

Non-Recognition of the Kashmiri Community in Great Britain

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Abstract:

British Kashmiris are those dwellers who or their parents initially migrated from Kashmir and have or entitled to the Kashmir State Subject. The contemporary phase of migration of Kashmiris in Britain can be traced after the World War I, where new work opportunities was the main factor that determined their settlement in Britain which was followed by Immigration Act of 1962 and construction of Mangla Dam that had accelerated the migration of Kashmiris from Mirpur. These Kashmiris were uneducated as they belonged to the Pahari region of Kashmir and had a semi nomadic way of life. It was also mainly the availability of work that determined their settlement in the coastal towns of Britain for manual unskilled labour jobs, particularly in textile mills in Northwest, steel factories in Sheffield and foundries in Midland, unlike their counter-part Pakistanis and Indians, who were mostly from urban educated middle class and settled mostly in the southern part of United Kingdom.

In the earlier stages, they never felt the need or had ability to engage in any meaningful way, politically or academically. Hence, it gave free hand to Pakistani academics to construct Pakistani or Muslim identities and completely overlooked and erased Kashmiri ethnicity and identity. Perhaps the other reason for Kashmiri exclusion may be that the census, Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), Academia, Central Government, policy makers and service providers' work from different value bases and did not follow to uniform set of

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ethnicities.

On the other hand, some individual research studies evidently specify that Kashmiris want their own language, which is Pahari, not Urdu or Punjabi. For example, in a case study of Eastbourne Junior and Infant school in Dewsbury (Kirklees LEA), parents demand for Kashmiri ethnicity and Pahari language. This clearly indicates that Kashmiris want their own identity which is further evidenced during the 2001 census, figures more than 20,000 people ticked other and self-certified as Kashmiri but for some reason public services decision makers continue to deny their identity as Kashmiris. Some of the academicians argues that because most of the Kashmiris are Muslims and come from the Pakistani part on Pakistani passport, therefore, they are Pakistanis, and have no need for their language, culture or heritage to be distinguished. This could be that they have no nation state, however, neither have the Kurds, Palestinians nor many more ethnic groups but they are recognized and included in British State and society.

Key words: Kashmiri community, United Kingdom, Pahari, social marginalization, group identity, role of language.

Introduction

The study looks at the existence of Kashmiri community in Britain and how it has been kept invisible and excluded at all levels by the British State and society. The study looks deeper into the formation of a new identity of Kashmiris as Pakistani or Muslim and their inability to assert their identity, and role played by social commentators, especially Pakistanis. Anwar and Khan describe the Kashmiri community in Britain as Mirpuris, ethnically Punjabi, hence Pakistani, which was then supported by academics in the 1980s and 1990s. (Anwar 1985) Ballard argues that Mirpuris are ethnically Punjabis. (Ballard 1983, 117-136) He compares them with Punjabis from Julandur, therefore they are Pakistanis. However, more recently, academics like Modood are arguing for assimilated Muslim identities in Britain and Kashmiris are included in that discourse. (Modood 2005)

Since the introduction of extended ethnicity codes in the

census (1991 & 2001), many ethnic groups up and down the country have benefited in terms of resources and engagement at the decision making level. The raise case study suggests that census recognition is critical in terms of service delivery and it also notes that Kashmiris continue to be identified as Pakistanis, therefore remaining excluded at all levels. It also notes that first generation Kashmiris were agrarian mountainous farmers, who worked in steel and textile industries where they suffered discrimination and bigotry at the hands of their neo-colonial masters. With the 1970s and 1980s industrial decline, second and third generation of Kashmiris were able to speak English and engaged with decision makers, started asking questions of the authorities in relation to the Kashmiri exclusion. This coincided with uprising in Kashmir, hence, instead of British authorities and academics looking at the Kashmiri inclusion demand in its right context, they related it to political situation in South Asia. Evans argues that “there are about forty pro-independence activists who are lobbying for Kashmiri recognition”. (Evans 2005, 35-47) Khan and many more academics have coupled the demand for Kashmiri inclusion with the uprising in Kashmir. (Khan 2000)

Another section of the article looks at some facts and figures of Pakistani and Kashmiri heritage education attainment. Recent individual research studies clearly indicate that Kashmiris do not want to be identified as Pakistanis and their language is not Urdu or Punjabi. For example; Eastbourne Junior and Infant school in Dewsby (Kirklees LEA) parents clearly demand for Kashmiri ethnicity and Pahari language and in Slough Borough Council it came out that Kashmiri parents often both do not understand the English education system and audio, video information in Punjabi and Urdu is unfamiliar to them.

