INTEGRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF BRITISH MULTICULTURALISM

INTÉGRATION DANS LE CONTEXTE MULTICULTUREL BRITANNIQUE

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Abstract: *From the 1960s to the late 1990s, issues of immigrants' integration in Britain involved two major approaches: Race Relations and multiculturalism were a direct response to the overt racism within society because of huge flood of immigrants mostly from the New Commonwealth. However, increasing reproach of multiculturalism since the late 1990s altered the political rhetoric to focus more on civic integration, community cohesion and common citizenship. Although Race Relations and multiculturalism reinforced ethnic group rights and group identity, civic integration and cohesion were destined to stress the prominence of common shared values, feelings of united belonging and individual rights.*

Keywords: *immigrants' integration policies, British multiculturalism, cultural diversity, community cohesion, citizenship*

Résumé: *Des années 1960 à la fin des années 1990, les problèmes d'intégration des immigrants en Grande-Bretagne impliquaient deux approches majeures: les relations raciales et le multiculturalisme étaient une réponse directe au racisme grandissant au sein de la société en raison de l'afflux massif d'immigrants principalement du Nouveau Commonwealth. Cependant, le reproche croissant du multiculturalisme depuis la fin des années 1990 a modifié la rhétorique politique pour se concentrer davantage sur l'intégration civique, la cohésion communautaire et la citoyenneté commune. Bien que les relations raciales et le multiculturalisme renforcent les droits des groupes ethniques et l'identité de groupe, l'intégration et la cohésion civiques étaient destinées à souligner l'importance des valeurs communes partagées, des sentiments d'appartenance unie et des droits individuels.*

Mots-clés: *politiques d'intégration des immigrés, multiculturalisme britannique, diversité culturelle, cohésion communautaire, citoyenneté*

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Immigrant integration usually included the positive contribution of immigrants in a variety of domains, mainly the labour market and the socio-cultural sphere, at both local and national level. However, the way in which the host society accepted and supported immigrants' integration varied in accordance with different circumstances.

Adrian Favell (2001) described integration as a main managing framework within a political system; political responses intended to manage problems posed by immigrants'

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integration. Political reactions varied from anti-discrimination legislation, to language provision, to civic education, to employment and housing policies, or further to promote immigrants' cultural needs and support ethno-cultural activities.

Besides, many definitions and approaches of multiculturalism were based on the idea of sharing a common human identity but in a culturally facilitated way. Group disparities and hierarchical power relations within society started breaking down in the after-war period, first through decolonisation, then through civil rights movements, and then minority and multicultural rights struggles, along with vigorous individual human rights legislation.

In admitting the shift from highlighting cultural distinctiveness to emphasising "Britishness" / "Englishness" values, this current study investigates the policies and practices of immigrants' integration in British society. It aims to provide answers to the following questions:

- What are the policies adopted to integrate immigrants?
- To what extent is immigrants' integration in England successful?

The hypotheses formulated are as follows:

- British government has made an exclusive combination of legislation and policies for treating difference, regulating immigration, and nurturing inclusion.
- Yet, many ethnic and religious minorities still feel isolated not because of their socio-economic status but due to their socio-cultural identity.

The work is divided into two parts; the first part deals with the main policies adopted by the British government to integrate immigrants, whereas the second part examines their integration in practice through the different statistics and results of various surveys and researches.

1. Immigrants' Integration and Multicultural Policies

Multiculturalism as a set of political policies focused on ethno-cultural groups, their relation with the state, and their different claims to gain recognition at economic, socio-cultural and political levels. Multicultural policies also stressed unnoticeable inequalities, prejudices and marginalised groups in society, and tried to support and celebrate ethno-cultural diversity in the public sphere.

British multiculturalism policies, thus, approved ethnic diversity and supported it, trying at the same time to eliminate the primary discriminatory barriers in society through race-relations policies; the state should not intervene in the cultural identity of its citizens. In fact, Race Relations Acts (1960s) (now Equality Act) policies were a series of anti-discrimination measures that first banned excessive forms of racial exclusion, and then by the end of the 1990s, included implicit forms of discrimination.These measures resulted in shaping a clear national approach to the issue of diversity including all areas of life; access to citizenship, education, health care and employment. However, since the early years of

the 21ˢᵗ century, multiculturalism faced serious hindrances, and parties on both sides of the political range were calling for its end.

