Runnymede Trust

Data Collection in the UK

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The use of ethnic data

- What ethnic data exists in the UK and how is it collected?

- What have been/are the challenges to collecting data about ethnic groups?

- How is ethnic data used and what have been some of the outcomes of this use?

- How is ethnic data used on a practical level?

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What data exists?

- The UK government collects ethnic data on the following:

- **Population growth** – Census conducted every 10 years which can provide useful information on the categories below

- **Health** – identifying groups at risk or particular illnesses/diseases

- **Employment** –information can be collected about those in work, out of work or economically inactive

- **Education** – Individual level information can be collected about pupils ie the National Pupil Database

- **Crime** – police statistics and the Crime Survey for England & Wales with information about perpetrators, victims and those experiencing race or religiously motivated hate crime

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What led to the collection of ethnic group data in the UK?

- Prior to national collection of ethnic data, the General Household Survey (GHS) was one of the 1st large scale datasets to include information on ethnicity

- In 1971, problematically (GHS) researchers began by ascribing the ethnicity of those surveyed, followed by the use of self categorisation in 1983. Survey closed in 2012

- In the 1971 census a question on parent's country of birth was introduced but this failed to account for the waves of migration to the UK from the Commonwealth and the numbers of British born children of migrants

- Attempts were made to introduce an 'ethnic question' in the 1981 census which were met with strong opposition, though categories were successfully introduced by 1991

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What were the historical challenges?

- The collection of ethnic data was and remains a contested issue, centred around a number of main points

  - The extent to which an ethnic category accurately reflects a person's identity
  - Concerns about the purpose for data collection
  - Difficulties with capturing the relationship between nationality and ethnicity

- Attempts to introduce the question into the 1981 census were thwarted by:
  - Concerns of minority ethnic groups at the time that they would be identified and stigmatized following heightened racial tensions
  - Worries that data collected would be used to 'repatriate them' following support for the question by prominent members of the National Front
  - Belief that the collection of data would have no positive effect on their lives

Overcoming challenges

Movement towards greater ethnic group classification has been incremental

1991

- Minority ethnic individuals were persuaded by the positive reasons for inclusion of an ethnic question in the 1991 census given that the House of Commons select committee noted inclusion of the question, together with other indicators of disadvantage would help to address racial discrimination

2001

- In the 1991 census all of those identified as White were grouped together which failed to take into consideration the different outcomes experienced by some ie Irish groups

- In 2001 the additional categories of Irish and mixed ethnicity were added into the census together with an optional 'religion' category

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Overcoming challenges

2011

- In the 2001 census, only those selecting 'White' on the form could identify as British
- The 2011 census enabled people to select nationality independently of ethnicity
- It also added the category 'Gypsy and Irish Traveller' and Chinese was moved from 'other' to Asian. A new 'Arab' category was also included
- NGOs and civil society groups providing support to those from Roma backgrounds remain unhappy that Roma does not constitute an ethnic category within the census.

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How ethnic population data has evolved

Evolution of ethnic categories used on the Census forms for England and Wales from 1991-2011

1991	2001	2011
1 White	White	White
	1 British	1 English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
	2 Irish	2 Irish
	3 Any other White background (write in)	3 Gypsy or Irish Traveller
		4 Any other white background (write in)
	Mixed	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups
	4 White and Black Caribbean	5 White and Black Caribbean
	5 White and Black African	6 White and Black African
	6 White and Asian	7 White and Asian
	7 Any other mixed background (write in)	8 Any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background (write in)
	Asian or Asian British	Asian or Asian British
2 Indian	8 Indian	9 Indian
3 Pakistani	9 Pakistani	10 Pakistani
4 Bangladeshi	10 Bangladeshi	11 Bangladeshi
	11 Any other Asian background (write in)	12 Chinese
		13 Any other Asian background (write in)
	Black or Black British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British
5 Black-Caribbean	12 Caribbean	14 African
6 Black-African	13 African	15 Caribbean
7 Black Other (write in)	14 Any other Black background (write in)	16 Any other Black/African/Caribbean background
	Chinese or other ethnic group	Other ethnic group
8 Chinese	15 Chinese	17 Arab
9 Any other ethnic group (write in)	16 Any other ethnic group (write in)	18 Any other ethnic group (write in)

