

EVERYDAY RACISM IN SCOTLAND: A CASE STUDY OF EAST POLLOKSHIELDS

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RACISM IN SCOTLAND

It is often argued that racism is not an issue in Scotland because there is a small black and minority ethnic population, and the Scottish people are thought to be tolerant of difference. This has been strongly rejected by a number of researchers and academics (see for example: Cant and Kelly 1995; Arshad 1999 2003a; Miles and Dunlop 1987). There is a dearth of research about racism in Scotland, with the exception of a few notable examples (Arshad 1999; Bailey, Bowes and Sim 1995; Bowes, McCluskey and Sim 1990; Hussain and Miller 2003; Kelly 2000 2002 2003,). Yet the experiences of black and minority ethnic groups in England have been widely researched, and approaches include analysis of segregation, experiences of different religious groups, youth subcultures, constructions of whiteness, and the connections between race and housing (see for example: Peach 1996; Alexander 2000; Bonnett 2000; Smith 1989). Some research also focuses upon racism in North Ireland (Hainsworth 1998). It has been contended that it can be difficult to transpose understandings and experiences of racism in other places and apply them to racism in Scotland (Miles and Dunlop 1987). In line with this, Rowena Arshad (1999, p. 221) contends that 'Scotland has avoided the realities of confronting racism as a door-step issue as most reports on racial harassment and racial crime have been largely drawn from evidence in England and Wales.'

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This article aims to build upon research about the Pakistani community of East Pollokshields in Glasgow. Having placed racism on the Scottish agenda, this article will introduce the research project and the area of East Pollokshields, before moving on to highlight the multiple lived experiences of the Pakistani community coupled with everyday racism and discrimination.

PLACING RACISM ON THE SCOTTISH AGENDA: TAKE 2!

Rowena Arshad (1999, p. 221) wanted to place 'racism on the Scottish agenda'. Her powerful call included a request that the democracy of the New Scotland offers a method whereby the voices of those silenced could now be heard. Despite this message, as well as the work of people such as Elinor Kelly (2000, 2002, 2003) and Hussain and Miller (2003) there seems to have been little progress, and indeed **Scottish Affairs** is one of the few journals to publish work about racism in Scottish society. The Scottish Executive's (2001) **Audit of Research from a Race Perspective** highlighted that, whilst there is research, it is often piecemeal and not properly funded. Furthermore whilst research is minimal, so too is the support available for black and minority ethnic researchers.

Racism, however, is prevalent in Scottish society. The **Herald** (30, 31 October and 3 November 1992) reported that, on 29th October 1992 at 3.40pm, 50 Asian young people gathered outside Shawlands Academy, armed with baseball bats, knives and blank-firing pistols, and attacked white pupils. Trouble had been simmering since a prefect, thought to have been one of the victims, reprimanded an Asian pupil. This was followed by a series of stormy school board meetings. I was a pupil at Shawlands Academy when these events took place, and the prefect who was assaulted was a friend of my older sister. A pupil in my year, who also lived in the same street as me, was attacked during these events breaking his arm. Andrew Johnson argues that Shawlands Academy did little to challenge the demonisation of the young Asians involved in these events¹. Moreover, my recollection of this event, and the rumours in the school thereafter, suggested that the BNP and other white supremacist organisations were involved in the incident. Six years later, Imran Khan, a sixteen year old Asian, died after being stabbed near the

¹ www.carf.demon.co.uk/feat12.html - accessed 4th April 2003

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school in a fight between white and Asian young people, and the judge controversially refused to acknowledge the racist context of the incident (Kelly 2003).

Another example of racism in Scotland led to six police officers and one demonstrator being injured during a violent confrontation. In March 2001, a campaign started, the aim of which was to keep Govanhill Pool open, after Glasgow City Council announced that the pool was to close. The council closed a number of local pools in the city hoping that local residents would travel to new leisure centres at Bellahouston and the Gorbals. Protesters accused the Council of institutional racism for failing to consult the local black and minority ethnic community. People would need to travel considerable distances to get to the new leisure centres, and the new facilities did not provide private spaces for the use of specific gender and religious groups. Southside Against Closure noted:

Critically, we regard the failure to consult fully with the black and ethnic minority community in Govanhill to be a form of institutional racism in the context of the Macpherson report into the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

(**Herald**, 9 August 2001)

One of the pool protesters, Danny Lowe, noted

there was too much racism, too much sectarianism. There's a lack of meeting places round here that involve all the communities. This campaign has naturally brought everyone together. The Muslim ladies' swimming group. The Orthodox Jewish swimming group. The elderly ladies of Queen's Park Swimming Club.

