

What works to reduce prejudice and discrimination? A review of the evidence.



CRIME AND JUSTICE

What works to reduce prejudice and discrimination? A review of the evidence

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objectives

- This is a review of the international literature and evidence on what measures are considered to be most effective in tackling prejudice. It provides an overview of the key theoretical debates on prejudice reduction, outlines some of the most common interventions, and suggests some lessons that may influence the design of policy interventions in the future.
- The report focuses on high quality empirical studies, a mixture of interventions that were evaluated in 'real world' settings also lab-based psychological experiments.
- The report also reflects on the appropriateness and applicability of such interventions for tackling different types of prejudice in Scotland. This includes exploring some of the key lessons in relation to anti-sectarianism work.

What is prejudice?

- The spectrum of prejudice ranges from instances of overt discrimination or hate crime, to much more subtle 'everyday' expressions, such as so-called 'banter', or ignoring or excluding certain people or groups, even unwittingly. This report sought to explore measures which tackle these more subtle forms.
- Prejudice should be viewed as a process in a set of relationships between people. The report therefore focuses on intergroup relations rather than the apparently prejudiced characteristics of individuals, moving away from an individual pathological approach towards seeing prejudice as a social problem which requires social change.
- Most people do not consider themselves to be 'bigoted', and may be unaware that their attitudes or behaviours could be deemed prejudiced or discriminatory. As such, it may be important to begin from an assumption that people will recognise themselves as prejudiced. Even people who consider themselves tolerant and are consciously non-prejudiced can have 'implicit bias' which is instinctive and often activated without being recognised.
- Given this uncertainty, interventions aimed at tackling prejudice should be based on an approach which is flexible, allows different perspectives to be debated, and does not blame or castigate. There should be sensitivity about the terminology used. Perhaps drawing people's attention to the concept of implicit bias – in a sensitive and blameless way, as opposed to making a moral judgment - might be a useful way to raise awareness and provoke honest discussion.

Theories on prejudice reduction

- Theories of prejudice reduction can be roughly divided into two camps: theories of intergroup contact, whereby association with other groups reduces negative attitudes and promote inclusivity; and theories which focus on how

exposure to information about other groups can challenge the way people think about them – (sometimes referred to as ‘education’ interventions).

- Lab-based and field studies have continually confirmed the effectiveness of contact, highlighting its ability to challenge prejudice by reducing intergroup anxiety and increasing empathy for other groups (the two underlying mechanisms).
- However, highly prejudiced people are more likely to deliberately avoid intergroup contact, so thinking about how to promote opportunities for contact and remove barriers for those less likely to seek it is vital. This is why interventions are often deployed, usually based on some form of focused education.

Types of prejudice-reduction interventions

- There are a mixture of lab-based interventions and evaluations of prejudice-reduction initiatives ‘in the field’, however the majority of studies are controlled and experimental, take place in psychology laboratories, and often with psychology students as participants. Fewer studies take place in ‘real-life’, in schools or communities for example.
- The most frequently studied interventions tend to fall into one of three categories: mid-long term educational strategies (including but not limited to school-based interventions); short-term diversity training courses; and media campaigns.
- It is important to emphasise that the evidence on ‘what works’ is very limited, but there is still value in drawing upon some of the most promising messages and themes that might help to inform and improve future initiatives.

Key lessons - General

Aim for a broad commitment to reducing prejudice, not one-shot interventions

- One objective of this review was to determine whether specific anti-prejudice initiatives (e.g. anti-sectarian, anti-racist, anti-homophobic etc.) would work better than a ‘catch-all’ focus on prejudice. Abrams (2010) states that this has not yet been subject to sufficient testing, but since prejudices towards different groups appear to have different developmental trajectories, there is value in treating these as different problems, with potentially different causes and solutions that require reflection and sensitive intervention designs.
- However, to avoid ‘prioritising’ certain types of prejudice over others (perhaps as a result of political/media pressure), there could be a broad prejudice-reduction framework with flexibility which allows for a focus on specific forms where necessary and regional and local sensitivity.
- Evidence suggests that one-off activities make less impact; better results come from sustained activities over a period of time. Some short-term projects may still be effective, however these should be part of a wider framework that

emphasises long-term education and opportunities for long-term contact with the potential for cross-group friendships.

- Furthermore, interventions should take place within a broader context of commitment to diversity in terms of institutional and cultural change. For example, there is perhaps less of a priority for organisations holding diversity training courses when groups such as women, ethnic minorities, or people with disabilities, are significantly underrepresented in senior positions within their workforce.

Certain techniques more effective than others

- Interventions should be based on social-psychological theories and key lessons from the literature: those that are not rooted in these tend to be less effective. Techniques based on an overly simplistic or idealised notion of what 'should' work can be counterproductive, especially if not applied with care.
- For example, despite good intentions, direct attempts at persuading people to recognise and change their attitudes have been known to be ineffective and often have unintentional negative effects. Diversity training in particular risks 'backfiring' by reinforcing minority ethnic stereotypes, essentialising group categories, and drawing attention to difference and inequality.
- In contrast, certain techniques are known to be much more successful with less risk of negative impacts. Interventions which facilitate positive intergroup contact, or are based on principles of perspective-taking or empathy-induction are considered to be effective. In education, cooperative learning and the use of curriculum which embeds positive messages of intergroup contact are also promising.

Handle issues sensitively

- Rather than 'instructing' what types of behaviours, language, or attitudes are 'wrong' – something that is often subjective and contested – teaching skills and disposition, such as critical thinking and empathy, is likely to be more effective.
- Acknowledging and discussing historical events may be helpful in terms of breaking down existing barriers and challenging the residual prejudice apparently stemming from historical conflict and poor relations.
- The 'backlash' effects discussed above emphasise the importance of knowing the area and of carefully designing programmes and initiatives. The literature strongly supports the principle of peer engagement, suggesting that change is best affected from within peer groups where possible. This could involve participants who previously took part in programmes helping to shape and facilitate future initiatives. The 'credibility of the messenger' is highly important.

Monitoring and evaluation central to success

- Interventions should have a clear strategy, and should be carefully monitored throughout. Evaluation should be considered at design stage, not as an afterthought. Need to go beyond self-reporting as it is vital not to confuse 'feedback' with evidence of impact.
- A 'What works' approach should be broken down into: for whom, in what context, for how long, and in what way. 'What doesn't work' is equally important – we should not be afraid to document what failed, and why.

Key lessons – Scotland

- A clear caveat is that we need to be wary about what conclusions can be drawn from 'what works' in more problematic settings that will be relevant or appropriate to Scotland. Many of the key prejudice-reduction interventions have taken place in areas in which ethnic or other prejudice results in or is exacerbated by overt conflict, or at least has done in recent times. This has not been the case in Scotland, so although these may involve useful strategies that could help to influence prejudice-reduction initiatives more broadly, direct application may not be appropriate.
- High levels of contact does not necessarily remove the existence of stereotyping or discrimination: the example of gender relations highlights this. In terms of Catholic/Protestant relations, people are very integrated in terms of families and other relationships. However, the research shows that perceptions of continued existence of sectarianism in Scotland are extremely high.
- Sectarianism therefore is either a problem of perception, or more complex than simply tensions between two separate groups. It may be the case that 'contact works' to an extent, but there 'residual' problems which are said to still exist – perhaps a result of historical 'grudges' and myths about our own histories and the histories of others. If the latter is the case, these might be tackled better through specific education or re-education.
- People have to be willing to confront and challenge their prejudices: it is very difficult to compel someone to change against their will. Yet we have established that most people do not recognise themselves as prejudiced, and this is particularly complex given that the attitudinal research on sectarianism shows that people tended to think of sectarianism as happening 'elsewhere' - not in their local area/community and not themselves personally. There may therefore be a lack of willingness among people to engage.
- Moreover, this complexity is compounded by the lack of consensus among people regarding what sectarianism actually is, again highlighted in the qualitative research. Sectarianism is a contested term, and some groups feel that what is sometimes deemed sectarian behaviour – for example, certain songs or language used - are legitimate expressions of culture or identity. This tension may be addressed in part by rooting initiatives in people's own experiences and understandings, rather than 'instructional' approaches which impose value judgements.

- Finally, it is important to be mindful of not facilitating the reproduction of particular assumptions or stereotypes. Dramatic interpretations of the issue - for instance, 'hard-hitting' messages or media clips - could risk alienating sections of the audience who would not recognise overt violence as a feature of their lives or communities.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Aims of this report

The purpose of this report is to examine the existing evidence on what approaches and interventions are most effective at tackling prejudice and discrimination, drawing on UK-based and international studies in various settings. Tackling prejudice and discrimination in all forms is a policy priority for the Scottish Government, and this has been a particularly important issue in relation to the on-going work on tackling sectarianism in Scotland.

The Scottish Government recently published the results of a programme of research and analysis on the 'nature and extent of sectarianism in Scotland'. However, this body of research on the 'nature and extent' has thus far not been complemented by a strong evidence base on the best solutions for reducing the problem. In recent years, 44 community-based projects have been funded to address sectarianism in local areas, with funding totalling £9 million. Evidence from the projects would suggest that many of the anti-sectarianism projects have made positive contributions, however increasing our knowledge of similar programmes that have been rigorously assessed for their effectiveness might help to determine what interventions are of the highest quality. The original aim of this report was therefore to look at the international evidence on tackling prejudice and discrimination, to consider the appropriateness of applying such approaches in Scotland in relation to sectarianism.

Yet calls for greater evaluation of prejudice-reduction initiatives are not restricted to the area of sectarianism; indeed, these are shared by equalities groups regarding all types of prejudice or hate crime. Abrams (2010) emphasises in a report for the Equality and Human Rights Commission that there is a need for 'rigorous evaluation' of initiatives aimed at tackling prejudice. Unfortunately, this is rarely the case, and as a result there are general concerns that programmes which deal with prejudice-reduction and similar issues might be disconnected. Various factors are known to contribute to this: including lack of planning; time restrictions; and funding limitations (Abrams 2010: 74). It is also not a simple task: attitudes are hard to measure, especially over time. Non-evaluated interventions may not only be a 'waste' of public funds; indeed, if there is limited evidence about the effects of initiatives, or confusion over what behaviours or attitudes these are targeting, they could actually be counter-productive. Since the uncertainty about 'what works' in relation to promoting equality / tackling inequality and discrimination is a common issue this report broadens its focus on sectarianism to look at tackling prejudice and discrimination more generally. The report reflects on the applicability of the prejudice-reduction approaches towards the subject of sectarianism, but it is helpful to think about sectarianism within a broader context more generally.

This report is intended to be useful for a wide-ranging audience, including policymakers, practitioners, academics, and third sector organisations.

