

Chapter 57

Race Matters: Urban Education, Globalisation and the Twenty-First Century

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The educational landscape in Britain in the early twenty-first century is constantly changing. It shifts according to changes of government, economic instability and global pressures. The key concerns around race and anti/racism of the 2000s have waned into the policy background. The focus now is once again on sameness – on assimilation, an emphasis on the so-called and nebulous ‘British values’ (DfE 2011) and ‘community cohesion’ (Cantle 2001), although now more in the guise of ‘counter terrorism’ (Home Office 2015). The targeted initiatives to address Black and Minority Ethnic¹ underachievement have been cut, and the blame for poor educational performance is laid at the feet of parents, the children themselves, teachers or ‘failing’ schools. Thus the emphasis is on individual responsibility: not structures or, specifically in relation to this chapter, structural racism. Britain, as elsewhere, is also caught up in the global competition for a top place in the educational stakes as defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (see for example Lingard and Sellar 2013). Initiatives are thus driven by school effectiveness rather than addressing inequalities. Over nearly 30 years we have seen the development and entrenchment of a marketised Education system which has led to an atomised system of schooling, individualisation with the individual being held accountable for her or his own underachievement (see for example Field 2010; Machin and McNally

¹The term Black and Minority Ethnic has taken on a common currency in Britain and is used in policy documents, as well as academic publications; most organisations tend to use it in their publications and reports also. It is not unproblematic and in particular can imply essentialism of Black and Minority Ethnic people which is erroneous. However, I am using the term as a signifier or racial and ethnic diversity which in the British context relates to Black African, Black Caribbean, Black Other, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Asian Other and Black and Minority Ethnic and White, mixed heritage people.

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2006). All of this has consequences for urban education and 'race' issues. The term 'urban education' is taken here to refer to schools and education provision located within town or city centres or conurbations that have substantial populations which are richly diverse socially and in most cases ethnically. In contemporary Britain the schools comprise different types including Local Authority maintained and Academies; faith schools and Free schools. This atomised and fragmented education system also contributes to the challenges facing urban schools, for whilst they offer enriching experiences and are potentially excellent centres for learning and preparation for cosmopolitan citizenship, they are often ill resourced to exploit fully this potential.

Against a backdrop of economic cuts are the changing demographics and diversity of needs and desires. Britain is not only a multicultural and multiracial society but now represents superdiversity according to some (see for example Vertovec 2006, 2007). Additionally in Britain we have seen a rise in poverty, a fragmentation of communities still reeling from the devastation of traditional industries in the 1980s and 1990s and with that the far Right's exploitation of discontent to whip up racial hatred. Following some progress in the development of 'race' awareness and anti-racist policies under New Labour (1997–2010), the Equalities and Human Rights Commission Report (EHRC 2010) 'How Fair is Britain?' demonstrated that Britain is still not that fair at all. For example the enduring under achievement of certain minority ethnic groups namely Black Caribbean, African Caribbean, Somalis, Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller children, prevails (DCSF 2008, 2009; Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) 2010; Department for Education (DfE) 2013).

More recently the Office of National Statistics (ONS) survey (NatCen 2014) of British Social Attitudes revealed that 60% of the population felt confident to declare that they were racist. This sense that it is acceptable to hold such views can also be demonstrated by events such as the Chelsea football supporters' display of racism in the Paris Metro when they refused to allow a black man to board the metro train and chanted that they 'are racists' and 'happy with that' (Taylor and Quinn 2015).

The significance of these individual attitudes is twofold: on the one hand they indicate the changing ethos of the society of what is acceptable and give voice to a narrow retrogressive position of acceptable racism; and on the other this apparent shift in attitudes causes politicians, especially in an election year (2015), to capitulate and try to match equally racist policies around immigration controls. As Tomlinson (2008) argued the obsession with immigration controls reinforces these negative and racist sentiments implying and reinforcing the erroneous view that migrants are to blame for unemployment, housing shortages, pressures on the health service and school failure. This is the context of urban education in Britain in the early twenty-first century.

Underpinning this scenario however, theoretical understanding of racism/s has developed and in the twenty-first century a clearer recognition of Whiteness and its implications for racist oppression has developed (Garner 2007) in relation to an understanding of intersectional identities (Bhopal and Preston 2012; Crenshaw 2003) and the importance of on the one hand foregrounding race, but on the other

the importance of challenging hierarchies of oppression and therefore eschewing damaging polarisations such as between BME groups and between BME and the White working-class.

These are some of the central issues that will be explored in relation to published key research and ideas in a discussion and exploration of inequalities and ideas for progressing social justice. In the rest of the chapter I will focus on the following themes to explore the concerns around urban education and race in Britain today: race matters; the education context in contemporary Britain and implications for racialised education experiences (including a discussion of super diversity); race and education: the state of play; urban geographies: space and place; the role of parents; racisms and White supremacy. In my analysis I will draw on the theoretical resources of Critical Race Theory and theories of Whiteness. I aim to address the salience of gender and social class in relation to race in the struggle for equality and social justice in education. This aspect of the analysis is informed by understandings of intersectionalities (Bhopal and Preston 2012; Crenshaw 2003).

