Daycare Trust 2004; 2007; MEWN, 1998).

5.6   In Wales, more so than in England, teaching is under recruiting BME groups and the representation of BME groups within the profession is particularly low. The early years and further education sector also have low numbers of BME professionals highlighting a need to observe why this might be the case. Less than 1% of teachers in Wales in March 2007 were non-white BME groups, with 1.5% being White (non-British) groups. The proportion of BME newly qualified teachers was higher at 1.97% for non-white and 4.9% for BMEs including White groups. Only 0.64% of head teachers came from non-white BME groups with 1.8% coming from BMEs including white groups. However caution is needed when analysing these values as a high proportion of head teachers and teachers did not state an ethnic group.   When this is taken into consideration (with only the teachers who stated their ethnic groups included) just over 1% of teachers and head

teachers were from non-white BME groups with approximately 3% from BMEs including white groups. The proportions for newly qualified teachers remained similar as only 7 of these did not state an ethnic group. Despite recruitment drives the proportion of teachers from BME groups is less than that in the general or Welsh school pupil population reinforcing a need to drive recruitment in this sector as highlighted in the Furlong Report (Furlong, Hagger and Butcher 2006).

5.7   Only 1.2% of those employed by further education institutes in 2003 were from non-white BME groups (No Mixed heritage personnel were recorded) indicating that the proportion of BME staff neither reflects the student or general communities served by further education institutions. The data does not indicate the role these staff pay within the sector and so it is unclear whether the BME individuals are lecturers or in other areas of further education work.

5.8   Over 6% of the total higher education academic workforce was from non-white BME backgrounds in Wales in 2004/2005. For all ethnic groups except the mixed group more males than females were represented in academic positions. Asians were the most well represented BME group reflecting their higher representation in the general and undergraduate student population. Very small percentages of Mixed and Black groups were represented. It is also difficult to assess from the data provided how many of the academic staff represented as BME groups are first, second or third etc. generation citizens.

5.9 Some researchers indicate that the low representation of BME groups within learning professions serves to exacerbate the problem further where BME groups are disenfranchised or do not associate these types of careers with their own communities or themselves (Runnymede, 2002). The perceived low status of some teaching / child careers within certain BME cultures also serves to further alienate BME groups especially where some groups already have polarised higher education choices linked to traditional professions such as law, medicine or dentistry.

6. Identifying and evaluating the issues important to BME groups in south west Wales during their education.

There were some key areas highlighted within the qualitative research phase with several issues reflecting those from other recent studies.

6.1 Value of education

The value of education to several BME groups has been highlighted in many research reports and articles (e.g. Connor *et al*., 2004; Allen, 1998) with a suggestion that strong parental and community support and commitment to education mitigates other negative issues such as being in lower socio-economic groups (Connor *et al*., 2004) and may explain why several BME groups are well represented on undergraduate courses.

The participants in this study reflected a strong support and value for education, with no participants indicating that education was not important. Some participants indicated that education allowed ethnic minorities to overcome discrimination and compete with the white population (see Table 5).

Table 5

You are a celebrity if you are bright and if you are successful, not if you play football or act. **African female participant**
The only way that you can stand shoulder to shoulder with a white person is to use your head and if you don't study you won't use your head properly. I think it's a very strong tool, very powerful. **African female participant**
Education is the first thing I got for my daughters – they have to be educated. **North African female participant**
Neither of my parents were educated but valued education. My mother says that person will get old but knowledge will stay young. **Bangladeshi male participant**
So many interesting things, the world is so interesting, you have to study or you will miss it. The world is just wonderful. **Polish female participant**
We might be discriminated against because we are an ethnic minority, if educated it will enable you to have a better chance in life. **Chinese female participant**

6.2   Higher education

For several participants, entering higher education was perceived as the only viable path post compulsory education. Higher education and professional careers being seen as a mechanism by several participants to increase social and economic status and well being (see Table 6) Such comments reflect research by others e.g. Modood (1993) indicated that some BME groups use higher education as means to ascend social classes, improve job prospects or improve on their parents' economic/social position. Singh (1990) also suggested that encouraging educational achievements meant parents earn recognition, and status within their own communities.

