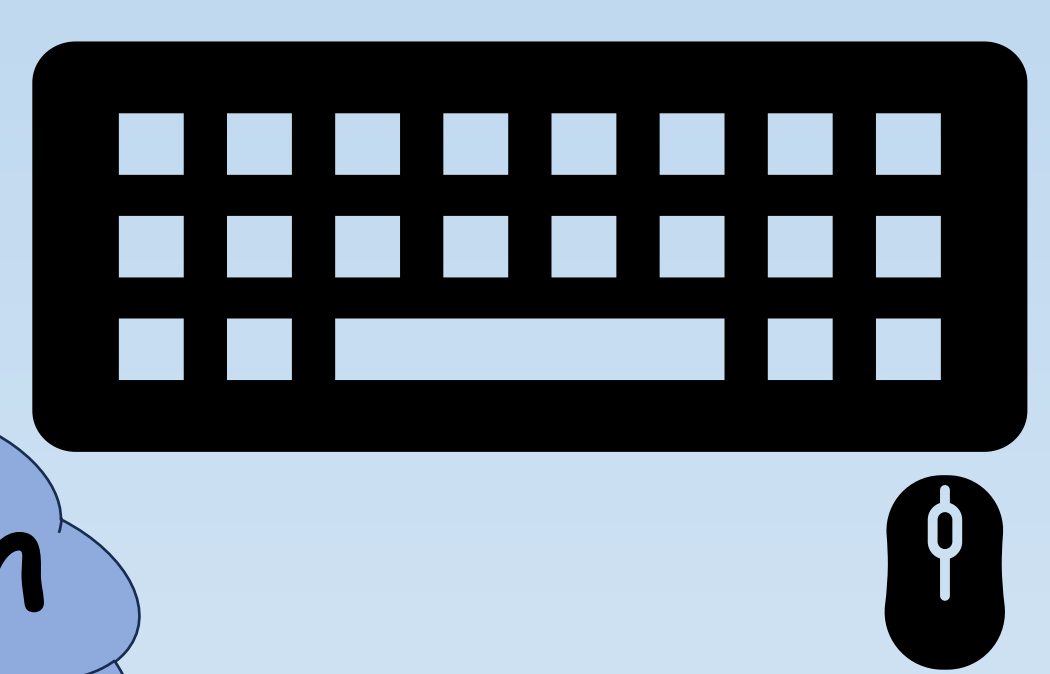# Exploring the Influence of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Initiatives on the Progression of Ethnic Minorities to High-Level Leadership Positions in British Universities

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Introduction

Dear UFHRD

I examine whether EDI initiatives influence ethnic minority advancement to senior leadership positions in British universities.

Existing policies reflect a commitment to EDI, but concerns are raised about their meaning (Koutsouris et al., 2022).

Despite the presence of EDI legislation both nationally and institutionally, the stark reality of a lack of diversity in senior leadership roles in UK universities persists, necessitating immediate attention and action (Clark, 2013).

This leads to the researcher's interest in examining the lived experience of ethnic minorities due to the paucity of literature addressing this issue.
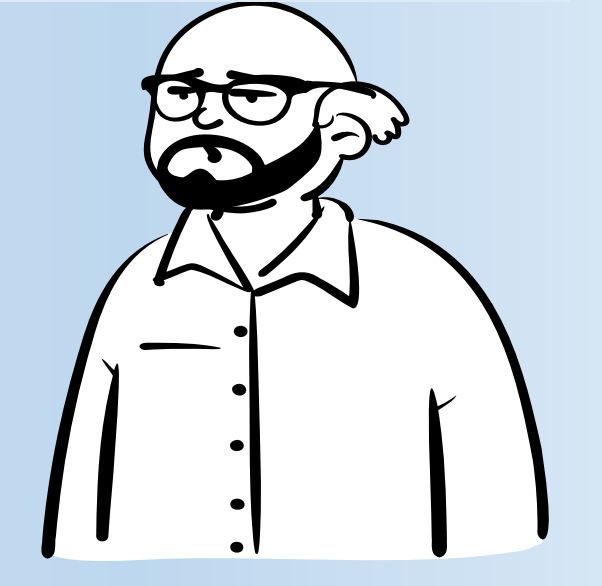
Purpose / Research Questions

To critically examine the influence of existing EDI policies on the progression of ethnic minorities to senior leadership roles in British universities. The following research questions will be addressed:

1) How do existing EDI policies impact the career advancement of ethnic minorities within British universities?

2) What are the primary obstacles ethnic minorities face to attain senior leadership positions?

