

Black governors in the mainstream: managing inclusive schools

Summary

Embedding equality and diversity in schools starts with the management system and the qualities that governors bring to the governing body. Developments in school governorship provide enormous scope for members of local communities to influence the education policy process. The legislation allows and encourages representatives from all sections of the community to become school governors and participate in the decision making process in local schools. This is not a recent development. School governing boards have long been a feature of the British education system. They became prominent with the passing of the 1944 Education Act, which legislated that all primary and secondary schools in England and Wales were to have managing or governing bodies. Simultaneously, wide-ranging duties were laid on the LEA meaning that governing bodies operated on the periphery of the education system (Morley-James 1989). One factor thought to increase the effective functioning of governing bodies since the 1944 Education Act was the provision for a group of schools to be represented by a single governing body. The 1980 Education Act stipulated that each school should have its own individual governing body. Local participation was somewhat limited as pre-1980 legislation placed the emphasis on governors accounting for the spending of public funds, and the role attracted the middle classes and professionals. A governing body covering a group of schools was considered to lack a depth of knowledge of the individual school's particular needs, because of its remote links with the local community served by the school. The ERA reversed this situation by introducing a system of locally managed schools; each having its own governing body taking over most of the responsibilities previously delegated to the LEA, and therefore having its own unique identity within the school system. The control of the school remains largely with the headteacher, teachers and governors who have the freedom to hire and fire teachers, take control over the use of school buildings, decide which pupils should be admitted to the school and also the power to suspend and exclude pupils. Disproportionate school exclusion rates make the latter a particular area of concern for black people in their roles as parents and governors.

The Government encourages representatives from all sections of the community to become governors and participate in the decision-making process within schools. In addition, school governors' legislation (The 1980 Education Act; 1986 Education No. 2 Act; Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA)) changed the composition and roles of governing bodies, and promoted the idea of equal partnership between parents, the LEA, and the local community; a framework within which no single interest would dominate. The legislation embodied the assumption that a governing body covering a single school would have a good understanding of the needs of the school and community. In effect, the governing body manages the school with guidance from the LEA. This places much emphasis on the role of governors with knowledge and experience of the dynamics within the local community. Moreover, the Local Management of Schools (LMS) mechanism of the ERA delegated to school governing bodies most of the responsibilities previously delegated to the LEA (DES 1988).

Black people serving on school governing bodies are playing an increasingly important role in ensuring that in their duty to meet the needs of all pupils, schools are not overlooking the specific educational needs of black pupils. Black governors draw on their specific cultural and educational experiences, and knowledge of issues affecting the black community to contribute to the work of school governing bodies. Most of the black governors covered in my research see this involvement in education policy and planning as a major step towards improving the educational experience of all pupils, and black pupils in particular. They also identify the danger of being perceived as the specialist on 'race' issues within the governing body and confined to a narrow range of governor activities. The results emphasise the various perspectives that black governors can provide to help create a culture of understanding and respect - for governors as well as pupils - in an environment where learning can flourish for all pupils.

Introduction

This paper sets out to highlight the contribution that ethnic minority governors make towards the effective management and success of the school, and identifies a range of factors that limits their participation in developing effective school policy. It also looks at substantive issues of school governance in general and the involvement of black governors in particular. The results provide an in-depth understanding of the role and experiences of black governors. It identifies what the research suggests constitute good governance and the role of ethnic minority governors in helping to manage the school. Throughout this paper the term 'black' is used to refer to people of African-Caribbean African and Asian origins. This term is applied in a very broad sense, but acknowledges the diversity that exists among people of Asians African and African-Caribbean origins.

This paper is informed by the findings from small-scale qualitative research undertaken to gain black governors' perceptions of their role on school governing bodies. The methodology includes observing meetings of the governing body in two schools over a three-year period, and interviewing governor recruitment and training coordinators in three LEAs. Textual analysis of LEA policies and policy statements on the need for and role of black governors was used to contextualise data gathered within the LEAs.