Table 6

Mum installed a strong reading habit and emphasised education as a stepping stone. I knew growing up that I had no choice but to get a degree. **Singaporean female participant**
Parents struggle to pay fees and you feel it is your duty to excel, you know you're going to end up in university. **African female participant**
If you want an opportunity in your life, you want more, you have to go to university **Chinese female participant**

6.3 Influences on educational and career choices

Parents, other relatives, the community and friends were seen as important influences when choosing subjects and where to study during higher education, with several participants from a range of different BME communities indicating a polarisation of career / subject choice. Many respondents indicated that 1st generation BME parents were influenced by the nature of the education system in the country where they were brought up, where often higher education was seen as the only route to a higher ranking career. The situation in the UK means that several vocational and academic pathways now exist and that parents and specific BME communities need support to become aware of the complexities of the system and that this is starting to happen with pioneer students from particular BME communities entering less traditional subject areas (see Table 7). These influences reflect those highlighted in several other research publications (including Connor et al, 2004, Lyle, 2006).

Table 7

Wouldn't ever consider subjects like art, music, etc. as know these wouldn't be acceptable to parents **African female participant**

Most of the parents push their kids to be accountants, doctors, surgeons and lawyers. **Bangladeshi male participant**

10 years ago there was a trend, there were only certain subjects that people did but now I'm finding that there's a variety of courses and subjects people do, there's no specific trend. There are people going into arts, I know people going into fashion. There are people doing accounts – a variety of subjects really, psychology, sociology, English, nursing, so it is a wide spectrum of subjects now.
British Bangladeshi female participant

*One brother excels at science but other brother is good at art and has been encouraged by parents because they can see that there is a possible end result. This would not have happened in ***** as parents didn't feel could get anywhere in life with arts, music or drama. She was good at sport but wasn't encouraged for the same reason. 'Where will that take you?* **African female participant**

.. it was different in Poland as there was only one path to follow and if didn't follow this wouldn't be good enough. System of matriculation. Here lots of different options and can find out what interested in. In Poland if you don't do it at a certain age it's very difficult to get back in the (education) system. **Polish female participant**

6.4   Role models

Role models were seen as being very important in terms of encouraging participation in various courses and training, with a suggestion that in this region role models are often absent especially in the education sector and is consistent with the findings of Lyle (2003; 2006) and EALAW (2003). Providing opportunities for young people to see successful role models from their own community becoming teachers, childcare

professionals etc. was suggested as an opportunity to increase participation. One participant indicated that Wales seemed to be lagging behind England in terms of increasing diversity within teaching careers, a sentiment confirmed below, indicating that those who become qualified teachers leave the locality to work in areas with a higher diversity of BME groups (see Table 8).

Table 8

> *Role models are very important, definitely important. One thing I use with all my kids (youth groups) when they're confused. I ask them to imagine 5 different models walking past you - surgeon, lawyer, policeman, plumber, teacher, which one would you like to be. I've never had anyone choosing the teacher. This is working with young men. It definitely may be a different story with the females.*
>
> *The bad news is this – recently I met a friend, an Arab friend and his wife is a qualified teacher but she cannot get a job in South Wales at all so they are moving this week to London. This is the second or third person who is a qualified teacher that I have noticed has moved away from Swansea. They are going towards London, going towards where there are other ethnic minorities. White teachers might not want a job in certain areas and so there might be a chance for an ethnic minority person to get that job. There are no natural role models in Swansea in that respect – the boys that I grew up with who are pharmacists or accountants are moving away for work. Teachers are a minority of a minority so even harder.*
> **Bangladeshi male participant**
>
> *It would be useful to have a profile of women who teach – Cardiff Muslim School. Women here need to see people like that as role models.* **Singaporean female participant**
>
> *Black males especially need role models. Don't have avenue to follow. Don't see black teachers and lecturers. Once role models others will follow.* **African female participant**
>
> *I've never seen a coloured teacher. In old school in Reading loads of coloured teachers* **British Indian female school participant**

7. Identifying barriers to accessing higher education in Wales and south west Wales, especially in relation to education and early years based education.

7.1   General barriers to accessing education courses

Participants from different communities including the Bengali and Polish communities' indicated that colleges and allied services should be sensitive to cultural, religious and linguistic issues. Some young female Bengali participants suggested that services such as careers advice would be less inhibitory if advice could be sought from female as well as male advisors, again consistent with issues highlighted in Wales by EALAW (2003) and in Swansea by Lyle (2003;2006;2007).

Participants indicated the importance of support with English language skills when accessing education and the importance of English as Additional Language provision for both established communities and new migrants (see Table 9). The need for incentives to increase EAL support was an important issue also highlighted in the EALAW (2003) report exploring BME groups and compulsory education in Wales.

