

Business in the

Race into higher education

Community

Today's diverse generation into tomorrow's workforce



race for opportunity

Celebrating 15 years of Action on Race 1995-2010

Contents

Foreword	03
Introductions and research methodology	04
Significant findings	05
Ethnic minorities' representation in higher education	06
Oxbridge and ethnic minorities	07
Representation of ethnic minorities at Russell Group universities	08
Universities with the highest and lowest representation of ethnic minorities	09
What are ethnic minorities studying?	11
Race into work	12
Recommendations	13

Foreword



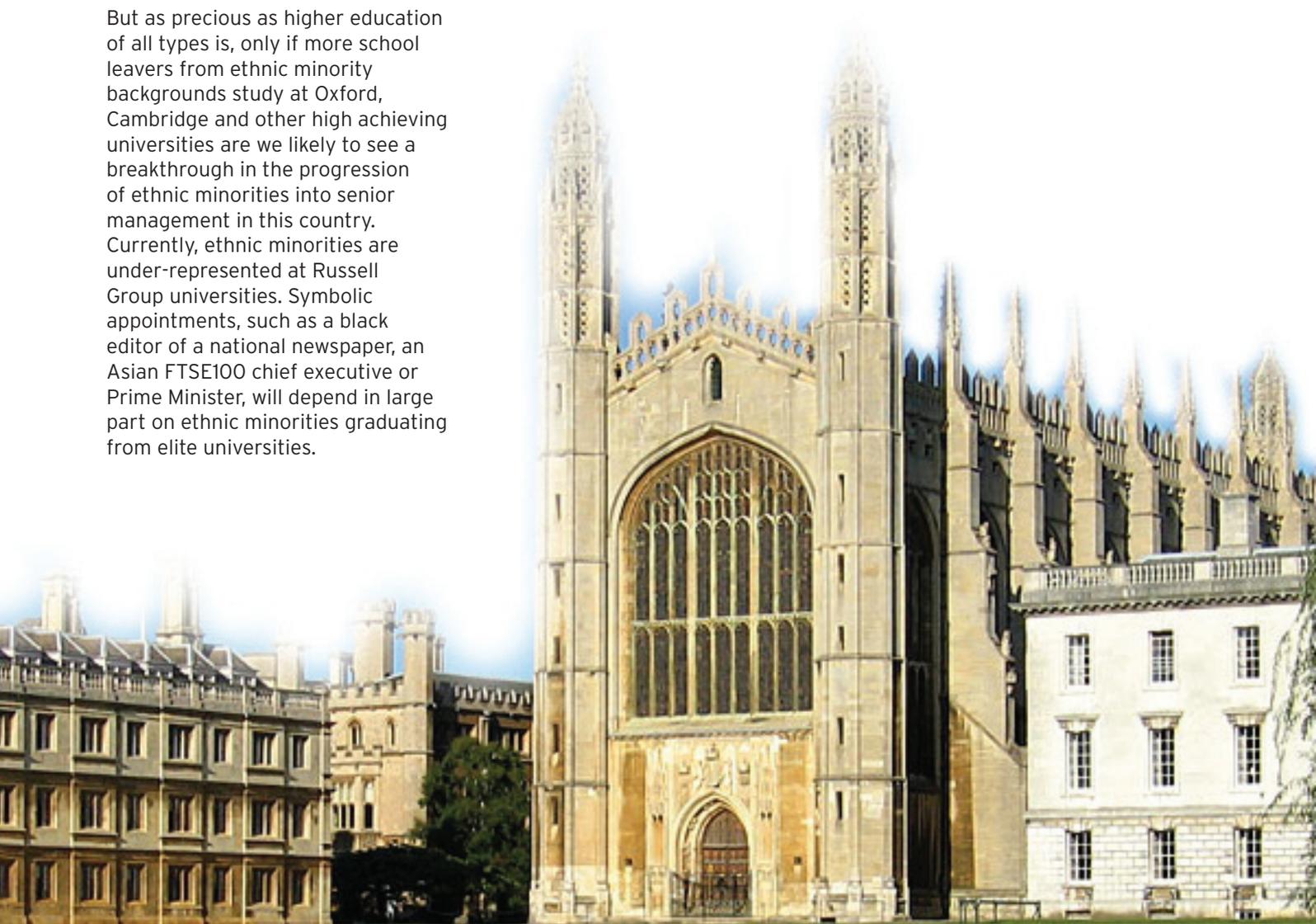
In January 2009, Race for Opportunity, part of Business in the Community, published *Race to the Top*. This report identified that given current trends, ethnic minorities in management will never be in line with their representation in the overall UK population. To challenge this, amongst other things, people from minority backgrounds need to ensure they progress to higher education, with one fifth of the emerging workforce and children in primary and secondary education being Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME).