57.1 Race Matters

To begin the discussion of race and urban education I want to outline the rationale of why race continues to matter and in the context of this chapter what I mean by race. Firstly the term race: amongst sociologists and education scholars it is clearly understood that race is a social construction without biological bases. For this reason it is frequently written within inverted commas signifying its problematic nature. Since I believe these problematics are fairly well understood I have decided not to use inverted commas around the term, in this chapter.. The social constructions of race are signified by colour and perceived physiological indicators. These perceptions and constructions translate into racist behaviours and practices overt and covert, explicit and implicit in terms of a racially underpinned and imbued society. Some, such as Modood (2005), argue that racism is also cultural. This is contested by others (e.g. Gillborn 2008) but if we accept this idea of cultural racism, I suggest that it does not follow that culture (also a contested term) is a definition of race. Culture is a fluid concept. Representations of culture might take the form of: language, religion, food, forms of dress, but whilst these might be aspects of culture, none of these is absolute or fixed or indeed can be attributed to a specific person just because they 'seem' to be of a certain ethnic group. Attributions of 'culture' essentialise: Black and Minority Ethnic people in particular, are often described by cultural traits or ascribed a particular manifestation of culture, as though that is their absolute identity. Black and Minority Ethnic people then come to be fixed by some often fairly arbitrary putative, cultural signifier; a signifier that is also an artefact of the dominant group.

The term culture is also used extremely loosely in the sense for example, of talking about people of 'different cultures', when they often mean of different colour or ethnic or national heritage. 'Different culture' is used, I suggest, as a shorthand for

identifying some perception of ‘difference’, often difference of skin colour or physiology, but it is often meaningless, since it is based on a subjective perception.

Without going in to the complex analysis of socio-linguistics which is beyond the scope of the chapter, in this chapter the term *race* is used to denote the experience of racism as defined by Macpherson (1999); it is used here to explore the impact of the perceptions of race on the education and opportunities of young people and the implications for their life chances of structural racism/s (see also Warmington 2009). Also following Solomos et al. (1982) and Gilroy (1992), race is taken as being not ‘a fixed unitary principle’ but one that changes over time in response to political and economic structures and conditions and social relations (Solomos et al. 1982). Race, it is argued, along with other structural inequalities, is embedded in the fabric of society and unless challenged and overturned is and will be continuously, reproduced: in spite of the contemporary focus on ‘super diversity’ and multiculturalism, although the latter is less popular now, this is why the focus on race remains important and relevant.

57.2 The Educational Landscape of Race in Twenty-First Century Britain and the Urban Context

The policy frameworks around Race and Education have changed markedly over the decades from the 1950s to 1960s, two significant periods of post-colonial migration but even more rapidly since 2010 and the loss of power by New Labour. New Labour largely because of the Macpherson Report (1999) arising from the murder of the teenager Stephen Lawrence, introduced the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) which gave recognition, for the first time in Britain, of institutional racism and required all public institutions and organisations to develop policies on challenging and monitoring racism (see Tomlinson 2008; Crozier 2012 for further details of the historical developments of race policies and education). Since then we have seen the focus on race and racism disappear from the political and education agenda. The UK Coalition Government (2010–2015) made severe economic cuts and changes which have reversed the advances in the fight against racism. For example, the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) which, whilst still on the statute books, has been superseded by the less specific and more nebulous Equalities Act (2010) and subsequently the requirement for public institutions and organisations (including schools and universities) to record racial harassment, write and implement policies on challenging and ensuring against racial discrimination, have been abandoned. In 2011 the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), a specific grant targeted at supporting minority ethnic groups in schools with English as an Additional language (EAL) provision, and other support measures, was abandoned as a specifically allocated grant; also in 2011 the Education Act removed the

requirement for Ofsted² to inspect how schools were complying with the ‘community cohesion duty’ and so on (NASUWT 2014).

Multiculturalism, often regarded by social scientists as the soft option to challenging racism head on, has been denounced by international politicians including the UK Prime Minister Cameron (Wright and Taylor 2011) and the German Chancellor Merkel (Weaver 2010) as, amongst other things, fuelling disharmony and community divisions and putatively contributing to the radicalisation of Muslim youth. We have also seen the rise of the far Right English Defence League and the anti-Europe and anti-immigration United Kingdom Independent Party (UKIP). Both these factions blame migrants for the loss of jobs for British nationals, housing shortages and diminishing public resources, constructing migrants as the feckless and the troublesome Other (Tomlinson 2008). Such sentiments thrive in the climate of austerity with low and depressed wages, an increase in poverty levels amongst families, signified by food banks in one of the world’s richest countries, and one of the worst housing crises since post World War 2 Britain (Islam 2013), without a clear and serious political explanation or locating the blame on financial corruption, mismanagement and ineptitude (Gamble 2009; Harvey 2010).