(**Herald**, 8 May 2001)

The campaign was supported by a number of MPs and MSPs including David Marshall (Labour), Nicola Sturgeon and Dorothy Grace-Elder (SNP) and Tommy Sheridan (SSP). Yet, despite this, the pool remains closed.

The BNP are also encouraging everyday racism in Scotland. They have quietly launched a campaign in Scotland, and Peter Appleby, a list candidate in Glasgow, gained 2,344 votes (1.21%) in the 2003 Scottish elections. In 2002, David Wilson was found guilty of sending hundreds of threatening, insulting and abusive literature to residents in Pollokshields. As a member of

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the BNP, David Wilson delivered these leaflets in July 2001, and the leaflets suggested that there had been a number of attacks by Muslims on local white residents.

This series of examples could go on to include the deaths of Surjit Singh Chokkar in Wishaw in 1998, and Firsat Dag in Sighthill in Glasgow in August 2001 (CRE 2002). Racism is not just now and then, it is an everyday experience for many of Scotland's black and minority ethnic population. Racism can take place in the street, at home, at school and in the many other places of Scottish society. It can be individual and institutional. Most importantly, racism is damaging, divisive and dangerous.

RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project on which this article is based took place between February and May 2001 and involved a mixture of research methods including household questionnaires and youth questionnaires, backed up by six individual interviews. This involved consulting 134 members of the local Pakistani community: 68 men and 66 women. This means that just over five per cent of the local Pakistani population were consulted in the research. The main focus of the questionnaires and interviews was the household, social activities, culture and employment. The questionnaire included a range of open and closed questions. All questions about social activities and culture were left open in order to minimise the influence of the researcher imposing categories onto the respondent. The researcher administered the household questionnaires, and these were completed in the homes of the respondents, or in the offices of local community and voluntary organisations. The youth questionnaires were administered in a local secondary school. Five of the six individual interviews were carried out in the respondents' homes, and one took place in a local café. The interviews, with permission of the respondents, were tape recorded and transcribed by the author.

The respondents for the household questionnaires were contacted through a method of snowballing. The researcher contacted local community and voluntary organisations and schools and asked initial contacts to identify other households who might agree to participate in the research. Questionnaires were initially used in this research project because there was little research about the black and minority ethnic population of Scotland. However, given some of the pitfalls of questionnaire based research

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(Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 1992), and after an initial analysis of the data collected, six individual interviews were conducted in order to obtain further details about the key issues discussed in the research. The interviews included two people from three different generations. This involved two young people aged between 16 and 25, two respondents aged between 35 and 45, and two aged over 65. Altogether, this offered deeper material on some of the main findings of the project.

Like the respondents in this research, I am also classed, racialised and gendered. My position as a white, middle-class male excludes me from certain levels of access that may be granted to others. The sample in the research may be biased towards those households who work in or have connections with local organisations, and community and voluntary organisations. In this way then, there is likelihood that this research may only relate to specific members of the local Pakistani community, and so may work to exclude others. However, as other research has shown, even if I had been a Pakistani woman, I would not necessarily have been granted a more privileged level of access (Mohammad 2001).

The sample consulted in this research was highly representative with respect to sex and age (see Table 1); however, employment status figures show that the sample, compared to the Glasgow population, includes more Pakistanis who are employed as opposed to unemployed or economically inactive. However, the figures used to compare employment status include men and women of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi background. Since the rate of unemployment for Pakistani men is similar to the white population, with Bangladeshi and Indian men experiencing higher levels of unemployment (Glasgow City Council 1996), it might be that the sample is more representative than it appears in Table 1. Furthermore, 52% of the population of East Pollokshields belong to the top three social class groups, compared with 44% for Glasgow, which may in part explain the differences between the sample consulted in this research project and the statistics for Glasgow. This does not explain the disparity with regards to the employment status of the women consulted in this research project. There is also a lack of information about the educational attainment of black and minority people in Scotland (Arshad 2003b) and so a comparison on these terms is difficult to make.

EAST POLLOKSHIELDS

Robina Qureshi recently noted in **Being Scottish** (2003, pp. 217-219) that:

I was born here and spent my childhood in Pollokshields. ... I felt like this was my home ... well, as much as it was possible given the other reminders that we were really outsiders ... society looked down on our communities, denigrating our culture then and even today. Nothing has changed, every day racism continues on the streets, in our faces and insidiously behind our backs. ... Don't be surprised when in a few years' time the children of our communities express their outrage at this society's treatment of them. ... The history of Scotland is a whitewashed one that forgets the sponging off poorer countries that Scotland did during its colonialist era.

