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Introduction

In 2010, the Equality Act 2010 was introduced; it includes what the Public Sector Equality Duties mean for education institutions in England and Wales. In schools and colleges, the Equality Act (the Act) aims to remove barriers that some students face but we might want to reflect on what “success” would look like. Could this be equal progress for all learners, regardless of their protected characteristics?

Purpose

The purpose of this study has been to explore the impact of the implementation of the Single Policy derived from the Equality Act 2010, on students' outcomes within a 16 - 18 Further Education College.

Methods

The research involves combining two methodological approaches to provide confirmatory evidence.

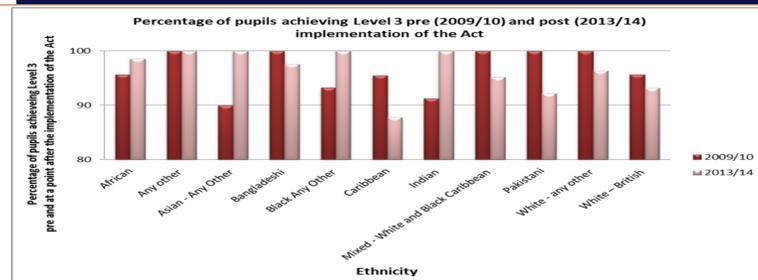
The quantitative - secondary data, provided by the college were analysed in line with the research questions.

The qualitative data was broken down into categories based on the theoretical lens (the theories help the researcher make sense of the data before him) and the research questions; I extracted relevant statements associated with the research questions and theoretical lens, and made connections between categories in terms of patterns and relationships between and among them.

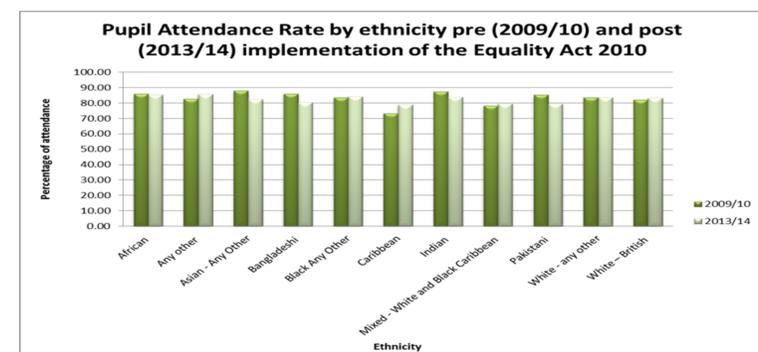
Limitation

Being a single case study, I am not able to generalise from the Findings.

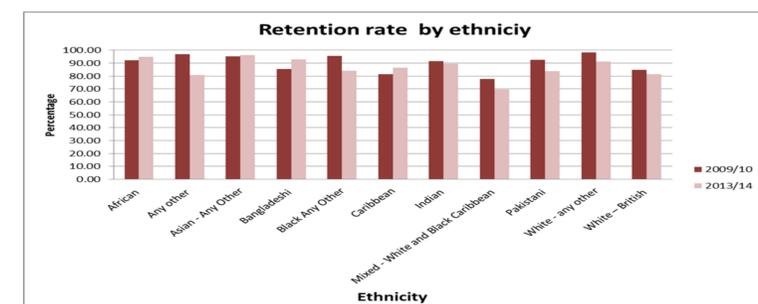
Results



Note 1: To avoid drawing inferences from changes for some groups that are too small, I only included data where the cell size (the number of individuals in that group) is more than 30.



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Qualitative findings

The work of the Equality and Diversity (E&D) Committee at the college indicates that there are some good practices, especially; the inclusion of student's representatives on the E&D committee is commendable. However, there was limited evidence clearly associating implementation of the Equality Act 2010 to learners' achievements. It is therefore incumbent on responsible body with the oversight for the college to develop a robust system of measuring the impact of Equality Act 2010 related actions on progress for all learners.

Initial Conclusions

From the quantitative analysis, it was not possible to detect a systematic impact from the Act on learners' academic outcomes because changes are small and statistically insignificant. Also, causality is difficult to establish because other things change over time. However, the qualitative evidence provides an insight into how pastoral outcomes such as better awareness of the Act, improved welfare and safe learning environment may translate to the future academic achievements for the students.

Recommendations

- Develop a robust policy impact assessment procedure that focuses on both pastoral and academic outcomes for students
- Develop 'positive action' initiatives to accelerate progress among ethnic groups identified as being 'at risk'
- Create Benefits Review Plan for intervention programmes.

Challenges

The implementation of the Equality Act 2010 raises practical difficulties, in that there is no previous evidence in literature with examples of good practice, and evidence of impact on learners' outcomes in 16-18 years old Further Education College.

Acknowledgements

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