

# Racism, identity and psychological adjustment

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# Research on racism

- Longitudinal study (focus of talk)
  - Funded by GARA
  - With Rory O'Connor, David Warden, Clare Cassidy, Derek Heim, Lisa Cunningham
- Research on refugees and asylum seekers
  - Two x MSc projects
- Racist bullying
  - Funded by ESRC
  - With Simon Hunter, Derek Heim, Kevin Durkin, Dermot Bergin

# Aims of longitudinal study

- Document experiences of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds in relation to:
  - Racism and discrimination
  - Education and employment
  - Psychological well-being
  - Life-style
  - Attributions and identity
- Compare with experiences of young people from white majority culture

# Longitudinal sample (at start)

- 271 young people
  - Pakistani (33%), Indian (14%), Chinese (11%), ‘Diverse’ (9%), White (33%)
- Three age cohorts
  - 14-15 years, 17-18 years, 20-21 years
- Roughly 50% male, 50% female; 50% middle class, 50% working class

# Method of longitudinal study

- Four waves of data collection
  - Wave 1 (Jan-Sept, 2001)
  - Wave 2 (Jan-Sept, 2002)
  - Wave 3 (Jan-Sept, 2003)
  - Wave 4 (Nov 2003-Feb 2004)
- Type of data
  - Waves 1-3 = Questionnaires and interviews
  - Wave 4 = Questionnaires only
- 56% of initial sample continued throughout

# Racism and discrimination

- Five measures, mostly indirect
- Participants from minority ethnic backgrounds reported more racism directed towards themselves than white participants
  - All measures
  - Both sexes
  - All age groups
  - Middle and working class
  - All waves
- White participants equally likely as minority ethnic participants to report witnessing racist events

# Perceived discrimination

	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3
Indian	16.69	14.32	14.61
Pakistani	19.41	18.30	15.79
Diverse	19.68	15.17	15.80
Chinese	17.85	16.81	14.88
White	10.01	7.72	7.49

# Racism in subsequent studies

- Refugees and asylum seekers
  - Secondary school age group
  - Higher levels of perceived discrimination than white controls
- Racist bullying
  - 8- to 12-year olds (Glasgow and Preston)
  - N = 913, 63% minority ethnic
  - 61% of victims of ANY bullying = minority ethnic
  - 80% of victims of RACIST bullying = minority ethnic

# Racist bullying and school composition

%BME in school	% BME Bullied	% White Bullied
5%	6%	1%
25%	8%	2%
50%	10%	5%
75%	13%	12%
95%	16%	23%

# Education and employment 1

- No differences between between white and minority ethnic participants over:
  - Standard Grades or Highers
  - Continuation to HE or FE (minority ethnic more likely to select HE)
  - Status of occupation (but sample small)
  - Perceptions of success
  - Career aspirations

## Education and employment 2

- School performance unrelated to experiences of racism and discrimination
- BUT dissatisfaction with school, workplace, or college/university in Wave 4 associated with experiences of racism in Wave 1

# Psychological well-being

- Pakistani young people lower self-esteem than white
- Chinese young people higher anxiety than white
- Pakistani or Chinese (depending on wave) higher depression than white
- Racism and discrimination in Wave 1 predicted anxiety and depression in Wave 4

# Racism and HADS

ANXIETY (W4)	Beta	Sig
Racism (W1)	.19	t = 3.60,p<.001
Racism (W4)	.14	t = 1.34,ns
DEPRESSION (W4)	Beta	Sig
Racism (W1)	.16	t = 3.47,p<.001
Racism (W4)	.12	t = 2.41,p<.05

# Family and friends

- Indian, Pakistani, Chinese more likely than White and Diverse to live with two parents
- Pakistanis had most brothers and sisters, and were exceptionally close to their brothers and sisters
- Pakistanis spent least leisure-time with friends; White spent most
- Pakistani and Whites had virtually no friends from other ethnic groups
  - Implications for Allport/Pettigrew contact hypothesis?

# Neighbourhood

- Seen as satisfactory - apart from 'racism' (minority ethnic) or 'trouble' (white)
- Few concerns about personal safety, but minority ethnic participants more concerned about crime than white

# Identity

- Rated importance of 12 identities
- Ethnic identity very important to all minority ethnic groups, not to whites
- Scottish identity important to white group only
- British identity not important to any group
- Identities from religion, student/occupation, daughter/son, brother/sister important to some minority ethnic groups, not to whites
- Identity as brother/sister protects against anxiety
  - Regression = brother/sister identity at W1, anxiety at W4 (with W1 anxiety controlled)
  - Beta = 0.20,  $t = 2.75$ ,  $p < .01$

# Conclusions

- Racism and discrimination feature prominently in contemporary Glasgow
- Coping involves segmenting racism/discrimination from other experiences, and identifying strongly with family and cultural traditions
- Academic and career ambitions are similar across ethnic groups, as is performance
  - Coping strategies may be relevant
- Psychological well-being is adversely affected by racism/discrimination
  - Identification patterns are protective
- Results have implications for theory and policy
  - Issues for contact hypothesis and social identity theory
  - Multi-culturalism vs. integration in racist society