Context

The research topic was heavily influenced by the considerable amount of prevailing evidence, which confirms that that black underachievement and disproportionate school exclusion rates. These have long been issues for black parents, schools and LEAs (Gillborn and Gipps 1996; Sewell 1997; Osler and Hill, 1999). Governing bodies as a whole now need to engage fully with these issues and develop plans to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. The consensus view is that exclusion from school disproportionately denies black pupils their human right to education (Gillborn 1997; Osler 1997). Within the framework of school governance, education professionals and politicians are accountable to a lay authority – the school governors (Earley et al 1999). This provides an opportunity for members of the local population to influence school policy and ensure that it takes into account the educational needs of all sections of the

community. School governors' arrangements, therefore, are particularly significant for communities vulnerable to the effects of inequality, racism and disadvantage. Black governors in particular have the opportunity to ensure that issues particular to the black community are not overlooked in debates that inform school policy. Black governors are thus able to tackle such issues as differential achievement and exclusion rates through a formal mechanism that brings education professions, parents and community representatives together in discussions about education provision at school level. The constitution of governing bodies therefore facilitates a partnership that is itself a reflection of the key partners within the education service at local level (Thody 1996). The perceptions of black governors have been largely absent from the body of research on school governors and governing bodies. Much of this evidence acknowledges the under-representation of black people on governing bodies, but then proceeds to generalise about governors as if they were a homogeneous grouping (Keys and Fernandez 1990; Golby 1993; Thody 1996). Exceptionally, certain writers have highlighted the contribution that black governors can make towards increasing the relevance of school policy to all ethnic communities (Deem et al 1992; Deem 1989; Tomlinson 1998; Earley et al 1999). This research provides evidence on the extent to which school governance is a vehicle that allows black governors to realising this aim.

In a political environment where emphasis has shifted to tackling social exclusion and promoting race equality and inclusion and eliminating discrimination, addressing the needs of black pupils is a fundamental requirement. Social exclusion is a multidimensional concept, embracing a variety of ways in which people may be denied full participation in society and full effective rights of citizenship in the civil, political and social spheres. Policies that tackle exclusion and discrimination are unlikely to work if the communities affected by them are not involved in their development. Area based policies have an increasingly important role to play in tackling social exclusion, as disadvantage is often geographically concentrated. This places crucial importance on the role of governors in both the school and community. The coming together of the functioning of citizenship and democracy at local level is therefore crucial to any strategy to tackle successfully the needs of an increasingly diverse society.

The governing body has a general responsibility for seeing that the school is run effectively, acting within the framework set by legislation and the policies of the LEA, so that it provides the best possible education for all pupils. However, they are not expected to take detailed decisions about the day-to-day management of the school. This is the responsibility of the head. The Human Rights Act 2000 is an important part of the Government's plan to modernise Britain and make it a better place to live and learn. It is being heralded as a step change in the creation of a new culture of rights and responsibilities in the UK. The right to education is one of the fundamental rights within The Human Rights Act 2000, yet, exclusion is widely used as a tactic to deny this right to a disproportionate proportion of black pupils. The Human rights Act, therefore, has fundamental implications for the way LEAs and governing bodies and schools operate, and places them and their policies under scrutiny regarding the way they may deny certain groups their fundamental human rights. Under this Act, black parents and pupils, for

example, may tackle governing bodies and LEAs about denying the right to an education by excluding them from schools.