According to the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) national data “the evidence of minority ethnic pupils” clearly shows that Kashmiris do not want to be identified as

Pakistanis; for example with the 1991 and 2001 census extended codes, a number of other categories have gone down considerably but Pakistani other has gone up. In one of the tables it shows, nearly 9,000 Kashmiri Pakistanis, 10,000 Mirpuri Pakistanis, and 52,000 other Pakistanis. This clearly indicates that Kashmiris want their own identity but for some reason public services decision makers continue to identify Kashmiris as Pakistanis. This indicates that contrary to the popular belief, Kashmiris being happy with Pakistani or Muslim identity and the demand for Kashmiri inclusion within the British State and society, is due to the political situation in South Asia is not true. Looking at the deprivation, inner city poverty ghettos, riots of Bradford, Leeds and many other inner city areas where Kashmiri community can be found, the case study suggests that the search for identity is a British issue. This is further evidenced in that during the 2001 census, figures more than 20,000 people ticked other and self-certified as Kashmiri. (Office for National Statistics 2006) Finally, the study has found that Pakistani education attainment probably is in par with Indians i.e. above national average but when mixed with Kashmiris we get a different picture, which means that of all Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups Kashmiri education under achievement is the highest. This poses a serious question for public services providers to recognise the problem across the board and try to address it.

The Origin of Kashmiris

Kashmiris originate from the State of Jammu Kashmir, before we go on to the Kashmiri community. It is important to know about Kashmir, which would help us understand the people better. The State of Jammu, Kashmir is bound by Tibet in the East, China and Afghanistan in the North, Pakistan in the West and South, and southeast by India. (Elkins 1987, 329) In the British imperial time, the State of Jammu and Kashmir

was not part of the areas under direct control of East India Company or British Raj, by virtue of the Amritsar Treaty, signed on 16th March 1846, it had a special status and relationship with the British Government and in practice it was an independent princely State. It is for this reason, the State of Kashmir along with other princely states, was not part of the division of British India. In fact, the princely states had a choice to join either India, Pakistan or remain independent. (Hussain 1998, 4)

The majority population was Muslim and the ruler was Hindu, therefore both India and Pakistan staked their claims on the respective religious basis for the future accession of the State of Jammu Kashmir, without any due consultation with people or the ruler, who wanted to remain neutral and independent. In 1947, British India endured a lot of violence but Kashmir remained calm; however, after scores were settled in Punjab, both Indian and Pakistani religious fundamentalists started operating in the state with respective communities. In October 1947, the entrance of tribal lashkar (band) into the State provided a chance for Indian Government to move its forces there. The case went to United Nations and Kashmir was divided, remains to this day. The 84258 sq. miles² with approximately 18 million people State remains about two third under Indian administration and one third under Pakistani administration. (Mir 1999) Pakistani administered part of Kashmir is known as Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu Kashmir and Indian administered - Jammu and Kashmir. However, both Kashmiris have got a special status. For example, by the nationality act of Kashmir introduced in 1927, non-Kashmiri cannot buy or own land and property in Kashmir including Indians and Pakistanis. (Dhavan 2004) Azad Kashmir enjoys

² The figure 84,471, square miles has been used in many publications. The 1891, Census put the area as 80,900 square miles and this figure was repeated in 1901. In 1911, Census showed the area as 84,432 square miles. According to the 1921, Census the area was 84,258. In 1941, the Census Commissioner considered as 84,258 square miles to be the correct figure.

its own parliament, legislature, national anthems and the whole of Kashmir has defined borders with India, Pakistan and China. Hence, Kashmiris have their own identity.

British Kashmiris:

British Kashmiris are British citizens and residents who themselves or their parents originate from the State of Jammu and Kashmir, which, as mentioned above, is divided between the occupation of India and Pakistan. (Rehman 2000, 4-15) Except for about 200 families from Indian Administered Kashmir and a few families from Gilgit-Baltistan, an overwhelming majority of Kashmiris came from “Azad Kashmir”, mainly from Mirpur division, which consists of the districts of Mirpur, Kotli and Bhimbar. Prior to division of Kashmir, Mirpur formed one of the 14 districts of the State and Kotli and Bhimbar were its sub-districts. After the division of Kashmir, Mirpur forms one of the two divisions of Azad Kashmir, the other being Muzzaffrabad. Shams, Rehman further mentions, “Because the British Kashmiris mainly came from Mirpur division, therefore, they referred to be as Mirpuris by academics and others”. (Rehman 2000, 4-15) However, I beg to differ, because both Indian and Pakistani communities in this country are competing over the ownership of Kashmiri, Pakistanis on religious basis and Indians on their stand of Kashmir being its integral part. Therefore, both deny Kashmiri ethnicity, both try to accumulate Kashmiris into their ethnicities and nationalities i.e. Indian and Pakistani, the latter with more success. Some academics couple it with the Punjabi group of people including Prof. Kalara as Kashmiri migration is documented along with the Punjabi migration patterns. Also political Kashmiri division is seen in the same context as Punjabi division. (Kalara 2000) This is despite Kashmiri economic and political conditions being completely different from that of Punjabis, for example, Kashmir was

divided almost a year later than the independence of India.

