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The significance of further education for black males

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore the lived educational realities of black male students studying in further education (FE) colleges to understand how these experiences compare to their experiences of statutory education. It describes the way in which students perceived and received education in both sectors and highlights the similarities and variations between the two.

Design/methodology/approach – Ethnographic methods including focus groups, individual interviews and naturalistic observations were used to investigate black male students' perceptions of FE. These accounts were compared to their memories of compulsory schooling experiences to establish differences and similarities between sectors and to determine which educational approaches black male students identified as most useful.

Findings – The research established black males perceived there were significant differences between the two sectors and these differences had impacted on their ability to learn. These findings provide a useful reference point for educators seeking to evaluate their organisation's education provision for black male students.

Social implications – This paper provides suggestions on what sorts of educational opportunities are appropriate and accessible for black males and which approaches help to support their educational achievement.

Originality/value – There are little research data which specifically discuss black male students' experience of the FE sector. This paper will help teachers and managers at all organisational levels in FE (and in schools) review their provision and consider adopting approaches that may help to enhance black students' educational journeys.

Keywords Lived experience, Black males, FE, Educational journeys

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Black male students have been identified as an academically underachieving group in mainstream compulsory secondary education and as experiencing racist behaviour from other staff and students while at school. Their academic achievement within and experience of further education (FE) is less well documented as confirmed by the scarcity of academic literature in this area. This paper works to help to address this deficit and presents an ethnographic account of the lived educational realities of 29 black men and boys aged from 16 to 47 studying a variety of different full-time courses in two large general FE colleges based in the East Midlands, England. The study explored the research participants' contemporary experiences of FE in relation to their previous educational histories in compulsory secondary education. The research produced a number of important themes which had impacted on the students' overall experience of education in both secondary and FE including prevailing institutional cultures; the FE curriculum and support mechanisms available to students.

The inquiry indicated many of the participants felt unable to engage with secondary compulsory education and perceived they were undervalued, marginalised and subject to overt and subtle racism. However, on transferring to FE, the research evidence indicates the participants felt encouraged to re-engage with education and were consequently able to recalibrate their educational goals and putative life trajectories. Although the research found FE was mainly a positive experience, there were still some aspects of college life which the participants felt could be better. In particular, even when students believed they were accepted and recognised as fully fledged members of the college community and had been able to achieve a measure of academic success they did not feel their college experience had sufficiently prepared them to manage broader challenges beyond education or discrimination in wider society.

Utilising a critical race theory (CRT) lens which recognises the significance of race and puts the voices of black and minority ethnic groups at the centre of all findings (Ladson-Billings, 2005), this research privileged and foregrounded the voices of the black male research participants. CRT acknowledges the concepts, societal structures and beliefs about race work to enframe black and minority groups' life experiences at all levels and in all arenas. This study examined how race had shaped, sculpted and informed black males' experience of education both in secondary and FE sectors.

A contextual review of the position of black students in compulsory secondary education

Black students' experience of compulsory secondary education in the UK has been comprehensively documented over many years and has been recorded as being both academically and socially challenging, characterised by episodes of systematic and incidental racism, where their efforts have been neither recognised nor rewarded (Yarnell and Bonstedt, 2018; Wright *et al.*, 2010; Gillborn, 2008). Although race is "a system of socially constructed and enforced categories" (Gillborn, 1995, p. 3) lacking any meaningful scientific basis, racism based on "physical, phenotypical, external, visible difference" (Mirza, 2009, p. 43) is a real phenomenon which has contributed to significant negative educational outcomes for black students including academic underachievement, higher exclusion rates and social marginalisation (Department for Education (DfE), 2014; Steele, 2009; Gillborn, 2008).