The good news is that ethnic minority students are doing just that: one in six of those studying within the UK's universities are BAME. And, overall, ethnic minorities are better represented in higher education pro rata to their share of the country's population.

But as precious as higher education of all types is, only if more school leavers from ethnic minority backgrounds study at Oxford, Cambridge and other high achieving universities are we likely to see a breakthrough in the progression of ethnic minorities into senior management in this country. Currently, ethnic minorities are under-represented at Russell Group universities. Symbolic appointments, such as a black editor of a national newspaper, an Asian FTSE100 chief executive or Prime Minister, will depend in large part on ethnic minorities graduating from elite universities.

This report, a comprehensive review of ethnic minorities in higher education today, will, I hope, be of interest to Government policy makers, university boards and UK industry, all of whom will want to see how the current ethnically diverse generation will slot into tomorrow's workforce.

Sandra Kerr
National Director of the Race for Opportunity campaign, Business in the Community



Introduction

The report is based on exclusive new research carried out by Race for Opportunity using data from the 1995-96 and 2007-8 'HESA Student Record' published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The report also makes use of Labour Force Survey data from the corresponding years.

The aim is to provide a snapshot of where and what BAMEs are studying at UK universities and whether this has changed since 1995-96. The report also looks at the success of ethnic minorities in finding employment after completing their education.



The statistics on the representation of ethnic minorities in population have been derived from the Labour Force Survey (and are based on England, Wales and Scotland). The population data relates to 18-24 year olds domiciled in the UK and does not, therefore, take into account mature students included in the HESA data used. A more accurate comparison was not available. We were unable to source a reliable ethnic minority population profile for Northern Ireland, making it impossible to produce true UK population comparisons.

Research methodology

The data used for the analysis is derived from the 'HESA Student Record' statistics published by Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The data sets used are for the period 2007-08 and 1995-96, and correspond to the period 1 August to 31 July for each of those years. Race for Opportunity was founded in 1995 and the period 2007-08 is the most recent comparative data available.

The HESA data used is restricted to UK domiciled students only, i.e. it does not include foreign students who are studying in the UK. Therefore the analysis is limited to the students who are residents of the UK. Students falling under the 'Unknown' category have not been grouped with Whites or ethnic minorities. These have either been disregarded or represented as 'Unknown' in the analysis.

The definitions of various classifications used in the report can be found by using the following links:

- 1** Subject Areas - <http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/102/136/1/4/>
- 2** Standard Occupational Classifications - <http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/102/143/1/6/>
- 3** Standard Industrial Classifications - www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/sic/downloads/SIC2007_explanatorynotes.pdf

Significant findings

- In 2007-08 almost one in six (16.0%) of UK university students were from a BAME background, up from 8.3% in 1995-96. This increase in BAME representation in UK universities is virtually in line with the growth in the BAME population from 7.7% of 18 to 24 year olds in 1995-96 up to 14.2% in 2007-08.¹
 - Elite universities Oxford and Cambridge are failing to adequately represent BAME students. Only Chinese and mixed-ethnicity students are better represented than average at both institutions.
 - Representation of ethnic minorities at Russell Group universities is unbalanced: the four London-based universities, including the London School of Economics and King's College, have a high proportion of BAME students but outside London BAME representation is, by comparison, poor. Ethnic minorities are under-represented at the majority of Russell Group universities.
 - As in 1995-96, British Bangladeshi and British Pakistani students continue to be the most under-represented within UK universities, compared to their representation in the national population.
 - BAME graduates are failing to find jobs as easily as their White counterparts despite being highly represented at UK universities. Some 66% of White students who graduated in 2007-08 found work within a year compared with just 56.3% of BAME students.
 - Half of the 10 universities in 1995-96 with the lowest proportion of BAME students appeared again in 2007-2008. This indicates how slow progress has been.
 - Agricultural universities and those that originated in teacher training colleges dominate the top five league for lowest BAME representation.
 - BAME students are favouring entrepreneurial subjects such as business studies (16.6% versus 9.7% White) but are close to half as likely as White students to study education (5.8% against 10.3% White).
 - White students are most likely to read humanities subjects (29.7%) whereas BAME students are most likely to read biological sciences (30.2%) at UK universities.
 - Ethnic minority students overwhelmingly tend to study in towns and cities with large BAME populations. Eight of the 10 universities with the highest proportion of BAME groups are in London or the Home Counties.
- ¹While data for student numbers is based on UK-domiciled students, the 18-24 ethnic population profile is based on GB (England, Wales & Scotland). We have found no reliable/compatible source of data for 18-24 ethnicity in Northern Ireland.