Kashmiris are working abroad for many centuries and migration to Britain was primarily due to the lack of economic opportunities. A very little investment in that region by Pakistan as argued by Baroness Emma Nicholson's European report on Azad Kashmir contribute to Kashmiri migration mainly from Pahari areas globally in general and chain migration to Britain in particular. (Nicholson 2006)

Brief Historical Background to Britain's Kashmiri Community

The Kashmiri community started coming to Britain straight after the World War II, and worked in textile and steel industries, as well as taking up other manual unskilled labour jobs. Unlike their counter-part Pakistanis and Indians, who were mostly from urban educated middle class and settled mostly in the southern part of United Kingdom, Kashmiris settled in industrial areas of northern cities and the Midlands. It is widely believed that Bradford has more than 80,000 Kashmiri population while Birmingham has more than 100,000. Fifty years on, if one looks at both cities workforce, Kashmiri Diaspora has a different economic profile. For example, Kashmiris are overrepresented in taxis and take-aways, and under-represented in business and public sectors. (Hanif 2002)

Very little academic commentary is available on Kashmiri migration and pre-migration way of life of Kashmiris. Kashmiri migration trends and reasons for contemporary migration and historical background in Britain has completely been ignored by the academicians. Prof. Nazir Tabbassam argues that the Pahari region of Kashmir has a semi nomadic way of life; the agriculture can only support families for eight months at best. For their other needs in the Pahari region of Kashmir, people rely on selling their livestock and working in

the Angrazi Allaqa (as British India was known to Kashmiris at that time). Like the Philippino domestic women workers, one male member of the family volunteers for this sacrifice. (Tabbassam 2003, 380-397)

Migration Case studies clearly shows that Kashmiris used to work abroad often in the rail or maritime industries, many joined the merchant navy or provided domestic labour and other manual work. This work was mainly in the cities and ports of southern India like Bombay, Calcutta and Chittagong. (Sayyid, Ali and Kalra 2006, 32-34) Nazir Gilani, a Human Rights activist writes: “in 1947, India was freed, Pakistan was carved out of India and Kashmir was colonised by both India and Pakistan. The case went to United Nations and it is still there gathering dust.” (Gilani 2006) Due to the above mentioned Kashmiri economic conditions, Kashmiris had to work abroad. For native people, all area across the Line of Control (LOC) became a no-go area, so Kashmiris, through chain migration, ended up in Britain. Obviously, it needs close scrutiny but it is certain that Kashmiris never came here as Pakistanis. Recently, there was a programme run by BBC Asian net Urdu service as they were trying to find out about the first Pakistani to come to Bradford. Someone phoned with a name and said: “the first Pakistani came to Bradford in 1928.”³ It then tells the whole story of Pakistanis in Britain, because Pakistan did not exist in 1928 and the person came from Kashmir. It seems as though within the South Asian discourse debate Muslim equals Pakistani and Asian equals Indian.

Also it is certain that almost all Kashmiris who migrated never had access to education and were illiterate, only concerned with work and sending money back home. In the earlier stages, they never felt the need or had the ability to engage in any meaningful way, politically or academically. Hence, it gave free hand to Pakistani academics to construct

³ “First Pakistani in Bradford,” *BBC, Asian Service, Radio Leeds*, Discussion Programme, 15th July 2001 at 6 PM.

Pakistani or Muslim identities and completely overlooked and expunged Kashmiri ethnicity and identity. It is for this reason, prior debates on education and public services delivery contempt Kashmiri community completely, and Kashmiris do not figure in any ethnic or black discourse debates at all.

Perhaps the other reason for Kashmiri exclusion may be that the census, Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), Academia, Central Government, policy makers and service providers work from different value bases and do not adhere to uniform set of ethnicities, and if they do, it certainly does not include Kashmiri ethnicity. For example, the office for national statistics, in most cases, works on the basis of nation states and CRE supports that the classic example is Irish ethnicity. Whilst Irish are Christians, white European, speak English, eat fish and chips and their country is divided into South and North, they are deemed to have different needs. At the same time Kashmiris have a very long shared culture, heritage, language and history but because most of the Kashmiris are Muslims and come from the Pakistani part, therefore, they are Pakistanis, and have no need for their language, culture or heritage to be distinguished. This could be that they have no nation state, however, neither have the Kurds, Palestinians nor many more ethnic groups but they are recognised and included. This then begs the question: is the race relations act and other equality legislature, brought in to contain communities of black nation states and marginalise and discriminate against politically vulnerable groups?

