

Paper presented at the ‘Ethnicity, Mobility and Society’ Leverhulme Programme Conference at University of Bristol, 16-17 March, 2006

Ethnicity as social capital? Explaining the differential educational achievements of young British Pakistani men and women

Claire Dwyer, Department of Geography, University College London

Tariq Modood, Department of Sociology, Bristol University

Gurchathen Sanghera, Department of Sociology, Bristol University

Bindi Shah, Department of Geography, University College London

Suruchi Thapar-Bjorkert, Department of Sociology, Bristol University

Abstract

Our paper reviews some existing analyses of social capital with a view to evaluating their usefulness in explaining the educational attainments of young British Pakistanis. Can social capital explain their educational success when compared to their white peers? Conversely can the poor educational attainment of other young British Pakistanis also be understood through the lens of social capital? Does success come at a price not acknowledged by social capital analysts? We explore these ideas through the work of Coleman who uses the concept of social capital to show how families and communities can make a difference to educational outcome, independent of class. Coleman’s insights have been used in the US by Zhou (2004) and others to explain the educational success of some ethnic groups. Although rarely cited in Britain, this work resonates with earlier British anthropological approaches which conceptualise ethnicity as a ‘resource’. However Zhou, like other theorists using social capital, has little to say about gender. As gender differences in attainments for young British Pakistanis also appear significant we assume that gender is critical to the explanation. We explore the relationship between gender, ethnicity, social capital and educational attainment, drawing on recent empirical work in Bradford and Slough.

Introduction

In this paper we explore the possibilities of theorising social capital in relation to ethnicity. Despite considerable enthusiasm for the concept of social capital in a variety of different fields (Baron et al. 2000, Baron 2003, Edwards et al. 2003,) the relationship between social capital and ethnicity remains underdeveloped (Goulbourne & Solomos 2003). This is perhaps surprising if we consider the parallels between an approach in British anthropology that has treated ethnicity as a resource (see for example studies by Wallman 1979; Werbner 1990a; 1990b; Ballard 1996, focusing in particular on self-employment amongst minority ethnic groups) and aspects of the concept of social capital theory. Nonetheless the possibilities of social capital as a form of capital which can be nurtured and which might both raise *social cohesion* and combat *social exclusion* has certainly been part of a wider government rhetoric which has included concerns about the social exclusion and perceived lack of social integration and ‘community cohesion’ for some ethnic minority groups (see for example the reports about the 2001 urban disturbances in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley, Home Office 2001a,b).

Our interest in examining the relationship between ethnicity and social capital was developed in the context of this political debate, but also emerges from a broader

examination of the relationship between educational achievement and ethnic background. The sociology of education in the 1970s and 1980s emphasised an overgeneralised connection between 'race' and 'underachievement' (with the notable exception of research done for the Swann Report in 1984) which has not entirely disappeared. However in the 1990s it was clear that ethnic minority groups were showing evidence of considerable variation in their educational achievements (Modood 2004). Although no ethnic minority group is under-represented in higher education there is considerable variation between ethnic groups. More than twice the proportion of 18-24 year old Africans, Chinese, Asian-Others and Indians enter university than 'white' pupils (Modood 2004). The Fourth PSI survey in 1994 showed that South Asians as a group had the highest rates of participation in post-compulsory education for the 16-24 age group. Indian and African-Asian men were the most likely to possess degrees, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men the least likely (Modood et al. 1994). However if Pakistani young men do less well than some of their South Asian peers, they are still much more likely to go to University than their white peers. Connor et al. (2004) record a Higher Education Initial Participation Rate of 54% for Pakistani males, compared to 34% for young White men. (Interestingly, the gap is much smaller between females where the Pakistani female HE Initial Participation rate is 44% compared with 41% for young white women.) Thus one starting point for this paper is to ask why are some ethnic minority groups doing so well and is it possible to identify a 'motor' for Asian success?

Another mode of comparison between ethnic minority groups is to compare their attainments at school. Here again we can see clear variation between ethnic minority groups (HFCE Statistics 2005). For male pupils obtaining 5 or more grades A*-C at GCSE in 2004 Chinese pupils performed the best at 69.5% following by Indian pupils at 49.4% this is against an average for all pupils of 46.8% and a figure for White British boys of 47.4%. However those pupils who were significantly below average included all those within the Black category, with Black-Caribbean boys scoring the lowest at 27.3%, and Pakistani boys scoring below average at 38.8%.

Explanations for the educational achievements of ethnic minorities lie partly in an understanding of class origins and the reproduction of human capital (Modood et al, 1997). Moreover, facility in English, cultural adaptation, racism and poorly resourced schools can also explain why some minorities do less well than national averages. But what about groups who begin with a low level of attainment and experience all the personal and structural problems that should keep them at a low level yet make significant improvements? Indeed, some groups may exhibit a higher rate of improvement than whites, with whom they catch up and even overtake by some measures. The Indians and the Chinese are two groups that have made significant progress and have substantially overtaken white averages. To some extent class has been a contributory factor. For example, the African-Asians, were a prosperous and qualified commercial and administrative class in countries such as Uganda and Kenya even though they entered Britain in the late 1960s and early 1970s with very little economic capital. Evidence for the high-achieving Chinese in Britain is perhaps less obviously related to class and it might be argued (see Archer & Francis, forthcoming) that there are particular elements of social capital, independent of class which may be significant for this group.

Our own interest, in the educational achievements and progress of British Pakistanis who have made significant progress in comparison to the white majority and do not come, for the most part, from middle-class economic backgrounds, also suggests the need for an explanation which does not rely solely on class or economic capital. Instead in this paper we develop a discussion about the possibility of using social capital theory to analyse the ways in which ethnicity might have an influence on the educational success (and lack of success) of some Pakistani young men and women. This argument is tentative, building on theoretical debates developed elsewhere (Modood 2004), and recognising the difficulties in theorising both ethnicity and social capital. To analyse ethnicity 'as' social capital is not straightforward or clear cut. For example, it is possible to see ethnicity as both a positive and a negative form of social capital. The situation is also complicated by the fact that there is considerable internal polarisation amongst the Pakistani population. Thus young Pakistanis are as or more likely to achieve entry into higher education than white youths, but they are also more likely to leave school with no qualifications. There are also important gender differences. While Indian and Chinese males and females both do well and achieve higher levels than their white peers, this is not the case with Pakistanis. While it used to be the case that males outperformed females at school examinations and were more likely to go on to higher education; the trend, however, has been reversed in the last decade.¹ That strongly suggests that an exploration of the concept of ethnicity and social capital to explain the ethnic differentials in education qualifications – in particular why groups with low economic capital progress – will have to be a gendered investigation.

