What are the factors that promote high post-16 participation of many minority ethnic groups?

A focused review of the UK-based aspirations literature

Review conducted by the York Post-16 Review Group

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TECHNICAL REPORT

The results of this systematic review are available in four formats:

SUMMARY
Explains the purpose of the review and the main messages from the research evidence

REPORT
Describes the background and the findings of the review(s) but without full technical details of the methods used

TECHNICAL REPORT
Includes the background, main findings, and full technical details of the review

DATABASES
Access to codings describing each research study included in the review

These can be downloaded or accessed at:
http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=2386

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List of abbreviations

DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
FE	Further education
FTE	Full-time education
HE	Higher education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
KS	Key stage
LEA	Local education authority
MEG	Minority ethnic group
NEET	Not currently engaged in employment, education or training
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
RDD	Regression discontinuity design
SES	Socio-economic status
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
WoE	Weight of evidence

Abstract

What do we want to know?

The desire to widen participation in formal post-compulsory education and training is a policy agenda common to most developed countries, and political attention in the UK has largely focused on young (potential) students aged 16-21. Given that some minority ethnic groups have higher rates of participation in the UK at both age 16 and 18 than both the majority white cohort and some other minorities, identifying potential determinants could lead to a method of increasing participation for all. The overall aim of this review, therefore, was to determine the factors that drive high post-16 participation of many minority ethnic groups.

What results were found?

There were 23 studies included for in-depth analysis. These examined relationships and/or statistical analyses with regard to the factors that could be instrumental in determining young people's views about post-16 participation by considering a variety of variables. The minority ethnic focus was variable in the 23 studies, and included both traditionally high-achieving, high participating groups and low- achieving, low-participating ones. The Review Group summarised all the promoters and non-promoters of post-16 participation derived from the 23 studies in a hierarchy of level of influence, starting with government policy and working through institutional practices and other external influences down to individual aspirations. A total of 21 promoters of participation and 21 non-promoters were identified in the eight levels of influence. Other factors not in these levels of influence were also identified (2 promoters and 8 non-promoters). The Group analysed the promoters and non-promoters within each level of influence, focusing on those which emerged from large numbers of studies or from one or more studies of a high weight of evidence. The following factors were instrumental in each level of influence.

Government

The educational maintenance allowance (EMA) was found to be a promoter of post-16 participation, and appeared to be more important for black students than for white students or Indian students.

Universities

The wider entry requirements and inclusive admission practices of new universities encouraged applications from ethnic minority groups, but minority candidates may face an 'ethnic penalty' with applications to 'old' and 'new' universities having differential success. The chances of a successful application may also be limited by the narrow application strategy of some ethnic groups who tend to apply to geographically close institutions.

Schools

High quality staff support was seen to increase the likelihood of staying on post-16 in general, as did a positive atmosphere and an emphasis on academic excellence. The reverse of these factors, especially low teacher expectations and poor quality teaching, were seen as barriers to participation. Other non-promoting factors included racial issues and a Eurocentric curriculum.

Careers advice

Careers advice was not generally found to play a major role in decisions to participate post-16; however, the influence of careers advice was greater for students from some ethnic minorities, especially black Caribbean students.

Work

All ethnic groups participated in work experience and most thought this had been helpful in their

decision to continue in education. However, wanting a job or training place was the principle reason given for leaving education at 16, particularly for white students.

Religion

There were no studies of medium or above weight of evidence that commented on religion as a promoter or non-promoter of post-16 participation.

Family

In families where parents placed a high value on education and offered strong parental support for post-16 participation, and where there was positive support from the wider community, there was an increased likelihood of continuing in education; once again, the reverse of these factors lead to decreased post-16 participation. Families were a stronger push factor for minority ethnic groups than for white students in relation to the need for qualifications and the type of qualification studied. Socio-economic status also appeared to affect post-16 participation, with young people from higher social classes being more likely to remain in education. For many students, financial constraints and family reasons were important reasons for leaving education.

Individual aspirations

The expectation of economic gain and career advance resulting from post-16 participation was found to motivate students to stay on post-16; ethnic minority pupils in particular often aspired to professional jobs. However, lower individual aspirations decreased the likelihood of continuing in education. Lower individual aspirations were especially seen in black Caribbean boys and seemed to be related to disaffected peers and a low commitment to schooling. Young people were also more likely to stay in education if they had a positive attitude towards school and viewed post-16 education as a 'natural progression' from school.

Other factors

Having positive peers increased an individual's participation in post-16 education, and, conversely, students with disaffected or negative peers were less likely to continue in education, regardless of ethnic group. Young men were more likely to participate than young women. Older candidates were also found to be less successful applicants.

Discussion

In the synthesis, of all eight levels of influence determining post-16 participation, two factors – the influence of family and individual aspirations – stand out as being the major determinants. Sixteen medium to high WoE studies found that a high parental value of education, strong parental support for post-16 participation, positive family influence, and being in a higher social class were determining factors in participation in schools post-16 and in further and higher education. On the other hand, eight studies found that a low parental value of education, parental influence against post-16 participation, negative family influence, and being in a lower social class could be factors acting as barriers to post-16 and further and higher education.

Fifteen studies found that individual aspirations and motivations for participation in post-16 education were major drivers for participation – not only in terms of aspiration for education as an end in itself and for economic gain and better job opportunities, but also in simply placing a high personal value on education and a belief that this would lead to personal satisfaction.

What are the implications?

Implications for policy and practice

Differences between ethnic groups are largely explained by differences in cultural attitudes towards education in general and higher education in particular. Minority ethnic groups with high participation tend to have a high cultural awareness of the value of extending young people's education.

In terms of interventions, financial assistance was seen as being important in one study. Financial assistance may be more important among those groups with low expectations and low emphasis on the value of post-16 and higher education. Careers advice appears helpful for some ethnic groups, and work experience is generally useful either in providing a reason for subsequent training or in acting as a negative experience of the workplace in comparison with college. If one really wants to increase participation, then one cannot assume that current opportunities are ideal and that all one has to do is to encourage the reluctant to take part.

Implications for research

This review has identified a number of areas where more rigorous research is required. In the systematic map of research, the Review Group did not identify any UK-based evaluations of interventions aimed at changing behaviour or attitudes using a strong design to enable causal inference (e.g. randomised trials or regression discontinuity evaluations). The data in this review is observational and consequently the results need to be treated with some caution.

How were the results obtained?

UK-based cross-sectional / views studies and secondary data analyses were included to address the review question. These studies either elicited students' views and/or aspirations about education or investigated the clear relationship between aspirations and educational variables. A conceptual framework informed the synthesis through a particular focus on themes relating to post-16 factors ('promoters' and 'non-promoters') grounded in the data, in the following categories: government policy; institutional practices - universities; institutional practices - schools; external agencies; work; religion; family; individual aspirations; and other factors.

CHAPTER ONE
Background

1.1 Aims and rationale for current review

Much of the UK-based research in the field of participation studies is understandably focused on why particular social, familial and economic groups are under-represented. Addressing this question could identify barriers and possible policy levers to improve the situation, although, in many cases, this approach could also lead to wider societal and non-educational remedies.

An alternative approach would be to focus rather on differential success and seek to uncover the determinants of success through case study, and then translate the findings into a remedy for 'failure'. Given that some minority ethnic groups have higher rates of participation in the UK at both age 16 and 18 than both the majority white cohort and some other minorities, identifying potential determinants could lead to a method of increasing participation for all.

Experience in the field of post-compulsory participation studies (Gorard and Rees 2002; Selwyn et al., 2005), suggests that the majority of UK-based research is 'qualitative' in nature, seeking to explain differential rates of participation. Of the remainder, most is correlational, based on analyses of retrospective learning histories or cohort studies.

The overall aim of this review is to attempt to determine the factors that drive high post-16 participation of many minority ethnic groups, through an in-depth review focusing on interventions and determinants.

A previous systematic review undertaken by the authors of this review (Torgerson et al., 2007) identified and characterised the research in the field, using the following overarching review question:

> *What are the factors that drive high post-16 participation of many ethnic minority groups, and what strategies are effective in encouraging participation?*

A systematic map identified and broadly characterised studies of two main kinds and gave summary details of the studies included in the map. Studies which focused on the determinants (aspirations) of high-participation ethnic minority populations were included to address the first part of the overall question: *What factors drive the high post-16 participation of many ethnic minority groups?*

The study designs that can address this question are surveys, qualitative and case studies, which investigate the views, aspirations and attitudes of both high- and low-participating minority ethnic groups. The Review Group systematically searched for, located and screened for inclusion all such studies. In order to narrow our focus to context relevant literature, the Group confined their searches to the UK-based literature. To address the second part of the overall question (*What strategies are effective in encouraging participation?*), the Group included evaluations of interventions for increasing participation in minority ethnic groups. Preliminary searches indicated that most of such studies had been undertaken in the US; therefore the international literature was explored for this research.

Ten interventions studies were included in an in-depth review which addressed the second part of the overall question: *What strategies are effective in encouraging participation?* This in-depth review was published on 29 November 2007 (Torgerson et al, 2007). The headline results of the review were as follows:

In a post-16 school setting, consistent high quality evidence of positive effects was found for a

monetary incentives intervention in helping high achieving, ethnically diverse students to maintain their academic good standing. The strategy was found to be particularly effective in a subgroup analysis of Asian students. In a post-16 school setting, consistent medium quality evidence for positive effects was found for a school engagement intervention. There were two medium-sized randomised controlled trials undertaken by the same group of researchers, both of which demonstrated positive results for the intervention. However, the study populations were similar in both trials and of limited generalisability to the UK context. In post-16 higher education (HE) settings, consistent high quality evidence was found for positive effects of a faculty/student mentoring strategy in improving academic performance and retention.

The question for this current focused review is as follows:

> *What are the factors that drive high post-16 participation of many ethnic minority groups?*

The overall aim of the review is to attempt to determine the factors that drive high post-16 participation of many minority ethnic groups, through an updated systematic map of the views, attitudes and aspirations of ethnic minority students relating to post-16 participation in full-time education literature and an in-depth review focusing on a subset of these studies. The available evidence on the possible reasons for high participation has been related to issues of ethnicity, where appropriate, and where the information is available in the primary research. In line with the first review (as they are closely related), a broad view of post-16 is taken to include participation at both post-16 and post-18.

1.2 Definitional and conceptual issues

Pragmatically, the Review Group used the Registrar General's definition of 'ethnic minority' for the UK context. This was adapted for use by the DfES as follows: ethnicity is self-defined. It could be based on common ancestry, memories of a shared past, a shared cultural identity which might include kinship, religion, language, shared territory, nationality or physical appearance. The term 'minority ethnic' refers to all groups that are not recorded under the 'white British' ethnic group category. This approach is supported by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) (http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/ethnic_group_statistics/). The categories largely reflect twentieth century immigration patterns to the UK. For national reporting, the DfES adopted two additional categories under the 'white' ethnic group, which did not appear in the national census: 'gypsy/Roma' and 'traveller of Irish heritage' categories, which were introduced in order to

support the Department's work to raise the attainment of traveller children; consequently this review included them as ethnic minorities. The list of categories can be seen at the official website (http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/collecting/763919/811067/).

One should, however, note that the definition of ethnicity is contentious, confused and liable to change over time. It is not fixed, and is probably best understood as self-referenced.

1.3 Policy and practice background

The desire to widen participation in formal post-compulsory education and training is a policy agenda common to most developed countries, and political attention in the UK has largely focused on young (potential) students aged 16-21. At a general level, participation has been increasing. In 1972, only 37% of 16-year-olds were in full-time education. Today 87% of young people participate in full- or part-time education or training in the year after compulsory schooling, and 76% are doing so two years after the end of compulsory schooling (DfES, 2007). The most recent developments outlined in the Government White Paper (DfES, 2007) 'Raising expectations: staying in education and training post-16' includes the proposal to raise the age at which young people may leave compulsory education or training from 16, initially to 17, and eventually to 18. The White Paper also details plans for the introduction of diplomas which will offer a mix of practical and theoretical study, and will allow students to begin working and gain qualifications to help them advance quickly in a specific occupation.

However, inequalities in participation in all forms of post-compulsory education have endured over the past fifty years in the United Kingdom, with significant minorities remaining routinely excluded (see, for example, Beinart and Smith, 1998). Individuals participating in adult education are heavily influenced by 'pre-adult' social factors, such as socio-economic status, year of birth and type of school attended. However, the situation for patterns of participation in terms of sex and ethnic background is much less clear. Some studies have claimed to find that men are more likely to participate in specific sectors of post-compulsory education than women (Green, 1994). However, women outnumber men in higher education in England, and have been more likely than men to participate in frequent short-term training. Similarly, some studies suggest that the members of the majority white ethnic group in England have been less likely to participate in many sectors of post-compulsory education. In one study, black women employees (not including those from the Indian sub-continent) were the most likely to have received training in the previous four weeks (DfEE, 1995). Other studies, however, suggest the reverse. Place of residence, sex and ethnicity are clearly related to other important characteristics. For

example, males are more likely to be employed full-time than women (Tremlett et al., 1995), with unpaid work at home not widely accredited (Butler, 1993). Leslie and Drinkwater (1999) suggest that, while British-born ethnic minorities are more likely to participate in post-16 education than white UK students, the figures are lower for black-Caribbean students than for any other minority, and anyway there is some concern that some minorities may feel that it is preferable to stay on in education largely because they will face discrimination in the work force.

According to the DfES (2006a), all minority ethnic groups in England and Wales are more likely to be in full-time education at age 18 than 'white' individuals. They are all also at least as likely to be in higher education. This means that a smaller proportion of ethnic minority individuals in education at age 18 are in higher education. This applies to Asian individuals, and also to the two main subgroups of Indian, and Pakistani/ Bangladeshi individuals. White individuals are correspondingly more likely to be in employment. When broken down, the figures for all other activities (such as part-time job) are small. The figures for those not in education, training or employment are roughly the same for all groups (around 12%) except Indians (4%). On the basis of these figures, one may conclude that all ethnic minority groups, but especially Indians, have relatively high levels of participation in immediate post-compulsory education. The figures for those in education aged 17 (DfES, 2005a) are larger for all groups, and, for those aged 19 (DfES, 2005b), the figures are smaller for all groups, but otherwise the conclusion remains valid.

The situation with respect to qualifications is more mixed, although again it must be stressed that some figures are very small. For example, the difference between 40% black individuals with NQF Level 3 and 37% Pakistani/Bangladeshi is actually only five individuals in a survey with a less than 50% response rate. There are few robust differences in the kinds of qualifications obtained, but there is an indication that Black individuals are more likely to hold an NVQ or equivalent (as opposed to A or AS levels) than other groups. This may partly explain their lower take-up of HE when one considers those in education at age 18. According to the DfES (2006b), Pakistani/Bangladeshi and black pupils have generally lower levels of attainment than other groups by age 16 at school, while Indian (and Chinese) pupils have higher levels of attainment. However, much of the difference here is attributable to differential deprivation and levels of parental education, and it appears to be the case that most ethnic groups make greater progress at school (in value-added terms) than the white group.

1.4 Research background

In a recent review for HEFCE of the barriers to participation in FE and HE undertaken by one of the authors of this review (Gorard et al., 2006), nearly 2,000 research reports were gathered for consideration. A large proportion of ostensible research reports actually contained no evidence, or were so inadequately described that they had to be ignored as evidence. Of the remaining research reports, many showed substantial clear defects, such as making a comparative claim without the use of evidence from a comparator, or even simple misreading of figures, such that a larger number was treated as being smaller than a genuinely smaller number. Much of the remainder did not directly involve a clear analysis based on ethnic minority groups.

The authors of the HEFCE review had considerable difficulty in establishing patterns of participation for ethnic minority groups, even using the official large-scale data available which depends on a sequence of less than perfect analytical steps, including:

- a suitable definition of, and method of measuring, membership of the social groups involved

- a suitable definition and characterisation of the relevant population

- an accurate measure of the prevalence of the social groups in the relevant population

- an agreed definition of what is meant by participation in HE

- an accurate measure of the prevalence of those with higher education experience in the social groups involved

From the results of these five steps, they could then calculate the difference between the proportion of each social group in the relevant population and the proportion of the same group in HE. If this difference was large and important then they could assume that there was a problem or a positive case, requiring either explanation or amelioration. However, the volatility of the figures, the smallness of some ethnic groups in England, the number of missing cases and values, changes in definitions over time and inconsistency between datasets, meant that the error components in any analysis tended to overshadow the small differences between ethnic groups and over time.

1.5 Authors, funders and other users of the review

The York Participation Review Group is undertaking this review mainly as a response from policy colleagues at the DCSF/DIUS (formerly DfES) who funded the research. The members of the Review Group have continued to work in partnership with an Advisory Group, comprising policy colleagues, to ensure relevance of the review to policymakers who may be interested in the determining factors that could be affected by policy decisions. However, they have set out to provide information for a wide range of audiences, including practitioners (who may be interested in undertaking classroom based action research themselves), research funders, and educational researchers. Implications for all of these audiences have been drawn out in the conclusions to the review.

1.6 Review questions

The aims of this review are, firstly, to update the systematic map of the values and aspirations literature, published in Torgerson et al. (2007), and, secondly, to investigate the factors that drive high post-16 participation of many ethnic minority groups. The systematic map was updated to include any aspirations studies identified too late to be included in the previous review.

Our review question for the updated systematic map and in-depth review is as follows:

> *What are the factors that drive high post-16 participation of many ethnic minority groups?*

CHAPTER TWO
Methods used in the Review

2.1 User involvement

The Advisory Group included representatives from key constituencies of policy users: a representative from the Lifelong Learning and Skills Directorate at the DfES and representatives from Strategic Analysis at the DfES. The focus of the review was identified through discussion with members of the Advisory Group at an initial meeting, and through the development of the protocol, and refined in response to comments by them and by colleagues representing the EPPI-Centre.

2.2 Identifying and describing studies for the systematic map

2.2.1 Defining relevant studies: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The inclusion/exclusion criteria for this systematic map were identical to those used for the systematic map in the previous systematic review (Torgerson et al., 2007).

Studies were included on the basis of the following criteria:

- They focused on pupils' or students' (of any age) views or aspirations about post-16 participation in full-time education OR evaluated interventions designed to increase post-16 participation of minority ethnic groups (topic focus).

- They used survey, qualitative or case study methods to investigate pupils' or students' views OR used an experimental design to evaluate an intervention (study design).

- They met pre-specified quality criteria for survey, qualitative and case study literature OR, for intervention evaluations, reported quantitative data on at least one outcome associated with participation, contained a

control or comparison group, contained sufficient data to calculate an effect size and contained at least 32 participants.

- They were of survey, qualitative or case study design and were UK-based.

- They were published or reported in English.

- They were published or reported between 1997 and the present.

- They were undertaken anywhere with populations of students for whom English is a first or additional language.

2.2.2 Identification of potential studies

Reports were identified through the searching and screening procedures described in the previous systematic review (Torgerson et al., 2007) but received too late to be included in that review.

Three reports were identified from the following sources:

- electronic searching

- contact (experts in the field)

2.2.3 Screening studies: applying inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to full reports of the three studies.

2.2.4 Characterising included studies (EPPI-Centre and review-specific keywording)

The studies included in the updated systematic map were keyworded (using EPPI-Centre (2006)

Data extraction and coding tool for education studies. Version 2.0). Additional keywords, specific to the context of the review, were also applied to these studies. All the keyworded studies were added to the larger EPPI-Centre database, REEL, for others to access via the website.

2.2.5 Identifying and describing studies: quality assurance process

Application of the inclusion and exclusion criteria and the keywording was conducted by pairs by members of the Review Group, working independently and then comparing their decisions before coming to a consensus.

2.3 In-depth review: the aspirations literature

2.3.1 Moving from broad characterisation (mapping) to in-depth review

The Review Group selected a subgroup of relevant studies from the aspirations area of the map. This was done by applying inclusion/exclusion criteria for this in-depth review:

For a study to be included in the focused in-depth review it had to fulfil the following criteria:

Inclusion 1 Study is mapped as a 'UK-based aspirations' study in the updated systematic map.

Inclusion 2 Study either elicits students' aspirations about education which are clearly post-16 (cross-sectional/views study) or investigates the clear relationship between aspirations and educational variables (secondary data analysis).

Inclusion 3 Key focus of study relates to post-16 aspirations.

Inclusion 4 Analysis of different minority ethnic groups is distinct.

Therefore studies which do not meet these criteria were excluded, using the following codes:

Exclusion 1 Not a UK-based aspirations study

Exclusion 2 Not students' aspirations about post-16 education or not relationship between aspirations and post-16 education

Exclusion 3 Post-16 aspirations not key focus of study

Exclusion 4 Analysis of different minority ethnic groups not distinct

2.3.2 Detailed description of studies in the in-depth review

Aspirations studies identified as meeting the inclusion criteria were analysed in depth, using the EPPI-Centre's detailed data-extraction tool (EPPI-Centre, 2007) and software, EPPI-Reviewer (Thomas and Brunton, 2006). For the cross-sectional / views studies, detailed data was extracted about, for example, the participants, views, attitudes and other key determinants of participation, and design features relating to the quality of the included studies; for secondary data analysis studies, detailed data was extracted about characteristics of the samples and design features relating to the quality of the studies, (e.g. appropriate statistical methods and sample size).

2.3.3 Assessing quality of studies and weight of evidence (WoE) for the review question

The two different types of studies (cross-sectional/ views studies and secondary data analyses) were separately assessed for quality and weight of evidence using three components to help in making explicit the process of apportioning different weights to the findings and conclusions of different studies.

Cross-sectional/views studies

Weights of evidence were based on the following:

A: Soundness of studies (at a general level), valid and appropriate data collection, data analysis and data interpretation, based upon the study only (weight of evidence A)

B: Appropriateness of the research design and type of analysis used for answering the review question (weight of evidence B)

C: Relevance of the study sample, measures, actual analysis or other indicator of the focus of the study) to the review question (weight of evidence C)

D: An overall weight taking into account A, B and C (weight of evidence D), and using a pre-established formula for moving from A, B and C to D:

For a study to be rated overall 'high', it had to be rated 'high' for WoE A and B and at least 'medium' for WoE C.

For a study to be rated overall 'medium', it had to be rated at least 'medium' for WoE A and B.

For a study to be rated overall 'low', it had to be rated 'low' for WoE A and B.

Example of a cross-sectional/views study rated overall 'high'

WoE A High: Explicit and detailed methods and results sections for data   collection and analysis; interpretation clearly warranted from findings

WoE B High: Large scale survey methods using questionnaires and/or interviews

WoE C High: Large sample, with diverse ethnic groups, with good generalisability and clear post-16 focus

WoE D High

Example of a cross-sectional/views study rated overall 'medium'

WoE A Medium: Satisfactory methods and results sections for data collection and analysis; interpretation partially warranted from findings

WoE B Medium: Survey methods using questionnaires and/or interviews

WoE C Medium: Adequate sample, with diverse ethnic groups, with generalisability and partial post-16 focus

WoE D Medium

Secondary data analysis

Weights of evidence were based on the following:

A Soundness of studies (internal validity and reliability of data collection, data analysis and data interpretation), based upon the study only (weight of evidence A)

B Appropriateness of the research design and type of analysis used for answering the review question (weight of evidence B)

C Relevance of the study sample, measures, actual analysis or other indicator of the focus of the study) to the review question (weight of evidence C)

D An overall weight taking into account A, B and C (weight of evidence D), and using a pre-established formula for moving from A, B and C to D

For a study to be rated 'high', it had to be rated 'high' for WoE A and B and at least 'medium' for WoE C.

For a study to be rated 'medium', it had to be rated at least 'medium' for WoE A and B.

For a study to be rated 'low', it had to be rated 'low' for WoE A and B.

Example of a secondary data analysis study rated overall 'high'

WoE A High: Explicit and detailed methods and results sections for data analysis; interpretation clearly warranted from findings

WoE B High: Large scale secondary data analysis; origin of dataset clearly stated

WoE C High: Large sample, with diverse ethnic groups, with good generalisability and clear post-16 focus, and low attrition from original dataset

WoE D High

Example of a secondary data analysis study rated overall 'medium'

WoE A Medium: Satisfactory methods and results sections for data analysis; interpretation partially warranted from findings

WoE B Medium: Secondary data analysis; origin of data set partially indicated

WoE C Medium: Adequate sample, with diverse ethnic groups, with generalisability and partial post-16 focus, and any attrition indicated

WoE D Medium

For any category A, B C or D, a judgement could be made to rate a study in between the broad categories outlined above, so, for example, a secondary data analysis study could be rated as WoE A 'high to medium'. This would mean that although the methods and results sections were judged to be very good (i.e. better than 'satisfactory', which is a 'medium' WoE judgement), they were not detailed and explicit which would have warranted a judgement of 'high'. It should be noted that the first word reflects the primary categorisation, thus 'high to medium' is predominantly high.

2.3.4 Synthesis of evidence

The data was synthesised to bring together the studies which answered the review question and which met the quality criteria relating to appropriateness and methodology. The conceptual framework informed the synthesis through a particular focus on themes relating to post-16 factors ('promoters' and 'non-promoters') grounded in the data, in the following categories of influence: government policy, institutional practices - universities; institutional practices - schools; external agencies; work; religion; family; individual aspirations; and other factors. The term 'promoter' is used to denote any factor that encourages or facilitates post-16 participation. 'Non-promoter' has been chosen as it is a neutral

term and does not necessarily denote a barrier to participation, although, in some cases, it does do so. For example, the careers service appears to play a minor role, but does not act as a barrier to post-16 participation. The Group intentionally adopted a comprehensive approach, which necessarily included both promoters and non-promoters. Promotional and non-promotional factors cover the whole spectrum and so this is much more of an unbiased, complete approach. The aim is towards drivers but, in the interest of balance and an unbiased approach to the topic, the barriers and neutral factors as well as the facilitators are involved; the two are intimately connected. The narrative synthesis was undertaken by looking at studies judged to be overall 'high', 'high to medium', 'medium to high' and 'medium' weight of evidence to address the research question in terms of the emerging post-16 factors.

The Review Group did this by identifying the emerging post-16 factors from the high and medium quality studies, using a grounded approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), which appeared to determine post-16 participation according to the views, attitudes and aspirations of minority ethnic groups and which investigated the clear relationships between aspirations and educational variables. The Group then looked at the low quality studies for findings which confirmed those in the high and medium quality studies.

2.3.5 In-depth review: quality-assurance process

Data-extraction and assessment of the weight of evidence brought by the studies included in the in-depth review to address the review question were undertaken in the following way:

One study (Shiner and Modood, 2002) was independently data-extracted and quality appraised by all four members of the Review Group (CJT, BHS, GDL and HRA), who then discussed the data-extractions and resolved any disagreements. A representative from the EPPI-Centre (MB) also data-extracted this study and her data-extraction was compared with the Review Group's moderated extraction. This was done in order to check and develop consistency of data-extraction judgements between members of the Review Group and the EPPI-Centre.

