From pardesi to desi?: Cohesion, integration, and social mobility amongst British-born Asians

There are many faces of Asians in London, which include: skilled Indian middle class migrants from the 1960s who have settled into a comfortable life in the capital; working class Bangladeshi Muslims from Sylhet in East London who have managed curry houses on Brick Lane; Punjabi immigrants who have settled and created 'Little India' in Southall, Hounslow, and Harrow; and radicalisation of British-born Pakistanis who carried out the London bombings in July 2005. To examine the disparate communities that are all reduced to the term 'British Asian', and to focus particularly on the diversity of British-born ('second-generation') Asians, the LSE Annual Fund sponsored a one-day workshop entitled 'Second-generation British-Asian Experiences in London: diversity, conflict and cohesion'. The roundtable, held at LSE on 29 May 2012, brought together key policymakers and researchers to discuss the inter-relationships between concepts of cohesion, integration, social mobility, and equality as they pertain to British-born Asians in London.

The event also provided an opportunity for policymakers and researchers from think-tanks, academia, and government to start a constructive dialogue about these vital issues, which are crucial to British-born Asians and all other Londoners. The roundtable consisted of three sessions: a presentation of a pilot study examining the Hindu Bengali community in Tower Hamlets (see Case Study); a summary of policies from the Greater London Authority and Harrow relevant to British-born Asians; and a wrap-up session to summarise the proceedings. Participants at the workshop framed their discussions on key questions that organisers sent beforehand. As with the roundtable itself, this report does not aim to provide resolutions to questions about integration, but rather to inform, evoke, and provoke in order to stimulate further discussions about the topic. The subsequent sections will summarise the main discussions during the workshop, sub-divided by the aforementioned key questions.

Case Study: Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets

In the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the Council and academicians have carried out extensive research on British-born Muslim Bengalis, since Bangladeshis comprise approximately 40% of the local population. This research has found that British-born Muslim Bengalis in the borough show low levels of cohesion, social mobility, and integration. Anecdotally, the Hindu Bengali minority in Tower Hamlets shows relatively high levels of social mobility. This is particularly interesting because Hindu Bengalis in the borough come from the same ethno-linguistic group, migrated at approximately the same time, have the same socio-economic origins, emigrated from the same region in Bangladesh (Sylhet), and settled in the same places (social housing in East London). To explore the case study further, the researchers focused on one of the Hindu Bengali community organisations in Tower Hamlets, Hindu Pragati Sangha (HPS), which built a Hindu temple in Mile End. The other Hindu Bengali community organisation in the borough is Sanaton Association.

Working with second-generation members of HPS, the research team designed and administered a questionnaire for a small pilot study (n=20) about cohesion, integration, and social mobility. These results were complemented by narrative data from a small informal focus group.

The respondents were between 20 and 40 years of age. In the survey, cohesion was defined using the national indicators on neighbourhood cohesion (NI1 and NI2), but adapting the wording to also gauge levels of cohesion at school, work, and in the UK. Integration was defined with more social connotations, with questions on the ethnicity of the respondent's closest friends and long-term partner. Social mobility was measured by finding the respondent's education level and income, compared with narrative data about his or her parents.

The researchers confirmed the high levels of social mobility in the pilot study. Although the first-generation had largely come without professional qualifications and took up 'blue collar' jobs in East London, most of the respondents worked in 'white collar' professions in the City or as medical doctors, with 55% earning £20,000-£40000 per year and 25% having an annual salary exceeding £40000. Although most respondents completed state education, 90% of the respondents had obtained university degrees (35% of whom completed a postgraduate qualification). Respondents also exhibited high levels of cohesion (i.e. feelings of belonging) in school, work, and in the UK, with slightly lower levels for the local area. In the focus group, the second-generation HPS community said that feelings of exclusion came from the majority Muslim Bengalis in the local area, not the White British population. Although respondents displayed high levels of self-identification as 'British' relative to other options, other indicators suggest that the second-generation Hindu Bengalis were not socially integrated. Of the respondents, 80% had some or many of their closest friends from within the Hindu Bengali community. Of those who had long-term partners, only one respondent married outside the community, though British-born Hindu Bengalis did marry others UK-born members of the community. The results suggest that Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets have high levels of social mobility and cohesion, with low levels of social integration. This challenges the prevailing policy consensus that sees 'integration' as a catalyst for cohesion and social mobility, since British-born Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets exhibit cohesion without integration. Further research will seek to unpack this puzzle.