Racial issues within education

Most education professionals insist that they treat all pupils the same, without regard to 'race' (Tomlinson 1998). In educational research in particular, 'race' is treated as an objective phenomenon. Statistical data and research findings are categorised according to some presumed racial membership of the subjects, even though the definitions utilised reflect ambiguity and overlap. For example, racial or ethnic groupings are classified to indicate racial or ethnic heritage based on self-identification – where a person is asked to indicate their membership of a racial group, or 'observed' identification by others – based on assumptions arrived at and assigned to a person according to phenotypical appearance. Racial designation, then, can be based merely on how a child looks to a teacher. Interestingly, membership of the white group is defined broadly as a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe. This is treated as a homogenous group, and more generally as a benchmark against which other groups should be assessed. Educational professionals who insist that they treat all people alike often bring their own racial constructs to the educational setting. This can have a paradoxical effect on rendering 'race' invisible. Given the links between school and society:

It seems inevitable that schools will be affected by their role within wider society that still maintains social divisions and a powerful sense of hierarchy. A particular criticism of school improvement work is that it has tended to exaggerate the extent to which individual schools can challenge such structural inequalities. This is particularly true of racial inequality in education as it is so powerfully linked to racial discrimination in wider society. Attempts to tackle racial inequality in the school through school improvement will be seriously undermined if economic and social policies fail to tackle patterns of racial exclusion shaping the social backgrounds students come from, the labour market the school prepares them for and the subcultures they create in response. ... too many urban education reforms have created school centred solutions with no sense of the structural, political and historical constraints (Taylor 1998:231).

Furthermore, schools are not neutral institutions. The notion of schools functioning as meritocratic institutions that counteract social inequalities has encountered many challenges (Tomlinson 1998). Some schools function in ways that do not only reflect external social inequalities but also, actively contribute to their reproduction. The school's essentially non-educational role as a sifting, sorting and labelling agency is understated in favour of the vision that all schools can become effective. This approach lacks an understanding of the micro-political consideration of the function of schooling and ignores the possibility that schools and their curricula can be organised in the interests of the ruling class, males or the dominant ethnic group (Troyna 1991).

In attempting to further understand ethnic differences in academic performance and its association with inequality of opportunity in wider society, national education systems have become a key focus for their role in the incorporation of ethnic minorities into the economy and civil society. Where migrants and minorities entered educational systems designed by the majority elites for the ethnic majority, conflicts often emerged. In Britain in particular, new forms of inequality and conflict are emerging as education systems are being encouraged to respond to market forces (Tomlinson 1998). These conflicts have centred particularly around the type and level of education required for the minorities to participate fully in society while retaining some aspects of their cultural identity. While diversity debates continue, the increased importance of educational credentials in the functioning of the economy is leading to more stringent focus on equality. The challenge to equality is a very forceful one. In postcolonial societies, the educational performance of minority students often lag behind the majority, and the failure of educational systems to deliver equal access and educational attainment remains a source of tension and debate. For example:

... in all European Community member states ... almost always, ethnic minority groups do less well in the education systems. They leave school earlier, drop out altogether more often, and obtain lower examination qualifications. In countries with selective systems of secondary education, children from ethnic minority groups are found predominantly in lower streams, lower status schools, ... and often over-represented in special education (Gillborn 1995, quoted in Tomlinson 1998).

In effect, the cumulative effect of 'race', class and geography has a compounding effect on educational experiences and outcomes. As legislation supporting the education market begins to take effect, location has become a disadvantage affecting minority students. Evidence suggests that social class and urban location disadvantage minorities in the education market. Urban schools in communities with high levels of deprivation continue to serve families from lower socio-economic groups, high proportions of ethnic minorities, adults with low levels of education, and poor housing and transport (OFSTED 1993). The market also works to encourage schools to get rid of students who disrupt the smooth running of the school. Closer examination reveals that black students were four times more likely to be in the stigmatised categories of 'educationally subnormal' and 'emotionally and behaviourally disturbed' (Tomlinson 1998). In a market where desirable customers are required, quicker ways of removing undesirables are required. In the 1990s, the use of exclusion as a way of rapidly removing troublesome students has increased and black students are disproportionately represented among those excluded.

Exclusions from school operate in a racist manner: they deny a disproportionate number of black pupils access to mainstream education and as the 'marketisation' of education has become more established, the rate of exclusion has risen (Gillborn 1995).

