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Ethnicity and Social Exclusion: Research and Policy Implications in a Cornish Case Study

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Ethnicity and Social Exclusion: Research and Policy Implications

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Abstract

Indigenous populations are often cited as groups that suffer the effects of systematic social exclusion disproportionately to other ethnic groups in the same geographic area (Sanchez-Perez et al. 2005). This paper makes the case for a direct examination of the Cornish with relation to the suffering of social exclusion factors. Smith's (1988) model of an ethnic group is applied to the case and found to fit adequately. It is argued that the people of Cornwall are just such an indigenous group potentially suffering disproportionately. Whilst there has been a limited policy reaction in response to this, it is shown that ethnicity remains one of the key variables left unexplored as far as targeted research is concerned. Thus there is a call for timely research to examine the situation of the indigenous people of Cornwall, to firstly identify if there is a linkage with social exclusion, and to secondly identify the location of, and specific characteristics of, the problem.

Keywords

Ethnicity, social exclusion, disadvantage, social divisions, Cornwall, policy

Introduction

Indigenous groups are often cited as particularly at-risk groups in terms of social exclusion, and those groups that live in already deprived areas are often shown to be those most susceptible (Eversole, 2005; Garreta Bochaca, 2006; Sanchez-Perez *et al.*, 2005). However, because of the large differences between groups it is clearly important to identify such cases as early as possible, and to examine the extent of the risk. This paper makes the case for the indigenous people of Cornwall being examined as just such a group, and subsequently makes suggestions for targeted research to examine the extent of the issue.

Initially the issue of ethnicity will be considered in context and, by demonstrating a link with the often contentious issue of race, a definition will be

proposed that is suitable for application. Smith's (1988) model of an *ethnie* will subsequently be applied to the Cornish case. By examining each category in detail, and reviewing the current literature in each (such as the extensive works by Deacon *et al.*, 2003; Payton, 1992; Payton, 2005) it will be argued that the group do indeed meet the criteria for treatment as a distinct *ethnie*.

This naturally raises some important questions both for sociology and policy. As a distinct group do the Cornish experience social life differently from other groups in the same area? This is the central focus for the paper. However, prior to exploring this in any depth it will be necessary to identify the ways in which such relative deprivation might be theorised, and thus the concept of social exclusion will be considered. Beginning from first principles, this term will be shown to have developed from the now somewhat outdated concept of poverty. Shown to be itself a relative term (Abel-Smith and Townsend, 1965), 'poverty' developed largely through European policy initiatives into the modern concept of social exclusion. However, the literature has often been divided on the operationalisation of social exclusion and therefore competing theoretical backgrounds must be discussed before settling on the definition as given in UK policy. This definition leaves many routes for identification of variables; however the most applicable in this case will again be shown to come from UK policy in the form of the Social Exclusion Task Force's B-SEM matrix (Levitas *et al.*, 2007).

Having made the case for a Cornish ethnicity, and found a suitable definition and measure for social exclusion, the linkage between the two will be explored. Using a theoretical base described by authors such as Pilkington (2003) it will be shown that there is often a link between ethnicity and social exclusion, indeed a link that is often an inherent feature of modern Western democracies (Koff, 2009; Panayi, 2000). With this in mind some illustrative cases will be examined and what emerge are the factors of social exclusion often experienced by indigenous peoples. In particular, those indigenous peoples that already live in deprived areas often suffer social exclusion disproportionately to other groups in the same area (Sanchez-Perez *et al.*, 2005).

Thus the case will be made for Cornwall on the basis of the previous arguments (Cornwall Council, 2009; South West Observatory, 2008). Cornwall is demonstrably an area of relative disadvantage within the UK context, a feature that has long been known and has attracted frequent policy initiatives, though with limited success (South West Observatory, 2008). The Cornish are not only a distinct ethnic group given the theoretical criteria, but have been quantitatively measured as a significant minority in the region (Cornwall Council, 2009). Therefore the important question again is posed: does this group experience social exclusion in the same way as others in the area? It will be shown that, despite the importance of this knowledge, the question currently goes unanswered. Despite numerous studies, which have highlighted the issue through proxies, such as long term residency, the correlation between ethnic group membership and social

exclusion remains significantly under researched. The article will conclude by posing some timely questions about the Cornish as a group, and suggesting some tentative ways of answering these. It will be argued that this research is both central to the advancement of sociological knowledge as well as the implementation of local policy initiatives.

