

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Bristol, Graduate School of Education</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 25 - Education</p>
<p><b>Title of case study:</b> Improving Schools' Policies and Practices to Raise the Learning Achievement of Black and Minority Ethnic Learners in England</p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Bristol research has led to a fundamental improvement of policies and programmes in the English education system so that they make visible and take into account, the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) learners at risk of underachieving. The studies have been used to shape progressive rounds of Government policy and programming including the implementation of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant and the Black Pupils Achievement Programme, informing and scaling-up good practice relating to school leadership and teaching in local authorities and schools throughout the 2008-2013 assessment period. They have also been used to increase levels of understanding amongst policymakers and the wider public about the barriers to achievement facing BME pupils and successful practice for overcoming those barriers.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The underpinning research involved four main studies led by Professor Leon Tikly in the Graduate School of Education (1998-) and involving other colleagues at the University of Bristol.</p> <p><b>Evaluating Local Education Authority (LEA) Action Plans to Raise the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Groups (2001-2):</b></p> <p>The research commissioned through a process of competitive tender by the DfES was undertaken by a team led by Tikly with colleagues at the University of Leicester (Osler, Vincent) and in partnership with the Birmingham LEA. The findings demonstrated the key relationships and differences in achievement amongst ethnic minority students across different local education authorities, and whether the strategies funded by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) make a difference [1],[4]. Importantly, the research established a link between levels of ethnic minority achievement, and LEAs strategies of supporting schools to review their performance; setting targets and monitoring achievement; devolving EMAG funds to school level; and, collating and disseminating good practice.</p> <p><b>Understanding the Educational Needs of Mixed Heritage Learners (2003-4):</b></p> <p>The research commissioned by DfES through a process of competitive tendering grew out of a pilot study and was led by Tikly, Caballero (University of Bristol staff from 2003-6) and Haynes (University of Bristol staff from 2003) in association with the Birmingham Local Education Authority (LEA). This research was the first of its kind to seek to understand the barriers faced by mixed heritage students, with specific reference to White/Black Caribbean students and that in the mixed heritage group, the White/Black Caribbean population is the largest (compared with the White/Asian and White/Black African), and makes up 0.9% of the total school population in England. White/Black Caribbean students perform below average, and when social class is controlled for, their performance is similar to that of Black Caribbean students. White/ Black Caribbean students self-identify as Black and like Black Caribbean students often experience low teacher expectations, linked to stereotypical views of these pupils' 'confused identities'. Furthermore, these students are largely invisible in schools policies, though they indirectly benefit from strategies aimed at Black Caribbean achievement. The research identified effective practices that led to achievement amongst these pupils, i.e. school leaders who challenged teachers to do better, a focus on innovative learning strategies, diversity in the curriculum, high expectations for pupils and a positive school culture that recognised diversity and 'mixedness' [5].</p> <p><b>Evaluation of Aiming High: Raising African Caribbean Achievement Project (2004-6):</b></p> <p>The research, commissioned through a process of competitive tender by the DfES was led by Tikly and included Caballero and Haynes with colleagues at the Institute of Education (Gillborn) and was undertaken in partnership with Birmingham LEA. The research evaluated the government's <i>Aiming High: African Caribbean Achievement Project (2003-5)</i>, which sought to raise the achievement of Black Caribbean learners in schools. The evaluation report [3] was accepted by the DfES and was used to inform the subsequent roll out of the Black Pupils Achievement project (below). The research found that student attainment had improved for African Caribbean students attending Aiming High schools compared to those not attending Aiming High schools but that improvement</p>

## Impact case study (REF3b)

varied across the schools. Improvements for African Caribbean boys were the lowest. Where schools had mechanisms of exclusion in place (such as ability setting, test and examination tiers, gifted and talented classes) African Caribbean students were less likely to be included in these classes. School heads and teachers across the project schools had varied understandings of the factors that affected the achievement of African Caribbean students. The schools' use of strategic data also varied across the schools limiting their capacity to impact on the target population.