Table 9

Lots of barriers for Muslim women – Asian especially – engaging with the mainstream or going into employment. Language is a huge problem - lots of cases where British born boys get brides from 'back home' so there is a high percentage of women who come here who don't speak English and are unlikely to learn to speak English. Another barrier is filling out forms – forms can be very scary and difficult for people. Could have a service which was culturally and religiously appropriate to help potential applicants fill out forms. **Singaporean female participant**

Good to have Polish teachers in school-not everything in dictionary-they can explain better **Polish female school participant**

Migrants from Poland make up the majority of the new wave of migration into Carmarthenshire and they are often unfamiliar with the local education structures and have very limited English / Welsh skills. Some children arriving with their parents are entering primary and secondary education with no English and therefore find it difficult to access and integrate into school life and academic pursuits. It is crucial that these students are able to access effective language support as part of their education, an issue highlighted by several participants, in order allow them to make educational progress within the county, but also to help them integrate socially into a new area. However it is not only new migrants that may have language support needs as identified above. More established communities' students may also have EAL needs. EAL workers note that although students may speak very fluent English their written skills may be less academically sound and this can have knock on consequences in later study. Providing good, easily accessible EAL support is therefore essential from a young age. Provision in Swansea is far better developed than in other areas of south west Wales, indicating opportunities to exchange ideas and good practice between different LEAs. The unexpected influx of new

migrants into Carmarthenshire makes providing adequate EAL support a growing priority.

7.2   Barriers to study at Trinity College, Carmarthen

Most participants from the Swansea area were unaware of Trinity College, with those in Carmarthenshire having more information about the College, probably reflecting its status within the county and strong links with schools within the county.   The bilingual nature, 'Welshness' and the Christian focus of the College were indicated by some participants as barriers to attracting BME students.   For several groups Trinity College was deemed to be too far from Swansea and their own close knit community, indicating that Carmarthen would be isolated from other BME people. The economic burden of travelling or living away from home was also indicated as a barrier for some participants. Intriguingly several of the Swansea participants especially those from the Bengali community suggested they would stay at home to study close to their own community. BME groups in Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion however suggested that they would value the opportunity to study further afield in more diverse metropolitan areas in order to '**see *different cultures and understand difference'*** (British Indian school participant) (see Table 10).

Table 10

Not a large visible black African population in Swansea. Started sending asylum seekers and refuges to Swansea in 2003 and even now they are still the majority of the black African population in Swansea. Link this to going to live in Carmarthen – would be highly isolated and would know the problems they would be faced with. I think that this would be a very big problem in terms of getting BME people to study in Trinity College.
African female participant

One barrier might be if the college that they wanted to go to was far from their parents as Filipino community very close and maybe wouldn't want their children to go far away.
Filipino female participant

Already part of community and Carmarthen considered to be more Welsh, Chinese like to be in a group where it's more close knit. If you live in another place it's uncertain so at least you know where you are, having lived in Swansea I've adapted to it. I've never moved away since I've emigrated here – maybe as far as **** when I got married and that's the furthest I've been.
Chinese female participant

I don't even know what courses they do or what they specialise in. I don't even know where it is to be honest with you. **Chinese female participant**

Hadn't been aware that Trinity College offered degree courses
Singaporean female participant

If they could travel they would probably go to Cardiff. So far all the UCAS forms that I've filled in with clients, I've not had the request for Carmarthen once. Some of them probably don't even know Trinity College exists. I didn't know about it until I started working and went to a conference there and I was interested in religious studies.
British Bangladeshi female participant

The first thing I think is a major barrier – Trinity College has a reputation for being a Christian College – even though it might be a totally different course it still might put up a barrier. **Singaporean female participant**

In the study several of those interviewed found they identified more with Britain than Wales and linked this to their lack of

Welsh language and culture. The Welsh language and culture is a strong factor in Trinity College's identity. For Trinity providing a non-exclusive image is important where prospective students understand that the bilingual Christian nature of the College goes hand in hand with a vision for community participation and social inclusion and that the majority of students from any ethnic background are neither practising Christians or Welsh speakers. One way of doing this would be to engage with different BME communities actively.