Qureshi notes above that 'every day racism' is still prevalent in Scottish society. Before discussing the everyday racism experienced by the local Pakistani population, this article will briefly summarise the history of East Pollokshields and the demography of local black and minority ethnic population.

Table 1
Comparison of sample with 1991 census

<i>percentages</i>	Pakistanis in East Pollokshields*	Research Project Sample
Sex		
Men	52	51
Women	48	49
	Pakistanis in Glasgow*	Research Project Sample
Age		
0-15	40	36
16-59	58	56
60+	2	8
Employment Status	Indian, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Glasgow*	Research Project Sample
Men		
Active	63	89

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Unemployed	14	3
Inactive	23	7
Women		
Active	25	72
Unemployed	7	0
Inactive	68	27

* see *Glasgow City Council (1996)*

Up until the mid-1800s, Pollokshields, to the southwest of Glasgow city-centre, existed as open farmland and a farm called Shiels (Ogilvie 1990, p. 2). At this time the Maxwells of Pollok owned much of the land that is today Pollokshields. It was not until 1849 that Sir John Maxwell approached David Rhind, an Edinburgh architect, and asked him to draw up a plan for the area. From this moment on, East and West Pollokshields were to assume very different characteristics:

the scheme envisaged different kinds of development on either side of the main dividing road (Shields Road). The strategy resulted in a social differentiation which is retained to the present day, with a dense tenemental form of development in East Pollokshields and the formation of a Victorian garden suburb of villa housing in West Pollokshields. Pacione 1995, p. 83

While most of Rhind's plan was not implemented, the key components of the plan were put into place. The Maxwells insisted on the establishment of a high-class well-maintained area, and went to great lengths to achieve this aim. They insisted that all of the houses in West Pollokshields should be different and that there should be no shops and no form of trade in the west. In 1891, Pollokshields joined Glasgow along with the neighbouring areas of Crosshill, Langside, Shawlands, Queens Park, Polmadie and Crossmyloof (Pacione 1995). It was between 1850 and 1910 that the main development of the area currently known as East Pollokshields took place, encouraged by Glasgow's increasing population. The area was essentially developed as a grid street plan of large tenements laid out in wide avenues. The tenements were restricted to three storeys in height by feu regulations, and no outside toilets were permitted. East Pollokshields was allowed all of the shops and

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other facilities that were prohibited in the west (Smith 1998). Much of the earliest development of East Pollokshields can still be seen today.

East Pollokshields is currently a busy area of inner-city Glasgow. Compared with the rest of the city, East Pollokshields is a reasonably affluent area, with almost a third of the population belonging to the professional/managerial class. The area has a low level of unemployment, and high levels of car-ownership and home owner-occupation. Albert Drive, the main street running through East Pollokshields, is a busy shopping street, and is often regarded as the retail centre of Scotland's Asian community (Hopkins 2002).

There is little information available about when the black and minority ethnic population first moved into East Pollokshields. However, in 1971 it was estimated that 12,000 people of Asian origin lived in Glasgow, and there was a significant proportion of this population living in East Pollokshields. The 1991 Census classified 60% of East Pollokshields as white, 33% as Pakistani, 4% as Indian and the remaining 3% as belonging to a range of other ethnic groups. The 2001 Census shows a significant increase in the black and minority ethnic population of East Pollokshields. The Pakistani population increased by 7 percentage points, now comprising 40% of the local population, and those classified as white fell to 50%. These statistics show that East Pollokshields is the most segregated area in Scotland in terms of ethnic group membership, and the level of this segregation is increasing.

MULTIPLE LIVED EXPERIENCES: GENDER AND GENERATION

The main findings of this research project highlight the multiple lived experiences and diversity of the Pakistani population of East Pollokshields. Gender and generational differences were evident in this research, along with diverse levels of educational attainment, forms of employment and opinions on identities.