This paper draws on a research project funding by the Leverhulme Trust which explores the linkages between educational qualifications, ethnicity and gender, and the utility of the concept(s) of social capital in understanding those linkages.² The research focuses on one ethnic group, British Pakistanis, and compares the experiences of educational and employment experiences of young men and women, aged between 16-25 in Bradford and Slough. The research is still on-going, but so far almost one hundred young men and women have been interviewed, including those in education and those at work and comparing those who might be defined as 'educationally successful' and those who have are less successful. We have also interviewed parents, teachers and other key stakeholders in each research site including those involved in education, youth work and employment initiatives for young people. The comparative research locations were chosen to contrast a relatively deprived urban area with a more suburbanised and relatively economically prosperous area to give some measure of structural external constraints and opportunities for employment and career advancement for racialised minority groups in each place.

In this paper we begin by highlighting those aspects of the work of Social Capital theorists such as Bourdieu and Putman which seem to offer possibilities for analysing

¹ Even if, as yet, not as strongly as in its outcome as amongst other groups. So that, in contrast to the national average, Pakistanis and Bangladeshi females are not (yet) ahead of their male counterparts in HE entry, they have made progress relative to other females as well as their male peers (Connor et al, 2004).

² The project, Gender, Social Capital and Differential Qualifications, is part of the Bristol-UCL Leverhulme Programme on Migration and Ethnicity. Further details are available at < <http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Sociology/leverhulme>>

ethnicity in relation to social capital – even if these theorists have not explicitly engaged with the concept of ethnicity. We then consider the work of a number of theorists, in particular those working in the United States, who have applied the concept of social capital to the study of ethnic groups. We then use some illustrations from our on-going research to highlight some of the ways in which it might be possible to theorise ethnicity as social capital. Our findings are not yet conclusive but nonetheless point to some interesting ways in which this theme might be further developed. In conclusion we raise some possibilities for interpreting the differential educational achievements of British Pakistanis through the lens of social capital.

Theorising Social Capital and Ethnicity

The three theorists whose work has been seminal in relation to understandings of social capital are Coleman, Putnam and Bourdieu. While all three theorists agree that social capital is a resource, they highlight different functions for it. For Coleman, social capital refers to resources available to individuals and families to achieve social mobility, for Putnam it is seen as an endowment for civil society and important for economic growth and establishing democratic institutions and for Bourdieu it is about how power and inequalities are reproduced in social networks. Our aim is not to chart all the debates about social capital theory but to offer some possibilities for using these theories for our own specific project.

Bourdieu is often seen as the originator of interest in social capital theory (Schuller et al. 2000) although it is the concept of cultural capital which is developed much more fully in his work. Although Bourdieu is, of course, most interested in how the dominant class reproduces itself, his theoretical approach is also of interest in understanding how subordinate groups might seek to raise their socio-economic status by the deployment of or investment in different kinds of capital beyond the economic (Bourdieu 1997). These different capitals may include social capital, such as the operation of social networks or group membership, and cultural capital as well as economic capital. Thus Bourdieu's work raises the possibility that families lacking in economic capital may be able to use other capitals to achieve their educational aims and goals. Is it possible to see ethnicity, operating as a form of social networks, or as a set of shared norms and values, as a form of social or cultural capital? Certainly Bourdieu's work is important in emphasising the importance of familial norms in the production of socio-economic advantages and disadvantages. His work also offers a theoretical framework for making the links between the wider social structure, power and ideology. Bourdieu's work has been particularly influential in educational research, though as Reay points out this often takes the form of no more than a superficial genuflection (Reay, 2004). His major limitation for us, however, is that he is asking about how the dominant class reproduces its domination, whereas we are asking how subordinate groups can achieve upward mobility. His interest is in how those with financial capital can convert it into educational qualifications and then back again. But our starting point are groups with little economic capital and Bourdieu's framework does not seem to be suitable for examining how such groups can generate social mobility for significant numbers of their members.

If Bourdieu pioneered the concept of social capital in Europe, it was simultaneously being pioneered by the theorist James Coleman in the United States. He is especially

worth considering because of his specific interest in the relationship between educational achievement and social inequality. As is well known, Coleman's empirical work focused on the link between school and attainment and particularly the success of Catholic high schools in offering benefits to pupils from less-advantaged backgrounds (Coleman 1988, 1990). Although subject to considerable criticism for his lack of nuance, Coleman's significance for us lie in his definition of social capital as:

'the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organisation and that are useful for the cognitive or social development of a child or young person' (Coleman 1994:300).

Coleman's findings suggest that economic disadvantage can be compensated by a strong form of social capital in the form of family norms, values and networks, as well as a broader set of community values and networks which promote particular educational goals. Coleman has, of course, been criticised for his failure to theorise more carefully the nature of social networks and the differences between weak and dense ties (Portes 1998:5) and for the generally conservative understanding of social capital which tends to assume 'traditional' families. Portes (1998) suggests that it is important to distinguish the resources obtained through social capital from the ability to obtain them by virtue of membership in different social structures – a distinction explicit in Bourdieu but obscured in Coleman. Just as Coleman illuminates aspects obscured by Bourdieu's class focus, so this argument is important for our discussion because as Portes and Landolt (1996) argue 'equating social capital with the resources gained through it could obscure the important structural constraints on utilising the assets gained from social and familial ties'.

Coleman was, however, a major influence upon Robert Putnam [Schuller et al. 2000,8] whose studies of civil engagement have made him the key figure associated with social capital theory and in particular the figure associated with the dissemination of the concept into mainstream political and policy discourse. Putnam defines social capital as:

'features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives' (Putnam 1996:56).

In response to criticisms and debate about how these different facets of social capital work, Putnam's later work has developed this theoretical framework. Not only has he developed the concept of trust to an emphasis on reciprocity (Putnam 2000) but he has also expanded his definition of social capital and in particular to emphasise a tension between 'bridging' and 'bonding' forms of social capital. Thus bonding social capital builds strong ties but may lead to separation of a group or a homogeneity. In order for a group to foster social inclusion groups need to build bridging social capital which builds connections between heterogeneous groups. Like Coleman, Putnam has also been criticised for a somewhat conservative focus.

