

Teaching and Talking about 'Race' in ITE

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Drawing from research

- **Minority Ethnic Pupils' Experiences of School in Scotland (2005)- Scottish Government**
- **Promoting Cohesion, Challenging Expectations: Educating the teachers of tomorrow for race equality and diversity in 21st century schools (2011) – ESCalate**
- **Everyday Geopolitics of Minority Ethnic Young People in Scotland (2015) - AHRC**



MEPESS (2005) -1

- **82 teachers, 96 pupils and 38 parents**
- **Race equality** was perceived as being largely of **relevance to minority ethnic pupils**
- **Race equality** was often related to discussions about supporting pupils for whom **English is an Additional Language (EAL)**, to **celebration of faiths and festival** or **tackling racist incidents**



MEPESS (2005) -2

- **Very few teachers focused on the curriculum as a tool for delivering for race equality and anti-racist education**
- **Very few recognised engaging with race equality as benefitting majority pupils**
- Parents had different views. Parents talked about **race equality in broader terms** – recognising difference, identities, fostering a positive self –image for their children, challenging deficit views of minorities



MEPESS (2005) -3

- Teachers were **uncomfortable with the term ‘race equality’** with marked avoidance of using terms like ‘anti-racism’ – **preference for terms such as inclusion or diversity**

“I get uncomfortable with the word anti-racist... when you start using emotive words like 'racist' or 'anti-racist', it evokes all kinds of different impressions on people. So we talk about the egalitarian side of things.” Headteacher, Primary



MEPESS (2005) -4

- Parents and pupils wanted their teachers to be **more practiced about addressing difference.**
- **Pupils talked about** adopting social norms, speech, accents and belief systems of majority ethnic peers – **fitting in**
- Teachers tended to interpret **‘being fair’** as **‘treating everyone the same’**



MEPESS (2005) -5

“We deal with everyone in the same way. They come through the door and they're just part of this school. And it doesn't really matter what their background is.” Teacher, Secondary

“I don't think we make any special effort to encourage minority ethnic parents onto the school board because we treat everybody the same.” Deputy Headteacher, Primary

“Of course you have to see the differences, how else are you going to cater for the different requirements. Teacher, Secondary



MEPESS (2005) -6

- **Racism was a feature of life - pupils**

“Because she's Chinese. She gets picked on quite a lot. They say quite a few things about her. It's bad, but not that bad, we deal with it ourselves and move on. Name calling. Or if you're passing through corridors, standing in your way pretending they haven't seen you coming.” *Secondary Pupil*

- Teachers stressed the **success of school ethos** and having a **zero tolerant approach to racial bullying**. Teachers saw **racism as inter-pupil relations**. **Infrequency of racist incidents** was taken as a **proxy that all is well**.



Teacher Educators for the 21st Century (2011)

- Collaboration with Manchester Metropolitan University – two contrasting areas in terms of geography, diversity and ITE delivery models
- 17 staff per institution took part via 1-1 interviews



Teacher Educators for the 21st Century (2011)

- How do teacher educators understand themselves and their roles, in relation to 'race' equality issues in general within the context of England and Scotland?
- How do teacher educators see 'race' equality issues located within initial teacher education?
- In what ways are the issues of 'race' equality addressed within the practice of initial teacher education?
- What kinds of knowledge, experiences and resources do teacher educators identify as supportive in enabling them to develop greater confidence in addressing issues of 'race' equality in their practice?



Scottish summary

- RQ1: Substantial data generated showing awareness is varied
- RQ2: Evidence of willingness but lack of confidence, understanding and knowledge and interviews generated very few examples of practice
- RQ3: With the exception of a discrete course little evidence was offered of how 'race' equality was embedded in course programmes
- RQ4: Needed time and opportunities to discuss and reflect with colleagues rather than more toolkits or websites



Awareness of equality issues (1)

- There was awareness of equality/inequality issues – poverty, gender, disability, religious bigotry

‘...the incidence of child poverty in Scotland seems to be the one that impacts most on student consciousness I think.’ (Female lecturer, primary)



Awareness of equality issues (2)

'I think disability issues are extremely well-addressed- all forms of disability. Very much and I mean clearly physical disabilities but also we talking about learning disability, dyslexia, dyspraxia, that's all been very well addressed.'

- Two areas least mentioned: sexual orientation and "race"



Lecturer confidence

“The 'race' one is a thorny one because we’ve had centuries of difficulties around this.

And I think it’s also very complex. It’s also one that people feel ‘I won’t talk about it cause I don’t want to be racist’. “

(Male lecturer, secondary)



English summary

- RQ1: Substantial data generated showing awareness is varied, for example between curriculum areas.
- RQ2: Evidence of willingness but limited confidence, understanding and knowledge.
- RQ3: Practice focused on discrete courses, little progress towards embedding across the curriculum.
- RQ4: Needed time and opportunities to discuss and reflect with colleagues. Some support for additional training and resources.



