

# The research



## **Building evidence for supporting widening participation for South Asian students**

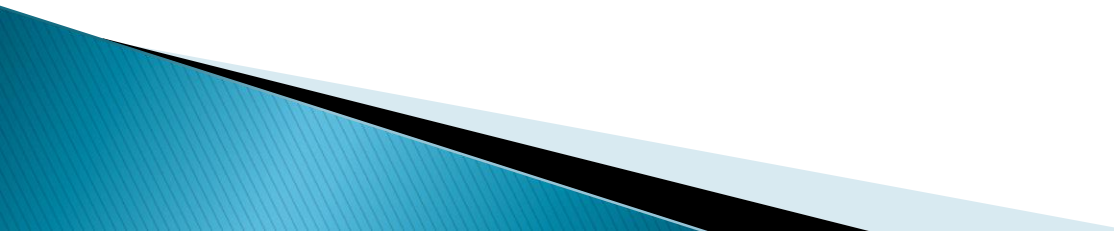
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# The reserach

- Research study funded by HEE
- This research is offered as a small contribution towards the HEE national programme for widening participation by:

exploring the barriers to South Asian people accessing and progressing on NHS funded nursing and midwifery courses and moving into employment.

# Research questions

- ▶ What are the views of South Asian students and programme leads on the barriers and enablers to accessing and progressing on NHS funded nursing and midwifery courses and moving into healthcare employment?
  - ▶ How does ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status influence decisions about accessing and progressing on NHS funded nursing and midwifery courses and moving into healthcare employment?
  - ▶ What can be done to encourage students from South Asian backgrounds to apply and accept places on nursing and midwifery courses?
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# Method

## ➤ Qualitative research design:

- generated in-depth information
- captured a range of views to help answer the research questions
- relatively quick
- triangulated and in-depth review

## Selecting the research sites:

- Towns in the East of England and Thames Valley regions
- Luton: ethnic groups make up 35% of the total Luton population. The 2011 Census identifies Luton's population as 203,201 with the Pakistani community accounting for approximately 14.4% of the total, making them the largest ethnic group (ONS, 2011). Indians make up 5.2% and Bangladeshi 6.7 % of the total population.
- High Wycombe: also has greater than average proportions of people from all of the non-white ethnic groups with 16% of the total population (68,900) being from South Asian ethnic groups.

# Sample Structure

Focus groups/ Interviews	University	Age range	Self -identified ethnicity	Religion	Gender	Total
Focus group sample students who have accessed nursing and midwifery programmes						
-	University 1(U1)	-	-	-	-	-
x	University 2 (U2)	A	A	A	A	A
-	University 3 (U3)	-	-	-	-	-
Total						(n=A)
Sample of prospective students age 16-18 years old						
X4 schools/college	High Wycombe	16-20	X21 Pakistani X4 Kashmiri X 1Sri Lankan X1Afghani X 1Indian	X27 Muslim X1		28
X5 schools/college	Luton	16-20	X20 Pakistani X6 Bengali X1Indian	X27 Muslim		27
Total						(n=55)
One to one interviews with programme admissions officers and programme leads						
X1	University 1(U1)	X2				1
X2	University 2 (U2)	X2				2
X2	University 3 (U3)	X2				2
Total						(n=5)

# The study sample & recruitment

Sample	Recruitment	Ethics,
Programme leads	<p>Recruitment letter, follow up phone calls and meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-availability was a problem.</li><li>-incentive</li><li>-competitors</li><li>-ethics committee delays</li></ul> <p>One to one interviews</p>	<p>Institute of Health Research ethical and research governance Ethics approval for the whole study from the University of Bedfordshire (UoB) Ethics Committee.</p> <p>Access letters, emails, telephone calls.</p> <p>Applications to University Research Ethics committees for permission to carry out research with programme leads and students.</p>