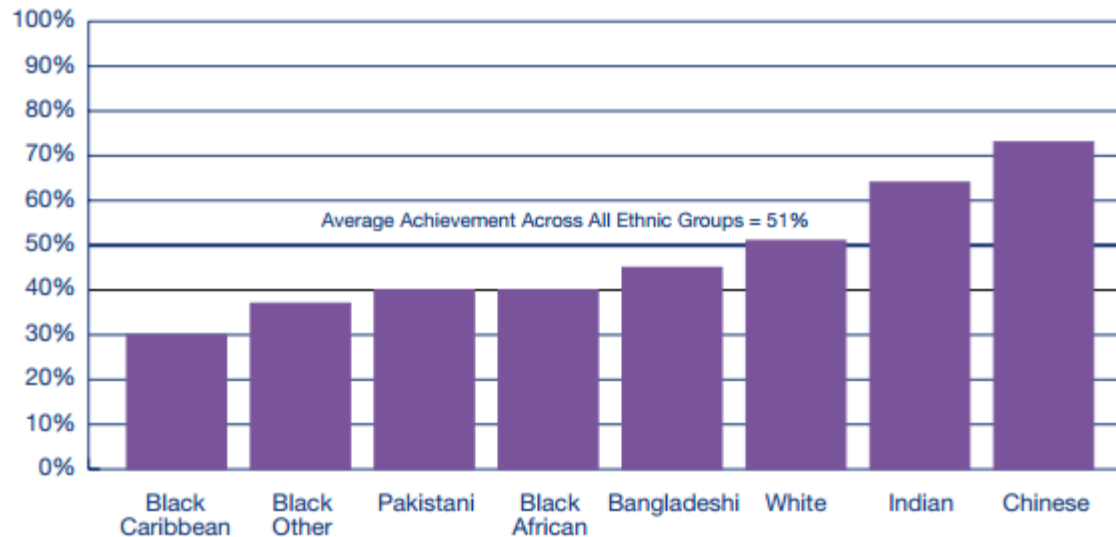**RUNNYMEDE**

How is ethnic data used?

Case study – education

- The Education department under various administrations has collected ethnic group pupil data for some decades. In 1966 this was used to establish how many pupils were immigrants, or the children of immigrants, & how many spoke English as a second language, but also to assist with the policy of 'bussing' minority ethnic children to prevent segregation in schools

- Bussing not a successful policy, but support for children with English as a second language important to assist with overall pupil attainment.

- National Pupil Database, including information gathered from the School Census (collected 3 times a year) includes information on ethnicity, gender, language, all attainment levels for a pupil, experience of school exclusion etc

- Has been used by academic and non-academic researchers to highlight the existence of gaps in attainment between ethnic groups

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What does data on ethnicity in education tell us?

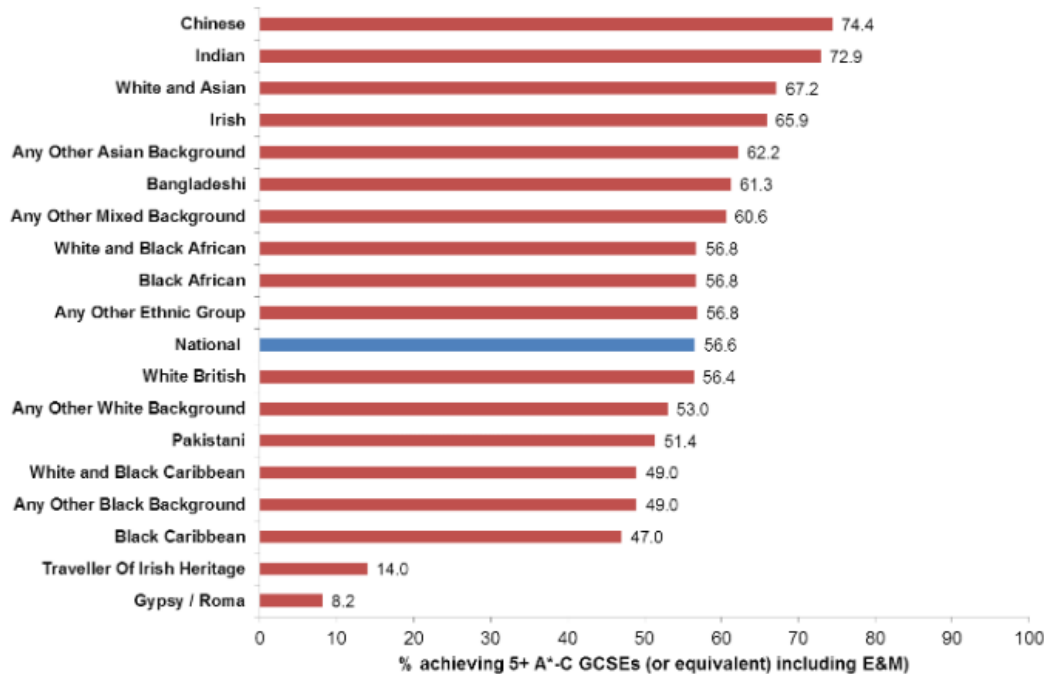- How well were minority ethnic groups faring academically in 2002 at the age of 16?

