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Young Migrant Women in Secondary Education – Promoting integration and mutual understanding through dialogue and exchange

National Policy Review: UK

Institute of Education- University of London

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A note on third country nationals

A third country national is “any person who is not a national of an EU member state” (http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/glossary/glossary_t_en.htm, accessed 15 March 2010). Nationals from countries which are not part of EU27 but which are members of the European Economic Area (Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) and nationals from countries with candidate status (Turkey, Croatia and FYROM) are therefore classed as third country nationals. Under United Kingdom migration policy, EEA nationals, Swiss nationals, and their families have the right to work and live in the UK (the “right of residence”). Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Slovakian and Slovenian nationals are required to register under the Workers Registration Scheme: most Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are required to apply for an accession worker card.

Nationals from countries with candidate status and other third country nationals do not have the right of free movement and residence in the UK. Distinctions between Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth immigrants to the UK were abolished in the 1972; however, Commonwealth citizen with UK ancestry (at least one grandparent born in the UK) can apply to come to the UK to work. Turkish citizens can benefit from a European agreement with Turkey if they want to establish themselves in business in the UK, or if they are already working in the UK legally. Current guidelines on immigration to the UK are available online through the UK Border Agency (<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>).

Scope of this review

This review of United Kingdom policy primarily focuses on historical background, national policy context, and education policy issues as these relate to young migrant women at secondary schools in England and not in the UK as a whole. In 1998, national administrations were established in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland, with education systems devolved away from the central UK government. Although the education systems of Northern Ireland and Wales have much in common with that of England, education in Scotland has always been distinct, with its own awarding and accrediting bodies and qualifications framework. In the main, this review is also concerned with educational policy and practice in the state-funded school sector (‘maintained’ secondary schools) and not the independent (privately-funded) school sector, although recent figures suggest that the ethnic mix at independent schools is roughly the same as that for maintained schools at around 23% ((ISC Census, available at www.isc.co.uk/publication_8_0_0_11_561.htm).¹

¹ These figures are not broken down by ethnic categories, although evidence from University applications suggests that Chinese and Indian groups are more likely to use private education (Tomlinson 2005, p. 157). Tomlinson cites evidence of



England has also been chosen as the main focus of this review because the vast majority of third country nationals to come to the United Kingdom in the years following the Second World War have settled in England. (Figures from the 2001 census show that 13% of the English population belong to minority ethnic groups, compared to 4% in Wales, 2% in Scotland, and 7.9% across the UK as a whole.) Furthermore, although immigration is not a devolved issue, with entry to, and settlement in, the UK regulated by the Home Office (see <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/passports-and-immigration/index.html>), differences in policy drivers have emerged in recent years between the Scottish and UK governments, with the Scottish Government expressing a need to attract migrants in order to combat population decline.

As per the terms of this project, UK policy relating to refugees and asylum seekers is not discussed in this review. The project working definition of 'migrant children' includes not only third country nationals (children who are not nationals of one of the 27 EU member states) but also children whose families have been settled in the UK for two generations or less. The breadth of this definition means that the policies and sources described in this review are not all specifically focused on migrants but rather on 'minority ethnic groups'², a category which includes (but is not limited to) cohorts of the young migrant women that are the subject of this research project.

emerging black and Asian middle classes educating their children privately, but also of black middle class parents sending their children back to the Caribbean for secondary schooling (ibid).

² The term 'minority ethnic group' is the usual term in the UK for minority groups that have a shared race, nationality or language and culture.

A. National Context

A1. Historical Phases of Immigration following the British Nationality Act

The British Nationality Act 1948 gave all people living in Commonwealth countries full rights of entry and settlement in Britain. The arrival of the MV Empire Windrush in London on 22 June 1948 carrying around 500 passengers, mostly from Jamaica, marked the start of mass immigration to the UK (rising from 3,000 economic migrants in 1953 to 136, 400 in 1961) and has come to symbolise the beginning of modern multicultural Britain. Governments and employers encouraged West Indians to fill UK job vacancies in industry, public transport and the National Health Service, but many migrants faced intolerance and racism, especially where the white population perceived competition over housing and jobs. In the 1950s, tensions culminated in race riots in London, Birmingham and Nottingham. In this first phase of mass immigration (the 1950s to the mid-1970s), diversity was perceived as a threat and new immigrants were expected to assimilate into the dominant white culture.

Thereafter, successive UK administrations legislated to restrict the right to immigration: for example, the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962 required migrants to be issued with employment vouchers by the government in order to settle. Although the flow of immigrants to Britain from the Indian subcontinent was at its peak in the late 1960s (and included around 30, 000 Ugandan Asians expelled by Idi Amin), by 1972 rights of entry were restricted to those with work permits, or with parents or grandparents who had been born in the UK. Most immigrants settled in the large cities (the biggest centres of African Caribbean settlement are in London and Birmingham) but sizeable minority ethnic populations (especially from Pakistan) settled in smaller industrial towns and cities in the north, attracted by employment opportunities in manufacturing and textiles.