Coard (1971) reported that numerous black children were routinely incorrectly assessed as having special educational needs and either sent to special schools or erroneously placed in lower ability groups in mainstream education. The 1985 Swann Report confirmed the earlier findings of Coard and showed West Indian students, as they were then described, had the highest allocation to special schools of any ethnic group. In addition, their academic achievement levels were significantly lower than other ethnic groups and in 1981–1982 only 6 per cent of all Caribbean school leavers obtained "five or more higher grades (grades A–C at O level and CSE grade 1) [...] compared with 17 per cent of Asians and 19 per cent of all other leavers" (Swann, 1985, p. 114). This pattern of academic underachievement continued to be replicated over time and while data from 1988 to 1997 indicated GCSE examination scores rose from 17 to 28 per cent for black students (an 11 per cent improvement) with the exception of Pakistani students, this still represented the lowest achievement of all ethnic groups (Gillborn and Mirza, 2003, p. 13). More recent data collected in 2015 by the Department for Education (2015) demonstrated:

> Pupils from a Black background are the lowest performing group [...] 53.1% of pupils from a Black background achieved at least 5A*- C GCSEs (or equivalent) grades including English and mathematics [...] 3.4 percentage points below the national average (56.6%). The percentage of pupils from a Black background achieving the English Baccalaureate [was] 21.1% [...] 3 percentage points below the national average.

While earlier research commonly aggregated scores for males and females, later studies show achievement by gender and indicate although black females have made academic gains, this success has not been repeated by their male peers (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2010; Department for Education and Skills, 2007). Independent research completed by the London Development Agency (2004) using data from 2000, 2001 and 2002 showed "African-Caribbean boys have consistently been the lowest performing group across all key stages [and] the achievement gap widened with progress through each key stage" (p. 9). Later, research by the Lambeth Council in 2015 confirmed:

> Black Caribbean underachievement in education is real and persistent and they are consistently the lowest performing group in the country, and the difference between their educational performance and others is larger than for any other ethnic group (Lambeth Local Authority, 2015, online)

thus reproducing the previous pattern of underachievement.

The pattern of repeated failure of black students generally and male students in particular becomes even more significant especially as black pupils make "a good start in primary schools" (Ofsted, 1999, p. 11) and "begin school promisingly with good results in the baseline assessments at Key Stage 1" (Crozier, 2005, p. 588). However, this intrinsic enthusiasm appears to be damaged in the secondary sector, so that numbers of black male students leave compulsory education feeling "they had experienced racist treatment by teachers […] because of their race" (Peart, 2013, p. 66).

Research from multiple data sets from 1971 onwards (see examples above) completed by both independent and government researchers confirm black male students fail to achieve expected academic qualification levels in secondary education, sometimes leaving with few or no paper qualifications. Without these qualifications progress into employment, training or further study may be delayed and black students realise on leaving secondary school they almost need to start from the beginning to try and gain GCSE qualifications or equivalents.

In addition to an unsupportive academic environment, black students have also reported frequent incidents of casual racism and Ofsted (2012) reported staff in both primary schools and secondary schools "said they heard racist language on a weekly basis" (p. 26) and "bullying about their race, religion or background" was common (Ofsted, 2012, p. 29). In his work, Byfield (2008) observed black students were "disrespected, talked down to, over-monitored, blamed for things they did not do, and given no chance to tell their side of the story" (p. 80) in an enveloping atmosphere of "aggression and humiliation" (Peart, 2013, p. 67). In their social interactions in schools, black males have been presented as aggressive and threatening resulting in higher levels of formal, informal, fixed and permanent school exclusions (DfE, 2014; London Development Agency, 2004). For some students trying to participate in classroom discussions have been interpreted as "being rude and a challenge to the teacher's authority" (London Development Agency, 2004, p. 8). Similarly, gathering in school corridors during break "frequently attracted the attention of the teacher or teachers on break duty [and] the teacher often responded to this situation by interrogatively ushering the group out of the corridor" (Wright *et al.*, 1998, p. 76); other black students found they were "wrongly accused, watched with suspicion at lunchtimes, subject to negative stereotyping and simply being disliked on account of being Black" (London Development Agency, 2004, p. 8). Additionally, black students found their interactions with teachers were characterised by being "overlooked for answering questions, verbal aggression […] and harsher reprimands than for students from other ethnic backgrounds" (London Development Agency, 2004, p. 7) and they felt they were not listened to or understood by their white teachers (London Development Agency, 2004, p. 8).

These incidents often went unnoticed and unchallenged. In such a climate of prevailing antagonism, where choices and chances are limited, black students seem almost fated to fail. The available evidence is compelling. In the statutory secondary sector, many black students have academically underachieved, experience a hostile unsupportive atmosphere and continue to do so. The overall picture from secondary education is a one of persistent academic failure and repeated social challenges.