# The study sample & recruitment

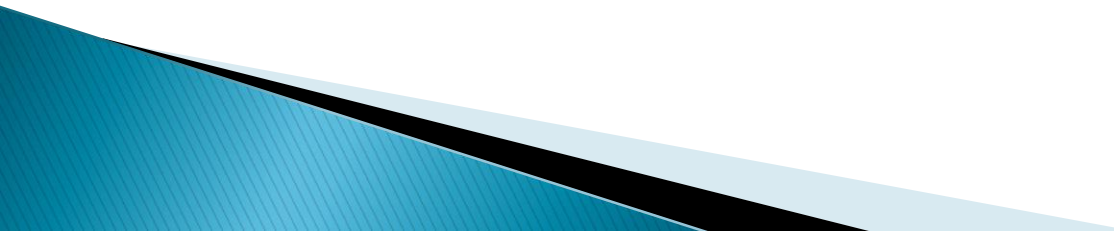
Sample	Recruitment	Ethics,
South Asian (Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian) students <b>who had</b> accessed nursing and midwifery programmes	<p>A stratified purposive sampling strategy. Recruited through contact with programme leads who disseminated information through student platforms, poster in refectory and word of mouth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-x0 responses from U1</li><li>-x2 responses from U2</li><li>-x1 response from U3</li></ul> <p>Focus group discussions</p>	As above.

# The study sample & recruitment

Sample	Recruitment	Ethics,
Prospective South Asian students who have not accessed nursing and midwifery programmes	<p>Recruited through schools by course tutors</p> <p>-teachers were very supportive of the research .</p> <p>No problems with recruitment or students wanting to take part in the research.</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p>	<p>Access letters to schools and colleges with a copy of the UoB ethics approval letter.</p>

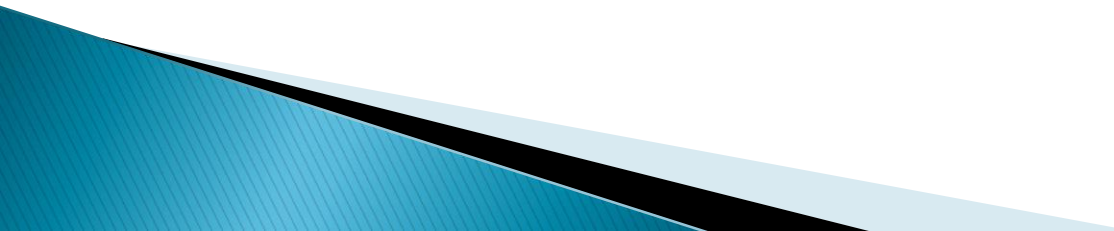


# The interviews and focus group discussion

- ▶ Mixed sex focus groups
  - ▶ Interviews and focus groups carried out on university and school/college premises.
  - ▶ Consent taken again before discussion and participants asked to complete a bio-sheet.
  - ▶ Discussions audio-recorded
  - ▶ Transcribed
- 

# Thematic analysis

A framework approach:

- ▶ a detailed familiarisation with the data
  - ▶ identification of key themes/sub themes
  - ▶ comparison across cases/gender/ethnicity
  - ▶ interpretation of the findings within the context of other research as well as policy and practice considerations.
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# Thematic framework

## Prospective student sample

Characteristics  
of the sample

Views in the barriers  
and enablers to  
accessing nursing and  
midwifery courses

*Knowledge and  
perceptions of  
nursing &  
midwifery*

*Accessing nursing  
and midwifery  
courses & careers*

*The role of  
religion and  
culture*

Widening  
participation for  
South Asian  
students

*More nursing and  
midwifery places*

*More information  
about nursing and  
midwifery  
roles/careers*

*More information  
about roles and  
career progression*

*Breaking down  
stereotypes and  
improving status*

# Findings

## Views on the barriers and enablers to accessing nursing and midwifery courses & careers

### *Knowledge and perceptions of nursing and midwifery*

- ▶ South Asian parents and community had limited knowledge of nursing and midwifery

From the people around us like our parents, friends, schools...wherever. If we're not being told what the job is about, if we're not being fully informed of what comes with the job, what rewards there are with the job, we're not really going to know much about it. I think there is a lack of information about it.....I don't really know much about them....(FG6M3)

# Findings

- ▶ Low status deterred participants from nursing and midwifery:
- ▶ Status influenced by perceptions:
  - under qualified
  - low incomes
  - long working hours
  - shift work
  - career progression

So really she was supposed to be a Doctor but the only reason that she is a nurse is because she couldn't do that  
FG7MP1

I didn't know that you could actually work your way up  
(FG6P5)

I think the working hours are too long...That's what puts people off too (FG6P2)

*I think it is regarded as a very low... why are you going into nursing if you can go into medicine...they see...nursing as something which is not for you its for people who don't finish school*  
(P1FG1)

# Findings

- ▶ Parents /community views of status of nursing and midwifery influenced participants decisions.
- ▶ Also influenced by relatives, friends, teachers.
- ▶ Experience and correct qualifications.