Markets, education and otherwise, create winners and losers. If minority groups are losers in the education market creating a polarisation of the education rich and education poor

along racial lines. The situation is particularly concerning as the values and aspirations of minority groups are no less ambitious than those of the ethnic majority. Regardless of their socio-economic position, the educational values and aspirations of minority parents have conformed to the aspirations and expectations of the UK middle classes (Kitwood and Burrell 1980).

Researchers and practitioners alike have recognised and acknowledged issues around black participation on governing bodies and have largely ignored them in their conclusions and recommendations. Likewise, individual schools and LEAs seem to be aware of the consequences of this for the black communities but appear to have done little to address the situation. In the working definition adopted for the purpose of the Inquiry, the concept of institutional racism consisted of:

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It [institutional racism] can be seen or detected in the processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people (MacPherson Report 1999).

It [institutional racism] exists because of the failure of the organisation openly and adequately to recognise and address its existence and causes by policy, example and leadership. Without recognition and action to eliminate such racism it can prevail as part of the ethos or culture of the organisation. It is a corrosive disease. It is clear that other agencies including for example those dealing with education also suffer from the disease. If racism is to be eradicated there must be a specific and coordinated action both within the agencies themselves and society at large, particularly through the educational system from primary school upwards and onwards (MacPherson Report 1999).

Major emphasis is placed on the importance of education and educational institutions in tackling racism both at individual and institutional levels. It must be a major concern of government that the educational system should address these issues since governors, as managers, have responsibility for ensuring that the school operates in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

The evidence suggests that there are difficulties in getting some schools individually or locally to acknowledge and tackle racism even where LEAs have sought to persuade them to do so. (- freedom to manage and develop school specific policies) the lack of power available to LEAs and the fear of negative publicity by schools clearly combine to make antiracist policies, through codes of practice ... to provide education which deals with racism awareness and valuing cultural diversity in a multicultural and multi-ethnic society in which we live (MacPherson Report 1999 para 6.56).

The culmination of the results of the investigation for the first time approached a coming together of discussion with various constituencies acknowledging the existence of and discussing the 'racism' in Britain. In unprecedented moves, systematic discrimination was exposed across a wide range of public services, and in the practices of individuals and organisations. The MacPherson report revealed that whilst admitting institutionalised racism is endemic in UK public service might have surprised the ethnic majority, it was experienced as a reality for black British people in their daily lives. The report findings in the wake of the murder of Stephen Lawrence will force public service organisations to examine their policies and practices towards ethnic minority people. Education was singled out as having a crucial role to play in reducing racial discrimination and disadvantage. Ultimately, this responsibility will fall on the shoulders of the governing body. The implementation of the recommendations of the MacPherson report would formalise the governors' responsibility for ensuring equality of access to and treatment within and outcomes from the education system. Whilst these responsibilities are currently part of the remit of the governing body through the Race Relations Act 1976, and the Children's Act 1989, the evidence of widespread racial discrimination reinforces the need for additional efforts within education to tackle racism early in pupils' lives.

Good governance and the role of black governors

The views presented here are those that the research findings suggest are aspects of good governance. Clearly, good governance involves all governance working together to forge strong links between the school and the community it serves. It also, and expressing a meaning and achievable vision and ensuring that the school, through its pupils, performs towards achieving that vision. Within this set of relationships, black governors have a crucial role to play on governing bodies and in raising attainment. However, their role is characterised with pitfalls that fortunately can be overcome when black governors are clear about their responsibilities and committed to the role. The findings also suggest that good governance involves all governors taking responsibility for and facilitating networks that involve the local community and the school. Networking plays an important part in the struggle for equality, as in terms of influencing the governing body, the views and concerns of the community need to be presented rather than those of a single governor or interest group. This approach is likely to be more effective for black governors within the governing body rather than those working as detached individuals within the community. More importantly, in the context of schooling, black governors have a role to play in extending the network of influence by appointing appropriately skilled black teachers. Good governance impacts on the school directly by influencing educationalists to make fundamental changes to ensure that cultural diversity is a primary objective in schooling. For example, through helping to create cultural diversity in teaching staff, black governors are contributing towards addressing the problems faced by black and other pupils in the school. Through this process, governors help to perpetuate a vision of cultural diversity in a society in which equality is paramount. A good governing body will delegate enough powers to allow the head to perform his or her management duties. The governing body is responsible to parents and the LEA for the way the school is run. In any event, the head must answer to the governing body on how the school is managed.

