

Blog: Interning with BSWN

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"Asian" "Nonnative English speaker" "Female" "Student" Those are the words which labeled myself and made me feel weaker. However, those labels have become my strengths through the opportunity at the Black South West Network (BSWN) as a policy research officer intern. Especially, working for the Research Action Coalition for Race Equality (RACE) was a precious opportunity to participate in research relating to race equality as well as reconsider and improve myself as an individual from Black and Minoritised communities.

I have felt passionate to contribute to addressing racial inequality. I have recognised that few articles discuss the particular issue or impact of racial inequality since I decided to include racial discrimination as part of the main focus of the dissertation. Also, I acknowledged the significance of evidence-based argument as a social science student. Thus, I was impressed by BSWN's values and policy as well as contributions of CoRE Bristol. It grew my interests to improve my skills and knowledge of the actual situation in the bigger world and willing to assist with projects with the experienced and passionate team for racial equality.

As a first task, I researched and wrote a policy summary about mental health support for Black and Minoritised youth. Since I have studied policy around family and youth as a Childhood Studies student, it was interesting to know how those theories and ideas are applied to actual policy making and the policies influence on Black and Minoritised communities. It was intriguing to recognise something I can't learn in the University such as that only little attention is paid to people from Black and Minoritised communities than people feel. It was also frustrating to know the fact that issues related to Black and Minoritised communities are well spoken covers so many problems that we should have addressed. Learning these factors have broadened my horizons and accelerated my passions to involving race equality and justice. I also took part in establishing and expanding Data Hub which is one of the significant projects of the RACE. The significance of this project, making data related to ethnicity accessible to everyone not only researchers, is something that I have not noticed before and I find it very innovative which empowers marginalised people.

As I mentioned above, BSWN has provided me a lot of opportunities to have insights and consider issues around Black and Minoritised communities which you would not realise when you are in University or in your small community even you believe it is enough diverse. I would strongly recommend a work experience with BSWN because it is a chance to stand a frontline and make actual changes as well as make yourself stronger with new knowledge and skills.