Trinity College will in the next few years move further into Welsh medium BEd degree provision and this may also have major implications for BME recruitment with most BME groups apart from the mixed heritage groups having far lower than 20% of their population being able to speak Welsh. Welsh medium secondary schools have very low BME representation as indicated by our discussion with local schools and in the EALAW report (2003). Such schools will be an important part of recruitment for education based training in Trinity's future, but will also represent a pool of recruits unrepresentative of different local BME communities, which may further exacerbate low recruitment among these groups.

7.3   Early Years Education

Several participants were not familiar with the term early years education. Some participants did not consider early year's careers as careers they would choose, and considered these careers to have less status than teaching older children. Others were interested by this field of work but were not

aware of higher education routes or options within the subject. Most alarmingly, those from some BME communities already qualified in early years areas were unable to gain employment locally (see Table 11).

Table 11

So far the girls who have done the basic certificate level haven't succeeded in getting a job in this profession and I think that has an effect on future aspirations for other girls. The woman who is running the crèche for MEWN is from the mainstream community. I think as time goes by childcare facilities will be in huge demand for this community as the girls who are succeeding in education and employment are looking for childcare facilities for their children but they want to keep their cultural values in tact at the same time so they are looking for …. Just the same way as you have Welsh nurseries – they want their children to be able to communicate with them and their grandparents. **British Bangladeshi female participant**

Middle class people have help to look after children so nursery school teacher would have even lower status than teacher. Might want to open nursery business that could be different **African female participant**

The feedback from participants therefore indicated that Early Years careers were under recruiting BME employees, those with qualifications within the field often facing several barriers when trying to gain employment and therefore not entering the profession. Such negative recruitment stories exacerbate the lack of diverse provision and therefore provide child care that does not reflect the community being served.

7.4 The status of teaching and barriers to this and allied careers

Several participants from a wide diversity of BME groups indicted that teaching did not have a high status in this country compared to other professions. For some groups the status of teaching and the respect given to the profession was

30

seen to be far lower in the UK, than when compared to that in other countries. Most of the young participants indicated that teaching would not be a career choice, suggesting that bad behaviour by pupils in the classroom would be an inhibitory factor. Of those who would consider teaching most indicated that primary education would be more appealing having less problematic children to deal with (see Table 12).

Table 12

So many barriers to education in this society to BME education. Barrier to BME people to go into teaching because of racism and attitudes towards black teachers. Teachers will say that they are ridiculed and have things thrown at them, for example. Majority of children will be white and some will have learnt racist attitudes. You would have to be very strong and very brave as a BME person going into teaching there would be so many problems to face and it would be so difficult to make progress in that career **African female participant**

Yes it's much harder. Say for example school governors are looking at the application of an ethnic minority. They may want to employ that teacher but they may think that they would get more abused than a white teacher and so not want to put them in that situation. I don't view everything as racism **Bangladeshi male participant**

I don't think that people see teachers as a good role model at this stage and I think that's sad. The respect element for teachers isn't high at all. They themselves experience disrespecting their teachers and so this isn't the best advertisement. **Bangladeshi male participant**

I'd be OK teaching young children but wouldn't want to teach children like me as I know what kids my age do to teachers. **Filipino female participant**

Teaching was actually one of the things they didn't mind (parents) but it wasn't seen as a high ranking profession like medicine, law. It's an Asian thing, an Asian traditional thing where they can only identify family status - by medicine, doctor. If you've got a doctor in the family, or pharmacist, if you've got lawyers those are the high ranking careers, those are the ones that the community identifies as high ranking jobs. **British Bangladeshi female participant**

> *Teachers never spoke well of their profession – told children they should become pilots, doctors etc. Big cultural shock coming to school in Swansea. Teachers not in control and used to having someone in control of the class* **African female participant**
>
> *In Philippines teaching has a high status. My daughter and two sisters are teachers* **Filipino Female participant**

The inclusive nature of current school provision was also highlighted as an important factor influencing the experience and perception of school education locally. Some students in Carmarthenshire indicated that sometimes they felt singled out by teachers because of their BME backgrounds (Table 13).

Table 13

> Maybe we are singled out by teachers because we are coloured. Need multicultural school, education. **British Indian female school participant**

Young participants indicated that inclusive teaching which was aware and interested in different cultures and BME backgrounds provided a positive impact on their educational experiences and reflects the opinions in other research projects (Modood and Acland, 1997; Runnymede Trust, 2002; Lyle, 2007).