From the 1960s to the late 1990s, issues of integration involved two major approaches: Race Relations and multiculturalism were a direct reaction to the explicit racism within society because of huge arrival of immigrants, mainly from the New Commonwealth. Yet, rising criticism of multiculturalism since the late 1990s reformed the political rhetoric to emphasise more on civic integration, community cohesion and common citizenship. Though Race Relations and multiculturalism supported ethnic group rights and group identity, civic integration and cohesion were meant to stress the importance of common shared values, feelings of united belonging and individual rights.

This shift from multiculturalism towards community cohesion derived from a time when national identity was facing an important impasse, highlighted by the urban race riots in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley in 2001. The Cantle Report of 2001 revealed that people from different groups were segregated in education, employment, communities, language, social and cultural networks and places of worship, resulting in "parallel lives". The alternative was to endorse community cohesion, based on respect for cultural diversity and greater sense of citizenship.

Likewise, the 2002 Home Office White Paper entitled *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain* placed the integration of immigrants and its impact on citizenship and national identity on top of its strategy. The White Paper openly admitted that in some respects British citizens were in a crisis of belonging, since the state failed in its attempt to integrate its varied society. It mentioned that the turbulences in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley were a proof of this disintegration and blamed it on the absence of a sense of common values and shared civic identity.

Consequently, the government planned to address this rupture by introducing an open and productive debate about citizenship, civic identity and common values. This White Paper paved the way for the work of the Life in the UK Advisory Group, led by Bernard Crick, which created the Life in the UK handbook and citizenship testing supplies. In 2006 the dean of Communities and Local Government Secretary Ruth Kelly asserted the establishment of a Committee on Integration and Cohesion, through which public discussions, case studies and research across England, was to advise the government on how to build a "cohesive society" and participate in building a national strategy about integration and cohesion.

An integrated and cohesive community meant a clearly defined and broadly shared sense of involvement of diverse individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country. It also emphasised a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who newly arrived and those who already had deep attachments to a specific place, with an accent on what they had in common; there were solid and positive relationships between people from wide-ranging backgrounds in workplaces, schools and other institutions within locality.
Furthermore, additional document was delivered by the Department for Communities and

Local Government in 2012 under Conservative government. In the report entitled *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, the Communities and Local Government generally summarised the new approach to integration in England through creating appropriate conditions for everyone to contribute to national and local life. Though the Commission on Integration and Cohesion of 2007 also focused on locally-led initiatives, the 2012 new strategy sought to create conditions for integration mainly by funding private and voluntary services.

Hence, the main task of the government was to act only "exceptionally". The document also portrayed five key aspects that could advance integration: a clear sense of shared ambitions and values; mutual commitments and obligations; helping people to realise their potential; giving chance to people from all backgrounds to take part in local and national life; and eradicating all forms of discrimination and extremism. Some of these measures were in fact rather similar to the principles outlined by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in 2007, principally shared futures, rights and responsibilities, while ethics of hospitality and mutual respect were replaced with more active social mobility, and similarly, equality, justice and trust between communities with a stronger sense of civic participation.

Nevertheless, the main difference in policy-making relied on the rigorous effort of the Conservative-led government to retire from a national strategy on integration, leaving it mostly in the hands of the voluntary and private sectors; instead of a national strategy, research and public consultations, the government created the conditions for "Big Society" in which public institutions were gradually pulled to pieces and the responsibility was placed on the voluntary and private sectors.

Although there were effective programmes like the National Citizen Service (NCS), or initiatives such as the "Big Lunch", integrating immigrants, particularly the most vulnerable, was absent at the state level. Integration policies, consequently, pushed the limits; this fact pointed to an era that was beyond immigrant integration, in which immigration was no more a new phenomenon and integration had long been entrenched into the society through anti-discrimination policies, whereas it also pointed in the direction of closed borders, anti-immigration sentiment and declined determination to integrate those who crossed the lines.

For Sarah Spencer (2014), deputy director of the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at Oxford University, in terms of integration policies, it was noted that the UK did not in fact have policies of immigrant integration. Despite the fact that she recognised the vigorous anti-discrimination legislation and the increase of English language teaching, she was clear to indicate that there was no national strategy on immigrant integration, no leadership to motivate and encourage people, through employers, trade unions and civil society, to contribute to the process of integration, which she defined as a "two-way street".