From our own perspective, Putnam, like Coleman, provides a framework for thinking about ethnicity as social capital. We could hypothesise that an ethnic group might have shared networks, norms and trust which might enable participants to act to pursue shared objectives – for example in the pursuit of social mobility. However the

tension between bridging and bonding social capital is also an important question. To what extent might ethnic minority communities exhibit strong ties which might mitigate against links with a wider society or prevent links to networks or norms which might facilitate social or educational mobility? In other words might some ethnic minority communities be sometimes strong in bonding social capital and weak in bridging social capital?³

Before developing these questions with reference to studies which have explored the relationship between ethnicity and social capital it is worth mentioning that any explicit reference to gender is absent in the key works of social capital. Indeed, as we have suggested already there is a possible conservatism to the work of both Coleman and Putnam which assumes the virtue of the 'traditional' family. For example Morrow (1999, 2000) argues that Coleman's idea of social capital not only portrays the consequences of women's employment as negative, but uses the number of siblings as an indicator of lack of social capital – ignoring how siblings may interact, support and determine the educational outcomes of each other. Moreover both Putnam and Coleman fail to account the role of social relations of power, a central feature of Bourdieu's framework. All three theorists, however, neglect the influence of gender ideologies in the creation and maintenance of social capital.⁴ Given our interest in the differences between the educational attainment and attitudes of young Pakistani men and women we are particularly keen to see how gender may influence how forms of social capital are developed, accumulated and realised and how gender ideologies intersect with the construction of shared norms and values.

'Ethnicity as Social Capital' Studies

There are a number of American empirical analyses that apply a concept of social capital to the study of ethnic groups (for a list see Bankston/Zhou 2002, 289). This body of work, not widely cited in the UK, is largely derived from James Coleman, reflecting his interest in explaining unequal scholastic outcomes, and perhaps initially intimated by the economist Glenn Loury in relation to the labour market position of African-Americans (Loury 1977). The empirical studies, while attempting to develop intermediate or grounded theory, do not slavishly follow any particular theorist or all aspects of the work of a useful theorist. For example, they assert the importance of the 'social' in all kinds of ways, while Coleman attempted to explain the social in terms of an economic-psychological individualism. Moreover, Alejandro Portes, perhaps one of the first to use the ideas of social capital and network theory in relation to immigrant ethnicity is scathing about some of the hyperbolic and vacuous uses of the concept of social capital (he particularly has Putnam in mind) and highlights negative as well as positive outcomes of social capital (Portes 1998).

³ Returning to the studies cited earlier of ethnic minority enterprises we might see these as examples of bonded social capital but suggest that limited bridging social capital did not allow some these ethnic minority enterprises to move beyond the limitations of the so-called 'ethnic niche' market.

⁴ Although Coleman does discuss social capital as parental support and cites the example of Asian immigrant mothers who both stay at home, and purchase second hand text books to help their offspring with homework.

The work of Bankston and Zhou (Bankston & Zhou 1998, 2002, Zhou 1992,1997, 2005) uses social capital theory to understand the academic achievements of Asian Americans focusing on case studies of Chinatown in New York and recent Vietnamese migrants to the US. This research has some parallels with our own interests since it focuses on migrants groups such as the Vietnamese who arrived in the US poor and without pre-existing community networks to assist them but have achieved outstanding academic performance (Zhou 1997, Zhou & Bankston 1998). In the case of research in Chinatown Zhou (2005) seeks an explanation for the fact that Chinatown families are experiencing upward social mobility within a generation. This explanation is rooted in what Zhou sees are key elements of the 'ethnic enclave' – group orientation, organisational structure and ethnic involvement. Zhou argues that a combination of strong shared norms and values about the importance of education, social mobility and social integration, strong parental and community enforcement of these norms and involvement in various ethnic institutions which bind families and individuals to an interlocking network of ethnic relations all combine to produce a form of ethnic social capital.

In seeking to theorise social capital Bankston and Zhou (2002), are critical of some of the ways that social capital has been used. They make some important and apposite philosophical points:

'... social capital, a [...] metaphorical construction, does not consist of resources that are held by individuals or by groups but of processes of social interaction leading to constructive outcomes. Therefore, we argue that social capital is not located at any one level of analysis and that it emerges across different levels of analysis. The confusion over the meaning of this term, then, is a consequence of a metaphorical confusion of a substantive quantity (capital) and a process that takes place through stages (embedded, goal-directed relations). Locating and defining social capital is further complicated by the variability, contextuality, and conditionality of the process. Stages of social relations that lead to constructive outcomes for one group of people or in one situation may not lead to constructive outcomes for another group or in another situation' (Bankston/Zhou 2002, 286).

On their reading of the relevant literature, two particular dimensions of social capital seem to have emerged in their research that are particularly relevant to the family: "intergenerational closure" and "norms enforcement" (Bankston/Zhou 2002, 287). In the case of families, "intergenerational closure" is achieved where parents know the parents of their children's friends, so that the network of parents and the network of children involve many of the same families. As for 'norms enforcement', it is of course critical that if certain goals are dependent on focused effort, then the norms that inform those goals must not only be shared but must be enforced, otherwise they would only be vague aspirations or good intentions. They suggest an important triad: familial adult-child relationships, transmission of aspirations and attitudes and norms enforcement. Zhou's work also gives attention to the locale beyond the family focusing on the operation of ethnic networks and organisations. She argues that 'the community, as an important source of social capital, not only makes resources available to parents and children, but serves to direct children's behaviour' (2005:34). Drawing on her study of Chinatown in New York and elaborating on the role community organizations play there in assisting upward social mobility, Zhou makes a distinction between what she defines as an ethnic/racial 'ghetto' and an 'enclave'

(Zhou 1992; 2005 forthcoming). Both are typified by high levels of ethnic group segregation and an absence of highly paid jobs, but an enclave, unlike a ghetto, is likely to be economically dynamic and aspirant, allow cross-class relationships, thus enhancing information channels, job opportunities and models of academic and economic success, all of which reinforce the promise of upward mobility missing in a ghetto. This is a distinction that can be connected with Putnam's emphasis on the importance of bridging and linking, as well as bonding capitals.