Table 14

> *We had a religious teacher who was genuinely interested. Other students thought I was the favourite but teacher just wanted to find out. Now she's gone unfortunately.*
> *She created an organisation with bracelet symbolising our religions in school and our origins. She gave everyone an opportunity – a forward thinking teacher. It felt good when she taught us. She was interested, cared in us, didn't think we were all the same* **British Indian female school participant**

A few students in Carmarthenshire also referred to racist incidents within their local area and a feeling of isolation.

Table 15

> One teacher referred to me as 'Your people' feel isolated. Parents also isolated **Mixed White/ Black Caribbean female school participant**
>
> My family is all white except me- I don't see father. Feel different, sometimes people think I'm a family friend when out with family rather than a sister or daughter **Mixed White/ Black Caribbean female school participant**
>
> In primary school we were the odd ones out, the only ones **British Indian female school participant**

Several students based outside Swansea indicated that they wished to experience a more diverse, multicultural society, which influenced their choice of higher education location and this was borne out by Careers Wales West figures (explored further in main report) where BME school leavers locally do not appear to be choosing more rural Welsh higher education institutes.

8. Providing recommendations to facilitate access by BME groups to higher education institutes in Wales and south west Wales.

8.1 In order to engage and encourage participation from BME groups in education and early years based courses colleges must be proactive in engaging with local BME communities and understand the needs of different communities. Colleges must ensure they have adequate language support and foster an inclusive college life sensitive to different cultural and religious needs.

8.2 The following recommendations have been drawn from the input of participants during the research project interviews and the feedback from workshops during the 'Looking In Reaching' out seminar. The recommendations offer practical ideas on how to remove some of the barriers facing BME groups entering higher education.

- English as Additional Language (EAL) needs must be recognised in further and higher education and provision made available for those students who require support. Widening access initiatives designed to develop the written language skills of EAL pupils would be another valuable tool to ensure students can reach their potential during higher education study.

- Education professionals must be aware of BME cultures and provision. Targeting a generic BME group cannot identify the needs of particular communities or groups. The needs of different BME groups vary greatly and is influenced by socio-

economic, educational status, language skills and generational and gender issues. Sensitivity is also required in order to design programmes that accommodate these needs. For some specific BME groups initiatives that target them may be worthwhile, for others such initiatives could be perceived as singling them out. It is therefore essential that those involved in such widening access initiatives have close partnerships with communities in order to reflect and respect their needs. Initiatives driven by BME communities themselves (as highlighted in the Looking In Reaching Out presentations) can be very beneficial and promote confidence among participants.

- The role of parents in guiding their children's educational futures was important for several groups in the research study and workshops. Parents should be involved in widening access initiatives and careers advice. Careers advice for students and parents together would allow parents an insight into careers they may previously not have considered for their children, and may help eradicate any myths about the suitability of certain careers. Visits to University, widening access workshops which involve parents as well as their children may also help demystify higher education and college life and highlight the benefits to both parents and prospective students. For children who wish to attend higher education but who have parents resistant to this, joint initiatives may empower children to talk to their parents about the benefits of higher education and qualifications. Such programmes would also allow parents to familiarise themselves with the variety of routes and courses available in higher education and to see the benefits of less traditional subject areas and the careers these could provide access to.

- Widening access initiatives which allow students to visit local higher education institutes were seen as important and several of the ideas generated in the workshops are already part of the South West Wales Widening Access Partnership portfolio. Specific ideas included:-

- Open days with an informal format where transport costs were paid allowing more groups to attend.
- Opportunities to experience a proper student day and learn more about student life in higher education.
- Subject specific summer schools in higher education institutes allowing students to discover more about specific disciplines.
- Opportunities for current higher education students to go into local schools and discuss student life with school pupils.
- Opportunities to meet and shadow current students in higher education in order to get an insight into student life.
- Workshops designed to explain higher education options, routes, fees, accommodation and other higher education issues.
- Opportunities for taster days.
- Activities should provide free transport in order for schools and students to be able to attend widening access initiatives.

10. Providing recommendations to allow Trinity College to improve access to local BME communities.

10.1 Trinity College recruits a lower proportion of BME groups than that for Wales and the school student population locally and nationally. To some extent this reflects the proportion of BME people in the south west Wales area and in particular the rural locality from which Trinity College recruits a high proportion of students. However the research work also indicates that there has been a failure on the part of the College until recently to engage with local BME groups.

10.2 The college will need to foster good relationships with local and national BME communities in order to design provision for their needs, which could then increase the diversity of the campus and provide some of the role models necessary to engage different groups.