Yet, one of these policies still remained in the form of civic integration testing framework: Knowledge of Language and Life in the UK (KoLL). Though the existing citizenship policies

were part of immigration policies agenda, they were clearly planned as a measure of a two-way process of integration of newcomers into British society. The 2003 report of the Advisory Group on *Life in the UK*, entitled *The New and the Old,* led by Lord Bernard Crick, highlighted the common responsibility and civic duty of both the new and the old immigrant generations to learn about each other's ways. According to the same report, citizenship was meant to be an important life event, a ritual that involved the learning of the language as well as some cultural aspects to live within a new society.

At the launch of the *Life in the UK: A Journey to Citizenship* handbook and test in 2005, Tony McNulty, then immigration minister, openly avowed: «This is not a test of someone's ability to be British or a test of their "Britishness". It is a test of their preparedness to become citizens» (Kiwan, 2008: 69) this position was strongly maintained by policy-makers in the making of citizenship constituents. The declaration was a response to criticisms that the new integration policies were a test of "Britishness", a "cricket-test"[2] of varieties that Britons themselves could not pass.[3]

Besides, the term "Britishness" was a slogan at the time the first citizenship test was accepted, adopted by politics and academia and proved in the new citizenship policies discourse. The report of *Life in the UK* Advisory Group overtly asked "Who are we British" and "What are our values?" and answered with key words like respect for equal rights, mutual tolerance, and understanding of differences. It also underlined the fact that "Britishness" was not just a memorised and tested British history.

In addition, the Advisory Group strongly supported a process towards educative and integrative citizenship, in which an applicant's progress, especially in terms of language skills, be evaluated in favour of a common test at a specific level. Consequently, the idea that newcomers should be given tools to integrate and actively participate in the society was the central philosophy of the first Life in the UK handbook, focused on the primary introduction to British civic society and its institutions, and supporting people to actively and voluntarily contribute to the society so as to build a deeper sense of national identity and belonging. The main purpose of the KoLL was also to help immigrants in their "journey" to British citizenship, through language and civics education based on active participation and community cohesion. However, with the changes in the 2013 handbook and associated test, there was a clear shift from the integrative aim of practical citizenship education towards testing of British history and culture.

1.1. Main Immigration Acts

Immigration is an important policy area for the British Government. It has a great impact on the economy, public services and community cohesion, and has always been part of its history as generations of immigrants have brought benefits to Britain's economy and culture. Yet, immigration has often been a very conflicting issue, and public apprehension

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[2]The "cricket test" referred to Norman Tebitt's comment in 1990 that a good indication of integration was when immigrants and their children show their fidelity to the British or rather English cricket team.
[3]BBC's "own version" of the "Britishness" test illustrated the fact that Britons themselves would find it difficult to pass.http://news.bbc.co.uk, accessed on 31 July 2020.

about it has increased.

Table 1: Main British Immigration Acts

British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act 1914	This granted the common status of British subject upon those persons who had definite connections with the Crown's dominions.
British Nationality Act 1948	The Empire's dominions each adopted their separate citizenships, but preserved the common status of British subject.
Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1968	This required certain potential migrants to supply proof that their parents or grandparents had been born in Britain.
Immigration Act 1971	Commonwealth citizens lost their automatic right to remain in the UK, meaning they faced the same restrictions as those from elsewhere. They would in future only be allowed to stay in the UK after they had lived and worked there for five years. A partial "right of abode" was introduced, lifting all restraints on immigrants with a direct personal or ancestral connection with Britain.
Immigration Act 1988	This act guaranteed that only one wife or widow of a polygamous marriage had a right to enter the country. It also ensured people with freedom of movement in the European Community did not need leave to enter or remain in the UK.
Asylum and Immigration Act 1996	It became a criminal offence to employ anyone unless they had permission to live and work in the UK.
Immigration and Asylum Act 1999	The act removed benefits from asylum seekers and created the National Asylum Service to house them, taking pressure off local authorities.
Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002	This created the first English test and citizenship exam for immigrants and introduced measures against bogus marriages.
Asylum and Immigration Act 2004	This act introduced a single form of application that remains to this day and made it a criminal offence to destroy travel documents. It limited access to support for those told to leave the UK.
Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006	A five-tier points system for awarding entry visas was created. Those refused work or study visas had their rights of appeal limited. The Act introduced a number of changes to the immigration appeals process, most notably restricting the right of appeal for refusal of entry permission in cases where the subject intends to enter the country as a dependent, a visitor or a student. This leaves the only grounds for appeal open to human rights and race discrimination reasons. Appeals launched within the UK can be for asylum cases only. The act brought in on-the-spot fines of £2,000, allocated by employers for each illegal employee, which could include parents taking on nannies without visas. It introduces civil (not criminal) penalties in the form of payments for employers who take on people over the age of 16 who are subject to immigration control (that is, have no entry permissions or leave to remain, or no valid