Lecturer confidence

“I feel I need an awful lot, and I’m sure most people...even down to the basic... the correct terminology to use, you know the labels bandied about and I don’t know in some area which is politically correct, politically incorrect... I am aware that terminology is changing ...but I’m not up to speed with that.

(Male lecturer, primary)



Awareness of equality issues

“I find that students generally...two things that they don't like talking about are 'race' and class. Those are the two things that they avoid if possible. And we get their essays back at the end of the year and they are allowed to choose from the topics that we do. They are allowed to choose two or three to talk about in their essays, those two are generally avoid, 'race' definitely, class some people will talk about, but they don't talk about 'race'.”



Key Issues

- **Homogeneity of staff and student body not generating a robust engagement with issues of ethnic, linguistic, religious diversities**
- **Need to move beyond a ‘cultural’ approach to a more critical understanding of power at macro, meso and micro levels**
- **Getting the message across that ‘racial equality’ is not just about BME learners**
- **Systematic embedding of equality (including ‘race’) issues needed**



Everyday Geopolitics of Minority Ethnic Young People in Scotland (2015)

**‘How international, national and local
political events shape the everyday
experiences of minority ethnic and
religious young people in Scotland ‘**





Rowena Arshad (co-I) is interested in race equality and anti-discrimination issues and how these issues are taken forward in education (school, community education and tertiary) and within educational policy.



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



Kate Botterill (PDRA) researches issues of migration, identity and the lifecourse. Her PhD explored the motivations, experiences and aspirations of young Polish migrants living in Edinburgh and Krakow.



Peter Hopkins (PI) research interests include: young people's geographies; religion, faith and spirituality; and the intersections between masculinities and ethnicities.



Gurchathen Sanghera's (Co-I) research interests include the politics of race/ethnicity; education, exclusion and social capital; critical approaches to human rights; and UN peace support operations in Liberia and Haiti.



University of
St Andrews

600
YEARS

Participant Data

- 382 young people
- 192 female and 190 male
- Age: 12-25 (70% in the 12-18 age range)
- Range of faith and belief groups
- Range of backgrounds – Asylum seekers and refugees, Eastern European migrants, International students, White Scottish, visible minorities



Qualitative

Topics covered....

-Everyday life, home and belonging, being a minority, neighbourhoods, school experiences, life in the city or countryside, identity, Scottish politics, local and global political events



In the main...

- Education sites were seen as safe spaces - order and consistency
- Friendship groups were diverse
- YP were appreciative of their teachers



Donald

... Most people actually do [think I am Muslim]. Like, and our RE teacher once thought I was a Muslim because of my skin colour. Then, yeah and when I first came to this school some of my friends now were shocked that I was a Catholic. They thought I was Muslim as well.

Donald, male, 12-15, Indian, Glasgow



Flynn

‘If someone asks me... like, where are you from. And I would say Scotland, and they would say no, but where are you really from...I’m like I’m from Scotland. Aye, but where is your mum from. She’s from Scotland. Ah, okay, so where’s your dad from? Aye, he’s Palestinian. They you go, you’re Palestinian.. But I’m from Scotland. But, yeah, I would say I’m mixed between the both I would identify myself as a Scottish person’.

Flynn, male, 16-18 Scottish Palestinian, Muslim, Fife



Afia

'I remember in one of my politics classes you know they're awkward because we were talking about Al Qaida and I felt awkward because I am, like, well why am I feeling awkward? But I feel tremendously awkward but it is because of the big media stigma that we associate one with the other, and all of us should be apologetic for what some people do. It's very strange'.

Afia, female, Scottish Pakistani, Muslim 18-24,
Glasgow



Dumfries Focus Group

'They (teachers) think more about your grades. Things like ethnic minorities I think, like, if they focus on that then maybe it would make it seem like it's a big deal, but they don't want to make it seem like it's a big deal, they want to just be like oh, yeah, it is normal, we don't have to focus on ethnic minorities, that kind of thing.'

Dumfries Focus Group (12-15 year olds)



Emerging issues

- **Staff awareness of micro-aggressions and impact**
- **Awareness of everyday street experiences that might disrupt ontological securities**
- **How can ITE assist future teachers (in all subject areas) to do more to educate against misrecognition**
- **YP want to talk about issues like racism but teachers are less willing to**



The future...

- Teaching workforce has to be more diverse – the lack of convergence of interest is stalling progress
- Role models required – ‘if you don’t see yourself, you cannot imagine yourself in that space’
- Recruitment of teaching staff, who writes the ITE curriculum and how we select students – has to have at its core criticality and an explicit commitment to politicised lenses – power, transformation, decolonisation and diversity