Over the past decade in urban centres there have been a series of dramatic and significant events, which disrupt and potentially destabilise communities. These include wide ranging events, for example the bombing in London the discovery of other explosive devices in a London park, a parked car (July 2005), the brutal murder in a London street during the day time of an off duty soldier (2013); these events appear to have been carried out by extremists, erroneously in the name of Islam; all of these events have given rise to speculation about the radicalisation of Muslims and concomitantly have fuelled the development of Islamophobia (Stone 2004). In addition there has been civil unrest including demonstrations and occupations expressing discontent with austerity measures, housing shortages and corruption of the banking sector. A national riot took place throughout England (2011) in 66 locations, provoked initially by the police shooting of a Black man in Tottenham, London (Bridges 2012). These are signifiers of major discontent and also a conflicted society; they also suggest something about the failure of urban education to address and meet the needs of the society’s young people. This fluid, diverse and as suggested, in some ways unstable context, is ripe for polarisations and racialised antagonisms.

Britain in 2015, together with much of Western Europe, is more culturally and ethnically diverse than ever. There are many different nationalities represented in British urban centres with for example an estimated 300 national languages spoken in London as an indicator of this (Vertovec 2007). The population includes second and third generation people who came from countries once colonised by Britain and more recently refugees and asylum seekers together with Europeans arising from

²The Office for Standards in Education Children’s Services and Skills is a non-governmental ministerial department (often denoted as a quango) that inspects and regulates services for children and young people, and services that provide education and skills for all ages. See <https://www.gov.uk/organisations/ofsted>. Ofsted reports directly to Parliament.

membership of the European Union and the open border policy. In the last decade with the accession of Eastern European countries former Soviet Block countries, significant migration from Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania has ensued. According to Steven Vertovec (2007) this diversity is more complex than has been acknowledged. He argues that there is now complex diversity not only in terms of languages, religion, other aspects of culture but also in terms of education, migration status, social class, occupation, length of establishment in Britain and so on—and this is not just between ethnic groups but also these differences are within ethnic groups. Moreover, he argues that government policies on multiculturalism have focused on the traditional, historic post-colonial groups from the Caribbean and South and East Asia. This he suggests, is too limiting since the newer, smaller, and as he says, less organised groups, are those ‘groups that have transformed the social landscape of Britain’ (Vertovec 2007) and that this needs to be acknowledged and addressed. Statistically, he continues, ethnic diversity is now also spreading across the rest of Britain and beyond London and key cities. Whilst this may be the case to some extent, it remains variable and we have little evidence to assess Vertovec’s assertions. The infusion of cultural diversity in terms of languages spoken, and types of food available in shops are the most noticeable changes; other changes regarding values and ways of being are difficult to research and in any case will take longer to assess. The term diversity itself has been much criticised as vague and nebulous and often leading to obfuscation of the central and significant issue of racism and racial discrimination (Ahmed 2007). Whilst ‘super diversity’ may be an important concept to facilitate understanding the complexity of contemporary society, it is not yet clear what the implications are with regard to the pressing issues of urban education and race matters.

However, the issue of migration which has given rise to the concept of ‘super diversity’, is important to the concerns of this chapter in terms of the conditions of urban education and any tensions or enhancements the complex dynamics of migration and demographic changes might lead to. The accession of six more European countries in 2004 from former the Soviet Block including white and Roma migrants complicates the analysis of discrimination, prejudice and disadvantage given the antagonisms levelled against these people, and the significant educational underachievement of Roma children together with Gypsies and Travellers (Bhopal and Myers 2008). Nevertheless, our increasing understanding of White privilege (Gillborn 2008) is useful in helping us make sense of this, which I will discuss below.

Driven by the PISA assessments and league tables (Lingard and Sellar 2013), as well as the operationalization of the British ‘school choice policy’, schools are pre-occupied with performance and the Ofsted inspection regimes rather than equality issues. Arguably they are interconnected; certainly examination success links with the league table position but the point here is who and what are prioritised? And how are these school successes achieved? We have seen in studies such as Gillborn and Youdell’s (2000) that in order to ensure student success at the Year 10 General

Certificate of Secondary Education³ GCSE assessment point, the practice of educational triage was operated in their study schools. In this way children on a significant grade boundary (Gillborn and Youdell termed this the A*-C economy) were given extra support whilst the needs of others were eschewed. Their research showed that it was Black African-Caribbean students who received the least support.