Of course Min Zhou's generally enthusiastic approach to theorising ethnic ties, norms and community organisations as a form of social capital which aids social mobility can be critiqued. First, her work is situated within an American context of the study of immigrant social integration, exclusion and mobility which tends to compare the Asian 'model minorities' with more long established groups like African-Americans which have not achieved social mobility (the reference to the 'ethnic ghetto') which tends to ignore more complex structural constraints for these unsuccessful groups. And, as we noted of Coleman and Putnam, Zhou also does not take account of gender ideologies and power relations within families and ethnic communities which can differentially shape the impact of ethnic social capital on educational attainment and career trajectories of young men and women.

Another issue, which Min Zhou does touch upon, are the pressures on the young people from this intense parental and community expectation and scrutiny which, as she admits, can lead to 'intense intergenerational conflict, rebellious behaviour, withdrawal from school, and alienation for the network which are supposed to help' . (Zhou 2005, 33)) Interestingly she notes both that the young people concentrate on particular subjects 'science and engineering because their families want them to do so...when graduating from college they often lack the type of networks that facilitate their job placement and occupational mobility' (Zhou 2005: 34). This observation, although not developed in her empirical work, certainly raises interesting questions about social mobility and ethnicity as social capital.

Before discussing our own empirical work we briefly cite two further studies which have used ideas about social capital to explain the educational achievement of minority ethnic or 'immigrant' youth.⁵ Lauglo (2000) looked at the educational performance of what he defines as 'immigrant youth' in Oslo in 1996 using a questionnaire survey. Of the variety of national backgrounds included in this survey 32%, the largest group, were Pakistani. Statistical analysis suggested that nationality was the most important variable explaining a 'constructive engagement' with school. Lauglo then suggests that this can be understood by using social capital measures such as an emphasis on a strongly cohesive family background (as well as other factors like religious involvement which is seen to be conducive to a positive engagement with school).

The recent work of Archer and Francis (forthcoming) focuses, like Zhou, on the Chinese pupils, this time in the British context. Their research seeks to understand the educational success of British Chinese pupils given the 'working class' positions of many Chinese families in Britain using the lens of Bourdieu inspired theories of social class. They identify a range of different strategies employed by British Chinese

⁵ The work of Ogbu (Ogbu/Simons 1998) on school performance also has some parallels with social capital theory although the primary focus here is Bourdieu's ideas of cultural capital and habitus.

families which can be read as employing a variety of forms of family capital – cultural, social and economic – as well as what they describe as a ‘diasporic discourse of Chinese valuing of education’ (p13). In this context social capital was identified as the informal and formal social networks within which information was shared by families. Two elements of this were key, social/educational competition among and between Chinese families and participation in Chinese supplementary schooling. Archer and Francis conclude by arguing that ‘race/ethnicity constitutes an ever-present complexity’ in existing class-based explanations for the re/production of educational inequalities (p19). Thus, while wishing to retain a much stronger economic/structural framework than Zhou, Archer and Francis also provide strong evidence for the ways in which ethnic networks, values and norms may be understood as social capital. Archer and Francis are also important in seeking to complicate these ‘ethnic’ networks, norms and values by emphasising classed differences between the Chinese families interviewed.

Having outlined the work of a number of other theorists who are interested in linking ethnicity and social class we now turn to our own research.

Gender, Differential Outcomes and Social Capital: Framing the Research

As stated already, our current, Leverhulme funded research, stemmed from our interest in the relationship between educational attainment and ethnicity, but it is also situated within broader debates about the crisis of masculinity in general, and the problem of young Asian Muslim men in particular, expressed most forcibly in the wake of the 2001 urban disturbances. In structuring our research we had the following aims:

Research Aims:

- (1) To employ the notion of ‘social capital’ to examine whether family and community values, norms and networks may influence which groups and individuals achieve economic social mobility.
- (2) To explore this role of ‘social capital’ through the lens of gender, asking how men and women may engage differently within this framework or set of shared norms and values.
- (3) To explore this role of ‘social capital’ through a comparative study focusing on two case studies (in Manningham, Bradford and in Slough) in order to be sensitive both to the geography of socio-economic opportunities and to the local contexts within which shared understandings of ‘community’ values and norms are negotiated.

Our more detailed research questions were formulated around this conception of social capital:

Research Questions

- (1) What attitudes and values about education, achievement and socio-economic advancement are held by young Asian men and women in each locality?

Do these attitudes and values vary according to different levels of academic achievement and socio-economic success?

Do these attitudes and value vary according to gender?

(2) What shapes these attitudes and values?

To what extent are the values of young people reinforced by ‘community’ or shared values, norms and networks, or to what extent are they in conflict with dominant ‘community’ or shared values?

How do young people describe and evaluate dominant ‘community’ or shared values?

Are there differences between young men and young women in terms of how they respond to perceived ‘community’/shared values?

(3) How do young men and women articulate their gendered identities? To what extent do they see their understandings of gendered cultures as in conflict or accommodation with the attitudes of older members of the Asian ‘community’?

As is clear from this research design we initially but provisionally conceptualised social capital in terms of a set of ‘community’ or shared values, while remaining wary of the dangers of essentialism in framing our analysis around the contested notion of ‘community’. Drawing on the work of Min Zhou we were interesting in finding out to what extent her framework of shared values and norms, enforced by familial and community networks operated in our two case study sites for young British Pakistanis and might be used to explain the attitudes of young people towards educational achievement.

Contexts and Methodologies

Bradford Background Data

The city of Bradford is located in northern England and has been the focus of much media and scholarly attention since the urban disturbances that took place in 2001. According to the 2001 census, the Bradford Metropolitan District’s total population stood at 467,665, with 78 per cent of the population identifying as White. Bradford had the highest percentage of people with Pakistani origins in Britain, comprising 15 percent of the city’s population, together with three percent Indian, one percent Bangladeshi, one percent African/Caribbean, and two percent ‘Others’.