One study (Francis and Archer, 2004) was data-extracted by three members of the Review Group (BHS, GDL and HRA) as a further check on consistency of data-extraction and quality assessment between members of the Review Group.

Each member of the Review Group independently data-extracted a further study, and these four studies were double data-extracted by a representative from the EPPI-Centre (MB).

Independent double data-extraction was carried out on three further studies with the following combinations of reviewers: CJT and BHS; CJT and HRA; BHS and GDL.

Twelve studies were data-extracted by one reviewer and confirmed/moderated by a second reviewer, with the following combinations of reviewers: BHS (10 studies) confirmed by GDL (five studies), CJT (three studies) and HRA (two studies); HRA (two studies) confirmed by CJT (one study) and GDL (one study).

In all cases, different combinations of reviewers were selected in order to maintain consistency between members of the Review Group and to reflect the relative experience of individual reviewers in conducting data-extraction.

Finally, two studies were data-extracted by one reviewer (BHS). These studies were only available as inter-library loans and had to be returned before they could be moderated by a second reviewer.

CHAPTER THREE
Identifying and describing studies: results

3.1 Studies included

Three studies (Bagguley and Hussain, 2007; Strand, 2007; Strand and Winston, 2008) identified too late to be included in the original systematic map (Torgerson et al., 2007), were added to the 42 studies coded as 'aspirations' studies in that review. These three studies were identified through electronic searching (one study) and through contact with a substantive expert (two studies). The updated map for this review contained a total of 68 studies.

3.2 Characteristics of the included studies (systematic map)

Table 3.1 gives the numbers and country of origin in terms of their study method and country of origin of study.

Table 3.1 Types of studies included in map (N = 68, mutually exclusive)

Study method	Number of studies	Country of origin of study
Review	12	UK
Intervention study	11	US
Aspirations study	45	UK

The 68 studies were reviews, interventions or aspirations (views) studies. Self-evidently, the interventions studies were characterised as 'What works?' studies. Some of the aspirations studies were purely descriptive; and some explored in more detail the relationships between aspirations and participation, retention, motivation and achievement.

3.2.1 Aspirations studies

Tables 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 characterise the aspirations studies in more detail. As indicated above, a majority of these studies were descriptive (see Table 3.2). In these studies the aim was to describe a state of affairs with regard to young people's views about post-16. However, 20 of the aspirations studies also examined relationships and/or statistical analyses with regard to the factors that could be instrumental in determining young people's views about post-16 participation (for example, parental or cultural influences). These studies considered a variety of variables, including familial attitudes and religious beliefs in order to help understanding of factors influencing young people's post-16 decisions. The minority ethnic focus was variable and included both traditionally high-achieving, high participating groups and low-achieving, low-participating groups. Table 3.4 shows the purpose of the study by ethnic minority.

Table 3.2 Purpose of the study (N = 45, not mutually exclusive)

Study purpose	Number of studies
Description	30
Exploration of relationships	20
'What works?'	3

Table 3.3 Ethnicity: UK (N = 45, not mutually exclusive)

Ethnicity: UK	Number of studies
White	20
Mixed heritage	11
Indian	18
Pakistani	22
Bangladeshi	25
Black Caribbean	22
Black African	18
Chinese	14
Gypsy/Roma	5
Other[1]	17
Traveller of Irish heritage	5

Table 3.4 Purpose of aspirations studies by ethnic minority (N = 45, not mutually exclusive)

Ethnicity: UK	Description	Exploration of relationships
White	12	11
Mixed heritage	8	45
Indian	10	11
Pakistani	13	13
Bangladeshi	14	14
Black Caribbean	14	12
Black African	11	10
Chinese	9	8
Gypsy/Roma	4	1
Other	11	9
Traveller of Irish heritage	4	1

The numbers of studies focusing on each topic area are given in Table 3.5. Table 3.6 shows the numbers of studies focusing on each outcome for each ethnic minority.

Table 3.5 What the authors are trying to understand (N = 45, not mutually exclusive)

Study focus	Number of studies
Participation	22
Retention	3
Aspirations / Motivations / Learner identity	35
Attainment / Achievement	22

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[1] The category 'Other' is usually not defined in the primary studies.

Table 3.6 Numbers of studies focusing on each outcome for each ethnic minority

Ethnic minority	Participation	Retention	Aspirations	Achievement
White	11	1	13	7
Mixed heritage	3	0	6	6
Indian	7	0	12	7
Pakistani	9	0	15	8
Bangladeshi	9	1	16	11
Black Caribbean	11	0	15	11
Black African	7	0	12	7
Chinese	4	0	10	7
Gypsy/Roma	3	1	4	1
Other	10	1	12	7
Traveller of Irish heritage	2	1	5	1

CHAPTER FOUR
In-depth review: results

4.1 Selecting studies for the in-depth review

The 45 studies coded as aspirations studies were screened in detail for inclusion in the in-depth review, using inclusion/exclusion criteria specifically developed for the in-depth review. In order to be included, a study had to be mapped as a 'UK-based aspirations' study in the updated systematic map. It had either to elicit students' views and/or aspirations about education which were clearly post-16 (cross-sectional/views study), or to investigate the clear relationship between aspirations and educational variables (secondary data analysis); the key focus of the study had to relate to post-16 aspirations; and the analysis of different minority ethnic groups had to be distinct. 22 studies were excluded using the exclusion criteria outlined in section 2.3.1. The remaining 23 studies were included in the in-depth review. The following table outlines how many studies were excluded from the in-depth review on each exclusion criterion.

4.2 Characterising the studies included in the in-depth review

The 23 studies were of two distinct study designs: secondary data analyses and cross-sectional / views studies. There were six secondary data analyses and 20 views studies. Three studies included both types

of study design within a single study, making a total of 26 studies in the in-depth review (hereafter 'sub-studies').

As outlined in Chapter 2, the 26 studies (including six sub-studies) included in the in-depth review were fully data-extracted and quality appraised. Data was extracted relating to the topic focus, the study method, and the emerging participation themes for the synthesis in the following categories: government policy; institutional practices - universities; institutional practices - schools; external agencies; work; religion; family; individual aspirations; and other factors. An overall weight of evidence (WoE) judgement was made about each study based on its internal validity, and relevance to this review in terms of its design, sample, measures, etc. The overall weights of evidence for the 26 studies (including sub-studies) are given in Table 4.2. Three studies were judged to be of overall 'high' WoE; two studies were judged to be of overall 'high to medium' WoE; three were judged to be of 'medium to high' WoE and seven were judged to be of 'medium' WoE. Eleven were categorised as 'medium to low' or 'low' WoE. It should be noted that the process for weighting the studies was a complex one and included judgements based on quality issues such as sample size, but also on issues relating to relevance for the review question (see Chapter 2).

Table 4.1 Studies included in the in-depth review

Included (Coded as 'aspirations' studies in the updated map	Exclude 2 (Not students' views/ aspirations about post-16 education, or not a relationship between aspirations and educational variables)	Exclude 3 (Post-16 aspirations not key focus of study)	Exclude 4 (Analysis of ethnic minorities not distinct)	Total included in in-depth review
45	9	11	2	23

Table 4.2 Weight of evidence (WoE) of studies included in in-depth review

	WoE A Trustworthiness of study findings	WoE B Appropriateness of research design	WoE C Relevance of study focus to review	WoE D Overall weight of evidence
Overall: high				
*Connor et al. (2004) Secondary data analysis:	High	High	High	High
Cross-sectional/views study:	High	High	High	High
Middleton et al. (2005)	High	High	High	High
Overall: high to medium				
Gayle et al. (2002)	High	High to medium	Medium	High to medium
Strand and Winston (2008)	High to medium	High to medium	High	High to medium
Overall: medium to high				
*Bagguley and Hussain (2007) Secondary data analysis/views study:	Medium	High	Medium to high	Medium to high
	Medium	Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high
Shiner and Modood (2002)	Medium	High	Medium	Medium to high
Overall: medium				
Ahmad (2001)	Medium	Medium	High to medium	Medium
Crozier et al. (2005)	Medium	High to medium	Medium	Medium
Fitzgerald et al. (2000)	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
Francis and Archer (2004)	Medium	Medium	Medium to high	Medium
Hagell and Shaw (1996)	High	Medium	Low	Medium
Joseph Rowntree (2006)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Strand (2007)	High	Medium	Medium to low	Medium
Overall: medium to low				
Abbas (2002)	Medium	Medium	Medium to low	Medium to low
Clayden and Stein (2002)	Medium	Medium	Medium to low	Medium to low
*Education Commission (2004) Secondary data analysis:	Medium to high	Medium	Low	Medium to low
Cross-sectional/views study:	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Medium to low
Rhamie and Hallam (2002)	Medium	Low	High	Medium to low
Overall: low				
Allen (1998)	Medium to low	Low	Medium	Low
Archer and Hutchings (2000)	Medium to low	Low	Medium to high	Low
Basit (1997)	Low	Medium to low	Medium	Low
Beck et al. (2006)	Medium	Low to medium	Low	Low
Bowl (2001)	Low	Low	Medium	Low
Dale et al. (2000)	Low	Medium	Low	Low

*Three studies included in the in-depth review used two different study methods; these have been separately weighted in the above table.

In this chapter, first to be presented are detailed summaries of all those studies or sub-studies with overall weights of evidence of 'medium' or higher; both 'promoters' and 'non-promoters' of post-16 participation are included[2] in the following order: Connor et al. (2004); Middleton et al. (2005), Gayle et al. (2002), Strand and Winston (2008), Bagguley and Hussain (2007), Shiner and Modood (2002), Ahmad (2001), Crozier et al. (2005), Fitzgerald et al. (2000), Francis and Archer (2004), Hagell and Shaw (1996), Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2006) and Strand (2007). The topic focus of each study is described, together with the method(s) used and the emerging participation themes in the levels of influence.

Connor et al. (2004) Why the difference? A closer look at higher education minority ethnic students and graduates

Overall weight of evidence:

Secondary data analysis: High

High internal validity; the results are generalisable, as a large nationally representative sample was used in the secondary analysis of national statistics.

Cross-sectional / Views study: High

High internal validity; includes a large-scale survey and interviews with a number of target groups – potential, current and past students, parents and employers.

Topic: Factors influencing participation, retention in and progression to HE of minority ethnic group students

Although ethnic minority groups as a whole were relatively well-represented in HE, their representation across the sector was not uniform. This study aimed to look at differences in HE participation rates between ethnic groups and their causes.

Method: Secondary data analysis using HESA and UCAS data, as well as questionnaire survey and interviews

In addition to analysing HESA and UCAS data, Connor et al. conducted a survey of 1,300 current undergraduate students in both HE and FE institutions (randomly selected and stratified by region and institution). In-depth interviews with 30 of the survey respondents were carried out. Potential HE entrants in year 13 in schools and colleges (1,000) were surveyed, followed by in-depth interviews with 42 of these students. The study included a survey of 80 parents of current students, followed by in-depth interviews with 13 of them, ten of whom were from ethnic minority

groups. Interviews were also conducted with 20 graduate recruiting employers. HESA and UCAS data provided the background information regarding the HE participation rates, distribution by institutions and socio-economic class of different ethnic groups. Survey data was analysed using SPSS, mainly cross-tabulations to test for significant differences, and factor analysis. Multivariate analysis was considered by the researchers but rejected, because it did not add to the analysis. Interview data was used mainly to supplement information provided in the questionnaire survey and, where appropriate, direct quotes were used.

Participation themes for synthesis

General

- Minority ethnic students were more likely to participate in HE than white students. However, their participation rates varied between universities, subjects, courses and geographic regions.

- Minority ethnic students were more likely to leave early than white students; black students were more likely than Asian students to leave early. Prior attainment and entry route were not the only determinants of HE entry or choice of study.

Institutional practices (school)

- Staff support may have affected students' likelihood of staying on.

External agencies

- Careers teachers and the careers service were viewed as more influential among all minority ethnic students than white students.

Family

- Parents and families were stronger push factors for minority ethnic groups than for white students in order for them to succeed through gaining HE qualifications.

- Parental influence had a greater effect on minority ethnic young people than on white students in steering them towards certain courses especially the professional / vocational subjects.

- Parental influence was the strongest factor for potential entrants, although parental influence on final choice of institution and course was limited.

Individual aspirations

These were more important influencing factors for minority ethnic students (especially Asian students) than for white students and included:

- Expectation of economic gain and career advantage

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2 As mentioned previously, the term 'promoter' is used to denote any factor that encourages or facilitates post-16 participation. 'Non-promoter' is used as it is considered a neutral term, and does not necessarily denote a barrier to participation, although, in some cases, it does do so. For example, the careers service appears to play a minor role, but does not necessarily act as a barrier to post-16 participation.

- Feelings of isolation, cultural diversity, term-time working and financial situations were likely to affect whether students stayed on in education. (For minority ethnic students, student finance was not a big disincentive for going to HE, unlike for white students.)

Other factors

• Concerns about student finance were not a major disincentive. There was some evidence that feelings of isolation, cultural diversity and term-time working might have affected staying on rates. The authors concluded that strong positive parental support and commitment to education could mitigate against the negative effects of being in a lower socio-economic class.

Middleton et al. (2005) Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds: evidence from the education maintenance allowance database

Overall weight of evidence: High

High internal validity; highly relevant to the review

Topic: Destinations at ages 16 and 18 and factors contributing to them

The aim was to explore the destinations, and achievements and opinions of young people from different ethnic minority backgrounds. The study is divided into two parts, A and B. Part A compares experiences during years 10 and 11, qualifications at the end of Year 11, destinations after compulsory education (including advice given and reasons for selecting). Part B compares destinations at ages 17 and 18 for those remaining in full-time education at 16, destinations of all young people at age 18 and explores relations between destination, ethnicity and other characteristics.

Method: Secondary data analysis (using EMA pilot data)

Middleton et al selected two samples of young people from the education maintenance allowance pilot dataset. The first sample (used in Part A) comprised approximately 14, 700 students who had finished compulsory education in 1999 and 2000 and were aged 16-17 years when first interviewed (1,334 from minority ethnic groups). The second (used in Part B) was approximately 8,300 who had taken part in all three years of survey interviews at 16, 17 and 18. The sample is described as random on (p i, Executive Summary), but the use of definite terms 'the' and 'these' (p 4) implies non-randomisation; the precise nature of the sample remains unclear. The sample covered 'ten EMA pilot areas and 11 control areas' (p. i). The data was analysed in

terms of frequencies and logistic regression. Ethnic groups discussed were white, black, Indian and Bangladeshi/Pakistani.

Participation themes for synthesis

Middleton focused on four ethnic groups, but the overall figures include a small group classed as 'other'. The comparisons with white students need to be treated with caution as there were at times 40 times more white students than black students, Indian or Pakistani/Bangladeshi students. The aspirations data only applies to Part A (data collected at years 10 and 11). Part B is an analysis of participation and destination figures.

General

- A majority of students from all four ethnic groups wanted to stay on in FT education and c. 90% had done so.

- Young Indian (84%) and Pakistani/Bangladeshi (82%) students had 'a greater propensity to stay on in education [at age 16] than young white people' (p 35). The figure for white students was 69%.

- After 16, the same pattern held (p 56), with Indian students overwhelmingly staying on. Those that did leave were unlikely to enter the NEET (not in education, employment or training) group (p.56).

- Pakistani/Bangladeshi students had the highest overall retention rate at 18, but those that did leave at 17 'had a relatively high chance of entering the NEET group' (p.56).

- Black students had a higher participation rate than white students at 16, but had the lowest retention rate of all four groups and over 20% of those with two years post-16 education were NEET. They were significantly more likely to be NEET than white students.

Government policy

- Awareness of EMA was high among all ethnic groups in the pilot areas (85% overall), especially those students in FT education. Awareness by those not in FT education was markedly lower. Of those aware of EMA, Indian students applied more than the other three groups (82%), with white students as the lowest group (65%).

- The figures were not large enough to draw clear conclusions about whether there were ethnic differences on the question of whether a weekly payment would have influenced those not in FT education to remain (p 28).

- The EMA was felt to be 'very important' in the decision to stay in FT education by 25% of the students in the pilot areas who were awarded an allowance. The figure was highest for black

students (40%), and lowest for Indian students (20%) and white students (23%).

- However, it was hard to explain why 73% of those who said the EMA was 'very important' also said they would 'probably' or 'definitely' have stayed without it.

- The 'deadweight' estimate of those who had an award but felt it was 'not important' to their decision and would 'definitely' or 'probably' have stayed on anyway, was between 56% and 60% for the four groups. The reasons for the deadweight were complex and the researchers suggested links with satisfaction with the decision to continue and the amount of the EMA involved (pp 33-34). It was also suggested that current satisfaction might have influenced the importance ratings, leading to them perhaps being an underestimate of deadweight (p 33).

External agencies

- Rates of contacting the careers service were roughly similar across all ethnic groups during year 11 (84%) and after year 11, 24% had interviews and 16% made telephone contact.

- Those remaining in FT education were more likely to say the careers service played a minor (vs a major) part in their decision (p 18), although the major~minor differences were fairly small (3%-5%), except in the case of black students (11%).

- Overall, 16% of all ethnic groups, including white participants, rated the careers service as the source of most helpful advice; this was more for black students (21%) and less for Indian students (15%).

Work

- A large proportion of all groups had been offered (90%), or had had (88%), work experience and 68% overall found it very or fairly helpful. The figures for both ratings were similar across the four ethnic groups.

- For most individuals, but especially white young people, wanting a job or a training place were the principal reasons for leaving education.

Family

- Around a third of students rated parents as giving the most helpful advice about post year 11 destinations, except for Indian students (16%), who felt careers teachers (41%) and siblings (14%) were more helpful.

- 3-4 times as many Indian students (14%) and Pakistani/Bangladeshi (13%) students rated siblings as the source of the most helpful advice (white students 3%; black students 4%).

- Financial constraints and family reasons were 'important reasons for Indian and Pakistani/ Bangladeshi young people to leave education' (p 35). Moreover, Pakistani/ Bangladeshi or black students not continuing in education for family or financial reasons were 'much less likely' (p 23) to have found work or training than white or Indian young people.

Other factors

- Friends were commonly consulted (40% overall, range 34%-44%), but rarely felt by any of the four groups to be the source of the most helpful advice (1%-4%).

Gayle et al. (2002) Young people's entry into higher education: quantifying influential factors

Overall weight of evidence: High to medium

High internal validity; method is highly appropriate for the review.

Topic: Factors influencing young peoples' entry into higher education

The authors undertook an analysis to identify the factors that influence young people's choices of entry to HE and participation on a degree level course. The research aimed to explore what external factors, beyond educational attainment, influence participation.

Method: Secondary data analysis

This involved an 'exploratory' analysis of a set of nationally representative data through statistical modelling, using data from the Youth Cohort Study of England and Wales (YCS): Cohort III. In the analysis, the outcome variable was participation at degree level in HE. The statistical method used was 'sample enumeration', to identify statistically significant factors influencing participation in HE and to quantify the level of significance of various factors after controlling for educational attainment. This method enabled the contribution of control variables to be estimated.

Participation themes for synthesis

General

- After controlling for educational attainment, the authors found significant main effects for a range of factors (for example, social class), and a significant interaction between parental education and schooling (attendance at independent schools).

- Ethnicity was not found to be a statistically significant factor in determining participation in HE.

Family

- After controlling for educational attainment, occupational social class was found to be a highly statistically significant factor influencing young people's entry into HE.

- Other familial factors influencing participation in HE included increased family size (associated with lower participation rates), home ownership (associated with home ownership) and early marriage (associated with lower participation).

Other factors

- Young women in this cohort were less likely to participate in HE than young men. Through the 'sample enumeration' the authors demonstrated that the difference in participation between males and females could be mostly accounted for by the 'gender effect' (i.e. gender discrimination).

- There were differential rates of participation of different ethnic groups, but ethnicity per se was not found to be a statistically significant factor influencing participation rates. However, the observed rate of participation of Indian young people was 26%, compared with 15% of young people not of Indian origin. The 'sample enumeration' analysis found that the majority of the difference was due to the ethnicity variable.

Strand and Winston (2008) Educational aspirations in inner city schools

Overall weight of evidence: High to Medium

High to medium internal validity; high to medium relevance to the review. Missing details about the sample, questionnaire development and reasons for choosing the method of rotation.

Topic: Factors influencing educational aspirations of 14-19 year-old students of different ethnicity

The aim of the study was to assess the nature and level of pupils' educational aspirations, to elucidate the factors that influence these aspirations, and to extend international data on young people's aspirations by adding further data from UK, particularly from inner city areas, where educational aspirations (such as rates of continuation in FTE) were relatively low.

Method: Cross-sectional study / views study

The study used a combination of self-completion questionnaire survey and focus group interviews. The five schools selected were representative of schools facing particularly challenging circumstances in that they were in the bottom quartile nationally for attendance, public exam results and continuation post-16.

The questionnaire was designed to gather information about students' intention to stay on in FTE, the level of qualifications they expected to achieve by the end of education and the factors that may impact upon aspirations. The 34 items in the questionnaire were subject to factor analysis and were then grouped according to themes. Logistic regression analysis was run. Analysis was undertaken on 796 cases.

Participation themes for synthesis

General

- The white British group had the lowest aspirations to continue in FT education after 16 (85% of the 773 responses). The group with the highest aspirations were the Asian other (97%) and black African groups (98%).

- There was no significant association between gender or year group and intention to continue in FTE.

Institutional practices (school)

- One of the schools had a higher than expected aspirations score for level of qualification than three other schools, when compared against the largest school. The authors concluded that this suggests that schools can have an impact on aspirations.

Family

- Home educational aspirations. This had the largest impact, such that a pupil with 1 SD score above the mean was four times more likely than those 1 SD below it to continue in FTE after 16 (odds ratio 2:03).

- In contrast to ethnic minority groups, white British pupils indicated few parental expectations. When they spoke of being valued and supported at home, this was unrelated to school work.

Individual aspirations

- Aspiration for professional jobs: pupils from black African, Pakistani and Asian other backgrounds aspired to more professional jobs, especially related to medicine or computers. In contrast, white British pupils seemed oriented to careers

as tradesmen (or for girls nursery nurses or hairdressers), which might involve training at college, or marriage.

- The high aspirations of black African students and Asian other students were mediated through strong academic self-concept, positive peer support, a commitment to schooling and high educational aspirations in the home. However, there was a paradox in terms of high aspirations and low achievement among black African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils. The authors suggested that this could be the realisation that ethnic minority pupils had a greater risk of unemployment than white British students if they entered the labour market at 16. There was, however, no evidence from questionnaire or focus groups to support these speculations.

Other factors

- Peer influence: The low aspirations of black Caribbean students seemed related to having disaffected/negative peers and a low commitment to schooling. Pupils 1 standard deviation above the mean with respect to having disaffected or negative peers were three times less likely to continue.

- Having positive peers and disaffected or negative peers were two of the four significant factors that explained 27.4% of the variance.

- Adding the factor scores increased explained variance from 7.4% to 18.4%. Four of the variables were significant: commitment to schooling, academic self-concept and having disaffected/negative peers and home educational aspirations. The greatest effect sizes were for commitment to schooling (odds ratio 1.51), academic self-concept (odds ratio 1.42) and home aspirations (odds ratio 1.17).

Bagguley and Hussain (2007) The role of higher education in providing opportunities for South Asian women

Overall weight of evidence:

Secondary data analysis: Medium to High

Medium internal validity; highly relevant to the review. The results of the quantitative analysis not fully reported; consequently, it is difficult to evaluate the conclusions.

Views study: Medium to high

Medium internal validity; medium to high relevance to the review. There is no report of piloting.

Topic: The diversity of South Asian women's experiences of HE and the barriers they faced

This study examined the patterns of participation in HE among South Asian women, in particular the barriers they faced. It also looked at the individual and institutional strategies that promoted participation by this group of young women.

Method: Secondary data analysis and interviews

Bagguley and Hussain analysed the 1991 and 2001 Census of Population as well as data from the Youth Cohort Study, HESA and UCAS to find out about South Asian women's education nationally. Birmingham and Leeds were chosen as research sites after examination of the 2001 Population Census and a consideration of the types of universities in the cities. Interviews were conducted with 114 women (26 Bangladeshi, 37 Indian and 51 Pakistani). About one-third of them were in the Sixth Form, one-third at university and one-third were recent graduates. Ethnic minority young women were asked about their views and experiences of education and its impact on their family lives. The influence of gender, age and ethnicity on their experience and aspirations were also examined. Further interviews were conducted with widening participation officers and careers service employees in universities. The qualitative data was contextualised and national-level statistics were analysed using simple frequency counts.

Participation themes for synthesis

General

- Indian women were the most likely to participate in HE, followed by Pakistani and Bangladeshi women, although participation by the latter two groups was growing rapidly.

- Bangladeshi and Pakistani women at university were most likely to be from working class families whose fathers were long-term sick, disabled, or retired.

- The rapid increase in participation by Bangladeshi and Pakistani women was largely due to high job aspirations and strong parental support.

- Bangladeshi and Pakistani women were more likely to attend local universities because their parents preferred them to live at home.

- The women's choice of university was largely determined by a combination of the courses offered at the universities, lower A-level requirements and the advice of relatives and friends.

Institutional practices (university)

- Choice of university was largely determined by a combination of courses offered, and lower A-level requirements.

Family

- Bangladeshi and Pakistani women were more likely to attend local universities because their parents preferred them to live at home.

- There was a strong parental support for HE.

- Family members as role models also influenced young Asian women's decisions to go to university.

Individual aspirations

Individual factors that influenced young Asian women's decisions to go to university were as follows:

- natural progression from school

- economic reasons (such as job, salary and status)

- independence

- a desire to be better mothers and members of their communities

- a desire to be better educated and for personal development

- delaying marriage

The authors concluded that successful participation depended on local provision of relevant degrees, overcoming stereotypical views about women's commitment to education, fostering good links between local communities and universities, having a critical mass of South Asian students, and operating effective equality and diversity policies.

Shiner and Modood (2002) Help or hindrance? Higher education and the route to ethnic equality[3]

Overall weight of evidence: Medium to high

The results are generalisable as the sample size is large and the sample is representative. Medium internal validity; high relevance to the review. However, there is a lack of information about 'lost' data.

Topic: The role of ethnic bias in the allocation of HE places

It was known that ethnic groups showed different application or admissions patterns; therefore, the authors hypothesised that certain groups might be deliberately using higher education as a means to facilitate social mobility. In order to examine the role of ethnic bias in the allocation of HE places, the authors investigated the extent to which differences in rates of admission were evident at earlier stages of the application procedure than in previous research; whether patterns of success varied between old and new universities; whether there were key differences between ethnic groups; and the degree to which such differences accounted for the rates at which ethnic groups successfully negotiated the various stages of the application procedure.