It seems that the academic community follows the lead from census or has its own national or religious aspiration. In some cases, a Pakistani academic argues that Mirpuris are Pakistanis. (Anwar 1985) Khan, a Kashmiri activist couples it with the 1989 Kashmiri uprising for independence. (Khan 2000) Ali and Evans follow Khan's lead. A leading researcher, Modood, himself was a refugee from India to Pakistan in 1947 on religious basis. He argues for a Muslim perspective, which

includes Kashmiris in its discourse. All the above social commentators seem to use Kashmiri Diaspora to further their arguments based on their personal aspirations and beliefs. Based on the above academic evidence, service providers, the Government including Office for National Statistics (ONS) department continue to exclude Kashmiri community living in Britain. It will perhaps become clearer from the case studies submitted to “Raise project”.

British politicians view Kashmiri inclusion as a politically sensitive issue, in that they might offend Indians and Pakistanis. Amongst some politicians there is a view that Kashmiri nationalists want to use the system and enter through the back door for some sort of national recognition. Whatever the case may be, it is certain that the Kashmiri community does have different needs based on the language, culture and shared values. Ali concludes that Kashmiri elders are not accessing mainstream services, for their language is different from that of other South Asian communities, they suffer from lack of confidence and are discriminated. (Ali 2005) In addition, Kashmiri elders have very little knowledge of the services availability. All written and oral materials are provided in languages, which are foreign to them. This is confirmed by a report carried out by Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) in 2006 into Bradford’s BME communities’ participation in public service providers’ decision-making process. The report finds that within BME communities it might be difficult for marginalised groups to participate. The report identifies those groups as gays, lesbians, people with mental health problems, people with disabilities, women and Bradford’s majority Mirpuri (Kashmiri) community. (Blakey, Pearce, and Chesters 2006)

The question of Pakistani ethnicity, Muslim community, Pakistani migration and settlement in United Kingdom (UK), factors behind the migration and patterns of migration, perhaps need revisiting, with the view of looking at Kashmiri migration

in its own context. Similarities and differences need to be highlighted. It is only then that we can begin to understand South Asian Muslim communities, commonalities and differences. In addition, the relationship between communities needs to be looked at; for example, Kashmiris are colonised in South Asia, that occupier and occupied relationship and attitudes exist in Britain and should be recognised within the discrimination discourse. The Kashmiris case seems to be similar to the Irish community, where the Irish were discriminated and were source of ridicule on the hands of English based on the colonial past. The other example is Punjabiness in service delivery, as Indian Punjab and Pakistani Punjab was one sixty years ago and now, both cannot work together and that is recognised and accepted. Why is it different for Kashmiris? If the JRF report on Bradford BME communities suggests Mirpuri exclusion, does it mean that 90% Kashmiris are excluded and ten percent Pakistanis pull the strings?

Commentary on Kashmiri Existence in Britain

Most social commentators in recent years have started realising the existence of the Kashmiri community in Britain. Prof. Nazir Tabbassam argues that out of the people who migrated to UK on Pakistani passports, 80% were of Kashmiri origin. They are quite distinct from the rest of the South Asians not only culturally and linguistically but ethnically too. (Tabbassam 2003, 380-397) Other social commentators and Anthropologists such as Ballard, Kalara, Ali and Khan, all put the figure above 70%. According to last Pakistani census in 1998, the figure of Kashmiri Diaspora from Azad Kashmir is shown as 1.5 million all over the world and close to a million in Europe, the bulk of it being in the UK.

However, earlier Pakistani commentators such as Anwar are followed by others, having run away with the idea of

Pakistaniness. For example, in his case study based on Pakistanis in Rochdale Borough Council, he attempts to lumber Kashmiris as Pakistani and people who migrated from India to Pakistan; he puts them as Indians in his earlier edition 1979 and they become Pakistanis in 1985 in his later edition. (Anwar 1985) It seems that Anwar very conveniently forgets the political position of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. For example, there are several outstanding UN resolutions to determine its future. He also chooses to ignore that Pakistan is a relatively new state, so is India for that matter because both India and Pakistan have never been countries as they are now. However, the State of Jammu and Kashmir and the people of Kashmir have a chronological five thousand years shared history, culture and languages and heritage. (Kalhana 1980)

This raises the question: why did not the Kashmiri community resist the formation of their new identity? Why they stood silently while their identity was being cleansed and they were being branded into a new ethnicity. To answer this, it is important to know about the community and its ability or inability to participate within British State and society structures in any meaningful way.

The Language

As mentioned above, most British Kashmiris have migrated from the Pahari region of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Pahari is the name of their language, which is a language of the Indo-Aryan family of languages. (Tabbassam 2001, 113- 120) It derives its name from Pahar meaning “Hills or mountains” for it is spoken over a very large area starting from Nepal and running throughout the foothills of the Himalayas, which includes Indian and Pakistani controlled Kashmir, from where most of British Kashmiris have migrated. However, there are many other languages spoken in the State and Pahari should be taken in the context of British Kashmiri’s mother tongue,

rather than the national or the only language of the State of Jammu Kashmir.