As would be expected, the young people consulted tended to identify more with Scotland than the older people did. Both questionnaires involved the respondent being asked 'how would you identify yourself?' This question was left open as 'the Moreno question is far too restrictive' (Hussain and Miller 2003, p. 11) and this can particularly be the case for people who identify in ways that are not necessarily territorially based. Ten of the young people

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chose 'bi-cultural' identity markers (Saeed, Blain and Forbes 1999) identifying as Scottish Pakistani, Scottish Muslim or British Muslim, and one young person identified as a Scottish Pakistani Muslim. Four of the young people identified as solely Pakistani, two as Muslim and two as Scottish. Comparing this with the findings of the household questionnaire highlights generational differences with regards to identity (see Table 2). The vast majority of those over the age of forty identified as Pakistani, and whilst this was still an important identity marker for some people under the age of thirty, this age group has more people identifying as Scottish. Whilst I was administering the household questionnaire, four groups of parents mentioned that their children would identify as Scottish and would definitely object to the use of a singular Pakistani identity label. This gels with the recent findings of Hussain and Miler (2003, p. 13) who note that 'young Pakistanis are more inclined to stress their Muslim identity while the older are more inclined to stress their Pakistani identity,' although I have also found that young Pakistanis are also likely to identify as Muslim and Scottish (Hopkins, 2004).

Table 2
How would you identify yourself? (Household Questionnaire Results)

Age	Up to 20	21-30	31-40	41-50	Over 50
Identity					
Pakistani	2	15	13	14	15
Kashmiri Pakistani			2		
Pakistani Scottish	6				
Scottish Pakistani		3	1		
Scottish	9	9			2

Table shows absolute numbers.

Generational differences in terms of education and employment were also evident. Almost all of the young people consulted in the youth questionnaire intended going to university, and those who had attended university were

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now employed in a variety of jobs such as banking, computing consultancy, and modern communication technologies (see Table 3). A career in law, pharmacy and science were mentioned by two young people each, and dentistry, teaching and air stewarding were mentioned once each. Comparing these career aims with the career of their fathers finds clear generational differences. Five of the young people's fathers were unemployed, five were shopkeepers, a further four were carryout workers, and there was one caterer and one pharmacist. The younger people of the Pakistani community are therefore moving towards different careers from those of their parents who tend to be concentrated in various forms of retailing. Both the household and youth questionnaires support this.

Table 3
Employment status and age

	Up to 30	31-40	41-50	Over 50
Unemployed			2	1
Retired				9
Full time domestic duties	1	5	3	1
Student	3	2		
Retail	1	2	12	2
Childcare	1	2	2	1
Technological	6	1		
Finance	2	2		
Education/Social Services		3	3	
Medical			1	
Administrative		1		

Table shows absolute numbers.

Levels of educational attainment varied (see Table 4), and this also highlights gender as well as generational differences. In total, more men than women were found to be educated to degree or Diploma level, yet more women than men had school certificates or very little or no education. Eight people stated

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that they had little or no education, and this group were all over the age of fifty and were born in Pakistan.

So there are gender and generational differences within the Pakistani community in terms of education, employment and career choice. Furthermore, men tended to attend the mosque with the women praying at home, and the young men tended to actively participate in sport and recreational activities, with the young women staying at home in their leisure time.

Table 4
Highest educational attainment

Age	Up to 20	21-30	31-40	41-50	Over 50	Total
Degree		2	5	3	3	13
Male		2	2	2	2	8
Female			3	1	1	5
Diploma		9	6	2	1	18
Male		7	3	1		11
Female		2	3	1	1	7
School certificates	1	15	8	12	4	40
Male		6	2	7	3	18
Female	1	9	6	5	1	22
Little or none					8	8
Male					3	3
Female					5	5

Table shows absolute numbers.

EVERYDAY RACISM

Despite the fact that the Pakistani community of East Pollokshields has multiple lived experiences, the everyday experience of racism and

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discrimination is the most persistent finding of this research project. Even when this research did not explicitly intend to investigate issues of racism per se, everyday experiences of racism and discrimination remain the strongest finding. Hussain and Miller (2003) found that 38% of ethnic Pakistanis have been harassed or discriminated against and 43% of this was by ordinary people. This makes it very likely that black and minority ethnic communities living elsewhere in Scotland will be experiencing similar levels of harassment. There is clear need for researchers to understand the complexities of the experiences of everyday racism amongst all black and minority ethnic communities in Scotland, and especially those groups living in different geographical locations.

Eleven young people noted that they had experienced racism, mostly at school, through racist remarks, bullying and fighting. Three of the young people suggested that more than half of the employers in Scotland would refuse someone a job on the grounds of race or ethnic origin, while six of the young people contended that about half of all employers would discriminate in this way. There is little evidence to support or refute these claims, although Hussain and Miller (2003, p. 23) contend that only 2% of ethnic Pakistanis suggested that they would be harassed by employers. More research about black and minority people's access to employment is required. The actual experiences of racism as well as the possibility of being a victim of racism are therefore issues for these young people. Racism was also mentioned by the young people as being one of the main reasons why white people and South Asian people sometimes live in different areas. The household respondents also found this, with some suggesting that white people move out when the South Asians moved in. One respondent in particular commented on the frustration and upset that he experienced when seeing the 'white flight' after his family amongst others moved into the local area. Again, little research has been conducted to support or refute these claims; however, given that the Pakistani population of East Pollokshields has increased by 7 percentage points since 1991, this may well be the case. Whilst the 'white flight' might be one explanation, Smith (1987, p. 35) has also stated that 'most [house] sales to Asians are made through Asian estate agents operating in a residual market and selling dwelling for Asians'. Furthermore, white estate agents were also found to steer Asian clients to cheaper properties, often in Asian-dominated areas. This was found to be the case in Bradford, and perhaps a similar argument could be put forward for

