

Gypsy Traveller Culture

M5X02165 – Culture, Identity and Education

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What is Culture?

According to Griffiths and McIntosh (2015) 'Culture is a term used to describe the way of life of a group of people. It refers to how they are expected to behave, what they tend to believe, and how they think' (Griffiths and McIntosh, 2015, p.10).

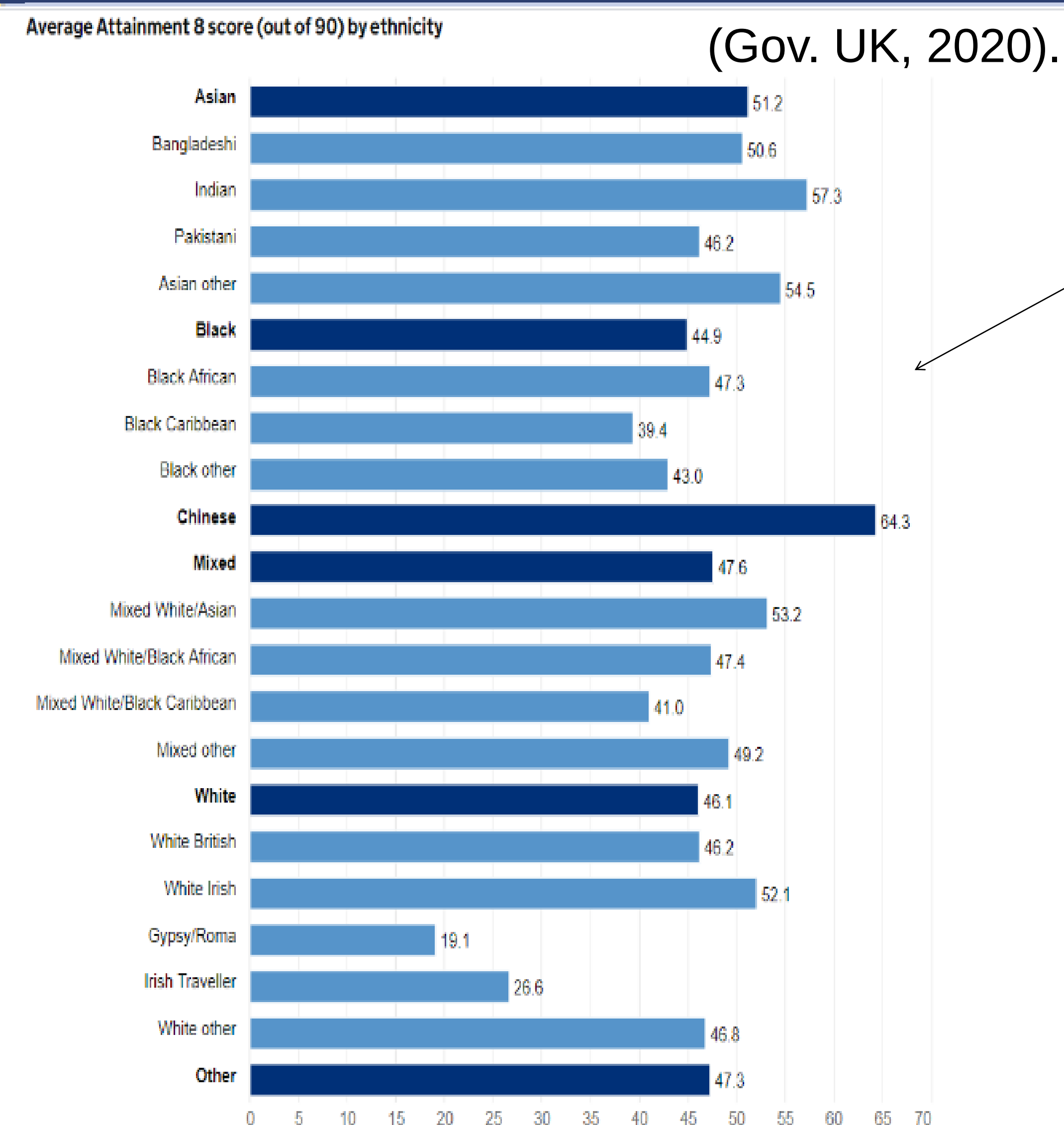
Hall (1996) outlines culture as 'the actual grounded terrain of practices, representations, languages, and customs of any specific society'.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Culture

Cooper (1967) described the meaning of the word 'gypsy' as "persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, but does not include members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or persons engaged in travelling circuses travelling together as such" (Parliament, UK, 2004).

Office for National Statistics (2011) reported that 58,000 people identified themselves as part of the gypsy culture. Further to this reading, just under half of the families stated that they have a child under eighteen living within their care.

Although gypsy travellers have been present in the United Kingdom for around 500 years, they are still thought to be the most socially excluded community (The Traveller Movement, 2020).



Attitudes to Education

• Attainment

The conclusion that gypsy traveller children have a low academic potential is supported by Department for Education (2010).

This image shows that gypsy, roma culture have the lowest attainment in the UK with only 19.1% leaving school with qualifications.

Wilkin et al. (2010) outlined that schools have reported that they feel that gypsy traveller's attainment is low due to the support for parents and families and their attitude towards education.

• Attendance

Gypsy traveller children contribute to the lowest attendance record in the education system (Kelsi, n.d.)

- Culture diversity
- Norms and Values
- Hall (1976) culture iceberg model
- Poor living conditions



(Lincoln Park Academy, 2018)

Education Statistics

- Gypsy Traveller children are four times more likely to be excluded than any other cultural group in the UK due to poor behaviours (DfES, 2010).



(Blanchet, n.d.)

- According to DfES (2010) gypsy traveller children are more likely to be identified as having special educational needs (SEN).
- The Ethnocentric Curriculum raises awareness that the National Curriculum is preoccupied on white culture (Griffiths and McIntosh, 2015).

Exclusion

• Discrimination

- Nine out of ten gypsy and traveller children have suffered racial abuse" (Dugan, 2014).
- The Equality Act 2010 it states that you must not experience discrimination regarding your race. Therefore, those who identify themselves as a gypsy are legally protected against race discrimination and should seek legal advice (Citizens Advice, 2021).

• The impact of the pandemic has had on gypsy traveller children

- Gypsy traveller children were digitally excluded before the global pandemic (Townsend, Salemink and Wallace, 2018).
- Difficulties reaching out to parents (Bubb and Jones, 2020).

Conclusion

To conclude, it is evident that many barriers exist due to the ignorance of the term 'culture'. There is an overall lack of understanding of the term and white culture seemingly dominates the United Kingdom. Therefore, unless improvements are made in how people perceive the gypsy traveller culture we will not allow for change.

We should accept diversity in culture and tradition and coexist peacefully...

Haile Selassie

(Selassie, n.d.)

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