*I wouldn't mind to do it, but I know my parents wouldn't want me to go into that, because of what other people might see it as, so its like we are like other peoples opinion don't matter but to our parents it is what other people see it as so that would be a major factor if I was to choose it or not (P1 FG2).*

# Findings

- Confusion about the nursing role & career structure
- Little knowledge of the different types of nursing for example, adult, children mental health etc.



*Like honestly I actually don't know what a nurse actually does like I've told you...I thought nurse and health care assistant was the same thing I don't actually know what a nurse actually does(P1FG4).*

# Findings

## *Accessing nursing and midwifery courses and careers*

- Participants had accessed information on university courses (including nursing and midwifery) through university websites, schools/college careers services/advisors and UCAS.
- Overall they had a good awareness of entry requirements and the application process. All talked about requiring maths and English.



# Findings

## *Accessing nursing and midwifery courses and careers*

- Discrimination in the application, selection, recruitment process, career progression and from patients in hospitals

*Asians, like Japanese Chinese and they were rest were White. So I think more South Asians go in to it...well it depends on whether they get selected or not but I don't think they under represented when there applying, it depends on the selection process (P1FG1).*



### Specifically:

- perceptions that religious beliefs might not be accommodated/modest dress
- progressing in nursing and midwifery careers
- discrimination from non Asian/Muslim staff.

# Findings

## *Accessing nursing and midwifery courses and careers*

- Perceptions that religious beliefs might not be accommodated/modest dress

*Ok I think that uniform wise if I was to wear a hijab or you know and go into nursing and midwifery. No or when applying for the kind of course they might think you know they might not give it to me, they'd rather give it to someone else cause' you know of the uniform you know say how you would, how would you dress in that way with the scarf so you know so it kind of influenced you in that way (P1FG3).*

# Findings

## *Accessing nursing and midwifery courses and careers*

- progressing in nursing and midwifery careers

*Not the community but the people who like in hospitals like managers like they don't want to accept applications from Asians (P4FG4).*

*There are some hospitals that are very like discriminatory because most White people are given the opportunity to become a senior nurses or a higher role where Pakistani, Bangladeshi's and Indians may not given the role because they [are ]looked [on] lower, if you get what I mean. It would be better if they were given the opportunities as well to become a senior nurse cause' I've never seen a South Asian become a senior nurse, I've never come across it (P4FG3). 44*

# Findings

## *Accessing nursing and midwifery courses and careers*

- Perceptions that religious beliefs might not be accommodated/modest dress

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# Findings

## *Accessing nursing and midwifery courses and careers*

- discrimination from non Asian/Muslim staff.



...when at the hospital there was a nurse and there was Asian and there was a patient who was white its coz of that and when the nurse actually wanted to try and help them up or something the patient was like don't want to be touched by her she's an Asian so there's like sometimes there's racism as well I think it kinda puts people off (P2Fg4).

# Findings

## *The role of culture and religion*

- Religion was discussed as an enabler and a barrier
  - An enabler because it reinforced the importance of caring and helping other/compatible religious values.
  - Barrier: mixing and providing physical/personal care to the opposite sex and uniform issues (again!).



*...going into like nursing not only are you dealing with females but males so that could also be something our parents weren't want us to go into especially if you come from a strict practising Muslim family (P4FG4)*

*Yeah so, if a male was to see you know a female naked or something in their opinion they might think this is a sin or you know is ungodly so they would rather not go into nursing or midwifery to prevent that kind of you know thing (P1MFG2)*



# Findings

## *The role of culture and religion*

- Some female participants explained that midwifery or paediatric nursing was a better option because it involved physical/personal care for women and less interaction with men.