3) How can improvements be made to EDI policies to facilitate the progression of ethnic minorities more effectively into senior leadership roles?

Theoretical Underpinning

Critical Race Theory (CRT)/Leadership & Power

Holistic Approach: Addressing Ethnic Minority Diversity through Integrated Framework.

- CRT: Analyse historical and systematic barriers to ethnic minority
- Ethnic Minority Lived Experiences: Informing Policy with Direct Perspectives
- Factors impeding or facilitating EDI implementation.
- Leadership dynamics: Examining Power Structures and biases for ethnic minority advancement
- EDI Policies: Evaluation and Revision for Ethnic Minority Inclusivity
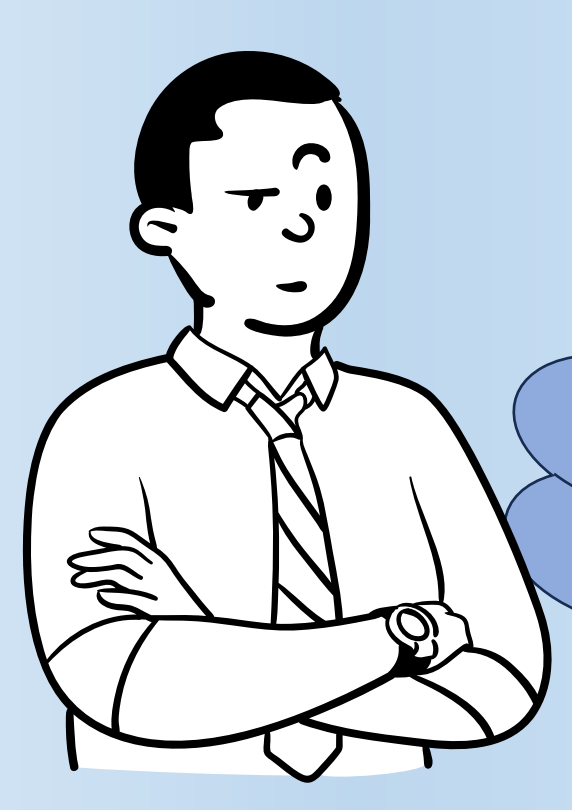
Research Methodology

➢ Qualitative approach: semi-structured interviews (Tindall et. al. 2009).
➢ UK university staff: senior lecturer through to vice president/professional staff equivalent.
➢ Two universities (research-intensive/teaching-focused).
➢ Snowballing technique: EDI Committees, researcher network (Manning and Kunkel, 2013).

Limitations

Due to qualitative data on ethnic minorities in UK universities, findings cannot be generalised to others from this group or externals who did not take part in the study.
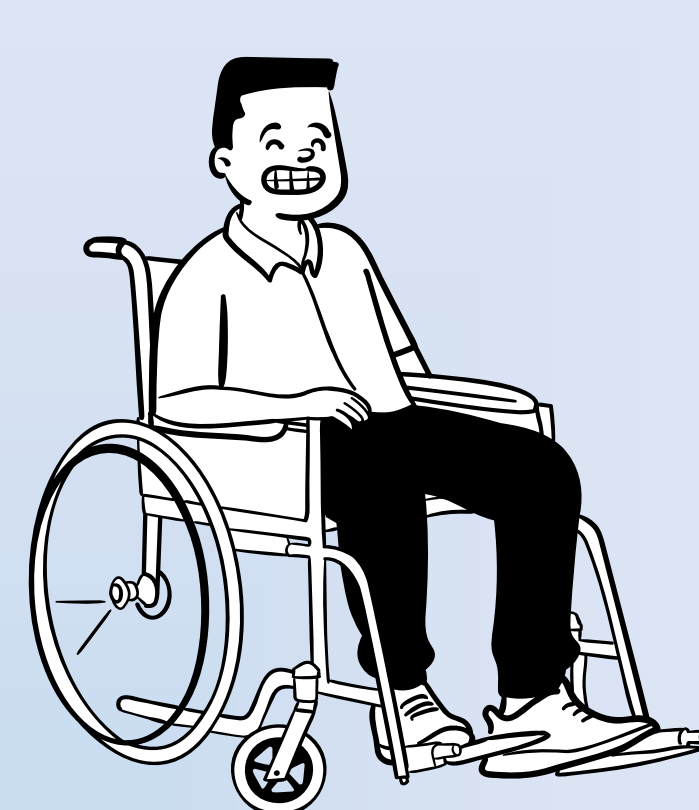
Contribution