According to Lingard and Sellar (2013) international league table position in terms of the PISA results is increasingly important, not least because of the financial rewards available to highly regarded knowledge economies, a role which Britain wants to occupy. League table position for individual schools takes on further importance at a national level too, since it is on this basis that parents make their choice of school and subsequently schools might survive or fail accordingly. For these reasons successive governments have introduced various initiatives to raise achievement. The focus though has been on the individual child and the parents – and increasingly on the parents whose own education is spotlighted as a cause for their child's under achievement (Field 2010) rather than on structural inequalities. Leonardo and Tran (2013) argue for example that neo-liberal policies are constructed as providing all solutions for the individual. Thus if the individual fails, then it is her or his own fault that they have not adequately utilised what is available to them. Leonardo and Tran go on to say that neo-liberal individualised and competitive frameworks serve to mask issues of race and racial inequalities.

High performing schools are essential to the marketization of the education project both nationally and internationally. At a national level parents' school choice is a key driver and in turn parental choice drives schools' policies and practice in order to achieve and or maintain the attractive league table position. Clearly not all schools achieve this nor could they. For some urban schools such ambitions are hardly attainable and in some cases head teachers and the school governors prefer not to play this particular game. In terms of urban education what we see is a pattern of differentiation based on class and race amongst school type and school success.

57.3 Geographies of Urban Education: Spaces of Exclusion

It is not only since the inception of neo-liberal education policies that schools in urban centres have been differentiated and segregated. School allocation, prior to the 'school choice' policy was largely based on locality and catchment area. The classed and raced differentiated urban spaces (Savage et al. 2005) translated into classed and raced differentiated schools. These 'geographies of schooling' were exacerbated and further embedded by the 'school choice' policy which as we know from an abundance of research (for example Ball 2003; Butler and Robson 2003; Gewirtz et al. 1995) middle class (and mainly white) parents who have the requisite social and cultural capitals are more likely to exert that choice effectively. In London

³GCSE examinations take place in Year 11 (students age 15–16 years). These examinations' results inform a students' future direction in terms of further study or work.

with the largest Black and Minority Ethnic population in Britain of 40% (2011 Census), whilst rich and poor live side by side, school differentiation along class and race lines is often quite stark (Butler and Robson 2003). Reay et al. (2011) in their study of white middle class families in London and two other areas in England, found in all of the three urban centres that there were some urban schools where there were no white middle class families and in London they found schools with almost 100% Black and Ethnic Minority populations. Although there are exceptions, such as in Reay et al.'s (2011) study which focused on those White middle-class parents who chose to send their children to urban comprehensive schools, Butler and Robson (2003) and Ball (2003) showed that White middle-class families engaged with the essence of the education market and played the system to ensure that their children did not have to go to such schools: schools, which Diane Reay (2007) in her analysis of the urban comprehensive has termed 'unruly spaces'. She argues that White and Black working-class children and 'their' urban schools are constructed in the White middle-class imaginary as 'the Other'; both the children and the schools are frequently demonised as out of control and undesirable and the schools are constructed as places that will inevitably fail their children.

The impact of this demonisation and segregating behaviour is broadly two fold. On the one hand it has a material impact where in a highly competitive field of school choice and where money follows the child, a school whose reputation has been destroyed will be in a difficult situation in terms of recruiting pupils. Moreover, schools that under recruit will not receive sufficient money and thus resources will be inadequate. More concerning is the segregation of children on any grounds but racial and classed segregation evokes frightening historical analogies and creates an elitist ethos. This in turn feeds into, and reinforces, White middle-class privilege and supremacy; the latter of these concepts will be discussed more fully below. Secondly, the emotional and psychic impact of this segregation together with the derogation of their school, cannot be underestimated. Diane Reay (2007) analyses this effect through the voices and experiences of young secondary aged children. The children in her study who attended urban schools reproduced the notion of 'good and bad' schools (Lucey and Reay 2002) most frequently describing their own school in negative, denigrating terms which as Reay (2007) argues had damaging implications for the ways the children assessed themselves and their communities.

Differentials between schools with some schools offering different and more advantaging experiences, has been exacerbated with the introduction of Academies and Free Schools; not that these new types of school are necessarily for the better but also their introduction make the system more difficult to navigate for some. However, the clearest examples of differentiated opportunities that are raced and classed are in fact in universities where reputations are more widely publicised in terms of Oxbridge and the Russell Group 'high status' universities (Boliver 2013). None of these universities have significant numbers of BME students even though BME students are reportedly "over represented in the university sector" (Kerr 2010). Those universities that might be referred to as 'urban universities' such as the post 1992 modern universities which are less well resourced and receive less

research funding, have been the most successful at recruiting and supporting BME students. This is important because these universities have been criticised, often unfairly, for, the quality of the experience they provide including teaching and the value of their degrees (Chapman 2010); also large employers (offering high salaries) tend to target Oxbridge and certain Russell Group University graduates (High Fliers Report 2015) in order to recruit new employees, thus disadvantaging graduates from other universities.

