

Editorial

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THIS special issue opens with Rizvi's powerful examination of how British minoritised children are systematically excluded under the guise of managing 'unruliness' in the classroom. Drawing on Falguni Sheth's concept of 'unruliness', Rizvi explains how exclusionary practices are entrenched in educational institutions. The case of Osime Brown, a young man with learning disabilities who was at risk of deportation, highlights how legal frameworks can be manipulated to strip vulnerable children and young people of their rights, and to label them as threats to social order. Rizvi critiques the slow progress in integrating anti-racist principles within Educational Psychology and challenges EPs to rethink the structures that enable exclusion, and urges a reimagining of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Building on this theme, Burnett and Wood-Downie's paper, 'An exploration of intersectionality and school belonging in the permanent exclusion of Black Caribbean boys in schools in England: Implications for Educational Psychologists', examines school belonging among Black Caribbean boys (BCB) in England. The authors highlight the disproportionately high rates of exclusion for BCBs, which appear to stem from poor teacher-student relationships marked by racial bias and low expectations. Using an intersectional lens, the paper reveals how interactive factors (including, race, socio-economic status, and family dynamics) compound the challenges these boys encounter. The authors argue that fostering positive teacher-student relationships is important for mitigating exclusionary outcomes.

The third paper, 'The experiences of East African immigrant parents of autistic children in the UK', by Oumar and Dewey, offers a poignant account of the systemic and cultural barriers experienced by immigrant parents seeking support for their autistic children. The study reveals how language barriers, lack of awareness, and cultural misunderstandings contribute to a sense of confusion and isolation among these parents. By listening to East African immigrant parents, this research highlights the need for more culturally responsive and appreciative support systems that take into account the specific challenges encountered by some immigrant families.

The fourth paper, 'Intersectional community psychology: A social justice framework for interrogating and pushing the boundaries of Educational Psychology practice', introduces an innovative framework that seeks to push the boundaries of Educational Psychology. Theara proposes a model that combines intersectionality with community psychology to address systemic inequalities at multiple levels, from individual interventions to broader community initiatives. This framework challenges Educational Psychologists to move beyond individual-level issues and to engage with the larger social, economic, and political contexts that influence educational outcomes. Theara's paper is especially timely, as it provides practical examples of how Educational Psychologists can adopt a more socially just approach. Theara advocates for structural changes that will benefit those most disadvantaged by current systems.

Embeita and Birch contribute to this conversation by reviewing the literature on Educational Psychologists' understanding of

social justice principles and their application in practice. Their review, based on eight empirical studies, explores how EPs define social justice in terms of fairness, equity, advocacy, and cultural competence. The authors find that EPs' application of social justice principles often involves systemic work and personal responsibility in addressing injustice. They propose an audit tool that can help Educational Psychologists and their services evaluate and develop socially just practices. This paper emphasises the need for a reflexive, culturally competent approach to fostering social justice within educational settings.

The final paper, by Cumber and Gulliford, takes us to the West Midlands, where Educational Psychologists' perceptions of social justice and their practice within local authority services are explored. Through qualitative interviews, the authors describe how there is a genuine commitment to fairness and equity among EPs. However, they also reveal significant barriers to enacting these values in practice. Pressures to conform to institutional agendas, high workloads, and the risk of burnout all pose challenges to sustaining a social justice-oriented practice. The study demonstrates the importance of reflection, supervision, and evidence-based, culturally sensitive approaches to overcoming these barriers and maintaining a focus on social justice within Educational Psychology.

Bringing together insights from these six papers, it is clear that the journey towards a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive educational system is longstanding, complex and ongoing. Intersectionality, as a critical framework, has provided invaluable tools for understanding how overlapping identities and systems of oppression interact. However, this special issue also challenges readers to consider the limitations of intersectionality. Is there a need to develop a framework that addresses specific cultural, systemic, and relational dynamics? Indeed, achieving true equity, diversity and inclusion will require a commitment to continuous reflection, the integration of culturally sensitive practices, and a willingness to engage with broader socio-political contexts that shape the experiences of marginalised people.

This issue also includes a study by Hayes and Gaukroger, titled, 'Critical Incidents in schools. Staff wellbeing and perceptions of psychological support', which examines the wellbeing of school staff in the UK following critical incidents, with a focus on the role of Educational Psychology Services. By assessing both the benefits and challenges of EP support, the study provides insight into how schools and EP services can better address the needs of staff, students, and families during and after traumatic events.

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