Method: Secondary data analysis (using UCAS statistics)

Shiner and Modood undertook an analysis of 7,383 applications to university for the academic year 1996-97. Although the sample was 'randomly selected', it included approximately equal numbers of white, black Caribbean, black African, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese candidates (about 1,000 candidates from each group). The authors included frequency summaries: for example, offers, confirmations and admissions by ethnicity and university type. Multivariate analyses, using logistic regression techniques, were also undertaken to examine the likelihood of receiving offers or confirmations in terms of a range of variables, such as relative academic performance, number of A levels taken, and socio-demographic variables.

Participation themes for synthesis

Institutional practices (universities)

- *Patterns of success:* There were ethnic differences in the rates at which applications yielded initial offers and the rates at which offers were confirmed. With the exception of Chinese applicants, ethnic minority applicants (particularly Black African and Pakistani applicants) had lower rates of success than white applicants; this partly reflected patterns of application.

- *Lower rates of entry:* Ethnic minority candidates were between 1.5 and 2.5 times as likely as white applicants to have gained admission through clearing, although once academic factors were taken into account, the authors found no statistically significant differences in rates of admission.

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3 "A further analysis by Gittoes and Thompson (2005, 2007) of the underlying data used by Shiner and Modood (2002) was not located through our electronic searching. Using a different approach to analysis, it did not find an 'ethnic penalty' specific to old universities (once certain courses and cases had been excluded from analysis). However, the Gittoes and Thompson study has not been formally appraised as part of our review process, so we are unable to say what effect the new study might have had on the review findings.

- *Destinations:* Ethnic minority students were over-represented in new universities (with the exception of Chinese applicants) reflecting differences in rates of application (p.215). For ethnic minority applicants (unlike white applicants), the rate at which an initial application yielded an offer depended on the type of institution to which students applied: old or new universities.

- Academic differences between the groups could explain differing rates at which groups were offered places and different types of university applied to. Ethnic minority candidates applied to institutions closer to home and this may have reduced their chances of success. Socio-demographic variables (older applicants, from less privileged social backgrounds) may explain the differences observed.

Ahmad (2001) Modern traditions? British Muslim women and academic achievement

Overall weight of evidence: Medium

Medium internal validity. The research is relevant to the study focus; however, there was a limitation in the sampling strategy, the sample was very small and social class background of participants was not confirmed.

Topic: The motivations and influences for entering higher education for Muslim women in Britain

Previous research on British Muslim women students and graduates is scarce and focuses mainly on the analyses of their labour market positions and positions within patriarchal relations. The authors accordingly stated that one of the aims of the study was to question the stereotypical view of South Asian women as 'victims' and recipients of oppression in patriarchal family relations. The research sought to explore the motivations of and influences on British Muslim women and how they may contribute to current discourses surrounding Muslim women in Britain. The research therefore sought to ascertain what perceptions British Muslim women had of their positioning within society, and within their community and family, and what benefits they expected from participation in higher education.

Method: Views study - semi-structured interviews

The study involved semi-structured interviews with 15 women of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi origin. Participants were between the ages of 19 and 30 years, and were undergraduates and postgraduates in education. The study used a

snowball sampling strategy to recruit participants into the trial, which could have resulted in a biased sample.

Participation themes for synthesis

Family

- The research concluded that the acquisition of academic qualifications was particularly important to South Asian families. Families and parents played a very influential role in encouraging Muslim females to succeed academically and professionally and to participate in higher education as an investment and insurance against marriage difficulties. Parents were keen to maximise the social prestige of HE qualifications. Fathers were more determined than mothers to see their daughters succeed. Mothers with low educational qualifications were less likely to encourage their daughters. There were also objections from other family members about women going into higher education, as they feared that university would 'anglicise' them and weaken their cultural affiliations. Also there was a concern that highly educated women might not be able to find suitable husbands.

Individual aspirations

- The women were very self-motivated to take part in higher education. They were keen to prove themselves to their family and also noted the need to be better than the indigenous majority in order to compete in the Labour market in the face of concerns over racial discriminations. The women were thus motivated by a personal sense of satisfaction and achievement as well as a personal interest. They were also motivated by the opportunity to leave home. Finally, the women believed that degree status would confer certain social and personal advantages on them.

Crozier et al. (2005) Parents, children and the school experience: Asian families' perspectives

Overall weight of evidence: Medium

Medium internal validity; high relevance to the review. No details on samples or data-collection tools were given and the study did not present information separately for children, parents and staff. Otherwise, this study had an appropriate design; it focused mainly, however, on parents' understanding of and engagement in their children's school education.

Topic: Asian families' understanding of and perspective on their children's education

The authors noted that parental involvement is arguably pivotal for government education policy and noted the lack of research on parents of South Asian origin. The research focused on the understanding that parents from Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage had of the educational system, and their children's educational experience. It also sought to discern their role in relation to their children's education.

Method: Views study - interviews

Semi- and un-structured interviews were conducted with 591 parents and young people, of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin. Following the initial interviews, twenty families (10 from each ethnic group) were selected for follow-up work. In addition, two youth groups and 15 schools were assessed. Semi-structured interviews were also carried out with 69 key members of teaching staff and 5 youth workers. The interview data was analysed using a grounded theory approach.

Participation themes for synthesis

Institutional practices (universities and schools)

- Many Bengali and Pakistani students talked about teachers having low expectations of them. Racial harassment and abuse was a prominent theme.

Family

- All parents, irrespective of ethnicity and socioeconomic status, had a desire for their children to do well. Some parents had high aspirations for their children and wanted them to go to university; however, many said it was up to their children to decide. Bengali parents in particular noted that participation was dependent on their children's ability. There was evidence of Pakistani mothers especially (including those with a limited education themselves), encouraging their daughters to go to university; there was an expectation that they would marry, but that they needed a good education to fall back on. The authors concluded that the interviews highlighted the important role that families play in children's education.

Individual aspirations

- The interviews highlighted some lack of understanding of the post-16 market: for example, university entrance and what the children needed to do early on in their educational careers to ensure success. The authors also noted that

the impact of racial harassment could not be underestimated in its impact on their psycho-social wellbeing.

Fitzgerald et al. (2000) Black Caribbean young men's experiences of education and employment

Overall weight of evidence: Medium

High internal validity; medium relevance to the review.

Topic: This was a description of respondents' experiences and attitudes towards employment, training and education, and an exploration of the relationship between academic qualifications and positive parental attitude towards schools and a successful labour market outcome. This study aimed to provide information about the experiences and attitudes to education and training of fairly well-qualified black Caribbean men who were excluded in previous qualitative research. It also aimed to assess awareness of, and attitudes towards, the New Deal for 18-24 year-olds.

Method: Fitzgerald et al. surveyed 264 18-30 year-old black Caribbean men who were fairly well qualified. A questionnaire survey was conducted using one-to-one interviews, and achieved a response rate of 58%. The data were analysed using frequency counts and multivariate analysis. Regression analysis was used to identify the relationships between a number of variables and successful labour market outcomes. However, the study did not carry out a regression analysis identifying factors influencing post-16 participation (rather than just labour market success) so important influencing factors could not be determined. If it had done so, the WoE rating would have been higher.

All data comparisons were checked for statistical accuracy assuming a random sample. However, the design effects accounting for clustering and other aspect of sampling methodology were not calculated.

Participation themes for synthesis

General

- The majority of the sample (73%) had done some form of post-16 education, with the younger age group (18-24) more likely (80%) than those in the older age group (25-39) where the participation rate was 65%.

- The majority of those who were in education or training were working (only 8% were not). The

majority had not had any full-time education, particularly those in the older age group.

- British Caribbean young men were more likely to have a vocational qualification than an academic one. The younger age group were more likely to hold an NVQ as their highest vocational qualification than the older ones. Only 24% of British Caribbean young men had any academic qualifications.

Institutional practices (schools)

- The majority were positive about their secondary school. 71% said they enjoyed school, 52% said they were treated fairly well by teachers; and over 50% said they had had a good education, lessons were interesting and that their teachers listened. Over 50% said their teachers encouraged them to do their best.

- A minority (10%) said they did not get on with teachers and 14% said their teachers had not encouraged them to do their best. These factors are seen by the researchers as barriers to academic success.

Family

- Family and friends provided the main motivation, as the majority of the sample said their family and friends felt it was important to have good qualifications as a means to get good jobs.

Individual aspirations

- The most common reasons for doing post-16 courses were related to career aspirations: for example, career development (72%), getting a job (41%) or change jobs (20%). Personal motivations for doing post-16 courses were to improve knowledge and ability in particular subjects (72%), to do something different (50%) and to get a foundation before starting another course (20%).

- Lack of self motivation (e.g. being lazy, 32%) was one of the main barriers to academic success.

Other factors

- The most common factor hindering academic performance was peer pressure (34%).

- Racism was rarely mentioned.

- The author concluded that black Caribbean young men did not identify with an academic pathway to the same extent as white young men and that the secondary school system had problems of fully addressing the needs, behaviour and associations with this group.

Francis and Archer (2004) British-Chinese pupils' constructions of education, gender and post-16 pathways

Linked to:
Francis and Archer (2005) British-Chinese pupils' constructions of the value of education
Francis and Archer (2005) British-Chinese pupils' constructions of gender and learning

Overall weight of evidence: Medium

Medium internal validity and relevance to the review.

Topic: The aim of the study was to explore British Chinese pupils' and parents' views about education and their aspirations for employment, as well as the pupils' constructions of / approaches to gender and learning. British Chinese students are traditionally high achievers and have 'amongst the highest proportional rates of progression into post-compulsory education' (Francis and Archer, 2005, p 497), but little is known about them at a detailed level and there is a tendency to report them in stereotypical ways.

Method: Semi-structured interviews were held with 80 pupils from years 10 and11 (48 girls; 32 boys), 30 parents and 30 teaching staff. The study focused exclusively on British Chinese young people, their parents and their teachers

Participation themes for synthesis

General

The key finding was an inability to decouple achievement and self-image from family and ethnic culture, which led to and maintained the work, the self-esteem and the aspirations/high valuing of education.

Government policy

- The researchers noted how the British curriculum often took a Eurocentric stance that did not always suit Asian-heritage children.

- They also noted that views of learning constructed by British Chinese pupils did not always fit the Western (middle class and masculine) models of the 'ideal' pupil or 'correct' approaches to learning.

Institutional practices (schools)

- Teachers were unanimous that British Chinese pupils' relatively high achievement was attributable to family and home culture, with high parental aspirations and a high degree of 'pushing' their children. Teachers 'frequently' mentioned Chinese family structures promoting obedience to authority, respect for teachers and a work ethic.

- Ten teachers reported that Chinese boys exhibited low degrees of 'laddishness'. Chinese girls were seen as passive and 'unnecessarily quiet', which was 'often' interpreted as a result of oppression; the Chinese girls themselves did not share this interpretation.

Family

- No results were reported concerning consultation of siblings about future direction or participation.

- The parents valued education and wanted their children to do better than they had (something which did not vary with social class). All but one (79/80) expected their children to go to university. While both saw it as a way to obtain better employment, the parents also tended to view education as intrinsically good (the young people held more instrumental views).

- Parents mobilised a range of social, cultural and economic resources to support their children's achievement. They became a resource for their children; they consistently deployed 'family capital' – for example, by moving to the UK, or taking on hard and unsociable forms of work, buying education, or protecting children from working in the family business.

Individual aspirations

- The young people more or less met their parents' aspirations; all expected to undertake further education after their GCSEs; just three did not intend to go to university; eight (of whom six were girls) were undecided. Responses did not vary with social class.

- All pupils aspired to professional or business occupations; none aspired to manual jobs ('unlike studies with ethnically diverse samples, Francis, 2002)'. The most popular were medicine, law, IT/computing and architecture. Although the pupils (especially the higher ability ones) reported some gender stereotyped views of school subjects, this did not apply to all subjects (e.g. mathematics was popular for boys and girls), or carry over to job aspirations. The girls showed less gender stereotyping than in other studies: aspiring to technical jobs in fields such as computing, forensic science, finance/the City, pharmacy and medicine. School subject choice was not affected by ability either: mathematics, art and science were preferred by all ability groups.

- No clear self-constructions as pupils emerged in relation to gender, social class or ability, although there was a general tendency to be positive (contrasting themselves positively with respect to other ethnic groups), to value education and to see themselves as 'good' and hard-working students. 39/48 girls and 17/32 boys claimed to be 'good pupils', with only four definitely seeing themselves as not good.

- While the boys agreed that that only a few boys were 'mildly' laddish, the girls interpreted their passivity in terms of non-conformity, resistance to authority, and just having fun – and not as ruthlessly repressed by teachers, deferent or desexualised.

Hagell and Shaw (1996) Opportunity and disadvantage at age 16

Overall weight of evidence: Medium

This a strong study methodologically but has limited relevance to the present review.

Topic: Post-16 destinations of educationally disadvantaged young people in English cities and their experiences

The study was designed to address the experiences of educationally disadvantaged young people in English cities in their transition from compulsory education. It explored their initial post-school destinations and examined the different experiences of males and females and of ethnic minorities.

Method: The study was carried out in three waves on year 11 students from 34 schools in six urban areas in eight LEAs. A total of 1,670 (35%) answered all three data-collection exercises. Self-completed questionnaires were used to collect demographic data and information about students' attitudes to school, their part-time activities, experience of discrimination, home responsibilities, family attitudes and family education, problems faced and views about their year 11 decision in retrospect. Logistic regression analysis was used to predict the probability that a person was likely to continue education or not based on a combination of independent or predictor variables, such as gender, age, ethnicity, parental occupation and living circumstances. As the sample was representative of a specific population (disadvantaged youth), and was not entirely random (some clustering within the sample, possible effect on sampling error), the results could not be generalised.

Participation themes for synthesis

General

- Young people from ethnic minorities were more likely than white students, not only to stay on at 16, but also to continue participating in further and higher education.

- Asian students were more likely to stay on in full-time education than students in other ethnic groups, even after controlling for differences in school achievement.

- Black Caribbean and white students had lower proportions following the education trajectory than students in other groups.

Family

- The authors concluded that Asian students were more likely to stay on in full-time education due to family pressures.

Individual aspirations

- Asian students were more likely to aim to continue studying beyond the end of their current course (80%), compared with 68% of black students and 59% of white students.

Individual achievement

- Chinese and Indian students achieved the highest scores at GCSE and black Caribbean and black other students scored the least well. This could have affected their staying on rates.

Other factors

- Positive and negative impression of school: Asian students were the most positive about school, while black students were the most negative; white students fell in the middle.

- Missing school: black Caribbean and black other students were the most likely to have missed school due to truancy; Asian and black African students were the least likely to have truanted. Of the Asian students, Indian students were the least likely to miss school due to truancy.

- To avoid looking for jobs: Asian students were more likely to stay on, partly because they did not feel confident to test the job market.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2006) A comparison of how young people from different ethnic groups experience leaving school

Overall weight of evidence: Medium

The study addressed the research questions of the review, but more analysis could have been conducted, especially with the quantitative data.

Topic: Pathways and choices of ethnic minority pupils

The study looked at the pathways of ethnic minority pupils in Scotland as they made the transition from school to further education or higher education, what resources they drew upon in decision making, what pathways they chose and the nature of their aspirations.

Method: Questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews

The research was conducted in eight secondary schools. The schools were asked to select pupils at random to take part in the research to ensure a representative sample. The sample of 134, included white, mixed heritage, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, black Caribbean, black African, Chinese, gypsy/Roma, and traveller of Irish heritage pupils. The research was conducted in two waves and participant data was only used if participants responded in both waves. The students were asked what their future plans were, what resources they drew on in making their career choices, why they choose particular pathways, and what their aspirations were.

Participation themes for synthesis

Institutional practices (universities and school)

- The research concluded that further and higher education institutions were not doing enough to support ethnic minority young people, especially those living away from home, and needed to scrutinise their academic and social provision to avoid excluding minority ethnic young people. The research also found that careers advisers in school did not play an important role in shaping pupils' decisions.

Family

- Family and community expectations featured very highly in the decisions by ethnic minority students, as they considered courses to take after leaving secondary school. Many Indian and Pakistani participants made references to relatives who were practising a profession, or who were studying to gain a qualification in a profession.

Individual aspirations

- While family played an important role, participants noted that their careers decisions were largely their own, although supported and encouraged by parents. The majority of respondents wanted to go to university after completing school. The most common reasons for wanting to go to university were personal satisfaction, ability, personal ambition and parental ambition. Respondents also reported that most or all their friends intended to go to university; this could have influenced their decisions. Pakistani students were more likely to choose medical sciences and business/finance related subjects, almost half of Indian participants chose medical science courses, while Chinese students were equally divided between medical sciences, business/finance and engineering. Overall law and engineering were also popular choices.

Strand (2007) Minority ethnic pupils in the longitudinal study of young people

Overall weight of evidence: Medium

The study had a very strong design and good internal and external validity. However while the results and conclusion relating to attainment are useful and important, there was only a small amount of data which looked at the aspirations of ethnic groups and there was no explanation of why ethnic group aspirations might be different.

Topic: The variables that may affect the educational attainment of children by ethnic group at KS3

The study aimed to explore and analyse the differences between ethnic groups and the impact that these differences had on their attainment. Factors such as gender, family composition, socio-economic position and faith adherence were studied. The study also looked at aspirations for the future, which is of particular relevance for this review.

Method: Secondary data analysis (using the DFES Longitudinal Study of Young People in England)

Strand undertook analysis of interviews with 15,570 pupils drawn from 658 schools conducted for the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England. These interviews were with year 9 pupils and their parents. The study collected information on a wide range of topics and provides insight into the experiences, attitudes and opinions of young people with regards to their school, their education and their choices and aspirations for the future. The ethnic groups used for analysis included white British, mixed heritage, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, black Caribbean, black African, and any other. The report used four main sequential blocks of variables to build multiple regression models, which included structural features of family background, more dynamic aspects of the family context, pupil characteristics, and school context.

Participation themes for synthesis

Institutional practices (schools)

- The authors noted that, apart from social class, teacher racism (not only directly, but also indirectly as institutional racism) could be another explanatory factor for the poor progress among some ethnic groups.

Family

- The research reported that parents had high aspirations for their children's education, with 83% expecting them to continue into full-time education. Educational aspirations were particularly high among African (98%) and Indian parents (95%), and lowest for white parents, with 77% expecting their children to stay in FE. Parental aspirations were generally higher for girls than boys, although, for black African pupils, it was uniform and for Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils it was higher for boys than girls. The authors suggest that some element of the better performance of Indian pupils relative to white pupils can be explained by high parental educational aspirations, high resource provision at home, and high parental monitoring of their children's whereabouts.

- The authors also noted that social class is another factor that could explain differences among ethnic groups. High parental and pupil educational aspirations may offset the negative impact of low social class and the high proportion of mothers with no educational qualifications among Indian pupils. Cultural orientations of certain ethnic groups may promote or discourage academic achievement.

Individual aspirations

- 82% of young people intended to continue in FTE after leaving year 11, although there was a large overall gender difference (boys 77% and girls 87%). White pupils were the least likely to say they intended to continue in FTE (77%); the rates for the other groups were Pakistani pupils (91%), Bangladeshi pupils (92%), Indian pupils (94%) and black African pupils (96%). A similar pattern was found in relation to aspirations to enter HE. The authors noted that, although high educational aspirations may not be associated with greater attainment for minority ethnic groups in general, some of the success of Indian pupils could be explained by their high aspirations.

4.3 Synthesis

As outlined in Chapter 2, a conceptual framework informed the synthesis through a particular focus on themes related to post-16 factors which promoted or facilitated participation ('promoters'), or which were barriers to participation or which played a neutral role ('non-promoters'). Some of these themes were established initially through a reading of background material relating to post-16 participation of ethnic minority groups. The included studies were all then coded for these themes. Other promoters emerged during the data-extraction process. The Review Group identified the emerging post-16 themes or factors using a grounded approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), starting with the high and medium WoE studies which appeared to determine post-16 participation

Table 4.20 Summary of all promoters of post-16 participation

		Number of studies						
		High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Government policy	Financial provision	1						**1**
Institutional practices (universities)	Wider and lower university entry requirements			1				**1**
	More inclusive admission practices by new universities			1				**1**
	Geographical location						1	**1**
Institutional practices (schools)	Quality of teachers at school	1	1			3		**5**
	Ethos and type of school		1			1		**2**
	School organisation and curriculum					1		**1**
External agencies	Careers advice including schools and outside agencies (minor role)	2				1	1	**4**
Work	Positive impact of work experience	1						**1**
	Economic motivation to stay on in education						1	**1**
Religion	Influence of religion					1		**1**
Family	Parents place high value on education	1	1		6	1	4	**13**
	Strong parental influence / support	2		1	4	1	4	**12**
	Positive influence of wider family / culture /community	1		2	3	1	2	**9**
	Social class (size of family, home ownership, marital status and parental education)		1	1	1	1		**4**
Individual aspirations	Motivation for higher education	1	1	1	5	2	3	**13**
	Natural progression from school			1	1			**2**
	Positive attitude towards school		1		2			**3**
	Awareness of the system					1		**1**
	Natural ability					1		**1**
	Strong academic self-concept		1			1		**2**
Other factors	Positive role of friends	1	1		1			**3**
	Gender		1					**1**

Table 4.21 Summary of all non-promoters of post-16 participation

		Number of studies						
		High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Government policy	Lack of financial support for students with children						1	1
Institutional practices (universities)	Non-supportive institutions				1			1
	Less inclusive admission practices by old universities			1				1
	Narrow application strategy of students			1				1
	Racial issues in universities						1	1
	Negative attitude of university tutors						1	1
	Lack of information of university applied to						1	1
Institutional practices (schools)	Low teacher expectations and encouragement at school				2			2
	Poor pupil-teacher relationship				1			1
	Negative experience of school						1	1
	Racial issues in schools				4		1	5
External agencies	Careers advice including schools and outside agencies	1			1		2	4
Work	Desire to work	1					1	2
Family	Parents place low value on education	1					2	3
	Parental influence	1			1		1	3
	Negative influence of wider family /culture / community				1	1	1	3
	Social class (size of family, home ownership, marital status and parental education)			1				1

		Number of studies						
		High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Individual aspirations	Low educational aspirations		1					1
	Negative attitude towards school		1		1			2
	Lack of understanding / awareness of system				1			1
	Practical obstacles						1	1
	Negative experience / perception of HE						1	1
Other factors	Negative impact of friends		1					1
	Negative impact of older age			1				1
	Geographical location					2		2
	Ethnicity					1		1
	Lack of time						1	1
	Lack of finance						1	1
	Gender		1					1

according to the views, attitudes and aspirations of minority ethnic groups, and which investigated the clear relationships between aspirations and educational variables. The Group then looked at the medium to low and low WoE studies for themes which confirmed those in the high and medium WoE studies. All studies were subsequently coded for any emerging themes. Promoters and non-promoters were coded for in the following eight categories of influence: government policy; institutional practices - universities; institutional practices - schools; external agencies; work; religion; family; and individual aspirations. Also coded were 'other factors'. Itemised subheadings were included in each category. This matrix provided our conceptual framework.

4.4 Summary of synthesis

Tables 4.20 and 4.21 summarise all the promoters and non-promoters of post-16 participation derived from the 23 studies in this review, in a hierarchy of level of influence starting with government policy and working through institutional practices and other external influences and down to individual aspirations.

A total of 21 promoters and 21 non-promoters were identified in the eight levels of influence. Other factors not in these levels of influence were also identified (two promoters and eight non-promoters). The Review Group analysed the promoters and non-

promoters within each level of influence and which emerged from larger numbers of studies or from one or more studies of high weight of evidence.

Government policy: factors promoting participation

Award of educational maintenance allowance (EMA) (One study: Middleton et al., 2005)

In terms of government policy, one high WoE secondary data analysis (Middleton et al., 2005) found that the education maintenance allowance (EMA) intervention (a monetary incentive awarded to students from low income families to encourage post-16 participation) was felt to be 'very important' in their decisions to stay in full-time education by 25% of the students in the pilot areas who were awarded an allowance. The figure was highest for black students (40%) and lowest for Indian students (20%) and white students (23%). (However, it was hard to explain why 73% of those who said the EMA was 'very important' also said they would 'probably' or 'definitely' have stayed on without it.) Middleton et al. selected two samples of young people from the education maintenance allowance pilot dataset. The first sample comprised around 14,700 students who had finished compulsory education in 1999 and 2000, and who were aged 16-17 years when first interviewed (1,334 from minority ethnic groups). The second sample comprised roughly 8,300 who had taken part in all three years of survey interviews at

16, 17 and 18. The data was analysed in terms of frequencies and logistic regression. Ethnic groups included in the analysis were white, black, Indian and Bangladeshi/Pakistani.

Institutional practices - universities: factors promoting participation

Wider entry requirements; inclusive admission practices
(Two studies: Bagguley and Hussian, 2007; Shiner and Modood, 2002)

In terms of university practices, two studies found that allowing wider and lower university entry requirements and more inclusive admission practices increased participation. These two studies, judged to be of medium to high WoE, examined participation in higher education through a secondary data analysis and views study of the diversity of South Asian women's experiences of HE and the barriers they faced (Bagguley et al 2007), and a secondary analysis of the role of ethnic bias in the allocation of HE places (Shiner and Modood, 2002). Bagguley et al (2007) found that choice of university was largely determined for the women concerned by the combination of courses offered and lower 'A' level requirements. Shiner and Modood (2007) found that ethnic minority candidates were concentrated in the new universities largely due to patterns of application, but also to a greater commitment among those universities to widening the social and ethnic basis of participation in HE.

Institutional practices - universities: non-promoting factors

Less inclusive admission practices (old universities); narrow application strategy
(Four studies: Archer and Hutchings, 2000; Bowl, 2001; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006; Shiner and Modood, 2002)

One medium to high WoE study (Shiner and Modood, 2002) found 'strong evidence' that minority candidates faced an ethnic penalty especially among 'old' universities. The rate at which an initial application yielded an offer depended on the type of institution to which students applied: 'old' or 'new' university. Also, location of institution was an important factor: ethnic minority students in the sample tended to apply to institutions geographically nearby and this may have reduced their chances of success. One medium WoE study (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006) found that further and higher institutions were not doing enough to support ethnic minority young people, especially those living away from home. The findings of two low WoE studies supported these conclusions.

Institutional practices - schools: factors promoting participation

High quality of support; positive school ethos
(Five studies: Abbas, 2002; Clayden and Stein, 2002;Connor et al., 2004; Gayle et al, 2002; Rhamie and Hallam, 2002)

In terms of school practices, five studies concluded that high quality of staff support increased the likelihood of students staying on post-16. In addition, two studies found that the ethos of a school was a particularly important factor influencing post-16 participation. This included a positive atmosphere and an emphasis on academic excellence.

