Institutional racism assignment

Sociology

This can be seen in the major debate of race and racism that has continued throughout contemporary British policing from the ass's to the present, featuring increasingly in popular media and political debates. Newbury 2005) The growing interest in the position of ethnic minority groups in relation to the criminal justice system was the acknowledgment that they do not receive equivalent reattempt as their white counterparts. This was shown in a number of high profile cases (Britton 2000), leading to public concern over whether racism operated at the individual level or whether was it embedded in policies and practices of the police. (Gaston & Piper 2005) In this period, two inquiries were carried out: The Scarcer report and the McPherson report, investigating and probing police procedures to see if or where racism was present in the system.

Both became of significant value to society, bringing, to the surface fundamental issues concerning police powers, competence, accountability, personnel and training. (Bowling 1998: xiv) Allowing fresh debates to surface on how to build a successful multi-cultural society in Britain. These are the areas I will focus on to be able to critically analyses the concept of institutional racism in policing and evaluate policy responses to it.

To be able to present my answer effectively, I will first concentrate on the relations between the police and minorities understood in the context of history, through the Britton riots, which triggered the Scarcer inquiry and the McPherson inquiry on the death of Stephen Lawrence. Analyses of the concept of institutional racism will follow this. Thirdly, I will look at the Stephen Lawrence case and the recommendations McPherson presented to create change in policies. Finally, I will look at the policy responses by

evaluating them, concluding that a lot of work still needs to be done to overcome institutional racism.

The widely known phrase ' There is a crisis in modern policing' has clearly strong evidence against it. (Wright 2002) In this section, one specific area of this crisis will be discussed: the relationship between the police and the growing black community. There was recognition of racist policing inside these communities in Britain in the g's, down to the failure of solving and investigating racist murders and attacks. (Railings 2002) Research done at this period showed that racism and racial prejudice in police culture were more widespread and more extreme in wider society. (Newbury 2005: 529)These accounts also documented the use of oppressive policing techniques, including those of mass stop and search operations in ethnic minority communities. These practices are collectively known as ' over-policing. '(Maguire 2002) These increasingly strained relationships, producing tensions between the police and black communities as police practices, heightened ND reinforced ratiocination. However, relations tipped the edge in 1981 with a high Incidence AT racist attach Ks out also ten wallpapers outdraws AT violence Detente ten police and ethnic minorities, occurring in many English cities. Benson 1986) ' Each riot was precipitated by an incident involving police officers and black people and each occurred in areas in which there was widespread antagonism between some members of the ethnic minorities and the police. '(Benson 1986: 3) The most serious disorder occurred in Britton, this was triggered by ' Operation Swamp 81' resulting in over 300 people being injured. Bowling 1998) After these incidents, Lord Careen's report on the Britton riots were published. The

report analyses the cause of disturbances and made a wide range of recommendations. Bowling 1998) Scarcer believed the riots occurred because they were, ' essentially an outburst of anger and resentment by young black people against the police. '(Bowling & Phillips 2002: 9) As the police was representative of the state, ethnic minorities saw them as a symbol of their exclusion from British life. The root cause was, in his view, the breakdown in trust and communication between police ND local communities, which produced hostility towards the police and the use of ' hard' policing. Bowling 1998) This report became the basis for a number of policy initiatives aimed at addressing the problems highlighted by the disturbances which it had criticized. He believed ' police reform was necessary to equip the police with the means to respond effectively to the changes in wider society. '(Lesbian 1996: 49) It is important to note the issue that instead of seeing racism as institutional, Scarcer (1981) ' considered only that racial prejudice [manifests] itself occasionally in he behavior of a few officers on the streets. (Bourne 2001) This finding was in direct contrast to the McPherson report, which addressed the inquiry of the death of Stephen Lawrence, where questions of policing were raised again, two decades after Scarcer. (Bowling 1998) In reference to the case, McPherson saw the result that the case was not Just mishandled wrong the problem went deeper. In fact, it was evidence that, ' institutional racism' existed in the force. (Wright 2002) He showed Stephen Lawrence murder was ' marred by a combination of professional incompetence, institutional racism and a failure of leadership by noir officers. (Newton 2005: 546) The report broadly identified serious problems that can face ethnic minority people in Britain, such as discrimination and stop and search powers, with them being over-

policed and under protected. The most significant finding to come out of the report was institutional racism being present in the criminal Justice system, resulting in the failure to protect ethnic minority communities. Therefore, it can be seen that Britain is a society which knowingly discriminates against ethnic minorities.