Bradford is one of Britain’s most deprived areas, due to processes of de-industrialisation and recessions during the 1970s and 1980s. According to the

National Index of Local Deprivation, Bradford emerged as the 23rd most deprived local authority area in England – out of 366. The Asian Muslim population is heavily concentrated within the inner city areas of Bradford associated with physical and social deprivation. For example, they make up over half of the population in electoral wards such as Toller, University, Little Horton and Bradford Moor (incidentally, each of these wards named among the poorest wards in England⁶). The 1993 ‘Areas of Stress Report’ within the Bradford district calculated that over half of Pakistanis (53 percent) and 81 percent of Bangladeshis live in areas of ‘multiple stress’. It found that the unemployment rates in areas of multiple stress averaged 32 percent, compared with 12.7 percent average for the district as a whole. In some electoral wards, including those covering Manningham, the rates were considerable higher, for both total unemployment and youth unemployment.

In the debates that ensued after the urban disturbances that took place in 2001, considerable media, policy and academic attention centred on issues of ‘social exclusion’, segregation, racism, and the Pakistani Muslim ‘community’ itself and ideas around ‘cultural dysfunction’ (Alexander 2004). Therefore, Bradford was in part chosen as a research site because of all the attention it has come under in media and policy arenas. Linked to this is the second point; that in certain circles (academic, media, and political) the disturbances were said to be indicative of both low levels of education and economic achievement of young Pakistani Muslim men in Bradford. Manningham, Girdlington are probably the most widely known neighbourhoods because they are often associated with the disturbances in 1995 and 2001. Pakistanis are the largest ethnic group in these neighbourhoods: in Manningham they comprise 62.1 per cent of the total population, in Girdlington 60.2 per cent, and Heaton-Oak Lane 67.3 per cent. They also have other similarities. For example, with respect to ‘no qualifications’, in Manningham and Girdlington the figure stands at 54.5 per cent and Heaton-Oak Lane 45 per cent. Interestingly unemployment amongst 16-24 year olds stands at 32.7 per cent in all the neighbourhoods (Census 2001).

The ethnic diversity of Bradford also reflects primary settlement during the 1950s and 1960s in relation to local job opportunities. In Bradford the majority of

⁶ Urban Audit Results: Bradford:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/urban2/urban/audit/results/bradford.htm
‘Caught in the poverty trap’ *Telegraph & Argus*. –
http://www.thisisbradford.co.uk/bradford_district/bradford/news/feat11.html

immigrants, who were largely less educated, worked the night shifts in the textile mills. Most were wool combers; a dirty job, traditionally carried out by women, who were not permitted by legislation to work the night shift (Lewis 1994:54). As a result, Bradford firms recruited men from India, Pakistan, and East Pakistan (now known as Bangladesh). Chain migration of single men continued until the Immigration Act of 1971. This saw the arrival of Pakistani wives and daughters; an estimated 70 percent of those calculated in the 1971 Census came after 1967 (Lewis 1994:55).

Slough Background Data

Slough is located in Southeast England in Berkshire. It has a population of 119,067 (2001) and generally regarded as an area of affluence with low levels of unemployment (3.4% in 2001, the national average). In terms of popular perceptions of Slough it's clear from a quick media search that it is frequently characterised as middle-England, dull and boring (*The Observer*, 29 September 2002). Of course, it has become caricatured in popular culture as the setting for the BBC comedy *The Office* reinforcing an image of stereotypical conformity. Despite the fact that it ranks 10th in an analysis of local authorities with the highest percentage of Muslims this is not often included in popular representations of Slough. Indeed the media reporting of the arrest of a British-Muslim terrorist suspects in March 2004 in Slough was consistent in its use of terms like 'Staking out suburbia' (*The Observer* 31/3/04) to suggest, perhaps, that Slough was not necessarily a place associated with either ethnic diversity or Muslim extremism. This representation also, of course, conjures up an image of the dangers of the 'enemy within' which might be compared with dominant media portrayals of Bradford.

While in the national media Slough is not associated with its ethnic diversity, local government officials, the local media, community groups and many residents perceive it as a rich and diverse multi-cultural and multi-ethnic community of which 36.3% are from ethnic minorities. The total population of Slough is 119,067 with 63.7% of the population identified as White. The largest ethnic minority groups are those defining themselves as Indian (16,719 or 14%) and Pakistani (14,360 or 12.1%). Statistics about the residential concentrations of different ethnic groups in Slough suggest that the areas of Baylis & Stoke, Central and Chalvey have the highest

percentage of Pakistanis and that in many cases this coincides with concentrations of other Asian groups.

The ethnic diversity of the population reflects both primary settlement, particularly in relation to local job opportunities, and also suburbanisation of Asian populations previously living in outer London. Slough has retained a manufacturing base, alongside services expansion and it is in firms such as Mars, Sara Lee, John Crane and SmithKline Beecham that the first Asian immigrants to Slough were recruited.

The positive, or perhaps benign, image of Slough was disrupted in 1996 and 1997 when Slough witnessed a form of Asian youth violence which to date had only affected a few areas of the country. The violence was portrayed as gang violence rooted in religious difference and territoriality by the media (*Evening Standard (London)*, 22/5/1997). Tensions between Sikh and Muslim young men in the town, particularly focused on the Chalvey area, are still very much an issue, as reflected in recent discussion of ‘community tensions’ in the local newspaper (*The Slough Observer* 26/2/2004) in which concerns were raised by the Sikh Community Action Network (SCAN) about Pakistani gangs targeting Sikhs. However, voluntary groups such as Aik Saath emphasise other socio-cultural issues as main contributory factors to the inter-ethnic conflict. They argued that the young people involved tended to be from disaffected areas of Slough and suffered from low self-esteem and self-worth. This was having a major impact on their lives and they were clinging to ideals that made them feel good about themselves and gave them a sense of belonging.⁷ Within the Pakistani community, as well as in other communities, there is also an issue of educational underachievement (Slough LEA) and social exclusion. In Chalvey, where a quarter of the residents are Pakistani, there is a great deal of material deprivation and the unemployment rate is 10.5 percent – more than twice the rate for Slough as a whole.

Method

In Bradford we conducted 55 interviews with young Pakistani men and women, aged 16 to 27, and one group interview with young men over a nine month period. This sample was recruited at a range of locations in Bradford: youth and community centres,

⁷ Aik Saath booklet, p. 6

the Youth Bank, local schools, voluntary organisations and through snowball techniques. The grid below provides a breakdown of our sample in Bradford.