Literature scope

There exists a large body of academic work on the topic of prejudice-reduction, much of this from psychology or education journals but also within sociology and health. Useful sources were also obtained from the government and Third Sector organisations. This report aims to focus on those studies which attempt to determine the most effective interventions, summarising the vast literature and information and making suggestions about what we may learn from these to work towards best practice in future. Given the main focus on sectarianism, the literature search focused initially on religious and racial identity prejudice, and interventions tackling these, however this was widened to enable the study to draw on prejudice-reduction interventions in other areas, gaining the benefit of good practice from other areas.

Research questions

The objectives of this report were to:

- Focus on high quality empirical studies, identifying the key features of different prejudice-reduction initiatives worldwide, interventions that were evaluated in 'real world' settings and also lab-based psychological experiments
- Consider the types of activities that work and those are not considered to be as effective, and what we might learn from these
- Develop the question of 'what works' to explore 'what works' for whom; in what context; where; and for how long etc.
- Reflect on the appropriateness and applicability of such interventions for tackling sectarianism in Scotland
- Determine whether blanket prejudice-reduction programmes or targeted initiatives are more likely to be effective
- Consider how 'effectiveness' is measured, and what we can learn about evaluations to ensure continual good practice

Given that the report deals with a large volume of literature and such a broad topic, there are space and subject constraints, and in some instances a 'summary treatment' is necessary. For example, although there is an abundance of literature on how prejudice develops, space does permit an account of this here. The purpose of the report however is to outline the key ideas and debates, and further information (e.g. details of specific programmes) may be found in the original sources.

SECTION TWO: DEFINITIONS, APPLICABILITY, AND OTHER CAVEATS

It is crucial to ground a report on ‘reducing prejudice’ in some discussion of what we mean by prejudice. This is especially important when addressing the topic of sectarian-related prejudice in Scotland, amidst current debates on the nature and scale of the problem.

The spectrum of prejudice

This report has been written in the context of a great deal of discussion about and policy attention on hate crime, so it is impossible not to address this issue in a review on ‘what works’ to reduce prejudice. However it is important to distinguish between hate crime and prejudice more generally, acknowledging that criminal victimisation is at the extreme end of prejudice and can perhaps overshadow the everyday experiences of prejudice felt by individuals and groups. A 2004 report by commissioned by Stonewall suggested that:

“The contemporary focus on hate crimes can obscure the ordinariness of everyday prejudice in terms of verbal abuse and incivility; pity and sympathy; or unwittingly derogatory language. As a result, many individuals fail to recognise their own beliefs and actions as a form of prejudice” (21).

Prejudice includes a spectrum which ranges from structural discrimination or hate crime to much more subtle forms, and this report emphasises those ‘everyday expressions’ of prejudice. As well as potentially marginalising these everyday manifestations for victims of prejudice, it is possible that the connotations of the term ‘hate crime’ might alienate people in terms of taking part in interventions to reduce prejudice. As will be discussed later in the report, most people do not consider themselves to be prejudiced, and fewer still would consider themselves capable of a ‘hate crime’. It is important that solutions are framed in a way that is as inclusive as possible. The hate crime framework is important in a legislative sense but is potentially problematic when talking about how best to affect social change through shifting attitudes. How we conceptualise prejudice is key to how solutions to overcome it are framed, so these issues deserve further exploration.

What is prejudice and where does it come from?

There is no universally accepted view about what constitutes prejudice or discrimination. The latter is more straightforward; signifying unjust treatment of particular groups of people (for example, denying employment opportunities) on the grounds of characteristics such as perceived ‘race’, disability, or gender. Prejudice is a far more complex and contested term, and it can manifest itself in very different ways.

Oskamp (2000) states that an understanding of where prejudice comes from is an essential starting point for any attempt to tackle it. Duckitt (1992) proposed a four-level model of the causes of prejudice:

1. Genetic and evolutionary predispositions – the “inherently human potentiality or propensity for prejudice” (1190)
2. Societal, organisational and intergroup patterns of contact and norms for intergroup relations (e.g. laws, regulations)
3. Mechanisms of social influence that operate in group and interpersonal interactions e.g. influenced by mass media, the educational system, the structure and functioning of organisations such as the workplace
4. Personal differences in susceptibility to prejudiced attitudes and behaviours, and in acceptance of specific intergroup attitudes

It is important not to overstate the first of these, as it is social and intergroup contexts and circumstances that can allow psychological ‘propensities’ to develop. Therefore, Duckitt emphasises that attempts to reduce prejudice should take place at all of these levels. The type of prejudice-reduction initiatives that are the focus of this report tend to focus on the third level.

The final point to note in relation to how prejudice develops is that most of our prejudices are learned at a young age. Abrams (2010: 76) highlights the different trajectories of prejudice:

“Developmental research on national prejudice, mostly conducted in the UK, also shows that explicit national intergroup biases appear later in childhood than racial or gender bias but then persist throughout middle childhood and early adolescence”.

It may be appropriate to target interventions sensitively because prejudices have different origins. It is essential to bear this in mind when exploring whether prejudice-reduction interventions should be ‘general’ or specifically targeted, for example towards racial prejudice, something that will be discussed later in the report.

How does prejudice function?

Importantly, few people may recognise themselves as ‘bigoted’, and may be unaware that their attitudes or behaviours could be deemed prejudiced or discriminatory. For example, various different social attitudes studies highlight the anomaly in attitudes towards equality more generally and attitudes towards measures implementing equality (cf. Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2006 and 2010). People are much less willing to admit to being overtly prejudiced or discriminatory than they are to state that measures to promote the rights of, for instance, black and Asian people, have ‘gone too far’. In this sense they may be termed ‘covertly discriminatory’ (Bromley et al 2007). Even those who consider themselves most tolerant of others have ‘implicit bias’ which are “automatically activated and often unintentional” (Devine et al 2012: 1267). Pettigrew (2008: 116) distinguishes between two main types of prejudice: subtle and blatant. The latter, according to Pettigrew, has two components. The first is ‘threat’ (which could be realistic or symbolic), such as the perceived economic threat from immigrants who

are frequently depicted as competing for jobs. The second is 'intimacy', the notion that an individual would not welcome a member of an 'out-group' becoming part of their family, even if they tolerated their general presence in society. Subtle prejudice, on the other hand, may be more difficult to detect, and is often subconscious. Subtle prejudice often focus on supposedly competing values, for example exaggerated views of cultural differences between groups.

Sometimes prejudice can be explicit, with perpetrators openly admitting intolerance or bias towards particular groups. However this is not always the case. For some, name-calling, jokes, and even derogatory references to the particular characteristics of an individual or group, (for example, their ethnic or religious background, culture, physical appearance, sexual orientation) is little more than 'banter' and regarded as part of life, whereas such behaviours may have significant impact on the lives of recipients/victims. Prejudice may be even more subtle than 'banter', in the form of ignoring or excluding certain people or groups, even unwittingly.

Further complicating the attempt to paint a picture of what prejudice is and how it works is the argument that researchers tend to overstate the role of antipathy between groups when discussing prejudice (Jackman 1994, 2005). Antipathy/conflict does not have to occur for prejudice or discrimination to take place. For example, Dixon et al (2012) uses the example of gender relations to highlight that prejudice / discrimination / inequality does not have to come from a "generic hostility" towards women as a group. A similar argument might be made about the elderly, as very few people would admit or consider themselves to be prejudiced towards this group, yet the elderly arguably make up the highest proportion of victims of prejudice (Abrams 2010). Abrams argues that that "prejudice needs to be viewed as a process within a set of relationships, rather than a state or characteristic of particular people" (2010: 8).

Impact of these debates on how we challenge prejudice

How and where prejudice is expressed varies greatly, which will impact upon the potential effectiveness of interventions. In their report for Stonewall, Valentine and McDonald argued that prejudice is mostly expressed in the home, an area which for obvious reasons is largely impervious to external interventions. It is therefore important to think about how the home, or the family, can be a focus of prejudice-reduction initiatives – perhaps in the form of support for parents. The difficulty in defining prejudice has important consequences, and has affected attempts to tackle this social problem through the legal system. For example, Goodall (2012) points out that there is a lack of research on what it means for a crime to be 'racial' or 'racist', and that the terms are ideologically-loaded.

“Describing a crime as ‘racially’ aggravated reproduces a perception that the way in which the victim is classified is morally and politically neutral; what has aggravated the offence is that the offender exploited the victim’s ‘race’ (1).

That this is a theoretical conundrum and an on-going concern for those operating in the criminal justice system is not the focus of this report, which concentrates on interventions outside of the criminal justice system. In terms of Duckitt's (1992) model of prejudice previously discussed, criminal justice interventions would focus on the second 'level', "societal, organisational and intergroup patterns of contact and norms for intergroup relations". Legislative frameworks and criminal justice interventions are complemented by work concentrating on the third 'level', that of "mechanisms of social influence that operate in group and interpersonal interactions". The latter is the focus of this report.

However, prejudice-reduction initiatives are very much shaped by similar assumptions as those shaping legislative responses, so questions over definition and language are equally important. The ways in which something is framed as a problem will have profound consequences on how solutions are designed, implemented and received. Valentine and McDonald (2004: 21) in their report for Stonewall cautioned that:

"Strategies to reduce prejudice must not begin from an assumption that people will recognise themselves as prejudiced".

If we acknowledge the contested nature of prejudice, and the difficulties associated with defining acts of prejudice, it would make sense that any interventions aimed at tackling prejudice should be based on an approach which is flexible, allows different perspectives to be debated, and does not blame or castigate. There should be sensitivity about the terminology used and interventions should be multi-perspective, challenging views of a 'problem' to make sure that the balance of perception and reality is as close to correct as possible. It is also important that this activity takes place in a context of broad societal change, as opposed to scapegoating individuals. Challenging discriminatory practice at a structural level is vital otherwise interventions aimed at people and groups may be perceived as insincere. For example, if an organisation does not have women, ethnic minorities or people with disabilities represented at senior management level but holds compulsory diversity training courses for staff, it may appear that they are merely paying lip service to issues of equality and prejudice.

To summarise, the key message from this section is that there is a spectrum of prejudice, which ranges from overt expressions to much more, subtle, sometimes unconscious, forms. It develops in different ways and requires a myriad of solutions at structural, group, and individual levels in order to address it.

SECTION THREE: THEORIES ON PREJUDICE-REDUCTION

The previous section provided a brief discussion of what prejudice is and how it functions, included some important caveats, and raised issues around definition and terminology. It is important to explore these concerns when thinking about what interventions might be useful in terms of challenging prejudice more broadly, as well as specifically relating to sectarianism in Scotland. Before going on to examine some of the evaluated prejudice-reduction interventions, and the available evidence of their effectiveness, it is necessary to present some of the key theories behind the literature, which is dominated by psychology studies. This section summarises some of the key theoretical bases for some of the most frequently-used and potentially effective prejudice-reduction interventions. Of course, there are broader debates about whether governments have the right to intervene in such domains (Libertarian vs. ‘nanny-state’ approaches), however this report presupposes that careful intervention is acceptable – assuming flexibility, transparency, reflection, and a voluntary approach.