Cornish ethnicity

Etymology and ethnicity

The Cornish question is unanswerable unless an argument can be constructed such that a distinct group exists. In order to define this group it is necessary to start from first principles and examine the notion of ethnicity itself.

The term ethnicity can be traced back to the ancient Greeks in one form or another, the most common usage being Homer's *ethnos hetarion* (literally 'band of friends' (Tonkin *et al.*, 1989)). Despite a long history the term has never been a concrete one, and frequent debates in the academic literature revolve around the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of the phrase. Nevertheless, all of the common usages have at their root the notion of shared biological or cultural difference that form the basis of group membership (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996). The dualism between biological and cultural bases for inclusion forms the central tenet of modern arguments around so called *race* and concepts of *ethnicity*.

During the middle of the 18th Century, and early part of the 19th Century, a 'science' of race emerged that developed into a hierarchical differentiation system well encapsulated by the seminal 'Orientalism' (Said, 1978). This was by no means a marginal belief at the time, with thinkers as noteworthy as Jung asserting the effects of living amongst 'inferior' and 'primitive' groups as profound (Jung 1930:195). Today this may be considered out-dated and politically incorrect; however one only has to examine contemporary public opinions around genetic bases of groups to be proved wrong (such as demonstrated by Phillips *et al.*, 2007). That said the common view that has prevailed into modern social thinking has been that there are far more factors at play than simple biology dictating group membership.

Encapsulating this is the view of one of the founders of modern social thought, arguably the most prolific thinker on human understanding, who said:

“We shall call ‘ethnic groups’ those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both...it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists.” (Weber, 1922)

However influential this definition may have been in dampening the debate around biological difference it is still (as is so often the case) a vague and non-prescriptive formula. The turning point occurred with the so-called 'middle range'

theories proposed by Merton (1972), who argued that group membership is based solely on ascription (by both insiders and outsiders) not objective facts. It is these two boundaries of knowledge that must be considered, and forms the basis of a prescriptive definition for ethnic group membership given later the following decade. Many have followed on from this work and whilst it is not the place of this paper to trace a complete history, the literature is large and informative (see Banton, 2008; Mason, 1995).

Ethnie – A. Smith

Numerous definitions were subsequently proposed, largely falling into two groups; those at a highly theoretical level and those which defined group based on pre-existing categories (Cohen, 1969; Devereux, 1975). A highly theoretical approach was taken by Devereux, who argued that a group is defined using a sorting device which collects individuals into an imprecise class. For example, the so-called class of ‘Soldiers’ might well include all ranks, thus demonstrating a degree of imprecision needed in grouping (Devereux, 1975). However Devereux maintains the uniqueness of individuals and the imprecision needed is flexible; allowing flexible group membership. However useful this may be for examining the internal mechanisms of groups it cannot be applicable in the definition of groups. Those that base ethnic group definition on pre existing political entities (for example Cohen, 1969) and objective identification are subject to an opposing problem. How can a previously unidentified group be examined? Barth (1969) suggests these definitions are not suitable for analysis but rather there must be a concentration on the inclusion or exclusion of individuals to a group. In this way it is the boundaries of the ethnic group that become the focus as well as the cultural matter. For example, situations where ethnic groups may come into contact with other groups are vital, not those that are seen to have evolved in isolation. These situations occur, argues Barth (1969), along the borders of territories where competition for resources is most acute.

Any of these definitions could be applied to the Cornish case, with some success, however when considering the central theme of this article the application of a definition needs to be comprehensive, something only supplied in the work of Smith (1988). It is a concentration on self-ascription for membership, both by the individual and the group as a whole, which forms the basis of the definition given by Smith (1988). This represents a comprehensive definition when seen against those problems discussed previously. Additionally, the model has been used before by researchers seeking to examine Cornwall in an objective sense; demonstrated well in the work of Deacon (1993). Smith (1988) defined six characteristics that were central to the definition of such an ethnies:

- A common name;
- A common myth of descent;

- A shared history;
- One or more elements of common culture;
- Link with a homeland;
- Sense of solidarity.

In order to address the question of Cornwall with any accuracy the model must be applied to that group. If indeed the group should be considered a distinct ethnic group then membership of that group becomes a topic with significant sociological and policy implications.

A Cornish ethnique?

It is not within the scope of this paper to explore, in great depth, the large literature that covers the history, culture and demography of Cornwall – all necessary for a complete application of the model. However, a summary of the application will demonstrate the need to consider the group as distinct from others in the same region.