The research will develop in four different ways. First, the sample of Hindu Bengalis will be extended to other British-born Hindu Bengalis in HPS and the Sanaton Association. Second, the same analysis will be applied to British-born Muslim Bengalis in Tower Hamlets. Third, the patterns of social mobility, cohesion, and integration amongst children of working class Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets will be compared with those of British-born Hindu Bengalis in the Bengali Cultural Association (BCA) in Newham, whose parents are predominantly highly-skilled middle class migrants from West Bengal. Finally, the results of these analyses will be compared with the Hindu Bengali communities in Manchester, to see whether there is a 'London effect' in patterns of integration, cohesion, and social mobility.

Is it possible to fit general principles from Government and Mayor's Office integration policies to local needs?

At the Council level, individuals or groups of individuals access services in inequitable ways, so it is vital for the Council to intervene to ensure fairer access across the local population. In other words, the Council aims to promote 'equal life chances for all' in the borough, as espoused by the Mayor's Office. This type of thinking is already reflected in procedures at the Council level. For example, the Harrow Council does not schedule meetings around midday on Fridays, since it would restrict access to Muslims (due to Friday prayers) and those who work in full-time jobs. UK Government and London policies on integration have tried to find 'universal' principles that are still flexible enough to cater to local needs. One concern with the existing policies is that the evidence-based approach requires empirical data, and there is a danger that marginalised groups that are not detected may remain invisible from integration policies.

In order to implement the policies effectively, it is important to look at the local political context within which Councils are implementing integration and cohesion policies, and whether British-Asians are integrated in decision-making. Most Councils outside London are dominated by White British middle-aged males. The experience is rather different in London. Two-thirds of current Tower Hamlets councillors are of Muslim Bengali (Bangladeshi) origin, and many of them are British-born and in their 20s or early 30s. The HPS Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets reported that although they had all suffered some racism at the hands of local white working class residents, it is the interaction with local Muslim Bengalis that they find most antagonistic. In particular, respondents reported that their access to Council services has been more difficult compared to their Muslim Bengali counterparts. The high level of Muslim Bengali political engagement is perhaps a legacy of high levels of political activism amongst first-generation migrants. Compared to other boroughs in East London, the British-born Muslim Bengali population in Tower Hamlets is politically engaged, and many are active from a young age in youth parliaments and other similar activities. This may be due to the reliance of working class Muslim Bengalis on council services. For middle-class residents, Council services may seem distant, but for Muslim Bengalis in Tower Hamlets, the Council is a crucial part of their access to health, housing, education, and employment. On the one hand, this has meant that Muslim Bengalis are integrated into politics of the borough, but this has also created new types of exclusion for groups that are not Muslim Bengali.