The educational experience of black students in FE
Despite an academically and socially challenging secondary school experience (Wright *et al.*, 2016; Crozier, 2005), many black male students choose to "persevere with their education in the hope of improving their prospects and obtaining their desired occupation" (Fyfe and Figueroa, 1993, p. 234) and continue their studies in FE in an attempt to gain "what they feel they have missed and what they believe carries most status: academic qualifications" (Further Education Unit (FEU), 1985, p. 5).

In contrast to the position in secondary schools, research evidence from Ofsted indicates in FE:

> […] learners from all ethnic backgrounds are increasingly succeeding in achieving their qualifications in the FE sector. Overall success rates for learners of BME heritage of all ages increased at an above average rate between 2002 and 2004. For 16-18 year old learners, particularly in GFE colleges, there were some significant improvements for particular groups whose success rates were exceptionally low previously, such as Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Black Other learner (Ofsted, 2005, p. 16).

Further, once in FE black students make academic progress "at an above average rate" (Ofsted, 2005). In addition to supporting black students achieve prized qualifications, FE staff were "perceived to care about the progress and well-being of young people" (Bhattacharyya *et al.*, 2003, p. 24) which helped to create a respectful purposeful atmosphere. This positive learning environment was unlike students' school-based experience, where researchers from the London Development Agency (2004) noted:

> […] the degree of care experienced by African-Caribbean pupils from their teachers, the quality of communication with their teachers, and levels of conflict with teachers, was all less positive for African-Caribbean boys than for boys from most other groups (p. 8).

While research on the achievement of black students from FE is limited and much is now dated, it appears that black male students achieve better academic results and have a more productive learning experience in FE benefiting from "positive, professional relationships" (Anderson and Peart, 2016, p. 209) with their tutors which help to support academic achievement.

Methodology

The aim of this study was to capture "the experiences that help us understand" (Newby, 2010, p. 36) the daily lived realities and academic attainment of black males in FE. The research was based on four main questions, namely:

RQ1. What were black males' experiences of FE?

RQ2. What were their daily interactions with people, structures and systems?

RQ3. What, if any, was the level of discrimination in FE and who were the perpetrators?

RQ4. Academically how well did Black males achieve in FE?

The study investigated these questions by privileging the voice of the research participants above others (including staff, and other students) acknowledging black males as being experts of their own realities and being able to speak with authority on their lives, thus providing a counter narrative to other research written by the dominant hegemony of white, middle-class, male, intellectuals and academics.

The research took place in two general FE colleges based in an ethnically diverse city in the East Midlands. Both colleges offered a broad range of courses from individualised study programmes for students with high levels of need through to advanced level and access courses to prepare students for higher education. Participants were recruited by identifying courses, where black students were studying and individually approaching students to ask if they wished to participate in the inquiry. The research population comprised 29 students, giving rich, thick data (Newby, 2010) to investigate the four research questions. The participants could be broadly classified as working class, with all apart from the three oldest participants (who lived independently) receiving hardship bursaries or grants. The other 26 participants lived in the family home, often with a single parent (usually their mother) and other siblings. Participants were studying varied courses such as art, business and sports science from levels 1 to 3. All participants were allocated pseudonyms to preserve anonymity.

The principal data set was based on eight focus group sessions comprising three to five students. Focus groups were identified as the primary data collection tool because it allowed participants to work together and support one another during the data collection process through an in-depth collaborative exploration of their understanding, attitudes and perceptions (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2015) and thus helped to provide a fuller account of the participants' experiences. Focus group data were complemented by nine individual student interviews. Students were selected for interview as a result of issues raised during focus group sessions. The individual interviews helped to develop a deeper "understanding of the respondent's point of view" (Henn *et al.*, 2006, p. 161) and mitigated against responses that may have been given as a result of pressure from their peers. To preserve the open, exploratory nature of the inquiry an informal, semi-structured format was adopted which "to all intents and purposes [was] like a normal conversation" (Bartlett and Burton, 2007, p. 43). A framework of ten common core questions was used for all participants and points of interest were expanded by asking further probing questions (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Interviews were used for "discovery rather than checking" (Denscombe, 2010, p. 182). Focus group sessions and individual interviews each lasted approximately one hour and all data were audio-recorded and later transcribed.

Testimony data gathered through focus group work and individual interviews were supported by data collected from six hours of naturalistic classroom observations which were "not contrived for research purposes" (Punch, 2005, p. 179). Observations were used as a means of corroborating statements made by participants in the focus group and interview sessions and to provide a "more valid and holistic picture of society than that which could be acquired by remaining true to only one set of methods" (Henn *et al.*, 2006, p. 19).