There is no standard way of categorising the various types of interventions, but theories of prejudice reduction can be roughly divided into two camps. The first is the theory of intergroup contact whereby association with other groups may reduce negative attitudes and promote inclusivity. The second comprises of theories which focus on exposure to information about other groups, which challenge and alter the way people think about other groups (through education and re-education, or media, for example). These are sometimes known as antibias theories. The latter assumes that contact alone is not sufficient, and that people need to re-educate themselves to move on from old assumptions and to change attitudes. Educational initiatives and media campaigns will have objectives of reducing ‘threat’ through increased knowledge and learning, for example. These two broad approaches are not always separate; indeed the majority of interventions will overlap to some extent.

Intergroup contact theories

Allport (1954) developed the original ‘contact hypothesis’, proposing that interaction between members of different groups would help to facilitate prejudice reduction, particularly if the interrelated conditions of intergroup contact - equal status (and power); interdependence (common goals); and authority sanction (support from relevant authorities) – were met. The notion that positive experiences with members of a perceived ‘out-group’ might help to counter negative perceptions or stereotypes associated with this group may seem basic, almost a common-sense approach, however the contact hypothesis is the root of most prejudice-reduction theory. Cross-group friendships have been shown to reduce intergroup anxiety and promote empathy, and studies have found that contact is particularly effective at helping to reduce prejudice amongst children. Abrams (2010: 69) notes that:

“Intergroup contact and school diversity tend to be associated with improved intergroup understanding and positive attitudes”

Prejudice is often a result of false beliefs, misconceptions and stereotypes, so common sense would suggest that discovering that these are incorrect through contact with other groups will result in improved attitudes. Lab-based and field studies have continually confirmed the effectiveness of contact, highlighting its ability to challenge prejudice by reducing intergroup anxiety and increasing empathy for other groups (the two underlying mechanisms). In a meta-analytic test of 'Intergroup Contact Theory', based on 713 independent samples from 515 studies, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006: 922) found that:

“Greater intergroup contact typically corresponds with lower levels of intergroup prejudice, and 94% of the studies reveal an inverse relationship between contact and prejudices of many types”.

Central to the contact theory is the notion that developing more positive than negative ideas about an out-group will extend beyond the immediate contact so that reductions in prejudice are not confined to individuals in contact, and instead impact on attitudes towards entire groups. However, according to Brown (1995) and Brown et al (1999), this depends on maintaining the salience of group differences. It is argued that boundaries should be maintained in order to increase the chance of generalisation of positive attitudes towards the group as a whole. Brown suggests that if contact takes place in a context where group difference is played down – for example, through emphasising shared identity, sameness – then members of the 'out-group' are less likely to be seen as 'representative' of the wider group, and positive attitudes may only be directed at individual level. Such debates highlight the complex balance between trying to maintain distinction in a positive sense while attempting to remove the more negative associations of stereotyping.

Direct contact is not always necessary: the 'extended contact' hypothesis posits that even knowledge that a member of the in-group has positive relationships with out-group members can also reduce prejudice (for example, 'friends of friends'). The following section will also touch on vicarious contact through media etc. when actual contact between groups is rare. Intergroup contact theory traditionally focused on 'racial' or other ethnic groups, as it was a key area of interest for psychologists and other scholars interested in prejudice in the context of growing civil rights movement in the mid-20th century. However, evidence supports extending this to other intergroup contexts (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006: 766), and more recently increased attention has been given to other forms of prejudice such as towards LGBT groups or disabled people.

Significantly, research by Hodson (2011) concluded that individuals holding high levels of prejudice actually benefited more from intergroup contact than relatively tolerant people did, highlighting the potential value of contact. The reasons for this are not fully explained. The 'ceiling effect', in the sense that people with already favourable attitudes towards other groups have less 'room for improvement', only partly explains this. Hodson suggests that significantly reducing threat and anxiety through contact is particularly effective for people with higher levels of prejudice, and encourages further research to explore this further. This also emphasises the need to consider who is most in need of intervention, and to bear this in mind when designing, implementing, and evaluating interventions. As Hodson notes, highly

prejudiced people are more likely to deliberately avoid intergroup contact, so thinking about how to promote opportunities for contact and remove barriers for those less likely to seek it is vital. Are the prejudice-reduction interventions that exist reaching the people that will benefit most? If not, how can we work towards this?

However, there are limitations, and we should think critically about the value of contact. Although contact is positive in general, it needs to be sensitively managed and designed or it can be counter-productive. People have to see improved attitudes or relations as a desired objective. Temporary contact, which may often be superficial (for example, attendance at a half-day 'diversity workshop' in the workplace), will not be as effective at changing attitudes compared to long-term contact with the potential for cross-group friendships. In this vein, Pettigrew (1998) calls for an additional criteria to Allport's 'contact conditions' – length of contact which would allow for the development of possible friendships between members of different groups.

Yet even long-term proximity will not always naturally encourage positive relations and/or a reduction in prejudiced attitudes. According to Abrams (2010: 81), studies show even when schools are 'mixed', children tend to favour same-race rather than cross-race friendship. A study conducted for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2005 also found that pupils attending schools in multi-cultural areas displayed less, not more, tolerance to pupils from different ethnic backgrounds (17). Moreover, returning again to the point about relations between men and women, it is clear that high levels of contact (and the fact that men generally have positive views about women) does not remove the existence of gender stereotyping or sexual discrimination. Pettigrew (2008) notes that the prejudiced views about women that some men hold occur when women "step out of the roles society has prescribed for them" (115). Exposure itself, even if long-term, is insufficient, because most contact situations do not meet Allport's 'conditions' (e.g. 'equal power and status'). It is crucial to consider the context and quality of contact, as well as issues of (historic and contemporary) power relations: a crucial caveat for contact theories. Devine (1989) suggests that a significant amount of effort is required on the part of individuals if their prejudices are to be overcome. The recognition of one's own bias, and the desire to overcome prejudice, must exist.

Going beyond contact: actively challenging bias

Given the limitations of contact theory, in some cases it may be necessary to purposely challenge prejudices, though this should be done carefully and not necessarily in a 'direct' manner. As emphasised earlier, prejudice may be held and acted upon by individuals, however it is a social problem, and as such requires us to consider how social change materialises. As an example we might consider how racism (at least in its crude, biological guise) became less socially acceptable in the latter decades of the 20th century. Lewin (1947/1951), one of the founders of social psychology and among the first to examine group dynamics and tensions, theorised that change in individuals is most successfully achieved through group encounters. Lewin's work preceded the development of Allport's contact hypothesis, but arguably helps to address some of its limitations. For Lewin, a process of

'reeducation' can challenge entrenched perceptions, stereotypes, and values. His theory is summarised by Bargal (2008):

"Lewin (1945/1948) likened false stereotypes and prejudices to erroneous concepts and theories. In his view, the first step to changing those concepts and theories is to re-examine them. Re-examination should be carried out through an alternative perception of the self and one's social relations. It cannot be left to accident, and group experiences should be planned as a forum for such re-examination. Lewin suggested that through the group one can acquire norms and means to learn new perceptions and behaviours, marked by a commitment to self-examination, active confrontation with one's own perceptions and perceptions held by the other group members, active involvement in problem solving, and a willingness to expose oneself to empirical examination of ideas and conceptions"

Lewin highlights some of the key conditions in which re-education in a group setting might bring about positive change in prejudiced attitudes. Ideally, the interaction should take place in an informal setting. Participation should be voluntary and, importantly, people should be free to express their often conflicting viewpoints in a safe environment. These conditions may help alleviate some of the unintended effects that contact can cause – such as the increased levels of prejudice towards other ethnic groups in schools with higher levels of diversity noted in the aforementioned Joseph Rowntree Foundation report. Contact within schools is of course not voluntary or informal, and pupils are subject to rules and regulations about what they can and cannot say or do. 'Mixing' groups in more informal settings, for example recreational activities, may result in increased positive interactions – essentially more meaningful contact. As will be discussed throughout this report, studies seem to support these points in terms of what interventions are most effective.

Various educational strategies can be employed in this sense, to seemingly positive effect. Cooperative learning programmes are arguably the most widespread interventions in schools. Paluck and Green (2009) argue that meta-analyses of studies based on the idea of cooperative learning "consistently confirmed a positive impact of cooperation on outcomes such as positive peer relationships and helpfulness" (355), though long-term effects are obviously harder to track. Educational efforts to reduce implicit bias include encouraging empathy, perspective taking, and 'imagining counter-stereotypic examples'. Like other prejudice-reduction initiatives, empathy-inducing interventions have most potential to be successful with young children (Abrams 2010) but this does not preclude these being used in adolescent or adult education settings.

Walsh (1988) suggests that prejudice could be challenged by teaching people to question their assumptions about the world around them, stating that "thinking critically is the antithesis of prejudicial thinking." Thinking critically, learning about history, discussion of sensitive topics, and shared learning / shared curriculums are some of the key themes that emerge from the literature on tackling prejudice through education. Walsh highlights the challenges of articulating a positive, anti-prejudice message:

“Research suggests that direct teaching of prejudice-reduction techniques may be ineffective, whereas indirect teaching of the skills and dispositions needed to combat prejudice is effective. This simply means that merely telling students they should not be prejudiced is ineffectual” (1988).

Rather than ‘instructing’ what types of behaviours, language, or attitudes, for example, are ‘wrong’ – something that, as noted earlier, is often subjective and contested – teaching skills and disposition, such as critical thinking and empathy, could be more effective.

SECTION FOUR: PREJUDICE-REDUCTION INTERVENTIONS

Having summarised some of the important theoretical contributions to prejudice-reduction, I will now present a summary of the main types of interventions with evidence on effectiveness, drawing on case studies and suggesting some principles which may be usefully applied elsewhere. Again it is vital to note that the case studies are not intended to be directly applicable to prejudice-reduction in Scotland. For instance, some of them talk about successful interventions to improve intergroup relations in post-conflict societies, which may be dealing with tensions that often spills over into actual (violent) conflict, and we may also assume that these are likely to be more 'reactive' than preventative. However, it may be appropriate to apply some of the 'universal principles' emerging from these to future strategies.

A mixture of lab-based interventions and evaluations of prejudice-reduction initiatives 'in the field' make up the growing literature on 'what works', however the majority of studies are controlled and experimental, have taken place in psychology laboratories, and often with psychology students as participants. Fewer studies take place in 'real-life', in schools or communities for example.