For example, Connor et al. (2004), in a cross-sectional study judged to be of high WoE, surveyed 1,000 year 13 students and found that staff support may have affected their likelihood of staying on at school.

Institutional practices - schools: non-promoting factors

Racial issues; low expectations; teacher quality; Eurocentric curriculum
(Six studies: Abbas, 2002; Bowl, 2001; Crozier et al., 2005; Fitzgerald et al, 2000; Francis and Archer, 2004; Strand, 2007)
Four medium WoE studies raised concerns about racial issues. Two studies found low expectations to be an issue in post-16 participation. Crozier et al. (2005) found that many Bengali and Pakistani students talked about teachers having low expectations of them. Racial harassment and abuse was a prominent theme. Fitzgerald (2000) found that the majority of respondents were positive about their secondary school. 71% said they enjoyed school; 52% said they were treated fairly well by teachers; and over 50% said they had had a good education, lessons were interesting and that their teachers listened. Over 50% said their teachers encouraged them to do their best. However, a minority (10%) said they did not get on with teachers and 14% said their teachers had not encouraged them to do their best. These factors were seen by the researchers as barriers to academic success.

Francis and Archer (2004) included examples of how the British curriculum took a Eurocentric stance which did not always accommodate cultural differences, and which therefore could have impeded minority ethnic students. In their study, they undertook semi-structured interviews with 80 pupils from years 10 and11 (48 girls; 32 boys), 30 parents and 30 teaching staff. The study focused exclusively on British Chinese young people, their parents and their teachers. They also noted that views of learning constructed by British Chinese pupils did not always fit the Western models of the 'ideal' pupil or 'correct' approaches to learning.

External agencies: factors promoting participation

Careers advice (schools and outside agencies)
(Two studies: Connor, 2004; Middleton et al., 2005)

Two studies judged to be of high weight of evidence (Connor et al, 2004; Middleton et al., 2005) conducted surveys and secondary data analyses, and found that careers service played a minor role in encouraging post-16 participation, but this was greater for students from some ethnic minorities, especially black Caribbean students. For example, in the study by Connor and colleagues (2002) a survey of potential HE entrants in year 13 in schools and colleges (1,000), followed by in-depth interviews with 42 of these students and a survey of 80 parents of the students, followed by in-depth interviews with 13 of them (ten of whom were from ethnic minority groups), revealed that careers teachers and the careers service were found to be more influential among all minority ethnic students than among white students. In the study by Middleton et al. (2005), 16% of all students surveyed rated the careers service as the greatest source of helpful advice; for black students, the figure was 21%, although the figure for Indian students was 15%.

External agencies: non-promoting factors

Careers advice
(Four studies: Allen, 1998; Bowl, 2001; Middleton et al., 2005; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006)

In four studies (including one high WoE study and one medium WoE study) found that careers advice did not play a major role in the post-16 decisions of the majority of students; these included one study judged to be of high weight of evidence. For example, Middleton et al (2005) found that those remaining in FE were more likely to say careers service had played a minor role in their decision to participate post-16, except in the case of black students (Middleton et al., 2005). A study undertaken for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2006) found that careers advice in schools did not play an important role in shaping post-16 decisions.

It should be noted that, overall, the evidence in this review concerning the influence of the careers service demonstrates that it is not a major influence in determining post-16 decisions. However, it is included in the promoting category because its influence does appear to be greater for students from some ethnic minorities, especially black Caribbean students.

Work: factors promoting participation

Work experience
(Two studies: Archer and Hutchings, 2000; Middleton et al., 2005)

One high weight of evidence study (Middleton et al. 2005), which involved a secondary data analysis on the education Maintenance Allowance pilot dataset, found that a large proportion of all ethnic groups (white, black, Indian and Bangladeshi/Pakistani) had been offered (90%) or had participated in (88%) work experience. Overall, 68% of those interviewed (all groups) felt that work experience had been 'fairly' or 'very helpful' in their eventual decision to continue in post-16 education.

There was also one low weight of evidence study commenting on work as a promoter (economic motivation to stay on in education).

Work: non-promoting factors

Desire to work or train
(Two studies: Beck et al, 2006; Middleton et al, 2005)

One high weight of evidence study (Middleton et al., 2005) noted that for most individuals, but especially white students, wanting a job or a training place was the principle reason for leaving education. One low weight of evidence study also provided support for this conclusion.

It should be noted that, although these studies were not specifically concerned with changes over time in the job market, such changes can and do occur, and may well significantly affect work preferences of students from any ethnic group.

Religion

There were no studies of medium or above weight of evidence that commented on religion as a promoter or non-promoter of post-16 participation.

Family: factors promoting participation

High value placed on education by parents; strong parental support for post-16 participation; positive family/cultural/community influence; social class (Sixteen studies: Ahmad, 2001; Allen, 1998; Archer and Hutchings, 2000; Bagguley, 2007; Basit, 1997; Connor et al., 2004; Crozier, 2005; Dale et al., 2002; Fitzgerald et al., 2000; Francis and Archer, 2004; Gayle, 2002; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006; Middleton et al., 2005; Rhamie and Hallam, 2002; Strand, 2007; Strand and Winston, 2008)

Overall there were sixteen studies which provided evidence for family-related factors which promoted post-16 participation in education. All studies included in this review and weighted medium WoE

or higher (Ahmad, 2001; Bagguley, 2007; Connor et al, 2004; Crozier, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2000; Francis and Archer, 2004; Gayle, 2002; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006, Middleton et al., 2005; Strand, 2007; Strand and Winston, 2008) found evidence of influence at the family level for encouraging post-16 participation (The findings from one medium to low study and four low WoE studies confirmed this conclusion).

Of the studies, 13 found that parental value of education was an important determinant; and twelve studies found that strong parental influence or support was crucial in determining post-16 destinations. Nine studies noted the positive influence of wider family, culture and community, and four studies highlighted higher social class as being influential. For example, a high weight of evidence study (Connor et al., 2004) used secondary analysis and cross-sectional methods to investigate factors influencing participation, retention in and progression to HE of minority ethnic group students.

The authors found that parents and families were stronger push factors for minority ethnic groups than for white students, with respect to helping them to succeed through gaining HE qualifications. Parental influence had a greater effect on minority ethnic young people than on white students in steering them towards certain courses, especially in professional/vocational subjects. Parental influence was the strongest factor for potential entrants, although parental influence on final choice of institution and course was limited. A high to medium secondary data analysis (Gayle et al., 2002) undertook an analysis to identify the factors that influence young people's choices of entry to HE and participation on a degree level course. The authors undertook an 'exploratory' analysis of a set of nationally representative data through statistical modelling, using data from the Youth Cohort Study of England and Wales (YCS): Cohort III. In the analysis, the outcome variable was participation at degree level in HE. The statistical method used was 'sample enumeration', to identify statistically significant factors influencing participation in HE and to quantify the level of significance of various factors after controlling for educational attainment. This method enabled the contribution of control variables to be estimated. The research aimed to explore what external factors, beyond educational attainment, influence participation. After controlling for educational attainment, occupational social class was found to be a highly statistically significant factor influencing young people's entry into HE. This applies to all young people, from all ethnic groups including white participants.

Family: non-promoting factors

Low value placed on education by parents; parental influence against post-16 participation; negative family/cultural/community influence; social class (Eight studies: Abbas, 2002; Ahmad, 2001; Allen, 1998; Bowl, 2001; Dale, 2002; Middleton et al., 2005; Shiner and Modood, 2002; Strand, 2007)

Overall, there were eight studies which provided evidence that family influence could be a barrier to post-16 participation. Only one of these was of high WoE (Middleton et al., 2005), one was of medium to high WoE (Shiner and Modood, 2002), two studies were of medium WoE, one was a medium to low WoE study and three were low WoE studies. For example, in the study by Middleton et al. (2005) the aim was to explore the destinations, achievements and opinions of young people from different ethnic minority backgrounds using two samples of young people from the education maintenance allowance pilot dataset. Middleton et al. (2005) found that Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi young people noted financial constraints and family issues as important reasons in the decision to leave education. Moreover, Pakistani/ Bangladeshi or black students not continuing in education for family or financial reasons were 'much less likely' to have found work or training than white or Indian young people.

Individual aspirations: factors promoting participation

Individual motivations for participation in HE (economic gain and better job opportunities, personal sense of achievement and satisfaction, high value of and aspiration for education); belief in post-16 education as a 'natural progression'; positive attitude towards school)
(Fifteen studies: Ahmad, 2002; Archer, 2000; Bagguley and Hussian, 2007; Basit, 1997; Beck, 2006; Clayden and Stein, 2002; Connor, 2004; Dale, 2002; Fitzgerald et al., 2000; Francis and Archer, 2004; Hagell and Shaw, 1996; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006; Rhamie and Hallam, 2002; Strand, 2007; Strand and Winston, 2008)

Overall, there were 15 studies which provided evidence for various promoters of post-16 participation within the individual aspirations level of influence. Of these there was one high WoE study (Connor, 2004), one high to medium WoE study (Strand and Winston, 2008), one medium to high WoE study (Bagguley and Hussain, 2007), six medium WoE studies (Ahmad, 2002; Fitzgerald et al., 2000; Francis and Archer, 2004; Hagell and Shaw, 1996; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006; Strand, 2007), two medium to low WoE studies and four low WoE studies.

Of these studies, 13 noted individual motivations for higher education, suggesting this is an important promoter of post-16 participation. The high WoE study (Connor, 2004) and Bagguley and Hussain (2007) (medium to high WoE) both noted the expectation of economic gain and career advantage resulting from post-16 participation motivated students to remain in education. Strand and Winston (2008) (high to medium WoE) similarly found that pupils from black African, Pakistani and other Asian backgrounds aspired to professional jobs often related to medicine or computers. Two of the medium WoE studies - Francis and Archer (2004) and Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2006) - also identified

economic gain and better job opportunities as motivating factors.

The five medium WoE studies also highlighted a number of other motivating factors, including a personal sense of achievement and satisfaction, and, improved knowledge and ability (three studies), a high value of and aspiration for education (three studies), the chance to leave home and gain independence (one study), a personal interest in the particular subject (1 study); students were motivated by the social significance attached to having a higher education qualification (one study). Women were also motivated by the need to prove themselves and compete in the labour market (one study).

Other promoters identified within this level of influence included the feeling that participation in post-16 education was a natural progression from school (two studies). A positive attitude towards school was also found to increase the likelihood of post-16 participation in three studies.

Individual aspirations: non-promoting factors

Lower individual aspirations (related to, for example, disaffected peers, low commitment to education, lack of understanding of the post-16 market and university entry)
(Five studies: Abbas, 2002; Bowl, 2001; Crozier et al., 2005; Hagell and Shaw, 1996; Strand and Winston, 2008)
One high to medium WoE study, Strand and Winston (2008), suggested that the lower aspirations of black Caribbean students seemed to be related to having disaffected peers and also a low commitment to schooling. This finding was echoed in the medium WoE study, Hagell and Shaw (1996). A further WoE study (Crozier et al., 2005) also noted that a non-promoter of post-16 participation was a lack of understanding of the post-16 market and university entry; students were unaware of what they needed to do early on in their education to ensure successful entry into further education

Other factors promoting participation

Positive role of friends; gender
(Three studies: Gayle et al., 2002; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006; Strand and Winston, 2008)

One high to medium WoE study (Strand and Winston, 2008) found that having positive peers increased an individual's participation in post-16 education. This conclusion was supported by a medium WoE study (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006) in which respondents noted that most or all their friends intended to go to university. This could have affected their personal decisions to remain in education. The explanations given for friends' decisions to continue in education were related to ambition, opportunity and expectation or the fact that going to university was felt to be the norm. A

high WoE study (Middleton et al., 2005) also noted that respondents often consulted their friends in the decision-making process, although they rarely felt the advice was helpful.

A study by Gayle et al. (2002) was judged to be of high to medium WoE and found that young men (from all ethnic groups) were more likely to participate in higher education than young women. Through the 'sample enumeration', the authors demonstrated that the difference in participation between males and females could be mostly accounted for by the 'gender effect' (i.e. gender discrimination).

Other factors: non-promoting factors

Negative impact of friends; negative impact of older age; gender
(Six studies: Bowl, 2001; Clayden and Stein, 2002; Gayle, 2002; Rhamie and Hallam, 2002; Shiner and Modood, 2002; Strand and Winston, 2008)

One high to medium weight of evidence study (Strand and Winston, 2008) found that having positive peers increased participation, and that the reverse effect was true for negative peers. The authors calculated that students with disaffected or negative peers were three times less likely to continue in education. One medium to high WoE study (Shiner and Modood, 2002) suggested that the age of applicants could be one of a number of socio-demographic variables which might explain the differing rates at which different ethnic groups are offered places and the different types of university to which students applied (old and new). In short, older candidates were less likely to be successful applicants. One high to medium WoE study (Gayle, 2002), as previously discussed, found that young women were less likely to remain in education than young men and demonstrated that this was mostly accounted for by gender discrimination.

4.5 Discussion

It is well known that minority ethnic students are more likely to participate in HE than white students. However, their participation rates vary between universities, subjects, courses and geographical regions, and some minority ethnic students are more likely to leave early than white students; this applies, in particular, to black students. Although prior attainment is very important, it is not the only determinant of HE entry or choice of study. For example, in the study by Gayle et al. (2002), after controlling for educational attainment, the authors found significant main effects for a range of factors (for example, social class), but ethnicity was not found to be a statistically significant factor in determining participation in HE.

In the synthesis, of all eight levels of influence determining post-16 participation, factors in the two levels of family and individual aspirartions stand out as being the major determinants.

Sixteen studies found that a high value placed on education by parents, strong parental support for post-16 participation, positive family influence, and being in a higher social class were determining factors in participation in schools post-16, and in further and higher education. On the other hand, eight studies found that a low value placed on education by parents, parental influence against post-16 participation, negative family influence, and being in a lower social class could be factors acting as barriers to post-16, and further and higher education.

Some of the reasons identified in the studies indicating why some parents place a high value on education include the belief that it is a path to success and/or to qualifications; it is an investment for future or better employment opportunities; it is an insurance against marriage difficulties, or it will enhance the chances of a 'good' marriage (Muslim women); it bestows social prestige, or it will change the social class of the student. Two other reasons identified in the studies are that education was felt to have an intrinsic value, and some parents simply have high educational aspirations for their children. A second group of factors includes parental support (for example, parents being prepared to use a range of resources to help their children); providing guidance, information, support; and lastly giving general support and encouragement to children, by, for example, talking to them about school. The influence of family is closely linked to socio-economic status (SES). High social class (as determined by size of family, home ownership, parental education etc.) increases the likelihood of post-16 participation among all ethnic groups (Gayle et al., 2002; Rhamie and Hallam, 2002; Shiner and Modood, 2002; Strand, 2007).

Fifteen studies found that individual aspirations and motivations for participation in post-16 education were major drivers for participation – not only in terms of aspiration for education as an end in itself and for economic gain and better job opportunities, but also in simply placing a high personal value on education and a belief that this would lead to personal satisfaction).

Summaries of studies concerning post-16 participation have a tendency to be recursive, and legitimately so. Participation in education or training at any age or stage is currently at least partly determined by experience and relative success or failure at the prior educational stage. Participation and success in the prior educational stage, in turn, depends upon at least partly on experience of the stage before that. Students who report enjoying school pre-16 and who obtain at least average KS 4 results are more likely to stay on than school avoiders and those with little or no qualification at age 16. Why then are there apparent differences in post-16 participation between ethnic groups in the UK?

Largely it is for the same reasons that those students who do well at KS3 (and KS2 before that) are more likely to be the ones reporting enjoying school at 16 and gaining average or better KS4 results. The ethnic minority groups most likely to continue and be successful with education or training post-16 are the same groups with above average attainment at 16 and before. There are several groups of possible explanations for this situation, but none of the studies encountered in this review addressed the full picture.

Perhaps the reason groups such as students of Chinese or Indian origin are more likely to participate post-16 and have higher levels of attainment pre-16 is the same as the reason why there is a link between SES and education more generally (i.e. the explanation is not ethnically based). Many of the studies in the review suggested parental education (and so assistance) and residential stability as possible causal routes for SES to play out in terms of educational outcomes.

School attainment and post-16 participation are linked to student SES, as judged by parental occupation, education and income (Gayle et al., 2002; Rhamie and Hallam, 2002; Shiner and Modood, 2002; Strand, 2007). Many SES variables act as proxies for each other because of the high correlations between occupation, education and income. Ethnicity, insofar as it can 'explain' variation in attainment/participation, has a similar role. If, for example, there is a tendency in the UK for the minority ethnic groups to represent different historical waves of immigration for different reasons (some economic migrants, some fleeing Kenya and Uganda, and so on), then it is also possible that they represent differing SES backgrounds. In general, ethnicity either disappears or is greatly reduced when SES is used as an explanatory variable in modelling educational outcomes (see, for example, Gayle et al., 2002).

The results of the review should be treated with caution because, unlike a simple indicator with a binary legal definition like sex or eligibility for free school meals, ethnicity is contentious, liable to change and complication over time, and confused. It is confused because current classifications mix criteria such as national origin (e.g. Chinese), skin colour (e.g. Black British), language, religion and culture. It is also confused because some individual categories are listed together as 'mixed' and some are not, even though it would be hard to maintain that any group was not mixed in some way. Some commentators allow that ethnicity must be self-referenced and self-judged. It is what one feels, and is therefore liable to change over time.

CHAPTER FIVE
Implications

5.1 Implications for policy and practice

The most obvious reason why students who are more successful in education pre-16 (including ethnic groups in the UK of Chinese and Indian origin) are also more likely to participate in education post-16 is that the system is selective. This selection can be overt, as with the standard requirements for sixth-form or college study of A-levels (such as five 'good' GCSEs including mathematics and English) or two or more A-levels (or equivalent) for entry to undergraduate level HE. The selection can also be indirect, through teacher discouragement, or advice and guidance, and even lack of parity of esteem between post-16 pathways. Selection is probably the greatest determinant of post-16 participation. As a nation, a decision probably has to be made: either to continue with this selective post-16 system and live with the stratified patterns of participation that result, or use anti-discriminatory legislation and re-training of practitioners to attempt to change post-16 education.

Secondly, by the age of 16, some students have apparently formed a learner identity that does not consider further episodes of formal 'schooling' desirable or appropriate. This is in effect self-selection, but it occurs as a direct result of the educational and familial determinants that combine to create learner identities either seeking or avoiding further formal study. Of course, success or failure at school is closely linked to learner identity, but this is a relative, rather than absolute, perception. If higher levels of post-16 participation are desired, then that participation has to be non-selective, it has to include pathways not resembling school to cater for those with negative school experiences, and schools would need to adjust to the forming learner identities of their pre-16 students.

The third group of explanations concerns socio-economic status (SES) and related variables. Policies supporting or enhancing positive individual and family attitudes towards participation in post-16 and higher education could be encouraged, although this should not replace any responsibility of the education system as a whole to attempt to equalise life chances for the most disadvantaged. If schools cannot and do not handle the inequalities, and leave this to parents, then this undermines an important part of their raison d'être.

Differences between ethnic groups are largely explained by differences in cultural attitudes towards education in general and higher education in particular. Minority ethnic groups with high participation tend to have a high cultural awareness of the value of extending young people's education.

In terms of interventions, financial assistance was seen as being important in one study. Financial assistance may be more important among those groups with low expectations and low emphasis on the value of post-16 and higher education. However, much of the argument for participation is based on simple human capital theory: the investment of time and fees will pay off. This does not work with some groups, who are as likely to leave education in order to earn money as to stay on in the hope of earning more. Education must be intrinsically appealing both for those whose vocation is a profession (e.g. medicine and law) and those interested in what is more traditionally labelled 'vocational routes'. Careers advice appears helpful for some ethnic groups, and work experience is generally useful either in providing a reason for subsequent training or simply acting as a negative experience of the workplace in comparisonwith college.

If one really wanted to increase participation, then it cannot be assumed that current opportunities are ideal and that all that is necessary is to encourage the reluctant to take part.

5.2 Implications for research

This review has identified a number of areas in which more rigorous research is required. In the systematic map of research, the Review Group we did not identify any UK-based evaluations of interventions aimed at changing behaviour or attitudes using a strong design to enable causal inference (randomised trials or regression discontinuity evaluations). The data in this review is observational and consequently our results need to be treated with some caution.

In order to move forward in the field, at each level of influence, research could be undertaken to identify interventions that look promising, and evaluate them using rigorous methods. Random allocation is the 'gold-standard' method of evaluating whether something works or not. This is because groups formed through random allocation are balanced at the baseline in all known and unknown co-variates: for example, SES, gender and other potentially confounding variables. Therefore any differences observed in outcome can reliably be ascribed to the intervention. It would be possible to evaluate interventions using random allocation.

When randomisation is not possible, the best quasi-experimental approach is the regression discontinuity design (RDD). In an RDD, a cohort of participants is identified, ranked by some form of scoring mechanism (for example, family income) and a cut-off point is identified, with only those falling below the cut-point being offered the intervention. The whole cohort is then followed up to observe the participation rates in post-16 and higher education. If the intervention is effective, then there is a break (or 'discontinuity') in the proportion attending post-16 and higher education commensurate with the cut-off point.

Family support and attitude have been identified in the review as important promoters and non-promoters of post-16 participation. One possible area of research might be a series of randomised trials evaluating different approaches to increasing parental support. For example, one might identify families at risk of low participation and randomly allocate them to receive an intervention that might promote parental support for higher education; outcomes would be the proportion attending higher education.

Similarly, one noted that the use of financial incentives might promote increased higher education attendance. one might evaluate these either by using a randomised trial or regression discontinuity study. In the latter design, one might identify a cohort of students and rank them according to financial status, offering the proportion that suffer the most financial hardship financial support contingent upon participation in higher education. Alternatively, randomisation might be possible in these circumstances. Either design would provide robust evidence as to the effectiveness of these interventions.

In the review, careers advice appeared to play a minor role for all ethnic groups, although it was possibly more beneficial for some ethnic groups than others However, there is no randomised or strong quasi-experimental evidence to support its use. A cluster or area randomised trial could be used to evaluate an enhanced careers service. Schools could be randomised to receive additional careers support versus usual support and the effectiveness could then be observed by differences in enrolment into higher education.

At present, although the link between ethnicity/SES and attainment/participation is clear, there is almost no research attempting to test why this is. Much research seems, indirectly, merely to reconfirm the pattern. Some of the studies in this review base conclusions on consideration of one group only (such as 15 Asian women) which cannot, by design, tell us how these compare with other groups. Any intervention or RDD study has to be longitudinal (as above), to avoid the problem that determining reasons for participation retrospectively tends to ignore non-participants, and could be open to rationalisation after the event. Using data from beforehand, such as attitudes and aspirations, is just as liable to error, since there is such a weak link between attitudes and actual subsequent participation: for example, in one study, around 90% of students in the lowest mathematics set 'intended' to study at university, even though they were predicted to attain no good GCSEs.

CHAPTER SIX
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Appendix 1.1: Authorship of this report

This work is a report of a systematic review conducted by the York Post-16 Review Group.

The authors of this report are as follows:

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Preparing the final protocol: CJT
Developing and finalising the search strategies: KW and CJT
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Screening at first, second and third stages: CJT, BHS and HRA
Data extraction and WoE judgements: BHS, GDL, HRA, CJT, Mukdarut Bangpan (EPPI-Centre)(MB)

Writing text for the final report: CJT, HRA, GDL, BHS, SG
Preparing the final report: CJT, GDL, HRA and BHS
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Conflicts of interest

There are no known conflicts of interest.

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APPENDIX 2.1 Data-extraction tables of the 23 studies included in the in-depth review

Note: Where appropriate, the actual text from original studies is used in the tables.

Abbas (2002) The home and the school in the educational achievements of South Asians	
Aims of study	To explore how South Asian parents and teachers affect the educational achievements of South Asian students in the city of Birmingham, England (p 291)
Study rationale	1) In Britain, the educational achievement of ethnic minorities and, in particular South Asian students, has attracted considerable academic and policymaker interest, but, despite the volumes of evidence, it has remained difficult to draw firm conclusions about the processes of achievement.
	2) In the last decades, research on ethnic inequalities between groups has found achievement to be strongly associated with social class. Another factor is parent education levels. Given these assumptions, there are implications for South Asian students, as they tend to occupy lower socio-economic positions and some South Asian parents are less educated. Other reasons, such as cultural and religious ones, also explain differences in the performance of South Asian students.
	3) As there is no single factor that can wholly explain variations in ethnic minority educational performance, more sophisticated questions needed to be asked to determine the causes of educational inequality more precisely and to explain subgroup processes more fully. Quantitative evaluations tend not to be broad enough to incorporate significant sample sizes and qualitative studies have not been sufficiently detailed in their elucidations.
	4) Birmingham was chosen as it has had many ethnic minorities settling within it during the post-war period. The city has further been an area of considerable academic study in the field of race relations research and remains an important 'test case for the future of 'race relations' in British society'. Since 1982, Birmingham LEA has been committed to a 'strong multicultural/ antiracist/equal opportunity perspective', with equality given high priority.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) What are the views of pupils, students and parents on schools and their teachers?
	2) What are the views of pupils, students and parents on religion and culture within the home?
Study method	Cross-sectional study: A self-completed questionnaire survey was conducted among college students. This was a multiple-choice attitude scale questionnaire.
	Views study: Face-to-face interviews were conducted pupils and parents from different schools.
Educational setting	Secondary schools, sixth-form college and further-education colleges
Number of participants	Total sample of secondary pupils (11-18): 89
	An additional 403 South Asian college students were surveyed to provide parity between younger and older South Asian students in education.
	25 parents were also interviewed.
Ages of participants	11-20
Ethnicity of participants	Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi students

Summary of results	*Perspectives on teachers and schools*
	1) Selective school pupils were of the view that it was the professional ability of teachers, irrespective of their ethnicity, that was important.
	2) It was the culture and ethos of selective schools that were essential in developing the overall attitudes of pupils.
	3) Although comprehensive school pupils were also of the view that it is the quality of teaching that matters rather than the ethnicity of the teachers, having co-ethnic teachers would be an added advantage for co-ethnic reasons.
	4) For college students, many Bangladeshi and Pakistani college students were less likely to have related well with their teachers, and the range of comments showed that South Asian Muslims had been affected by the negative perceptions of teachers.
	5) Parents from lower social class backgrounds were less critical of teachers than parents from higher social class backgrounds. Higher social class parents were more likely to express faith in selective schools and that the values, codes and ethos the schools possessed would be positively impressed onto their children. Lower social class background parents, on the other hand, were more likely to hold the school responsible for educational underachievement.
	6) Parents from lower social class backgrounds were more likely to be approving of South Asian teachers. They felt that these teachers were able to communicate positively with pupils on account of shared history, religion and culture. Parents from higher social class backgrounds, on the other hand, expressed a desire for more effective teachers per se, irrespective of ethnicity.
	Religion and culture within the home
	7) Muslim pupils were inclined to be closer to their religion in that they felt it broadened every aspect of their lives. (However, the paper was not clear about how religion may shape pupils' educational achievement.)
	8) Muslim college students were more likely to consider religion as critical to their aspirations, and that religion played a part in their education. Three-quarters of the Muslim college students had been through religious supplementary schooling, compared with only one-third of Indian students.
	9) There were differences among parents regarding the influence of religion and culture on education. This was largely based on social class. Professional parents tended to see religion as either having no real influence, or a negative influence on education. On the other hand, lower social class parents were more positive and constructive about the influence of religion.
	10) There were differences between Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh students with regard to the influence of religion. Muslim students were more religious, while Hindu and Sikh students were less religious, irrespective of social class.