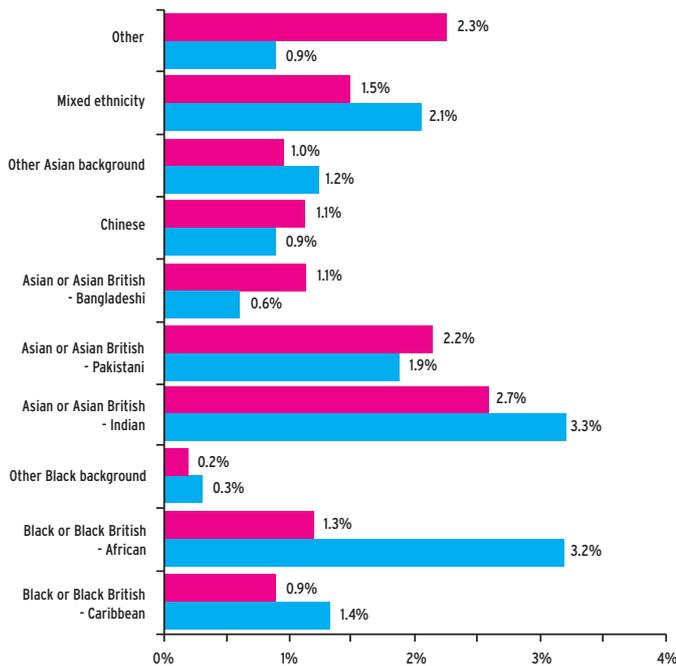


Ethnic minorities' representation in higher education

Good news. The proportion of ethnic minorities in higher education almost doubled from 8.3% in 1995-96 to 16.0% in 2007-08. **The proportion of ethnic minorities at university exceeds their share of the 18-24 year old population in the UK (14.2%).** The doubling of ethnic minorities in higher education over the 12 year period does however reflect the fact that this share of the population has almost doubled, from 7.7 per cent in 1995-96 to 14.2% today.

Yet some of the least privileged potential students may not be making it to university at all because of deprivation earlier in childhood. A 2009 Government report into ethnicity and child poverty found that levels of poverty were especially high for Bangladeshi and Pakistani children². Here, Race for Opportunity finds that British Bangladeshi and British Pakistani students remain woefully under-represented groups within higher education.

Figure 1:
Representation of Ethnic Minority Groups - All Unis vs. 18-24 Population - 2007-08¹



Total Ethnic Representation:
Total Pop. (18-24) - 14.2%
All unis - 16.0%

■ Total population (18-24 years)
■ Total (All Universities)

Source: HESA Student Record and Labour Force Survey
KEY: This chart shows the percentage of a) population b) all university who are BAME.



There are, of course, winners. British Indians continue to be the best represented ethnic minority group within UK universities in 2007-08 (3.3%) as they were in 1995-96 (2.1%). They were followed by Black or Black British Africans (3.2%) who have almost tripled their university presence in the last 12 years, and finally, mixed ethnicity students constituted 2.1% of the university population.

² Ethnicity and child poverty 2009 by Lucinda Platt, University of Essex, for the Department for Work and Pensions.

Oxbridge and ethnic minorities

The UK's elite universities, Oxford and Cambridge, recruit fewer ethnic minority students than the average for all other universities. However, the story differs from one ethnic minority group to another. Those of Chinese and Mixed ethnicity were better represented at Oxbridge than average, whereas those of Indian, African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnicity, for example, are under-represented.

Oxford

More than one in 10 (11.1%) of students at Oxford University is from a BAME background, but the university still needs to recruit a massive 44% more BAME students to square up to the average university BAME population of 16.0%. However, Oxford has improved its overall performance since 1995-96 when only 3.6% of students were BAME compared with 8.3% at all other universities.

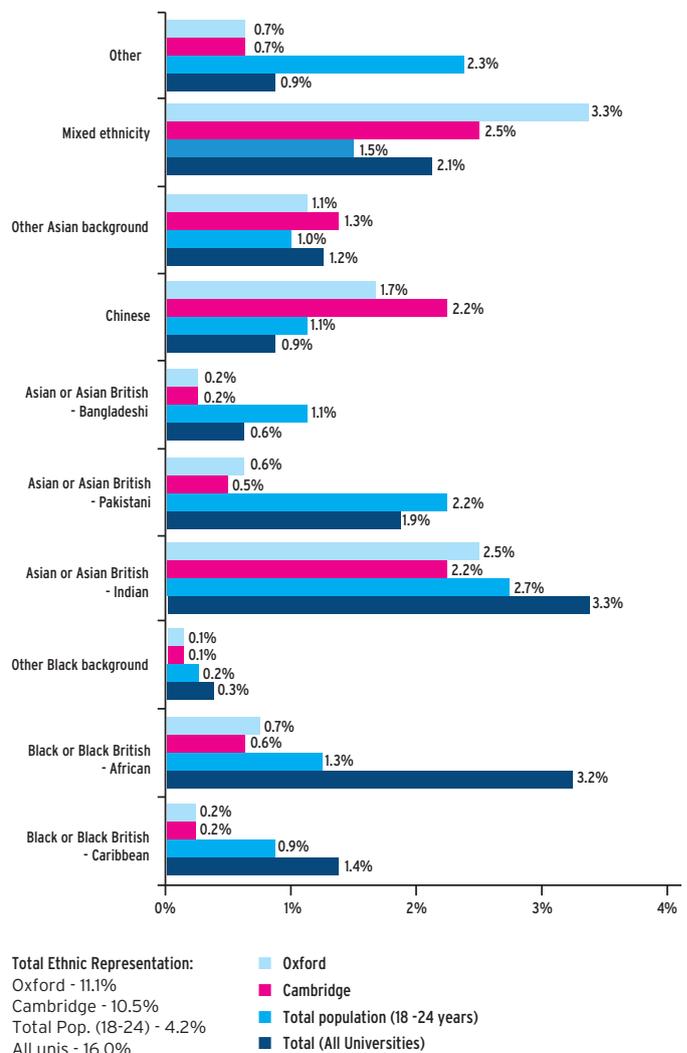
British Bangladeshi and Black or Black British Caribbean students both only constituted 0.2% each of Oxford's student population in 2007-08 while those from Other Black backgrounds made up a very small percentage (0.1%). There are seven times fewer Black or Black British Caribbeans at Oxford than on average at other universities.