That there is a so-called ‘sense of difference’ among many individuals in the County is well documented (Payton, 1992), and it has been argued that treatment of this group should be differentiated regardless of the legal or theoretical application of ethnic status (Ivey and Payton, 1994). However, when one actually begins to apply the model prescribed by Smith differences of the group begin to emerge. A *common name* for this particular group is documented as far back as the 17th Century, probably arising from a French description of the shape of the region as horn-like (Carew, 1602). A *common myth of descent* is also demonstrable through the many and varied claims of Celtic ancestry (Alberro, 2001; McDonald *et al.*, 1986); and even some claims of genetic descent (Harvey *et al.*, 1986).

Smith (1988) discusses at length a sense of *shared history*, something that the people of Cornwall claim to have in abundance. The truth of the Arthurian legends is irrelevant when compared against the cultural significance that they have in the region (Hale, 2000). The history of the people has also been traced using historical literature (Kent, 1996); lineage (Hamilton Jenkin, 1934); and the somewhat clichéd battle against the ‘Englyshe’ (Rowse, 1941; Stoye, 2002). Similarly, there are numerous elements of *common culture* that have been identified, with religion; mining; fishing; and farming at the core (Deacon and Payton, 1993). In addition, there have been numerous authors who have held up the Cornish language and sport as bastions of distinct culture (Jenner, 1904; Seward, 1997).

A *link with a homeland* is a somewhat more complex problem in the Cornish case, though a case can be made for territory being one of the defining characteristics of the people, the natural boundary being the Tamar river (Payton, 1993). Arguably a stronger case can be made through an examination of the

Cornish Diaspora, those individuals who travelled the world and settled as miners yet kept a Cornish cultural tradition (Payton, 2005).

The last of Smith's (1988) categories refers to a *sense of solidarity*, something often demonstrated by political action in a region. Again Cornwall fulfils this criterion, and whilst there is much debate about the success of the nationalist movement in the County there is no denying its persistence (Deacon *et al.*, 2003).

The group can be said to fulfil the criteria set out by Smith; however can the group be measured in any substantive sense? It subsequently becomes necessary to consider previous attempts to map the Cornish. Simply, does this group exist in any real sense outside of a proposed ethnic grouping in policy and research? The answer to this is remarkably elusive yet largely positive, with relatively few studies which have examined the problem directly. One of the largest, and therefore one of the most significant, was conducted by the Cornwall Strategic Partnership (2007). Of a sample of 3,222 respondents, 25.9% considered themselves to be 'White-Cornish', with a significant 'gradient' from East to West (i.e. more pronounced in the west of the County). What is significant about this study was that no other variables were linked directly to ethnicity despite evidence that they varied according to area; and given the gradient observed it would be surprising if there were no correlations of interest.

It is not necessarily large quantitative projects that have examined the Cornish case, ethnographic research carried out in the region identified differences in identity based around descent (Willett, 2008). Whilst the methodology of this study limits the findings considerably, there are still some interesting conclusions; 58.7% of the respondents felt that they had a Cornish identity and 56% felt that it was more important to their identity than an English alternative.

Studies such as these demonstrate the need to examine the situation in greater detail, something that once again has not eluded policy makers. As such, in the 2001 Census there was an option to write-in 'Cornish' as an answer to the ethnicity variable. This represents a leap forward; however there are clearly numerous limiting factors with such an option when compared to an equivalent tick box. Despite the limiting factors over 34,000 individuals stated a Cornish ethnicity explicitly, a figure that represents 6.8% of the population of the area (Cornwall Council, 2009). Clearly this figure is not uniformly spread around the County, and further research would indeed highlight the linkages with the previously mentioned gradient, and possible links to class. So it can be argued with some confidence that the group in question exists, and exists in significant numbers.

A Cornish ethnic group emerges therefore as a distinct phenomenon in the area, which clearly has implications for policy as well as academic research. Questions must be raised as to the social and economic position that the members of the group occupy, as well as the treatment of the group both by the state and by other groups. One of the key linkages in terms of ethnic group membership is

social exclusion, however before examining this phenomenon in detail it is worth again briefly returning to first principles and considering the very notion of social exclusion.

Social Exclusion

Once again, there is a large literature surrounding the emergence of a concept of social exclusion, and a comprehensive analysis is beyond the scope and purpose of this paper. However, what is necessary is a short background to inform the development of a suitable model for analysis that can be used to highlight social exclusion issues in context.