...the whole of opposite sex sort of working... Not something that I agree with so midwifery for me would have been the better option because it does limit who are working with...or I would consider paediatric nursing, so working with younger people obviously for religious reasons (FG8FG10)

# Findings

## *The role of religion and culture*



...there might be a family that wear like full coverage they call it *jilbab* , *hijab* right and stuff they wouldn't want their child to be wearing...uniform can always like trigger some parents like my parents like they don't obviously, but people say that if you have trousers or wearing a skirt that job isn't right, it always connected back to other family and relatives its like dignity and pride (P1FG4)



# Findings

## *The role of culture and religion*

- Cultural construction of gender roles
- Culture influenced dominate constructions of masculine and feminine roles which influenced course and career options. Nursing and midwifery seen as a extension of the female 'care giving role' and 'women's work' not appropriate for men.

*Basically girls are more likely to become nurses and midwife, whereas boys they are most likely to become like engineers and businesses...Because girls are intended to do like it's a girls job basically nursing it's for mostly girls like do nursing (P5FG4).*

*Also, male like yeah they don't go into midwifery and that because it's not really a manly job to do and that and people will think that they're not manly enough oh they're just going to do nursing and that's why most male men don't go into nursing (P4 FG5).*

# Findings

## *The role of culture and religion*

- Cultural exceptions of women's roles preventing women from going into nursing and midwifery because :
  - should marry
  - have children
  - be homemakers
- Working hours and shift work disruptive to family life.

...our Asian society demands so much of women that we need jobs that we....if we want to work that it is flexible for us around our husbands, children and our families (P2FG8).

*Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshi's they all have similar culture so when ladies leave university they are back to their culture and its like oh why are you getting into a job which is so demanding you should be having other responsibilities and stuff like that I think that's why they leave at that time so I think they are under-represented (P4fG1).*

# Findings

## Widening participation for South Asian students

### *More nursing and midwifery places*

...if the NMC...if there were more spaces on the course ...I think that would encourage more South Asians to apply and then to build up their personal statements with experience and choose courses at college that are science based and health and social care based, or whatever they need, that would motivate them to get on to the places they'll think there more spaces there's more of a chance of getting in to it (P1FG1)

*England are desperate for nurses and...it's better off to have nurses who are educated here and is employed here rather than get one from somewhere else because they may not have that kind of clinical skills and things (P4FG3).*

# Findings

## Widening participation for South Asian students

*More information about roles and career progression*

- Information should be provided by South Asian nurses and midwives, sensitive to religious and cultural concerns and how to negotiate these in the workplace.
- ▶ More South Asian nurses/midwives as role models in community/schools. Increase their visibility

# Findings

## Widening participation for South Asian students

### *Breaking down stereotypes and improving the status*

- community outreach/engagement
- community languages
- courses, roles, careers, salaries, career progression explained to raise status
- More information through social media
- course tasters, hospital open days and work experience/shadowing

# Key findings

- Findings similar to what previous students have found with South Asian people and some aspects similar to the White population.

Darr, A 2001 Under representation of Asian students on nursing, radiography and physiotherapy courses. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Bradford.

Darr, A and Archibong (2014) Improving the recruitment of South Asian people into nursing in *Nurse Education Today* 24, 417–419.



Community engagement/outreach  
Community focussed action

Improve knowledge  
& awareness for South  
Asian people  
(parents/young  
people/community)  
Improve perceptions of  
status

Improve access  
Targeted recruitment  
(Darr,2004)  
Positive role models/teaching  
staff /recruitment staff  
Review recruitment strategies  
(how culturally competent are  
they?)

Attitude change  
Increase  
representation

# Strengths and limitations of the study

## Strengths

- To the best of our knowledge:
  - no study has explored the perspectives of prospective South Asian students
  - nursing and midwifery students
  - Programme leads
- Provides in-depth triangulated views on barriers to accessing courses and progressing onto nursing and midwifery employment.
- The findings from the study will contribute to existing government initiatives to recruit more BME nurses and midwives into the NHS.
- Feed into the HEE national programme for widening participation

## Limitations

- ▶ A small sample.
- ▶ Views presented here may therefore **differ** among South Asian prospective students elsewhere in the UK.
- ▶ Although the aim of the sampling was to have a South Asian sample it was majority Bangladeshi and Pakistani. Also the majority of participants were Muslims.



# PhD reserach



The University of Bedfordshire are pleased to offer a full-time PhD studentship in the subject area described below.

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# Any Questions?