57.4 Race and Education: The Current State of Play

The New Labour Government (1997–2010) claimed that by the end of their term of office in 2010 Britain was a more tolerant and fairer society than it was when they first came in to office. Ministers went so far as to say that race was no longer a central issue of concern and now the focus had to be on social class. New Labour had invested substantially in race and education policies and initiatives and had targeted Black and Minority Ethnic groups in order to raise educational attainment. However, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2010) report ‘How Fair is Britain?’ clearly revealed that it was still not very fair at all and 5 years on, if anything, the situation is much worse.

In particular Black Caribbean, certain Black African groups, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage children together with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children are still significantly under achieving compared to their White counterparts; this is both at school and higher education level (Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) 2008, 2009; EHRC 2010; Department for Education (DfE) 2012; Stevenson 2012) Social class is an important factor as is gender but research has shown that race is the overriding factor (see for example Strand 2011). The endurance of schools’ failure of BME students is a deep seated and embedded systemic issue. However, Strand (2012) has shown that whilst Black underachievement continues to prevail the picture is more complex with some Black African groups achieving well. Cassen and Kingdon (2007) also identify a complex and variable picture of underachievement for Black and Minority Ethnic groups. At the other end of the scale certain Indian heritage groups and British Chinese children achieve highly, in spite of experiencing personal racial harassment (Mau 2014; Archer and Francis 2007). Social class is a particular factor in these differences but such factors are rarely absolute or singular. The construction of the ‘model minority’, (Leonardo 2009) whilst at a psychic level may have negative effects, in terms of academic achievement, would seem to ensure high teacher expectations and also position those young people in a positive academic space in order to succeed.

Others have written about the importance of focusing on success rather than interminably on failure or underachievement (e.g. Rhamie 2007). The construction of Black children and boys in particular for example, as failures, tends to lead to lower expectations as discussed below and a fixing of this underachievement as part of

their persona or worse, so called 'ability'. The focus is too often on the child rather than on the failure of the schools to recognise their own failure of these children.

Teachers, schools, policy makers and so on are implicated in a complex web infused with hegemonic – White – values. Teachers play a highly significant role; they are at the interface between society and the children. Obviously they are not individually or even collectively solely responsible for this but their role is very important and all teachers and educational professionals have to take some responsibility for school failure and discriminations and the perpetuation of inequalities. Rist (2000), Strand (2012), and Basit (1997), for example, have shown that White teachers tend to have lower expectations of BME children which impacts on their achievement levels, and Rist (2000) and Mechtenberg (2009) more recently, have discussed the impact of this in relation to the self-fulfilling prophecy. Given the differences in achievement amongst minority ethnic groups, as indicated above, it suggests a hierarchy of expectations, when all other things are equal (see for example Strand 2012 regarding his findings on social class and the pattern of Black Caribbean children's under achievement across a representation of all types of school). Archer et al. (2010) go on to say teachers make differentiations between ethnic groups based on their perceptions perhaps informed by stereotypes, prejudices and so on. Burgess and Greaves (2009) provide quantitative evidence from a longitudinal study employing large-scale observational data. They demonstrate that teachers categorise children and create exemplars to make conscious or unconscious judgements about future students from the same group, based on prior information of others from those ethnic groups. Drawing on Chang and Demyan (2007) they also state that these exemplars or stereotypes differ across ethnic groups. In their conclusions they argue that on average Black Caribbean and Black African pupils are under assessed relative to White, Indian and Chinese and mixed Asian pupils who are over assessed. They note that there are important differences across subjects within ethnic groups and differences between schools across groups and subjects. Given teachers use of previously held views of minority ethnic groups and their behaviour and performance, they go on to say: "The dependence of a pupil's assessment of performance of others of her ethnic group locally means that school composition matters." (p. 23).

This evidence identifies the salience and implications of negative constructions of BME children and young people that abound. Black Caribbean boys are frequently singled out as being troublesome, unruly, difficult and disinterested (Sewell 1997; Mac an Ghaill 1988; Noguera 2013). However, the White view of Black people, mainly males, is also that they are fascinating, strange and entertaining (Said 2003). Black girls on the other hand according to Rollock (2011) are often rendered invisible by the contrast and fear of their Black male counterparts. In addition the discourse of girls' academic success together with a stereotype of girls as less threatening mitigates the potential negative effect of their Black identity on White teachers' perceptions. Whilst this may have a positive effect in terms of exclusion rates, their academic success which appears to be positive, is apparently measured against that of Black males who we know are underachieving. When measured against their White female peers they are seen to be underachieving also. Rollock argues that the

Black girls' position is invidious since they have become invisible and their academic aspirations are undermined and neglected. Others such as Morris (2007) writing in the USA, have found that Black girls are frequently described by teachers as "coarse and overly assertive" (p. 491). Teachers aimed to temper this behaviour and mould the girls into a more passive (White) model of femininity. Morris argues how this threatened the Black girls' success. Controlling Black people whether it is males through a positioning as entertaining or exotic, or assimilating Black females into a stereotype of White girls' behaviour, are devices to ensure that Black people are less threatening and can be kept in their place (see also Puwar 2004). Passivity is also a common construct of South Asian girls; in their case it is often used as an excuse or reason for their underperformance in schools, blaming them or their parents for 'low aspirations' (Shain 2003). By contrast South Asian boys, similar to Black African and Caribbean boys, are seen as threatening and 'prone to' forming gangs in school (Shain 2011; Alexander 2000). They are seen as tribal and said to draw on their community and extended family if they need to resolve peer group issues (Crozier 2004).