Furthermore, the research findings suggest that good governance occur in situations where the governing body consults with the community on pertinent issues and, in turn, supports and works with communities to affect positively all sections of that community. In this process, the governors represent the community within the school and communicated the community's concerns to the governing body. The result involves all governors working towards creating effective partnership between schools, communities and LEAs. To facilitate this process, the integration of governing bodies is an important development since, by exercising their powers effectively, different groups of governors influence school policy in different and diverse ways. The black perspective enriches debates about whole school issues rather than only the ones about "race". Moreover, by taking part in decision making, and by sharing responsibility for ensuring that the school works effectively, the observations show that all governors, regardless of ethnic background, can help the school to develop and all pupils to be successful. The kinds of expertise governors from different backgrounds bring to the job and the different perspectives they contribute are extremely valuable to schools, especially those serving a diverse range of ethnic groups. The research highlights the valuable differences ethnic minority governors can make by simply contributing their knowledge of issues affecting the community served by the school.

Black governors' main area of concern is the persistent and much noted underrepresentation of governing bodies, especially those school that do not reflect the makeup of the pupil population on the governing body. Black governors perceive this underrepresentation as a barrier to the needs of black pupils being met by the school. Another concern for both individual black governors and LEAs is the failure of successive changes in legislation to encourage more ethnic minority people to become governors. As a result, despite the crucial role black governors play in promoting, supporting and managing the school, their underrepresentation remain a barrier to their contributing to developing effective school policy. The concentration of black governors in the parent governor category also limits the impact they can have on the governing body.

Black governors' the contribution to the governing body

Black governors have very specific views about the role they should be fulfilling on the governing body. They perceive that they governors should challenge teachers about poor pupil performance and on their failure to implement actions agreed at governors' meetings. Therefore, despite not having a policing role, a minority of black governors sees this as an additional dimension that would ensure issues particular to improving black education would receive adequate attention. The evidence highlights concerns about the motivation of some governors and governing bodies to discuss "race" issues. This takes the issue of attainment to the examination of internal school arrangements. Significantly, all of the black governors interviewed perceive contributing to raising black pupils' attainment levels to be part of their duties. The majority of the black parent governors interviewed, regardless of gender, cite the desire to be involved in providing a good education for all pupils as their reason for becoming governors. By implication, the findings suggest that governing bodies need transparent mechanisms in place to ensure

that the specialist knowledge of ethnic minorities contributes to discussions about whole school issues, not only those affecting black pupils. That requires ensuring that subcommittees contain a mix of professional expertise, specialist knowledge and community responsibility. Governing bodies comprising a diverse range of cultures and experience develop fertile policies that are relevant to the school and community.