Conclusions	1) Whether parents or teachers have any influence on educational achievement of South Asian students depends on the type of individual in question as well as the type of school they attend.
	2) All South Asian students wished for success, but there was a divergence between the experiences of Muslim students (Bangladeshi/Pakistani) and Indian students (Hindu/Sikh). A large part of the reason is due to economic, social capital and knowledge differences between South Asian students, as well as the ways in which religion and culture affect groups. (Culture and religion seems to be intertwined and it is not clear in the paper how much the difference in views of education aspirations between Muslim and Hindu students was the result of religion or social class).
	3) Adverse cultural practices within the home, coupled with disengagement with the school, leads to educational underachievement. (How far this is the result of cultural influence, rather than of social class, is not clear.)
	4) Teachers have an important role in alleviating the situation of disadvantaged South Asian students, through proactive methods.
	5) Religion and culture is more likely to influence South Asian Muslim students due to the limitations faced by, and put on, pupils domestically (and especially on females). South Asian Muslim students under-perform on account of factors that affect them negatively within the home and school: at home, due to patriarchy, and, at school, based on the views that currently exist towards Muslims in Britain. Indian students, on the other hand, are more likely to experience a double advantage: higher socio-economic status and better schools, as well as greater acceptance by teachers and society in general.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium to low
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium to low: This is because of the inadequate sampling and validation reports, the lack of clarity about disentangling the effect of religion and the periodically vague reporting of how many subjects felt a particular thing.
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium to low

Ahmad(2001) Modern traditions? British Muslim women and academic achievement	
Aims of study	To explore the motivations and influences for entering higher education and to consider how they may contribute to current discourses surrounding Muslim women in Britain
Study rationale	1) Research on British South Asian Muslim women and their post-school experiences are mainly limited to analyses of their labour market positions and their position within patriarchal relations of both public and private spheres. One of the aims of the research is, therefore, to question the stereotypical view of South Asian women as 'victims' and recipients of oppression in patriarchal family relations. 2) Existing research focusing on British Muslim young women has not yet acknowledged their academic achievements at graduate level as significant enough to warrant detailed study. 3) Many studies focus on Muslim schoolgirls who have little life experience from which to speak as representatives for their community or culture. 4) Research on British Muslim women students and graduates is minimal. Although more Muslim women are now participating in HE, their accounts of experiences of student life are rarely heard due to their relatively small number, the focus on anti-racism and multiculturalism in primary and secondary schools, and because they chose to remain 'invisible'
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) How far do decisions to study reflect family practices both here and in the country of origin? 2) What perceptions do British Muslim women have of their 'positioning' within British society, their local community and their families? 3) What benefits do they perceive and expect from participation in higher education personally and socially? 4) Do any contradictions exist for British South Asian Muslim women in their pursuit of upward social mobility through the British higher education system? 5) If so, how are such contradictions rationalised?
Study method	Views study: semi-structured interviews to explore the views of Muslim women
Educational setting	Higher education institution: undergraduates, postgraduates and graduates in employment
Number of participants	N = 15
Ages of participants	Interviewees were 19-30 years of age.
Ethnicity of participants	Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi women

Summary of results	1) Acquisition of academic qualifications is particularly important to South Asian families. 2) Muslim parents played a vital role in encouraging their daughters to succeed both academically and professionally. 3) Educational achievement is seen as a 'commodity', an indicator of status and social mobility. 4) The motivating factors to participation in HE were: *Parental encouragement* - Sons were viewed as future breadwinners and were strongly encouraged to pursue vocationally oriented degrees (such as law, medicine, dentistry, engineering and computer science). - Daughters were encouraged to participate in HE as an 'investment', symbolising their value. Education was seen as an insurance against the worst-case scenarios (e.g. break-up of a marriage). - Parental encouragement was also seen as a family expectation or a family ethos. - Fathers were more determined than mothers to see their daughters achieve academically. - Mothers with few educational opportunities or inclination are less likely to place the importance of education on their daughters. *Self-motivation* - Women keen to prove themselves to their family, 'to do something' - The need to be better than the indigenous majority in order to compete in the labour market in the face of concerns over racial discrimination - Personal sense of satisfaction and achievement - Personal interest explains the wider diversity of subject choice. *Other motivating factor* - The opportunity to leave home 5) The main concerns were objections from other family members who feared that going to university would 'anglicise' them or weaken their cultural affiliations. There is also the concern that a highly educated woman might not be able to find a suitable husband.
Conclusions	1) The experience of the Muslim undergraduates and postgraduates in the study indicates that the aspirations of schoolgirls are achievable. 2) To British South Asian Muslim women, degree status confers certain social and personal advantages. Parents are keen to maximise this social prestige by encouraging them to pursue HE.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium 1) It questions the stereotypical perception of young South Asian women as 'victims' and recipients of oppression in patriarchal family relations. 2) It explores the motivating factors that underlie participation in HE for British South Asian Muslim women. However, this has a medium rating on account of the weakness in the sampling strategy and in not actually confirming the social class background of participants.
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	High to medium
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium

Allen A (1998) What are ethnic minorities looking for?	
Aims of study	1) To examine factors influencing decision of ethnic minority and white pupils to enter higher education 2) To explore reasons for choice of HE institutions 3) Reasons for choice of subjects
Study rationale	Not stated as this is a chapter in an edited book based on a collection of papers at a conference
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	Implicit from the aims of the study: 1) What are the factors influencing ethnic minority and white students' decision to enter higher education? 2) What are the reasons why students choose to apply to particular higher education institutions? 3) What are the reasons for ethnic minority and white students ' motives for selecting their current subject of study?
Study method	Cross-sectional study: Postal questionnaire Views study: In-depth interviews and focus group discussions as well as follow-up interviews to explore the survey findings
Educational setting	Higher education institution
Number of participants	238 in postal questionnaire (146 for ethnic minority students and 91 for white students)
Ages of participants	17-21 and over
Ethnicity of participants	Indian 37%; Pakistani 19%; Bangladeshi 3%; black Caribbean 13%; black African 8%; Chinese 20%; other
Summary of results	1) Majority of ethnic minority students (84%) compared with only half (55%) of white students said that higher education is greatly valued by their family. 2) Ethnic minority families were more likely to encourage their offspring to go on to higher education (71% compared with 36% for white). 3) A higher proportion of both ethnic minority and white respondents rated the influence of parents/guardians as important in their decision to enter higher education than other relatives, careers advisors, school teachers or friends. 4) A higher proportion of ethnic minority respondents were more likely than white respondents to rate these family influences as 'very important' or 'important'. 5) Family members were more likely to be sources of information about their current institution for ethnic minority students. 6) Over half (57% for minority ethnic group (MEG) and 56% for white) of respondents had not discussed their career / higher education plans with careers advisors prior to starting their course. 7) MEG students were more likely to cite family pressure and the need to satisfy family aspirations as reasons for wanting to take up a higher education course. 8) MEG students were more likely than white students to cite proximity and reputation of current institution for their choice of institution. 9) Only 20% of MEG students rate the presence of a high proportion of MEG students in an institution as an important factor in their decision-making.

Conclusions	1) The overwhelming support for higher education among ethnic minority families suggests that some ethnic minorities use higher education to alter their class composition and for Asian girls, it is probably used to enhance their chance in the 'marriage market'. 2) This also suggests that higher education institutions need to have a strategy to target existing and past students' siblings, particularly ethnic minority students. 3) Ethnic minority students were more likely to agree that girls were not encouraged to enter higher education. This suggests that there is a greater tendency in SE Asian cultures to encourage boys to enter higher education.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium to low: Very low response rate.
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Low
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Low

Archer and Hutchings (2000) 'Bettering yourself?' Discourses of risk, cost and benefit in ethnically diverse, young working-class non-participants' constructions of higher education	
Aims of study	To explore the views of non-participants and how their constructions of value may constrain or encourage participation in HE
Study rationale	1) Widening participation and increasing student diversity are currently key concerns across higher education sector. 2) There is persistent under-representation of working class students within British universities. 3) Little is known about the viewpoints and understandings of working class non-participants.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) Educational decision-making - What decisions did participants make at various points throughout their careers? - What influenced their decisions? - What alternative options were open to them? 2) Constructions of HE - What are participant's constructions of HE (such as images of universities and students, value of higher education, knowledge of entry qualifications, finances, etc.).
Study method	Views study
Educational setting	Post-compulsory education institution: FE colleges
Number of participants	109 working-class young men and women
Ages of participants	16-30
Ethnicity of participants	White (British, Turkish and Italian); mixed Asian and mixed black; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; black African
Summary of results	1) Family support and encouragement partly explains the high proportions of black and Asian students entering HE. - Young black Caribbean and African women tend to attach social significance to getting a degree and academic failure is seen as social failure. For this group, black familial network provides a strong encouragement towards HE participation. - A number of Asian students also talked about economic and personal encouragement from their families to stay on in education. 2) There is evidence that young ethnic minority working-class people may feel left out and excluded from participation because certain routes to HE are dominated by the white middle-class. 3) The domination of HE by middle-class white students also put off some ethnic minority applicants. 4) Some young ethnic minority people felt that institutionalised racism may hinder their chances of success. 5) Among black respondents, family and community status were seen as important benefits of HE. 6) To the immigrant parents, their children's education is seen as an opportunity to improve their life chances. 7) Among young ethnic minority males, the fear of having to do manual / dirty work is another impetus to get a degree to achieve the social mobility.

Conclusions	Motivations may be economic: for example, as a means of improving working class mobility; tapping under-utilised working class potential for national economic benefit; bolstering university finances through increased funding and ensuring sufficient numbers of students.
	People from working class backgrounds largely agreed with the official discourses as to the potential individual economic benefits of higher education. However, they also constructed HE as inherently risky, demanding great investment and costs and yielding uncertain returns. The discussions spanned the entire process from application through to participation and graduate life.
	The authors suggest that young working class people occupy disadvantaged positions compared with middle class applicants because risks are unevenly distributed within society; this uneven distribution works to reproduce and perpetuate class inequalities. They shared government concerns regarding the individual economic and employment benefits that can follow from participation, but there was less agreement as to personal identity benefits.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium to low
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Low
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium to high
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Low: Although the study is relevant to the review study in that it looks at the barriers to HE participation by working class young people of different ethnic groups, the study sample includes only those who are in FE, most of whom are doing Basic Skills & Vocational courses and had achieved low grades at GCSE. Hence the results of the study cannot be generalised to all working class ethnic minority groups.
	The poor sampling strategy of this study lowers substantially the weight of evidence.

Bagguley and Hussain (2007) The role of higher education in providing opportunities for South Asian women

Aims of study	To explore, examine and seek to explain the different patterns of participation in HE among South Asian women. It addressed the following issues: 1) Barriers to entering university facing different groups 2) The needs of different groups prior to university, during their time at university and their successful exit into viable careers 3) Individual and institutional strategies that are effective in enabling different groups to gain access to university 4) Experiences of different groups of segregated universities, types of qualification, subject areas and the process giving rise to this segregation (p viii)
Study rationale	More South Asian women have been staying on in higher education. However, South Asian women, especially Bangladeshi and Pakistani women, remain the most excluded and lowest-paid sections of the labour market. (p. viii) The authors note that there have been previous studies of South Asian women and education, but none have attempted to compare women of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladesh origin (p 1). Two research sites (Leeds and Birmingham) were chosen after examination of data from the 2001 census of population and consideration of the types of university located in the city (Russell Group and large new universities). Leeds was the principal research location. Birmingham was used in order to validate the findings from Leeds. (p 4)
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) What are the barriers to entering university facing different groups? 2) What are the needs of different groups prior to university, during their time at university and with reference to their successful exit into viable careers? 3) What individual and institutional strategies are effective in enabling different groups to gain access to university? 4) What are the experiences of different groups, segregated universities, types of qualification, subject areas, and the process giving rise to this segregation? (p viii)
Study method	Views study; secondary data analysis
Educational setting	Higher education institution; post-compulsory education institution; sixth-form centres
Number of participants	N = 114 young women: 37 Indian; 51 Pakistani; 26 Bangladeshi Plus a small (no number reported) sample of 'widening participation and careers service' staff in universities
Ages of participants	17 to 21 and under
Ethnicity of participants	Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi

Summary of results	1) Indian women's participation in higher education is already high and growing slowly; Pakistani women's participation is moderate, but growing rapidly; Bangladeshi women's participation is low and growing rapidly. 2) The majority of Bangladeshi and Pakistani women at university are from working class backgrounds or have fathers who are long-term sick, disabled or retired. 3) Although having a degree dramatically reduces Bangladeshi and Pakistani women's unemployment rates, they are much less likely than Indian or white women to obtain professional or managerial employment. 4) The rapid growth in university education among Bangladeshi and Pakistani women is due to high job aspirations and strong parental support. 5) 'Pioneer women', the first in their local communities to go to university in the 1990s, are important role models for Bangladeshi and Pakistani women applying to university. 6) Young Bangladeshi and Pakistani women often attend local universities because their parents prefer them to live at home while studying. 7) Women choose particular universities on account of the courses they offered, lower A level score requirements and the advice of relatives and friends. (p 1, findings)
Conclusions	The study concludes that successful participation in higher education among South Asian women depends upon: local provision of relevant degrees; overcoming assumptions that they are not serious about education; good links between universities and local communities; a critical mass of South Asian students; and effective implementation of equality and diversity policies. (p 1 findings)
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Secondary data analysis: Medium - due to quantificational vagueness Views study: Medium - no report of piloting
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Secondary data analysis: High Views study: Medium to high
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Secondary data analysis: Medium to high Views study: Medium to high
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Secondary data analysis: Medium to high Views study: Medium to hig

Basit (1997) Eastern values; Western milieu- identities and aspirations of adolescent British Muslim girls	
Aims of study	Explores the educational, social and career aspirations of Muslim teenage girls in Britain
Study rationale	1) Very little research has been done on British Muslim girls. 2) There are misunderstandings and ambiguities regarding the role of Muslim women in the present day that sometimes lead to the stereotyping of female Muslims by British society at large. 3) Education in Britain is compulsory until the age of 16 and Muslim parents are legally bound to send their daughters to school, sometimes reluctantly and, in the process, create numerous problems with their demands. Some Muslim girls are not allowed to continue their education and are sent back to their country of origin for an arranged marriage. 4) It is therefore important that more in-depth empirical research is carried out to ascertain the extent and nature of misunderstandings that prevail in this under-researched area, and to identify the reasons for the incongruous demands between home and school.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	To determine the aspirations of adolescent Muslim girls and to ascertain how these aspirations were being shaped
Study method	Views study: Views/aspirations of Muslim girls and how they were shaped by the views and attitudes of parents and teachers
Educational setting	3 secondary schools
Number of participants	24 pupils (8 from each school), 24 parents and 18 teachers
Ages of participants	Sample: Muslim girls, aged 15-16 years
Ethnicity of participants	Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black African
Summary of results	Muslim girls' identity 1) Their identities are dynamic and helical. They change according to the vicissitudes of life. These identities are linked to the multiple aspirations in a complex way. 2) Parental views shaped the ethnic, linguistic and religious identities of the girls. Teachers' views also have an important impact on their identities. Family values 1) There is considerable disparity in perceptions of gender among British Muslim families. 2) Indigenous teachers' definition of freedom for girls means autonomy in personal matters, thereby not complying with parental authority in deciding on attire, recreation and choice of friends. Parents, on the other hand, do not believe that girls are old enough to be autonomous to make rational decisions without parental guidance. 3) It appears that the girls have thought considerably about gender equality and how it impacts on the realisation of their aspirations. Marriage and career 1) All parents want their children to marry and all the girls are willing to marry. Arranged marriage is highly favoured by all the parents and the vast majority of the girls. Many teachers, on the other hand, regard this custom as oppressive. 2) Muslim girls have multiple aspirations: they want to attain educational credentials, have a career, get married and have a family.

continued	**Social dimension of schooling** 1) There is a great deal of incongruity in the way Muslim girls' enthusiasm for school is interpreted by the teachers, the parents and the girls themselves. 2) Muslim girls have positive attitudes towards their teachers, but they do not have the teachers as their role models. 3) The majority of parents have positive views of teachers. While a few may perceive their daughters' teachers as racist, all of them expected their children to hold their teachers in high esteem. The girls internalise these values, behave in class and work diligently. **Academic dimension of schooling** 1) Both parents and pupils value education. The girls work well in class and are pushed by their parents to finish school work before indulging in recreational activities. They want to succeed educationally. 2) All the girls, regardless of ability, want to go into further education. Contrary to what some teachers believe, the girls want to stay on for self-improvement, good career prospects and better marriage chances, and not to postpone marriage. 3) While the academic dimension of the life of these girls is being shaped mainly by their teachers, their parents' views, opinions and aspirations also have an impact, despite the fact that they have minimal knowledge of school procedures.
Conclusions	1) Teachers do not fully understand the religious and cultural values of Muslim girls. Muslim ethos is misunderstood. 2) Teachers are effective where they have been trained to teach in multi-ethnic schools and are therefore sensitive to the issues involved. These are mainly senior teachers with several years of teaching experience. 3) It is not clear how much of the misunderstanding from the teachers is class bias and how much of it is covert racism. 4) Many teachers feel that the girls need sympathetic listeners to discuss their so-called problems. 5) Muslim girls do not fit many teachers' mould of working class adolescents who are supposed to have minimal aspirations. Many teachers find it puzzling that these girls and their parents have aspirations which are endemic to the middle class only. 6) The girls are encouraged by their parents to accept teachers' views on education, but the majority rejects the teachers' opinion about marriage and family. This indicates maturity where the girls are able to analyse and synthesise the ambiguous messages, and determine aspects which they have distance themselves socially from the teachers. 7) Muslim parents want their children to succeed, and some hope to see their children train to become doctors or lawyers. This can be attributed to their lack of knowledge of how ability and achievement relate to university entrance and subsequent careers, and also their desire for their children to prosper. 8) To the parents, education is considered important not only to have a career, but also to have a good marriage. 9) The family bond is a strong and powerful tool in conveying group norms to ensure group perpetuation. These norms are sustained by a religious ethos. 10) Parents want their children to move into the middle class through the routes of education and career. 11) All the girls aspire to further education and many to higher education. Parents are willing to see their daughters though to higher/further education, despite meagre finances.
Weight of evidence A **(trustworthiness in relation to study questions)**	Low
Weight of evidence B **(appropriateness of research design and analysis)**	Medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium to low
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Low

Beck et al. (2006) Safety in stereotypes? The impact of gender and 'race' on young people's perceptions of their post-compulsory education and labour market opportunities	
Aims of study	The article examines the impact of gender and 'race' on young people's perceptions of the educational and labour market opportunities available to them after they complete their compulsory schooling in England.
Study rationale	1) Choices made at an early stage in young people's lives have an important impact on their career trajectory. Apprenticeships, for example, should provide a worthwhile option for young people. 2) In the UK, young people can still leave full-time education at 16 and enter a labour market in which employers are not obliged to provide training. 3) With the changing nature of the UK economy resulting in an expansion of service sectors, the concept of apprenticeship is being fragmented, with some offering just an induction course. 4) The authors therefore argued that, for apprenticeships to contribute to an individual's learning, they need to be structured and accessible to both males and females, and people of all ethnic backgrounds. In this way, young people entering the labour market have an equitable platform for progression.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) What are the processes that give rise to young people's occupational choices? 2) To what extent are young people in a position to make informed 'choices' about their career paths from the position of their gender and ethnicity? 3) How would these opportunity to make 'informed' choices affect their ability to assess the relative merits of remaining in full-time education as opposed to seeking an apprenticeship?
Study method	Cross-sectional study: Questionnaire survey Views study: Focus groups
Educational setting	Secondary school
Number of participants	1,802 questionnaire were distributed. Eight focus groups with around 6 boys and girls
Ages of participants	14-15
Ethnicity of participants	White British (70%); white Irish (1%); white other (2%); mixed white and black Caribbean (3%); mixed white and black African (1%); mixed white and Asian (1%); Indian (3%); Pakistani (4%); Bangladeshi (1%); black Caribbean (4%); black African (3%); Chinese (1%); other Asian (1%)

Summary of results	1) Staying on in full-time education and doing A-levels were the most popular choice among young people surveyed. 2) Chinese and Asian students were most likely to want to continue education and least interested in vocational or work-based training or a full-time job. 3) Black students were the most interested in getting a full-time job and doing a national vocational qualification. 4) Girls are more positive about remaining in full-time education and taking A-levels than boys: 92% of Asian and Chinese girls and 79% Asian and Chinese boys indicated that they wanted to stay on in full-time education; 95% of girls and 82% of boys of these two ethnic groups intended to study for A levels. 5) 48% of the respondents believed that they needed to have A levels or a degree to get well-paid jobs, suggesting that lifestyle aspirations may be an explanation for their choice to stay on in education. Over 50% of the respondents indicated that their long-term plan was to study at university. 6) Another reason for wanting to stay on in education is a way of postponing the decision-making process. The authors speculated that this could be due to lack of information on career routes and opportunities, based on a comment made by one female student in the focus group. 7) Among the ethnic groups, Asian and Chinese students were the most likely to want to go to university (83%) compared with black students (58%) and white students (48%). Among these, 56% of Chinese/Asian, 57% of black and 47% of white students thought they would be working part-time. This suggests that the financial burden of attending university is more acutely felt by ethnic minority students. 8) Black students were the most likely to indicate that they wanted to work full-time and study at a further education college. This group is often perceived as underperforming and was less likely to want to pursue an academic trajectory.
Conclusions	1) Young people receive little practical information and guidance about the consequences of pursuing particular occupational pathways. 2) They are not engaged in any formal opportunities to debate gender and ethnic stereotyping in the labour market. 3) Non-white young people are more reliant on official sources of guidance (as opposed to friends and families) for their labour market knowledge. 4) Good quality apprenticeships can provide a strong platform for lifelong learning. 5) Young people need more detailed information in order to make decisions about whether to take a work-based pathway or pursue full-time education.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Low to medium: Although the questionnaire and focus group interviews provided the information needed to answer their research questions, the findings of the research which were specifically relevant to this systematic review were not expounded on. The conclusions did not highlight those issues that were particularly relevant to this review: for example, the differences in career trajectory among different ethnic groups, and possible explanations for them, such as financial constraints - hence the need to work part-time or desire to take up full-time job after compulsory schooling. These findings have broad policy implications, which were not discussed in detail in the conclusion.
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Low
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Low: Parts which were relevant to the review did not form the focus of this particular study.

Bowl (2001) Experiencing the barriers: Non-traditional students entering higher education	
Aims of study	To explore the impact of the transition to mainstream higher education from the point of view of the participants themselves; to move away from institutional perspectives and to gain an insight into the experiences of learners entering a range of full- and part-time higher education courses. It sought to examine how the institutional rhetoric of 'mass higher education' was experienced in practice by non-traditional students – primarily women from working class and minority ethnic backgrounds. (p 143) To develop a participatory research design to encourage mature students to speak directly to an academic audience and to reflect on their experiences as they made the decision to aim for higher education entry. (p. 141).
Study rationale	Factors have combined to stimulate the growth in numbers of mature first-time entrants to higher education. Study is based on the REACHOUT project which was set up in 1996, sponsored by a government grant aimed at increasing levels of entry to full- and part-time higher education. A researcher was appointed development worker and researcher of the project. The researcher worked alongside a group of non-traditional entrants to higher education. (p 142)
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	Not stated
Study method	Views study; case study
Educational setting	Higher education institution Other educational setting: REACHOUT project
Number of participants	32 mature 'non-traditional' students (p 142) Initial interviews with 17 students (p 144) One year later 12 further interviews (p 144) Case study of 3 participants (p 145)
Ages of participants	21 and over
Ethnicity of participants	Black Caribbean students: participants 2 and 3 (out of 3); ethnic affiliation of participant 1 not stated
Summary of results	(Beginning at p 152): What emerges from the three descriptions and from those of others involved in the study is their engagement as 'frustrated participants' rather than 'non-participants' in education, as people who have battled often with little support, to find an educational and career direction. From their later descriptions of university study, a picture emerges of people struggling against financial poverty, lack of time, tutor indifference and institutional marginalisation. Schooldays: Description of schooldays revealed aspects of school experience which led them to feel that higher education was not something to which they could aspire. Experience of 'difference' at school and lack of family information and support were two key factors. They felt different on the basis of background language and culture, and they sensed they were viewed with caution and distance by teachers. Participants felt disadvantaged by their parents' outsider status and the lack of information and guidance they were able to offer as a result. It also became clear that these disadvantages were not compensated for by official advice, support and guidance which participants received from careers advisors. *Advice, support and guidance* Informational disadvantage was compounded by the way in which careers advice was offered, particularly to those who had not by the age of 16, been considered successful in their school careers. Careers advice was described as short-term, negative and based on existing qualifications, rather than on an assessment of future potential or ambitions.