Following this, it is perhaps unsurprising to find that BME children and in particular Black Caribbean children, are placed in lower sets in both primary and secondary schools (Strand 2012; Gillborn and Youdell 2000). Repeated research (e.g. Ireson et al. 2001; Hallam et al. 2008; Wells and Serna 1997) has shown the disadvantages and damage of streaming and setting. It has the effect of undermining self-confidence and engendering negative learner identities (Hallam et al. 2008) and leads to students giving up hope (Archer et al. 2010). It also reinforces labelling and stereotyping of Black children as deficient (Rist 2000). In fact streaming and setting perpetuates differential achievement outcomes since as Collins et al. (2000) have argued, children in the lower sets do not receive the same education, curriculum content or indeed learning opportunities as those privileged, largely White, students in the higher groupings: "they receive a form of schooling that steers them towards the backgrounds they come from" (p. 135).

School failure leads to disillusioned and demotivated students, often resulting in disaffected behaviour with the consequence of school exclusions. It is therefore hardly surprising that just like the significant underachievement of Black Caribbean children there is correspondingly a disproportionate number of Black Caribbean children excluded from school, with boys in both instances being in the majority (Parsons 2009). Underachievement and exclusion give rise to a domino effect which can account for the disproportionate number of Black young men out of work and also in prison. In the current period of economic crisis the first to suffer in terms of unemployment, and loss of other resources, are young, working-class and low credentialed young people (Blanchflower 2011); also just under half of Black men 16–24 years of age, 47.4%, compared with 20.8% Whites, in Britain in 2011 were reported as being unemployed (Ball et al. 2012).

Whilst Cassen and Kingdon (2007) for example, have suggested that young BME people do not identify racism as a reason for their underachievement, there is other evidence that shows they are acutely aware of the impeding effects racism in society can have on their future opportunities and job prospects. Archer et al. (2010)

for instance report that Black urban school students in their research were disheartened by future prospects holding a view that Black people are only destined for menial jobs. By contrast to Cassen and Kingdon (2007) and Archer et al. (2010) also demonstrate that Black students' concerns about racism were not limited to the world outside of school but their Black respondents also expressed hurt from the racist abuse they experienced from their peers. Such hurt has a number of implications and effects. The hidden psychic costs of racist abuse should not be underestimated but is in fact frequently ignored. The US psychologist Margaret Beale-Spencer has written of the stressor effects of racist abuse and the impact on the self-concept. Beale-Spencer and Harpalani (2001) focus on the structural and contextual analysis of school as a stressful experience that impacts negatively upon young black people's psychosocial well-being. They argue that young people throughout their schooling encounter experiences which contribute to the development of identity and influence their choice of coping strategies. They go on to say that 'the presence and engagement with structural racism poses severe risks for the learning of adaptive coping strategies and positive outcomes with regard to individual and community level health and well-being' (Beale-Spencer and Harpalani 2001).

Throughout the parents' accounts, in my own study, (Crozier 2005a, b) a pattern of racist school experiences for most of the children are identified as emotionally challenging and negative, which it would seem in Beale-Spencer and Harpalani's terms, could result in the undermining of their mental health and well-being. The impact and consequences of the experiences of racism were serious concerns for the parents. They spoke about the need to support the morale of their children and they feared their personality being changed as a result of these pressures. As one mother, Sara (African Caribbean mother, business studies degree) "I'm a mother with an African male child and I know there's an onslaught on our male children, so I'm very conscious about his spirit not being broken." (Crozier 2005b).

In another study of South Asian families (Crozier 2004) South Asian secondary school students reported on the deep anxieties they held during morning and afternoon recess and lunch breaks and even between lessons when they had to change classrooms. Some reported hanging back to avoid being physically hit and resulting in being late for lessons which in turn had the consequence of school punishment. Many of the young people said that they would only go on school trips if their Asian friends went although often their friends were in different sets – another negative consequence of such segregation. The students' stance resulted not in understanding or sympathy from the school, nor positive action, but rather gave rise to teachers' criticisms of the South Asian students' separating themselves off (Crozier and Davies 2008). A further consequence was that the children often missed-out on enriching educational experiences. Disturbingly these experiences did not end at school but in some later work with university students Crozier and Reay (2008) reported that South Asian students in their study recounted similar experiences of fear and seeking solidarity with other Asian students (see also Bhopal 2010). Although this action was understandable, at times it had the effect of restricting or cutting them off from accessing important aspects of their university experience and

put constraints on opportunities to acquire the requisite cultural and social capital to progress successfully through their studies.