All three data sets, focus groups, individual interviews and observations, were analysed and processed to derive meaning from the participants' words and actions. The data sets were then integrated with each data set complementing and supporting the other. Data were then re-analysed to uncover patterns and persistent ideas by examining the data for recurrent words and phrases which were then used to create research themes. This final section of this paper will present evidence from the inquiry and discuss issues under these thematic headings.

FE college culture

Culture, while difficult to define, is a significant feature of all students' educational experience and all can comment with authority on the culture of an establishment as all have occupied that organisational space. Culture, as is it experienced, is influenced by CRT and black and minority groups have a different cultural experience of organisations as a consequence of their race. FE has been described as being "both preparatory and lifelong learning institutions" (Foster, 2005, p. 39). However, this description does not encompass the ideological stance of FE which purposely positions itself as a different offer where contributions from students are encouraged and welcomed in an open "relationship of mutual respect between teacher and learner" (Vella, 1994, p. 182) and where the tutor "honour(s) the learner first as an adult with years of experience" (Vella, 1994, p. 185). While recognising students may be different ages, FE begins from the premise all students have entered an adult learning environment and college's default position is to treat all students with the respect routinely accorded to any adult.

Research participants were aware of the institutional differences between secondary education and FE and enjoyed studying in a reciprocally civil atmosphere which encouraged their participation as demonstrated in the following student comments:

> Issac: You can talk to teachers without saying "Sir", or having to talk to them like they're all high. Cause the teachers here are on the same level if you know what I mean.

Joseph: I've never come to college and felt […] teachers stressing my case.

Clement: Yeah, I do feel respected. I don't get treated like a child. I get treated on the same level as teachers.

John: It's like I have to look up to you if I'm calling you Miss.

The opportunity to speak to staff in a more equal manner without attracting reprimand marked a significant difference between school and college for the research participants reinforcing the more democratic, less hierarchically stratified organisation of FE. The more informal environment of FE is directly opposed to the experiences of black males in schools in Sewell's (2004, 1997) and Blair's (2001) earlier research, which demonstrated black males usually experienced destructive staff relationships and struggled to effectively engage in positive staff/student dialogue. In this study, many students enjoyed a good rapport with their college tutors, underlining the impact of environment for students as they migrated from one setting to another. For these students, their earlier experiences of education were dominated by race where they were conceptualised by their tutors first a black person and second as a student. Issac was especially clear the more empathetic environment of FE was more supportive to black students' progress and development and expanded his comments in the following way:

Issac: A school leaver would fit into college a lot more, cause they'll understand more. It's not like they're being held down and pressured.

In this quote, Issac hints back to his perceptions of a restrictive school environment which Crozier (2005), in her research, found to be like "a war" (p. 586), where students are positioned in a subordinate position and are tightly controlled and monitored, needing to justify and explain their actions continually. FE provided a new environment where tutors were willing to work with students in a more meritocratic way to support them in achieving their goals confirming earlier research completed by Attwood *et al.* (2004) and the FEU (1985).

The open culture of colleges was further emphasised through the way colleges imposed rules and regulations. To many of the research participants, it appeared that there was a complete lack of rules, so that some participants claimed no awareness of college rules stating:

Michael: I suppose the rules are cool, cause like the rules here are basically just like standard life rules. I don't feel like I'm restricted.

Clive: I don't even know the rules.

Tony: There aren't many rules

The research participants were conscious of the way they were "treated like adults" (Harkin, 2006, p. 325) as opposed to the infantilising treatment received from "school teachers" (Harkin, 2006) who neither expected nor gave them the opportunity to accept adult responsibility having stereotypically configured black males as "aggressive underachievers" (Peart, 2013, p. 17).

The FE curriculum

At school students are obliged to follow a prescribed curriculum where they have slight choice in the subjects they study. Furthermore, many schools lack the resources to offer a broader curriculum focussing on work-specific vocational or creative subjects such as sport or ICT. Although the taught curriculum in FE has many similarities to the taught curriculum in schools, and the examination and assessment agencies are the same as those

used by schools, critically students are afforded a degree of choice and the opportunity to specialise in a preferred area.