	permit to work in the UK).
UK Borders Act 2007	This provided the UK Border Agency with powers to tackle illegal working and automatically deport some foreign nationals imprisoned for specific offences, or for more than one year. It gave immigration officers police-like powers, such as augmented detention and search-and-entry roles. The act brought in the power to create obligatory biometric cards for non-EU immigrants.
Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009	This act amended the rules so people from outside the European Economic Area had to have residential status for eight years before being eligible for naturalisation. Those seeking naturalisation through marriage had to be married for five years first. Residents who had spent five years living in the United Kingdom were able to apply for "Indefinite Leave to Remain". Under the Act, five years of residence leads to "probationary citizenship", which can lead to full citizenship after earning a certain number of "points", such as volunteering or "civic activism." The act also allowed immigration and customs officers to perform some of each other's roles and imposed a duty on home secretaries to safeguard children.

Source: https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics

In general, British policies have given importance to integrationist approach; the most significant decisions were taken in 1960s. Prominent Race Relation Acts (1965, 1968 and 1976) were passed to integrate immigrants and allow cultural diversity in an air of common tolerance. These Acts aimed at putting an end to discrimination and promoting multiculturalism. However, a change from multiculturalism towards community cohesion derived from a time when national identity was facing an important impasse, highlighted by the urban race riots in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley in 2001.

In the same year, the Cantle Report revealed that people from different groups were segregated in education, employment, communities, social and cultural networks, and places of worship, resulting in "parallel lives." The alternative, then, was to validate community cohesion, based on respect for cultural diversity and greater sense of citizenship. In 2012, a document was delivered by the Department for Communities and Local Government that enhanced the new approach to integration in England through creating suitable conditions for everyone to contribute to national and local life. The new strategy sought to create conditions for integration mainly by financing private and voluntary services.

2. Integration in Practice

On the other side, seventy years ago in Britain issues of race and identity were unfamiliar to most, in a country that looked very different from today. However, since then the face of the nation has changed swiftly. Within the lifetime of the baby boomers, the post-war generation defined more officially as those born between 1946 and 1964, Britain has

gone from a country where almost all communities were single faith and mono-cultural, to a society where one in ten belongs to ethnic minorities.

Table 2: Pros and Cons of Immigration

Immigration	
Pros	**Cons**
- Increased economic advance - More flexible labour market - Fills jobs vacancies in unpopular jobs - Provides skilled workers, such as nurses, doctors, teachers - Potential entrepreneurs - Working-age migrants provide net profit to government budget - A solution to an ageing population - Greater cultural diversity	- Potential decrease in real wages, especially for low-skilled native workers - Augmented pressure on public services like health and education - Over-population could rise price of housing/renting - Impact on real GDP per capita can be damaging - Social conflict from prompt immigration

Source: https://www.economicshelp.org

Besides, immigration gave considerable economic profits to Britain mainly, a more flexible labour market, greater skills base, augmented demand and a greater diversity of innovation. However, immigration caused issues of overcrowding and extra pressure on public services like health and education. There is also a debate about whether immigration of unskilled workers leads to descending pressure on wages and even unemployment of native workers; though the same labour force was needed to rebuild England in post-war II period.