57.5 The Role of Parents

School students particularly those who are marginalised from the mainstream or who might be described as vulnerable to discrimination and racist harassment, have limited voice or agency. Their recourse is often to walk away as in truancing or hitting out, as in so called disruptive behaviour. It is in relation to such challenging experiences that parents might be the sole advocate for the child. In the study referred to above (Crozier 2005a, b) the Black parents played this role. They sought to intervene on their child's behalf as well as providing substantial support, and in the case of the child who was on a long term suspension from school, provided alternative educational opportunities. Another parent whose child had also been suspended, had to give up her job in order to be at home with him.

Parents are regarded increasingly as important by schools and policy makers, although their role in relation to schools moves backwards and forwards along a continuum: of support for teachers, as consumers, as stakeholders, calling teachers to account and more recently, providing 'school ready', 'exam prepared' children; children with the requisite cultural capital that ensure success and good league table results for schools (Crozier *in press*). Schools are less keen on assertive, interventionist parents who might question or challenge them and often see this as a threat to their professionalism (Vincent 1996). The BME parents in my study (Crozier 2005a) frequently tried to speak up for their children or request advice on how to support their children, or for more homework. They reported that often they were either fobbed off or not taken seriously. The parents, mainly mothers, including a teacher, social worker, and business woman, described the downward spiral of educational achievement of their children. In spite of frequent visits to the school about homework and setting and exclusions, they reported being ignored and quite ineffective in being able to support their children. This experience with the school contrasts with the experiences of White middle-class parents (Ball 2003).

Studies of White middle-class families and schools have shown the privileged position these families hold in relation to the schools and the benefits their children derive from this (Ball 2003; Ball and Vincent 2007; Reay et al. 2011). Reay et al. (2011) for example, report the high frequency the White middle-class parents intervened if they were unhappy with the school's practice or behaviour such as if their child was placed in a lower set or failed to get on to the Gifted and Talented Scheme. Their successful interventions contrast markedly with the Black middle-class parents reported in Vincent et al.'s (2012) study of Black middle-class parents. Vincent et al. (2012) (see also Rollock et al. 2011) report that their respondents faced a subtle but pervasive form of racism signifying misrepresentation and misrecognition. Some parents felt that the message from the school indicated that their child, as a Black child, was only capable of a certain level of achievement. Parents felt

they also were stereotyped in negative ways, such as some fathers who felt they were seen as a threat, and some mothers were thought to be victims of aggressive partners, neither of which was so. This is a further example where social class is fairly irrelevant in the face of structural racism.

57.6 Racisms and White Supremacy: Underpinning Urban Education

The reasons for BME underachievement are varied and complex and institutional and structural racism is central to this. There is a substantial amount of research that demonstrates the prevalence of racist practices in education (for example: Archer 2003; Gillborn and Youdell 2000; Gillborn 1990, 1995; Mac an Ghaill 1988; Mirza 1992; Shain 2003, 2011). Likewise the discussion of the various manifestations of institutional, structural as well as personal racism throughout this chapter provides evidence of this. As stated earlier manifestations of racism shift according to the socio-economic and political context nationally but are also influenced by global factors (Sivanandan 2002), such as the impact or perceived impact of migration and the blame erroneously placed on this for unemployment, housing shortages etc.. As already discussed this has given rise to the development of racisms in terms of forms of discrimination and structural inequalities based on colour and also perceptions of certain cultures. Modood (2005) controversially argues that whilst there is often a connection between colour racism and culture the two facets of racism need not always be present. He makes his argument on the basis of many contemporary developments but the rise of Islamophobia and the media hype of Islam as an international threat is central to this. As already argued, culture is itself a contested term and within race discourses leads into the diffuse and tangential territory of 'diversity' and 'difference', referred to and critiqued earlier. However, cultural racism does link in with reference to 'superdiversity' (Vertovec 2006) and as Sivanandan (2002) has said, racism never stands still and "the racism that faces us today is not the racism we faced 40 or 50 years ago" (p. 1). Sivanandan recognises the racism that is perpetrated against refugees and asylum seekers and he also includes Roma, Sintis and "poor whites from Eastern Europe". Sivanandan argues that the experiences of these White groups is based on "fear of strangers" and thus xenophobic but is also racist in the way "it operates". Others, as well as Sivanandan, have argued against the dualist black-white distinction of colour racism in that it ignores Irish racism according to Mac an Ghaill (1999) and the White working-class according to Cole (2009). Gillborn (2008) on the other hand challenges this view taking a Critical Race Theory (CRT) stance of foregrounding racism based on colour discrimination. The importance of CRT together with an engagement with White hegemony is in focusing directly on discriminatory practices and Othering, and away from diversionary cultural exoticism (Crozier 2012). These debates are important and complex and I do not intend to ignore the issue of social class or indeed Irish racism, but I

also assert that recognition of White supremacy is essential to understanding racial oppression and in order to go beyond anti-racist consciousness raising or tweaking policy and practice, in the fight against it.