10.3 The importance to Trinity College of its Christian and Welsh language heritage must not be allowed to serve as a device to exclude BME groups, and the college needs to find a way to combine these values with their strong commitment to social inclusion and community participation. Interview participants included their own ways forward that the College could explore (see Table 16).

Table 16

It would be good if they could make the links themselves. For example, when Gorseinon college and Swansea college want access to BME people they usually do workshops here and show them what's available. It's about showing people where you are and what you can offer. People have gone from the community to Glamorgan to study. If they can see they can get somewhere and the determination is there and they know it's available they probably would access it.
British Bangladeshi female participant

There is a Women only course organised through MEWN (Minority Ethnic Women's Network) and Swansea Institute. Identified barriers to access and decided to make tailor made course – content the same but time of teaching and childcare facilities different. Course ends before school finishes. Tailor made in this sense but not in content. For this particular group childcare was the main barrier as all married with children.
British Bangladeshi female participant

Seeing black people on posters would attract me to college. I have white friends but some things happen in my life that white friends wouldn't understand. I'd know that black people would understand – for example the need to work to support education. Perhaps an advert directly linked to black people – positive discrimination. Once some black people go to the college then others would follow.
African focus group participant

10.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the research project interviews and the feedback from workshops during the 'Looking In Reaching Out' seminar.

- Several participants felt widening access needed to target young pupils in year 9 in order to provide them several opportunities prior to becoming 16 to find out and discuss higher education.   This is currently part of widening access work within Trinity College and the South West Wales Widening Access partnership.

- Current Summer School provision tends to be residential in nature. In order to accommodate some BME groups where parents may not be willing for students to stay away from home non-residential schools should be provided. These could run for one a day week over the summer holidays and would be a good way to break down parental fears about higher education.

- Marketing, recruitment and widening access initiatives could also provide more information to prospective students. Open days should be advertised more widely and target a wide range of community and school organisations. Trinity and other colleges should familiarise themselves with and interact with groups that represent the needs of specific BME groups. Advertising in BME associated press and media would also demonstrate that colleges are reaching out to these communities through the organisations they are familiar with. Advertising material could be more specific and may benefit from relating to specific BME groups in some instances and could be multi lingual in some instances. Careers advisors and teachers also need to have up to date information in order to advise their students appropriately.

- Courses should be delivered to reflect the need of participants. Courses that are run to take account of the school day will allow mothers and fathers with child care duties to attend. Flexibility in terms of time, but also the nature of groups is also important. For some cultures women only groups would allow more BME groups to attend. Courses that run in the evening may also allow those with commitments in the day to attend and suitable child care provision provided at these times would also encourage

participation. For several communities, restaurant and other service industries are important employers, and make evening study difficult, and therefore courses that can fit around these long hour roles would also facilitate participation in learning. Several new Polish migrants work in large factories locally and investigating possible links that could be made with these companies in order to provide in house education initiatives cold also be ways of supporting language and other learning initiatives. Online e-learning initiatives may also be useful methods for some groups to access educational opportunities.

- There should be opportunities for education practitioners, students and organisations to network regularly and to become aware of any initiatives or sources of funding that could be utilised. For example the Looking In and Reaching Out seminar has lead to the development of some collaborative projects between schools and widening access groups as well as between community groups and local higher education colleges. More easily accessed online interaction facilities flagging up initiatives and partner organisations would also be valuable resources.

- Encouraging BME students to access education based training and careers require long term changes within the education system. New teachers, child carers and other education practitioners must be aware and sensitive to the needs of different BME groups and in their own practice strive to provide inclusive settings. This can only be achieved by incorporating staff development and training which highlights these issues from the perspective of BME groups. If BME students feel their experiences and input is valued and recognised this should help provide more positive education

experiences and in turn increase the value attached to education professions. Since the Looking In and Reaching Out seminar some of the delegates will contribute workshops or lectures to undergraduate education and early years based courses, with a view to highlight the barriers and problems several BME groups face. This will be an opportunity to raise awareness among tomorrow's education practitioners.

• Listening to the needs of BME communities is essential in order that new initiatives succeed. Colleges such as Trinity must work with different groups and provide a curriculum and courses that are accessible in terms of timing, location and content.

