

[Year]

Developing a Local Community -Report

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Introduction

Studies show that racial discrimination has a significant prevalence within public school system in Wales (Show Racism the Red Card, 2020). Berman and Paradies (2010) name racism a mark of oppression expressed through deeply ingrained ideologies, preconceptions, and animosities that can perpetuate and inflame discrepancies of prospect among segregated social classes. Anti-racism is an endeavour that balances chance of equal status and can only be accomplished via an assortment of adjustments dealing with both the individual and the organisational structure (Berman and Paradies, 2010). The purpose of this report is to examine aspects of racism and anti-racism in the theoretical framework of specialised literature as well as in the practical, operational setting of the Welsh public school system. Referring mainly to black ethnic minority, the paper briefly discuss their arrival in United Kingdom as well as their children's actual circumstances in terms of schooling. The analysis of the Anti-Racist Wales Plan and its linked implications investigates a specific content corresponding to children who face racial discrimination in primary and secondary schools. Before conclusion, there will be some recommendations.

Background

The black ethnic community can trace its roots back to the descendants of newcomers from the West Indies' British colonies who travelled to England and Wales during the two decades following the Second World War (Iwobi, 2018). They are known as the Windrush generation, whose name originated in relation to the HMT Empire Windrush, the vessel that transported the first wave of Caribbean foreigners in United Kingdom (Wallace, Wilson and Darlington-Pollock, 2022). The illusion of the homeland, which urged them to come and build the post-war country, was shattered by conflicts even after their arrival, which led to the increase of ethnic tensions and violence (Iwobi, 2018). In Wales, Cardiff Bay, the oldest multi-ethnic region, black community became more diverse, with individuals from different cultural backgrounds integrating into the community (Iwobi, 2018). The presence of the Welsh black community has led to increased awareness and education about the history and experiences of black people in Wales. Betty Campbell was the pioneering figure in education in Wales is the first black head teacher, identified as a community-based leader (Johnson, 2017). As a black woman in a predominantly white profession at a time when racial equality was still a distant goal, she broke down barriers and shattered stereotypes. Through her

unwavering commitment to her students and community, Campbell paved the way for other black educators and leaders in Wales (Iwobi, 2018; Johnson, 2017).

Context

Wales's interest in addressing inequality and racism, like in many developed nations, is enshrined in the 'A more equal Wales' sustainable well-being goal, which strives to minimise gaps and provide fairness, equality, and social justice for all citizens of the country (Future Generation Commissioner for Wales, 2023). Likewise, Welsh children cannot be deprived the international statutory entitlements to an education (UNICEF, 2016, art. 28) and equitable treatment and safeguarding of children from every cultural background, regardless of their personal circumstances and traits (UNICEF, 2016, art. 2). However, when Education Wales (2020) indicates that ethnic diversity consists of little over 10% of students in each primary and secondary school, the current system of education in Wales is evidently prone to racial disadvantage. Furthermore, a survey conducted by Show Racism the Red Card (2016; 2020) highlights the growing incidence of racism in schools: in primary classrooms, distinctions based on skin colour, religion and national identity are relevant triggers for two out of five children to become victims of discrimination based on race. Hatred within educational institutions is a harsh reality acknowledged by certain pupils as a daily occurrence (Wiegand and Cifuentes, 2018; Children's Commissioner for Wales, 2023). The incidents are not always reported because of teachers' superficiality in actions, treating the problems as minor events do not demand restorative justice approach (Wiegand and Cifuentes, 2018). As evidence, two out of every three teachers lack confidence and specialised training in mediating racial events; and others disregard these incidents as insignificant as they are not an issue of concern, they lack the resources needed, or they believe that parents are accountable for their children's anti-racial education (Show Racism the Red Card, 2016; 2020; Wiegand and Cifuentes, 2018). Further research identified that educators are not well trained to deal with both victims and perpetrators of racial discrimination and their parents (Show Racism the Red Card, 2020).

Appropriate Strategy

Betty Campbell's desired utopian society inspired the design of the 'Ant-Racist Wales Action Plan' which acknowledges racism as an ongoing challenge that needs to be fully

addressed comprehensively to build a society of justice and equality for everyone in Wales (Welsh Government, 2022). The plan recognises that racism exists in various domains such as education, employment, housing, healthcare, and criminal justice, and proposes specific actions to tackle racism and promote racial equality in each of these areas (Welsh Government, 2022). In terms of education, the Welsh Government's (2022) action plan outlines the following key pledges and procedures:

- a) Curriculum reform to ensure that it represents multiple cultures, histories, and achievements from various ethnic backgrounds. Its goal is to provide an inclusive curriculum that encourages knowledge, reverence, and tolerance for everyone irrespective of their ethnic or racial background.
- b) Fostering personal growth and education via educational opportunities and materials to help personnel comprehend and confront systemic prejudice and structural disparities.
- c) Managing inequality within institutions, endorsed by a more effective and consistent mechanism for reporting for racist occurrences, as well as legislative guidelines and anti-bullying internal rules to safeguard the mental health of ethnic minority students.

Analysis and Changing behaviour

The Anti-Racist Wales Plan recognises the need of eradicating racial prejudice in schools. It strives to establish an educational climate that celebrates diversity, promotes inclusion, and confronts racist attitudes and practices; and education against racism is essential to accomplishing these goals.