Figure 3: Long-Term Immigration Trends by Reason for Migration
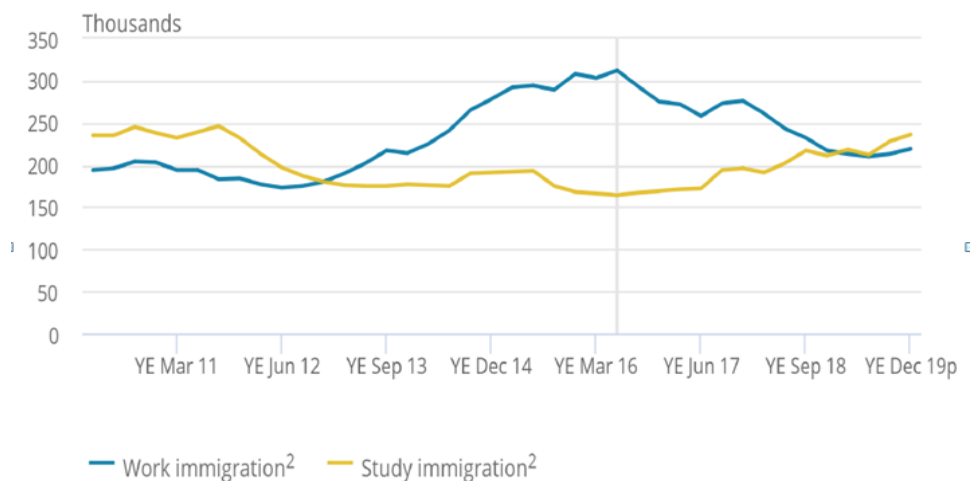
Source: Office for National Statistics, May 2020

According to Office for National Statistics, overall immigration for work has diminished since 2016, while immigration for study has progressively increased over the same time period.

Graphic 4: Population Who Agree that Their Local Area Is a Place Where People from Different Backgrounds Get On Well Together in England

Source: https://statista.com/statistics
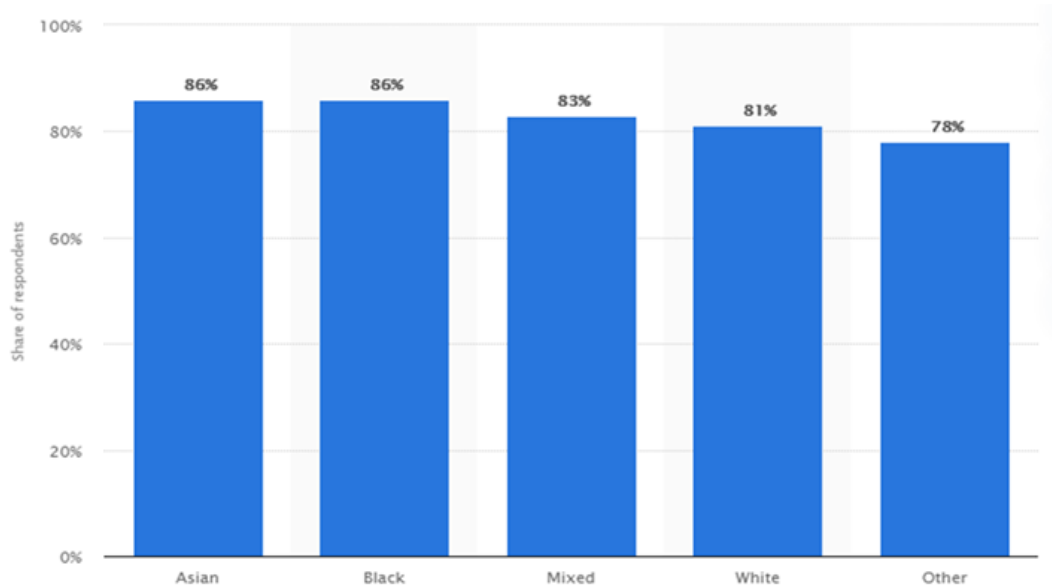
In England, many immigrant groups as Indians and Blacks established in specific suburban areas in London, Manchester and Leicester, which became branded by the groups' different ways of life. As these varied lifestyles became visible, a sense of "otherness", the sentiment of being different in appearance or character from what is familiar, expected, or commonly accepted, raised among the local population. The statistic shows the share of the population who agreed that their local area was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together in England in 2018/19, by ethnicity. This belief was held in a high majority among those from Asian and Black ethnic minority groups, with 86 per cent each.

Graphic 5: Is Britain a Racist Society?