Some ideas highlighted by research participants include:-

- Providing language immersion courses as part of degree study for new migrants to improve their English skills.
- Outreach activities which involve running courses in venues close or in their own community that can be accessed easily.
- Mentoring activities for GCSE and other school activities which can support students learning. Such mentoring can be of particular help to students where parents do not have the language or educational skills to support their own children's learning as much as they would like.
- Provide real stories and examples of BME students who have succeeded in higher education or in education based careers, in order to see that positive role models do exist
- Courses that are developed in close partnership with BME groups and organisations and therefore are lead or have a strong input from BME groups.

11. Conclusions

- All BME groups have a variety of different needs and these needs also vary within different generations, socio-economic classes, education status and cultures within particular BME groups. These specific differences and issues cannot be highlighted by statistical data that tends to bulk different BME groups together, and within each group ignores generational and other issues. More detailed investigations exploring the experiences of different individuals are needed to provide a fairer insight.

- Trinity College recruitment of BME groups is proportionally lower than that for Wales and the school student population locally and nationally. There has been a failure on the part of the College until recently to engage with local BME groups.

- This study confirms an under recruitment of BME students into education based courses. The often negative perceptions of teaching, and to a lesser extent early years careers, as well as the examples of qualified BME teachers choosing to seek work outside the south west Wales area, suggests there is a great deal of work to do to increase the representation of BME groups locally.

- Much work is needed in Wales and within south west Wales to fulfil the objectives of the Furlong report (Furlong, Hagger and Butcher, 2006) to increase BME teacher participation.

- Participants within the research project indicated several barriers associated with studying at Trinity College and this varied between different BME groups and between different

parts of south west Wales and included socio-economic constraints, fear of isolation, lack of ethnic diversity on campus and in the locality, and issues linked to the College's Christian and Welsh language / bilingual ethos.

- Trinity College will in the next few years move further into Welsh medium BEd degree provision and this may also have major implications for BME recruitment.

- Trinity College (as well as other higher education institutes located in more rural settings) face dual problems in terms of attracting BME groups living in rural or urban settings. Several rural participants did not consider Trinity College as a place of study, as it is not perceived as diverse enough. Several well established communities such as the Bengali, Chinese and Filipino communities living in Swansea indicated that there were several socio-economic and cultural reasons for not leaving the security of their own community to study at Trinity.

- Students from new migrant communities need to be able to access effective language support as part of their education in order allow them to make educational progress within the county. Provision in Swansea is far better developed than in other areas of south west Wales, indicating opportunities to exchange ideas and good practice between different LEAs. The unexpected influx of new migrants into Carmarthenshire makes providing adequate EAL support a growing priority.

- More established communities' students may also have EAL needs but this should be approached with caution as several participants' indicted experiences where they were confronted

by people who presumed being from a BME background meant having weak English skills, which of course is not the case.

- The Christian nature of Trinity College and its bilingual ethos may raise conflicts for some BME individuals. Trinity needs to provide a non-exclusive image where prospective students understand that the bilingual Christian nature of the College goes hand in hand with a vision for community participation and social inclusion. One way of doing this would be to engage with different BME communities actively.

- The importance of parents and role models in influencing careers and education choice must be considered. Often parents provide important advice and therefore need to be well informed about the education sector in order to provide the best guidance for their children, and colleges can support the delivery of such information.

- Trinity and any other higher education institute must actively engage with communities in order to find out what their needs are and then work in partnership to create worthwhile learning experiences. For some specific groups providing tailored provision which reflects their needs may be one way forward, as long as this is delivered and designed sensitively and does not stigmatise groups.

- The lack of awareness of Trinity by several respondents in the study underlined the important need for Trinity not only to engage with different groups more effectively but also to explain its portfolio of courses and roles more clearly.

- Some students interviewed in this study spoke of the racism they experienced locally and in school, and also indicated negative stories where teachers did not take any interest in the specific cultural and religious needs of their BME students. Participants indicated that teachers and activities which were designed to engage BME groups and value their experiences were strong motivators for making students feel engaged and included. Such examples need to be celebrated and used as learning tools in order that BME groups feel education professions are routes they would feel comfortable following.

- Recent studies indicating that BME groups do not attain as well as white British students during higher education provides alarming reading. The experiences of students during higher education must be explored in order to highlight what factors make this the case. Support during higher education must be accessible by all ethnic groups equally. The issues linked to social activities and recreation during college must also be explored in order to ensure some BME groups do not feel excluded from college life. It is also crucial that the widening access agenda ensures students are supported through to graduation rather than only to enrolment.