Women have yet to achieve parity with men at Oxford. **Males in all ethnic categories are slightly better represented than females, except for Black or Black British Caribbeans where females are three times greater in number than males.** Depressingly, the situation has changed little since 1995-96 when only Other and Black or Black British Caribbean females did better than their male counterparts.

Cambridge

Like Oxford, little more than one in 10 (10.5%) of students at Cambridge is from a BAME background compared with the university average of 16.0%. Students of mixed ethnicity (2.5%), Chinese students (2.2%) and those of Other Asian background (1.3%) are the only BAME groups better represented than at other universities. Twelve years ago, British Indian students had the highest representation at 1.8%. British Bangladeshi, Black or Black British Caribbean and Other Black students were least represented both today and in 1995-96. In 2007-08, only females of Black or Black British Caribbean and Mixed ethnicity were better represented at Cambridge than males of the same ethnicity.

Figure 2: Representation of Ethnic Minority Groups - Oxford vs Cambridge vs All Universities vs. Population - 2007-08



Source: HESA Student Record and Labour Force Survey
KEY: This chart shows the percentage of a) Oxford University students, b) Cambridge University students, c) 18-24 population and d) All university students who are BAME.

Representation of ethnic minorities at Russell universities

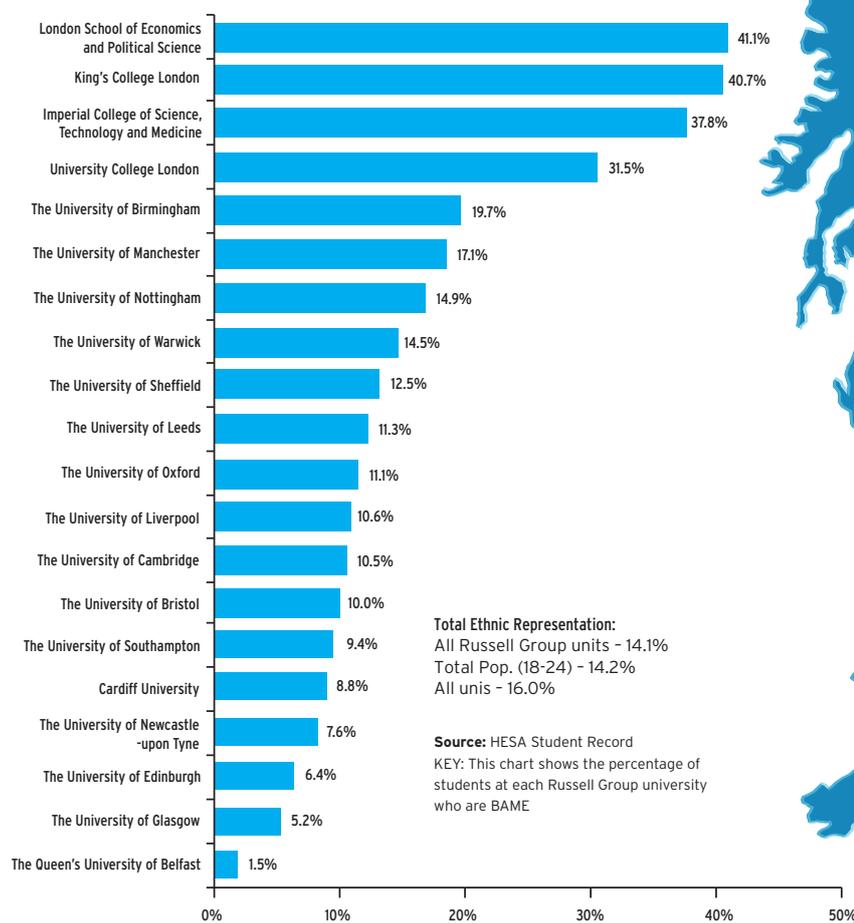
The Russell Group comprises 20 major UK research-intensive universities and accounts for two-thirds of UK universities' research grant and contract income. As an association with a mission of contributing to the UK's innovation and economic prosperity, its graduates can expect to shape the future of British industry and public life.