Source: https://statista.com/statistics
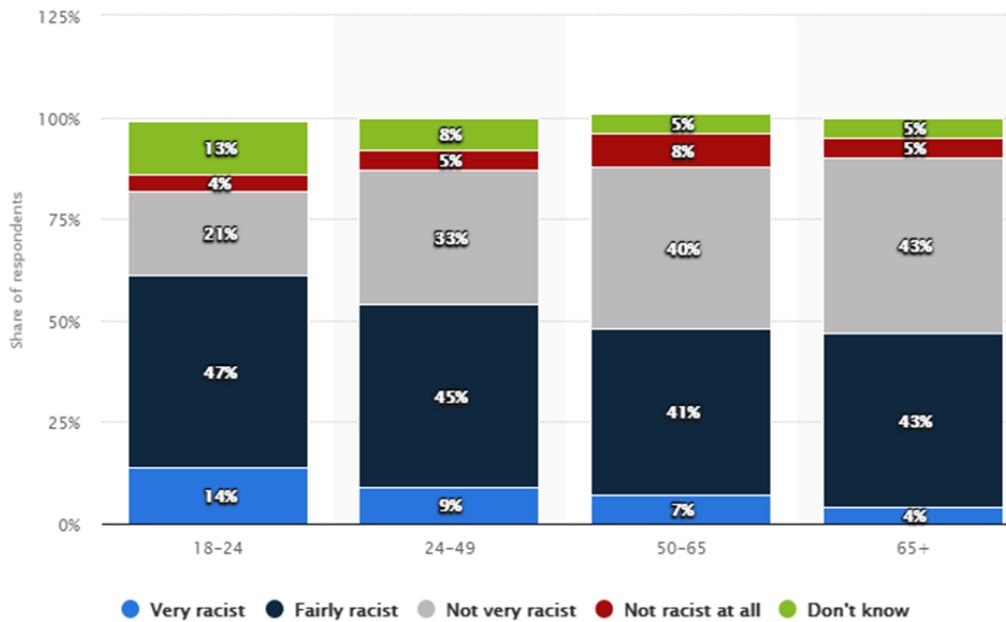
Furthermore, according to Statica survey results, 44 per cent of adults in Britain think that it is a fairly racist society, with eight per cent of others, mainly ethnic minorities, believing Britain to be a very racist society. In 2019, over half of 18-24 year old in Britain think that it is a racist society, with 47 per cent believing it to be fairly racist and 14 per cent believing it to be very racist. Although 43 per cent of over 65 think Britain is a fairly racist society, four per cent still think it is a very racist one.

2.1. Minorities in Britain Still Suffer Discrimination despite Progress

Racial discrimination and abuse are generally committed by strangers as opposed to others known directly to the victims. The most common forms of discrimination or abuse stated by victims support the notion that it is the criticisms and prejudices of strangers that touch ethnic minorities the most: 47% testified that they were insulted directly, 40% received end of racist jokes or insults, 40% others received end of racist stereotyping and 38% were treated differently in public places like shops and restaurants. Although the political conditions have changed much in twenty years, the authorities are still seen by some as a source of preconception; 20% of all Black Britons reported being viewed with suspicion by the police.

As revealed by Opinium survey in 2019, only (48%) of British adults think that Britain has become a less racist country with a similar percentage of ethnic minorities (46%) agreeing. Seven in ten (71%) ethnic minorities think that racist beliefs are still broadly held but are not openly talked about, and 60% believe that racial discrimination is common in Britain. The message is that even if it is less socially acceptable, discrimination on grounds of race has not yet been committed openly. More than half (58%) of ethnic minorities say that they have been a victim of racial discrimination, while 47% say they have received racially

motivated abuse. One in seven (14%) Muslims and 10% of Hindus frequently face racial discrimination, compared to a minority of ethnic groups who are Christians. This advocates that some groups are still targeted more than others, and the data at least, should lead to reconsider the issue of Islamo-phobia in Britain especially among Pakistani and Bangladeshi women.

2.2. Integration in Multicultural Britain

On the other side, understanding the identity of several groups in society has become a needless part of multicultural Britain, because British identity is frequently multidimensional. Though most of Britons claim various elements to their identity, ranging from religion to even the local community in which they live, for nearly three quarters (72%) of White Britons the country where they live in is the single most significant part of their identity.