For the purposes of summary and analysis, the interventions that are most frequently studied and that are useful for this report can be roughly divided into three categories:

1. Educational strategies (including but not limited to school-based interventions)
2. Short-term diversity training courses
3. Media campaigns

1. Education and Re-education

Unsurprisingly, education has long been a key area of interest for scholars in all disciplines who have looked at 'what works' to reduce prejudice. Educational prejudice-reduction initiatives build on contact theory through the premise that activities such as cooperative learning; discussion and peer influence; instruction; and multi-cultural curriculum will help to reduce prejudice in a way that contact alone might not be sufficient to. Educational initiatives are concerned with promoting positive relations through challenging stereotypes and 'myths' about out-groups. This may involve groups being in direct contact with each other, for example pupils from different faith schools taking part in shared learning, or peer discussion between different groups on topics that might be said to create divisions and tensions (such as certain historical events).

Some educational initiatives may draw on 'extended contact' principles such as empathy and perspective taking, and might take the form of vicarious/imagined contact. These techniques may be useful for more 'hidden minorities', and

situations where direct contact is either impractical (for instance, when dealing with prejudice against transgender people, who make up a very small proportion of the population) or might prove problematic (such as in post-conflict societies).

This section of the report outlines various case studies of these principles being implemented in prejudice-reduction interventions. Although much of the existing research in this area is lab-based, there is value in also highlighting those interventions that were carried out and evaluated 'in the field'. The case studies selected were sampled from a large number of interventions, on the basis that they cover different international contexts, different age groups, and deal with different types of prejudice: as such, they are intended to be merely an indication of the types of studies that exist. The final point to make is that 'diversity training', in the sense of short-term initiatives which often take place in corporate workplaces, is dealt with in a separate section, as the principles discussed in this section tend to focus on mid-long term educational strategies, and tend to be aimed at younger people rather than adults.

Shared education curriculum

A recent intervention with a rigorous longitudinal evaluation is the 'Promoting Reconciliation through a Shared Curriculum Experience Programme' report, published 2013. Undertaken by the Centre for Effective Education at Queens University Belfast, the study was a two-year evaluation of the above programme, which was designed to address the "propensity of teachers to avoid controversial issues relating to sectarianism and the conflicted past in Northern Ireland" (1). The study was a clustered randomised controlled trial involving 27 primary and secondary schools in Northern Ireland, with a total of 840 children taking part. 12 'lessons' were delivered (by teachers) over a 6 month period, and the evaluation included pre and post-test questionnaires, interviews with teachers, focus groups with students, and observations. The programme was carried out in a 'curriculum only' or 'contact & curriculum' basis, to test the 'contact' effect (shared learning) as well as the impact of talking about the issues.

Findings were positive, in terms of children learning about people from other religious backgrounds, and signs of improved intergroup relations. The role of the facilitator (the teacher) was noted as very important. The study seemed to show support for Walsh (1988) argument about critical thinking in education, as participants became more critical of the in-group (perhaps questioning old assumptions). The report claims that the intervention helped to challenge everyday understandings about 'outgroups', particularly in the context of Catholic-Protestant relations. This might support the argument that acknowledging and discussing historical events would be helpful in terms of breaking down existing barriers and challenging the residual prejudice apparently stemming from historical conflict and poor relations.

Some limitations were noted. Firstly there is a question over long-term impact, which is the case with virtually all studies of this type, even if they show encouraging results. Results from this study also suggested that effects were different when lessons were delivered in single group versus contact settings.

‘Shared learning’ involving contact between groups at times actually counteracted the benefits from the curriculum. This does not suggest that contact in general is not beneficial, however it may be that when confronting history and attempting to challenge prejudices against out-groups, there are advantages of delivering this in single settings. This question is worthy of future research, and where possible a balance should be sought.

Secondly, one concern raised by teachers taking part in the study in Northern Ireland was that by raising sectarianism as an issue, it could in a sense worsen the situation by creating a problem where one does not exist:

“...many children, particularly those from more rural areas were ‘unaware’ of sectarianism and found the concept difficult to grasp; that the programme appeared to direct children to ‘defend their own culture’ instead of ‘accepting the culture of others’; and in so doing, ‘encouraged sectarian identifications”.

Some of the feedback included use of symbols that children may not understand, for example paramilitary symbols. There are challenges associated with this type of intervention, as there is danger of essentialising group categories (Bekerman & Zembylas 2011). Again this is something that has to be carefully considered when designing, implementing, and monitoring prejudice-reduction initiatives based on intergroup theories. It would suggest that regular feedback is sought as part of on-going evaluation of projects, and acted upon when necessary in terms of changing content or delivery style. Notwithstanding the risks associated with transferring any policy from one jurisdiction to another, some of the principles raised in this intervention might be useful if applied carefully elsewhere.

Sharing perspectives: conflict resolution

Unsurprisingly, many of the key prejudice-reduction interventions have taken place in areas in which ethnic or other prejudice results in or is exacerbated by overt conflict, or at least has done in recent times. As such, quite a lot of literature on the topic of teaching history / education focuses on post-conflict settings. In relation to contexts with less overly problematic intergroup relations, such as Scotland, we of course have to be wary of what conclusions might be drawn from ‘what works’ in these settings, however there may be useful strategies that could help to influence prejudice-reduction initiatives more broadly.

With findings published in 2008, ‘Enabling Adolescents in Culturally Diverse Environments to Peacefully Resolve Ethnic Group Conflicts’ was a project based on the idea that change is best delivered through small groups. The project brought different ethnic groups together at two diverse Midwestern High Schools in the United States². The programme was designed to maximise the benefits and diffuse the potential risks of contact, based on ‘intergroup dialogue programmes’ combined with ‘conflict mediation’. Over a three-year period and with a total of 178 participants, school students explored dynamics of intergroup relations (in their own

² “The racial and ethnic background of students were approximately 48% African American, 24% Caucasian, 4.8% Latino, 8.4% Asian American, 7% multiracial, 3.6% Arab American, and 3.6% Other.”

school and with another school) by exploring stereotypes, and examining their attitudes towards others and vice versa. The project evaluation was based on pre and post-test surveys, as well as qualitative interviews. Among the key findings was a reduction in prejudiced attitudes and stereotypes, reports of new friendships, and more knowledge. The authors note that crucial to the success of the intervention was careful choice of facilitators; involving those who had previously completed the programme to help run it the following year; careful attention to feedback; and the collaboration of researchers, practitioners (in this case teachers), and participants (in this case students).

In the same volume, Bargal (2008) describes the effects of an intervention with Israeli and Arab youth in Israel, which focused on reducing conflict and negative stereotypes between the two groups. Like the Michigan University project outlined above, the intervention was based on the principles of Lewin's 'reeducation' theory. Youth from both groups were recruited to participate in a three-day conflict management workshop, and participants dealt with issues such as intergroup conflict, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. Central to the intervention was discussion of the complexity of the Arab-Jewish conflict, and the opportunity for both groups to discuss their personal experiences of living with conflict. According to Bargal, group facilitators played a crucial role:

"Facilitators point out the similarities as well as the differences between the two groups. They emphasize the overall need for national group identity and the importance of each group's unique history. (p. 56)"

Clearly, provision of accurate information is important, and a setting which facilitates debate and discussion of what might be considered contentious issues increases the potential efficacy of an intervention. Bargal noted that there had to be high levels of motivation to take part, emphasising that people have to want to at least be open to challenging their own biases. Moreover, it was concluded that potential effects in terms of attitude change could have been encumbered by the fact that the intervention was short term.

Peer-based learning

The final real-life case study is an intervention developed and tested as part of a psycho-educational initiative at various universities across the United States. Souweidane's (2012) 'An Initial Test of an Intervention Designed to Help Youth Question Negative Ethnic Stereotypes' was based on perspective-taking principles and the idea of reducing prejudice by challenging stereotypes. 192 high school students (from two schools with high concentration of Arab American and Jewish American students) took part, and were divided into 'immediate intervention', 'delayed intervention', and 'control group'. Pre and post-test surveys as well as observations were used to test effectiveness of the intervention. Part of the activities included using media to talk about stereotypes – for example, looking at websites such as 'Facing History and Ourselves' to learn more about the history of anti-Semitism.

The results from the study were encouraging in terms of improving tolerance and positive relations, and improvements in negative stereotypes. Findings chime with some of the contact and education/reeducation theories outlined in the previous section, highlighting the value of grounding interventions in theory. The intervention was said to have positive effects on participants' critical thinking (which Walsh 1988 argued is crucial to reduce prejudice), and this was especially the case for peer educators. Particularly promising was the effectiveness of peer-based learning, which is supported by social learning theory and action research. Young people may play an important role in helping their peers confront and address negative ethnic stereotypes. Involving young people as leaders and educators in interventions targeting young people has numerous merits acknowledged in the literature (cf. Stukas et. al., 2000). This theory was supported by the example outlined here:

“The present study has also provided evidence supporting the positive impact of promoting youth to become engaged in interventions targeting attitude and behavioral changes among their peers. Research on this topic may be enhanced by adopting empowerment theory practices in the development of an intervention. The significant improvement among the peer educator group supports this approach. This study has demonstrated that empowering youth to take on a leadership role, such as a peer educator, positively affects the youth leader. Future research may want to focus on engaging youth in interventions targeting them so that we gain greater understanding of the youth educator role effect and so that improved outcomes may be achieved” (123-4).

Some limitations included that the intervention was limited to four sessions, and the author suggests that more time (for example, a semester-long class) would be more likely to affect change (122).

Lab-based study: ‘A prejudice habit-breaking intervention’

Although this report focuses on real-life interventions in order to get a sense of what might be most straightforwardly transferred to other contexts, findings from lab-based studies can also be applied (carefully) elsewhere.

A particularly useful lab-based intervention to include as a case study is Devine et al (2012) ‘Long-term reduction in implicit race bias: A prejudice habit-breaking intervention’. The three month longitudinal study aimed to determine whether interventions can have long-term effects in terms of reducing implicit biases. The intervention took place in the University of Wisconsin, USA, with 91 non-Black participants, and the authors claim that their study “is the first to our knowledge to produce long-term change in implicit bias using a randomized, controlled design” (1276). As discussed in section 3 of this report, the existence of implicit biases mean that even people who are consciously non-prejudiced and consider themselves to be supportive of equality can unintentionally act in prejudiced ways towards others. As Devine et al (2012) comment, “this process leads people to be unwittingly complicit in the perpetuation of discrimination” (1267).

In this study, the authors seek to build on promising but limited results from what they term ‘easy-to implement strategies’ such as perspective taking and imagining

counter-stereotypic examples. They note that reductions in prejudice from such short-term interventions are “likely to be highly contextual and short-lived” (1268). Participants were therefore engaged in a long-term process, with intentional efforts to overcome biased responses. The intervention was multifaceted, with a bias education and training programme complementing the use of the [Black-White Implicit Associated Test \(IAT\)](#). The results of the IAT were as anticipated: a high proportion of participants (in this case 90%) implicitly favoured White people over Black people. Being confronted with this evidence was thought to increase awareness of bias, and this awareness was developed through the other aspects of the intervention, such as the training section which provided participants with strategies to overcome these in everyday settings (for example through perspective taking and stereotype replacement). Importantly, the study noted improvement of attitudes over time, perhaps as people became increasingly self-aware and used the strategies taught to overcome instances of prejudice.