	Frustrated participants Not a previous lack of experience but high level of engagement in education and training. Those interviewed were not non-participants' but 'frustrated participants' .They had been educationally active, but unable to use fully their education and skills. Frustrated by lack of guidance and support. *Anticipating change* Participants often had little contact with university prior to entry. Stakes of change are high; participants stressed the practical, rather than academic, challenges of university life. *University entry* Most participants experienced higher education entry as traumatic and isolating. The lack of money was identified as the most pressing difficulty; financial entitlements were not established until well into first term, meaning they were dogged by uncertainty. No allowance is currently made by the government for the childcare costs of students. Participants who often had to combine study with childcare and family responsibilities, and in some cases paid work, could not give as much time to their studies as they would like. *Institutional barriers* Within university itself, another set of obstacles was to be overcome: learning the rules of academia. Difficulties included time management, reading and structuring assignments, understanding what tutors wanted and understanding the advice and support tutors were prepared to offer. Overall, the onus seemed to be on the students themselves to adapt to the institution and its rules, rather than on the institution and its main players to adapt to the fresh perspectives which participants brought with them.
Conclusions	The picture that emerged of the non-traditional student was of a highly motivated but frustrated participant unable to gain access to support and constructive advice. Transition to higher education has complex practical and emotional implications. From the non-traditional students' perspective, life arrangements must be made before entry to the institution and there is an assumption that institution has little interest in the life circumstances of non-traditional students. Dislocation seems to centre on class, gender and ethnic difference between the overall ethos of the institution and that of the non-traditional student. Participants whose educational aims were stated in terms of survival as much as in terms of learning and academic enrichment found that the voice of their experience, as working class people on low income and as black women was silenced. (pp 157-158)
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Low
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Low
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Low

Clayden and Stein (2002) The way it is: young people on race, school exclusion and leaving care	
Aims of study	To investigate the views of three distinct groups of young people who are most likely to face barriers to education and employment
Study rationale	1) This study is a second phase of research into young people's attitudes and aspirations. The first phase, published as It's Like That, investigated the unemployed, those who became pregnant early and who involved with criminal justice system. 2) There are few studies seeking to understand the views of young people, and even fewer that have looked at those who face particular challenges of leaving care, being permanently excluded from school and coming from a minority ethnic community. 3) The researchers believed that an understanding of the motivations, concerns and hopes of these disadvantaged youths could help remove barriers to success.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	What are the attitudes and aspirations of young people with regard to education and employment? With particular reference to ethnic minority, the questions are about: - cultural identity and community - education and employment - racism - politics and citizenship - future aspirations
Study method	Views study: focus groups, in-depth interviews and face-to-face questionnaire interviews
Educational setting	Not stated
Number of participants	10 in-depth interviews, 4 focus groups (not clear how many in each group) and 300 face-to-face interviews
Ages of participants	11 to 21 and over
Ethnicity of participants	Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; others implied, but not specified
Summary of results	1) Young people from ethnic minority groups felt strongly about their British identity and often prioritised this over their cultural heritage. 2) They valued family support (in particular, Asian students). 3) They were generally happy with and integrated into communities and appreciated the benefits of cultural diversity. 4) Religion was something that set them apart from mainstream British culture. 5) Variations exist among ethnic groups regarding attitudes to education, with Bangladeshi and African Caribbean young people consistently the most pessimistic and withdrawn. 6) The ethnic group students valued education. To them, staying on in further education was a priority: 77% wanted to continue in full-time education. Qualifications were seen as vital to securing the job they want in the future. It is unclear how (5) and (6) are reconciled. 7) They reported experiencing prejudice both at school and in the labour market, but felt they could cope with racism and were determined to succeed. 8) One in three felt that their race put them at a disadvantage. Young people in rural areas appeared to experience a greater degree of discrimination than their urban peers. 9) 'Teachers play an extremely important role in re-engaging pupils who have become disaffected with mainstream education' (p 26), although few details are offered.

Conclusions	1) Local education authorities need to be clearer and stricter about monitoring the performance of young people by ethnic origin to raise pupil attainment across the board. 2) Need to diagnose and spot warning signs of institutional racism in schools, among employers and public bodies.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium to low
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium to low

Connor et al. (2004) Why the difference? A closer look at higher education minority ethnic students and graduates	
Aims of study	To identify the factors influencing the participation, retention and progression in HE of minority ethnic students
Study rationale	The study was conducted to address the current policy concerns about the participation and achievement in education and employment of the minority ethnic population in UK. Research has shown that, although minority ethnic groups (MEGs) are relatively well represented in aggregate in HE study, their representation across the sector is variable. This study aims to take a closer look at the differences between ethnic groups and their causes, and also to provide a more up-to-date perspective, taking account of the various wider changes in HE and the changing nature of the UK's minority ethnic population.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) What are the various factors which encourage and inhibit the participation, retention and progression in HE of minority ethnic students? 2) Assess the relative importance of these factors for various subgroups of minority ethnic students, including subgroups within, as well as between, minority ethnic groups. The subgroups of interest are gender, age, family background, geographical location, entry qualification, subject and mode of study, type of institution, and other personal circumstances.
Study method	Cross-sectional study: questionnaire survey Views study: interviews Secondary data analysis: analysis of HESA and UCAS data
Educational setting	Higher education institution; post-compulsory education institution; secondary school
Number of participants	Student survey and interviews: 465 white and 70 minority ethnic students, plus a subset of 715 minority ethnic students (to 'boost' the survey sample) HE entrant survey and interview: 957 year 13 students took part in the questionnaire survey; of these 20 took part in telephone interviews and a further 22 took part in face-to-face interviews. Parent survey and interviews: 80 parents Graduate survey: 262 agreed, but 103 (39%) were interviewed.
Ages of participants	17-21 and over
Ethnicity of participants	Mixed heritage; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; black African; Chinese; black other; Asian other

Summary of results	Although the study looks at participation and routes or trajectories to HE and labour market among the different ethnic groups, for the purposes of this review, only the factors influencing HE entry are summarised here. The report suggests that prior attainment and entry route are not the only determinants of HE entry or choice of study. Other key influencing factors are as follows: 1) Influence of parents and families. There was generally a stronger push for minority ethnic groups than white students to succeed through gaining higher qualifications. For potential entrants, it was given as the strongest factor, although parental influence on the final choice of institution and course was 'limited' (p.33). Parental influence thus had a greater effect on minority ethnic young people in steering them towards certain courses, especially the professional/vocational subjects, such as medicine, law, business and IT. 2) 'Careers teachers and the Careers Service were viewed as more influential among all minority ethnic students than white students' (p 29: potential entrant survey) 3) Expectations on economic gain/career advantage. On average, individual minority ethnic potential students hold more positive attitudes about outcomes and benefits of HE than white students. 4) Concerns about student finance. This was not a big disincentive to go on to HE for minority ethnic groups compared with white potential students as a whole (though differences within ethnic groups help shape views on financial issues (e.g. likelihood of living at home, age, socio-economic class and parental support). The study also found that MEGs are more likely to leave early from degree courses than white students; black students being more likely than Asian students. However, once entry qualification and entry route are considered, and differences in subject, age and gender are controlled, the ethnic disadvantage reduces considerably. There is some evidence that staff support, feelings of isolation and cultural diversity, term-time working, different financial situations of MEGs and white students may be affecting students' likelihood to stay on.
Conclusions	An important conclusion is that the influence of ethnicity on decisions about HE entry is a powerful one, but not equally so for all minority ethnic groups. Being a member of a particular ethnic group is one of a variety of factors affecting decision-making about going on to HE. Some of these factors interact with each other. In particular, it is likely that the strong positive 'parental support/commitment to education' effect is mitigating some negative effects, such as being in a lower socio-economic class. This would explain why, despite having lower socio-economic class profiles on average, minority ethnic groups are more likely to enter full-time degree courses
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Secondary data analysis: high Cross-sectional / views study: high
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Secondary data analysis: high Cross-sectional / views study: high
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Secondary data analysis: high Cross-sectional / views study: high
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Secondary data analysis: high Cross-sectional / views study: high

Crozier et al. (2005) Parents, children and the school experience: Asian families' perspectives	
Aims of study	To develop knowledge of the understanding that parents from Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage have of the educational system and of their children's educational experience, and to discern their role in relation to their children's education, together with the children's perspectives on these issues (p 1)
Study rationale	Parental involvement is arguably pivotal for government education policy. The research was prompted by the lack of research on parents from these ethnic groups, together with reported national underachievement of Pakistani and Bangladeshi school students. (p 1) Two towns were chosen because a Bangladeshi community resided in one and a Pakistani community resided in the other. (p 1)
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	What are the specific needs, concerns and constraints that impede a positive educational experience for the children and the involvement of parents? Are there any positive features or possibilities that could contribute to the improvement of educational achievement and enhanced experience? What are the needs of ethnic minority groups? (pp 1-2)
Study method	Views study Action research
Educational setting	Primary and secondary schools
Number of participants	591 parents and young people interviewed 2 youth groups and 15 schools assessed 69 key members of staff and 5 youth workers interviewed (p 3)
Ages of participants	11 to 21 and over
Ethnicity of participants	Pakistani; Bangladeshi students
Summary of results	*Bangladeshi and Pakistani parents' knowledge, views and expectations of the education system* Most Bangladeshi parents knew very little about the educational system, what their children did in school, or how they were progressing. They did not express a need to know more; general satisfaction with their children's schools. The majority of parents believed their children were doing well academically and were not having problems even though seemingly this was not always the case. Level of knowledge and understanding among the Pakistani parents was more mixed. They were generally satisfied with their children's primary school, but were more critical and discerning about the secondary schools. Pakistani parents agreed with the school monitoring homework and the children's safety. A particular concern was that of teachers' low expectations of their children. Parents in both locations expressed concerns about racism. *Asian parents' hopes and aspirations for their children* All the parents, irrespective of ethnicity or socio-economic status, expressed a value of education and desire for their children to do well. Some parents had high aspirations, wanting them to go to university. Many parents said it was up to their children to decide and depended on their ability; this was particularly prevalent in the Bengali community. There was evidence of mothers (especially Pakistani, including those with limited education themselves) encouraging their daughters to further their education. Girls were expected to get married, but it was considered good to have education to fall back on.

| | *Nature of the relationship between the Asian parents and their children's school, parents' role and the influences*
Limited contact between the Bengali parents and the schools, contact most often instigated by the school. In the Pakistani community contact between parents and schools varied.
i) Parents as consumers: Actively chose secondary school, knowledge of what their children did, attended parents consultations but rarely other school events, provide resources for their children; generally happy with the school
ii) Independent parents: Maintained minimal contact with the school, sometimes attended parent evenings, knew little about what their children did in school, monitored homework but not proactive. Generally satisfied with information they received from school
iii) Non-participant parents: Virtually no contact with the school; tended to leave education decisions to children, knew little about educational system.
A number of reasons for lack of involvement included cultural factors, schools not taking into account needs of parents, lack of knowledge about education system, lack of tradition of questioning professionals.

Young people's views on their education, and on their parents' involvement
Most participants did talk about importance of education as a means of securing a good job and enjoying a good future, but some had no understanding of how to position themselves appropriately to achieve their aspirations.
Many Bengali and Pakistani students talked about teachers having low expectations of them.
Racial harassment and abuse was a prominent theme.
For some girls in Shipton, there was evidence of not being allowed to do some activities on account of parental concerns. Evidence of girls exploring different 'ways of being' and 'self-surveillance'. Boys seemed to have more freedom from the parental gaze.
Students very independent of their parents with regard to their education; they were motivated by a desire in many cases to protect their parents. They pointed out that their parents were interested and gave them encouragement.
Year 6 students were positive about school, like their older counterparts they were vague about what they did at school; SATs seemed to be a predominant feature of their final year. Some evidence of children not being allowed to use their community languages in school.

The schools' view of the relationship with their Bangladeshi or Pakistani parents and their expectations of these parents
Only one secondary school monitored according to ethnicity and attendance at parents' evenings, and no formal monitoring of attendance took place at other events. Teacher's views on parental involvement were therefore based on subjective perceptions.
Limited contact with Bengali parents lead headteachers to believe that parents were not interested in their children's education. Primary school heads said Pakistani parents more likely to attend if invited personally. Also concerned about extended visits to Bangladesh and Pakistan; only in a minority of cases was work provided for the children to do when they were away. Primary schools had closer relationships with parents than secondary schools.
Bilingual assistants were seen as a successful strategy. |
| Conclusions | Important differences between Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities: Pakistani community displays more diversity in its educational knowledge and behaviour in relation to education; however, overall, Pakistani parents have limited, and Bangladeshi parents almost no, educational knowledge.
The extended family played an important role in children's education. This finding challenges the individualisation of parental involvement as a tool for promoting the success of the individual child.
Analysis also questioned the cultural difference model as an explanation for parents' lack of involvement; it was considered that a combination of factors coalesce to impede parents' greater engagement with the school and also undermines the development of their knowledge and understanding of education.
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continued	For young people themselves, their progress is hampered by a lack of understanding of the post-16 market, including university entrance, and what they need to do early on in their educational careers to ensure success. The impact of racial harassment cannot be underestimated in its impact on their psycho-social wellbeing. Finally, some schools give very little consideration to the ethnic and cultural diversity of their client group. Some are unsure how to address their diverse populations, others are developing some effective strategies to ensure school is welcoming; this is still, however, a long way from participatory democracy
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium: No details on samples, data collection tools, and did not present data/information from children, parents, staff (i.e. direct quotations)
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	High to medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium

Daleet al.(2000) Routes into education and employment for young Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in the UK	
Aims of study	To examine the educational and employment experiences and aspirations of young Pakistani and Bangladeshi people living in Oldham, Greater Manchester
Study rationale	1) Oldham was chosen because it has a large Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. 2) Oldham is also a relatively self-contained labour market and provided the opportunity to build on previous research in the area. 3) Oldham is within easy travelling distance of Manchester with implications for time and travel costs. 4) The minority ethnic population in Oldham is young (mean age is 21 for Pakistani young people and 20 for Bangladeshi young people), projected to double between 1997and 2011. This means that there will be a big increase in the numbers of young Pakistani and Bangladeshi people going through the educational system and entering the labour market. 5) An understanding of the educational qualifications and occupational aspirations of these young people and how they differ from those of their parental generation is important, not only to policymakers, but also to academic analysts.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) What are the educational and occupational aspirations of young people? 2) How does this vary by gender? 3) What is the role of parental aspirations? 4) What are the barriers to achieving them? 5) How does this vary by gender? 6) How do young women envisage their future in terms of work and family life?
Study method	Views study
Educational setting	University; FE and sixth-form college; secondary school
Number of participants	Total number of young people interviewed: 72 (This number on page 966 does not tally with the number given by the authors on page 948.) Number of adult women interviewed: 43 One director of the Careers Service in Oldham was also interviewed.
Ages of participants	11 to 21 and over
Ethnicity of participants	Pakistani; Bangladeshi The young people were born in Britain; the adult women were not necessarily born in the UK.
Summary of results	*Educational attainment* - Pakistani and Bangladeshi young people are more likely to stay in education post-16 than white young people. - Asian young people are more likely to retake GCSEs and less likely to be doing A-levels than white young people. - South Asian young people in post-16 education have lower-level qualifications than the white population. - Young Asian people associated staying on in education as being closely associated with obtaining qualifications, as qualifications were seen as the only route to a good job. - 'Most' young Asian people found that they had to be better than white young people in order to compete in the labour market, suggesting the presence of an 'ethnic penalty'. - The ability to remain in post-16 depended heavily on parental support.

Role of parents and family in educational choices

- Parents provided material and emotional support in young people's educational attainment.
- Parental support was also seen as pressure to continue in education when the young person would rather have left.
- Some parents were reluctant for daughters to continue in education in favour of an early marriage.
- Parental aspirations were solely based on achieving success rather than the intrinsic values of education associated with white middle class values.
- For some young men, role models within the family were deciding factors in continuing education.
- Young people felt that their parents placed great value on an academic route and were not keen to consider alternative non-academic routes to success.
- Parents and family members were a greater influence on young Asian's choices of career than career advisers or teachers.

Gender differences in post-compulsory education

- Education was important for both boys and girls.
- Boys, however, faced greater pressure to remain in education as it was often regarded as their responsibility to provide for the extended family.
- For girls, education was important in that it provided them with economic independence.
- Girls faced greater restrictions and it was suggested that this was an explanation for why they did better at school as they spent more time at home doing school work.
- For the Oldham Asian community, it was important that the girls were not seen as behaving inappropriately, thereby bringing dishonour to the family. This meant that some girls in traditional families were not allowed to go to FE college or university on their own. Those who allowed their daughters go to university or to study abroad faced considerable community pressure.
- Girls were allowed to continue post-16 education if their parents were assured that they would not bring dishonour to the family.
- Girls often had to negotiate with their parents to be allowed to continue in education.
- Parents were more willing to let their daughters continue education in Oldham than outside, as both the FE college and sixth-form college were in the centre of Oldham. It was not only easier for parents to keep an eye on their daughters, but also for the girls to get family support. Some parents even escorted their daughters to and from college.
- Role models within the family helped in providing reassurances.
- However, interviews with married women suggest that many had been prevented from continuing their education.
- The influence of both husband and mother-in-law was reported.

Uptake of higher education (from national statistics)

- There has been an increase in uptake of higher education in Oldham. National data shows that applications for first or higher degrees from Bangladeshi and Pakistani women increased (83% and 60% respectively) between 1994 and 1999. Applications from white women showed only a small increase, while those for white men fell.
- Enrolments for first degree courses also increased (95% for Bangladeshi and 71% for Pakistani women) between 1994/5 and 1998/99. Increases for Bangladeshi and Pakistani men were smaller (21% and 44 % respectively).

Conclusions

1) Educational qualifications are highly valued by Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities.
2) Young Pakistani and Bangladeshi young people interviewed had high educational and occupational aspirations.
3) Post-16 participation rates were higher than for white young people. Possible explanations included the cultural value of education among Asians, the desire by parents to achieve success for their children, the ethnic penalty incurred in seeking employment and a desire to succeed.
4) Asian girls faced greater barriers to higher education than boys.
5) Despite the positive findings, there was still evidence of alienation by some students. (p 962)

Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Low: As explained above, little of the interview data from young working women was reflected in the paper. The majority of the views cited were from men/boys, even though the paper is about routes to education and employment for young Pakistani and Bangladeshi women.
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Low
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Low

Education Commission (2004) The educational experiences and achievements of black boys in London schools 2000-2003	
Aims of study	To carry out an inquiry into the attainment of black boys in London schools, with a focus on boys of African-Caribbean heritage
Study rationale	Analysis of the 2002 post conference survey indicated that the three issues of greatest concern for delegates were as follows: - pupil exclusions - helping black children achieve in school - schools failing black boys Concern was also expressed about the difficulties many black teachers experienced within the education system. In response to these concerns, Diane Abbott approached Mayor Ken Livingstone with a request for support for the establishment of an education commission which would carry out an inquiry into the attainment of black boys in London schools, with a focus on boys of African-Caribbean heritage.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) To develop an understanding of the schooling experiences of black pupils and to ascertain the views of pupils in regard to what practical steps need to be taken in order to raise standards 2) To ascertain the views of parents with regard to their experiences within the English schooling system, and what practical steps need to be taken in order to improve levels of achievement for black and minority pupils in general, and with specific reference to pupils from African-Caribbean backgrounds 3) To ascertain the views of teachers with regard to what practical steps need to be taken in order to improve levels of achievement of black pupils in general and with specific reference to pupils from African-Caribbean backgrounds
Study method	Cross-sectional study: questionnaire survey Views study Secondary data analysis: National Pupil Database
Educational setting	Primary school; secondary school
Number of participants	Questionnaire survey: 464 Focus groups conducted in 4 schools for mixed group of up to 9 students; unclear how many focus groups were conducted Pupil and parent interviews: 7 African Caribbean pupils, 6 mothers of boys who had been excluded Parent focus groups / teacher focus groups: focus groups conducted in five schools; unclear how many people in focus groups or how many were conducted.
Ages of participants	Year 7 to year 10 (13 years to 19 years of age)
Ethnicity of participants	White (English, Scottish and Welsh); mixed heritage; black Caribbean; black African; Chinese; Asian (not specified whether Indian, Bangladeshi or Pakistani)

Summary of results	1) Primary aged pupils generally enjoyed school and saw it as a place of learning and adventure.
	2) Secondary aged pupils did not find school as enjoyable, some describing it as 'prison like' and teachers bearing down on them.
	Experience of black pupils
	- Low teacher expectations played a major part in the underachievement of African-Caribbean pupils. Inadequate attention, unfair behaviour management practices, disproportionately high levels of exclusion and an inappropriate curriculum were the main factors.
	- Negative peer pressure, prevalence of negative and stereotyped media images of black youth, inadequate school resources and facilities, high teacher turnover, insufficient levels of parental involvement were also critical factors.
	- Pupils in all phases had concerns about school work not being challenging enough, there being too much repetition, and not enough practical or creative activity (e.g. pupils would like to see more black history in the curriculum).
	Black teachers
	- Pupils felt that black teachers were more encouraging, provided greater levels of support and higher expectations for academic success They took extra time to explain and were more prepared to trust black pupils with responsibilities.
	- Increased number of black teachers should be seen as part of a holistic solution to raising levels of attainment.
	Black parents / carers
	- Most pupils were able to communicate with their parents on a range of issues around school and life in general, but boys generally did not like to talk about school at home.
	- Pupils said they needed a high level of encouragement and interest from their parents about school, and to be trusted by their teachers and parents.
	- African-Caribbean pupils were least likely to believe that they received good levels of support at home.
	- Many parents wanted to have higher levels of involvement in their children's schooling, but were often unclear about how they could assist, or had their offers of assistance rebuffed.
Conclusions	1) The findings suggest that African-Caribbean parents need to identify more clearly the ways in which their children need to be supported and encouraged in their school work.
	2) One of the strategies to be adopted would be to focus the school's efforts to engage parents largely around teaching and learning, rather than on issues of behaviour.
	3) The fact that African-Caribbean pupils had the lowest levels of achievement for all ethnic groups at KS 4, despite considerable educational reforms suggest that a national, wide-ranging strategy, with a strong lead from National Government to reverse this trend.
	4) The quality and stability of London's teaching force is of critical importance to the quality of schooling of African-Caribbean pupils. The retention, recruitment and promotion of black teachers and other educators should be addressed as a matter of urgency.
	5) Black parents must increase their levels of involvement in their children's schools. Schools likewise should accept the necessity for a full partnership with parents. Black parents must ensure adequate supervision of their children (e.g. in the completion of homework).
	6) There needs to be a change in the curriculum to reflect the cultures, heritage and experiences of African and African-Caribbean communities. Black pupils also need higher levels of creativity if they are to become highly motivated and independent learners.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Cross-sectional / views study: medium
	Secondary data analysis: medium to hig
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Cross-sectional / views study: low
	Secondary data analysis: medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Cross-sectional / views study: low
	Secondary data analysis: low
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Cross-sectional / views study: medium to low
	Secondary data analysis: medium to low

Fitzgerald et al. (2000) Black Caribbean Young Men's Experiences of Education and Employment

Aims of study	1) To provide information about the experiences and attitudes to education and training of fairly, well-qualified black Caribbean men, who were excluded in a previous qualitative research study 2) To assess awareness of, and attitudes towards, the New Deal for 18-24 year-olds
Study rationale	The study builds on a previous study published by DfEE in 1996. The earlier study looked at black Caribbean young men, but interviewed only men with few or nor qualifications. So no information was available for young men with more qualifications and, therefore, potentially more successful in the labour market. Secondly, as the 1996 study was qualitative in nature, the author felt that its findings could not be seen as representative of all black Caribbean young men.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	Implicit from the aims, the research questions are as follows: 1) What are the experience of employment and training of young men whose family origins were black Caribbean and who are fairly qualified? 2) What are the attitudes towards employment and training of the above group of people? 3) What are the factors which contribute to labour market success and factors which restrict labour market success? 4) What are the attitudes towards previous and current education? 5) What are the family background and parental attitudes to education and employment?
Study method	Cross-sectional study (questionnaire survey); views study
Educational setting	Home
Number of participants	N = 264
Ages of participants	17 to 21 and over
Ethnicity of participants	Black Caribbean
Summary of results	Key findings: 1) 73% of the sample had done any form of post-16 education. About a quarter of them had not. 2) Those aged 18-24 were significantly more likely to have undergone post-16 education than those aged 25-39 (80% compared with 65%). 3) The majority of those who were in education or training were working; only 8% were not. If those who were working part-time while in full-time education were included, the proportion rose to 14%. This implies that the majority were working full-time. 4) The majority of the respondents had not be involved in any full-time education, with those aged 25-30 more likely to do so than those aged 18-24. 5) Less than 1% of those aged 25-30 had spent more than three-quarters of the time between July 1996 and July 1998 in full-time education. 6) 17% of black Caribbean young men had attended a school outside UK. 47% had attended more than one school, with those who have attended a school outside UK more likely to do so. 7) A third of the students (36%) of respondents attended a school where 'all, nearly all' or 'most' pupils were of black Caribbean origin. About half attended a school with 'some' and only 12% attended a school with 'hardly any' black Caribbean pupils. Only 45% of black Caribbean pupils attended a school where 'all', 'nearly all' or 'most' pupils were white. This is probably because the sample was made up of black Caribbean young men living in 50% of postcode areas most densely populated by this group.