Graphic 6: Most Important Part of Britons' Identity


Source: https://opinium.co.uk
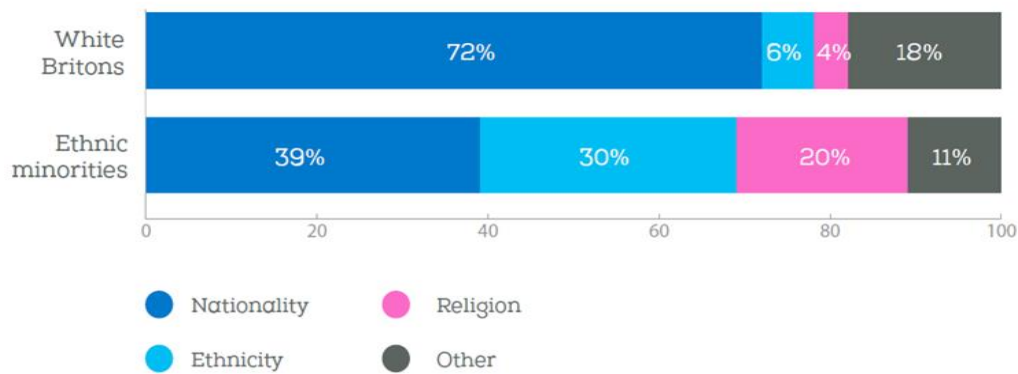
However, for many ethnic minorities there are other features that shape their sense of identity. Although 39% identify most with the country they live in, half consider their religion or ethnicity as the most central part of their identity compared to only 10% of White Britons; almost half (47%) of Muslims consider their Islamic faith to be the most important part of their identity, while 43% of Black Britons view their ethnicity to be the mirror that reflects themselves.

Indeed, it's important to understand that these opposing identities exist to challenge many problems around integration. Just over a third (35%) of minorities reveal feeling like they belong to a different culture, with a further 22% being excluded from society as a whole by openly agreeing that they do not feel being a part of British culture as well as being proud of British history, customs and monarchy. A third (33%) Muslims – the group most likely to identify with their religion – are most expected to say they do not feel a part of British culture, while only 19% of those with no faith feel the same. Remarkably, young people are the most likely to say they feel detached from British culture (29%) maybe because they have been victims of discrimination, principally young ethnic minorities.

Regardless of whether they primarily identify with the country they live in or not, nearly everyone seems to be proud of something about Britain. The National Health Service tops

the list of things that make all adults proud to be British, followed by British history, the British sense of humour and the Monarchy; White Britons often focus on some of the more traditional characteristics of being British – 27% are proud of British history and 25% nominated the Monarchy. Contrariwise, ethnic minorities are much more likely to focus on features of modern British society. A quarter (25%) state that Multiculturalism makes them proud of where they live compared to only 6% of White Britons. Minorities are also less prospective than White Britons to say they are proud of British history (13%) and the Monarchy (7%).

Graphic 7: Is Britain a Successfully Integrated Society?

Source: https://opinium.co.uk
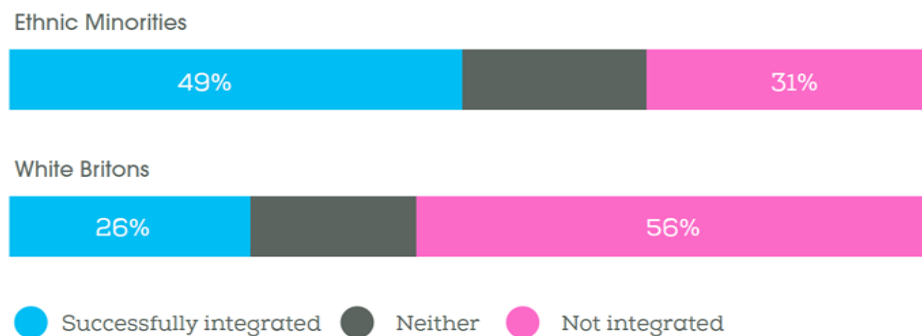
In spite of a large portion of minorities feeling detached from the conventional, ethnic minorities mostly have a more positive image about the state of their integration than white Britons. More than half of white Britons (55%) think Britain is poorly integrated, with different cultures and communities living and working independently. Unusually, ethnic minorities hold practically the complete opposed point of view. Half (49%) think Britain is really an example of an effectively integrated society where different communities and cultures live and work together.