PLASC 2002 characteristics: Proportion achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs for those entered for GCSEs in Maintained Schools in 2002

Average Achievement Across All Ethnic Groups = 51%

Black Caribbean — Black Other — Pakistani — Black African — Bangladeshi — White — Indian — Chinese

**Other, Unkown and New Code Pupils are included in the Average Achievement across All Ethnic Groups Figure but not represented in the chart
Source: NPD 2002

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What does data on ethnicity in education tell us?

What had changed for 16 year olds across ethnic groups in 2013/14?

Ethnic Group	% achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) including E&M
Chinese	74.4
Indian	72.9
White and Asian	67.2
Irish	65.9
Any Other Asian Background	62.2
Bangladeshi	61.3
Any Other Mixed Background	60.6
White and Black African	56.8
Black African	56.8
Any Other Ethnic Group	56.8
National	56.6
White British	56.4
Any Other White Background	53.0
Pakistani	51.4
White and Black Caribbean	49.0
Any Other Black Background	49.0
Black Caribbean	47.0
Traveller Of Irish Heritage	14.0
Gypsy / Roma	8.2

Source: Key stage 4 attainment data (2013/14)

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Data tells us

- Firstly, comparisons across time are difficult – data for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils were added in 2003 so are missing from the 2002 information

- Up until 2006 data collected on pupils' characteristics which included ethnicity were submitted by schools to the government once a year. The National Pupil Database collects this information 3 times per year and includes more than just characteristics data

So comparison data has to be used cautiously but:

- There are now 10 ethnic groups achieving above the national average benchmark at age 16 compared to just 2 in 2002.

- Bangladeshi children, who are more likely than many other minority ethnic groups to be found living in poverty, are now achieving above the national average. This is true also for African students but class may play more of a role here.

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What has changed?

The attainment gap for some pupils has decreased:

- On a regional level, initiatives such as London Challenge, which focused support on low attainers, many of whom were from minority ethnic backgrounds, had a positive impact on achievement

- Nationally, the government department responsible for education in 2003 developed 'Aiming High' which addressed minority ethnic pupil achievement specifically

- Legislatively the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 placed a statutory duty on schools and local authorities to monitor attainment of minority ethnic pupils & to assess impact of policies on minority ethnic pupils and staff

- The Public Sector Equality duty, s149 of the Equality Act 2010 also requires schools to collect equality information to help them understand the impact of their policies on different groups

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Challenges remain however - Policy is shifting…

- National government priorities are shifting towards the poor more broadly – the Pupil Premium, whereby schools receive greater funding for poorer students, aims to tackle educational underachievement in this group

- Many minority ethnic pupils and families can be found within this group but culture, racism and stereotyping create different outcomes for minority ethnic groups

- For example, Black children from poorer families are more likely to be developmentally ready for school than their White counterparts at age 4 and Chinese girls from poor families outperform **all** ethnic groups at school

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What are the existing challenges?

Self categorisation:

- This remains the best means of capturing ethnic data for reasons of accuracy & the fostering of engagement

- However within the UK there are still groups ie Roma individuals reluctant to self-identify in view of worries about the potential for persecution or discrimination

- **How to address this**: careful engagement work which shows the benefits to be gained from having data about groups (ie improved outcomes), as well as best practice examples (from other minority ethnic groups or countries).

- In the UK while we do not collect national data on the Roma from the census, individual administrative sources within education and health do collect. We now have information about health risks that can be used to support individuals and families

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Other challenges?

Data Harmonisation

- Categories are now largely harmonised between the Census and other administrative sources, but this has been incremental making longitudinal comparison difficult

- The different nations in the UK do now follow broadly similar categories, but each may have categories slightly different to the other – fine for national comparison but not across the UK

- **How to address**: Try to research all possible categories at the start and consult groups widely. Will ultimately however be difficult to capture all categories, given societal, generational change and impact of continuous migration

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But having access to ethnicity data helps us to raise awareness about this:

- If you have an African or Asian sounding surname you need to send about twice as many job applications as those with a traditionally English sounding surname even to get an interview

- Unemployment among minority ethnic young people is more than twice as high as among white people of the same age. This is an even bigger gap than in the 1980s

- If the police stopped and searched black and Asian people at the same rate they stop white people they would save nearly 5,500 days of officer time every year

- Most children who live above the 4th floor in tower blocks in England are black or Asian

- In 2009/2010 if you were a Black African Caribbean boy with special educational needs and eligible for FSM, you were 168 times more likely to be permanently excluded from a state-funded school than a White British girl without SEN from a middle class family

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