In Britain, sometimes it is referred to as Mirpuri, (a British phenomenon). It is the spoken language of nearly all Kashmiris in the UK. When it comes to reading, some Kashmiris can read Urdu as some can read English. Karamat Ali, an educationalist argues that: “Many British decision-makers, in an attempt to make services accessible, have invested in interpreting and translation services. However, the languages offered to people from South Asia have been limited to Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi or Gujarati. There has been very little reference made to Kashmiri community or Pahari language: instead, decision-makers have incorrectly tended to use Urdu or Punjabi to communicate with UK’s Kashmiri community. In such instances, members of the Kashmiri community have had to settle with another group’s language.” (Ali 2005)

This in reality means that the lack of Pahari provision has had a significant impact on the way in which services have been delivered, for example, all audio and written materials by service providers is produced in languages other than Pahari. Hence, the Kashmiri community is unable to take advantage of many services through lack of knowledge, communication and participation in decision-making. (Ali 2005) The research shows that many Kashmiri elderly are unaware of any services offered by voluntary or statutory sectors and they are unable to take part in any consultation despite the availability of interpreters in Urdu/Punjabi. The services that they do access are by default, rather than the services being aimed specifically at them.

This has a far-reaching effect in education, for parents have often not been understood by the education providers and vice-versa, this affecting Kashmiri children. We shall explore this in case studies submitted to “Raise project”. One such example is the production of audio CDs by Parents centre

(2006) titled “Other languages”. The main problem encountered, which hinders no English pupils education was language, which gave way to underachievement of black pupils, though this was not without racism, colonial myths and perceptions of black stereotype. The centre had Punjabi and Urdu for Kashmiri and Pakistani heritage pupils but no Pahari / Mirpuri.

This raises the question of effectiveness of interpretation / translation services and money spent by service providers to reach communities. Exclusion of Kashmiri community results in a loss of custom for the private sector, marginalisation by public sector providers and an inability by Kashmiri community to participate and engage in the mainstream in any meaningful way. This is confirmed above in the JRF findings of Bradford’s Mirpuri (Kashmiri) community.

Education Policies/Background

The principle of equality and equal access to education is enshrined in the 1944 Act (the Butler Act) which for the first time committed the British State to the provision of free education for all. These developments in education along with the National Assistance Act (1948) and creation of the National Health Service (1946), have been seen as inaugurating a turning point in British society, the creation of a welfare State. This was not without problems, and was viewed by many social commentators as a direct conflict between liberalism and capitalism. The public professionals were at the contradictory centre of this novel social formation. The defining political experience of the caring professions became their ambiguous position in and against capitalism. Public services professionals advocated this assimilationist model being the answer to most of education’s problems and gave very little credence to class, social standing, and socio-economic positioning of the communities or individuals. Neither has it seemed to consider

the teachers value base or training in understanding the complexity and diversity of the pupils. Zulfiqar quotes John Vaizy, (an economist and highly influential educational policy adviser) in education for tomorrow, that, although once it had been legitimate to consider educational resources as limited:

Since our society is now entering a period of great wealth, and already has the capacity to provide an education system which is satisfactory for any child, there is no need to maintain this assumption of scarcity. (Zulfiqar, M. 1991; C. Mullard 1962a, 1982b; J. Vaizy 1962; and Kirp 1985, 3-10)

The liberal reformists formed Eurocentric liberal education policies without any regard for others; this could be because relatively very few children travelled with the first Commonwealth settlers in Britain in the 1940s and even 1950s. However, by the early to mid-1960s, no black students started entering both primary and secondary schools in significant numbers. Between 1960 and 1973, the number of students in the Department of Education and Science (DES) classified as “Immigrant pupils” grew from what Zulfiqar, who describes Black pupils as ‘an unaccounted handful to an estimated 3.3 percent of all pupils. (Zulfiqar, M. 1991; C. Mullard 1962a, 1982b; J. Vaizy 1962; and Kirp 1985, 3-10) Although reliable figures are no longer available, Zulfiqar quotes that, in the early 1980s, 8.0 percent of British school students were “Black”. (Zulfiqar, M. 1991; C. Mullard 1962a, 1982b; J. Vaizy 1962; and Kirp 1985)

Black pupils were seen as a problem, Zulfiqar quotes Chris Mullard, suggesting that all of the various educational responses employed since the early 1960s have attempted to foster the cultural subordination and political neutralisation of blacks, and secondly, the meaning and aim of “multi-racial education” can best be seen as an outcome of a continual process stemming from one common social imperative, to maintain as far as possible the dominant structures, values and beliefs. (Mullard 1991, 3-10)