Practical: The research will guide impactful EDI policies, encourage inclusive leadership practices, tailor training programmes to address identified barriers and foster a conducive environment for ethnic minority growth.
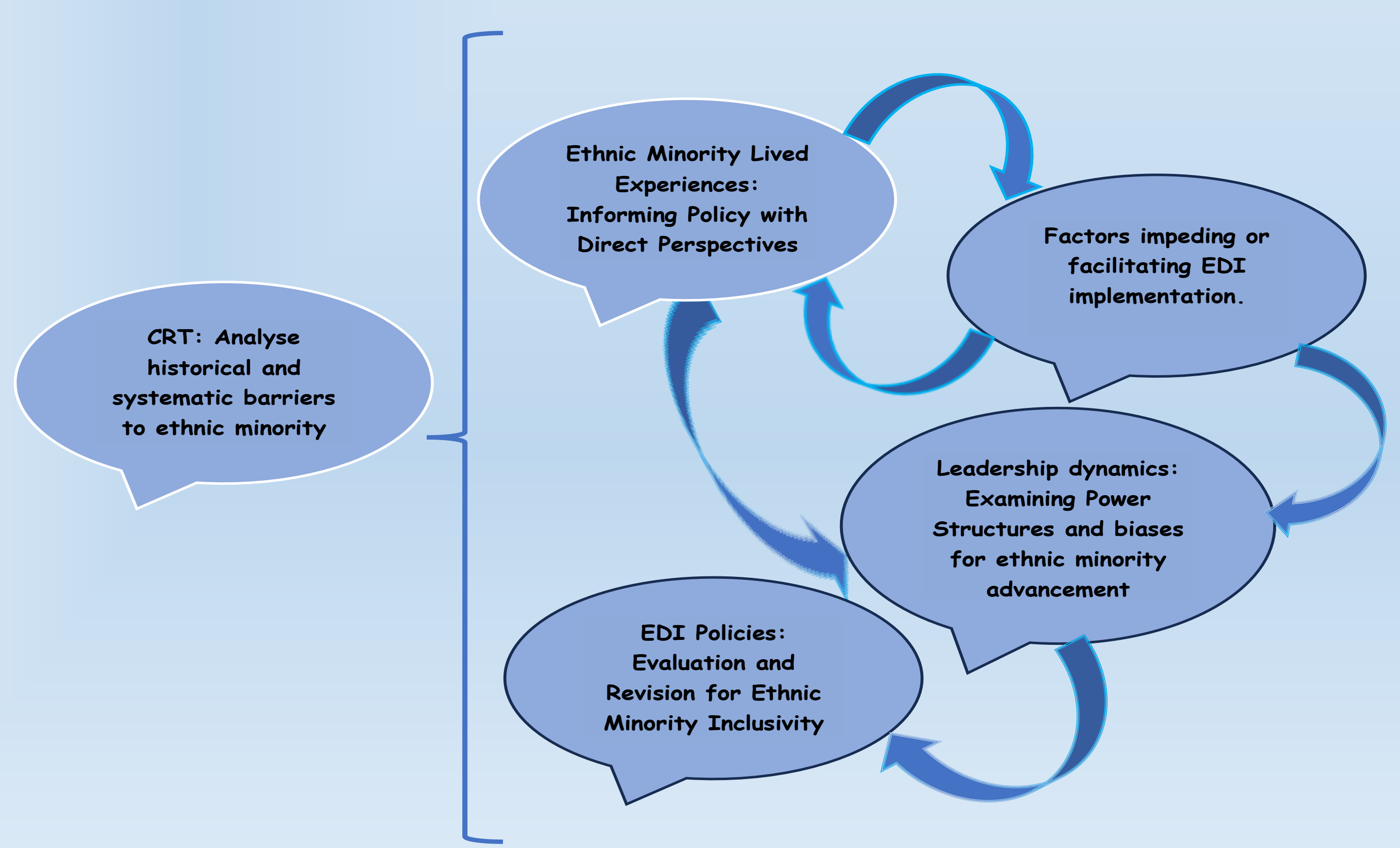
Theoretical: Advance HRD discourse on diversity and inclusion and enriching theoretical frameworks for organisational change in higher education.

Conclusion

➢ EDI policies are essential for creating a more representative and equitable organisation.
➢ Ethnic minorities are subject to underrepresentation in leadership roles.
➢ British HE Institutions aim to address ethnic disparities.
➢ EDI Policies vs. Reality: Misalignment for Ethnic Minorities.
➢ Urgent need to investigate EDI Policies' Impact on Ethnic Minority Progression in UK Universities.

References

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