With these restrictions came a shift in the nature of UK immigration, which from the mid-1970s to the late-1980s was characterised by chain migration, whereby families set out to join relatives who had migrated in earlier waves.³ In this period, the idea of a multiracial, culturally diverse (multicultural) society began to replace assimilation as the goal. The Race Relations Act 1976 legislated to prevent discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin and the Commission for Racial Equality, the statutory body charged with tackling racial discrimination, was established. However, this period was again marred by racial violence. The Scarman Report (1981), which enquired into race riots in Brixton, highlighted the problems of racial disadvantage in Britain's inner cities and signalled a shift from discourse about race relations to community relations, with its focus on the relative social, economic and political status of ethnic communities.

As well as tightening legislation through the 1980s and 90s, the nature of immigration changed again with the decline in manufacturing industries (meaning work permits were the preserve of those with specialist skills, often from America, South Africa, and the Antipodes) and changes on the geopolitical stage. Civil wars in the 1990s brought refugees and asylum seekers from Somalia and Sudan and Sierra Leone and from Bosnia, Kosovo and Turkey. The UK did not place restriction on migration of workers from the eight accession countries joining the EU in 2004: between May 2004 and June 2005 around 427,000 workers from these countries successfully applied for work in the UK, the majority from Poland. (Nevertheless, data for 2004-2006 shows that 67-74% of non-British citizen entries each year were citizens of countries outside the twenty-five Member States.)

In the UK, as in other European countries, the subject of immigration has recently attained new vigour (and venom in some media), particularly with regard to asylum seekers and refugees. Despite the fact that the rate

³ Areas of the UK (like Scotland) which experienced only low levels of immigration after the Second World War did not have large settled migrant communities to attract chain migration, thus intensifying the gap between areas with significant minority ethnic populations and those without.

of immigration from the UK's former colonies has fallen dramatically since the 1950s and 60s, in both public opinion and political discourse the topic of settled migrant communities is often conflated with that of new migrants (Tomlinson, 2005). Blurred distinctions between who is a migrant and who is a citizen are particularly confused where ethnicity and faith are brought into play, with debates on immigration not separated from those on racial equality. From the late 1990s, a new discourse about migration also emerged, partly as a backlash against 'multiculturalism', viewed by some on the right as a manifestation of 'political correctness' and some on the left as a cause of segregation. Policies and initiatives increasingly refer to 'community cohesion' and 'social inclusion', that is, promoting understanding between and of different cultures and faiths and highlighting the importance of citizenship and community engagement. However, although new legislation has been introduced to prevent discrimination, it is by no means clear that this 'bureaucratic approach to diversity' (Mirza 2005, p. 5) has produced actual racial equality and equality of opportunity. Recent studies have also questioned the appropriateness of the established terminology of race and ethnicity in contemporary Britain: a recent report (Sveinsson, 2010) which draws together community studies focused on 'smaller, more hidden, and often voiceless communities and ethnic groups' (including Vietnamese, Bolivians and South Africans), posited that the 'monolithic blocs of black, Asian, white and "other"' (p. 4) are outmoded in a new era of 'super-diversity' (ibid.).

A2. Current Migration Legislation

In 2006, the UK government published 'the most significant change to managed migration in the last 40 years' (Home Office, 2006). (Creation and consultation on this new system came at a time when migration to the UK from the A8 countries [see above] was far in excess of the government's prediction of 15, 000 migrants a year.) Moves have been taken to strengthen UK border controls via a Points Based System (PBS) and the Borders, Immigration and Citizenship Act 2009 and a single border control agency, the UK Border Agency (created in 2008) now controls immigration to the UK. The PBS currently (2008-2010) being introduced classifies immigrants from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland into five tiers: Tier 1: Highly skilled workers; Tier 2: Skilled workers with a job offer; Tier 3: Low-skilled workers filling temporary labour shortages; Tier 4: Students; Tier 5: Temporary workers and youth mobility. Each tier has different rights in terms of entry and settlement, with those in Tier 1 having the greatest access and those in Tier 3 having no right to be accompanied by dependants. These changes, along with a restricted approach to citizenship, mark 'a shift to a more proactive method of promoting citizenship, and demanding that longer term migrants (those staying for more than five years) progress along a path to citizenship by passing various tests' (Kyambi, 2009: p. 14).

The intention of 'managed migration' is to create an immigration system that is 'focused primarily on bringing in migrants who are highly skilled or to do key jobs that cannot be filled from the domestic labour force or from the EU' (Home Office 2006, p. 1). The right to settle in Britain is therefore linked to human capital, and the skills and qualifications potential migrants can bring to the UK: as some commentators warn, for migrants from poorer countries, deskilling and downward social mobility are common (Sveinsson 2010, p. 14).