Age/Status	Male	Female	Total
School or FE (Aged 16-20)	11	18	29
University (19-23)	8	5	13
Employed or unemployed (16-20)	2	2	4
Employed or unemployed (19-27)	5	4	9
Total	25	29	55

In Slough we conducted interviews with 65 young Pakistani men and women, aged 16 -26 in Slough, and conducted one focus group with 5 young women and one focus group cum extended interview with two young men over the same period. This sample was recruited at a range of locations: youth and community centres; other groups where youth were involved; Slough Borough Council; and through snowball techniques. The grid below provides a breakdown of our sample in Slough.

Age/Status	Male	Female	Total to date
School or FE (Aged 16-20)	10	9	19
University (19-23)	7	10	17
Employed or unemployed (16-20)	10	5	15
Employed or unemployed (19-26)	6	8	14
Total	33	29	65

We targeted our recruitment of potential interviewees in particular ways in order to interview a range of respondents who might be variously characterised as ‘educationally

successful' and those with lower levels of attainment. Thus our sample is not representative and reflects our methodology, our objectives and the ways in which the social identities of the primary researchers, Bindi and Gurch, shaped recruitment strategies.

PROVISIONAL FINDINGS: SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Focus primarily on Slough data and largely on data for young men rather than young women.

(1) Importance of Education

Our preliminary findings, based at this stage largely on the Slough data, show considerable evidence for a set of shared beliefs and values about the value and importance of education. Most of the young Pakistanis agreed that education is important in securing a good job, and all parents stress the value of education for their children. These aspirations are true of all parents regardless of their own educational or class backgrounds. The educational and career achievements of their children provide a source of respect and status for parents within the co-ethnic community in the UK as well as vis-à-vis family back in Pakistan. We can begin to interpret these aspirations as an example of ethnicity at work if we compare these aspirations to those of white working-class parents who may be much less ambitious for their children or may see aspirations for social mobility as 'getting above your station' (Ready 1999, McDowell 2003).

(2) Class and Social Capital

However what was clear from our research was that where parents differed was in their abilities to assist their children in enabling these aspirations.

More middle-class parents or parents with middle-class orientations invest in strategies such as seeking better schools or driving their children to better schools, (a key issue in Slough with its competitive grammar school system) purchasing additional books, visits to the library or access to the internet, etc. What is evident is that more middle class parents are able to mobilise not only economic capital – in terms of accessing schools in more affluent areas, or driving to different schools or

buying extra resources – but also social and cultural capital. The more middle-class parents have broader social networks which are cross ethnic and cross class in contrast to the more working class parents whose networks are only co-ethnic. These social networks are important for gaining both specific information about the educational system and a more general awareness of the changing demands in skills as a result of changing labour markets. Such parents were more open to their children pursuing occupations other than the doctor/lawyer/accountant triad. The middle-class parents also have cultural capital. They understood the school culture and expectations on the part of parents on a daily basis. Several were also on the board of governors of local primary schools and one was trying to get on the board of a girl's secondary school. Two mothers had frequent contact with their children's headmistress/teachers; one accompanied her children on day fieldtrips.

In contrast some less well educated more working class parents do not enforce rules and discipline that instils a work ethic or ambition, especially among the boys. Instead parent-child relationships (measured in terms of level of knowledge about what parents do and think, levels of communications and who is identified as influencing the young person's decisions) are not strong, close or trusting, nor is children's religious practice and attendance at the mosque strong. Thus the norms enforcement, identified by Zhou as being key, is not present, and this is particularly true for young men. While working-class parents may be concerned about education and indeed may invest in tutors and provide computers, these are not necessarily timely and are not complimented by more general support. Instead they leave their children's educational achievement to school and or to 'fate'

One interesting illustration of how these differences between parental cultures have an impact on their children is to consider the example of three boys in the sample who were from middle-class families and were attending grammar schools, but were still influenced by the peer culture, particularly the use of drugs which had affected their studies. However, what is significant is that all three had managed to pull themselves out, with the help of family and friends and were back on "track." This outcome points to the social/cultural capital of middle-class families and the ways in which

middle-class families can mobilise resources (both material and psychic) when their children are experiencing crisis, and the authority that family norms and messages hold.

So our research findings did suggest that families with a more middle class orientation were better able to mobilise social capital in order to access education and develop the skills and values required to be successful in a competitive labour market. These findings raise some interesting questions about ethnicity and social capital. They suggest the importance of networks, norms and values in addition to aspirations and point to the class-based contexts within which norms, values and aspirations are negotiated.

(4) Religion as Social Capital

Having complicated the argument about ethnicity as social capital by arguing for the need to also consider the ways in which ethnicity is inflected by class, we now want to give some examples which provide somewhat stronger arguments for the operation of ethnicity as social capital.

The first, concerns a group of young working class men who can be contrasted with those involved in street culture described above. What characterised these young men was their strong affiliation to a religious identity. For these young men their religious practice and particularly their reading of the Koran gave them a strong impetus for pursuing education and to perform well academically. Not only did their religious devotion encourage them to conform to parental norms and values, but they actively constructed their own values which saw education as an appropriate Islamic activity.⁸ Although these young men were not the really high achievers nor particularly ambitious, their religious commitment kept them in school and college or university. In this case then we might argue for a Muslim identity as a form of ethnic identity which provides strong motivation for educational aspiration and advancement.

⁸ This is in contrast to another group of young men, largely present in the Bradford sample, whose devotion to a more 'fundamentalist' practice of Islam made them reject education in general and University study in particular as 'Western'.

This issue of religious observance as a means to develop social capital, a point made by Coleman, is also relevant if we think about the role of various community organisations including the mosques in providing social capital. If social capital varies across class at the family level, can working class Pakistani families draw on social capital generated through community-based organisations at the neighbourhood or locale level? The Slough Community School, which started in 2001, and has 180 children attending, with 120 on the waiting list, and a homework club which started about a month ago and has 10 children attending are two examples of the civic organisations that Zhou identifies and that Archer and Francis point to. Both of these were started by middle-class professional parents, are run on a volunteer basis and receive no government funding. While these organisations will contribute to the generation of cross-class/caste networks, they are relatively recent and cater for the needs of a small minority of Pakistani children. Although based in the mosque and with strong religious connections the Slough Community School was expressly set up to provide children with supplementary education following the National Curriculum rather than religious education and to provide working-class children with some of the extra educational tuition which more middle-class parents 'buy in' in the form of tutors. However a key problem for the Slough Community School is money since the ways in which British multicultural policies work shape funding in particular ways and do not allow schools such as this, which operate in a mosque, to access LEA funds. In the U.S. there is no such official policy and the community organisations that Zhou identifies in Chinatown have probably been generated through community effort and finance. Among the Vietnamese, refugee resettlement monies from the U.S. government helped the initial establishment of resettlement and other civic organisations. So, the political contexts matter.

