

Abstracts

Dr Kenisha Linton

Ethnic minority students are well represented in UK higher education institutions but their retention and attainment are significantly lower than that of white students. Researchers have confronted and disproved the taken for granted assumption that all students have equal chance to succeed at UK universities (Archer, Hutchings and Ross, 2006; ECU, 2017; McDuff and Barefoot, 2016). The Equality Challenge Unit defines the degree attainment gap as the difference in 'top degrees' – a First or 2:1 classification – awarded to different groups of students. The biggest differences are found by ethnic background, and is currently reported at 15.6% (ECU, 2017).

It is argued that higher education institutions (HEIs) need to move beyond access or equality of opportunity and instead to focus on student success and equality of outcome (University Alliance, 2014; McDuff and Barefoot, 2016; ECU, 2017). Strategies designed to fix the institutional culture, curriculum and pedagogy will not only help to close the ethnicity attainment gap but also help to improve the attainment of all students (Cousin and Cureton, 2012).

Through data collected via documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews, the approaches of two UK higher education institutions are comparatively evaluated in this paper. Both institutions are in the relevant sector-benchmarked group and are members of the Equality Challenge Unit's Race Equality Charter Mark; one received a bronze award (University One) and the other is yet to obtain an award on race equality (University Two). The results show that University One with its embedded, institution-wide approach that spans senior managers, academic staff, professional service staff and students was identified as more successful in reducing the attainment gap. Although leadership and senior management support is identified to be crucial to addressing the attainment gap, few studies have linked leadership commitment to outcomes on the ethnicity attainment gap. The comparative challenges faced by University Two indicate that managing staff perspective, organisational climate, and senior leadership buy-in are absolute imperatives in closing the attainment gap. The paper proposes a theoretical framework for linking leadership approach to outcomes on student success. The paper further suggests that without leadership commitment and staff 'readiness', institutional and environmental factors (e.g., policy or legislation) are limited in reducing the ethnicity attainment gap.

Ms Olga Mathews

'How leadership is understood and enacted is shaped by the ethos of particular systems; and the images of those systems as they are perceived by leaders'(Blackmore, 2009:2). During a period of unprecedented global change, and the continued fragmentation of schooling processes across the UK, how do headteachers with a commitment to democracy and social justice promote community cohesion where it is no longer a focus for school inspection?

In 2001, the Cattle Report, published shortly after the race riots in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley coined the phrase 'community cohesion'. The BBC concluded that neighbourhoods at the heart of this civic unrest were highly racially and socially segregated; perceived at the time as a major contributory factor. The removal of the duty to inspect community cohesion has led to concerns in some quarters that it may have fallen off the agenda.

Schools are historically vulnerable to pressures associated with fast changing soci- cultural and political contexts and can often become repositories of conflict fomented in relationships formed or not formed beyond the school gate.

Examined through a lens of Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS), an analytical frame tangential to Critical Race Theory (CRT) the study is intended to trouble conceptions of integration and to gain an insight into how school leaders understand the notion of community and what they do to put that cognition into practice; how schools may develop effective strategies that enable them to promulgate an active commitment to cohesive communities.

Data is drawn from Inner London schools designated outstanding in Ofsted Inspections carried out during the last 3-4 years. This allows the most recent manifestation of the guidelines to be accommodated. Reports are rigorously assessed for evidence of Ofsted's recognition of demonstrable engagement with tenets of social cohesion.

Ms Allana Gay

The lived experiences of the black educator is a varied one based on their education experience. From the *Swann Report (1985)* then seeking to *Tell it like it is (2005)* to examining *Parallel Lives (2005)* and now a recently renewed examination of genetic theory, the education of black students is fraught with statements of underachievement. All of these seek to explain the result without creating in the engagement of the actions to change it.

Similarly the experience of the black educator identifies issues that marred the experience of Black teachers. Despite partaking in a *Race to the top (2015)* the prevailing contrast is still *Visible Minorities, Invisible teachers (2017)*. As we examine the recommendations made we also should critiques the means b which they were implemented. Have attempts to bring black and ethnic minority into a singular BAME community led to a misrepresentation of data and hence stifles necessary conversation? Finally we examine the positioning of Race in the wider discussion of diversity in educator; which conversation has a voice and which a whimper.