Significantly, in this research, students were entrusted to "make sensible decisions for themselves" (Wolf, 2010, p. 20) as opposed to having teacher choices imposed on them based on "societal […] and negative stereotypes about their abilities" (Steele, 2009, p. 164). The freedom to choose a course increased in importance as some black students struggled to accommodate to "the dominant cultural values perpetuated through the school system" (Byfield, 2008, p. 13). The students who took part in this research welcomed the opportunity to make important decisions about their futures and to select (and in some case build) a programme which more accurately reflected their skills, aspirations and abilities. As a result, many students were positively motivated towards learning from the very beginning of their course and demonstrating a willingness and a "persistence in college" (Alt, 2015, p. 111):

> Abraham: You didn't get a choice whether you could do technology or not. I hated being in school for them reasons. Now you come to college and you want to do this, this, this and this and they say "Well this is your timetable"-done. And if you can't do certain things you've always got a big, vast selection you can choose from after that anyway, so if you can't do this, you can do this.

> Clive: "Cause I've chosen things myself it's more varied" cause I've chosen things I'm interested in. It comes down to the choices I've made.

> Clark: In college you make your own decisions.

However, students who had not yet attained a level two qualification at the expected minimum grade in English and maths (until 2017 a GCSE grade C, now level 4) were also required to study these courses and effectively for a re-sit examination thus replicating a school-based experience. While this requirement introduced a degree of compulsion, students appreciated the way college staff tried to ensure the relevance of these subjects:

> Joseph: It's all to do with what we're doing in college—all the numeracy and communications and stuff. I think it's good because it involves what we're doing.

> Clark: Even maths is relevant cause it's all about sports.

The realisation of personal agency in FE was a powerful motivating factor for all students who positively engaged with the chance to choose what subjects they studied and were glad to stop studying subjects they disliked. Furthermore, even if students were obliged to continue some less favoured subjects such as maths, because the tutors worked to integrate these subjects into the main provision and vocationally contextualise the work, the students were able to acknowledge a greater relevance of the topic. The research findings appear to suggest that the more responsive curriculum of colleges was more appropriate to the needs of black male students.

Support in college
Although not wholly eschewing formal college based student support systems, the support most frequently used by the research participants was the informal class based tutor assistance provided to all students. This type of help seemed more acceptable and the perceived stigma of being needy was removed. This integrated student support provided by the regular class tutor appeared to be far more acceptable to students as it did not identify them as lacking in skills or understanding, having problems or a special need. Rather, it was seen as a normalised practice of working with the whole student population. This normalisation was especially significant for black male students because individualised tutor attention in schools was usually associated either with being in trouble (London Development Agency, 2004; Wright, 1998), or having been identified as being "mentally

Q4

retarded or suffering from a learning disability" (Noguera, 2003, p. 432). With the support of college tutors students were able to believe in their abilities and to discuss "their pursuit of a positive outcome" (Wright *et al.*, 2010, p. 50):

> Trevor: They treat you as friends. They can trust you, and we can trust them. In school you couldn't trust them, cause if you told them something I know they would go and tell the headmaster or something. And they treated you as little kids as well. In college they treat you as adults.

> Clement: If I needed help I wouldn't be struggling, I've got teachers who I like to think are friends who would help me.

> Lawrence: They've got this emotion for you. It's like Lewis, he treats you like a brother, like "I want you to do well", and he's proper preaching to you like my Dad or something. They don't speak to you aggressively, like nastily.

In addition to the academic support, students perceived college tutors gave appropriate emotional support and tutors were willing to discuss issues beyond academia such that students formed the view tutors genuinely cared about student well-being:

> Curtis: She talks about our age group and our race, how it's vulnerable out on the streets and stuff. She just tells you to keep a cool head. She gives good advice.

> Issac: I've had a couple of problems at home and what not, and I can talk to the teachers here, and they can understand and advise me. They try and get me on the right path, speak to the right people I've got to speak to. It's a lot more helpful.