The London-based universities of the London School of Economics (LSE), King's College London, Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, and University College London were the best performing universities for BAME students 12 years ago and remain so today. Looking outside London, only the universities of Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham and Warwick are attracting a representative proportion of the UK ethnic minority population.

LSE, whose largest BAME group is British Indians at 14.5%, also has the largest population of ethnic minorities. It is the top Russell Group university for students of mixed ethnicity, while Chinese students fare best at Imperial College. The largest proportion of all British Pakistanis is at the University of Birmingham, where they form 3.4% of the total.

However, drilling down, the picture is not so rosy for all BAME groups. **Black or Black British Caribbean students and British Bangladeshi students are the least represented at most Russell Group universities. Black or Black British Caribbeans are highly-represented only at King's College and the University of Birmingham. British Bangladeshi students are highly-represented only at LSE, King's College and University College London.**

Figure 3: Proportion of Students from Ethnic Minorities studying at Russell Group Universities (2007-08)



Universities with the highest and lowest representation of ethnic minorities

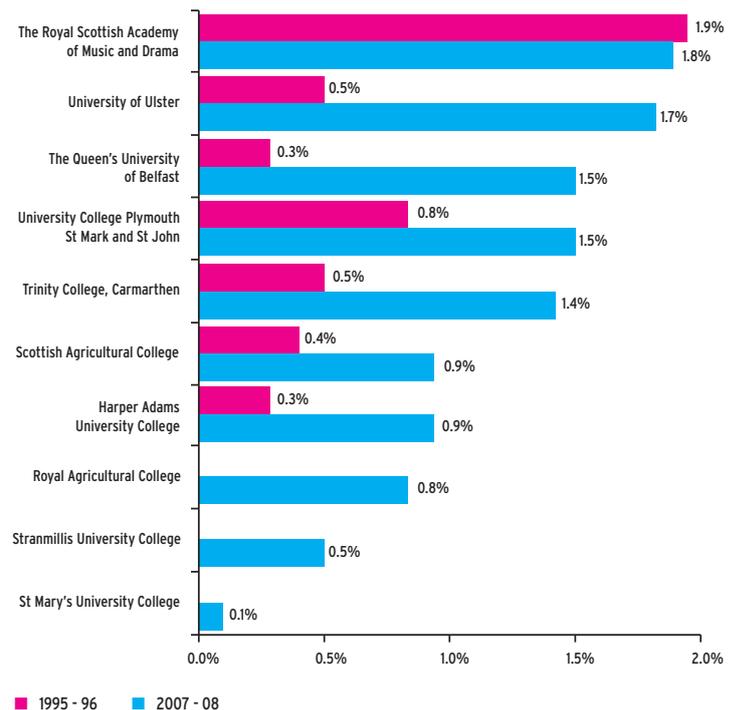
Ethnic minorities are polarised across UK universities according to specialism and region. Agricultural universities and those that originated in teacher training colleges dominate the top five league for lowest BAME representation, while four-fifths of the universities with most BAME students are in or around London.

Further, half of the universities that feature in the lowest 10 for 1995-96 appear again in 2007-2008, suggesting that they have failed to attract sufficient numbers of BAME students.

Teacher training specialist St Mary's College in Twickenham, part of the University of Surrey, scored lowest for its representation of BAME students, at only 0.1%. The next, Stranmillis University College, part of Queen's University Belfast *(0.5%), also began life as a teacher training college, although like St Mary's is now multi-professional. The Royal Agricultural College, Harper Adams University College and the Scottish Agricultural College completed the league of five lowest BAME-populated colleges at 0.8%, 0.9% and 0.9% respectively.

Ethnic minority students are clustered around London. The top 10 universities for ethnic minority students shows that they study in towns and cities where there is already a large BAME population. Eight of the 10 universities with the highest proportion of BAME groups are in London or in the Home Counties. The other two are in Birmingham and Bradford, both cities with large BAME populations.

Figure 4: UK Universities with Lowest Proportion of Students from Ethnic Minorities (1995 - 96 and 2007-08)³



Source: HESA Student Record and Labour Force Survey
KEY: This chart shows the percentage of students at each university who are BAME

³ HESA data separates Stranmillis University College although it is officially part of Queen's University Belfast.