In Harrow, British Indians have a major presence on the Council, though there are few non-Indian Asians. However, workshop participants inquired whether this provided evidence of significant integration into political decision-making, since it might be possible to become a Councillor as a British-Asian, yet the cabinet portfolios remain in the hands of 'native' White British politicians. In the case of Harrow, the previous head of the Council, who is now a member of the Greater London Authority, is of Indian descent. In the past few years, two of the portfolio holders in Harrow Council have been Indian women. The Councillors have generally been older and born outside the UK, unlike in Tower Hamlets. Despite the presence of elected officials on local Councils in London, there is a demographic gap between the 'top table' decision-makers in the local statutory bodies and the rest of the staff, where the upper echelons do not reflect the diversity of the borough population or the Council personnel. This is an important observation for the pilot study on Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets. Most respondents registered high levels of cohesion in their workplace. However, they are mainly at an early stage of their careers in private sector firms. It would be interesting to revisit the same sample in 5-10 years' time to see whether they have progressed within their firms to decision-making positions, and whether this promotion (or lack thereof) will affect their attitudes on cohesion and integration. It would also be interesting to follow the life trajectories by gender, and whether female respondents started families and were expected to stay at home at the expense of career advancement.
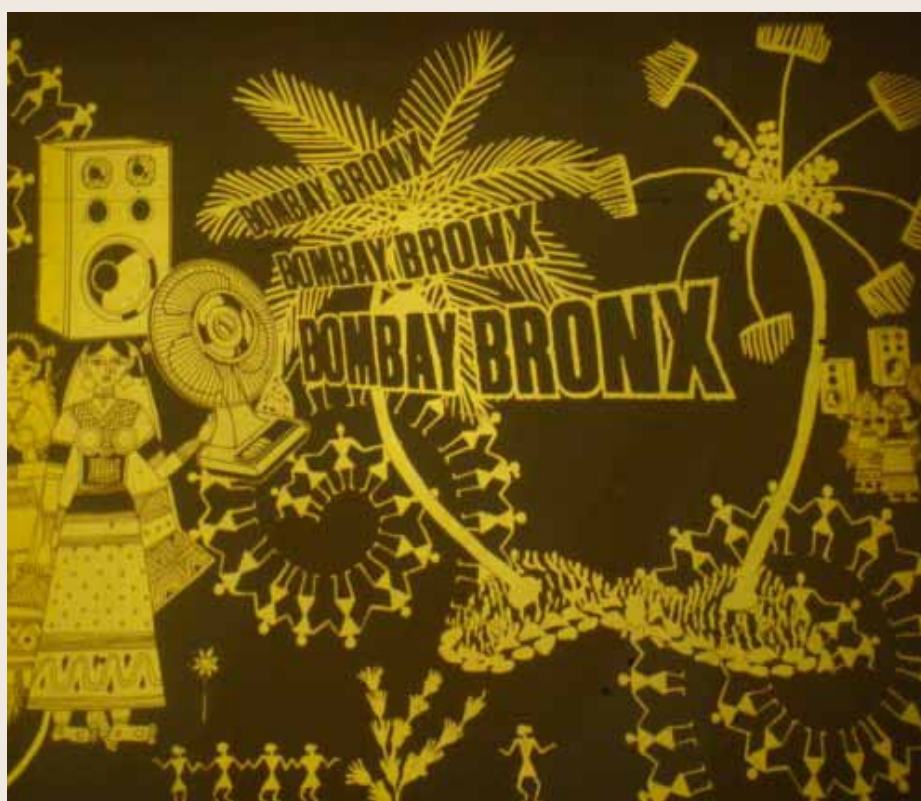
'Many first-generation even second-generation Bangladeshis maintained this view of "going back"… It was all about getting employment, sending money back, with the aim that they were going to return to Bangladesh… I would argue, if they [Hindu Bengalis] knew whether they were not going back…they made a conscious decision that they were going to strive to be educated, strive to get into professions, and the Muslim Bengalis in the area think that they were always going to go back'.

Is there an overarching 'British-Asian' experience in London?

Before examining factors that may explain the differences amongst British-born Asians in London, it is instructive to highlight the commonalities of the British Asian experience. Though British Asian communities may be integrated into the workforce *per se*, they nonetheless find that there is an earnings 'glass ceiling'. One roundtable attendee said that research has found that – including high prestige professions such as medical doctors – the most successful individuals of Asian descent will still earn 25% less on average than their White British counterparts. The picture is bleaker for those looking for employment, even for those with qualifications. The UK Department for Work and Pensions published a report, *A test for racial discrimination in recruitment practice in British cities*, where it sent identical CVs with 'British' and 'foreign-sounding' names and found that 74% more applications from ethnic minority candidates were needed to achieve the same level of success as white candidates. Thus, across the board, British-born Asians face difficulties in achieving full integration into the labour force (regardless of other demographic characteristics).

'As the newer arrived Asian community became more established, became more confident, and were able to think about the things that were important to them, you had the emergence of temples, gurdwaras and mosques. It's a part of becoming more established and feeling confident in terms of expressing their faith'.

The first generation of Asian migrants in the 1960s and 1970s experienced more virulent and occasionally violent racism, and different communities galvanised activism around the umbrella term of 'Asian' during the anti-racism movement, not as a cultural designation, but as an empowering political coalition to stand up to organisations like the National Front. The anti-racism movement in places like Tower Hamlets by Left-orientated Muslim Bengalis represent the genesis of the integration and cohesion policy agenda, and local political activism more generally. British Muslims and

Sikhs were the main drivers of the movement, whilst British Hindus were less visible.