A copy of the full report will available online or by request in the next few weeks

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Appendix 1

List of Community groups participating in the project:

Community Group	Contact Person	Contact Details
African Community Centre	Uzo Iwobi, Chair	01792 470298 africancc@btconnect.com c/o CEMVO 60 Walters Road Swansea SA1 5PZ
Filipino Community Drop-In & Information Centre	Amy Moore, Chair	01792 477036 filcomcentre@filipinos.freeserve.co.uk Room 8 2nd Floor Union Chambers Union Street Swansea SA1 3DW
Swansea Polish Saturday School	Beata Fonferko-Shadrach-Secretary Hania Estall-Chair	01792 864503 01792 404245

Contact was also made with a number of community groups who provided information but were not directly involved in the project:

- Swansea Chinese Community Co-op Centre
- Jewish community
- Polish Welsh Mutual Association

List of organisations participating in the project:

Organisation	Contact Person	Contact Details
AWEMA (All Wales Ethnic Minority Organisation)	Naz Malik – Chief Executive	AWEMA Suite 2, First Floor St David's House Wood Street Cardiff CF10 1ES AWEMA Swansea Orchard Business Centre Suite 3-4 Second Floor 9 Orchard Street Swansea SA1 5AS Tel:02920664213 enquiries@awema.org.uk
CEMVO (Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations)	Shereen Williams, Director	CEMVO 60 Walters Road Swansea SA1 5PZ 01792 463036 Shereen.Williams@cemvo.org.uk
EYST (Ethnic Youth Support Team) Swansea	Helal Uddin -	
MEWN Swansea (Minority Ethnic Women's Network)	Shehla Khan -	MEWN Swansea 24 Mansel Street, Swansea SA1 5SQ 01792 467722 mewn@mewnswansea.org.uk

Swansea Bay REC (Race Equality Council)	Taha Idris, Director	3rd Floor Grove House Grove Place Swansea SA1 5DF 01792 457035 director@sbrec.org.uk

Appendix 2

Table 2 - The ethnic group, age and gender of interview participants. The numbers next to ethnic groups in column one represent the interview number of the participant. For example, all those with number 1 were interviewed together

Participant ethnic group/ origin (self evaluated) and interview number	Age (where available)	Gender
Cameroonian 1		Female
Cameroonian 1	16-17	Female
Singaporean 2		Female
Kenyan 3	19	Female
Kenyan 3	36	Female
Zimbabwean 3	20	Female
Polish 4	46	Female
Polish 5	33	Female
Congolese 6		Male
Algerian 7		Female
British Bangladeshi 8	29	Female
Filipino 9	56	Female
Filipino 10	30s-40s	Male
Filipino 10	30s-40s	Male
Filipino 10	30s-40s	Male

Filipino 10	30s-40s	Male
Filipino 10	30s-40s	Male
Filipino 10	30s-40s	Female
Filipino 10	30s-40s	Female
Filipino 10	14	Female
Filipino 10	14	Female
Filipino 10	17	Female
Bangladeshi 11		Male
Chinese 12	29	Female
Chinese 12	36	Female
Chinese 12	48	Female
Chinese 12	53	Female
British Bangladeshi 13	14	Female
British Bangladeshi 13	14	Female
British Bangladeshi 13	14	Female
British Bangladeshi 13	14	Female
British Bangladeshi 13	14	Female
British Bangladeshi 14	14	Female
British Bangladeshi 14	14	Female
British	14	Female

Bangladeshi 14		
British Bangladeshi 14	13	Female
British Bangladeshi 14	14	Female
British Chinese 14	13	Female
Turkish 14	13	Female
Afghan 14	13	Female
Polish 15	14	Female
Polish 15	14	Female
Polish 15	13	Female
Polish 15	13	Female
Polish 15	12	Female
Nepalese 15	13	Female
Nepalese 16	14	Female
British Indian 16	13	Female
British Indian 16	14	Female
Mixed White / Black Caribbean 16	14	Female
Mixed White / Black Caribbean 16	14	Female
British Pakistani 17		Male
Mixed White / Sri Lankan	17	Female

18		
Mixed White / Pakistani 18	17	Female
Guyanese 18	17	Female
British Chinese 18	17	Female
Mixed White / African 18	18	Female
Mixed White / Sri Lankan 18	17	Female
Hungarian 19	16	Female
British Bangladeshi 20	12	Female
British Bangladeshi 20	13	Female