McPherson believed there were three categories of racism. The one that was of most importance was that racism can be unintentional or unwitting in the form of discriminatory practice, present in the mode of operation of organizations. (Lea 2000) This allowed a new definition to be elaborated in McPherson report as the collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their color, culture or ethnic origin.

It can be seen or detected In processes, tattletales Ana Detonator wanly amount to Localization through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage ethnic people. '(Holloway & O'Neil (2) 2006: 350) Within this, McPherson states that institutional racism can be overt or covert, residing in the policies, procedures, operations and culture of public or private police. This results in reinforcing individual prejudice as well as underlying the actual practices and the structural conditions that the criminal Justice system operates in. Wadding 2004) McPherson showed this in Stephen Lawrence murder, where the case collapsed because of the police's lack of appropriate and professional service. If the institute as not racist, the police would have been able to demonstrate the requirements for the different needs of black and white people, providing a fair service for everyone. (Britton 2000) However,

this was not the case. McPherson showed that Careen's (1981) ' rotten apple' thesis, that the institution is not racist but only a few officers on the streets are, is false.

This allowed a more sophisticated notion of discrimination to be the focus. One, which arises ' out of the everyday functioning of an organization rather than being equated simply with examples of individual racial discrimination. (Hale 2005: 517) McPherson created the new definition from the basis of Carmichael and Hamilton (1967), who moved away from the focus of individual prejudice to the power structures in the generation and reproduction of racialists division by whites. This leaves minorities being structurally more disadvantaged than their white counterparts in all areas.

From this, McPherson sought to develop a definition within the boundaries of the inquiry that is relevant to modern policing. (Cook & Hudson 1993) Institutional racism can now be seen clearly in the system, highlighted by the case of Stephen Lawrence, showing that this practice is actually ' Just reflecting current practices and values built into our laws and institutions. '(Chance 1997: 11) These have an impact on ethnic minorities experiences, compounding racial patterns that lead to a bias against them.

This can be seen throughout the whole system with black events, black areas and black meeting places being targeted for special policing, with them being more likely to be stopped and searched, with more arrests. Therefore they are over-represented in the latter stage of the system (Melange 1997) and when ethnic minorities complain of abrogation of their rights the system shuts on them, especially when there is a violent death in

custody, no one gets found guilty of racism. Holloway 1996) These practices therefore clearly point to an institutional culture which is nurtured from the top ranks all the way through. This results in black people being rarely seen as victims, meaning racial violence is never taken seriously enough. (Gaston & Piper 2005) Because of the structure and laws of society ' an organization may not intend to act in a racist way, but its structure or its culture means that patterns of recruitment, rendition or service delivery may result in people from racial minorities being disadvantaged. (Green 2000: 29) By looking at Deterrent areas AT ten police, racism can De seen to nave Eden institutionalized into them. It can be found in the police culture, which McPherson (1999) noted in his report ' much has been said about our culture, the canteen culture, the occupational culture. How and why does that impact on individuals, black individuals on the street? Well, we would say the occupational culture within the police service, given the fact that the majority of police officers are white, tends to be he white experience, the white beliefs, the white culture… (Holloway & O'Neil (1) 2006: 486) This leads to negative attitudes and behavior to those who are not part of the white culture. This culture, therefore, becomes powerful in shaping officer's views and perceptions of a particular community, leading them to have a distinct tendency to stereotype people. This creates problems especially in the way officers deal with black people. (Rowe 2004) This problem occurred in the Stephen Lawrence murder, where the police did not follow the process which is different for racial offences.

This is why the McPherson port (1999) concluded that the fundamental flaws in the conduct of his murder investigation resulted from professional

incompetence, institutional racism and a failure of leadership by senior officers. ' (Newton 2005: 546) He stated this was down to the catalogue of errors revealed during the initial investigation. The inquiry showed that the police have to recognize differences in incidents and treat them equally in the process to function effectively. This is what's missing and therefore needs to change.

The report made 70 recommendations to overcome this; almost all were accepted by the government, putting policies in place. Bowling 1998) The extensive amount of recommendations which put cultural issues at heart, made this to become, the most extensive programmer of reform in the history of the relationship between the police and ethnic minority communities. '(Bowling & Phillips 2002: 16) The list was directly related to the role of the police, regarding a wide range of issues affecting the policing of minority ethnic communities and the police response to victims of serious crimes in general.