Of course it is important to note the limitations of the study. Participants were all psychology students, common in lab-based studies but controlled for as best as possible. It is also unclear how easily this type of intervention would be administered in real-life – perhaps in school settings it might be more feasible than other settings. Another key issue is to think about who the interventions are targeting and who they are likely to be missing. Most people do not consider themselves to be prejudiced so whether they would commit to a goal of ‘breaking the prejudice habit’ is questionable. However, it may be the case that such strategies are still useful in that they address the problem of people wanting to be tolerant and free of prejudice, but still holding implicit bias. Given that we have already established the difference between many people’s intentions regarding equality and their attitudes to the implementation of measures which aim to actually tackle inequality, it is likely that such interventions would address an important discrepancy.

2. Short-term ‘diversity training’ courses

In many ways, the interventions discussed in the previous section could be termed ‘diversity training’ because the objective is to help people value diversity, as opposed to fearing difference – a key cause of prejudice. This section, however, looks at more short-term and isolated diversity training programmes, rather than focused and longer term interventions targeted at certain populations. These often take place in corporate workplaces, and with adults as opposed to children and adolescents, though some do focus on younger people. This type of training comes in many forms, with some ‘instructional’ in nature such as showing movies or delivering lectures, and others encouraging interactive activities such as role plays and discussions. Diversity training may involve group discussions about ‘difference’, based on the same values which are at the heart of educational initiatives: overcoming ignorance; expressing hidden assumptions; and feeling empathy for other groups or individuals (Paluck 2006: 581). Diversity training is an industry with huge levels of investment, yet as Abrams (2010) comments, there is “almost no adequate evaluative research” (74). Following a discussion of the general theoretical concerns with short-term diversity training, this section will draw on two case studies of applied prejudice-reduction interventions to explore the

strengths and weaknesses of this type of approach. The first empirical example took place in Australian workplaces with adults, and the second in the UK with children and adolescents in school and community settings.

‘Backlash’ and other limitations

A central criticism regarding diversity training programmes is that they are rarely “guided by the theoretical models of learning or prejudice reduction” (Paluck and Green 2009: 354). Pendry et al (2007) further highlight the separation between theory and practice as they comment that despite diversity trainers and social psychologists having similar objectives (i.e. improvement in intergroup relations and reduction in prejudice), “they currently operate in a fairly separate fashion with limited dialogue (28).” This disconnect is likely to result in more ‘piecemeal’ initiatives compared to educational programmes which may be grounded more thoroughly in theory.

Moreover, diversity training programmes are often considered to have potential ‘backlash’ effects, perhaps as a result of the ‘blanket’ designs often applied, the short-term nature of most of these initiatives, and delivery not always being sensitive to its environment. There is a strong suggestion that programmes can reinforce inequalities/discrimination felt by minority participants by drawing attention to difference. As discussed in the previous section, discussing group difference can be positive in terms of improving attitudes towards out-groups, however it is important that these discussions are handled carefully. Paluck (2006) suggests that diversity training courses might reinforce stereotypes, and actually ‘backfire’ by increasing, renewing or even fostering new sensitivities. Plaut et al (2011) suggest that majority participants may also in some cases feel excluded, for example if the emphasis is put on the celebration of minority cultures.

Yet a ‘colour-blind’ approach which suggests that everyone is equal is similarly problematic. As Abrams (2010: 72) comments, we know that everyone is not equal; there remain huge inequalities in all societies. Therefore, initiatives that ‘pretend’ everyone is equal and do not highlight difference and inequality might be seen to lack credibility and sophistication. Pendry et al (2007) point out that diversity training “differs from the superordinate concept of diversity management in that it does not necessarily imply any background change in system-level structure, decision making or organization ethos” (28). This is important: an organisation with management dominated by middle-class white men compelling its staff to attend ‘diversity training’ may appear insincere if a commitment to diversity is not shown in the institution as a whole.

Some general limitations of diversity training courses which are similar to those highlighted in the educational initiatives section are also worth mentioning. Firstly, diversity training programmes are often not evaluated at all, or are evaluated by participants directly after sessions, making it impossible to track any long-term effect on attitudes or behaviours. It is also important to reiterate the point that real change is only possible if people are motivated to change:

“Unfortunately, field research on prejudice reduction does not have much to say about influencing those who do not sign up for anti-prejudice interventions (Paluck and Green 2009: 352).

This report so far has emphasised the point that people have to want to overcome prejudice, and that meaningful change will generally only occur over time. It is questionable whether compulsory attendance at a workplace ‘diversity’ training course, for example, which may be one-day in length, and often shorter, would satisfy this criteria.

Tackling racism in Australia

One of the few academically-evaluated applied prejudice reduction programmes was published in 2001, the culmination of research in Australian workplaces in the 1990s: ‘Stereotype Change and Prejudice Reduction: Short- and Long-term Evaluation of a Cross-cultural Awareness Programme’ by Hill and Augoustinos. The Cross-Cultural Awareness programme was an anti-racist educational course used in South Australia in various institutions including some government agencies. Staff attended a three-day training programme on either a compulsory or voluntary basis, depending on the type of role. The programme’s objective was to reduce prejudice towards Aboriginal Australians, a group frequently stereotyped, stigmatised, and discriminated against, and to promote knowledge and appreciation of indigenous culture.

It is important to point out the methodological limitations of the study. As well as the small sample (62 participants), there was no control group and the study was non-random due to location (workplace). However, it was evaluated using a social-psychological approach, and given the oft-cited issue of interventions failing to be grounded in theory, it is worthy of consideration. Moreover, it included a 3 month follow-up, addressing another key limitation of such interventions, in that long-term attitude or behaviour change is rarely captured. The training course involved group discussion, role-play and videos, and was facilitated by Aboriginal employees (the target outgroup). Participants were encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs and stereotypes, and to think more broadly about prejudice and discrimination.

The results of the intervention were relatively positive. There was a significant improvement in knowledge, and a reduction in negative stereotyping and ‘old-fashioned prejudice’ (p. 258). However, there were limitations. Firstly, effects seemed to reduce after the 3 month period. This could reflect a deficiency with the intervention, however it is likely to be an indication of the fact that negative stereotyping is a difficult habit to break. Furthermore, the decrease in ‘old-fashioned’ racism was not matched by a decline in ‘modern’ racism – for example, the belief that Aboriginal Australians have too much influence as a result of Government initiatives to promote equality. This chimes with the earlier discussion about the discrepancy between people’s broad attitudes to equality and their attitudes towards specific measures to work towards this. Finally, the authors emphasise the importance of such programmes being a part of – not an alternative to – broader systematic attacks on prejudice at all levels: ‘the individual, the intergroup, and the institutional/structural levels’. They note that:

“The piecemeal use of such programmes ‘here and there’ in the community, is unlikely to be effective if there are no serious challenges to the social realities that shape and govern intergroup and structural relations” (260).

Genuine institutional and cultural change is undoubtedly more difficult to achieve, but this evaluated case study stresses the importance of bearing in mind that prejudice is not simply a ‘personal pathology’, and that interventions should look at the structural arrangements of society as a whole. This echoes Pendry et al (2007) argument that diversity management is crucial.

Tackling racism in the UK

Another relatively rare example of evaluated short-term diversity training initiatives are outlined in a 2005 report entitled ‘The Search for Tolerance: Challenging and changing racist attitudes and behaviour among young people’, produced for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF). These studies reinforce the complexity of the ‘contact theory’ as it plays out in real-life, in the form of diversity training programmes. The report is based on five separate case studies of small projects in the United Kingdom. The initiatives focused on tackling racism and improving intergroup relations, and are described below:

“Two are educational and delivered as part of citizenship education in schools, ‘Show Racism the Red Card’ in Stafford – run by a police officer – and ‘You, Me and Us’ in Peterborough – run by the local authority’s youth service. Tower Hamlets Summer University is a voluntary sector, informal education project. The ‘Diversity Awareness Programme’ for convicted racially motivated offenders is run by probation officers. The Jubilee Football Tournament was run by two housing associations and could be described as a community cohesion project” (1).

Six hundred young people, mostly 11 and 12 years old, took part in the five projects in total. A mixture of quantitative (survey) and qualitative methods were used. Some of the key points on ‘what works’ and ‘what didn’t work’ that emerged from the report included the need to have a clear structure; a range of activities; sufficient time given to interventions; and consideration of the potential for backlash.

In practice diversity training programmes are often ‘instructional’ in form, as a result of lack of planning, resources, and time. The studies described in the JRF report were a mix of interactive and instructional, and the findings highlight the limitations of instructional approaches:

“Activities that encourage young people to reflect on their own experiences and debate local events and concerns are more likely to have a lasting impact than presenting general information about racism, which seems distant and superficial and therefore of little relevance” (57).

This echoes findings in the previous section and supports the theoretical arguments that ‘learning through doing’ is more effective than simply being told that certain

attitudes and behaviours are 'wrong'. Creative methods are more likely to attract and engage participants.

For instance, the 'Tower Hamlets Summer University' initiative was criticised for a lack of interactivity and variety of activities. In contrast, the 'You, Me, and Us' programme in Peterborough, which was a series of workshops within schools involving drama, poetry, storytelling, music and art, proved more popular and because of this potentially more effective. Notwithstanding the limitations associated with self-reporting through questionnaires, participation in the programme appeared to have positive effects, with a significant proportion claiming to have "a better understanding of the complexities and subtleties of racism and cultural difference" (28).

Of course it is very important to be careful not to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of creative methods alone in terms of changing attitudes. Another attempt to use creative methods to promote equality and improve intergroup relations was the 'Jubilee Football Tournament' in Rochdale, an area characterised by divide between white and South Asian communities. However, a closer examination of the football tournament raises questions about the long-term effects of such initiatives. Feedback through discussions with participants suggested positive short-term effects, as for the duration of the tournament young people from different communities were brought closer together. However, these effects were short-lived, and it is suggested that this was a consequence of a lack of a clear anti-racist purpose, and failure to build on initial signs of potential improvement in relations. The two communities remained quite separate after the intervention. This highlights the importance of a clear strategy for all prejudice-reduction interventions, and careful monitoring during and afterwards. It also reiterates that creative methods may well improve the popularity of programmes, but are not necessarily any more effective in terms of changing attitudes or reducing prejudice, especially in the long term. The most important intervention elements remain contact and education which encourages a self-critical approach.

Some of the studies in the JRF report also highlighted the need to be extremely careful when designing and managing discussions about sensitive topics such as racism. For example, the authors note that the in 'You Me and Us' programme:

"Some of the responses suggested that not all the messages had been understood as intended. For example, the day began with a discussion about football hats and scarves, with an implicit message about not making decisions about other people based on stereotypes. One young person, however, seems to have come to a slightly different conclusion, saying he had learnt: that you are racist just by booing some ones hat. ('British', male)" (28).