Zulfiqar further argued that the core principle of the education policy has been not to challenge ideological bases of the dominant white culture, or threaten the stability of what is seen host society. However, the makeup of the British society in post-colonial multicultural Britain, aided by successive race relations act (1968, 1976) and race relations amendment act (2000) put pressure on the service providers, policy formulators and services planners to be seen as proactive towards the demands of multicultural society, which includes equal access to all services including education. Therefore, with the rise in emigrant pupils, the policy makers in 1950s and 1960s have had to shift their thinking from assimilationist policy to integrationist policy. This essentially provides extra help for migrant pupils to assimilate; for example, in 1960s and 1970s extra language support was put in place, through supplementary schools as well as special centres. The integrationist model was revised and replaced in 1980s by “cultural pluralist” model, which stayed dominant until mid-1990s. However, with extended ethnic codes used in 1991 and 2001 census, education policy makers were in a better position to target demographic and geographic mapping of education under achievement. This coupled with community cohesion, citizens’ curriculum development, in Bradford (Raise project). Individual homogenous ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups, not only could be identified but were also targeted to raise education attainment with some success.

Fifty years on, the policies seem have gone full circle; in the post-colonial era, the debate started with assimilation, has travelled through integration, cultural pluralist and is heading towards post multiculturalism, which essentially means assimilation. Zulfiqar argues that at the base of this model rests the belief that a nation is a unitary whole, politically and culturally individual; all groups should, therefore, be absorbed into the indigenous homogenous culture so that they can take an informed and equal part in the creation and maintenance of

the society. It further states the need for retention of certain cultural values of individual groups as a secondary concern.

This raises the question of the ability of the groups to assimilate, for example in the post-colonial era (Late 1940s and 1950s). It was assumed that assimilation policy meant equal rights for all; no thought was given to enablement and empowerment to former colonial subjects, a very Eurocentric approach. This leads to the adoption of the integration approach, in which the socio-economic ability, culture, and languages of some groups were completely ignored, that remained the case in Pluralist, Multicultural and post Multicultural phases. JRF (2006) report states that some community groups within BME groups have never been engaged and gives examples of excluded groups including majority Mirpuri (Kashmiri) community. This raises the question of why the Mirpuri (Kashmiri) community has been excluded and marginalised since their arrival. Is the Mirpuri community able to assimilate and engage from the enclaves and ghettos of Bradford, Luton and Birmingham?

Education Case Studies of Pakistani Pupils

Evidence from the Commission for Racial Equality, Runnymede Trust, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and academia suggest that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis suffer the most disadvantages in all aspects of life in Britain, including education underachievement. However, if the Kashmiri community was monitored in its own right, the levels of underachievement would be much higher. This would be based on the limited evidence available, would make British Kashmiris one of the most disadvantaged ethnic group in Britain, argues Ghulam Hussain at the time of the 2001 census consultation.

In London and the southeast, some of the Pakistani communities are fairly prosperous and their educational achievement is on par with, or higher than, national average.

In the West Midlands and North, the communities have been

severely affected by changes in manufacturing industries over the last twenty five years and by the consequent lack of employment chances. Here, educational achievement in Pakistani communities is much lower than regional and national averages.⁴

“Raise Project” Themes and Threads

Themes and threads further comment that the higher proportion of Pakistani communities in the West Midland and North originate from Azad Kashmir in Pakistan. Being Kashmiri is an important part of their identity and history. This raises the question given that Pakistan was created out of India and people of Pakistan had the same educational opportunities as Indians. It is very unlikely that Indians are achieving in education above average and Pakistanis are at the bottom. Shamas Rehman reveals that if the figures were separated for Pakistani from Kashmiris, Pakistani educational attainment would be in par with Indians, it is Kashmiris who muddy the water. (Rehman 2000, 4-15) Further evidence is provided by the Raise Project, (the achievement of British-Pakistani learners). In the introduction, Shamas’s theory is supported. This will be discussed in the following steps.

The Raise Project

Background

The Raise project was set up in 2002. It was funded by Yorkshire, forwarded and organised by the Uniting Britain Trust, in association with the churches’ regional commission for Yorkshire and the Humber. It was managed and co-ordinated by the Insted (In-service Training & Educational Development) Consultancy. The project was created because in many parts of England there is a substantial gap between national averages

⁴ Councillor Ghulam Hussain of Leeds is a British-Kashmiri community

on school attainment and the attainment of pupils of Pakistan and Kashmiri heritage. The project aims to demonstrate through a series of case studies that the attainment of Pakistani and Kashmiri heritage pupils can be raised and it describes the factors that underlie success.

Since the inclusion of ethnic categories in the 1991 census, decision makers at national, regional and local levels collated data to ensure the socio/economic needs of Britain's minority ethnic communities are met. It also has made it easier for education authorities to determine achievement data of the communities. It is also noted from all Local Education Authority (LEA) case studies submitted to "Raise Project" that for the first time LEAs are using the term Pakistani and Kashmiri heritage.