Through showing an understanding "of the complex identities of the boys [...] where racism worked on a number of levels" (Sewell, 2004, p. 103), college staff were able to support students to help them "overcome the challenges" (Wright *et al.*, 2010, p. 50) of the discrimination they experienced in schools, to assert their agency to shed the label of being "unworthy of an education" (Wright *et al.*, 2010) and to plot a positive future trajectory. Although there is a "general consensus in the published research [...] that Black teachers work successfully with Black students and that their shared cultural background is often a major part of their teaching success" (Carson, 2017, p. 117) for the students in this study, tutor ethnicity did not appear critical in terms of providing support for the students and, reflecting employment patterns in the region, most tutors at the college were White British. However, students were willing to accept and receive support from white tutors as long as the support was relevant and recognised the students' status as adults capable of forming logical assessments of information.

Discussion

The research evidence demonstrates many black male students have a negative secondary school career, in which they have consistently failed to achieve academically, operating as an educationally marginalised population in secondary education. The failure to achieve academic qualifications has impacted on their ability to move forward and consequently numbers of black students have chosen to attend FE, which has become a practical second opportunity to gain qualifications needed to progress in their chosen spheres. The evidence from this study suggests black males find both the culture and the academic offer of FE more positive, a place where they are supported to achieve.

At school, black males have been configured as "violent, aggressive, sexually out of control and engaged in illicit activities such as mugging and drug pushing" (Blair, 2001, p. 81) with "attitude problems and limited academic ability" (Peart, 2013, p. 17). According to Sewell (2004), they are seen as "one big lump of rebellious, phallocentric underachievers" (p. 103) in whom tutors should not bother to invest because they will not achieve. In the secondary school environment, black males were not conceptualised as having academic

aspirations, rather they were homogenised into a single group where they are all the same and they are all bad. In schools, it appears diversity and difference does not exist and where success is predicated on ethnic origin rather than capability. Further, it appears education perversely echoes the criminal justice system and black students receive worse punishments for similar offences than their white counterparts (London Development Agency, 2004; Sewell, 1997, 2004) in a system, where "school teachers select individuals to make an example of and demonstrate how insubordination was dealt with" (Peart, 2013, p. 68). Thus, in both academic and disciplinary regimes, black students seem to have the worst possible experiences.

In FE, black males appear to be supported to escape limiting and unhelpful stereotypes of "super athlete, criminal, gangster or hypersexual male" (Swanson *et al.*, 2003, p. 609) and are provided with the academic, curriculum and support systems needed to achieve their academic goals. Within FE the cultural dispositions of black males (which appear to be interpreted as a direct challenge to school tutors' authority) no longer seemed to present an overt problem to tutors who demonstrated a capacity to accommodate and recognise differing cultural expressions. As a consequence, black males were not perceived as being education resistant and, in turn, were enabled to participate in and take advantage of available education opportunities. FE tutors seem to understand "Black boys are not a homogenous group [and] contrary to popular view, they are not synonymous with underachievement" (Byfield, 2008, p. 3) and have the ability to achieve qualifications in a variety of subjects. Within FE it appears there is space for other ways of being, without being othered.

Education is ideally placed to "intervene in the reproduction of disadvantage so as to equalise life chances between individuals from different […] backgrounds" (Dyson, 2006, p. 119). It is not a pre-determined fate, black males should or need to fail in education and it is possible for black males to "make successful transitions" (Wright, 2010, p. 50). Further, the 2010 Equality Act obliges all public sector organisations to take active steps to eliminate discrimination and imposes a legislative requirement to advance equality of opportunity for all minority populations and work to remove educational barriers to achievement.

Education has the capacity to and can change students' lives enabling them to have better opportunities, but this life-changing capacity can only be achieved if organisations are willing to develop strategic plans "to support [the] introduction, development and maintenance of inclusive practice" (Sood *et al.*, 2018, p. 50), without such plans there can be no equality for black males. There is now a legal imperative to reject racial inequality at every level and work to produce equity for all groups.

The final words of this paper are given to John, one of the students who took part in this research. John critically recognised the impact of race on his learning and life chances and summarised his experience in the following way:

> John: What colour you are matters. If you're Black it makes an impact. Life's harder being Black. No matter how hard you put a smile on your face, you're going to have to work extra hard to please somebody. My mum says to me "As a Black youth in a white society you're going to have to work extra hard". A White person will put in the same work, but you're going to have to put in double effort to get somewhere in life.

The 2010 Equality Act compels educators in all sectors and phases to make John's words history, and develop a just educational meritocracy where students are seen as individuals, recognised for their contributions and rewarded for their efforts.

Notes on student quotations
All verbatim quotes from students have previously appeared in S. Peart (2013)

Q6

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