It included improvements in the handling of racist incidents as well as change in training, recruitment and retention leslies. (race for racial Justice' 1999) In response to the inquiry, the government fully accepted 56 of the 70 recommendations providing an action plan to increase trust and confidence in policing amongst minority ethnic communities,'(Maguire 2002: 585) as well as to make the police sustainable and fit in what has become a multi-ethnic society. The government's focus was to address these policies by putting them into practice throughout the whole organization, with them being fully understood and used. ' Race for racial Justice' 1999) The underlying line was the organization as a hole must accept the problem of

institutional racism. With reference to the recommendations, there were two angles to it: in and out. Among the ' in' angle there were three recommendations relating to recruitment and retention. This would be able to improve the trust and confidence in the police by ethnic minorities, Government set out targets to increase the amount of minority staff in recruitment, retention, career progression and senior level representation. Conducting targeted recruitment campaigns.

The removal and identification of features that may disadvantage ethnic minorities has been put forward in training election. (Holloway 1991) Promotion has also been targeted to allow more ethnic minority officers to access higher position ranks. (Bowling & Phillips 2002) Among the ' out' angle, it recommends the increase of accountability in incidents such as stop and search. Under the PACE framework (1985) it can only be carried out when ' an officer has reasonable grounds for suspicion necessary to exercise the power of stop and search. (Marrow & Loved 2000: 63) McPherson recommendation added to this, to increase accountability, reducing the amount of racial discrimination by avian every time a record giving reasons for the stop including information of the suspects color to be monitored, analyses and results published. (Rowe 2004) There has been some progress with government taking more interest in institutional racism, with racial harassment becoming a criminal offence. Arguably the most important ' post-Lawrence' developments are the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the launch of the Black Police Association in 1994.

The Act allows legislation to bring public authorities, including the police, to be brought into the ambit of IS-K anti-discrimination law. While the PA

directly and uniquely articulates the voices of ethnic minority officers to the senior ranks. (Holloway 1996) It has been shown that McPherson provided recognition of the challenges that were needed to start building a safer and fairer society, but it is only a starting point. Success cannot be predicted, there is a difference between policy and practice. (Bowling 1998) Often these approaches are less than adequate e. G. Tree officers can often ignore or side step rules imposed by higher ranks. The main problem found with these approaches is their relation to the core values of the police culture that as been traditional and not suitable for changing for a diverse culture. (Chance 1997) Research has shown that many of the recommendations are not being put into practice sufficiently. The HEMI report (1997) noted: the conclusion of the findings indicates that progress has been less than satisfactory with many of the recommendations largely ' sidelined' and few forces placing the issue high on their agendas. (Marrow & Loved 2000: 20) With reference to stop and searches, officers are often sidelining the new recommendations. Many see the new guidelines as another level of bureaucracy and to recognition of racism. (Rowe 2004) Statistics still show that ethnic minority groups are more likely to get stopped, showing racism is still productive. Figures in 2001-2 for England and Wales show that while the rate of stops per 1, 000 population was 13, the figure for black people was 106.

This shows they are still 8 times more likely to be stopped. (Newton 2005) Recruitment and retention also still have the same problem. Measures of recruitment drives have not seen any results. The Home Office's report (2003) shows in 2002 the amount of officers from ethnic minority backgrounds was only 3. %, showing the force is unrepresentative. This

might be down to what Smith Ana Gray (BIBB) round " l Is clear Tanat Tort most Dalai Ana Drown people, Dealing police officer puts them under considerable strain.

They have to take abuse from the public and put up with racist language and Jokes from their colleagues and they are subject to a conflict of loyalties. ' (Holloway 19991 : 369) So it can be seen that very little in terms of actual practice appears to have changed. This is because there is still racial prejudice at the individual, cultural and institutional level; resulting in the failure of delivering an equal service. Therefore a series of radical interventions are needed to bring about change. Bowling 1998) From analyzing the concept of institutional racism, and evaluating policy responses to it, the conclusion would be that the McPherson report can be clearly seen as a watershed in British race relations which instead of improving racial harmony, has diminished it. Though there has been some good work around the country, this has actually been inconsistent and patchy. Addressing the root of police racism has and will be difficult due to racism being entrenched in our social and political institutions.

With the police being no more than instruments of capitalism, there is not much that can be done about police racism short of a revolution. Hence the fight against institutional racism is part of a larger fight against state racism. As a recognized phrase says: ' changing the color of the police does not change the police culture. Changing the police culture, however may help change the color of policing.