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the increasing levels of segregation in Scotland. Again, however, more research is required to show whether this is actually the case or not.

The choice of what area to live in is influenced by the possible impact of racism, and this is the most frequent response from respondents having been asked why they would not live in certain areas. There may be other people who are restricted from living in certain areas because of financial reasons or even because of sectarianism, and so it is unlikely that racism will be the only factor in their decisions. However, almost half of the households consulted note that they would not consider moving to certain areas because of fear of racism. Name calling at school and racism in the street were the main forms of victimisation. One woman whom I spoke to was visibly upset about the everyday 'in your face racial hatred' that she experiences when driving to and from work. She told me an emotional story about drivers swearing at her because she was supposedly driving improperly. Confirming that she has a full clean British licence this woman is terrified about getting in her car every day to go to work.

The everyday experience of racism is further emphasised through these responses:

- Respondent 1: At college I was one of the only Asian guys in the football team. ... Once another guy who we were playing against started hacking me because of my skin colour and making racist remarks to me under his breath.
- Respondent 2: People are racist towards us because they think we abuse the state and things like that, and that makes me very angry.
- Respondent 3: School was terrible. I used to get bullied every day. I was beat up every day.

Fourteen people explicitly mentioned that they have experienced or currently experience discrimination. It is difficult to find patterns of explanation for the racism and discrimination experienced as it is such a clear finding. Most of the people who did not mention experiencing racism or discrimination tended to be under 40, and approximately half of these respondents either never wore Asian clothes, or chose to wear Asian clothes on some occasions.

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Perhaps these people are less visibly different and so less likely to experience racism and discrimination (even although people should not need to integrate in such a way in order to free themselves of any form of discrimination). They may also experience genuinely lower levels of racism, or they may have chosen not to articulate their experiences in terms of racism. Regardless, it is clear that more research is required.

Islamaphobia is another form of racism and discrimination that was persistently mentioned by the respondents in this research project, and the events of 11 September 2001 are likely to have heightened such racism (Hopkins, 2004; Runnymede Trust 1997). A recent Scottish Executive (2002) report on tackling religious hatred paid minimal attention to Islamaphobia: it concentrated largely on the issue of sectarianism, and whilst this obviously needs to be challenged, the issue of Islamaphobia remains almost unchallenged despite there being more than 42,500 Muslims in Scotland.

CONCLUSION

Rowena Arshad (1999, p. 219) has suggested that we need:

to seek dialogue with those that genuinely wish to see racial and cultural exclusion end for the benefit of all. It is critical that those who shape policy and strategies to challenge exclusion and bigotry are themselves accountable to people whom are marginalised and discriminated against.

The findings of the research project reported here suggest that racism is an everyday experience for the Pakistani community of East Pollokshields in Glasgow, even when gender and generational differences are also considered. More research is required about the experiences of different black and minority ethnic groups living in different areas of Scotland. In line with the work of Essed (1991, p. 288) it is clear that 'experiences of everyday racism do not exist as single events but as a complex of cumulative practices'. Perhaps working together and uniting against racism and discrimination will help to change the future of Scotland. This will take positive education, involving an increase in education about racism, and the problems that racism can create for Scotland. This education should be wide ranging in its coverage and outlets. It will also require a deeper understanding of the way that racism is experienced (Essed 1991) as well a further exploration into identities of both a territorial and cultural/religious nature (Hussain and

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Miller 2003). Perhaps more qualitative research along the lines of the focus groups used by Hussain and Miller (2003) and the interviews used in this research project would contribute to deeper understandings of the ways in which everyday racism is experienced, who perpetrates such racism and the influences this has on how people feel about their identities, nationalities and where they live. Most importantly, Scotland's children and young people will benefit from this, both through have a deeper understanding of different cultures and ethnicities, and also through being able to look forward to living in a more tolerant Scotland, a Scotland where everyday racism and discrimination is not the norm.

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