These features of the anti-racism movement perhaps explain one of the more intriguing findings of the Hindu Bengali pilot study. Choosing between the terms 'Asian', 'Bengali', 'British', 'Hindu', and 'Indian' for self-identification, respondents felt least affinity for the term 'Asian', since they found it to have negative connotations – particularly in mass media. Since British Hindus were less active during the anti-racism movement, there is no strong political history of conflict with the state, and there is no political cultural barrier to working for the Establishment, such as large banks in the City run predominantly by white managers. A second reason for avoiding the term 'Asian' is perhaps to distinguish themselves from other British Asians, particularly Muslim Bengalis, in Tower Hamlets. This is a function of two factors. First, Tower Hamlets, and many other parts of London, have large British Asian populations, so there is a sufficient critical mass to express more nuanced British Asian identities by ethno-linguistic group or religion. These opportunities would not present themselves in other parts of Britain, so this highlights another crucial part of the British Asian experience: destination of the first generation migrant. Whether the first generation settled in Tower Hamlets near the City or a post-industrial city such as Sheffield strongly conditions the experiences and 'life chances' available to second- and third-generation.

A second factor is that, compared to their parents, British-born Asians do not have a language barrier and thus have the confidence to integrate into the UK. In other words, the 'defensive' identity of 'Asian' is replaced by more 'proactive' assertions of

integration and nuanced ethno-linguistic or religious identities. Asian communities that have been in the UK longer have integrated more effectively than newer migrants. For example, Indian and Pakistani migrants have been in Harrow for several decades, and are more well-integrated than recent migrants from Sri Lanka and from Afghanistan. Thus, the second factor that differentiates experience is the generation of the British Asian. However, determining inter-generational patterns is complicated by British-born Asians marrying partners from the country of origin. Although the British-

'If you look at some of the similarities in terms of integration within society as a whole, interactions within society as a whole, actually you will probably find that white working class people actually probably have more in common with working class people from Asian communities'.

born Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets tend to find spouses amongst the community born in the UK, a significant number of British-born Muslim Bengalis in Tower Hamlets marry partners born in Bangladesh, which blurs the generational boundary. Bangladeshi women who come over to the UK, even with educational qualifications, tend stay at home in a carer role for elderly in-laws and

'When you are talking about employment gaps in the Muslims, when you actually look at it by breaking down the Indian Muslim community, and the employment rate for them, it's probably different from the Pakistani Muslim community, and from the Bangladeshi Muslim community. When policy is being developed...there's a need to actually break it down. If we are going to address the barriers of inequalities, you need to actually go to that level'.

find it difficult to obtain the know-how to integrate into the labour force. Bangladeshi men who join their British-born wives in the UK have slightly better levels of success than British-born Bangladeshis, but there is a real problem across this community translating qualifications into employment. A counter-intuitive inter-generational pattern is that the older generation, even from traditional and rural backgrounds, may have been involved in the anti-racism movement, joined the Labour party, and had social circles across different Asian communities, whilst the subsequent generation has sought to pursue a more orthodox and narrow identity, such as the increase in British-born Muslim men growing beards and British-born women wearing the niqab. Thus, it is the older generation that were embedded in inclusive progressive politics in the UK, whilst their children may be more 'traditional'.
However, describing the fragmentation of second-, third-, and fourth-generation identities needs to be balanced with

