

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM – AN INDIVIDUAL AND
ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSE

PRESENTATION BY
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DIVERSITY FORUM – 22ND MARCH 2004

OVERHEADS

DIMENSIONS OF CHALLENGING INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

Raising public awareness of racial discrimination.

Report and record its incidence (a supportive culture must be built for this to take off)

Develop benchmarks for, and gather evidence of, all personnel working together.

Effective leadership; and management action.

Education and training.

Piecemeal approaches will not work: e.g. race awareness training in the UK

Challenging the occupational culture, the workplace culture, in a specific community of practice is essential.

‘Race’

“As a way of categorising people, race is based upon a delusion because popular ideas about racial classification lack scientific validity and are moulded by political pressures rather than by the evidence from biology.”

(Banton and Harwood, 1975, p. 8)

Banton, M. and Harwood, J. (1975)
The Race Concept
London: David Charles

See Also:

Barzun, J. (1965)
Race: a Study in Superstition
New York Harper Row

Miles, R. (1982)
Racism and Migrant Labour
Chapter 2
London: Routledge and Kegan Paul

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Subjective Axis

Generic Professional Identity

**Institutional
Axis**

Institutional
Routines

Managerial
Ideologies

Specialist Professional Identity

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Burkitt, I., Husband, C. Mackenzie, J. and Torn, A. (2001) *Nurse Education and Communities of Practice*. London: ENB, Chapter 5

“For tolerance to be necessary, there must be a prior belief that the person to be tolerated has an intrinsically undesirable characteristic, or that they are not fundamentally entitled to the benefits which are to be allowed them. Those to be tolerated, by definition, possess some such social stigma. Hence as I have argued elsewhere:

Tolerance is the exercise of largesse by the powerful, ultimately on behalf of the powerful. It is the generous extension of forbearance toward someone who is intrinsically objectionable or not deserving of the privilege being allowed ...

Prejudice that is replaced by tolerance leaves in place the power relations, and the stigma which the tolerator sees to be characteristic of the tolerated.”

(Husband, C. 1994
'Race' and Nation: The British Experience
Perth: Paradigm Books)

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

“The collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage Black and Minority ethnic people.”

The Stephen Lawrence Enquiry:
CRE 1999

The CRE stress that:

“Institutional racism should not be used to label individuals negatively; it is a problem for the organisation as a whole ... everyone in all organisations needs to ask some basic questions for example:

Are we acting fairly?

Does the service we provide reach all the communities it is meant for and does it meet their needs?

Are we applying the same professional standards in every situation?”

The Stephen Lawrence Enquiry,
Implications for Racial Equality,
Commission for Racial Equality: March 1999

Racialisation:-

“the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group ... it is an ideological process, an historically specific one”

(Orni and Winant, 1986, p. 64)

Racialisation refers to a discourse in which the concept of ‘race’ is invoked with reference to phenotypical human characteristics or to cultural characteristics in so far as they are seen as fixed, naturalised and inherently different.

‘Race’ then explains behaviour.

‘The Politics of Recognition’

“What has come about with the modern age is not the need for recognition but the conditions in which the attempt to be recognized can fail.”

(Charles Taylor, 1992, p. 35)

“The importance of recognition is now universally acknowledged in one form or another; on an intimate plane, we are all aware of how identity can be formed or malformed through the course of our contact with significant others. On the social plane, we have a continuing politics of equal recognition.”

(Ibid. p. 36)

“... the development of the modern notion of identity, has given rise to a politics of difference. There is of course a universalist basis to this as well, making for the overlap and confusion between the two. Everyone should be recognized for his or her unique identity. But recognition here means something else. With the politics of equal dignity, what is established is meant to be universally the same, an identical basket of rights and immunities; with the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognize is the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctiveness from everyone else. The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or majority identity.”

(Ibid. p. 38)