

BAME PE



Introduction

In the last edition of Physical Education Matters topics of equity and diversity within our profession were importantly illuminated as a necessary topic of conversation within the discipline. Articles such as ‘critical whiteness’ (McBean, 2019) and ‘the hidden curriculum and sociocultural-issues for physical education teachers’ (Henry, 2019) were shared. As a community, we recognised that our profession *can* and *is* reproducing inequities that are broader social problems (Brown & Rich, 2002) and reflect our political economy (Love, 2019). For example, reproducing whiteness as an ideology, a social and institutional status privileging political, economic, legal and social rights over others (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). In physical education, we see this enacted through a eurocentric curriculum made up of traditional curricula such as football, rugby, netball, hockey, cricket, and athletics. We (a collective of individuals) decided the voices of our most marginalised teachers are missing from the discipline and subsequently the field continually reproduces itself.

What is BAME PE?

As stated in McBean’s (2019) article only 7% of postgraduate physical education trainees come from a minority ethnic group. However, when you break down the statistics, 86% of the population identify as White British and the last census highlighted that the percentage of people identifying as White British is decreasing (ONS, 2018). In London, the smallest percentage of White British people reside and a large amount of the population, 40.2% of residents identify as

Asian, Black, Mixed or Other ethnic groups (ONS, 2018). If 93.1% of physical education teachers in state-funded schools identify as White British then it seems fitting to suggest that our workforce does not represent the young people that we teach (especially in London). As our society changes, we need to reflect the change in our discipline. The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) demographic has been marginalised and as a consequence, we have begun the BAME PE network to help raise the profile of this neglect and address the lack of diversity in the profession. We recognise the term BAME is contested by members of its own community. However, we chose this because it reflects the terminology of institutions of education nationally, it is widely accepted in academic literature and is derived from ‘political blackness’ movements of discrimination in the 1970s. Thus, it is rooted in movements for social change.

Vision, Aims, Actions

Our vision is to work towards an equitable physical education with our community. In reality, what this looks like is likely to transform as we move forward; our environment is constantly changing and as a result, so are the needs of our community. In order to achieve this vision, we have outlined some initial aims that we are currently working towards:

- To raise the profile of physical education
- To make changes in physical education to promote equity and equality
- To support BAME physical educators
- Increase the number of BAME physical educators in physical education teacher education recruitment
- To engage BAME physical educators in research opportunities and network meet-ups

Most importantly, as a social movement, action is what drives us. Therefore, how we intend to put our aims into action are as follows:

- We are spreading awareness of the BAME PE network through conferencing, talks and our online engagements
- We are sharing good practice (e.g. culturally relevant resources, teaching/curriculum models)
- We are supporting our community by trying to reduce barriers of access (e.g. conference fees, sharing resources, research)

Who does BAME PE include?

With any social movement, inclusivity is at the core, we can build alliances for social change when we collaborate and include all groups (Love, 2019). For that reason, our network includes all people that support our cause, we need people that identify as White British to become co-

conspirators and allies in changing our discipline. Fortunately, AfPE has recognised this issue and are supporting our efforts in beginning this network along with creating their own action plan. For those new to understanding equity and diversity work and becoming a co-conspirator the work of Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017) and DiAngelo (2018) is particularly helpful for how you can advocate. Currently, our network comprises of people from an array of background supporting our vision.

Our logo

The logo we have created was influenced by intersectional feminist thought (see Ahmed, 2017) and to include the voices of those historically marginalised in the discipline and patriarchal society (hooks, 2010). Namely, these include women hence our four animations of women as the field has been dominated by sexism and masculinity since its beginnings (Hickey, 2008; White & Hobson, 2017). The women are characterised as BAME women and reflect culturally appropriate images. Moreover, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/ Questioning, Intersex people as the field replicates the heteronormativity of our society. This is shown within the text of the logo: the pride flag (BAME) and the trans flag (PE). We also support people with disabilities and our leaflets include the well-recognised disability flag. Physical education has notoriously been obsessed with one's physical ability and we plan on destabilising this norm through our network.



Image: Disability Flag

Where have we presented?

The new year saw the start of our work on sharing the vision of our network beyond social media, as members of our network presented at Diverse Educators III and BAMEed “Keeping Resolutions” conferences in January. We are also confirmed to be presenting at the WomenEd London Unconference in March. We hope to be involved in more events throughout the year as we seek to amplify the work of our movement.

How can you help?/ Want to be involved?

- Join and share our Twitter group (@BAME_PE)
- Look at our website (www.bamepe.wordpress.com)

More to come through these channels in the coming year.

Thank you for your continued support.

Dr Shrehan Lynch & Laura McBean (on behalf of the BAME PE Network)

Additional photo if needed:



References

Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a feminist life*. London: Duke University Press.

Brown, D., & Rich, E. (2002). Gender positioning as pedagogical practice in teaching physical education. In *Gender and physical education* (pp. 92-112). Routledge.

DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism*. Boston, USA: Beacon Press.

Henry, L. (2019). The hidden curriculum and sociocultural issues for physical education teachers. *Journal of the Association for Physical Education: PE Matters* 14(3) 67-69.

Hooks, B. (2010). *Understanding patriarchy*. Louisville Anarchist Federation Federation.

Hickey, C. (2008). Physical education, sport and hyper-masculinity in schools. *Sport, Education and Society*, 13(2), 147-161.

Love, B. L. (2019). *We want to do more than survive: Abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of educational freedom*. Beacon Press.

McBean, L. (2019). A journey to understanding critical whiteness. *Journal of the Association for Physical Education: PE Matters* 14(3) 70-72.

Office for National Statistics (2018, August 1). Population of England and Wales. Retrieved from: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/population-of-england-and-wales/latest>

Sensoy, O., & DiAngelo, R. (2017). *Is everyone really equal?: An introduction to key concepts in social justice education*. London: Teachers College Press.

White, A., & Hobson, M. (2017). Teachers' stories: physical education teachers' constructions and experiences of masculinity within secondary school physical education. *Sport, Education and Society*, 22(8), 905-918.