Dr Lauri Johnson

This paper examines the lives and leadership practices of three Black women “firsts”-- Yvonne Conolly (London, 1969), Betty Campbell (Cardiff, 1973), and Gertrude Paul (Leeds, 1976) —who were pioneer women head teachers in the UK in the 1960s and 1970s. I use Black British Feminism (Ali, Mirza, Phoenix, & Ringrose, 2010) and intersectionality (Brah & Phoenix, 2004) as theoretical frameworks to interrogate how these school leaders navigated their roles as “outsiders within” (Collins, 1986) the educational establishment and successfully advocated for the opportunities and life chances of African Caribbean and immigrant students and their families in an often hostile educational environment (Johnson, 2017a). The paper also considers how their careers as Black women leaders in predominately White local authorities were influenced by interest convergence (Bell, 1980) and the White gaze of the British media.

Yvonne Conolly, who had taught in prestigious private schools in Jamaica before she borrowed the money for a ticket to England in 1963, recalls her frustrations trying to find teaching work in London that first winter:

I lived in Swiss Cottage, Finchley, and they (ILEA) put me in South London. And these were all (the) trials of how to cope with winter. How to get the right bus. How to get the

connections... I would go down to South London to the office and then they would say 'Well we don't need a supply teacher (today).'

Conolly was filmed for the British Pathé newsreel when she became the first Black headteacher in London at Ringcross Infant School in Islington in 1968.¹ After 48 years she vividly remembers the reporters camped outside her school for days: "It was horrible. It was dreadful. Very stressful." She received anonymous letters, which included her photograph cut out of the newspaper with racist comments scrawled across it. Acknowledging the low teacher expectations evident in British schools in the late 1960s, in her school Conolly emphasized her "deep belief that every child has got the capacity to learn." As she put it, "it's giving the opportunity, real opportunity, to children, as I used to say, to hit the ceiling."

Betty Campbell, first Black head teacher in Wales, was the daughter of a Jamaican seaman and an Irish and Barbadian mother. Growing up in the multiethnic Butetown neighborhood in Cardiff in the 1950s, she described her secondary school teacher's response when she announced she wanted to be a teacher:

Oh, I can see Miss Atfield, she had an Eton crop. Very, very tall. She went (Betty shifts into an upper class inflection), 'Oh, I think you may have too many problems.' She's going on, 'You could do this, you could do that.'...I went back to my seat, and I'm thinking, 'Well, what would the problems be?' ...The only problem is I'm not White, I'm Black.' And I cried. And that's the first time anyone made me cry and I said it would be the last. She made me more determined.

Appointed as the head teacher of Mount Stuart Primary School in 1973, Betty Campbell's constant refrain to students at her multi-ethnic, multi-faith, working-class school located near the Cardiff docks was "Believe in yourself. I don't care if anyone else believes...you believe in yourself." During her 16 years as head teacher she proved a fierce advocate to ensure that her students, many of whom were Black and Welsh, knew their heritage and history.

In 1956 Gertrude Paul arrived in Leeds from St. Kitts, where she had completed her teacher training on Antigua and taught at the Bethel School. As the first Black teacher in Leeds, Paul began teaching as a supply teacher at infant schools in the outer suburbs, but her first long-term appointment was at the Cowper Street Middle School in Chapeltown, a neighborhood situated northeast of the Leeds city center with a long history of settlement by immigrant groups. Seconded to Elmhurst Middle School in 1974, she was appointed head teacher in 1976. In addition to her formal leadership role with the Leeds local authority, Paul was also involved in the United Caribbean Association Supplementary School, which was established in 1971 to provide a more culturally responsive education for African Caribbean children than they were receiving in state run schools. As Paul described the philosophy of the supplementary school: "We feel we should teach our children West Indian history. They need to know their background and their origins so they can become aware of who they are." (Winter, 1978). An advocate for race equality and the African Caribbean community, Paul went on to serve on the national Commission for Race Equality (CRE) as a representative from Yorkshire in 1980.

The life histories presented here are part of a larger study of the lives and identities of three generations of BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) headteachers (28) from across the UK who led schools over a 47- year period. For the pioneer generation, their common experiences with racism as educational leaders included low societal expectations toward Black and South Asian students, difficulties in securing jobs and getting promoted, resistance from White staff, and the pressure to succeed. Strategies they used to resist racism and challenge the status quo included the development of professional organizations for Black and South Asian teachers, political advocacy for race equality policies, and

curriculum transformation through the establishment of Black supplementary schools and multicultural and anti-racist curriculum (Johnson, 2017b).

Directions to the UCL, Gordon House

Directions

Gordon Square is located behind the Institute of Education main building, five minutes walk from the Bloomsbury campus.

Distance from Bloomsbury campus: 0.2 miles (0.3 km)

Nearest tube station(s): Euston Square, Russell Square

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/maps/gordon-house>