As noted earlier in the discussion of what actually constitutes prejudice, there is a complexity that is perhaps not always recognised when designing prejudice-reduction interventions. Crucially, the reception of messages and interventions will be influenced by the existing predispositions of participants, so effects will vary. This is particularly important when considering interventions for young children. As Aboud et al (2012) note, "messages need to be tailored to the cognitive and

emotional maturity of the children who in most cases already have well-formed opinions of themselves and others” (333). The ‘Show Racism the Red Card’ initiative in Stafford was said to be successful in reinforcing the point that racism is wrong, but did not really focus attention on sources of prejudice or specific issues raised by the children (e.g. their concerns about the situation in Iraq). This suggests that short-term diversity training programmes may risk being seen as superficial, inevitably lacking the depth that more long-term interventions can have.

Conclusion

Despite the aforementioned limitations and complexities, it is not suggested that diversity training has no value. Rather, that the key message is that it is important to be careful about how these activities are approached and to consider that some types may work better than others. The JRF report recommends empathy-inducing interventions as most valuable in terms of challenging prejudiced attitudes. Its findings also resonate with some of the key principles of the education/reeducation theory, including experiential learning and the value of learning about history and political events. Short-term activities may be useful in conjunction with other interventions (for example, on-going education, increase in contact). And as the Australian study showed, these should take place in a broader context of commitment to diversity and anti-racism, with institutional and cultural change. The most successful educational initiatives discussed in the previous section were designed on the basis of the existing social psychology research, and as the studies outlined here emphasise, such considerations are important for short-term interventions too.

3. Media-based interventions

Introduction

The media is regularly used as an approach to tackle prejudice, through TV, radio, and the internet. The media can provide an informational or a normative function, and initiatives may include poster campaigns, advertising, storylines on television programmes, and plays. Anti-prejudice campaigns in the media tend to fall into three categories: general awareness-raising; encouraging of reporting discrimination/abuse; and campaigns targeting certain groups/particular settings (e.g. ‘Show Racism the Red Card’ - tackling racism in the context of football). Although ‘media’ is a separate section from education/reeducation and diversity training for the purposes of categorisation for this study, media campaigns have educational purposes as well as providing a moral challenge, and the educational initiatives like those discussed in the previous sections use different types of media sources in their interventions, such as books and film clips. This section will cover these briefly, as they complement findings in previous sections and are worth reiterating, and will then move on to look at media campaigns.

Use of media in educational interventions

Emphasising the links between the different prejudice-reduction techniques, Aboud et al (2012) suggest that media could represent a useful alternative or addition to contact, for instance in cases in which direct contact between different groups is not feasible:

“Media is a particularly convenient way of providing children with an indirect or vicarious form of contact, especially children with little or no opportunity for direct contact” (331).

Aboud et al carried out a systematic review of 32 studies published from 1980 - 2010 of various types of interventions to reduce prejudice in early childhood. Interventions took place in various different countries, and all were delivered to young children under the age of eight. The authors found that media/instruction forms of intervention had a 47% success rate in terms of improvement in attitudes (and to a lesser extent on peer behaviours). Of course such figures should be treated with caution – the different studies will each have had different evaluation methods, and the recurring problem of short-term vs. longer term attitude-change will be pertinent here too. Nonetheless, it is a positive indication that media can be used successfully as part of educational strategies to reduce prejudice.

Their evidence also strongly suggests that the type of media content very much matters. For example, in relation to using media as part of educational curriculum, “scenes and stories of intergroup contact among peers” fared far better than ‘multicultural education (331). Using media as a form of indirect contact, as opposed to focusing on the culture of a minority group, may therefore be a more effective approach.

Media campaigns

Media campaigns – for example, by campaign organisations, the Government, or criminal justice agencies – are also extremely popular, and frequently used with the intention of promoting change through raising awareness and challenging attitudes and stereotypes. Some academic research has looked into the effectiveness of such campaigns, and the results are mixed. Sutton et al (2007) suggest that despite the frequency of such campaigns, there is little evidence of their effectiveness. To date there has been very little research, and the authors point out that we cannot easily evidence effectiveness in terms of changing attitudes.

Abrams suggests that ‘informational’ media messages might not be the most efficient way of influencing people and that normative pressure can be much more successful. The normative communication functions of media can be considered more controversial to libertarians, and again the issue of to what extent Government has the right to intervene in this way is contentious. There is also the issue of the ‘credibility of the messenger’. Abrams (2010) points out that it matters where the attempt to persuade comes from:

“Groups become more persuasive if we identify with them and less persuasive if we see them as out-groups” (70).

We are more likely to be persuaded to change attitudes if there is a general consensus amongst our own group. Findings in the educational initiatives discussed in the previous section strongly supported peer engagement, suggesting that change is best affected from within peer groups where possible. Similar lessons could perhaps be learned for media-based interventions.

‘One Scotland Many Cultures’

The ‘One Scotland Many Cultures’ campaign by the Scottish Government was launched in 2002 and involved advertising (through TV, radio etc.), poster campaigns, a website, and other related awareness-raising activities in the media. The campaign’s objectives were to celebrate multiculturalism, create empathy for victims of racism, and state a moral appeal for equality and tolerance. However, a retrospective evaluation carried out by Sutton et al (2007) found that the campaign was not based on the key theories and evidence from the social-psychological literature and empirical studies. One significant consequence of this was that the campaign conformed to minority ethnic stereotypes, such as ‘Asian shopkeepers and doctors and Black footballers’ (47). Theory tells us that prejudice-reduction interventions can backfire if they are regarded as ‘favouring’ certain groups, or if they reinforce stereotypes, yet this does not appear to have been fully appreciated. This is a common problem with media interventions in general. The authors also discuss some of the media campaigns on racism in football, noting that:

“If a campaign depicts racial discrimination at football matches as coming from far-right neo-fascists, rather than by more everyday supporters, it will not ring true, and so have less impact on prejudice and discrimination at matches” (29).

Moreover, when designing interventions the pre-existing opinions of the audience should be given careful consideration. Maio et al (2001) carried out an experimental study on how people respond to anti-racism messages in the media, and found that results are greatly dependent on existing opinions. Crucially, existing opinions or attitudes could result in messages backfiring. Reinforcing stereotypes and failing to properly consider the target audience and what messages the campaign wishes to get across are problems frequently raised in studies on diversity training and educational initiatives too. Such oversights risk alienating audiences, so this highlights the importance of utilising the available academic evidence when planning interventions.

There is also a tendency to lean towards ‘hard-hitting’ messages, provoking anger, fear, or guilt, with the premise that triggering powerful emotions such as these will capture people’s attention. This may be appropriate in certain contexts, such as health promotion or crime awareness. It perhaps falls into the what ‘should’ work category when talking about reducing prejudice, but the theoretical research encourages us to be careful in this respect. Abrams (2010) warns that making people feel guiltier about inequality seems unlikely to be a useful solution – people are prone to reacting defensively (similar to the findings noted in the section on short-term diversity programmes). As noted earlier, the social psychological theories state that inducing empathy and compassion are the most effective ways of challenging attitudes, so when designing media interventions it is important to

bear this in mind. Hard-hitting messages are also in some cases based on exaggerated interpretations of an issue, and as such are not necessarily accurate. If it appears that facts are being distorted and what is being depicted is not a true reflection of reality, there may be a risk of alienating the intended audience. An example may be plays or films about a particular type of prejudice. We have established that prejudice often exists in subtle, everyday manifestations. However in order to maximise appeal, particularly dramatic interpretations of a problem may be deployed. Initiatives that use such methods should be aware of these risks.

As well as making best use of the available evidence and social theory when designing interventions, Sutton et al (2007) note that evaluation is often not properly considered:

“Evaluation of these initiatives has also tended to be done as a quick afterthought with a consequent lack of the rigour required to identify good practice” (20).

This lack of evaluation echoes problems raised in previous sections. The ‘One Scotland Many Cultures’ project was criticised for poorly-designed surveys which made evaluation even more difficult. Sutton et al propose that initiatives should be tested with target audiences in pilot projects before launching, then monitored throughout. One recommendation of this report would be academic evaluations of prejudice-reduction initiatives, which may well have a more thorough approach. Finally, the literature on media interventions suggests that repetition is an important point – repeating an argument continually may have a greater effect than one-off campaigns, similar to the finding regarding educational interventions discussed in the previous section, in that short-term one-offs are less effective than on-going programmes.

Conclusion

It is reasonable to suggest that, at best, media campaigns might be deemed effective in relatively ‘vague’ ways. However it is possible to draw from the available evidence some suggestions of what is most likely to have positive effects and least likely to potentially ‘backfire’. Given the popularity of such campaigns, effectiveness might be increased by taking into account some of the lessons discussed in this section.

SECTION FIVE: REFLECTION, LIMITATIONS, AND APPLICABILITY - WHAT CAN WE LEARN?

As pointed out in the introduction, prejudice is primarily a social problem and prejudice-reduction requires social as well as individual change. In attempting to tackle prejudice, we want to challenge and influence societal norms where entrenched prejudice exists. So the approach has to be about more than just the individual. Of course, criminal justice approaches may be appropriate in cases of hate crime, the extreme manifestation of prejudice. There may also be evidence on the deterrent effects of criminal sanctions, though this is beyond the scope of this paper. Returning to the earlier theoretical discussion, this report has focused on the third 'level' of Duckitt's model: "mechanisms of social influence that operate in group and interpersonal interactions". The intention is to learn from some of the key messages from the theories and the empirical interventions outlined in the last two sections.

The fundamental message is that, unfortunately, the evidence on 'what works' is very limited. We can make some general comments on the fact that developing relationships, encouraging close contact, and aiming interventions at young children where possible may be most effective, but Paluck and Green's 2009 large-scale review of studies on prejudice-reduction interventions concludes that "of the hundreds of studies we examine, a small fraction speak convincingly to the questions of whether, why, and under what conditions a given type of intervention works" (339). Moreover, the majority of studies have taken place in laboratories, not in real-life. We must consider who participates in these 'experimental' lab-based studies: these tend to be dominated by Western undergraduate students. So even those studies that show promise in terms of certain prejudice-reduction initiatives have to be treated with caution, as those with perhaps the most entrenched prejudiced attitudes might not be the ones participating in studies. Indeed, this is also highly likely to be the case in real-life interventions. There is also a lack of evidence from field experimental literature; many interventions which show potential in laboratory settings have never been tested. For instance, Aboud et al (2012) comment that:

"Conditions known to enhance the benefits of contact are not always implemented in community and school settings. Furthermore, the rigorous designs used in small-scale laboratory research are rarely found in evaluations of school programs" (309).