	8) 59% of the sample had at least one vocational qualification. Almost one-quarter had a higher vocational qualification, such as HNC/HND or an ONC/OND. 9) Half of those aged 25-30 had no vocational qualification, but only one-third (35%) of those aged 18-24 did not. 10) They were more likely to have a vocational qualification than an academic one. 85% had no post-16 academic qualifications compared with only 41% who had no vocational qualifications. 11) Black Caribbean young men aged 18-24 were more likely to hold an NVQ as their highest vocational qualification than those aged 25-30. 12) 7% of the sample had a first or higher degree. This is an improvement over the 1991 census, but the trend is in line with that of other ethnic group which have also seen increased participation rates in higher education. 13) Only 24% of black Caribbean young men had any academic qualifications, 10% had vocational qualifications only and 49% had vocational and academic qualifications. 16% had no qualifications at all. 14) Among those who participated in post-16 education, 14% finished this before the age of 18 and over half finished between the ages of 18 and 21. Average age of completion for those who continued in post-16 was 19.5. The authors explained that this was perhaps due to the tendency for this group to study vocational, rather then academic, qualifications. 15) 83% who had done post-16 education found their courses useful to their future job prospects. 16) The most common reasons for doing post-16 courses were career development (72%), getting a job (41%) and thinking the course would help them to change jobs (20%). 17) The personal motivations for doing the course were to improve knowledge and ability in subject (72%), to do something different (50%) and to get a foundation before starting on another course (20%). 18) The majority who had taken a post-16 education were also like to continue some form of learning, or training (83%). 19) The majority of respondents and their friends and family felt that it's important to have good qualifications to make it easier to get good jobs. 20) The majority of respondents were positive about their secondary school. 73% said they enjoyed school, 53% said they were treated fairly well by teachers, slightly over half said they had a good education and that lessons were interesting. Half of respondents said that their teachers listened to them and over half (56%) said their teachers encouraged them to do their best. 21) Under half (45%) did not think their secondary education was useful to their working life. 22) Most common factors hindering their academic performance were peer pressure (34%) and lack of self-motivation (e.g. being lazy, 32%). 10% said they did not get on with teachers and 14% said their teachers did not encourage them to do their best. 23) Racism was rarely mentioned as an issue. 25% said that they had experienced racism at school, college or university.
Conclusions	The study suggests that black Caribbean young men do not identify with an academic pathway to the same extent as white young men and that the secondary school system has problems at fully addressing the needs, behaviour and associations of this group. A similar pattern was observed in their attitude to employment. They generally have a positive outlook towards employment which is not mirrored in terms of outcomes. The data showed a link between successful market outcomes and qualifications, so it is likely that much of the 'under-employment' was related to poor attainment of academic qualifications. Multivariate analysis and other market research suggested that ethnic minorities were often geographically restrictive in their job search activities. The research highlighted the problem of not having access to private transport as a barrier to successful labour market outcomes.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	High
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium: The study presents the views of and attitudes of black Caribbean young men and their family towards education. To this extent, it is relevant. However, it could be higher if the study also conducts a regression analysis identifying factors influencing post-16 participation, rather than just labour market success so that the important influencing factors can be determined.
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium: The study's main focus appears to be on labour market success of black Caribbean young men.
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium

Francis and Archer (2004) British-Chinese pupils' constructions of education, gender and post-16 pathways	
Aims of study	The aims were to: 1) Examine the constructions of British Chinese pupils and their parents concerning the value of education and their aspirations for the future concerning education and occupation 2) Investigate British Chinese pupils' constructions of gender and learning 3) Analyse any differences and similarities in construction of gender and learning according to the Chinese students' gender, social class and ability 4) Examine the perceptions of teachers concerning British Chinese pupils' gender constructions and approaches to learning
Study rationale	1) Although British Chinese pupils tend to achieve highly in the British education system, they remain relatively invisible within social and educational theory and research. The little research in this area tended to be simplistic, with stereotypical portrayals of the Chinese people, ignoring the discrimination and difficulties faced by many Chinese people in Britain. 2) The construction of gender among pupils of British Chinese origin was an unresearched area.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) What are British Chinese pupils and their parents' perceptions of the value of education and their aspirations for the future concerning education and occupation? 2) What are British Chinese pupils' perceptions of gender and learning? 3) What are the differences and similarities in perceptions of gender and learning according to the Chinese students' gender, social class and ability? 4) What are the perceptions of teachers concerning British Chinese pupils' gender perceptionss and approaches to learning?
Study method	Views study: semi-structured interviews with pupils, parents and teachers
Educational setting	Secondary school
Number of participants	N = 140: 80 British Chinese pupils from years 10 and 11 (48 girls and 32 boys); 30 teaching staff; 30 parents
Ages of participants	11-16
Ethnicity of participants	Chinese
Summary of results	1) Both British-Chinese parents and their children valued education. They saw this mainly as a means to better employment. However, parents were more likely to emphasise the intrinsic value of education, while the pupils were more instrumental in their views. 2) Pupils and parents mobilised a range of social, cultural and economic resources to support achievement, (e.g. deployment of 'family capital'). 3) Almost all parents said that they would like, or expected, their children to go to university. Only one parent said it depended on them as it was their choice. All pupils said they would undertake further education after their GCSEs; only three did not intend to go to university, eight were undecided and two noted that it depended on their grades). Responses did not vary with social class. 4) All pupils aspired towards business and professional occupations; none aspired to manual jobs. Medicine, law, IT/computing and architect were the most popular aspirations. 5) Aspirations of British Chinese girls appeared to be less gender stereotypical than those in other studies. British Chinese girls were more willing to choose business/technical jobs than other groups of girls, including computing, forensic scientist, finance/city job, pharmacy and medicine. 6) British Chinese pupils seemed to have a more gender-stereotypical view of school subjects than other ethnic groups. Only half of the boys and girls felt that the sexes were equally able at all subjects.

	7) British Chinese pupils also differed from other pupils in terms of gender and subject preference. Mathematics was the most popular subject among both boys and girls. British Chinese pupils of both genders were less likely to choose drama as a favourite subject compared with non-Chinese pupils. British Chinese boys were also less likely to favour PE than mixed-ethnicity group boys. 8) Respondents were divided as to whether or not British Chinese boys participated in 'laddish' behaviour. Although a quarter of the pupils argued that British Chinese boys did not behave in 'laddish' ways, the majority asserted that some British Chinese boys did behave in a 'laddish' manner, but only mildly. However, there were diverse performances of masculinity among the interview sample. Similarly, while girls were portrayed as deferent, diligent, de-sexualised and 'ruthlessly repressed' by teachers, the girls themselves drew a far more diverse picture, illustrating resistance, challenge, non-conformity and fun. 9) Respondents' constructions of themselves as pupils were vague. No clear pattern emerged in relation to gender, social class and ability. Many respondents represented themselves as highly applied, conscientious and diligent. 10) Respondents were highly positive about themselves and constructed themselves as 'good' pupils. 11) There were no differences between middle-class and working-class boys and girls in their constructions of gender ability. However, higher ability boys and girls were more likely to say that genders are not equally able at different subjects. 12) Ability did not influence subject preference. Mathematics, art and science were evenly represented as favourites across ability groups, with the exception of science, where only one girl from lower ability group chose it as a favourite subject. 13) No social class differences were found within pupils' views about their own attitudes to learning. 14) Teachers were unanimous in their view that British Chinese pupils' relatively high achievement was attributable to family and home culture: that is, a high valuing of education in 'Chinese culture', high parental expectations and strong 'pushing' or encouragement of their children. Chinese family structures which promote 'obedience to authority' and/or respect (for teachers/parents), combined with a 'natural ethic' to work hard were also frequently mentioned. However, British Chinese girls were more likely to be viewed as passive and 'unnecessarily quiet' by teachers. This was often constructed by teachers as a result of their oppression. 10 teachers maintained that 'laddishness' was noticeably absent in Chinese boys.
Conclusions	1) The high valuing of education by both parents and pupils is integrated within a discourse of 'Chinese culture'. British Chinese pupils constructed themselves as valuing education and derive self-esteem from this in relation to their learning and classroom conduct. Despite being viewed as positive by British Chinese pupils themselves, these attitudes are not always read positively by British educationalists, who sometimes regard these behaviours as pathological. This is because views of learning constructed by many British Chinese pupils do not completely 'fit' the Western (masculine and middle-class) models of the 'ideal pupil' and or 'correct' approaches to learning. 2) Issues of ethnicity and gender are threaded through the pupils' ideas and preferences in relation to education: for example, the approach to mathematics in Chinese families and consequent preference for mathematics among Chinese pupils. There were also illustrations of how the British curriculum may take a 'Eurocentric' stance that does not always accommodate cultural differences, thereby impeding minority ethnic pupils. 3) It is unclear whether the authors consider that the teachers felt Chinese masculinity to be feminised in 'Western' terms, or whether this is a general cultural comment.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium: With more detail, this would be high.
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium to high
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium

Gayle et al. (2002) Young people's entry into higher education: quantifying influential factors	
Aims of study	To undertake an exploratory analysis of a series of nationally representative data through statistical modelling to identify factors that influence a young person's chances of entering HE and participating in a degree level course (p 5)
Study rationale	Various government reports had recently looked at the issue of equality of participation in HE: The National Committee of Enquiry into Higher Education had highlighted the 'existence of unequal rates of participation in HE by some groups within society.' (p 5) (Dearing, 1997) The Green Paper, The Learning Age: A Renaissance for a New Britain, had directly addressed the issue of widening participation in HE. Government had stated that a priority was to reach out to young people from certain ethnic backgrounds. Also a survey of the relevant literature indicated its 'confused' nature, although the overall message of the literature is one of social inequality. Therefore the authors state that the paper is 'timely' due to the government research agenda, covering inequality and the need to identify factors that mean that some young people do not enter HE.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	Primary research question: 'Net of attainment, do external influences such as family's social class, parental education, gender and ethnicity influence a young person's chance of studying for a degree?' (p 6) Implicit in the aims of the paper (p 6): To report the findings of a research project on young people's routes to HE which identifies factors which influence young people's entry into HE and 'which are associated with low rates of participation by various social groups'
Study method	Secondary data analysis
Educational setting	Higher education institution
Number of participants	N = 8,573
Ages of participants	11 to 21 and over
Ethnicity of participants	White; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; black African; other (cohort study including all groups)
Summary of results	Summary (abstract)The authors found that 'net of educational attainment a number of factors (e.g. gender and social background variables) influence the likelihood of a young person entering HE and participating on a degree level course' (p 5). The authors stated that their analysis highlighted the 'interwoven effects' of parental education and schooling. Authors tested for a wide range of effects (Table I gives full list of all factors tested). After controlling for individual attainment the following were found to have significant main effects: - individual, family background (occupational social class' size of family, marital status, home ownership) - school factors - gender - parental education - ethnicity Table VI gives the sample enumeration results (studying for a degree logistic regression). Social class: after controlling for educational attainment occupational social class is highly statistically significant. The sample enumeration model indicates that the estimated shortfall due to the class effect for each of the social classes is about 3%. Authors also tested for interaction effects. Table II gives studying for a degree two-way interaction effects. Table III gives studying for a degree three-way interaction effects. Table IV gives studying for a degree model of best fit (logistic regression). (p 13)

Conclusions	Ethnicity effects: Ethnicity is not statistically significant. Various ethnic groups have differential participation in HE. Using sample enumeration an estimated 23% of non-Indian origin would attend HE if they behaved like their counterparts of Indian origin - an increased rate of 8%.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	High
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	High
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	High to medium

Hagell and Shaw (1996) Opportunity and disadvantage at age 16	
Aims of study	To explore the experiences of youths in major cities in their transition from compulsory education
Study rationale	1) Over 25 years (from 1970 to mid-1990s) a number of political and social changes meant that the experiences of young leaving compulsory education have changed. More young people are now involved in continuing education. The withdrawal of benefits from all unemployed 16-18 year olds and the introduction of new vocational qualifications all had implications for young people. 2) It is widely recognised that the British educational system is very effective for high achievers from middle class homes, but the standards for the majority are much poorer than they should be. Arising from this is a need to reduce inequalities of opportunity between less and more affluent areas, between social classes and between ethnic groups.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1) What are the main pathways taken by young people in six inner-city areas? 2) What are the main issues faced by a group of potentially disadvantaged 16-year-olds in the first year after the end of their compulsory education?
Study method	Cross-sectional study
Educational setting	Secondary school
Number of participants	1st wave: 4,706 questionnaires were sent out (2,955 completed; response rate 63%) 2nd wave: 4,706questionnaires were sent out to the same group (2,539 returned; response rate 55%) 3rd wave: 4,706 questionnaires given out to the full sample (2,429 returned; response rate 52%)
Ages of participants	Average age of respondents: 16.5 years
Ethnicity of participants	White; black other; other (not specified)
Summary of results	1) The highest achieving groups were the Chinese and Indian youths, and the lowest, the black other and black Caribbean groups. Bangladeshi pupils performed less well than their white counterparts and Pakistani pupils at roughly the same level. 2) Asian students were most positive about school, while black groups had the most negative impressions of school. The white respondents fell in the middle. 3) Asian and black African students were the most likely to have truanted during the previous two years at school. Indian respondents were the least likely to have done so. Black Caribbean and black other students were most likely to have missed some school due to truancy. They also had the least positive attitude to school and lower achievement at GCSE. Black other students were markedly more likely than the sample as a whole to have truanted for days or weeks at a time. 4) In terms of education pathways, the black Caribbean group is very similar to the white group in that they have lower proportions following the education trajectory than the others and larger proportions following the 'other all year' trajectory. Asian students were more likely to stay on in education. Asian students were more likely to be aiming to continue studying beyond the end of their current course (80%), compared with 68% of black students and 59% of white students. Young people from ethnic minorities were more likely than white students, not only to stay on at 16, but also to continue participating in further and higher education.

Conclusions	1) Chinese and Indian respondents achieved the highest score in GCSEs; black other and black Caribbean respondents scored the least well. 2) Asian students were the most likely to stay on in full-time education than other ethnic groups, even after controlling for differences in school achievement. The authors concluded that this might in part be due to differences in aspirations and family pressures; it may also have been partly because they did not feel confident about testing the job market. 3) White students were more likely to follow the traditional pathways of leaving school at 16. 4) Ethnicity remains a significant predictor of pathways followed even after accounting for existing variations between the ethnic groups by the end of their compulsory education. Although the authors did not have direct evidence of discriminatory practices at work, in training nor employment, they believed that such practices still exist. In addition, due to increasingly competitive local conditions in the inner cities, the aspirations and expectations of certain ethnic minorities may be being eroded to the point where they do not feel it is worth even trying to exercise options other than education and training.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	High
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Low
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium: This study is strong methodologically, but has limited relevance for this review.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2006) A comparison of how young people from different ethnic groups experience leaving school	
Aims of study	The aims of the study are to explore: 1) the pathways of ethnic minority pupils of schools in Scotland as they make the transition from school to further or higher education or work 2) the resources these young people draw on to make career choices 3) the reasons for choosing particular pathways 4) their ambitions for the future
Study rationale	1) Young people are staying on longer in education as labour market changes and educational demands increase. 2) Although black and minority ethnic young people are more successful in obtaining FE and HE, they have been less successful in gaining employment. 3) There is almost no research focused on minority ethnic pupils of schools in Scotland.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	Implied from the questions asked in interviews and the aims of the study, these are the research questions that are relevant to the review: 1) What are the future plans of young minority ethnic pupils? 2) What resources do participants draw onto make career choices? 3) Why do they choose particular pathways? 4) What are their aspirations?
Study method	Cross-sectional study: questionnaire survey Views study: semi-structured interviews
Educational setting	8 secondary schools, including state and independent schools
Number of participants	Total number of actual sample is 134. The number reported as the actual sample was the number of participants who responded in waves 1 and 2. Data from wave 1 was not use, if the participants had dropped out by wave 2.
Ages of participants	11-20
Ethnicity of participants	White; mixed heritage; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; black African; Chinese; gypsy/Roma; traveller of Irish heritage
Summary of results	1) The majority of respondents want to go to university after completing school. Only 10% wanted to apply for a college course. 2) Most common reasons for wanting to go to university were personal satisfaction, ability, personal ambition and parental ambition. 3) Pakistani students were more likely to choose medical sciences and business/finance related subjects; almost half the Indian participants chose medical science courses, while Chinese participants were equally divided between medical sciences, business/finance and engineering. Overall, law and engineering were also popular choices. 4) Most of the respondents stated that the career decision was largely their own. Although they were supported and encouraged by their parents, family and friends, they were not influenced by them. However, many Indian and Pakistan participants made references to relatives who were practising a profession or who were presently studying to gain a qualification in that profession. The reasons they gave for why they thought their friends wanted to go to university were more to do with ambition/opportunity and expectation/norm. 5) Participants did not make any explicit reference to work experience. Career advice in school also did not play an important role in shaping decisions. 6) A large majority of respondents reported that most or all their friends intended to go to university. This could have influenced their decisions. While participants gave their own reason for wanting to go to university as a personal ambition, their explanations for their friends' decisions were related to ambition, opportunity and expectation or the norm. 7) In wave 2, 37% of participants were still at school, and nearly 50% of female Pakistani participants who had left school were attending college.

Conclusions	1) Family and community expectations featured highly in the decisions of ethnic minority young people as they considered courses to take after leaving secondary school. Careers guidance advisors in schools should be more aware of the needs and concerns of minority ethnic young people, and perhaps involve parents in careers guidance process. 2) Further and higher education institutions are not doing enough to support minority ethnic young people, particularly those living away from home. 3) Colleges and universities need to scrutinise their academic and social provision to avoid excluding minority ethnic young people.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium: The study addresses the research questions of the review, but more could be done with the sample size and analysis (especially the quantitative data).

Middleton et al. (2005) Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds: evidence from the education maintenance allowance database	
Aims of study	To use quantitative data collected as part of the education maintenance allowance pilots to explore comparatively the destinations and achievements and opinions of young people from different ethnic minority backgrounds. Collected from two cohorts of educational minority pupils who left full-time education in 1999 and 2000. (p. i)
Study rationale	Ethnicity continues to affect the educational and employment outcomes of young people and adults alike (p 2). The information that is available about the qualifications achieved by different ethnic minority groups paints a complex picture. The research literature about ethnic minority young people's socio-economic background and their experience of both compulsory schooling and post-16 education is still sketchy and dispersed. This report seeks to provide information on these issues using information from the young people in the first wave of the EMA surveys. (p 3) The EMA evaluation provided a unique opportunity to gather such evidence (p 1).
Study research questions and/ or hypotheses	Part A compares young people's school experiences during years 10 and 11, their qualifications at the end of year 11, their destinations immediately after compulsory education, the advice they received during Year 11 about these destinations, and the reasons they gave for their choice of destination. It also investigates the role of EMA on decisions to remain in post-16 education. Part B compares destinations at ages 17 and 18 of those who initially remained in full-time education at the age of 16, and then considers the destinations at age 18 of all young people, irrespective of whether they initially remained in education, and explores the relationship between destinations, ethnicity and other characteristics known to be associated with remaining in education. (p i)
Study method	Secondary data analysis
Educational setting	Post-compulsory education institution; higher education Institution; secondary school; Workplace (by inference some students were at work); other educational setting (part of the questionnaire asked about post school destinations)
Number of participants	c. 14,700 in Part A; c. 8,300 in Part B
Ages of participants	11-20
Ethnicity of participants	White; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; black African
Summary of results	*Part A School experiences and destinations at 16* There were variations in destination at age 16, according to ethnicity. Indian and Bangladeshi/Pakistani young people were most likely to be in full-time education. The majority of young people said they wanted to remain in education, irrespective of ethnic group. (p iii) Young people reported that parents and schools had been the most frequent source of advice. There were few variations, except that white students were more likely than any other group to have consulted their parents; Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi students were more likely to have sought advice from brothers or sisters. Overall, at least 84% had some contact with the careers service during or after year 11, and a quarter (23%) felt the advice had played a major part in their eventual decision. The figures for the white young people (22%) were lower than for the three main ethnic groups: Indian students 31%, Pakistanis/Bangladeshi students 34%, and black students 32%. Almost all young people had been offered, or had taken up, work experience in year 11 and the majority (68% overall) felt it had been very or fairly helpful in their decision. For most individuals, but especially white young people, wanting a job or a training place were the principal reasons for leaving education. Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Black students were more likely than white students or Indian students to say that it was because they could not find a place. Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi young people were also more likely to say that it was because their parents could not afford, or did want, them to remain in education. (p. iv) Awareness of EMA was high among all groups. Young Indian students were most likely to have applied. Over half of all the young people in the pilot areas had been awarded an EMA, with higher percentages among the ethnic groups. More than 3/5 of the young people in the pilot areas felt EMA had been quite or very important in their decision to remain in education, and this was particularly so among black students and Pakistani/Bangladeshi students. Estimates of the possible 'deadweight' of EMA suggest that an EMA made a difference for between 47% and 57% of young people in receipt of one. Deadweight was lowest for Pakistani/Bangladeshi and white young people and highest among Indian students. (p. iv-v)

	Part B Destinations between the ages of 16 and 18 years White students: 80% were still in full-time education at 17, 58% at 18; those who left, mainly entered work. Indian students: 79% were still in full time education at 18; 8% were NEET at age 18. Pakistani / Bangladeshi students: 82% were still in full-time education at age 18. Black students: 47% were still in full-time education at age 18; those who left were disproportionately likely to be NEET (over 1/5 at 18). By age 18, the proportion of all young people in full-time education had decreased to 38%; the proportions in work and training increased to 27% and those at work with no training 17%. The proportion of NEET increased to 18%. Significant differences emerged by ethnic group; approximately 2/3 of the Indians and Pakistani/Bangladeshi students were still in education at 18, compared with 35% of the white and 3% of the black young people. Significant differences were also found in relation to sex, socio-economic group and year 11 achievement. Irrespective of ethnic group, generally the higher the socio-economic group young people were in, the more likely they were to be in full-time education and, the lower their socio-economic group, the more likely they were to be NEET. *Multivariate modelling (used to take into account achievement at Year 11 and socio-economic group)* At age 16, young people from all ethnic groups more likely to be in full-time education. At 17, young people in each minority group were less likely to be in work with training than white young people. Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi students were less likely to be in work with no training or NEET than white young people. Black young people, in contrast, were slightly more likely to be in work with no training than whites, but more than twice as likely to be NEET. At age 18, young people in all minority groups were less likely to be in work with training or no training, and more likely to be in full-time education than white young people. Indian and Bangladeshi/Pakistani students were less likely to be NEET than white students; however, again black young people were more than twice as likely as white students to be NEET, rather than in full-time education. (p viii)
Conclusions	All young people from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely than white young people to remain in full-time education at age 16. The proportions leaving over the next two years differed significantly, as did their destinations after full-time education: - Indian young people sustained their initial high participation rate; the small minority that did leave between ages 16 and 18 mainly entered work. - Pakistani/Bangladeshi young people had the highest retention rates at age 18 of all ethnic groups. However, those who did leave education had a relatively high chance of entering the NEET group. - Black young people had the lowest retention rate of all groups. Large proportions of young people who left at 17 and 18 entered the NEET group. Focusing on the destinations of all young people at 18, rather than just on those who initially entered full-time education at 16, significant differences again emerged: - Black and white young people were least likely to be in full-time education at age 18, but white young people were most likely to be in work (with or without training); in contrast, almost 1/3 black young people were NEET at age 18. Significant differences emerged in the proportions of young people in full-time education at age 18, according to sex, socio-economic group and level of year 11 achievement. However, multinomial regression analysis that took these factors into account showed that in each of the three years, Indian and Pakistani/Bangladeshi young people were more likely to be in full time education than work, training, or NEET destinations, compared with white young people. On the other hand, although black young people were less likely to be in the NEET group at 16, and more likely to be in full-time education compared with whites, the trend was reversed at 17 and 18. (pp 56-57) Receiving an EMA did appear to play a major part in determining black and Pakistani/Bangladeshi young people to remain in education.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	High
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	High
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	High
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	High

Rhamie and Hallam (2002) An investigation into African-Caribbean academic success in the UK	
Aims of study	To explore the factors that contribute to the academic success of African-Caribbean students who have continued their education to postgraduate level. It is hoped that this will provide suggestions for promoting success rather than ameliorating failure.
Study rationale	1) The underachievement of African-Caribbean students is well documented, but little research has been done to establish what might promote success. 2) Research, which consistently focuses only on negative educational outcomes, provides an unbalanced perspective of the African-Caribbean community as a whole and reinforces negative stereotypes which may contribute to the problem. 3) Research, which draws attention to the underachievement and high level of exclusions, has been limited in its impact and change is slow. Recommendations have resulted in the necessary change in attitudes and practice in schools to bring about an increase in standards.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	What are the factors that contribute to the academic success of African-Caribbean students in the UK?
Study method	Views study: semi-structured interviews
Educational setting	Higher education institution
Number of participants	N = 14
Ages of participants	23–40: participants were pursuing or had completed postgraduate studies
Ethnicity of participants	Black Caribbean
Summary of results	Factors identified as contributing to academic success of African-Caribbean students in UK are as follows: *1) Home factors* All respondents reported the importance of home influences on their success, namely: Parental support and encouragement - motivating and encouraging (100% of respondents) - sacrificing time and interests to be involved in the education of the respondents (93%) - emphasising the importance of education and schooling (86%) - being taught at home or provided with tutors (71%) - supportive of respondent (71%) - pushing respondent to do better (21%) Parental guidance, goals and expectations - set high expectations (86%) - provide educational path with clear goals (43%) - determination to see respondent through education (21%) Parental knowledge - knowledge and understanding of the education system (43%) - knowledge and understanding of the respondent (21%) Environment - providing resources, security and loving support (93%) - general upbringing (36%) - 'middle class' upbringing (29%) - disciplined and strict environment (29%) Family as role models - parents as mentors and role models (43%) - academic relatives and siblings (43%) - relatives as mentors (7%)

2) Individual factors

Second largest category that emerged related to characteristics of the individual, namely:

Motivation (% of respondents referring to theme)
- self-motivated (93%)
- goal oriented and focused (71%)
- strength, determination and will-power (50%)
- desire to do well and work hard (50%)
- enjoy studying (21%)
- self-discipline (7%)

Confidence
- self-belief, confidence and faith in oneself (21%)

Awareness
- aware of the education system and the importance of schooling (57%)
- feelings of being loved and appreciated (7%)
- awareness of black culture and stereotypes (21%)

Talent
- natural ability (14%)

Deportment and behaviour
- good speech and behaviour (14%)

3) School factors

Respondents' perceptions and assessments of their own schools reflected key determinants of effective schools (see Table III). Themes related to this category include:

Ethos and type of school
- positive atmosphere (64%)
- academic excellence (36%)
- very good state school (21%)
- fee-paying or selective school (14%)
- primary schooling in the Caribbean (14%)

Teachers
- supportive and encouraging (64%)
- abilities (35%)
- expectations (14%)

School organisation
- banding and streaming (29%)
- extra-curricular activities (e.g. sports (71%), music/drama (50%), extra English and mathematics (21%), chess clubs (14%))

4) Community factors

These were less frequently raised in the interviews and included church and related activities, music tuition and activities, community projects and cultural activities, and access to role models and mentors.

Church
- regular, active involvement in church programmes (43%)
- religious beliefs (36%)
- clubs (36%)
- sense of belonging and support network (29%)

Music
- tuition (64%)
- additional band or music involvement (14%)

Community projects and cultural activities
- positive experiences of the Caribbean (43%)

	- visits to libraries, museums, art galleries, etc. (14%) - youth clubs (7%) - Access to role models and mentors - within the church community (36%) - older friends (29%) - from the Caribbean (21%) The authors developed two models for success: Model 1 suggests that, where children attend schools where expectations of academic success are high for all pupils, they respond to this ethos and succeed academically. Model 2 suggests that supportive, achievement-oriented community activities may, in conjunction with a supportive, education-focused home and motivated child, work together to provide a strong network that enables the child to succeed in school and remain focused on the goal of achieving, despite the obstacles.
Conclusions	- Socio-economic status is one of the most powerful predictors of educational success and Africa-Caribbean children living in inner city areas characterised by poverty and high unemployment are often disadvantaged. - This research suggests that local communities can provide a 'sense of belonging' and opportunities to be successful and demonstrate to young African-Caribbean people that it is possible for them to succeed (e.g. through the support of the church and youth clubs). The high incidence of private music tuition among the sample also offered opportunities for enhanced self-esteem through the demonstration of achievement and receiving praise, which in turn encourages self-discipline and independence. - The research also demonstrated the importance of role models (e.g. family members, friends of the family and members of the church). - Raising the attainment of African-Caribbean boys may require interventions aimed at engendering and sustaining positive attitudes towards academic success and making educational experiences more positive. - Schools need to actively tackle racism, monitor the progress of ethnic minorities, and enrich the curriculum to cater for, and include, all pupils. - The research points to two models that might act as starting points for exploring the way that home, individual, school and community factors might interact in different ways to contribute to academic success in African-Caribbean children. While these models provided the best descriptions of the data presented above, no claims were made that they may account for the achievement of all academically successful African-Caribbean students. Indeed, there may be those who have shared experiences to those of the participants but who have been unsuccessful academically. Further research focusing on a sample of African-Caribbean students with a range of levels of academic attainment will be required to establish the extent to which the models have explanatory value. - The high incidence of private music tuition in the sample, which provided opportunities for enhancing self-esteem through a sense of achievement and praise, may also encourage self-discipline and inculcate independence. Further research exploring the role of such extra-curricular activities in promoting success may be needed.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Low: In order to look at what contributes to the academic success of some African-Caribbean students, the research design should also look at less successful or underachieving African-Caribbean students. As the authors stated, 'further research focusing on a sample of African-Caribbeans with a wide range of levels of academic attainment will be required to establish the extent to which the models have explanatory value'. (p 166) Moreover, important variables such as socio-economic status are not examined. It appears that the sample consists largely of people from middle-income families as evidenced by the high incidence of private music tuition (particularly piano).
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	High
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium to low:Due to limitation in sampling strategy. This is an opportunistic sample which means that the participants could be self-selected; they are likely to be those who are motivated enough to want to take part in the study. Moreover, it appears that the sample came from largely middle-income homes which could have explained most of their success, in terms of home environment, role models in the family, etc.