Black governors perceive their duty as that of alerting the governing body to the issues that impact disproportionately on black pupils. The interview evidence suggests that black governors want to represent their community and communicate to the governing body the issues and concerns facing their community so that the decisions that are made take these issues into account. One of the main barriers perceived by black governors is persuading and convincing education professionals on the governing body that they have a valuable contribution to make in discussions about school improvement. Moreover, black governors have difficulty convincing the governing body that their concerns are relevant to all pupils rather than only the black ones. Whilst they are providing the black perspective, they are conscious of the need to consider the impact on all pupils in the school. Black governors, especially parent governors often perceive teachers as the gatekeepers with whom they have to negotiate their way into the classroom, consequently, they perceive that education professionals do not acknowledge their credibility. Where the governing body perceive black governors as the experts on black culture and "race" issues may compromise the same black governors' role on the governing body. In such cases, black governors' professional expertise and the skills and attributes they bring to the governing body are under-utilised, and their effectiveness as governors compromised. This suggests that black governors need to be mindful of these potential pitfalls that can result in them being habitually delegated responsibility for areas of the governing body's work that is pertinent to black issues. Governing bodies should also ensure that all governors regardless of their ethnic identity share responsibility for all areas of their work. While black governors acknowledge that they have a responsibility for tackling racism and highlighting where policy has the potential to disadvantage black pupils, they also reinforce that these are the responsibility of the entire governing body.

Black representation and influence on governing bodies

There appears to be little reward and a number of disincentives to those black people considering becoming governors, especially in inner city areas perceived as having educational and social problems. Black governors highlight that common practice of associating inner city schools with failure, underachievement and disruption serve to discourage parent governors who may not want to be associated with failure and underachievement. The emphasis placed on these characteristics is unlikely to attract a large number of potential governors regardless of ethnic group. Across the LEAs considered in this research, the high proportion of ethnic minority pupils means that a large number of black parents are eligible to become governors in local schools. In reality, despite the system being characterised by a lack of incentive and many disincentives, black people are volunteering to be governors. However, when compared with the white majority group this number appears insignificant.

The research evidence suggests that in order to ensure that schools serve the needs of all pupils effectively, those schools serving multicultural communities need to be aware of, and to confront issues that disproportionately affect ethnic minority pupils. It is therefore necessary for school governing bodies to draw on the range of knowledge and experience that exist within and about the local community. Some of this knowledge will be historical, charting the context that influenced the prevailing state of affairs. Such an arrangement will depend on the effectiveness of a complex set of relationships and processes in place to facilitate an ongoing dialogue to inform relevant school policy. Black representation on governing bodies is therefore an important issue to be addressed in order to ensure that all sections of the community contribute to the decision making process. However, black governors have to gather a number of community perspectives and distil those into a manageable communicable form in order to represent the community effectively. They must also be committed to developing and maintaining open communication within the community in order to provide the governing body with a deeper understanding of the multiple issues concerning the community and, which may in turn, affect the school. This collaboration requires that representatives from black communities contribute to school policy formulation in order to ensure the relevance of the governing body's knowledge of their constituents and have greatest potential impact on school policy.

Black governors value the role for the way it allows them access to key decision makers and opinion formers, including headteachers, LEA officials, and others who play important roles in influencing school and wider education policy. They also consider the opportunity to challenge and contribute to debates on "race" and education as well as on the general education agenda to be very rewarding. They feel that whilst all governors, irrespective of "race" have a contribution to make towards improving the school, black governors can contribute a particularly important black perspective to the governing body's work. The majority of the black governors feel that their role should be recognised and acknowledged in a more positive light. They identify the popular images of inner city areas and inner city schools as a factor that discourages black people from becoming governors. They also suggest that there needs to be greater acknowledgement of the fact that many people, who are not education professionals, are doing a good job in the governor role. Black governors clearly help to ensure that governors are influential in raising attainment through their involvement in the decision-making process. Ethnic minority governors play a full part in the work of the governing body. The individual character and motivation of black governors are key characteristics for challenging the established ways of doing things or mindset within governing bodies. Schools can serve their pupils better by fostering a sense of community and promoting ways of advancing cultural diversity. The perceptions that black governors have of their role highlight this as an important issue. On governing bodies, the legislated relationships provide roles and role expectations. In contrast, within communities, mutual interdependence is based on shared values and a shared sense of belonging to that community. The research evidence suggests that black governors are contributing to helping schools to have their distinct profiles and community cultures acknowledged at school and to a lesser extent at LEA level.

Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from this research suggest that black governors perceive that they are making significant contributions to schools and the educational experiences of pupils. While they feel compelled to work towards improving the educational experience for black pupils in particular, they are mindful that their work also impacts on the entire pupil population. With respect to these endeavours and in light of the systematic disadvantage black people have experienced in Britain, a policy shift is occurring. The current emphasis on human rights and citizenship has the potential to create opportunities for the efforts that black people have made to improve their position in the social and economic order in Britain. The small-scale activities of governors in the local school have repercussions for the entire education system. Maintaining this momentum is crucial to the ideals held by black governors being realised. Encouragingly, government policy (Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; Human Rights Act 2000) provide opportunities and support initiatives that set out to improve create an equal society in which all can participate and succeed.

Finally, the analysis of research findings and literature suggest that a shifting discourse is emerging around black people's experience of disadvantage in Britain, and their approaches to combating disadvantage through participation in the key institutions and agencies. The shift is diverging from looking at how black people are disadvantaged to looking at how they are developing alternative strategies to deal with unequal access to citizenship rights. They are developing routes into school governorship could be evidence of a shifting identity and sense of belonging. This is coupled with their responsibility as citizens to support and contribute to teaching and learning process by representing their community at all stages of the education process. The conclusions suggest that in this process, black governors in particular have introduced crucial changes to the traditional perception of citizenship by pursuing an active participatory role in school governance. Through this activity, they are pressing the state to protect and enhance their rights, while developing alternative non -state directed strategies to improve their level of involvement in school governorship through local networking and organisation. Such support from within the local community served by the school is crucial if schools are to meet the needs of all pupils.

Black governors felt they were not often valued, respected or supported to work as an integral part of the governing body. They commented that there were far too many occasions where they were expected to be experts on 'race' issues. They felt that this often limited wider consultation on educational issues with other Black and Asian people. The impact of school policy on the ethnic minority community was not often considered. The style of some management meetings was seen often to be very reserved and black governors found that culture inhibiting with the environment considered at times highly confrontational, and conformity was valued more than individuality. Black governors expressed the need to equip themselves for the many varied styles of management without compromising their sense of cultural identity and difference. This was perceived to be crucial to maintaining their integrity within their communities and ensuring their effectiveness on the governing body.

References

Children Act 1989

Coard, B. (1971) ***How The West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in The British School System: the scandal of the black child in schools in Britain.*** New Beacon for Caribbean Education and Community Workers Association. London.

Deem, R. (1989) *The new school governing bodies are gender and race on the agenda? in Gender and Education. Vol. 1. No. 3. 247-261.*

Deem, R et al., (1992) *Social justice, social divisions and the governing of schools.* in D. Gill et al., eds. ***Racism and Education.*** London. Sage.

DES (1988) ***Education Reform Act: Local Management of Schools: A report to the DES.*** London HMSO.

DfE (1992) ***Choice and Diversity: A New Framework for Schools.*** London. HMSO.

DfEE (1998) ***Excellence in Schools.*** London. HMSO.

DfEE (1999 Edition) *Statistical Volume 'statistics in Education, Schools in England'.*

Earley, P. et al., (1999) ***Improving the Effectiveness of School Governing Bodies.*** DfEE.

Education Act 1980.

Education Reform Act 1988.

Figueroa, P. (1993) *Cultural Diversity, Social Reality and Education.* In Fyfe, A. and Figueroa, P. Eds. ***Education for Cultural Diversity - the challenge for a new era.*** Routledge.

Gillborn, D. (1997) *Racism and Reform: New ethnicities old inequalities? Institute of Education, University of London. B.E.R.J. Vol. 23. No. 3.*

Gillborn, D. and Gipps, C. 1996) ***Recent research on the achievements of ethnic minority pupils.*** London. HMSO.

Golby, M. (1993) 'Parents as School Governors' in, Munn, P. Ed. ***Parents and Schools. Customers, Managers or Partners?*** Routledge. London. New York. P- 65-86.