Poverty and relative deprivation

Social exclusion should be seen as the development and subsequent broadening of poverty research; which can itself trace roots back to the Elizabethan Poor Laws (Walker, 1995). However, this was often seen to be a simplistic term referring to the lack of resources (often financial) suffered by individuals, indeed it was the notion of protecting those worse off that led to state intervention and eventually protective policy. The dominant view in post-war Britain became that poverty was diminishing, or at the very least that the gap between rich and poor was shrinking. By examining data from the Ministry of Labour, Abel-Smith and Townsend (1965) demonstrated that the conventional concept of poverty was inadequate, there had been a monetary increase in income yet a corresponding increase in the numbers experiencing poverty:

“There is...a difference between defining poverty in any objective or partly objective sense and defining it subjectively – as felt by the individual or by particular social groups. In any objective sense the word has no absolute meaning which can be applied in all societies at all times. *Poverty is a relative concept.*” (Abel-Smith and Townsend 1965: 63, emphasis added)

Social Exclusion Emerges

Relative poverty as a concept was a significant step, transforming policy decisions as well as the way research into disadvantaged groups was conducted. A multi-dimensional concept along similar lines was to evolve into the modern form – social exclusion. Arguably, this term is derived from the French *les exclus* (Burchardt *et al.*, 2002), and developed largely in the policy of the European Union.

In 1990 social exclusion appeared on the Social Charter, as well as in a resolution to ministers. It was meant as a replacement of the old, and seemingly outdated, concept of poverty and designed to be more inclusive and multi-dimensional (Berghman, 1995). The shift away from poverty is demonstrated

clearly in the project and policy development of the 1980s and 1990s, and was formally entrenched in the Nice Treaty of 2000 (Levitas, 2006; Room, 1995). The term was rapidly adopted in the member states' own policy initiatives, with the UK being no exception; accepting the newer and broader definition quickly. Such has not been the case in the USA, where the acceptance of the multi-dimensional approach in examining data has not been widespread; despite the efforts of researchers to demonstrate the interrelatedness of key deprivation variables (Wagle, 2008).

Despite the rapid uptake of the new concept in policy and academic research during the 1990s, there was still no general consensus on definition. Debates quickly arose between those who proposed a 'collectivist' definition and those who favoured a Marxist approach. Simply, the collectivist approach takes the form of a violation of the social principles of justice and solidarity (Barry, 2002). Conversely, the Marxist approaches hold that in a Capitalist, market-driven, economy social exclusion is both inevitable and essential. Byrne (1999) stated the argument as the conception of an *industrial reserve army* which can expand the labour force at no additional cost and serve as a threat of replacement to existing workers.

Philosophical foundations aside, a workable definition of social exclusion should have primary research and policy as its base. There are many proposed solutions based on single studies (see Smith, 2005) and whilst valid, these lack broader generalisability. Better, or at least broader, definitions are to be found in the realms of policy; with the current position neatly summarised by David Miliband in 2006. He argued that in the UK there are three distinct ways of defining social exclusion; 'wide', 'deep' and 'concentrated' (Miliband, 2006). Whilst a concise summary of the Government position at the time, these definitions lack the required detail for operationalisation. For this to be achieved one must look to the department responsible for policy research in the field, the Social Exclusion Task Force (formerly the Social Exclusion Unit).

A seminal paper produced by this group reviewed all the relevant literature and subsequently held panel discussions to form a workable definition. It would be hard to find a definition that better summarises the current debates yet leaves interpretive space for research:

“Social exclusion is a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to the majority of people in society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole.” (Levitas *et al.*, 2007)

There is, once again, a large literature describing the route from theory to method in this area, with numerous and varied final indicators (see for two good examples

Gordon *et al.*, 2000; Palmer *et al.*, 2005). Despite the many advantages of the large studies which independently arrived at indicators, one must again look to policy for the most inclusive and applicable method. The aforementioned Social Exclusion Task Force (SETF) attempted to produce an exploratory tool from the existing sources, and after examination found that many of the indices depicting exclusion were overly descriptive.

In order to examine the Cornish case with any accuracy a model is needed to map the levels of exclusion. The matrix designed by the SETF team (the B-SEM matrix) had as its starting point the definition mentioned above, and subsequently identified three key dimensions: *resources*; *participation*; and *quality of life*. These dimensions were then developed further into domains; and lastly into topic areas for variable identification (Levitas *et al.*, 2007). The advantage of such a matrix is the avoidance of a prescriptive nature, unlike its predecessors, and thus it succeeds in the vision of exploring the range of data on social exclusion available in existing data sets.