It seems likely that the recent change of government (a Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition came to power in May 2010) will signal a shift in UK migration policy, with the Conservative election manifesto making a commitment to introducing a cap on non-EU immigration. In one of its first immigration measures the new government brought forward legislation requiring non-EU immigrants marrying (or entering into a civil partnership with) UK citizens to pass a basic English language test. This legislation is conceived of as a means to support the integration of immigrants into the national and local communities; campaigners, however, have raised concerns that the requirement will have a discriminatory impact, particularly on young female immigrants from South Asia (see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk/10270797.stm>).

A3. Female Immigrants

As this suggests, the experiences of male and female immigrants can be different and immigration is not a gender-neutral process. However, discourse analysis demonstrates that gender is infrequently employed as a discursive category in the UK: on the contrary, fears over rising immigration levels have prompted an abstract discourse that depersonalises immigrants and ascribes immigrants a group identity (Griffin, 2007). In policy terms, attention focuses chiefly on employed-related migration (conceived of as a predominantly male activity) and although gender-differentiated immigration data is collected it is under-used, under-analysed and under-published. In fact, family migration (that is, migration for family formation [mostly migrants from the Indian subcontinent] or for family reunion) is the largest single category of migration to developed countries including the UK.⁴ Although this type of migration is generally dominated by females, family migration is viewed as a consequence of mass labour migration, and with this economic focus, policy on family migration is framed with reference to primary applicants who are assumed to be male heads of household. The impact of family migration on the economy and labour force participation is also an under-researched and under-monitored area and the significance of family mobility to the social and cultural aspects of migration is largely overlooked in policy. Despite the fact that labour migration to sectors such as health, education and domestic service is female-dominated (generally migration reinforces existing gender divisions in the workplace), gender is neglected in policy terms and the different patterns of female migration go unrecognised.

The shift to a managed migration system, giving rights of residence to the dependants to skilled and highly-skilled workers only, is indicative of a general trend toward placing restrictions on family related modes of migration. (Women also tend to be engaged in types of employment with more limited rights.) As Kofman et al (2008) explain, 'until the mid-1980s, British immigration policy embodied profoundly racist and sexist assumptions, with the male breadwinner expected to determine the place of family domicile and the wife to follow him' (p. 6). Until it was abolished in 1997, the Primary Purpose Rule (PPR) controlled spousal immigration deemed primarily for economic advantage but engineered through a marriage of convenience. Since 2000, legislation on spousal rights of residency have been tightened in order to prevent 'sham' marriages⁵, with the period of probation increased from one to two years (although women migrants leaving violent relationships are granted leave to remain). Within the two year probationary period, spouses have no access to income-related welfare benefits, forcing women into a position of economic dependency on their settled spouse or partner (with their entry to the labour market mostly informal); evidence suggests that some South Asian women have been vulnerable under this rule to their husbands holding their passports (Kofman et al 2008, p.35).

According to the Women's National Commission, 'women who have migrated to the UK, forced or of free will, are more likely than migrant men to suffer from discrimination. They are also more likely to be exposed to forced labour, sexual exploitation and other kinds of gender-based violence. They are more likely to accept hazardous work conditions and low salaries that are below the minimum wage' (<http://www.thewnc.org.uk/work-of-the-wnc/migration-and-asylum.html>). The differential experiences of women immigrants are recognised in policy on people trafficking. Estimates of the number of women trafficked annually to the UK (from Eastern Europe; West Africa, China and Thailand) for sexual exploitation range from the just over one hundred to just under fifteen hundred (Kofman et al 2005, p. 14).

A4. Immigration and education

Parallel phases of assimilation, integration, multiculturalism and community cohesion tell the story of how successive governments have treated migrant pupils. Although the arrival of the first immigrants in English

⁴ The other two major migrant groups are labour migrants and asylum seekers. In 2005, family migrants comprised 31.4% of long-term migrants to the UK (Kofman & Meeto 2008, p. 157).

⁵ A sham marriage is defined by the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (S24) as 'one entered into for the purpose of avoiding the effect of one or more provisions of United Kingdom immigration law or the immigration rules'.

schools was met, in James Lynch's words, by 'ignorance and neglect' and migrant education was not addressed (Gillborn, 2001), for a decade after the late-1950s, emphasis was placed on 'protecting' traditional ways from the potential negative impact of minority ethnic pupils on schools and ensuring that educational resources were not seen to be directed at these migrant pupils at the expense of the white population (Gillborn, 2001). As well as being 'culturally and socially deficient', migrant children were pathologised as being 'inherently intellectually lacking' (Mirza, 2005, p. 2), and a degree of segregation took place, with Black and Asian children dispersed in order to keep minority ethnic numbers small in any one class, school or area.