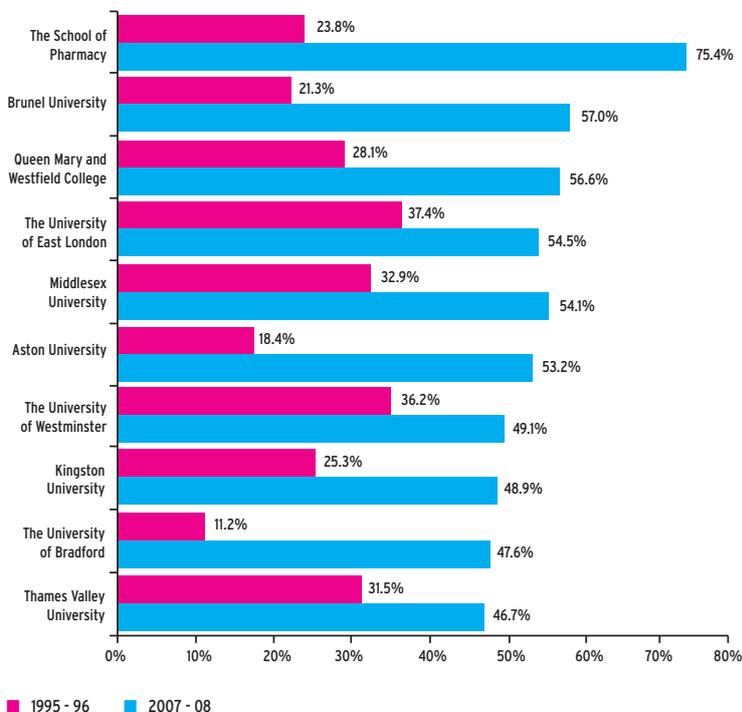


The geographical concentration of BAME students has changed little in the last 12 years. In 1995-96, all 10 of the top UK universities for BAME groups were in London, Surrey or Middlesex. Additionally, seven of those universities of 12 years ago are still in today's league table, which suggests that BAME students tend to stick to the same places either through choice or circumstance. This also suggests that most universities have not made significant progress in attracting new BAME students during the last 12 years.

Some universities attract distinct BAME groups. Almost one in three (29.2%) of the School of Pharmacy's students in 2007-08 were British Indian. The next biggest group was Black or Black British African at 9%.

A similar story emerges at The University of East London, an area of London with a high density of ethnic minority groups. Here the largest ethnic minority by far is Black or Black British Africans at 19%, followed by 7.3% Black or Black British Caribbean. However, Queen Mary & Westfield College in London's Tower Hamlets where, according to the council, a third of the population is Bangladeshi, only has a 6.2% British Bangladeshi student population.

Figure 5: UK Universities with Highest Proportion of Students from Ethnic Minorities (2007-08)



Source: HESA Student Record and Labour Force Survey
 KEY: This chart shows the percentage of students at each university who are BAME



What are ethnic minorities studying?

Some 16.6% of ethnic minorities studied business and administrative studies compared with 9.7% of White students. The research shows that BAME groups are favouring more entrepreneurial subjects while, perhaps more BAME graduates become self-employed than White ones.

However, BAME students are only half as likely to study education. Almost twice as many White students study education as ethnic minorities (10.3% and 5.8% respectively.) A dearth of ethnic minority teachers can have detrimental ramifications and it is imperative that BAME teachers are within the education system to provide positive role models for the next generation of children.