Gittens, I. (2000) unpublished PhD thesis. ***The roles, perceptions and influence of ethnic minority governors in local education policy making.*** University of Birmingham. UK.

Hatcher, R. (1994) *Culture, Consent and Contestation*. in Thody, A. **School Governors: Leaders or Followers**. Longman Group Ltd.

Haw, K. (1998) **Educating Muslim Girls: Shifting Discourses**. Open University Press. Buckingham. Philadelphia.

Haw, K. (1998) *Equality in Difference*. In Haw, K. (1998) **Educating Muslim Girls: Shifting Discourses**. Open University Press. Buckingham. Philadelphia. P117-136.

Human Rights Act 2000

Jefferies, G. and Streatfield, D. (1989) **The Reconstitution of School Governing Bodies**. N.F.E.R. Slough.

Keys, W. and Fernandez, C. (1990) *A Survey of School Governing Bodies*. In **Exeter Papers in School Governorship**. Vol. 1. NFER. Slough.

Kitwood, T. and Burrell, C. (1980) *The significance of schooling for an ethnic minority*. **Oxford Review of Education**. Vol. 6. No. 3. p 241-253.

Landman, R. (1999) *Ethnic Majority Must Put its House in Order*. **Times Educational Supplement** 16 April: 13.

Lynch, J (1987) **Prejudice reduction and the schools**. Cassell. London.

MacPherson, W. (1999) **The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. Report of an inquiry by Sir William McPherson of Cluny**. The Stationery Office.

Morley-James, R. (1989) *Increased Responsibilities of Governors- Aspects of School Governance*. In, Fidler, B. & Bowles, J. Eds. **Effective Local Management of Schools**. Longman. p 214-233.

OfSTED (1993) **Access and Achievement in Urban Education: A Report from the Office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools**. London. HMSO.

Osler, A. and Hill, J. (1999) *exclusion from school and racial equality: an examination of government proposals in the light of recent research evidence*. In **Cambridge journal of education** , vol. 29. No. 1.

Race Relations Act 1976.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Sallis, J. (1993) **Basics for School Governors**. Network Educational Press Ltd.

Sallis, J. (1993) *Working With Governors*. in Green, H. **The School Management Handbook**. 2nd. Edition. Kogan Page Ltd. p 93-97.

Sewell, T. (1997) **Black Masculinities and Schooling: How Black Boys Survive Modern Schooling**. Stoke on Trent. Trencham Books.

Shearn, D. et al, (1995) *The Changing Face of School Governor Responsibilities: a mismatch between government intention and actuality?* in, **School Organisation**. Vol. 15. No. 2. p 175 - 188.

Taylor, F. (1998) *Racism, admit it, counter it, set targets*. In **Times Educational Supplement**. November 27.

Taylor, E. (1998) *Towards a coherent theory of 'race' in the education of school leaders: fly fishing across the racial divide*. In, **'Race', Ethnicity and Education**, Vol. 1. No.2. P 225-240.

Thody, A. (1996) **School Governors: Leaders or Followers**. Longman Group Ltd.

Tomlinson, S. (1998) *New Inequalities? Educational Markets and Ethnic Minorities [1]* in, **'Race', Ethnicity and Education**. Vol. 1 no. 2. P 207-224.

Troyna, B. (1993) **Racism in Education: research perspectives**. Buckingham. O.U. Press.

Biography

Dr Ian Gittens currently has a strategic equality and diversity role in the provision of Further Education. Until recently, he was a Government Senior Research Officer and also has a wide range of experience of working in a voluntary capacity with community groups on planning and developing educational projects.

Contact details:

Dr Ian Gittens
Equality and Diversity Development and Modernising Government Manager
Quality and Standards Directorate
Learning and Skills Council National Office
101 Lockhurst Lane
Foleshill
Coventry CV6 5SF

Work Email: ian.gittens@lsc.gov.uk