This philosophy of cultural deficit continued into the 1970s and was enforced at many levels, including in the curriculum, by crude stereotyping of minorities. With the key driving force being to protect the status quo, attention was focused on immigrant pupils and their families as the cause of 'problems', including the lower achievements of minority ethnic pupils (Gillborn, 2001). Black underachievement was believed to stem from the low self-esteem of black children which led to low aspirations, both for themselves and by their teachers. Until the early 1990s, debates on the education of minority ethnic pupils centred on this issue of underachievement (and in turn to perceived links between Black social exclusion and criminality): it has even been suggested that this discourse 'lead to lowered expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies of failure' (Runnymede, 1997). Two major educational reports, the Rampton Report (1981) and the Swann Report (1985), both of which inquired into the underachievement and needs of all ethnic minority children (Rampton explicitly on West Indian children), 'showed educational underachievement had taken root, and for the first time linked it to socioeconomic concerns of race and class' (Mirza, 2005, p. 3).⁶ But, as Mirza points out, with educational analysis focused on underachievement, gender was marginalised and comment in research on black female performance was absent or ignored (Mirza 1992, p. 30).

A5. Ethnic minority pupils in schools

Across compulsory education, one in eight pupils in the UK is now from a minority ethnic background. England has a higher proportion of minority ethnic pupils than the other three countries: figures from the English School Census of January 2008 show that in state-funded secondary education 19.5% of pupils were classified as of minority ethnic origin, an increase from 18% in 2007. (Statistical First Release 2008, www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000786/SFR_09_2008.pdf). (This compares to 3.8% of Scottish pupils with a minority ethnic background in 2005.) In line with recent immigration trends, the fastest growing ethnic group in London schools is 'white other' (that is, pupils not from Britain but from European countries like Poland and Lithuania). Figures from 2009 show that 11.1% of secondary school pupils (364, 280 pupils) in England (364, 280 pupils) have a language other than English as their mother tongue. In Inner London, over half of school pupils (54.1%) are recorded as learning English as an additional language (Statistical First Release, August 2009, www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/raising_achievement/763697/).⁷

Pupil diversity is not quite matched by teacher diversity and black and Asian teachers are under-represented in the workforce. Figures for January 2009 show that 94% of teachers in England (across compulsory education) were white; 2.7% of teachers in 2009 were from Asian or Asian British ethnic groups; 1.8% were Black or Black British and 0.9% were from a mixed heritage (Statistical First Release, September 2009; available at www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000874/index.shtml). As Archer and Francis (2007) note, Teacher Training Agency surveys regularly reveal that 'the majority of new teachers report feeling ill-prepared and ill-equipped to engage with multicultural classrooms and pupils from diverse backgrounds' (p. xv).

⁶ The different discourse that has emerged in the late 1990s with the New Labour administration and the effects of this are dealt with in Section B of this report.

⁷ In two London areas, Newham and Brent, there is a larger ethnic minority population than white population (UK Census 2001).

B. Policy Context

B1. Policy Drivers

Since the New Labour government came into power in May 1997, a number of national initiatives have been implemented that impact upon migrants and education. Some of these initiatives are relevant to children and young people in education in general; others specifically tackle the imbalance of educational opportunities and educational outcomes for school pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. Two drivers have shaped policy on education and migrants: (1) a commitment to social justice, and in particular, to policies of equality and inclusion; and (2) the creation and promotion of the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda. With reference to equality, the Race Relations Amendment Act (RRRA) 2000 has a key impact in stimulating a range of equality and inclusion duties of public bodies, which the Equality Act 2010 has integrated into a general equality duty, bringing together the duties on gender, ethnicity and disability with duties on age, gender identity, religion and belief, and sexual identity. Significantly, both the RRRA and Every Child Matters emerged from inquiries into the murders of Black children in Britain, and the questions these deaths raised about UK society's record in racial equality and child protection. The Department for Schools, Children and Families (DCSF) is responsible for issues affecting people in England up to the age of 19, including child protection and education. DCSF was created in 2007 following the demerger of the Department of Education and Skills.