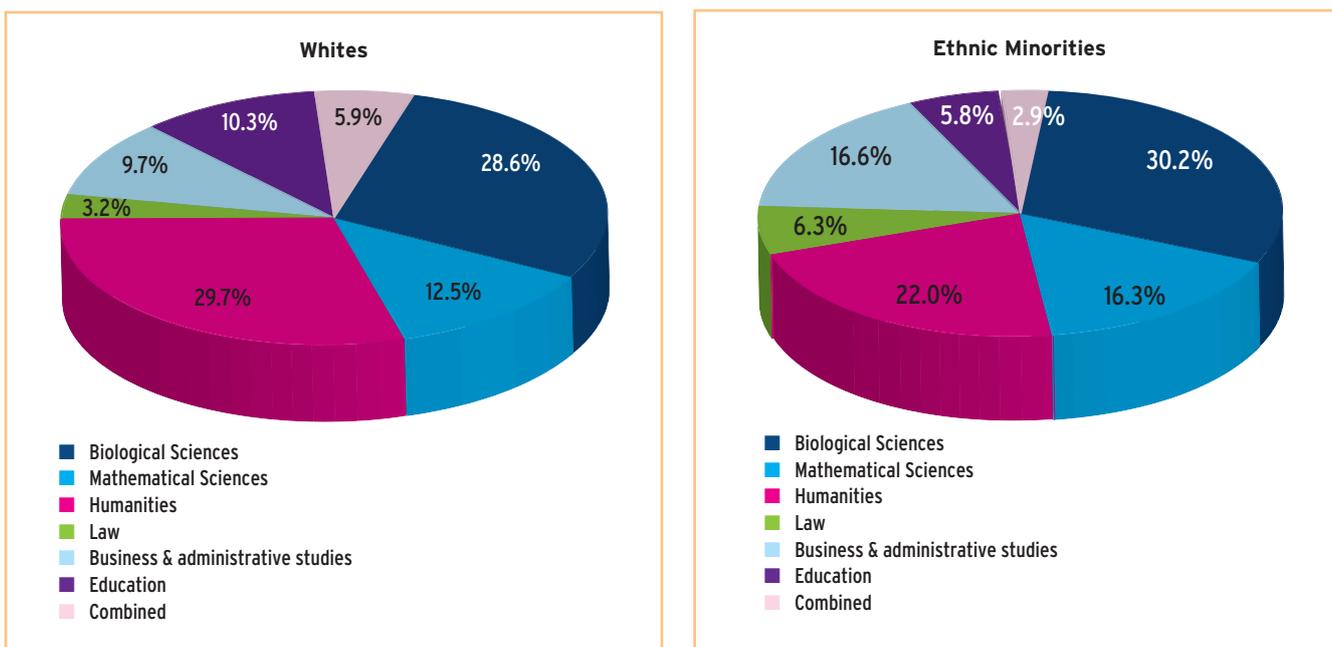
There is however, good news for BAME females who may be breaking through into teaching. Education has emerged as the fifth most popular subject for BAME women in 2007-08 with 7.7% of BAME women choosing this option, up from 5.3% in 1995-96. But they have some way to go before they equal the 13.3% of their White female counterparts.

Business and administrative studies was the most popular subject for BAME males overall both in 1995-96 (18.4%) and in 2007-08 (19.8%). Subjects allied to medicine have zoomed up to the top of the table for ethnic minority women with almost twice as many taking these subjects as they did 12 years ago.

It is notable that descendants from the Indian sub-continent are divided in the subjects they study. Law is the third most popular subject for both British Pakistanis at 11.1% and British Bangladeshis at 8.8%, yet does not feature in the top five for British Indians who prefer medicine and dentistry. No known research has yet been done into why students who are more likely to be Muslim tend to study the rudiments of law and justice.

Breaking it down, both Black or Black British Caribbeans and Black or Black British Africans are most likely to study subjects allied to medicine (15.8% and 25.7% respectively). Black or Black British Caribbeans include education and creative arts & design in their top five while engineering & technology and computer science occupy the same two positions for Black or Black British Africans.

Figure 6: Popular Subjects of Study - White vs. Ethnic Minorities (2007-08)⁴



Source: HESA Student Record

KEY: This chart shows the percentage of a) White and b) BAME students who are studying each subject at university.

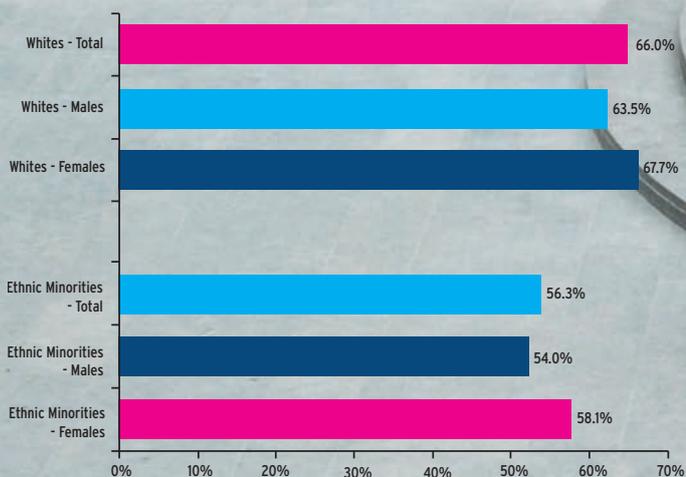
⁴ Biological Sciences - (1) Medicine & dentistry, (2) Subjects allied to medicine, (3) Biological sciences, (4) Veterinary science, (5) Agriculture & related subjects, (6) Physical sciences
 Mathematical Sciences - (7) Mathematical sciences, (8) Computer science, (9) Engineering & technology, (A) Architecture, building & planning
 Humanities - (H) Creative arts & design, (G) Historical & philosophical studies, (E) Mass communications & documentation, (F) Languages, (B) Social studies