cultural forms that seek to bring together disparate British Asian voices. There are parallels between these processes and the construction of a politicised Black British identity in the 1980s and 1990s. The *Dis-orienting Rhythms* collection on Asian urban music showed that there was a shared notion of an identity that drew on the Homeland and the UK. In this context, the term British-Asian has been replaced by the word *desi*, which translates as 'local' in Hindi, though it refers to a transnational identity of those from the Subcontinent not born in the 'Homeland' – and has replaced the term *pardesi* ('foreigner'). However, there are also complex constructions about those who can be *desi*, and who cannot, and the term has been co-opted mainly by those of North Indian origin, and those outside London. Those within London, for the reasons outlined above, tend to prefer narrower self-identification.
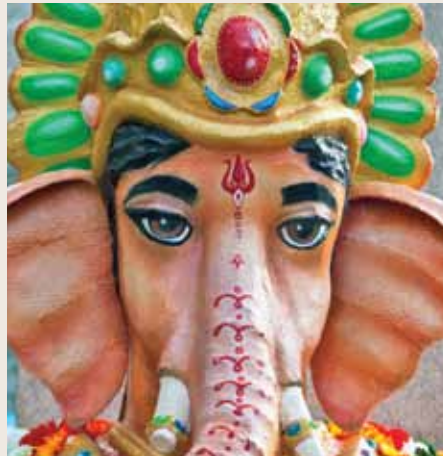
A third factor that affects the trajectory of the second-generation are the socio-economic characteristics of the first generation. Thus, highly-skilled Asian migrants from urban areas are expected to integrate more quickly into education, housing, and employment compared to their low-skilled counterparts. It is here that the Hindu Bengali pilot study also provides an interesting finding. Although the parents of the group of respondents in the study come from the same ethno-linguistic

group, same region, same socio-economic origin, and settled in the same places as Muslim Bengalis in London, Hindu Bengali respondents showed high levels of cohesion and social mobility, compared to the majority Muslim Bengali population. This suggests that either the Hindu Bengali migrants were perhaps more well-off than their Muslim counterparts, or there is another missing factor.

Most of the participants felt that a fourth factor, the aspiration to return, may explain some of these differences. In the Muslim Bengali community in East London, the first generation wanted to return to the homeland, and would speak about eventually returning to Bangladesh or would send money home. Thus, this community was less likely to actively integrate with education, housing, and employment in the UK, since they always felt that life in the UK was temporary – even though they have not since returned to Bangladesh. By contrast, Hindu Bengalis left, sometimes as persecuted minorities in a Muslim-majority country, to establish a new life in the UK. Thus, there is no 'homeland' to go back to, so it is best to integrate here in the UK. Interestingly, the pilot study found that they associate with India, not Bangladesh. Moreover, in the self-identification question in the survey, more respondents placed 'British' as their primary identity, just ahead of 'Indian'. Thus, there is a little or no identification with being Bangladeshi.

'The interesting thing is that even working in this area, I am still struggling to identify what Britishness is, when one has achieved integration. Maybe it is just the journey, maybe the road is shifting, as society is not standing still, maybe it's just the journey'.

Can notions of multiculturalism and integration co-exist in building a cohesive society?

There are strong partisan patterns in the understanding of both integration and multiculturalism. Under Ken Livingstone from the Labour Party, the Mayor's Office identified specific communities and specific organisations within those communities to be targeted when developing policies in areas such as employment, health and housing. The new Conservative Mayor, Boris Johnson, by contrast, saw the previous Mayor's multicultural policies as divisive and not bringing Londoners together. The Mayor's Equality Framework, *Equal Life Chances for All*, has shifted to an evidence-based approach that is mainstreamed across all policy areas to identify those who do not

have equal 'life chances'. The policies of the UK Government also show a break from a focus on multiculturalism or integration in favour of an evidence-based approach that seeks to improve inter-generational social mobility. The UK Coalition Government's strategy – *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers* – examines individual 'life cycles' during foundation, school, and transition years, as well as adulthood, in order to identify important points in which to intervene. Unlike previous Government policy, the 'life cycles' approach is not a 'top-down' policy, but rather a long-term strategy that requires action from all sectors in society. For example, because of the proximity to

'What I am hearing is that maybe we in local government need to seize the initiative and take on this view of mainstreaming… For a long time, and we've definitely done this, we've taken what the Government has done as the latest mantra on policy. Maybe our challenge now is to say…we need to create this space locally to be a bit more responsive to what's different'.

Tower Hamlets in East London, larger private firms in the City have carried out initiatives as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility Programmes in local schools to help the disadvantaged.