1. Race Relations Amendment Act. The racially-motivated murder of black British teenager, Stephen Lawrence, in 1993; the failure to convict any suspects for the murder; and the handling of the case by the police and the Crown Prosecution Service, led to the Macpherson Inquiry (1999) which found that the Metropolitan Police Service was 'institutionally racist' (contradicting the findings of the Scarman Report).⁸ The Macpherson Report contained 4 educational recommendations, including that the National Curriculum 'better reflect the needs of a diverse society'; that Local Education Authorities and school Governors develop strategies to prevent and address racism in schools; and that the implementation of these strategies be monitored by the schools' inspectorate (OFSTED). Drafted in response to Macpherson's findings, the RRRA extended the 1976 Act by including a statutory duty on public bodies to promote race equality, and to demonstrate that procedures to prevent race discrimination are effective. (Additional legislation, the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, included the offence of inciting religious hatred.) Specific duties were placed on schools to help them meet the general duty of positively monitoring and promoting race equality: to prepare a written statement of the school's policy for promoting race equality, and to act upon it; to assess the impact of school policies on pupils, staff and parents of different racial groups, including, in particular, the impact of attainment levels of these pupils; to monitor the operation of all the school's policies, including, in particular their impact on the attainment levels of pupils from different racial groups; and to take reasonable steps to make available the results of its monitoring.
2. Every Child Matters. Launched in 2003 in the wake of the Laming Report into the death of 8 year old Victoria Climbié, a child from the Ivory Coast who was murdered by the guardians she had come to live with in England, the aim of the Every Child Matters programme is to give all children the support they need to be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic well-being. The legislative basis for many ECM reforms came with the passing of the Children's Act 2004, which requires schools, health and social services to work closely together, and the agenda was cemented in the Children's Plan 2007 (see www.dcsf.gov.uk/childrensplan/). Among areas of guidance for those working with children is statutory guidance for organisations and individuals enabling them to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

⁸ 'Institutional racism' is defined by Macpherson as 'the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people' (Macpherson, 1999, p.28).

B2. General Initiatives impacting on migrant/minority ethnic pupils

The national curriculum has been amended as part of the new duties on schools to address and prevent racism. In response to the Macpherson Report, mandatory 'citizenship education' was introduced to the curriculum in 2002 for pupils aged 11 to 16. Nonetheless, there has been ongoing concern about the lack of a culturally-diverse curriculum and the role this might play both in racism and in educational underachievement by some minority ethnic groups. Sally Tomlinson argues that 'the failure of successive governments to encourage curriculum policies that would combat cultural ignorance, ethnocentric attitudes and racism' is 'the most serious omission concerning the education of all young people in a multiethnic society' (Tomlinson 2005, p. 165). The Diversity and Citizenship Curriculum Review (The Ajegbo Report, 2007) found that although there were examples of outstanding practice in citizenship education, there was a huge variation in the amount and quality of citizenship provision, and a 'light touch' approach meant that citizenship objectives were not prioritised. This report drew attention to the fact that, in general, schools neither engaged with issues of diversity and identity nor was citizenship education sufficiently contextualised and recommended that explicit content for the programme be developed on identity and diversity in the UK, including content on critical thinking about ethnicity, race and religion, and on immigration.⁹ Although the theme of identity and cultural diversity is included on the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum there is debate about the extent to which the curriculum is used as a race equality intervention: research by the Runnymede Trust, for example, suggests that 'teachers in majority white schools may be more confident in implementing the policy of responding to racist incidents rather than in engaging with the delivery of cultural diversity teaching in PSHE lessons' (Asare 2009, p. 3) thus leaving the conditions that give rise to racist incidents unchallenged.

Schools also have a gender equality duty (to demonstrate that they are promoting equality for women and men and eliminating sexual discrimination and harassment, and they are required to have a gender-equality scheme) and a community cohesion duty (a duty that all pupils understand and appreciate others from different backgrounds with a sense of shared values, fulfilling their potential and feeling part of a community, at a local, national and international level). Again, there are questions about the extent to which these duties have translated into actual educational policies designed to ensure justice and equity and to combat racism and exclusion. Shain (2003) found that although all the schools she visited in the course of her fieldwork had policies on race equality or equal opportunities, racism and racial harassment was an 'accepted part' (p. 130) of the school experience of female Asian pupils.

The New Labour government is committed to parental choice in education, particularly in the selection of school their child attends (schools in England act as their own admissions authorities) and research suggests that many minority ethnic parents are in favour of selection although the system often works against them (Tomlinson, 2005). Tomlinson also argues that the evidence shows parental choice has increased social and racial segregation in schools, as it has enforced the idea of a hierarchy of desirability, with many schools attended by ethnic minorities (often inner city schools without an established academic culture) viewed as the least desirable. This tension between choice and inclusive education is also present in the emergence of faith schools in England: the range of school with a particular religious character or formal links with a religious organisation has increased since 1997 and concerns have been raised about whether these schools are divisive in a multicultural society.

B3. Initiatives specifically targeted at migrant/ minority ethnic pupils

In common with previous governments, New Labour has sought to tackle the perennial issue of 'underachievement'. (Archer and Francis [2007] argue that 'issues of race/ethnicity are only really acknowledged or addressed by education policy within the context of "under-achievement"' [p. 1].) The

⁹ The Islam and Citizenship Education Project (www.theiceproject.sdsa.net) has added Islamic guidance to the national citizenship programme of study that schools use.

Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils consultation (2003) took place in the wake of analysis which showed that Chinese and Indian young people achieve better than average GCSE results, while Black and Pakistani young people underachieve, meaning they are less likely to go to university and to get good jobs, and more likely to disengage from education and wider society. Following on from this, the Aiming High: African Caribbean Achievement Pilot (2003-2005) aimed to work with school leaders to develop whole-school approaches to raising the achievement of African Caribbean pupils and to engage parents in school life. An evaluation of this pilot found that it had been effective in raising attainment in some (but not all) schools although 'colour-blind' approaches (which play down racial inequalities) were found to be a barrier to the implementation of the programme's goals (Tikly et al, 2006). The Black Pupils Achievement Programme (2005-2008) aimed to raise the attainment of target groups (Black African, Black Caribbean and mixed heritage, Turkish, Somali, Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils) and to contribute to raising overall attainment locally and nationally. Other related programmes include: London Challenge/City Challenge (running for 3 years from 2008) which aimed to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children; the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), a DCSF fund devolved to local authorities and schools to support minority ethnic pupils and raise the achievement levels of those at risk of underachieving; and the Excellence in Cities (EIC) programme, intended to improve the education of children in cities. The Aiming High strategy includes measures for English as an Additional Language (EAL) which set out a number of areas for development of work to support bilingual learners. The EAL Programme (National Strategies) is designed to support improvement in the standards of attainment in English and mathematics of bilingual learners by drawing on, developing and disseminating knowledge and understanding of bilingualism, and EAL pedagogy and practice.

Several initiatives have been criticised for allowing schools to follow a 'soft approach' focusing on aspects of behaviour (like personal development), culture and the home rather than structural issues such as implementing strong leadership in schools which have been demonstrated to have a significant effect in raising (Mirza, 2005). Research has shown the impact of the EMAG in closing ethnic achievement gaps to be negligible (Tikly et al, 2005) and has criticised the initiative for offering (limited) resources within the existing system.

The exclusion of black pupils from schools is a priority area for action. (In 2007/08 Black Caribbean pupils were three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than their white counterparts.) Following a priority review, the Department ran a project in 2007/08 to reduce exclusions of those pupils, and published training materials for teachers in 2009. John Pitts' studies of gangs in London have shown that around two-third of gang member have been permanently excluded from schools.¹⁰ The Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) strategy has also had implications for schools: the strategy recognises the importance of working with children and young people to build resilience to violent extremism and to protect those who are vulnerable. Despite these initiatives targeted specifically at minority ethnic pupils, it has been argued that they are 'small-scale and localised' (Archer & Francis, 2007: p. 16).

¹⁰ The Tackling Gangs Action Programme (TGAP) provided figures which showed that almost all gang members were male (97%) and three quarters were African-Caribbean.

C. Educational Policy Issues

C1. Educational Policy and young migrant/minority ethnic women

This review has referred to ongoing concern in the UK about the lower achievement levels of some minority ethnic pupils. In practice, the majority of discourse has focused on the lower achievement levels of boys, particularly African Caribbean boys and, more recently, white working-class boys (the lowest attaining group) and Muslim boys. Girls remain absent from current discussions around gender and schooling, eclipsed by an ongoing international media and policy obsession with the 'boys underachievement debate' (Archer et al, 2007, p. 549). A 'girls versus the boys' mindset exists, with certain characteristics associated with girls (working hard; being organised; handing in homework) also being viewed as indicators of likely success (Rollock, 2007). Because assumptions are made that 'merely to be female is thought to imbue girls with an inherent ready-to-work attitude and approach to schooling' (Rollock 2007, p. 6) girls are thought to be 'not a problem' and there has been resistance to policies focused on girls. However, as well as it being oversimplified to think that girls do well and boys do badly, the catch-all term of 'girl' overlooks the experiences of 'other' girls such as minority ethnic young women or working-class girls, despite the fact that discussion of boys often concentrates explicitly on these 'other' groups (Archer et al, 2007: p. 550). Although, for white British pupils social class has a far greater bearing on educational achievement than gender, the same is not true for all minority ethnic groups (ibid.). Noting the overall improvement in the performance of girls in schools masks the educational difficulties of girls from working-class and/or minority ethnic heritage as well as the impact of other social identities.

Data from the Youth Cohort Study suggest that while the gender gap is established within each of the principal minority ethnic groups, there are nevertheless consistent and significant inequalities of attainment between ethnic groups regardless of pupils' gender (Gillborn & Mirza, 2000). The data highlight a particular disadvantage experienced by Pakistani/Bangladeshi and African-Caribbean pupils. Here girls attain rather higher than their male peers – which, in the case of Black girls, educational research has attributed to the (mythologised) 'strong black mother' (Mirza 2009, p. 11) – but the gender gap within groups is insufficient to close the pronounced inequality of attainment associated with their ethnic group as a whole. Achievement data shows that, in actual fact, white British boys do better than Black Caribbean girls at GCSE level (Archer & Francis 2007, p. 10).

