Session A4: Being BAME and LGBT in the workplace

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Session Outline

- Terminology
- Intersectionality
- Cultural pressures
- Racism on the scene
- Challenges at work
- Invisibility and role models
- Power and privilege
- Being an ally
Terminology

- LGBTQ - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer
- B(A)ME - Black, Asian and minority ethnic
- POC - People of colour
- QTIPPOC - Queer, trans, intersex people of colour
Intersectionality

**Definition:**
The study of overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination.

There is no such thing as a single issue struggle, as we do not lead single issue lives.

Audre Lorde
Cultural Pressures

- Isolation from family, church, community
- Hyper-masculinity
- Interpretation of faith
- Family shame within a collectivist community
- Colonial overhang: discriminatory laws still held up in countries of origin
- Idea that LGBT identities are a western concept/corruption

Side note: BAME people does not = homophobia, biphobia, transphobia. Assumptions can be made that BAME people are going to be. This is unhelpful, important to bust myths and challenge those stereotypes!
Racism within the LGBT community

Exclusionary door policies

NO SPICE
NO CURRY
NO CHOCOLATE
NO RICE
NO FALAFEL

Racist drag

Racism on apps

Laguisha Jonz
Racism within the LGBT community

- 80% of Black men
- 79% of Asian men
- 75% of South Asian men
- 64% of mixed race men

have experienced racism on Britain’s gay scene

(FS Racism on the Scene survey, 2016)
Challenges BAME staff face at work

- Discrimination during the recruitment process
- Racial harassment from colleagues
- Breaking the glass ceiling
Invisibility

I wish there was somebody black that would have guided me in understanding my sexuality.
Curtis, 25

Show me the black gay people! We’re invisible and that’s part of the problem we have.
Michael, 32
Role Models
Power and Privilege

- Privilege is a special right or advantage available only to a particular person or a group of people.
- In the context of social equality, it means that some people are treated better than others based on their race, sexual orientation, class, gender identity, physical ability.
- Everyone has it in one way or another.
Power and Privilege

- Privilege is not about guilt or blame
- It’s about using your power to challenge the system that perpetuates inequality
- Ignoring privilege or refusing to believe it exists only allows it to continue and thrive

Privilege is when you think that something's not a problem because it's not a problem for you personally.

David Gaider
Activity

How can you better understand the experiences of BAME LGBT people in your organisation?

What action can you take to make your workplace more inclusive for BAME LGBT staff?
Being an ally

- Remember people belong to more than one identity
- Talk to black and minority ethnic lesbian, gay and bisexual and trans people
- Don't make assumptions
- Check your privilege
Being an ally

- Challenge homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and racism when you see it amongst your communities
- Don't deny people's experiences
- Sign our NoBystanders pledge
- Get engaged in Stonewall’s BAME work