Race into work

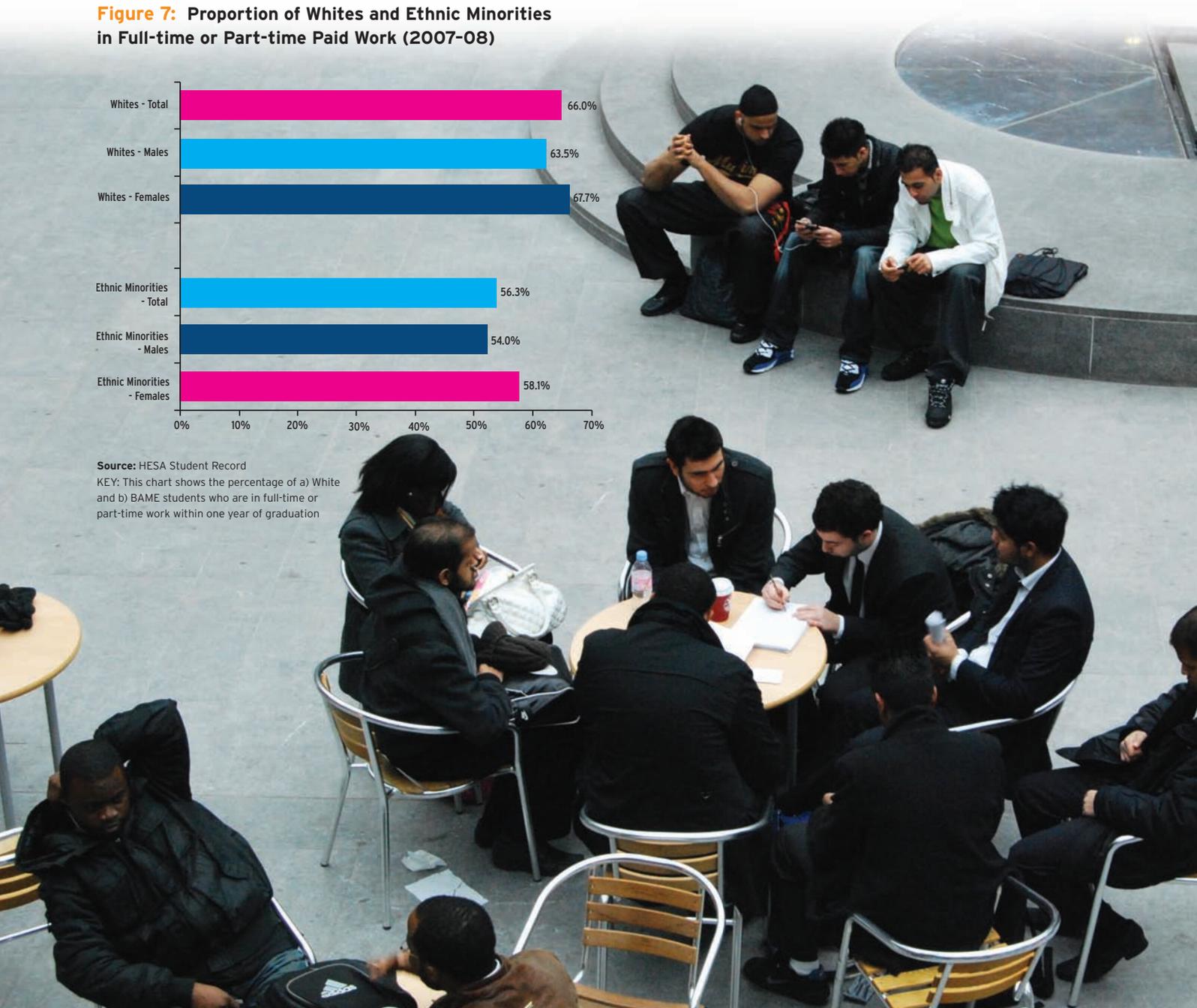
Ethnic minorities are less likely to find employment after graduation. According to the HESA 2007-08 figures, two thirds of White students (66%) found full-time or part-time employment within a year of graduating compared with 56.3% of BAME graduates. Both White and ethnic minority females are ahead of males in employment success by around four percentage points each.

Looking only at ethnic minorities, Black or Black British graduates were most likely to find work after graduating (62.6%). Black or Black British Caribbean females (64.1%) followed by Mixed ethnicity females (61.1%) were most likely to find employment within a year of graduation.

Figure 7: Proportion of Whites and Ethnic Minorities in Full-time or Part-time Paid Work (2007-08)



Source: HESA Student Record
KEY: This chart shows the percentage of a) White and b) BAME students who are in full-time or part-time work within one year of graduation



Recommendations

1 Monitoring and reporting on ethnic minority representation should be carried out by all universities and responsibility for improving ethnic minority representation, where below the national average, taken on by university Vice-Chancellors.

2 Awareness amongst ethnic minority school pupils of the importance of university choice needs to be raised. University-driven activities could include:

a Identifying high performers at the age of 14 and cultivating them both academically and otherwise

b Creating an alumni fund to support BAMEs who cannot afford to study at Russell Group universities

c Creating a large-scale mentoring network to help such youth become better prepared for university selection



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Please visit www.raceforopportunity.org.uk or telephone 020 7566 8661

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