Integrating ethnic plurality within the study of Welsh history represents a first step towards an anti-racist educational approach to the viewpoints of ethnic minorities (Williams, 2021). Decolonising the curriculum by incorporating assorted knowledge, contributions, and contexts sets the foundation for developing a multifaceted understanding of history and culture (Williams, 2021). This change allows students to perceive themselves as represented by the curriculum, building a sense of belonging and encouraging a more equitable and unbiased outlook on the world at large (Williams, 2021). Professor Williams' 'Cynefin: Black, Asian, and Minority Wales' Working project is a successful innovative learning and teaching initiative, with three editions running in one year (Welsh Government, 2022a). The unique notion 'cynefin' linked to the curriculum is envisioned as a catalyst for children to take part in

greater knowledge of their identities, communities, and history (Williams, 2021; Welsh Government, 2022a).

The Children's Commissioner for Wales (2023), interested in knowing the teachers and adolescents' real experiences and standpoints of racism, employed qualitative research in secondary schools, engaging children from four regions of Wales. The findings highlighted the students' challenges in exposing racist events: normality, a lack of transparency in the process, a superficiality of the remedy, or worry about retaliation. On the other side, school officials admitted the absence of clear guidelines for intervention and proper training, and some allegations were rejected in favour of the institution's prestige (Children's Commissioner for Wales, 2023).

According to Priest et al. (2021), as identity creators, schools become essential environments for conducting population-centred programmes since they are significant mediators of impact on racism and reactions to it at multiple tiers. Besides, educational institutions and educators are frequently regarded as a constituent of the answer rather than being the problem (Arneback and Jämte, 2021). The actions required to address racism refer to interventions on students' manifestations such as learning and practising how to use freedom of speech, be self-reflective, and accept background diversity; as well as their individual expressions by changing the inter-relational behaviour, become well informed, and communicate in a democratic way (Arneback and Jämte, 2021). Latest studies on anti-racism education report favourable outcomes from a pilot programme in elementary schools meant to foster proactive observer conduct and healthful disagreement with racism (Priest et al., 2021). The project concentrates on age-appropriate cognitive abilities and processes such as viewpoint taking, empathy, double sense of self, and ethical reasoning, as well as promoting healthy social standards in the context of school to reduce confrontation (Priest et al., 2021). With a minimal intervention, Priest et al. (2021) identified several areas requiring reconsiderations: a) resource allocation, especially through additional budgets and pairing programmes to the existent curriculum content; b) support teachers for the students' follow-up interventions; c) linguistic and cultural adaptation of the program; and d) fostering collaboration school-parents-community.

As Miller (2021) state individuals' diverse values and opinions represent the greater society in learning institutions. School leaders have the capacity to set up the general attitude of the organisation and affect its course of action (Miller, 2021). To effectively transform a school's culture, leaders need to be empowered with the skills they need to address institutional and racial challenges as a basic part of their responsibility (Miller, 2021). The

ecological model of combining traits, talents, expertise and context, conforming to Miller (2021), support head teachers establish a language and practice of racial consciousness.

In terms of shaping behaviours in schools, Losinski et al.'s (2019) thematic review suggests a few successful program-based methods for decreasing bias and encouraging enhanced student wellbeing:

- a) Interventions promoting intergroup contact can be an effective strategy to combat prejudice in schools, due to their nature of multiple relational and contextual interactions, but they may count just for a particular bias addressed. Therefore, it implies that some forms of bias may be harder to change than others (Losinski et al., 2019). Christ et al. (2014) validate the success of this approach when used only to large social circles where behaviours can be easily learned from others.
- b) Introducing explicit lessons on intergroup prejudice in schools can increase children's awareness of biases by associating inequalities to systemic or environmental factors. In addition, this approach encourages young people's critical thinking skills helpful in recognise and reject racism and racial discrimination (Losinski et al., 2019). Bigler and Wright (2014) warn about the harmful effects of this type of learning. Racial discrimination may generate in youngsters, especially those who are victims, intense negative emotions such as anxiety or rage; increased susceptibility; diminished group trust; and reaffirmed prejudice.

Nonetheless, as Priest et al. (2021) state, it is important to recognize that combating racism and racial discrimination should be integrated with efforts to also improve the health of children and young individuals. It is imperative for nations to create and execute inclusive anti-racist initiatives and educate all children and young people about racism, as these actions are fundamental to achieving human rights and health parity objectives.

Recommendations

In context of education system, the Anti-Racism Wales Plan can consider the following recommendations:

- Racism prevention lessons should be blended into the core curriculum through teaching disciplines as history, social studies, literature, and art in a multi-disciplinary approach. Using age-appropriate educative and informational resources, students learn about the history of racism, the impacts of prejudice on individuals and wider community, and the anti-racism measures.

- Ongoing education and a variety of relevant materials should be provided to educators to improve their insight and familiarity with anti-racism concepts and actions. This can include conferences, seminars, and online courses that provide instructors with the equipment they need to effectively combat bias in the classroom.
- Cultural literacy should be promoted among students and teachers. This may be accomplished by creating a welcoming school atmosphere, promoting diversity via artistic activities, and facilitating chances for intercultural conversation and appreciation.

Conclusion

This report has evaluated aspects of racism and racial discrimination affecting children and adolescents from the black ethnic minority group in the context of Welsh educational system, as well as how effective are the Anti-Racist Wales Plan's initiatives in addressing these circumstances. As a conclusion, tackling racial discrimination in schools is essential for promoting equal opportunities and a sense of belonging for all students. Anti-racism education, in accordance with the Anti-Racist Wales Plan, plays a crucial role in raising awareness, developing critical thinking skills, and promoting cultural competence. By creating inclusive and respectful learning environments, the young generation can be guided to form a society that values diversity and embraces racial equality. However, anti-racist education requires teachers who can transcend their demeanour, which has been highly shaped by years of social contact and prior experiences and embrace the transformational approach of defying racist layouts and representations (Arneback, 2022).

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