There is a total of eleven case studies submitted to raise the project so far nationally. These case studies have some common themes running through: for example, Kirklees, Slough and some others seem to be very clear on Kashmiri community and Pahari language. Bradford, which has the largest Kashmiri community, completely chooses to ignore it and run with Pakistani heritage, so does Rotherham and other authorities, which have a very large community of Kashmiri heritage. When it comes to student data both Rotherham and Bradford use the word Mirpuri and Pakistani heritage. Derby, Redbridge and some other start off with Pakistani and Kashmiri heritage for few pages and then Kashmiri replaces Mirpuri and eventually it becomes Pakistani and Muslim heritage.

There is no evidence to suggest why this is the case except that the people involved with the projects are either biased i.e. of Pakistani or Indian origin and their white counter parts run with their advice or it may be that it is due to sheer ignorance and Kashmiri exclusion in census and other Government departments. However, some case studies have

leader and the former Manager in Social Services Leeds City Council.

dug deeper and have involved Kashmiri parents with appropriate linguistic support to get to the bottom of the problem. For example, Eastbourne junior and nursery school in Dewsbury (Kirklees).

Case Study 1

The study was carried out at Eastbourne Junior, infant and Nursery school, all previous assumptions in relation to links between parents language competence, own level of education, aspiration and pupils attainment were set aside and the team set about to seek information on the community, parents/pupils, culture, language and ethnicity. At the time, there were 196 pupils on roll, of which 125 were Pakistanis and Kashmiri heritage. 37% to 60% were on free school meals. The study set out to explore the education levels of the adults within the family and languages of verbal and literacy used for daily communication between family members and the wider community.

A questionnaire for the parents was devised after much discussion and consultations with all relevant people, including parents. It was recognised that some parents might not be able to fill out the questionnaire, hence, the ethnic minority achievement co-ordinator was engaged but he only could speak Punjabi and Urdu, and could not communicate with a section of the parents, therefore two bilingual support workers who identified themselves as Pahari speakers, were engaged and they participated actively.

However, parents had difficulty in defining their language. Some said “it is Pakistani” but after some discussions and bilingual support workers’ help, the languages were identified as Pahari and Punjabi. Being able to identify their language positively and having the vocabulary to label it correctly enhanced parent’s confidence and sense of personal identity. Subsequently, Pahari speaking parents identified themselves on school forms as speakers of Pahari rather than

Punjabi. Parents recognised the political dimensions of language and nationality and they described themselves as Kashmiris, a group distinct from Pakistanis. The study further notes that it was the Pahari (Kashmiri) families, in which neither parent had personal experience of the English education system.

Raw data was entered into a database to facilitate comparisons and analysis; responses indicated that, of the families previously recorded as Pakistanis, many identified themselves as Kashmiris and felt strongly that their ethnic identity should be accurately recorded. Prior to the questionnaire, the school had recorded the heritage as Pakistani and language of all Pakistani pupils as either Punjabi or Urdu. Subsequently, a very large number of them identified themselves as Pahari speakers of Kashmiri heritage. The major finding of this study was that:

Pakistani and Kashmiri cultures, languages and value base were different. Pahari speaking (Kashmiri) parents had very little experience of English education system and were submissive and hardly engaged. It was also noted that, they had high aspirations for their children, however, their non-recognition i.e. cultural, linguistic needs marginalised them.

There is currently a great deal of debate regarding the status of Pahari and whether it is a discrete language or a dialect of Punjabi. The study also notes that the debate is influenced by the current political climate in the region of Kashmir. It should be noted that this point is very widely used to water down different needs of Kashmiri community.

Case Study 2

Slough case study is no different, in that it has got themes of Pakistani and Kashmiri heritage with a Muslim dimension in its commentary. Eventually, Pakistani, Kashmiri and Muslim heritage appear as a homogenous group, as having Pakistani heritage. However, the study does talk about cultural pathology

which problematizes certain groups and in that it states: “From interviewees’ discourse there emerges some evidence of respondents adopting a “cultural pathology” which particularly problematizes Kashmiri pupils and their families.” The study shows that, with very limited exposure, Kashmiris do not actually know what is expected of the child. If the father is doing night duty, he is too tired to take an interest in the child. The woman is doing all the house work, and has small children, so she does not know what is expected, this results in the child being left to his/her own devices to do whatever he/she can or just forget about homework. Therefore, there is no consolidation of the work done in the class.

The study also suggests that Kashmiri parents seldom attend parents’ evenings and often are very happy if their children can speak English. They are willing but unable to participate in children’s education attainment. This is due to many factors: their inability to understand the education system, engage with appropriate authorities, including teachers. Though Slough employs bilingual workers, Pahari language is ignored at its peril. No attempt is made to understand child’s cultural background or family values. One of the interviewees argues that if the School Support Assistant or the teacher speaks the home language of the pupil, that’s a huge difference. The pupil automatically feels: “Oh she knows”, as she knows me, we have got that common ground. The study also found that all the advertisements for bilingual support assistants had Punjabi and Urdu essential and there was no mention of Pahari, hence it discriminated against the majority of the Kashmiri community, in its employment practices.