Graphic 8: Barriers to Integration

Source: https://opinium.co.uk

In addition, half (52%) of white Britons think that Britain is not a cohesive society due to minorities not making an effort to integrate. On the other hand, 32% of minorities are much more likely than white Britons (24%) to blame a lack of recognition from the majority for blocking integration and this rises to over half (52%) of first generation minorities. What both do agree on, however, is that the chief responsibility for integration into wider society depends on the individual (38% of white Britons vs. 34% of ethnic minorities).

2.3. Clustered Communities

Besides, over a third of minorities and half of white Britons blame the attraction for individuals in an ethnic group to group together for stopping minorities from integrating. In addition, half of Britain's black population lives in only 19 English districts, 17 of them in London. Likewise, half of Britain's 4.3 million Asians live in only 29 urban areas across England. In a word, one in six ethnic minorities resides in a region where they are the majority. This means that many ethnic minorities know a very different Britain to most of the population. Despite the fact that 13% of Britain is not white, half of the white population lives in a district where less than one in twenty is an ethnic minority. A quarter of white Britons live in a region where less than one in fifty is an ethnic minority. Definitely, one in four white Britons hardly meets a Black or Asian person in his neighbourhood.

While there is a serious separation over integration levels and the reasons for why it is not working, most of British adults seem to agree that education may be the best solution to advance both social and cultural integration. Half of British adults (51%) support obligatory English lessons for those that move to Britain, as do a third (36%) of ethnic minorities. A further third of British adults (31%) approve introducing a free course for all immigrants to learn about Britain when they arrive rather than when they apply for citizenship.

One of the best ways to do this could include lessons in schools about British culture and traditions (39% of Britons think this could help), more lessons in schools about different religions and cultures (26%), and educating children about the consequences of racism (34%). Over a quarter (27%) also believe that integration can be enhanced by guaranteeing that the intake of each school mirrors the broader area and is not ruled by one group.

Yet, some differences still persist. Although a quarter (26%) of white Britons support an integration promise on arrival for immigrants aspiring to settle in Britain, only one in seven (16%) ethnic minorities feel the same way. Ethnic minorities (25%) are also more probable than white Britons (15%) to think integration could be helped by encouraging greater depiction of ethnic minorities in organisations where they are underrepresented. They are also twice as likely to think councils should use more local or community events to encourage the diverse range of cultures in Britain (24% minorities vs. 13% white Britons).

On the other hand, though the law protects all citizens against any kind of segregation, discrimination because of race still prevails, comprising colour, nationality, citizenship and ethnic or national origins. These challenging social and economic biases and abuse such as "islamo-phobia" are principally concerted among those who see immigration and

multiculturalism most negatively. However, examples of challenges towards better understanding and tolerance are made. Taking one of the most debated and misused words associated with Muslim women and Anti-Muslim sentiment, *It's Not About the Burqa* written by Mariam Khan and published in 2019, is supposed to change all that. Or Meera Syal of Indian background, known for her typical contribution to the creative arts in Britain, who was bestowed with a CBE by the Prince of Wales, on 6th May 2015, at Buckingham Palace.

Conclusion

In general, the first hypothesis has been confirmed; the British government has adopted many multicultural strategies that recognised ethnic diversity and supported it, trying at the same time to put an end to racial discrimination through race-relations policies. These measures resulted in shaping a clear national approach to the issue of diversity in all areas of life including access to citizenship, education, health care, housing and employment. The second hypothesis has been proved as well; these encouraging initiatives do not change the fact that some still feel discriminated. Instead of improving understanding of cultural differences, multiculturalism encouraged indifference toward other people's lives, and thus strengthening "parallel societies" with different values.

In conclusion, the irony of multiculturalism released a tension leading to discrimination and separation, mainly, between blacks and whites; Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindi started to live in different spaces, attend different schools, and unite through different institutions. Rather than directly undertaking the problems of racism and exclusion of communities, both local and national authorities encouraged black and Asian communities to inactively coexist by following "parallel lives" under the umbrella of multiculturalism. However, regardless of their different cultural heritage, all British adults equally seem to share a pride in the individual freedom and democracy that remain the basics of British society past and present. Perhaps it is around these mutual values of freedom and democracy that Britain may build a durable multicultural and multiracial society that feels at ease with itself.

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