Of course it is unrealistic to expect that in the real world interventions can be controlled and evaluated so precisely, so the intention is not to undervalue these important studies. There is value in drawing upon some of the key messages/themes that might help to inform future practice, whilst always keeping in mind that the question of application is crucial.

The rest of the report will reiterate the key messages and questions that emerged from the previous sections, namely: whether targeting specific prejudices or employing a general prejudice-reduction approach works best; practically, what

types of activity are considered to work best (including where, with who, and how often); and finally the importance of measurement and evaluation.

Broad prejudice-reduction approach or one targeted at specific types of prejudice?

An important question is whether prejudices should be directly challenged, or whether encouraging positive contact between groups would be more effective. The question of who are victims of and who are perpetrators of prejudice is not always clear. Most of the studies refer to 'minority' versus 'majority' communities, reflecting the fact that prejudice is most often directed towards minority groups who have less power. Sometimes this relates to numerical majorities but often (for instance women, working class people, ethnic groups in some cases) this is not the case. Furthermore, power is not static, and it is important to consider the intersectionality of prejudice: a black working-class woman will inevitably experience processes of exclusion and discrimination differently to a black middle-class man. Abrams et al (2015) discuss the notion of 'equality hypocrisy', whereby people professing values of equality often still tend to differentiate between which groups are 'deserving', because "social identities, power hierarchies, and intergroup norms come into play, all of which might place greater value on some groups than others" (30). Sutton et al (2007) warn of the need to be careful about prejudice-reduction interventions because prejudiced attitudes vary greatly by factors such as age, education level and region. Even within individuals prejudiced attitudes will adapt over time and/or in different circumstances. A popular example of this is the idea of people behaving in what could be deemed a 'racist' or 'sectarian' at a football match, yet would never consider themselves racist or sectarian, and would be unlikely to display similar attitudes or behaviours in other contexts.

This raises the question of whether specific anti-prejudice initiatives (e.g. anti-sectarian, anti-racist, anti-homophobic etc.) would work better than a 'catch-all' broader focus on prejudice, and/or placing in the broader equalities framework. The evidence review undertaken has been unable to find clear guidance on this matter. Abrams (2010) points out that this has not yet been subject to testing, but suggests that "given that prejudices towards different groups appear to have different developmental trajectories, it seems likely that the latter approach (targeting specific prejudices separately) may work better" (76). Yet consideration of the intersectionality of prejudice may lend support to idea of a broader equalities/respect approach, perhaps with flexibility for targeting where appropriate. In their report for Stonewall, Valentine and McDonald (2004) found strong similarities in the levels and types of prejudice across the country. As a result, the authors stressed that policies should be national, but also "regional and locally sensitive" (21). So it appears that quite a delicate balance has to be struck.

Practical suggestions: Key messages about activity

- **Setting and participants:** Where prejudice-reduction initiatives take place is important. Interventions might function in schools, workplaces, or in the community. You can encourage or even compel people to participate in the first two of these but the third is less obvious – there has to be choice, self-

selection is a factor. Given that we have already established that most prejudice takes place in the home, it is important to consider how positive messages might be transmitted to other settings. This also applies to intended participants. Are there target groups that we would want to participate in certain initiatives? How can we reach out to these people? This may also include long-term thinking, such as enabling tolerance among future parents.

- **Clear objectives:** It should be clear from the outset of an intervention who it is aimed at and what is intended. Clear objectives, a clear structure, and definable outcomes are essential. What behaviours/attitudes is the intervention trying to change? Are there risks of counter-productivity? How will success be measured?
- **A range of activities in group settings:** In terms of initiatives, group activities work best (except in the case of entrenched/aggressive attitudes, which may mean one-to-one approach is better). Initiatives should prioritise “learning through doing and experiencing, not just listening and talking” (JRF report). Although it should be a given that young people especially are less receptive to ‘instruction’, many interventions are still based on this. Recreational activities such as sport and arts-based activities are particularly good (especially for young people). It is also worth considering how best to utilise the media in interventions.
- **Discussing sensitive topics and personal experiences:** Discussing historical and political events has been shown to affect change in attitudes, and JRF review suggests that interventions should focus on ‘encouraging reflection’ and “on personal attitudes and experiences”.
- **Importance of facilitators:** The case studies continually emphasised the importance of facilitators in the effectiveness of interventions. Correct training, consistency, and regular feedback will help ensure best effectiveness in this respect. Peer engagement is a key aspect of this: involving participants (e.g. youth) in the design, implementation, and review of interventions had positive results.
- **Length of interventions:** If projects are short (which they often are), it is questionable how much impact they can actually have, and how can they be feasibly evaluated in that time. Unpredictable, short-term funding has been shown to be less likely to work: on-going support/funding required. JRF report states that one-off activities make less impact; better results come from “sustained activities over a period of time”.

Evaluation of prejudice- reduction interventions

As Paluck and Green (2009) point out, evaluating changes in attitudes is extremely complex. For example, if someone chooses to attend a diversity course, or voluntarily participates in a ‘sectarianism awareness’ workshop, it is highly likely that they will have “more positive attitudes towards diversity” already (344).

Furthermore, Sutton et al (2007) emphasise that “there is a need to implement effective initiatives, rather than those based on idealised notions of what works, or what should work” (30). Evaluation of interventions should be considered at design stage, not as an afterthought. Even when evaluations of projects do take place,

there are issues. Measuring prejudice is difficult partly because of social desirability concerns, so measuring improvement in prejudiced attitudes will be particularly difficult. Paluck (2006) reiterates the issue of self-reporting, self-presentation bias, and social desirability bias. Paluck recommends that future research is needed to establish causal effects of interventions, using unobtrusive measurements that go beyond self-reporting (585), as it is vital not to confuse 'feedback' with evidence of impact. Post-event surveys do not provide enough information to determine whether an activity has been effective or not: it may be that participants simply particularly enjoy the programme, feel like they should be supportive and positive, or they might even have increased awareness of bias – but these do not necessarily translate into long-term attitude change. Post-intervention surveys in particular will have to consider these issues, and might best be complemented by qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, and observations, and follow-up measurement. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report suggests that programmes should be assessed for effectiveness by participants themselves, which would support the argument for peer-based learning (e.g. involving previous participants in the running of projects). Sutton et al (2007) include a useful checklist (appendix 1) which may be a useful example for initiatives to help develop their own. Finally, there may be an argument for retrospective analysis in areas where there is an absence of prejudice where you might have expected to see it. This is potentially an area worthy of further research, to determine what factors impact on positive attitudes and tolerance of diversity, as opposed to simply focusing on where prejudice exists and how to get rid of it.

SECTION SIX: POSSIBILITIES FOR PREJUDICE-REDUCTION IN SCOTLAND

Introduction

The objectives of this section are two-fold: firstly, to reflect on how some of the report's key messages might relate to Scotland, with focus on the specific sectarianism debates; and secondly to propose some recommendations that might help shape future interventions and strengthen the position on sectarianism more generally. It will outline main lessons from the literature which may be useful for policy, make some practical suggestions relating to anti-prejudice initiatives, and recommend possible further work on the topic.

Nature of prejudice and discrimination in Scotland

Tackling prejudice in all forms is a policy priority for the Scottish Government. A great deal of research has been carried out in recent years mapping out the different types of prejudice that exist in our society, how this is experienced by victims, and how attitudes are potentially being challenged and changing. It would appear that overall there is much to be positive about. The 2010 Scottish Social Attitudes Survey suggests that, overall, levels of prejudice and discrimination continue to decline – albeit gradually and with some anomalies (for example, transgender people and Gypsy/Traveller groups still experience higher levels of discrimination). This progress may be in no small part due to the legislative and policy changes that have entrenched statutory responses to prejudiced and discriminatory behaviours. Successive Scottish Governments have focused on this in recent years, for example through the introduction of civil partnerships and the eventual legalisation of same-sex marriage, which will almost certainly have contributed to marked improvement in attitudes towards homosexuality (SSAS 2010).

Returning to some of the earlier theoretical discussions, this highlights the value of changes at the second 'level' of Duckitt's model of the causes of prejudice (1992). Increasingly, attention is also focusing on interventions at the third 'level': measures which are designed to improve intergroup relations. This is because despite legislative and policy changes, prejudice and discrimination still affects a significant minority of people. The criminal statistics show that there is evidence of hate crime against certain groups, though these of course are based only on incidents reported to the police and therefore are likely to exclude the 'everyday' manifestations of prejudice.

Although it has received a lot of attention in recent years, recent evidence may suggest that sectarianism is generally at the lower end of the spectrum of prejudice. Violent offences are extremely rare nowadays, and it is perhaps attitudes rather than behaviours that are the focus of attention. Yet even the attitudinal indicators regarding sectarianism seem to be positive. The Scottish Social Attitudes Survey usefully explores attitudes towards intimacy (for example, feelings about the idea of a relative marrying a member of an out-group) as a way to look at prejudice. Pettigrew (2008) claims that when it comes to the 'intimacy' question, people are

likely to display prejudiced attitudes even if they claim to be tolerant in general. In the 2014 SSAS, only 1-2% of respondents said that they would be unhappy if someone of either the Catholic or Protestant faiths joined their families. Crucially, prejudice levels seem to be generally much higher towards other groups. In the 2010 survey, 21% of people would be unhappy or very unhappy if a relative was to marry someone 'who occasionally experiences depression'. This figure was 55% when the question was somebody who cross-dresses in public; 30% for same-sex relationships; and 37% for someone from a gypsy-travelling background.

Despite relatively rare direct personal experience of it, or evidence of structural discrimination (though this was a problem in the past), research continually shows that there are strong perceptions of a problem with sectarianism in Scotland. The rest of this section will explore potential lessons from the main report that may help to deal with this complex situation.

Main lessons

Contact-based interventions are helpful but limited

Unlike some types of prejudice, a lack of contact cannot be said to explain the apparent residual problems with sectarianism in Scotland. In the 2014 Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, which specifically focused on attitudes towards sectarianism 81% of Catholics and 76% of Protestants state that they have at least one close friend from the 'other tradition', and for 'close family member' the figures are 30% for Catholics and 18% for Protestants. Inter-marriage rates are also high. This is a positive indication of the progress that has been made in recent decades, in a time which inequalities in terms of socio-economic indicators have gradually been eroded, and is suggestive of the positive effectiveness of contact.

However, as noted the research shows that perceptions of continued existence of sectarianism in Scotland are extremely high. Either it is entirely a problem of perception, or it may be the case that 'contact works' to an extent, but there 'residual' problems which are said to still exist – perhaps a result of historical 'grudges' and myths about our own histories and the histories of others. If the latter is the case, these might be tackled better through specific education or re-education.