In the Fabian Society's 2010 pamphlet Separate and Unequal, Nick Johnson proposes a way to move beyond the gap between notions of 'integration' and 'multiculturalism' in order to build a diverse society whilst reducing inequality, using an approach that celebrates both commonality and diversity in order to reduce inequality. Participants in the roundtable also identified this relationship between the two concepts, with a mutual respect for differences ('multiculturalism') as a basis for starting a process in order to find a set of common goals and values ('integration'). Part of the challenge faced during the roundtable is that the term 'integration' has different connotations in different settings. In the case study on Hindu Bengalis, 'integration' refers to a more cultural definition, measured through interactions with members outside the community. By contrast, governmental policy definitions underline that 'integration' initiatives should create conditions such that all members of the community are able to fully take part in the society, with a particular focus on issues such as health, housing, and employment. Participants in the roundtable did refer to both understandings of 'integration', but there was a consensus that the definition of equal access for all was of more use.

As outlined above, both central government and the London Mayor's office have moved away from the strand-by-strand approach espoused by the Labour Party in favour of a more decentralized style. At the Council level, the new Government approach has signalled a new way of doing business, which some participants felt may be beneficial in the long-run. Despite the demographic differences amongst Councils, one borough official said that frameworks on equality at the local level tend to look very similar, suggesting that it is possible to distil commonalities which hold across London and across the UK. The prevailing London and Government policies also provide a discretionary space for local authorities to reflect on local context instead of waiting for policy frameworks from Whitehall. On the other hand, participants active at the local level voiced concerns that the focus on individual 'life cycles' and 'life chances' provides a way for the state policy to link directly to the individual citizen, which thus bypasses local authorities. They also said that by tailoring policies at the individual level, analyses ignore structural factors leading to inequalities, and there is an underlying assumption that the 'right policies' can solve deeper structural problems. Moreover, the evidence-based approach encouraged by the Mayor's Office and the Government is vulnerable to blind-spots, whereby some smaller communities may be overlooked in studies, such as British-born Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets analysed in in the aforementioned pilot study.

The roundtable participants focused on three further discussions related to integration and multiculturalism: defining Britishness; the exception of London; and the relationship between integration and notions of cohesion. Workshop discussions on trying to define the end-point of integration of British-Asians interrogated the receding nature of the 'Britishness'. There is a growing uneasiness amongst many British residents about what this actually means. There is a reliance on notions of Western or European liberal norms as a consensus on 'British culture' becomes more elusive. The Government requires applicants for long-term settlement or naturalization to pass a 'Life in Britain' test, which may reflect a white majority view of the UK,

according to one of the officials at the roundtable. A few participants claimed that the exam does not encourage diversity and inclusion, but rather promotes assimilation into a particular version of Britishness. However, other workshop delegates believed that the exam was a way to instil civic values and empowerment to access services, thus starting the process of integration.

Nonetheless, attempts to promote certain types of 'Britishness' are confounded by the diversity within London, where a significant proportion of the population are ethnic minorities. The notion of a mono-cultural and mono-racial 'British host society' does not reflect the realities in London, and the demographic settlement patterns in the rest of Britain are quite different from the diversity in the capital. That being said, it was mentioned that within the 'global' city of London, groups are segregated by class, ethnicity, and religion, only feeling certain parts of the capital are 'their own London'. One suggested alternative to both 'British' and 'London' identities was a greater focus on a local civic identity to promote a stronger feeling of belonging in one's own physical locality instead of more abstract city-wide or national identification.

After the 2001 riots in Oldham and Burnley between British Muslims and British White populations, the Labour Government reaffirmed the need for policies that emphasise cohesion and integration in order to foster greater inclusion. Local policymakers present at the workshop said that they try to promote integration through interaction and communication leading to a mutual respect for difference, though there are no operational definitions for 'integration' or

'We have had this completely mad idea that we can somehow, through public services, manage people out of structural poverty. And that's crazy'.

'multiculturalism'. It is here that it is necessary to have more productive discussions between academia and policymakers, since, as mentioned above, definitions of these terms are complex and unclear, yet need to be grounded in policy outcomes to be useful. The pilot study on Hindu Bengalis in Tower Hamlets suggests an interesting counter-narrative to prevailing ideas of links between integration (measured through inter-communication) and cohesion: although respondents showed a high level of social cohesion, they also were not integrated as evidenced by their predominantly intra-group social interaction. Thus, instead of using integration as a starting point (i.e. personal communication between members of different communities), it is perhaps a culmination of a longer process, starting with a reduction of poverty (leading to equality), resulting in more self-confidence to belong within a diverse patchwork of communities (cohesion), which then leads to gradual integration.