### **Making the Difference: Ethnicity and Achievement in Bristol Schools (2012):**

The research was commissioned by Bristol LA following a rigorous review process and was undertaken by Tikly, Rose (member of staff since 2008) and Bent (member of staff since 2012). The purpose was to raise public awareness of achievement issues affecting Black and Minority Ethnic Learners in Bristol schools. Drawing on experiences of Head teachers, classroom educators, teaching assistants, support staff, parents and learners the team identified the range of strategies that these schools use to make a difference and developed this into a model of successful practice that drew on earlier projects undertaken by Tikly and colleagues [1], [2], [3], [5]. The report found that the largest growing BME group is the Somali group. This group along with learners of Black Caribbean and Pakistani heritage and White Working class learners were particularly at risk of underachieving in Bristol schools but that strategies targeted at BME learners were likely to also benefit learners from White Working Class backgrounds as well [6].

### **3. References to the research** (indicative maximum of six references)

- [1] Tikly, L., Osler, A., Hill, J. & Vincent, K. (2002) *Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant: Analysis of LEA Action Plans*, (London: DfES). (Available at: <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/4573/1/RR371.pdf>).
- [2] Tikly, L. Caballero, C., Haynes, J., Hill, J. (2005) *Understanding the Educational Needs of Mixed Heritage Pupils* (London: DfES). (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/ethnicity/documents/educationalneeds.pdf>)
- [3] Tikly, L, Haynes, J, Caballero, C, Hill, J and Gillborn, D (2006) *Evaluation of Aiming High: African Caribbean Achievement Project, Research Report RR801* (Nottingham: DfES). (<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eorderingdownload/rr801.pdf>).
- [4] Tikly, L., Osler, A. & Hill, J. (2005) The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant: A Critical Analysis, *Journal of Education Policy*, 20(3): 283-312. DOI:10.1080/02680930500108619.
- [5] Tikly, L. & Caballero, C. (2006) The Barriers to Achievement for White/ Black Caribbean Pupils, *British Journal Of Sociology of Education*, 27(5): 269-283. DOI:10.1080/01425690600958766.
- [6] Bent, E., Rose, J., Hill, J. & Tikly, L. (2012) *Making the Difference: Ethnicity and Achievement in Bristol Schools* (Bristol: University of Bristol) (available at: [http://dbms.ilt.bris.ac.uk/media/user/229363/Making\\_the\\_Difference\\_22\\_June.pdf](http://dbms.ilt.bris.ac.uk/media/user/229363/Making_the_Difference_22_June.pdf)).

### **Related grants supporting and evidencing quality of publications:**

- Tikly (2001-2) *Evaluation of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant*, (DFES), £50k.
- Tikly (2002) *The Achievement and Educational Needs of Mixed Heritage Children in UK Schools* (University of Bristol, Centre for Ethnicity and Citizenship), £500. A small grant to pilot fuller application [with Chamion Caballero, Department of Sociology].
- Tikly (2003-4) *Understanding the Educational Needs of Mixed Heritage Pupils* (UK Department for Education and Skills), £136k [with Jo Haynes and Chamion Caballero, Department of Sociology, University of Bristol].
- Tikly (2004 -6) *Evaluation of the Aiming High: Raising African Caribbean Achievement Project* (UK Department for Education and Skills), £126k. [with Professor Dave Gillborn, Institute of Education and Birmingham Local Education Authority.
- Tikly (2012) *Making the Difference: Ethnicity and Achievement in Bristol Schools* (Bristol Education Achievement Partnership), £12k

### **4. Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research has had a wide and significant impact on professional practice at the local level. It has also shaped national policy and programmatic interventions and influenced national and international guidelines on successful practice in closing the attainment gap.