Need for sensitivity

'Prejudice' is further complicated by the fact that what counts as sectarianism in Scotland is unclear and contested. There has been no agreed comprehensive definition, which illustrates the subjective nature of the term, although the Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism has recently proposed a definition, based on their investigations into the subject. Definitions are extremely important, especially as some groups feel that what is deemed sectarian – for example, certain behaviours, songs, or language used - are actually legitimate expressions of culture or identity (The Celtic Trust, 15 June 2013). Goodall et al (2015) talk about the construction of meaning when it comes to particular songs and other symbols:

“For many in West-Central Scotland in particular, songs acquire sectarian agency, rendering much of their original meaning redundant in favour of how they have come to be used against – and received by – the opposing community.”

Understanding sectarianism should go beyond the objective statement or behaviour and motivations of the proponent/s, and should also consider how certain actions are received and interpreted.

Given these debates, it is reasonable to suggest that defining sectarian-related prejudice in Scotland might be less clear-cut in comparison with prejudice against someone on the basis of a disability, for example. Therefore, an important caveat when exploring the potential for prejudice-reduction interventions regarded as effective elsewhere to be applied to Scotland is the need to be mindful about terminology used. Recognising the contested nature of sectarianism, initiatives should be multi-perspective, encouraging alternative views and interpretations of the issue. Perhaps this lack of consensus about what it really is could be partly addressed by rooting initiatives in people’s own experiences and understandings instead of instructional approaches.

A further complication is that the attitudinal research showed that people tended to think of sectarianism as happening ‘elsewhere’, not in their local area or community and not with themselves individually. There may therefore be a lack of willingness among people to engage. It is possible that this could be addressed by talking more generally about implicit bias. The report discussed methods of raising people’s awareness of their own bias (for example, through something similar to the IAT test mentioned earlier) which may be a good starting point for an honest discussion. It is also important to think about the ‘credibility of the messenger’. As noted earlier in the report, research suggests that change is best effected from within peer groups where possible, so features such as involving people who’d previously completed the programme as facilitators may be useful.

Target initiatives carefully

The question of whether to target sectarianism specifically and directly, or to address the issue through a broad prejudice-reduction strategy, is a key area of debate. Goodall et al (2015) suggest a move away from “treating Scottish sectarianism as if it was a unique and inexplicable quality of the national character” (289). The Advisory Group for Tackling Sectarianism (2015) also recommends a more “coordinated approach” to tackling prejudice, but warned of the need to ensure that tackling sectarianism does not “recede into the background again or allow taking a broad approach to addressing all forms of hate crime to favour tackling one form of abuse over others” (27). The ‘hate crime’ umbrella should perhaps be avoided in this context, due to the issues previously discussed including the conflation of sectarianism and hate crime, and the fact that there is a spectrum of prejudice in which hate crime is very much the extreme manifestation. The research on prejudice-reduction in general states that interventions should be tailored to local communities for local demand. This flexibility is crucial in relation to sectarianism in Scotland, as the research overwhelmingly suggests that it is not an

evenly-spread problem, and instead exists in what have come to be known as ‘pockets’ or ‘cobwebs’ (Goodall et al 2015). This suggests that ‘blanket’ designs should be avoided: prejudice varies according to different contexts. So it may be the case that a more coordinated approach which looks at prejudice more broadly would be effective, but with the flexibility to target specific problems in specific contexts.

The concern to avoid ‘blanket’ designs extends beyond simply particular areas, as prejudice varies by many other factors, including by age. In a recent research project on community experiences of sectarianism in Scotland, Goodall et al recommend an “intergenerational approach” to tackling the problem, as the evidence strongly suggests an ‘inheritance’ of what may be termed ‘sectarian culture’. Messages from recent research on sectarianism in Scotland may suggest that this phenomenon may have become less of a direct and overt phenomenon: inequality and discrimination is considered to be something that older generations may have been more familiar with. As such, we may expect that older generations would benefit most from interventions, however younger generations may well ‘inherit’ particular attitudes. Potentially, interventions which involve people with historical experiences of sectarianism talking to younger people could be useful. This may help to overcome the apparent reluctance of some people to discuss the topic. Sectarianism is undoubtedly a controversial and sensitive topic for some, so perhaps encouraging people to talk about it and, importantly, to develop a historical outlook that might challenge some of the myths, could be helpful. Such approaches would also be rooted in the established principles of empathy and perspective-taking, enhancing their credibility. Of course, as has been established, highly prejudiced people are more likely to avoid intergroup contact so it is important to think about how opportunities for contact can be promoted if there are individuals or groups with specifically ‘hardened’ attitudes.

Ensure accuracy

A final key lesson from the main body of the report is the need to be as accurate as possible in the message that is put across in interventions. It is important to be mindful of not facilitating the reproduction of particular assumptions or stereotypes, for example. In relation to sectarianism, this might involve thinking carefully about how dramatic interpretations of the issue could be received, when in reality what remains is subtle and not evenly spread. This is perhaps when a ‘what not to do’ approach could be useful. Avoiding anything too dramatic or extreme – for instance, ‘hard-hitting’ media clips – may ameliorate the risks of alienating sections of the audience who would not recognise overt violence as a feature of their lives or communities. Where possible there should be a thorough research process, perhaps with some academic input, so that there is a clear understanding of the issue that the intervention is attempting to tackle.

Some of these issues could perhaps be tackled through careful evaluation. It is vital to reiterate that evaluation should be considered from design stage, not as an afterthought. Observations and other methods of tracking attitudinal or behavioural changes might be a complementary measure to surveys. Regular feedback throughout is key, changing content and/or delivery style in response where

necessary. Finally, 'what doesn't work' is equally important as what does, and programmes should not feel scared to document what failed and why.

Recommendations

One recommendation is a 'mapping out' of what legal interventions are currently in place to prevent and tackle prejudice in Scotland, if this does not exist already. Returning to the theory of Duckitt (1992) on the 'levels' of prejudice, the interventions and recommendations covered in the main body of this report focused on the third level. However it would be interesting to explore how these may work alongside legal interventions which tackle the second 'level'.

Further research could also explore the possibility that high levels of contact, illustrated for example by high rates of intermarriage, might be the case nationally, but with some 'pockets' still resistant to national trends. In research terms, such questions reiterate the importance of qualitative research in developing what we already know based on statistical evidence. Further research could drill down and try to uncover whether and why there is still perhaps a lack of (meaningful) contact in some communities.

In general, developing the academic links, as opposed to simply practitioner led analysis, may be useful. This could involve systematic reviews, evaluation studies in Scotland, or perhaps funding of PhDs.

SECTION SEVEN: CONCLUSION

This report has considered the evidence base for ‘what works’ to reduce prejudice, taken from theoretical debates and a selection of empirical studies internationally. It examined some of the principal arguments around how prejudice develops, how it functions differently in different contexts, and how it might be challenged through interventions. Section five reflected in detail on what we might learn from this information, and section six considered how some of these might usefully be applied to Scotland.

Most interventions are not properly evaluated, so this summary and these recommendations are limited in terms of transferability, however in terms of working towards best practice and increasing what we know, it is a useful first step. Interventions should be theory-driven, based on the best available knowledge from the social psychology literature. Prejudices may be deeply-held, and interventions that directly challenge and confront such worldviews may be less effective than contact, which can help to increase out-group empathy with less risk of causing defensiveness, re-entrenchment of prejudices. However the limitations of contact alone have been well documented, and as such interventions designed to reduce prejudice are commonplace.

A key message is that people have to be open to and willing to confront and challenge their prejudices. This is the biggest obstacle for anyone with an objective to reduce prejudice. Importantly, this will be a continuous process. Bargal (2008) sums up the importance of longer-term interventions, one of the key messages from this work:

“The change of negative intergroup attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices, and the provision of conflict management skills requires a long and incremental process. From our own significant experience in this process and based on the experience of others (Bar & Bargal, 1995; Paluck-Levy, 2006), we learned that intergroup interventions demand sacrifices from participants, facilitators, and organization officials and leaders. Social scientists who want to engage in it should abandon scientific models of a short-term, one-shot intervention and evaluation and adopt long-range, action-research designs” (p. 57).

The length of interventions is arguably the most influential factor. As noted, the shorter the intervention the more likelihood that it will appear ‘piecemeal’ and will have limited short-term effects, if any. This is not to suggest that short-term initiatives are never useful but they should take place in the broader context of promoting tolerance and challenging prejudice through facilitating positive contact and robust educational programmes.

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APPENDIX 1

From Sutton et al (2007) 'Getting the Message Across'

Figure 4.1: Checklist for assessing initiatives to reduce racial prejudice or Discrimination

| Design | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Are the likely mechanisms of successful practices in place? | Y | N |
| 2. Are the objectives and aims well defined? | Y | N |
| 3. Are the specified aims and outcomes realistic? | Y | N |
| 4. Are target audiences identified? | Y | N |
| 5. Is the initiative sustainable (sustained change may take time)? | Y | N |
| 6. Is it modelled after other successful initiatives? | Y | N |
| 7. Is it practical? | Y | N |
| 8. Is it replicable? | Y | N |
| 9. Is it generalisable? | Y | N |
| Nature of message | | |
| 1. Does the message avoid the use of unrecognisable stereotypes? | Y | N |
| 2. Does the message emphasise positive similarities? Y N | Y | N |
| 3. Does the message include positive role models of in- and outgroups? | Y | N |
| 4. Is the message unambiguous? | Y | N |
| 5. Is the medium appropriate? | Y | N |
| 6. Is the medium readily available and/or widely circulated or visible? | Y | N |

| Evaluation | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Are the impacts of the initiative measurable? | Y | N |
| 2. Have mechanisms such as pre-initiative baseline measures, budgeting and allowing time for evaluation been built in? | Y | N |
| 3. Has evaluation been conducted of the proposed type of initiative. If so, how well? Have evaluation mechanisms such as pre-initiative baseline measures, budgeting and allowing time for evaluation been built in? | Y | N |
| 4. How were target audiences identified? | Y | N |
| 5. How were target audiences' responses measured (quantitatively or qualitatively, both, or neither)? | Y | Y |
| Resources for implementation, monitoring and evaluation | | |
| 1. Is the leading organisation appropriate (given its mandate etc.)? | Y | N |
| 2. What is the organisational base of the body responsible for implementation? What is the history of its "success" in other initiatives? | Y | N |
| 3. Are the staff implementation, monitoring and evaluation resources adequate given the scope of the initiative? | Y | N |
| 4. Are there community partners, or is there multi-agency support? Y N | Y | N |
| Definition of problem | | |
| 1. Are the particular requirements and sensitivities of the target audiences understood and accounted for in the design of the initiative? | Y | N |
| 2. Are the problems of racial prejudice and/or discrimination to be targeted adequately identified, defined, conceptualised or understood? | Y | N |
| 3. Who is doing what to whom, in which way, why, where, when and with what effects? | Y | N |

How to access background or source data

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact Ben.Cavanagh@scotland.gsi.gov.uk for further information.



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