How do socio-economic class differences amongst British-born Asians in London affect cohesion, integration, and social capital?

Although most of the discussions focused on ethno-linguistic or religious distinctions within the British Asian community, participants in the roundtable agreed that socio-economic class remains a primary driver for integration, cohesion and social mobility for all communities in the UK. Socio-economic status affects an individual's education, income, and health. According to the Waltham Forest Health Inequalities Strategy 2010-2015, traveling eastward on the Central Line between middle class Notting Hill Gate and working class Leyton, life expectancy reduces by a half a year for surrounding communities for each stop, and the male/female life expectancy in Notting Hill is 84.3/88.9 years compared to 76.5/81.2 years in Leyton.

It was mentioned that the move away from 'old style multiculturalism' or 'identity politics' began during the previous Labour Government, as indicated in John Denham's speech in 2010 as Communities Minister which emphasised that anti-discrimination policies should 'target class, not race'. There was a concern that the Labour opposition is now shying away from mentioning race as part of the inequality debate. However, inequality is not a question of race or class, but rather the inter-play of different demographic factors, such as race, class, and gender.

'If you look where people settled, places like Bradford and Oldham, those places were poorly industrialised. The issue may well not be about places where they came from, but the conditions of what was available to them rather than the region from which they may or may not have migrated from'.

Some of the participants also expressed a level of scepticism of Government policies on equality and integration, saying that they are not meant to transform society but rather maintain the *status quo*. Part of the critique stems from their feeling that the policies of this Government as well as the previous administration seek to incite change through gentrification. In other words, the policy by middle class decision makers becomes 'how to make the working class more like us' through cultural outreach and similar projects, without tackling the structural causes of the widening socio-economic gaps in the city. As mentioned above, ascriptive traits like gender and ethnicity still affect social mobility and integration in employment, even for the most successful British Asians. There are British-born Asians who have been successful in climbing the corporate ladder, but they have tended to come from public schools and followed similar life trajectories to their privileged White British counterparts. Thus, marginalised British Asian communities remain so, and the experience of exclusion has more commonalities with the White working class communities in London, rather than more socio-economically advantaged members of their ethnic group. Thus, it is important to appreciate the 'diversity of diversity' within the British Asian communities by not focusing on 'Asians' in London as a uniform entity, and instead, being aware of possible patterns of exclusion by ethno-linguistic group, religion, class, gender, or generation.

Still, participants in the workshop noted that the relationship between levels of social capital and level of poverty is not always the same. Areas with high levels of deprivation sometimes show high levels of community belonging, whereas the expectation would be the opposite. As an example, during the unrest during the summer of 2011, there were riots in several parts of London, but there were no riots in other deprived areas in the country like the East of Glasgow. This leaves a puzzle to explain more complex explanations for levels of community cohesion as they related to deprivation and demographics.

'I think about this notion of "host society", I think that in itself can be problematic, because the understanding is that the host society, particularly if we think about London or we think about the UK, narrowly being mono-cultural or mono-racial is certainly not the case'.

Starting a dialogue

The discussions during the roundtable resulted in areas of common understandings of cohesion, integration, and social mobility amongst British-born Asians in London, but it also posed new difficult questions that were not resolved during the workshop. The event provided a forum for policymakers, researchers from think-tanks, and academicians to openly discuss complex issues related to British-born Asians in London in a deliberative space, instead of the isolation of one's institutional context. In this way, the roundtable allowed for participants to challenge and be challenged by other interested stakeholders around understandings of key issues, and will hopefully represent the beginning of a constructive dialogue between policymakers and researchers on this topic.

Web Links

Bangla Stories.
www.banglastories.org

Generation 3.0
www.generation3-0.org

Institute of Community Cohesion
www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk

Older People (Runnymede Trust project)
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1 Did not attend workshop, but provided responses to the key questions.
2 Did not attend workshop, but provided feedback on the draft report.

'The problem with that [evidence-based approach] is if you don't have the evidence, you won't make any improvements for communities that are always marginalised, so it's a Catch-22. So they may remain marginalised for years to come, and there will not be equal life chances for those [communities]'.

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