#### **Local impact (practice)**

The research has changed teacher practices and LEA approaches towards raising the

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

achievement of BME learners at risk of underachieving across England. Case studies of Birmingham and Bristol offer examples of the significance of the changes from 2008:

**Birmingham:** A former LEA statistician reported that:

- Outputs from the research and findings [3] [5] underpinned resources that were made available through the LEA's School Improvement Website (Birmingham Grid for Learning – BGfL, between 2004 and 2012. "This included a number of DfE reports and guidelines; an African Caribbean Achievement Plan; and school case studies"[h].
- The LEA utilised these resources and the research findings to enhance professional practice, informing "good practice relating to school leadership, community partnership, mentoring, curriculum development, and raising awareness/tackling racism and stereotyping [h]
- The research [3] [5] reinforced the LEA's inclusion of mixed heritage groups in the analysis of performance (GCSE and SAT results) and in the analysis of "Every Child Matters" outcomes. This is a practice which Birmingham LEA continues to support and the performance analysis is reported to the City Council Scrutiny Committee each year [h].
- The data show that standards have improved for African Caribbean students and mixed heritage groups since the research was published and disseminated through BGfL. "Although it would be difficult to establish a direct cause effect relationship with these improvements and the research, the research findings did inform the policies and practices introduced to raise achievement"[h].

**Bristol:** The LEA service director has emphasised:

- That the research [6] "has had a strong impact on awareness, policy and practice. Bristol LA refer to the report on a number of occasions, including drawing it to the attention of head teachers and governors. This has raised awareness and brought around a more informed dialogue about the attainment of BME pupils"[g].
- The research [6] has influenced professional standards, guidelines or training, and has helped to develop a model of good practice in Bristol which "has had a valuable impact in terms of raising awareness and evidenced based discussions around policy and practice, and provides a useful on-going reference point" [g].
- "In partnership with the Bristol Education Achievement Partnership (BEAP) the LA commissioned an "easy read" version and booklet of the report [6]. The booklet has been widely disseminated to schools and, to stakeholder groups such as governors, parents, inter-agency NGOs etc. BEAP are also in the process of developing digitally based resources and guidance which are underpinned by the *Making a Difference* report" [g].
- "The November 2012 Bristol LA Annual Education Partnership Conference attended by head teachers, governors, academy sponsors, inter-agency NGOs etc. focused on narrowing the gap in achievement. The conference raised the profile of the report, and Professor Gus John from the Institute of Education was invited to speak with reference to the *Making a Difference*" [g].
- "The dissemination of the research finding [6] has impacted the development of policy and practice around inclusion and diversity and contributes to Bristol City Council's approach and awareness of achievement issues affecting Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Learners in Bristol schools" [g].

**National level (policy)**

The research has impacted and shaped government policy in England, and NGO's and professional bodies' policy from 2008 in the following ways:

- Influence can be seen in the impact of the Aiming High programme feeding into the content of the Black Pupil's Achievement Programme (BPAP) [a], which ran until August 2008 and has been credited for significant gains in the educational achievement of BME students.
- Influence can be found in several guidelines issued by the DfES as part of their national strategies, where research outputs have been cited. For example Aiming High [3] is included in a literature review of six research projects on BME children in schools in the *Excellence And Enjoyment: Learning And Teaching For Black Children In The Primary Years* strategy [b].
- The research underpins policy and best practice guidelines by professional bodies and charities. For example models of good practice drawing from the Aiming High research [3] is cited in guidelines of successful practice aimed at schools produced by the *National Union of Teachers* and the *National College for School leadership* [f]. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation cites

## Impact case study (REF3b)

*Understanding the Educational Needs of Mixed Heritage Pupils* [2] in a paper commissioned as part of its programme on poverty and ethnicity [i].