Shiner and Modood (2002) Help or hindrance? Higher education and the route to ethnic equality	
Aims of study	To examine the role of racial bias in the allocation of HE places
Study rationale	Relatively little attention to the link between education, ethnicity and social stratification. Relatively little work on issues of racism and ethnicity in HE. Previous research has been limited: focus on narrow range of course; small number of institutions; failure to take into account other factors; focus on admissions rather than on offers.
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	To identify the possible role of racial bias in the allocation of HE places. The analysis focused on the extent to which differences in rates of admissions into HE reflect bias in the allocation of places: (i) to establish the extent to which differences in rates of admission are evident at earlier stages of the application procedure than in previous research (ii) to consider how patterns of success vary between old and new universities (iii) to identify key differences between ethnic groups (iv) to assess the degree to which such differences account for the rates at which ethnic groups successfully negotiate the various stages of the application procedure
Study method	Secondary data analysis
Educational setting	Higher education institution
Number of participants	Not stated
Ages of participants	17 to 20
Ethnicity of participants	White; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; black African; Chinese
Summary of results	Patterns of success: Ethnic differences in rate at which applications yielded initial offers and the rate at which offers were confirmed. With the exception of the Chinese, ethnic minority applicants (particularly Black African students and Pakistani students) had lower rates of success than white students at both stages (see Table 1) Lower rates of entry: Ethnic minority candidates between 1.5 and 2.5 times as likely as whites to have gained admission through clearing, although once academic factors taken into account no statistically significant differences in rates of admissions. Destinations: Ethnic minorities over-represented in new universities (with exception of Chinese); this reflected differences in rates of application. For ethnic minority applicants (unlike white applicants), the rate at which an initial application yielded an offer depended on type of institution applied to (old or new universities).
Conclusions	Academic difference between the groups could explain different patterns of rates at which different groups were offered places and different patterns in type of university applied to. Ethnic minority candidates applied to nearer institutions and this may have reduced their chances of success. Socio-demographic variables may explain the differences observed: age (older), less privileged social backgrounds. Results from multivariate analyses: academic factors clearly important in distinguishing between successful and unsuccessful applications; also number of sittings, studying fewer A levels; and a range of institutional factors, including location of institution. Little evidence of ethnic disadvantage in overall rates of admission; with the exception of Chinese applicants ethnic minority candidates concentrated in the new universities (partly due to patterns of application) but also an 'apparently greater commitment among new universities widening the social and ethnic basis of participation in HE'. Strong evidence that minority candidates face an ethnic penalty.

Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	Medium
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	High
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	High
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium to high

Strand and Winston (2008) Educational aspirations in inner city schools	
Aims of study	'…to assess the nature and level of pupils' educational aspirations and to elucidate the factors that influence these aspirations' (p 2) '…to extend the international data on young people's aspirations by adding further data from the UK, particularly from inner city areas, where educational aspirations such as rates of continuation in FTE are relatively low' (pp 4-5)
Study rationale	To reflect the importance of the topic in recent UK government policy, and to follow up research by Addams and Johnson (2005) on London school pupils. Otherwise reason unstated. '…major goal of the UK government in recent years has been to increase the number of young people who continue in education and training after the end of compulsory schooling at age 16…This is seen as important for the supply of educated and trained labour for the economy, but also for the futures and well-being of the young people concerned' (Payne, 2003, p 3) 'The current research was concerned to extend the international data on young people's educational aspirations by adding further data from the UK, particularly from inner city areas where educational aspiration such as rates of continuation in FTE are relatively low' (p 5)
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	1. What are the educational aspirations of a sample of pupils from inner city UK schools at age 11 and age 14? 2. Are there significant differences in the levels of educational aspirations by gender, age, or ethnic group? 3. To what extent are educational aspirations correlated with factors in the home school or peer group? 4. Can ethnic group differences in factor scores from the questionnaire account for ethnic group differences in educational aspirations?
Study method	Cross-sectional study; views study
Educational setting	Secondary school
Number of participants	849 returned the questionnaire. 48 (presumably of the 849) participated in focus groups.
Ages of participants	12-14
Ethnicity of participants	White British; Indian (conflated with Asian other); Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; black African; Chinese (conflated with Asian other); Asian other; white other; other
Summary of results	*Questionnaire* 1. The white British group had the lowest aspirations to continue in FT education after 16 (85% of the 773 responses to the item). The highest scores were from the Asian other (97%) and black African groups (98%). 2. There was no significant association between gender or year group and intention to continue in FTE (p 12). 3. Black African students were 10 times more likely than white British pupils to say they intended to continue in FTE after 16 (p<0.05), with Asian other pupils close to a significant difference with the white British pupils (p=0.06). 4. When the eight sets of factor scores for the background variables were added to the model, explained variance rose from 8.8% to 27.4%, and four were significant: commitment to schooling (p<0.001), having positive peers (p<0.01), having disaffected or negative peers (p<.001) and having high home educational aspirations (p<0.001). The largest impact was home aspirations, where a pupils with one SD score above the mean were four times more likely than those 1 SD below it to continue in FTE after 16 (odds ratio 2.03). Conversely, pupils 1 SD above the mean having disaffected or negative peers were three times less likely to continue. 5. When asked what level of qualifications they expected to reach, only 5 (of the 751 responders) said 0 GCSE/GNVQ passes. 144 (19.2%) had A/AS level and 277 (36.9%) had degree. 6. The proportions for both A/AS and degree were lowest for white British pupils; around 50% expected to get A/AS, with 70-75% for any other group, Bangladeshi, black African, Pakistani and (highest) Asian other groups. For degrees, the figures were 28% white British versus 50% Bangladeshi, 53% black African, 58% Pakistani and 66% Asian other groups. 7. Again, there was no statistically significant association between gender or year group and expected qualification. Three ethnic groups differed significantly from the white British: black African (p<0.05), Pakistani (p<0.001) and Asian other groups (p<0.001).

8. Adding the factor scores increased explained variance from 7.4% to 18.4%. Four of the variables were significant: Commitment to schooling (p<0.001), academic self-concept (p<0.001), having disaffected/negative peers (p<0.001) and home educational aspirations (p<0.05). The greatest 'effect sizes' were for commitment to schooling (odds ratio 1.51), academic self-concept (odds ratio 1.42) and home aspirations (odds ratio 1.17).

9. All but one of the significant ethnic group contrasts (ie with white British) became non-significant once the factor scores had been added. Only the Asian other Group expected qualification scores could not be explained in terms of the eight factor scores.

10. School 1 had a significantly higher score for level of qualification expected, than did schools 2, 4 or 5 (when compared against the largest school, school 3). The significance level of p<0.01 fell to p<0.05 when the factor scores were introduced, but the contrast remained significant.

Focus groups

11. The results supported the questionnaire results.

12. The white British pupils had little enthusiasm for school and indicated few parental expectations from it. When the pupils spoke of being valued and supported at home, this was unrelated to school work. The pupils seemed oriented to careers as tradesmen (or for the girls nursery nurses or hairdressers), which might involve training at college, or marriage. (p.19)

13. On the other hand, pupils from black African, Pakistani and Asian other backgrounds aspired to more professional jobs, especially related to medicine or computers.

14. Ethnicity seemed a significantly greater influential factor on aspirations than gender.

Conclusions	1. The eight factor scores account for a substantial part of the ethnic group aspiration scores, but there are clear ethnic group differences within the eight. The suggestion is that the factor scores affect different ethnic groups' aspirations differently (p 16):

2. The high aspirations of black African and Asian other students 'are mediated through strong academic self-concept, positive peer support, a commitment to schooling and high educational aspirations in the home' (p 17).

3. The low aspirations of the white British 'relate most strongly to poor academic self-concept and low academic aspirations in the home' (p 17). Education was not seen as playing an important role in achieving vocational goals.

4. The low aspirations of black Caribbean students seem related to having disaffected/negative peers and a low commitment to schooling.

'This research does raise important implications for policy. Raising the aspirations of inner city children of secondary school age is one of the key aims of the current government's educational reform programme in the UK. The current research suggests that educational aspirations are themselves strongly associated with some specific attitudes and influences that may underlie the link between aspirations and attainment. The key attitudinal factors from our data associated with low aspiration are low academic self concept, low home-educational aspirations, low peer support, disaffection and a lack of commitment to schooling. The differences in educational aspirations across ethnic groups are largely mediated by these factors, with contrasting cultures of aspiration within the home seen as a key mediator. For those groups where the home environment does not provide young people with the navigational capacity to aspire 'nurtured by the possibility of real-world conjectures and refutations', to re-use Appadurai's words, then the school is needed to fill the gap. The higher than expected aspirations of pupils in school 1 suggests that schools can have a positive impact on aspirations. However, if the capacity to aspire is essentially a cultural capacity, then it will require more than an additional strand of skills within the National Strategy; rather, schools will need to re-assess themselves as cultural institutions and find ways to connect their normative values of aspiration with the lived curriculum of their pupils.' (pp 21-24)

5. Home support seems particularly important where pupils do not have 'the material or cultural resources of the more privileged middle classes' (p 21).

6. The study seems to suggest that groups who have remained longest in a deprived area may feel more reluctant to embrace the educational aspirations that promise an escape from it (p 22).

7. There is a paradox at times between high aspirations and low achievement in the black African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups (p 23). The authors suggest that one reason might be the realisation that ethnic minority students have a greater risk of unemployment than White British students if they enter the labour market at 16. They may also split high 'abstract' ideological principles about the value of education and lower 'concrete' attitudes about actual hardship and unfair treatment and the latter may influence achievement (p 23). No evidence from the questionnaire or focus groups is given to support these speculations.

8. The high aspirations in school 1 suggest that schools might be able to increase aspirations.

9. The overall conclusion is vague: 'schools need to reassess themselves as cultural institutions and find ways to connect their normative values of aspiration with the lived curriculum of their pupils' (p.24)

Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	High to medium: Missing details about the sample, questionnaire development and reasons for choosing method of rotation.
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	High to medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	High
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	High to medium

Strand (2007) Minority ethnic pupils in the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England	
Aims of study	To explore contextual differences between ethnic groups and the impact that these differences have on their attainment. To explore differences within these groups associated with factors such as gender, family composition, socio-economic position and faith adherence. (p 18)
Study rationale	No single study has assembled all the relevant data to be able to explore the relationships between a number of variables and educational attainment with a large and representative sample. The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England is a major panel study of young people which brings together rich and detailed data from interviews with young people and their parents with test data from the National Pupil database. It offers the potential to identify factors influencing attainment and progress in early secondary education and to greatly extend knowledge about the experience of minority ethnic pupils in schools. This report focuses on the pupil's attainment in national end of KS 3 tests completed in summer 2004. (p 18)
Study research questions and/or hypotheses	Research question not explicitly stated but specific objectives are to: - Build a picture of the socio-economic context and household characteristics of the different ethnic and faith groups - Build a picture of the attitudes towards school, and future aspirations, of pupils (and parents) within the different ethnic and faith groups - Build a picture of the school experiences of pupils from different ethnic and faith groups (enjoyment of school and different subjects, relationships with teachers, views on behaviour and school discipline, etc.) - Explore how all the above interact with each other and what their impact is on the attainment of these pupils. (p 19)
Study method	Cohort study
Educational setting	Secondary school
Number of participants	15,570 pupils drawn from 658 schools (p. 20)
Ages of participants	11-16 (year 9 pupils); 21 and over (parents)
Ethnicity of participants	White; mixed heritage (white and black Caribbean, white and black African, white and Asian, any other mixed background); Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; black Caribbean; black African; Chinese; other (any other Asian background; any other black background; any other ethnic background).
Summary of results	This data-extraction focuses on results related to parent and pupil post-16 aspirations and higher education. Overall parents had high aspirations for the children's education with 83% of them expecting the pupil to continue into full-time education. In relation to ethnic group, educational aspirations were lowest for white parents, with 77% expecting their pupil to stay in FTE. Aspirations for their children to continue in FTE were high in all other groups (above 90%) except the mixed heritage group (88%). Particularly high among the African (98%) and Indian (95%) parents. While parents' aspirations were generally higher for girls than boys, for black African it was uniform and for Pakistani and Bangladeshi parents higher for boys than girls (pp 36-37; for full details, see Table 10 on page 36.) 82% of young people intended to continue in FTE after leaving year 11. There was a large overall gender difference with 77% of boys but 87% of girls intending to continue to continue in FTE. White pupils were the least likely group to say they intended to continue in FTE (77%), with black African pupils (96%), Indian pupils (94%), Bangladeshi pupils (92%) and Pakistani pupils (91%). Gender difference was minimal for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups. A similar pattern of ethnic differences was found in relation to aspirations to enter HE. (See Table 13 on page 39 for more details.)

Conclusions	Research reported wide variation in educational attainment at age 14 between different ethnic groups; explanations of these gaps in terms of socio-economic status have mixed success in accounting for the gaps. Indian and Pakistani pupils achieve higher results than would be expected given their social class. However, the low attainment of the black Caribbean groups cannot be adequately explained by social class. As well as the structural variables, the 'full context' model included more subtle measures, such as parental involvement in school, parents and pupils' aspirations, etc. However, the model could not account for the low attainment of the Pakistani group and was particularly poor at explaining the low attainment of black Caribbean and black African groups. Minority ethnic groups were frequently more advantaged on many of these parental and pupil factors than their white British peers, but this was not associated with proportionately greater attainment for the minority ethnic groups. Much of the difference between ethnic groups at age 14 can be accounted for by pre-existing differences between ethnic groups at age 11. Some element of the better progress of Indian pupils relative to white British pupils can be explained by positive factors, such as high parental and pupil educational aspirations; undertaking high levels of homework; low levels of truanting; exclusion or social services / EWS involvement; high resource provision at home; and high parental monitoring of their children's whereabouts. These positive factors offset the negative impact of low social class and the high proportion of mothers with no educational qualifications. The explanatory variables included in this report do not account for the poor progress of the black African Caribbean group. It is therefore necessary to look at wider explanations for ethnic group differences. Apart from social class, the authors also note two further explanations for the difference in educational attainment for ethnic groups: firstly, teacher racism, not only directly but also indirectly as institutional racism; secondly, how the cultural orientations of certain ethnic groups promote or discourage academic achievement.
Weight of evidence A (trustworthiness in relation to study questions)	High
Weight of evidence B (appropriateness of research design and analysis)	Medium
Weight of evidence C (relevance of focus of study to review)	Medium to low
Weight of evidence D (overall weight of evidence)	Medium

APPENDIX 2.2   Overview of the promoters and non-promoters of participation in post-16 education

The following tables provide an overview of the promoters and non-promoters of participation in post-16 education which emerged from the analysis of the 'high', 'high to medium', 'medium to high' and 'medium' WoE studies. Promoters and non-promoters of post-16 and HE or FE participation from the 'medium to low' and 'low' weight of evidence studies are included where they confirm themes that emerged from the other studies.

They have been categorised into the following eight levels of influence: government policy, institutional practices (universities and schools), external agencies, work, religion, family, individual aspirations and other factors. For each promoter and non-promoter, the number of studies within each weight of evidence category with relevant findings is indicated.

It should be noted that the overall totals highlighted in blue or grey are not mutually exclusive. For example, in the 'Institutional practices: promoters' table, the total given for 'ethos and type of school' is '1', even though there were five subheadings under each of which one study had relevant findings. In this case, a single study had relevant findings in all five subheadings, so the total number of studies with relevant findings on 'ethos and type of school' remains '1'.

Government policy (promoters)

Promoters (N = 1)

	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Number of studies — Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Financial provision	1						1
• EMA had a very important influence on the decision of students to stay on in FT education (25%). It had the most influence on black students (40%), the lowest influence for Indian students (20%) and white students (23%).	1						1

Government policy (non-promoters)

Non- promoters (N = 1)

	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Number of studies — Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Lack of financial support for students with children						1	1
• No allowance made by the government for childcare costs of students.						1	1

Institutional practices - universities (promoters)

Promoters (N = 2)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Wider and lower university entry requirements			1				1
• Wider combination of courses	1		1				1
• Lower A-level requirements			1				1
More inclusive admission practices by new universities			1				1
• New universities more committed to widening social and ethnic basis of participation			1				1
Geographical location						1	1
• Proximity and reputation						1	1

Institutional practices - universities (non-promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 4)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Non-supportive institutions				1			1
• FE and HE institutions were not doing enough to support ethnic minority young people, especially those living away from home.				1			1
Less inclusive admission practices by old universities			1				1
• Old universities less likely to offer places to ethnic minority students			1				1
Narrow application strategy of students			1				1
• Ethnic minority students more likely to apply to institutions nearer home, thus reducing their chances of successful application			1				1
Racial issues in universities						1	1
• Institutional racism in universities						1	1
• Dominance of white middle class in universities make working class ethnic minority students feel excluded.						1	1
Negative attitude of university tutors						1	1
• Indifference						1	1
• Marginalisation						1	1
Lack of information of university applied to						1	1
• Little contact with university prior to entry						1	1

Institutional practices - schools (promoters)

Promoters (N = 2)

	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Quality of teachers at school	1		1		3		5
• Good/effective teachers in dealing with disadvantaged and disaffected students					2		2
• Supportive and encouraging teachers	1				1		2
• High teacher expectations/aspirations		1					1
Ethos and type of school		1			1		2
• Positive atmosphere of school					1		1
• Academic excellence of school					1		1
• Fee-paying/selective schools		1			1		2
• Very good state schools					1		1
• Primary schooling in the Caribbean					1		1
School organisation and curriculum					1		1
• Proximity and reputation					1		1
• Extra-curricular activities (e.g. sports, music and drama, chess clubs)					1		1

(Header spanning the number columns: Number of studies)

Institutional practices - schools (non-promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 6)

	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Low teacher expectations and encouragement at school			2		1		3
• Teachers had low expectations of pupils and did not encourage them to do their best.				2	1		3
Poor pupil-teacher relationship			1				1
• Pupils did not get on with teachers.				1			1
Negative experience of school						1	1
• School experience led them to feel HE was not something to which they could aspire.						1	1
Racial issues in schools			4			1	5
• Racial harassment and abuse in general				2			2
• Teacher racism				1			1
• Experience of 'difference'; feeling of being distanced by teachers						1	1
• 'Eurocentric' curriculum				1			1

(Header spanning the number columns: Number of studies)

External agencies (promoters)

Promoters (N = 2)

	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Careers advice including schools and outside agencies (minor role)	2				1	1	4
• Careers teachers and careers service were seen as more influential among all minority ethnic groups than among white students.	1						1
• Black students (21%) and Indian students (15%) were more likely to view careers service as a source of most helpful advice than students from other ethnic groups.	1						1
• Lack of careers advice may explain why some students postpone decision-making by staying on in education.						1	1
• Community projects and cultural activities - Positive experiences of the Caribbean students - Visits to libraries, museums and art galleries - Youth clubs					1		1
• Access to role models and mentors - Within the church community - Older friends - From the Caribbean					1		1

Number of studies

External agencies (non-promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 4)

	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Careers advice including schools and outside agencies	1			1	2		4
• Careers service plays a minor role in post-16 participation decisions (except for black students).	1			1	2		4
• Over half of ethnic minority and white pupils did not consult careers advisors prior to starting their course.						1	1

Number of studies

Work (promoters)

Promoters (N = 2)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Positive impact of work experience	1						1
• 68% rated work experience as fairly or very helpful in their eventual decision.	1						1
Economic motivation to stay on in education						1	1
• Asian students in particular wanted to stay on in education in the hope of getting better jobs in the future.						1	1

Work (non-promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 2)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Desire to work	1				1		2
• For most individuals, but especially white pupils, wanting a job or a training place were the principal reasons for leaving education.	1						1
• Black students were most interested in getting a full-time job and doing an NVQ..					1		1

Religion (promoters)

Promoters (N = 1)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Influence of religion					1		1
• Muslim college students viewed religion as critical to their educational aspirations.					1		1
• Parents from lower social class were more likely to view religion as a positive influence on education than professional parents.						1	1

Family (promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 16)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Parents placing high value on education	1	1		6	1	4	**13**
• As a path to success through qualifications	1						1
• As an investment for the future/better employment opportunities				2		2	4
• Insurance against marriage difficulties/ enhance chance of a good marriage (Muslim women)				2		2	4
• Social prestige/change social class				1		2	3
• Intrinsic value of education				1			1
• High educational aspirations for children in general		1		5	1	2	9
- higher for girls than for boys except for Muslim students (higher for boys than girls) and black African students (same)				1		1	2
Strong parental influence / support	2		1	3	1	4	**11**
• Prepared to use range of resources				2	1	1	4
• Provide advice, information, guidance	2			1	1	3	7
• General support, encouragement			1	1	1	3	6
Positive influence of wider family / culture / community	1		2	3	1	2	**9**
• Other family members as role models			1		1	2	4
• Other family members (e.g. relatives and siblings) as sources as advice	1			1			2
• Home culture important				1			1
• Parents prefer daughters to live at or near home			1			1	2
• Community expectations important				1			1
• Cultural orientations of certain ethnic minority groups may promote academic achievement. (e.g. cultural value of education among Asian students a possible explanation for high participation among Asian students.				1		1	2
Social class (size of family, home ownership, marital status and parental education)		1	1	1	1		**4**
• High social class increases the likelihood of post-16 / HE participation among ethnic groups.		1	1	1	1		4

Family (non-promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 8)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Parents placing low value on education	1					2	3
• Low educational aspirations - especially for girls/in favour of marriage						2	2
Parental influence	1			1		1	3
• Parents unable to support financially	1						1
• Mothers with low educational qualifications less likely to encourage daughters				1			1
• Lack of information and guidance from parents						1	1
Negative influence of wider family / culture / community				1	1	1	3
• Objections from wider family and community to women going to HE				1			1
• Influence of patriarchy especially towards females					1		1
• Adverse cultural practices					1		1
• Important that girls not seen as behaving inappropriately so prevented from continuing to HE						1	1
• Married women prevented from continuing by husband or mother-in-law						1	1
• Cultural orientations of certain ethnic minority groups may discourage academic achievement				1			1
Social class (size of family, home ownership, marital status and parental education)			1				1
• Candidates from less privileged social backgrounds less likely to be successful			1				1

Individual aspirations (promoters)

Promoters (N = 15)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Motivation for higher education	1	1	1	5	2	3	13
• Economic gain	1		1				2
• Better job opportunities	1	1		2	1	3	8
• Better mothers			1				1
• Better members of community			1	1			1
• Opportunity to leave home/ independence			1	1			2
• Personal sense of achievement and satisfaction/ improved knowledge and ability			1	3	1	1	6
• High value of and aspiration for education		1		3	1	1	6
• Personal interest				1			1
• Social significance				1		1	2
• Delayed marriage			1				1
• Women keen to prove themselves and compete in labour market				1			1
• Determination to succeed					2		2
• Better marriage chances						1	1
Natural progression from school			1	1			2
• Some students see HE as a natural progression from secondary school.			1	1			2
Positive attitude towards school		1		2			3
• Having a positive attitude with low levels of truanting and exclusion		1		2			3
Awareness of the system					1		1
• Being knowledgeable and aware of the education system and its importance (e.g. university admissions)					1		1
Natural ability					1		1
• Students with natural talent more likely to have high educational aspirations					1		1
Strong academic self concept		1			1		2
• Pupils with strong academic self-concept had high aspirations in education.		1			1		2

Family (non-promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 5)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Low educational aspirations	1						1
• Black Caribbean students with low educational aspirations tended to have low commitment to schooling.		1					1
Negative attitude towards school	1			1			1
• Low commitment to schooling/high truancy		1		1			1
Lack of understanding/awareness of system				1			1
• Lack of understanding of post-16 market: for example, university entrance and what they need to do early on in their educational careers to ensure success				1			1
Practical obstacles						1	1
• Mature students with children needed a great deal of practical preparation over academic preparation (e.g. arranging for childcare and finding time to study)						1	1
Negative experience/perception of HE						1	1
• Participants experienced HE entry as traumatic and isolating.						1	1

Other factors (promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 3)

	Number of studies						
	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Positive role of friends	1	1		1			3
• Most commonly consulted but rarely felt advice was helpful	1						1
• Having positive peers		1					1
• Respondents reported most or all their friends intended to go to university and the authors speculated that this could have influenced their decisions.				1			1
Gender			1				1
• Boys more likely to participate in post-16			1				1

Other factors (non-promoters)

Non-promoters (N = 6)

	High	High to medium	Medium to high	Medium	Medium to low	Low	Total
Negative impact of friends		1					1
• Having disaffected/negative peers		1					1
Negative impact of older age			1				1
• Older candidates less likely to be successful			1				1
Geographical location					2		2
• Those living in rural areas appeared to experience greater degree of discrimination than their urban peers.					1		1
• African Caribbean students living in inner city areas characterised by poverty and high employment were often disadvantaged.					1		1
Ethnicity					1		2
• One in three felt that their race put them at a disadvantage.					1		1
Lack of time						1	1
• Participants often had to combine study with childcare and family responsibilities						1	1
Lack of finance						1	1
• Lack of money was identified as the most pressing difficulty.						1	1
• Financial entitlements are often not well established until well into the first term.						1	1
Gender		1					1
• Girls are less likely to participate in post-16 possibly due to gender discrimination.		1					1

Number of studies

The results of this systematic review are available in four formats:

SUMMARY Explains the purpose of the review and the main messages from the research evidence

REPORT Describes the background and the findings of the review(s) but without full technical details of the methods used

TECHNICAL REPORT Includes the background, main findings, and full technical details of the review

DATABASES Access to codings describing each research study included in the review

These can be downloaded or accessed at **http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/reel/**

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