In a similar vein, Osler and Vincent (2003) examined school exclusion data and found that girls comprised a very significant minority (1 in 4) of school exclusions of pupils aged 13-15 (a key educational period in terms of working towards public examinations); but noted that there was a lack of interest in this from policy makers and a belief that this was not a priority issue. Although there is evidence to support the argument that African Caribbean girls are disproportionately likely to be excluded from school compared to other ethnic groups (eight times more likely than their white female peers [ibid]), the impact of institutional or teacher racism (explicit or implicit) on girl pupils is under-researched. As Archer *et al* (2007) outline, disengagement from education by girls, like exclusion, is something that is often hidden, with girls' tactics for disengagement being less visible and disruptive than those used by boys. Because of this, disengagement by girls is not regarded as a priority issue, either by schools or policy-makers. Interestingly, this research also concludes that while 'educational policy and popular discourse continues to assume that boys need "saving" [...] "good" girls are learning that they must "save themselves"' (p. 566): the girls interviewed in this study assumed blame and responsibility for their own achievement. For girls as a whole, Osler and Vincent argue, 'the efforts of policy-makers to address the needs of boys, examining apparent 'underachievement' and disaffection, have led to a neglect of girls' social and educational needs. At school level, the more overtly challenging behaviour of some boys has served to mask girls' difficulties, resulting in programmes, provision and resource allocation targeted at boys' (p. 169).

The issue of pupil mobility – that is, the movement of pupils in and out of schools at non-standard times of entry – is one with direct relevance to young migrant women, although in the UK it is most often discussed

with references to refugee and asylum-seeking children. Pupil mobility is perceived by many head teachers to have a negative effect on school performance, largely because mobile pupils tend to be those with EAL: young people's wellbeing, progress and attainment may be negatively affected by domestic and school mobility (see LERU 2008). The New Arrivals Excellence Programme (NAEP) offers guidance on the induction and integration of newly-arrived pupils learning EAL and the DCSF provides advice for schools on meeting the needs of newly arrived learners of EAL, especially where these schools have no access to specialist ethnic minority advisers.

Where schools policy concerns young minority ethnic women specifically, it is in cultural/social measures. As part of the Every Child Matters agenda, the DCSF published (in 2008) booklets and leaflets on forced marriage specifically aimed at children and young people, with separate leaflets aimed at teachers. In the school context, forced marriage is viewed as a child protection issue, and because of unexplained absence, schools have the potential to recognise when a forced marriage may have taken place. Practice guidelines for professionals, including school staff, were developed followed the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007.¹¹ Mirza (2007) argues, however, that in general multiculturalism in Britain has failed to recognise gender difference, with consequences for 'ethnicised' young women who are invisible, not fully-protected, and thus vulnerable to oppressive cultural and religious practices, such as forced marriage, crimes said to be committed in the name of 'honour' ('izzat') and Female Genital Mutilation (in the UK an estimated 6,500 girls are at risk of FGM every year). Institutional paralysis and community resistance can prevent Muslim women from getting or seeking help with domestic violence. In 2009, the DCSF set up the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Advisory Group which recommended that the DCSF commission guidance for schools to support effective teaching and learning to prevent VAWG across the curriculum as part of the gender equality duty.

C2. Issues of Identity for Young Migrant Women

Educational research and policy can categorise minority ethnic pupils in ways which are insufficiently intricate to identify and address equality of opportunity and outcomes. Added to this, stereotypes of female pupils persist, with the ideal female pupil being quiet, obliging, working industriously and so forth. As Archer *et al* (2007) found in their study of working-class girls in inner city schools, discourse about what female pupils are can be experienced as narrow and constraining (p. 555). Indeed, this study found that the conflict between expectation and experience was particularly pronounced among minority ethnic young women; moreover, teachers and professionals described this disengagement in 'explicitly racialized terms' (*ibid.*, p. 557), with Black girls viewed as louder than Asian girls who were homogenised into a passive (and thus marginalised) group. (Asian girls were also perceived by pupils to be treated more harshly for transgressing the expected behavioural codes.) Some researchers have attempted to find out more about how migrant/minority ethnic girls and young women construct and negotiate their identities in school. As Nicola Rollock points out, when identifying a new approach to debates on the school performance of Black pupils that is neither structuralist (fault of the system, with black pupils reduced to victims) or culturalist (pathologising black pupils and their families/communities), there needs to be a consideration of 'the ways in which Black pupils themselves may inadvertently contribute to their own negative positioning as they attempt to negotiate their school existence' (Rollock 2007, p. 19).