- Practitioner debate has been informed and stimulated by research findings. This is evidenced in Times Educational Supplement (TES) article *Colour blind? Not any more*, an article engaging in the debate about persistent gaps in BME pupil performance and exploring issues around race equality and “colour blindness”. The article cites “The final evaluation of Aiming High [3], led by Leon Tikly, Professor in Education at Bristol University” which “found that there had been impressive changes where schools routinely gathered data that was then analysed and used for professional development and targeted programmes of support” [j].

**Regional and Global levels (Policy)**

Insights developed through the combined research outputs have had a Europe-wide reach:

- Guidelines for inclusion and diversity underpinned by the research fed into a booklet (<http://www.britishcouncil.org/malta-indie-best-practice-guidelines.pdf>) and the British Council’s INDIE Policy Makers Seminar involving representatives from the Ministries of Education from 11 EU countries [d], with the outcome being a “strong interest in widening the impact of INDIE”.
- Dissemination has successfully targeted key policy makers and practitioners in international agencies and NGOs. It has fed into global guidelines on raising BME achievement, inclusion and diversity and research outputs have been widely cited in policy documents and background papers. For example [3] in the OECD Reviews of Migrant Education - *Closing the Gap for Immigrant Students: Policies, Practice and Performance*, which is “a report structured as a concise action-oriented handbook for policy makers” [e], and [4][3] in *Equal Opportunities? The Labour Market Integration of the Children of Immigrants* [c].

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- [a] Maylor, U., Smart, S., Abol, K., and Ross, A. (2009) *Black Children’s Achievement Programme Evaluation* (DfES: London). Aiming High/Tikly [3] [5] is cited frequently, evidencing its impact on Gov. policy, the Black Pupil’s Achievement Programme and Black Children’s Achievement Programme.
- [b] Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008b) *Excellence And Enjoyment: Learning And Teaching For Black Children In The Primary Years*, (Ref: 00058-2008BKT-EN), Nottingham: DCSF. Aiming High [3] is included in a review of 6 research projects on BME children in schools, demonstrating it has become an important reference point in its field.
- [c] OECD *Equal Opportunities? The Labour Market Integration of the Children of Immigrants*. 2010. OECD ISBN 9789264082397. Cites Tikly *et al* (2005) [4], and Tikly *et al* (2006) [3], demonstrating the research has become an important reference point for its field/policy makers.
- [d] Conference Report. British Council INDIE Policy Makers Seminar, 30<sup>th</sup> Nov to 1 Dec 2009, Berlin. <http://www.britishcouncil.org/indie-what-is-indie-policy-seminar.htm>. Tikly’s presentations on diversity and voice and collating best practice are reported, with the outcome of “strong interest in widening the impact of INDIE” amongst attendees.
- [e] OECD *Reviews of Migrant Education - Closing the Gap for Immigrant Students: Policies, Practice and Performance*. 2010. OECD ISBN: 9789264075771. A “report structured as a concise action-oriented handbook for policy makers”, which cites (Tikly 2006) [3], demonstrating it has become an important reference point in its field and for policy makers.
- [f] [Successful leadership for promoting the achievement of white working class pupils](#). The National Union of Teachers and National College for School Leadership. Nov. 2008. Six successful interventions identified in the Aiming High research [3] are cited, evidencing the impact on promoting good practice.
- [g] Statement, Service Director, Education, CYPS, Bristol City Council. Provides evidence of impact of underlying research on policy and practice in Bristol LA.
- [h] Statement, former statistician, Birmingham LEA. Provides evidence of impact of underlying research on policy and practice in Birmingham LA.
- [i] [Poverty, ethnicity and education](#). Joseph Rowntree foundation. 2011. Cites *Understanding the Educational Needs of Mixed Heritage Pupils* [2], as an example of how the research impact has dispersed beyond schooling to a broader audience.
- [j] [Colour blind? Not any more](#), by Helen Ward. Article Published in TES 4<sup>th</sup> Aug 2008. Cites Tikly [3], evidencing practitioner debate is being informed and stimulated by the research findings.