(5) 'Street' culture as social capital

There is also some evidence of the ways in which ethnicity may function as social deficit rather than social capital. As illustrated above there were differences between our sample in terms of the kinds of networks within which parents operated with working-class parents likely to have networks which were mainly, or exclusively, co-ethnic. This might be evident of 'bonding' rather than 'bridging' social capital with some of the negative consequences of lack of social integration which this might suggest. We particularly found this to be the case with a group of working-class

young men who had few educational qualifications or aspirations but had strong associations with a peer-based street culture which included drug dealing and other illegal activities. All of them had attended a comprehensive school where the majority of the students were of Pakistani ethnicity. For this group their identities were linked to a Pakistani masculine culture which emphasised physicality, territorial loyalty and strong co-ethnic ties but few links outside this group. For the working-class boys, who used and dealt in drugs, the peer culture and the strength of their peer ties held much more sway (based on their lack of knowledge about jobs fathers did or what siblings were doing, who they saw as influencing them, and on their ambitions and need for earning money now).

Structural factors/ Gendered and racialised labour markets

However in considering the attitudes of these young men we also have to consider the ways in which the wider social context and structural constraints shape academic achievement and economic opportunities for Pakistanis in particular ways. Bankston and Zhou (2002) argue that their results show that conceiving of social capital as a process (rather than a quantifiable entity) can contribute to our understanding of how social groups and social settings promote individual consequences. This conclusion is perhaps a nod towards the constraints and opportunities shaped by the wider social structure and context, such as labour market changes, racism, though they do not elaborate on it. In our study many working-class young men argued that, while education is important, pursuing HE is not worth it because they know of many examples where peers have gone to university and are still finding it hard to get a job. This trend, plus the fact they do not want large debts, and that in the current labour market experience seems to count for more, are cited as reasons for not pursuing FE or HE. Economic re-structuring in general and labour market changes in particular has meant the factory jobs that the unskilled fathers (mostly, though some mothers as well) of our respondents had access to are no longer available. Many of the new jobs in the service sector require a minimum level of qualifications but also what are defined as “soft skills” in the economic sociology literature. If young Pakistanis, particularly males, don’t have these skills and qualifications, or are perceived by local employers not to have these skills, their economic opportunities will be diminished. Most of the young men interviewed at a training centre for 16-19 year-olds, and who

had no GCSEs or 1-2 GCSEs, did not appear to have “soft skills” or skills, abilities and traits related to personality, attitude and behaviour. This came across in interviews and in informal conversations with staff.

Transforming/negotiating negative masculine subcultures

Within our subset of young men who had left school with few educational qualifications we also had a group who were distinguished by their ability to negotiate their way through expectations and pressures from family, peer culture and the larger society and mapped out alternative career pathways in the post-sixteen transition. As these young men have made the transition from school to the world of work, their parents’ messages about the value of education have taken hold. Most of them have come to view education as important and as the vehicle through which they can get jobs that they enjoy and that pay well. However, they have not taken the traditional academic route, as their parents would have wished. Instead they have used their social networks to learn about other paths to gaining qualifications that will lead to jobs with some status, money and a satisfying career path. We termed these young men ‘negotiators’ because this is how we interpret their performance of an Asian Muslim masculinity. While these young men might regret their behaviour at school distance themselves from those young men who are involved in criminal activities, respect amongst this peer group remains important. Indeed some, like Bilal, have been able to use this performative masculinity as currency to gain him credibility in youth work. These young men are also negotiators in how they understand the expectations upon them to be breadwinner, to perform a ‘respectable masculinity’ in the context of their families.

Gender and Social Capital

Much of this paper has concentrated on our findings about the education of young men. However, as we stated at the outset Pakistani young women are generally doing better than young men, certainly at GCSE level and soon at the level of entry into HE as well. To what extent might a gendered form of ethnicity explain this? Our findings here are still somewhat speculative, so should be treated with caution, however like

other studies (Dale et al. 2002, Ahmad et al 2003) we found plenty of evidence of the strong commitment of young women to education including a wide spread desire to stay in education for as long as possible and to pursue higher education and a career. While for some young women this reflected support from more middle class parents, what was striking was this commitment to education could not simply be explained by class and was as strong in girls from more working-class families and where other members of the family had not been educationally successful. One explanation of this phenomenon does draw on ethnically constructed assumptions about femininity since it could be argued that continuing in education is a strategy to postpone marriage which often takes place as early as 16 for girls from Mirpuri families, although this was not a common finding for our sample. Another factor which has an ethnic inflection is that girls saw education more broadly than simply in relation to individual ambition seeing it as a means to support themselves (and possibly also their parents) if their arranged marriage failed. Some also saw education as a means by which they could contribute to the broader Pakistani community which again suggests some form of social capital explanation. In addition to these explanations it was clear from our findings that young women, because their socialising outside the home is much more limited are not subject to the distractions cited by their brothers in terms of masculine street peer culture. Thus the form of ethnicity as social deficit could be seen more positively for young women – perhaps with a caveat about the imposition of gendered norms upon the practice and behaviour of young women.

CONCLUSION

As we stated at the outset this paper has drawn on initial findings from work-in-progress so our conclusions are limited at this stage. In this paper we have presented a discussion of the potential and possibilities of using social capital theory to explain education achievement and career advancement for ethnic minority groups, focusing specifically on young Pakistanis. We began by outlining the interests of our specific project in the educational success of some ethnic minority groups in relation to others, and in the high and increasing rates of university application for ethnic minority groups like Pakistanis. We then considered the possibilities of using social capital theory to analyse this data outlining our own qualitative research on attitudes and experiences of young Pakistani men and women in which we have sought to

understand how community values, norms and networks may have an influence on educational aspirations and outcomes.