Ethnicity and Education: The evidence of Minority Ethnic Pupils age 5 to 16. Research topic paper 2006 edition.

In the data for BME groups (2006), it is stated that as of

January 2006, at primary schools, the largest minority ethnic group is the Pakistani group which accounts for 3.3% of pupils, followed by white others 2.6% and Black African pupils 2.5%. At secondary schools the largest minority ethnic groups are Pakistani 2.5%, Indian 2.4% and white other 2.3%. The data also shows that since the introduction of extended ethnic codes in 1991 and 2001 census, the number of others has gone down significantly for all communities; however, the number of Pakistani others has increased twofold. Though DFEs makes extended codes available, these are the same as the ones used in 2001 census and CRE recommendations are in line with the 2001 census. However, more than fifteen local authorities include Kashmiri category in their employment and service delivery monitoring systems. Even then there seems to be confusion amongst local authorities and LEAs. This then is translated into their local education categories, for example; some just stick with Pakistani, others go bit further and include categories such as Mirpuri Pakistani, Kashmiri Pakistani, Punjabi Kashmiri and so on. This perhaps is a result of Kashmiris self-defined other tick rather than going along with Pakistani as is shown in the data further on.

This then is not surprising, because the schools, teachers and LEAs know that something is not right but they, like the Kashmiri community, are being failed by the Central Government and department of education's ethnicity guidelines. The data on the website shows that within each set of extended codes the largest group of pupils is the "other" group. Within others, the most notable group is the other Pakistani group. Around 25% of the pupils are identified as other Pakistanis. Further on the table 7 on page 15 tells its own story it puts Kashmiri other at 1,313 and other Asian close to 10,000. This perhaps is explained on the same page in figure 8. The table heading says: Number of Pakistani pupils in the 11 Las using extended Pakistani codes 90% or more of their Pakistani pupils in 2005. And the table reads: 8,373 Kashmiri

Pakistani: 10,318 Mirpuri Pakistani: 52,256 other Pakistani. Does it mean that 90% of the pupils are of Kashmiri origin labelled as Pakistanis and the remaining 10% are Pakistani? This would be a true reflection of the social commentators and anthropologist's commentary on the Pakistani/Kashmiri population percentages in Britain. This is discussed above, in the section heading "Kashmiri existence in Britain". This is a classic example of the lack of knowledge of the Kashmiri existence or exclusion and marginalization. It also defeats the argument that Kashmiris are happy with Pakistani categorisation. If that was the case why would we have more other than Pakistanis? Are Kashmiris protesting by self-defining other or Mirpuri or Kashmiris or are Kashmiris deliberately being confused by inclusion of many categories, which would define Kashmiris as mentioned above.

Above, Raise case studies of local authorities and Data on minority ethnic school population, poses a serious question to all service planners and providers: Who are 'other' Pakistanis? Is other Pakistanis' culture, language and heritage taken into consideration in formulation of community cohesion policies, multicultural curriculum development? Is 80% to 90% of other Pakistani population engaged in any service planning, consultation or social policy in any meaningful way? JRF (2006) study in Bradford argues that the largest BME (Mirpuri) community is marginalised and excluded.

Conclusion

In this study, we have seen how Kashmiri identity and ethnicity has been remoulded by some social commentators without any resistance initially and how it has been made to look like a political issue by some academics. Despite introduction of rafts and rafts of inclusion legislations and community cohesion drives the state and society continues to exclude Kashmiri community at all levels. The Asian academics

for example, Anwar and Modood continue to ignore their own governments' standings of Kashmiri community. Nicholson, in her European Parliament's Report on Kashmir, notes that Indian constitution's Article 370 and Act 1974, clearly defines the State of Jammu and Kashmir as sovereign and gives it clear ethnic identity but in Britain Kashmiris are no longer Kashmiris as they are either Pakistanis or Muslims.

In the second case study, it is clearly shown the disadvantage faced by Kashmiri community in education attainment in the absence of their identity; hence mother tongue Pahari language is replaced by Urdu or Punjabi, which are foreign to Kashmiri parents and children alike. This exclusion then makes it impossible for service planners/decision makers to include Kashmiri community in decision-making process or gear service towards their needs. Though the case study only looks at educational attainment, it should be noted that absence of Kashmiri ethnicity in national census has far reaching effects on the public services to Kashmiri community. In Leeds social service research report suggests that Kashmiri elders are not able to access services due to various reasons including language, attitudes towards them by other Asians and lack of knowledge.

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