Although focused on children in primary schools, Diane Reay's case study of gendered power relations among 7-year-olds in London contains interesting insights on issues and themes affecting young women in schools stemming from debates on achievement. Reay argues that the binaries of achieving girls and underachieving boys; and mature girls and immature boys 'prevent us from seeing the full range of diversity and differentiation'. Reay detected the beginnings of 'the intense preoccupation with academic success that other researchers describe in relation to middle-class, female secondary school pupils' (Reay, 2001, p. 158). The dominant peer-group culture makes being a 'nice' girl (who is academic and well-behaved) an unpopular choice and the two Asian girls in the class were not part of the dominant girls' groups, which were all-white.

¹¹ See www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/forced-marriage/publications and www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/3849543/forced-marriage-guidelines09.pdf

Although this case-study is very small, Reay concludes that 'ethnicity, as well as class, appears to be an important consideration in the possibilities and performances of different femininities' (ibid. p. 160). Ethnicity, as well as class and sexuality, can 'constrain as well as create' (ibid., p. 163) the options available to girls in constructing their gender identity.

For Asian – or Muslim – girls the focus of their femininity has been on constraint not rebellion, and the symbols of stereotypes of oppression by the home culture (as opposed to the freedom of school): clothing and choice in marriage. The current representation of these girls is as 'the over-controlled victims of oppressive cultures' (Shain 2003, p. ix) and research has shown that 'it is a common experience for Asian girls to be ignored or marginalised in classroom interaction because it is assumed that they are industrious, hardworking and get on quietly with their work' (ibid., p. 62). Research with working-class Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian girls aged 13-16 conducted by Shain (2003) shows instead that 'the girls are actively engaged in producing identities that draw on both residual cultures of the home and the local and regional cultures they now inhabit' (p. ix). Shain described four strategies for survival employed by her interviewees: (i) resistance through asserting their Asian cultural identity, a response in the main to experiences of racism; (ii) survival by passivity, working within stereotypes and focusing on academic achievement; (iii) rebelling against their parental and community values, and (iv) asserting religious identity. (Mirza's study of black girls at schools in London in the late 1980s observed that 'much of the girls' time was spent using strategies to avoid the effects of racist and negative teacher expectations [Mirza 1992, p. 192]).

As Basit describes, female Muslim pupils can be stereotyped by their teachers as having poor attendance, low self-esteem and on the receiving end of low expectations (academically) from their parents. Basit conducted interviews with 15 and 16 year old Muslim girls in the east of England who had all been born or raised in Britain to explore how the dynamics of Muslim family life impact on their identities. This study reveals interesting insights into the mismatched perceptions of teachers – that British Muslim girls were lacking a freedom at home which they had at school, and that this was a cause of tension between them and less restricted (white) English girls – and the perceptions of the Muslim girls themselves: that they wanted more freedom, but not as much as English girls had, for this freedom was perceived as a symptom of parental neglect. Basit identifies 'a process of negotiation in constant operation, whereby Muslim girls are able to win more freedom in certain areas, such as education, by behaving in accordance with parental wishes in other ways, for instance by not going out with boys' (Basit 1997, p.436). Claire Dwyer's interviews with young Muslim women engage with the premise that the veil is a marker of difference and how dress is used to construct identity in a school context. Dwyer found that choices over dress were related to the school context (particularly the visibility of the Muslim subpopulation) and class (with working class girls experiencing fewer freedoms than middle class girls). Young women described clothing in oppositional terms as either Asian or English, and with anxiety expressed about being defined by the clothes worn: styles were mixed to create new ethnicities, as young women explored their identity through clothes style. For Shain, the Asian girls she interviewed who defended their wearing of non-Western clothes to school, traditional dress was 'an important site for the contestation of school identities' (Shain 2003, p. 65).

These studies emphasise the multiplicity of identities that young migrant women in secondary schools engage in, and that the formation of identity should be seen as a fluid process, a process of becoming rather than arrival (Asare 2009, p. 17) Within this, however, it is important to recognise that this story is by no means wholly negative and the very fact of being a migrant, especially where this move has been motivated by pursuing a goal of upward social, educational, or occupational mobility, can be a positive factor in educational attainment. In the UK educational success is associated with some migrant groups (Chinese pupils for example), but is also evident in groups not normally recognised as successful. As Mirza argues from her study of second-generation African Caribbean women (whose parents came to Britain in the 1950s) 'young black women engage in a dynamic rationalisation of the education system' and 'strategically employ every means at their disposal in the educational system and in the classroom to achieve a modicum of mobility in a world of limited opportunities' (Mirza 2009, p. 11). Through a combination of a faith in meritocratic ideals (from migrants who came to the UK in search of 'a better life'), 'strategic rationalisation' (that is, strategies for

getting by and getting on in the school environment, making use if the opportunities that are available and accessible) and the expectation of economic independence and the prevalence of relative autonomy between the sexes, young women construct 'positive strategies for a negative climate' (ibid., p. 25) in the educational system.

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