White supremacy is not, as Gillborn (2008) has said, about the narrow racism of right wing, fascist ideologies. It is more powerful and extensive than that, it is a view “that is normalized and taken for granted.” (p. 35). In other words it is hegemonic. It is central to our lives and is wholly pervasive; it is often taken for granted and its dominance rarely questioned or its existence even recognised. Garner (2007) problematises it as a concept and recognises how it can be used in counterproductive ways. But he also shows how it is an important concept to further our understanding of how racism operates and can be challenged. He argues that Whiteness is a racial identity but one that only exists “in so far as other racialised identities, such as Black, Asian etcetera exist” (p. 2). Whiteness, he says, is a system of power, privilege and cultural capital (Garner 2007). Leonardo (2002) identifies it as a discourse, and Gillborn (2005) goes further by suggesting that: “Critical scholarship on whiteness is not an assault on white people per se: it is an assault on the socially constructed and constantly reinforced power of white identifications and interests (see Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995)” (pp. 58–60). Challenges by White people to White hegemony do take place but are limited. Of course not all people are ‘equally White’ (Leonardo 2002). That is to say they do not have equal power, privilege and influence but arguably all White people have equal interest in safe-guarding their relative White privilege and with that relative advantage (Marx 2006).

Utilizing the concept or discourse of Whiteness to make sense of the educational experiences and evidence of oppression discussed in this chapter I suggest, helps to explain why some anti-racist initiatives have failed to make any impact on BME children’s underachievement for example. It contributes to understanding the insidiousness of the symbolic violence rendered on BME children in school, inhibiting their acquisition of those resources to help them progress through the system of attainment and learning and marginalising their voice. Of course White dominance does not just operate in urban schools but it impacts significantly in these spaces where there are already tensions and pressures, as I have discussed throughout this chapter. White dominance impacts on and perpetrates all facets of the education system: policies, resourcing, curriculum, teacher training and so on. In understanding the ways that Whiteness operates and impacts, we can begin to develop ways of undermining and dismantling its hold but this understanding and a commitment to dismantling White hegemony and thus decentering is central.

57.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the socio-economic and political context of urban education. I have discussed the ways this influences and impacts on the educational experience and opportunities of young BME people. The discrimination and failure of schools to improve the life chances of these young people is disgracefully

enduring. In the chapter I have tried to show that whilst some of the structural inequalities have remained fairly constant the context has become more complex. The changing demographics of schools add to the intricacies of the needs and expectations that schools and their teachers have to respond to. The fairly constant policy changes that schools experience with fewer resources and English as an Additional Language support is one such, contributes to the challenge. Moreover, the changes to teacher education has meant that there is now less preparation of new teachers and less opportunity for in-service development to engage effectively with racial diversity and learn how to effectively address racism in the classroom (Davies 2015).

The policy of school choice has contributed to White flight from some urban schools creating an unhealthy imbalance in the school experience of what should be an integrated and enriching racial diversity. The creation of Free Schools has also contributed, albeit unintentionally, to segregated racial and religious communities. The multiplicity of different types of schools including various types of Academies, as well as Free Schools and Local Authority maintained, has atomized the system and made the possibility of developing and implementing unifying anti-racist policies extremely difficult if not untenable. However, prior to the current Coalition Government (2010–2015) in London the Equality Challenge initiative which targeted BME children's under achievement relatively successfully and improved the urban educational experience across the city, demonstrates some progressive possibilities. According to Baars et al. (2014) the successful initiatives included improved resources such as financial, more teachers and improved school building quality. In addition the improvement of London schools also depended upon effective leadership; a more professional working culture and collective sense of possibility and professional development. Likewise, the calls to localism (e.g. Sahlberg 2011) might be a way forward to bring influence on a small scale but with a potentially cascading effect. Also generating parental participative and democratic involvement on an equal basis is another (Hong et al. 2009).

An additional challenge to urban education and the wider community is the danger of polarisations – hierarchies of oppression which lead, amongst other things, to racial antagonisms. Whilst I have focused on race in this chapter and I would argue that foregrounding race is important strategically, the significance of social class must not be underestimated. As I have discussed in relation to BME achievement and parental participation in schools, race is shown to 'trump' social class. However, class oppression is central to structural inequalities and White hegemony as part of that. White hegemony and social class are inextricably linked. Therefore whilst at times foregrounding race it is essential to challenge these central oppressions simultaneously and collectively.

Education cannot be held responsible for societal manifestations of discontent such as the riots of 2013 and the putative rise of radicalisation amongst young Muslim people. The much quoted sentiment expressed by Bernstein (1971) that education cannot compensate for society holds true. But education, academics and education professionals in general, have a central part to play to support and help to guide people and give sound preparation for children's and young people's future lives.

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