Our initial findings suggest some of the interesting ways in which the norms, values and networks developed within different ethnic minority communities might be conceptualised as social capital. These forms of 'ethnic' social capital might be consistent with the findings of theorists of ethnic advancement working in the US such as Min Zhou. However our initial findings have also problematised and challenged some of the ways in which Min Zhou and others have emphasised the role of social capital in aiding the advancement of ethnic minority groups. Our research points to the complex ways in which ethnic community norms, values and networks need to be theorised taking into account power relations, structural constraints and possibilities and the ways in which class, gender and generation, amongst other factors, interact in the construction and negotiation of community values, norms and networks.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AHMAD, FAUZIA/Tariq MODOOD/STEVE LISSENBURGH, *South Asian Women and Employment in Britain: the interaction of gender and ethnicity*, London 2003.
- BALLARD, Roger, *The Pakistanis: Stability and Introspection*, in: PEACH, Ceri (ed.), *Ethnicity in the 1991 Census*, vol. 2, *The Ethnic Minority Populations of Britain*, London 1996.
- BANKSTON CARL L./Min ZHOU, *Social Capital as Process: The Meaning and Problems of a Theoretical Metaphor*, in: *Sociological Inquiry*, 72(2).2002, 285–317.
- BARON, S., FIELD, J. & SCHULLER, T. 2000 *Social Capital, Critical Perspectives*, Open University Press.
- BARON, S. 2003 'The concept of social capital in politics and policy making' Paper presented at Social Capital Dialogue Day, South Bank University, 20th January
- BOURDIEU, Pierre, *The Forms of Social Capital*, in: HALSEY, A.H./P. Brown/A.S. Wells (eds.), *Education, Culture, Economy, Society*, Oxford 1997, 46–58. [First published in: RICHARDSON, J.E. (ed.), *Handbook of Theory for Research in the Sociology of Education*, Westport, C.T. 1986.]

- COLEMAN, James S., Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital, in: American Journal of Sociology, 94.1988, S95–S120.
- COLEMAN, James. S., Foundations of Social Theory, Cambridge, Mass., 1990.
- CONNOR, Helen/Claire TYERS/Tariq MODOOD/Jim HILLAGE, Why the Difference? A Closer Look at Higher Education Minority Ethnic Students and Graduates, (Research Report 552, Department of Education and Skills), London 2004.
- DALE, A., SHAHEEN, N., KALRA, V. and FIEDLHOUSE, E. (2002) 'Routes into Education and Employment for Young Pakistani and Bangladeshi Women in the UK' In: Ethnic and Racial Studies. Vol. 25, No. 6, p.924-968.
- EDWARDS, R., FRANKLIN, J. & HOLLAND, J. Families and Social Capital: Exploring the Issues, South Bank University, Families and Social Capital ESRC Research Group, working Paper, Number 1, 2003
- GOULBOURNE, H. & SOLOMOS, J. 2003 Families, ethnicity and social capital' in Social Policy and Society 2(4), 329-338
- HALL, Stuart, "New Ethnicities" in J. Donald & A. Rattansi (eds) "Race", Culture and Difference, 252-259, 1992
- HOME OFFICE, Building Cohesive Communities, HMSO, London, 2001a
- HOME OFFICE, Community Cohesion (The Cattle Report) , HMSO, London, 2001b
- LAUGHLO, Jon, Social Capital Trumping Class and Cultural Capital? Engagement with School among Immigrant Youth, in: BARON, Stephen/John FIELD/Tom SCHULLER (eds.), Social Capital: Critical Perspectives, Oxford 2000.
- LOURY, Glenn C., A Dynamic Theory of Racial Income Differences, in: WALLACE, PHYLLIS A/ANNETTE M. LAMOND. (eds.), Women, Minorities, and Employment Discrimination, Lexington 1977.
- MCDOWELL, LINDA 2003 Redundant Masculinities, Blackell, 2003
- MODOOD, Tariq, Ethnic Differentials in Educational Performance, in: MASON, David (ed.), Explaining Ethnic Differences, Bristol 2003.
- MODOOD, Tariq, 'Capitals, Ethnic Identity and Educational Qualifications', *Cultural Trends*, Special Issue on Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion, guest edited by Tony Bennett and Mike Savage, 13(2), no 50, June 2004
- MODOOD, Tariq, *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity and Muslims in Britain*, University of Minnesota Press and University of Edinburgh Press, 2005.
- MODOOD, Tariq/Richard BERTHOUD/Jane LAKEY/James NAZROO/Patten SMITH/Satnam VIRDEE/Sharon BEISHON, *Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage*, London 1997.
- MORROW, V. 1999

- MORROW, V. 2000
- PORTES, 1998
- PORTES & LANDOLT 1996
- PUTNAM, Robert, Bowling Alone: American's Declining Social Capital, in: *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1).1995, 64–78.
- PUTNAM, Robert, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York 2000.
- REAY, Diane, 'Its All Becoming A Habitus': Beyond the Habitual Use of Habitus in Educational Research, in: *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Special Issue on Pierre Bourdieu's Sociology of Education 2004.
- SCHULLER, T., BARON, S. & FIELD, J. 2000 'Social Capital: a review and a critique' in BARON S. et al., 1-38
- SKEGGS, BEV. 1997 *Formations of Class and Gender* (London, Sage)
- SKEGGS, BEV 2003 *Class, Self, Culture*. (London: Routledge).
- WALLMAN, Sandra, *Ethnicity At Work*, London 1979.
- WERBNER, Pnina, *The Migration Process*, Oxford 1990a.
- WERBNER, Pnina, *Renewing the Industrial Past: British Pakistani Entrepreneurship in Manchester*, in: *Migration*, 8.1990b, 7–39.
- ZHOU, Min, *Chinatown: The Socioeconomic Potential of an Urban Enclave*, Philadelphia 1992.
- ZHOU, Min, *Growing Up American: The Challenge Confronting Immigrant Children and Children of Immigrants*, in: *Annual Review of Sociology*, 23.1997, 63–95.
- ZHOU, Min, *Ethnicity as Social Capital: Community-Based Institutions and Embedded Networks of Social Relations*, in: LOURY, Glenn C./Tariq MODOOD/Steven TELES (eds.), *Ethnicity, Social Mobility and Public Policy in the US and UK*, Cambridge forthcoming 2005.
- ZHOU, Min/Carl L. BANKSTON III, *Growing Up American: How Vietnamese Children Adapt to Life in the United States*, New York 1998.

