

The 'migrant children schooling crisis': examining the intersection between media framing, neoliberalism and schooling (Leicester)

Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA) funded,
Interdisciplinary Research Partnerships project, May-July 2019

Aims

The pilot project aims to address tensions identified with the 'migrant children schooling crisis' as it is portrayed in the media and the challenges this brings to local authorities and schools who have to place and educate 'migrant children'. This is an intersectional study between the media framing of neoliberal tensions within the education sector and the reality of how local authorities and schools deal with those tensions.

News Framing

- Immigration and immigrants are framed as problematic and as a key issue
- The tabloids are most likely to present the issue of immigration using the language of capacity.
- Education is seen as a limited quantity, for example if schools are 'full' then this suggests a limited capacity that cannot be increased.
- Immigration is seen as exerting pressure on the education system that cannot be relieved in any way other than restricting immigration
- Potential benefits of immigration to education are not presented
- Metaphors used in the headlines imagine the border as a physical entity that can be broken. The border is therefore presented as something in need for protection and presents a territorial understanding of the UK's relationship with the rest of the world.
- The continued reference to increased birth-rates can be understood as a populist myth that aims to further stoke anti-immigrant sentiment.
- Much of the language around the so-called immigrant baby boom, positions children of migrants not as British themselves, but as burdens to the British state.
- Nationalist rhetoric that aims to protect "Britishness"
- Another key way that the issue of immigration and education was framed was through the use of a binary opposition between immigrant school children and working class British born children

Methodology

This is qualitative research that aims to construct a historical narrative through an interpretive case study to develop a strategy for overcoming the barriers brought in to the classroom as a result of neoliberal policies.

The project will be based in Leicestershire and investigate three secondary schools.

A total of ten interviews were conducted with Head Teachers, Local Authority (Leicester city and Leicestershire council), and Chair of governors of selected schools on admission policy and migrant schooling, supported by a qualitative news frame analysis, employing both rhetorical and technical framing devices of the five national newspapers focusing on the headlines and content (The Sun, Daily Mail, The Guardian, The Times and The Independent) and two local newspapers (Leicester Mercury) to understand how the issue of migrant schooling has been framed between 2009- 2019 through media texts and how people in position view the migrant crisis.

Interview findings

- Schools need more resources to support children coming from British working class background.
- Multiculturalism teaches us to live in community pockets, but we need to practice inter-culturalism to understand different cultures.
- Turbulence in schools sometimes leads to resource issues.
- Media reports does not reflect the real situation in schools.
- Experiences differ between urban and rural schools
- Coexistence leads to a better system
- Different pathways need to be considered, emphasis on cultural and social capital required
- Children in schools require multidisciplinary support that has been impacted by austerity

Britain's schools need more resources for 'influx' of immigrant children, chief schools inspector warns

Sir Michael Wilshaw says giving schools extra support to deal with foreign-born pupils is a 'big issue' for Government



Sir Michael Wilshaw's comments will raise fresh concerns that high levels of immigration is putting a strain on the education system. Photo: GEOFF PUGH FOR THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Teachers are struggling to cope with 'influx' of migrant children, warns Chief Inspector of Schools Sir Michael Wilshaw

- Mr Wilshaw said schools needed help to deal with foreign-language children
- He said the 'resources aren't there', which is 'a big issue for government'
- Comes after Michael Fallon said communities were 'under siege' by migrants
- Nick Boles also admitted the UK would 'never be able to control' immigration
- Fellow MPs slam spin doctors after both retracted comments afterwards
- Home Secretary also under fire after collapse of sham marriage trials

By TOM MCTAGUE, DEPUTY POLITICAL EDITOR FOR MAILONLINE and DANIEL MARTIN FOR THE DAILY MAIL

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40,000 new places must be found at schools after the influx of migrants

MINISTERS last night announced funding for an extra 40,000 extra school places following warnings of intensifying pressure on the education system caused by the influx of migrants. The Department for Education announced that it will provide an extra £680million to create the new places in primary and secondary schools in England.

"Ethnic minority children face specific challenges, including racial and ethnic marginalisation, huge concentrations of minority ethnic groups in deprived areas, language and cultural barriers, poverty, and a lack of general social capital. In spite of this, some groups of ethnic minority children appear to be performing much better than white students" (A compendium of evidence on ethnic minority resilience to 0n.n.i,n0-the effects of deprivation on attainment Research report June 2015).

References

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- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439861/RR439A-Ethnic_minorities_and_attainment_the_effects_of_poverty.pdf (Accessed on July 28, 2019)

Dr Indrani Lahiri, Senior Lecturer, Media and Communications Research Centre,
Leicester Media School, Principal Investigator ,
CEM

Dr Claire Sedgwick, Research Assistant, Leicester Media School, CEM