The B-SEM matrix is a suitable tool for analysis when examining the level of social exclusion experienced by a group, especially one broken along ethnic membership lines. To continue in an examination of the case for Cornwall in context, it is necessary to demonstrate the linkage between ethnicity and social exclusion, and to subsequently apply those arguments in specifics.

Ethnicity and social exclusion

That there is often an ethnic dimension in many aspects of social exclusion is perhaps a statement of common sense, however as is so often the case the reality is less straightforward. In the USA one argument presented was essentially an extension of the underclass thesis, which states that some groups simply do not assimilate (Pilkington, 2003). This explanation could equally however refer to gender; class, or indeed any social division, not necessarily ethnicity.

In the UK, with the underclass thesis not accepted wholesale, two other viewpoints prospered; Weberian and Marxist. The Weberian perspective held that class and status are the key elements of power in society, and that racial disadvantage has roots in the subsequent status inequality that is inevitable in a Capitalist economy. Conversely, Marxist theorists held that there was an inherent division between capital and labour and that racial divisions occur when ethnic minorities occupy either the lower strata of the working classes or a significant element of it (Pilkington, 2003). Whilst providing a good overview at the top level these perspectives do not illuminate the actual processes involved in exclusion when based on ethnic group membership.

In his seminal work, Ratcliffe (2004) argued that ethnicity and social exclusion are linked through three distinct spheres of society; spatial segregation and housing; education; and the labour market. Giving theoretical bases for all three, Ratcliffe demonstrates that there are certain groups more likely to become

excluded in modern societies. Not only are there groups more likely to be exposed to higher levels of exclusion, argues Panayi (2000), but ethnic divisions are partially inevitable, being built into many modern western democracies. This argument is based on the notion that those with power are normally from a majority ethnic group; and so it is minorities which suffer through negative media representation and the replication of stereotypes. The argument has been expanded and used as an explanation for concrete social phenomena such as the French urban riots in 2005 (Koff, 2009).

If it can be established that some ethnic groups are likely to suffer exclusion disproportionately, then common characteristics of these groups are suitable foci for research. Many have argued that the most at-risk groups are indigenous groups (Eversole, 2005), a proposition that seemingly holds true in affluent western nations as much as in poorer states. Sanchez-Perez *et al.* (2005) examined the relative deprivation of indigenous women in an already deprived area of Chiapas, Mexico. Women in this area experienced some of the worst living conditions in the country, with high infant mortality and other serious health related issues. The study discovered several significant differences amongst those indigenous individuals, when measured against other groups; and these findings are echoed throughout the literature (Garreta Bochaca, 2006; Humpage, 2005).

That is not to say that it is *only* indigenous groups who should be considered at risk, there have been extensive studies conducted in the UK (and abroad) that demonstrate the risks felt by immigrants, groups linked by language, and numerous others (see for a good selection Brittain, 2009; Hickman and Walter, 1997; Walter, 1986). It is important to recognise that in nearly all the studies at least some reference was made to those that already resided in deprived areas. The process is not simple, there are many compounding variables to be taken into consideration that are group specific, for example self-exclusion (Crozier and Davies, 2008; Kalter and Kogan, 2006). The difference between groups can often be as great as that between dominant and minority, and so the central problem becomes the identification of socially excluded groups in order for a more in depth examination of the specific case.

A Cornish question

The literature has demonstrated that ethnicity is closely linked with social exclusion and that it is often more pronounced among indigenous minority groups living in already deprived areas. Because of the often group specific anomalies associated with the phenomenon it therefore becomes important for research to identify ethnic groups who may suffer disproportionately. The last section of this paper will argue that such an examination is not only applicable but timely for the people of Cornwall. Beginning by showing that Cornwall is a disadvantaged area and following on from the previous arguments surrounding Cornish ethnicity, the

question raised is, logically, does this group suffer the effects of disadvantage more than other groups in the same area? This will be shown to be a highly under-researched area and therefore the paper will conclude by proposing targeted research as a coherent examination of the case.

Cornwall and disadvantage

Cornwall's long and highly publicised history of deprivation has as one of the central features the disparity between observed and underlying elements of the region. Whilst highly politicised, this assertion holds that Cornwall (which has been the site for many rich developments) has not seen a proportional rise in the economy (Deacon *et al.*, 1988). Indeed, at the time of the *Single Regeneration Budget* in the UK, Cornwall exhibited significant deprivation when measured on the Indices of Local Conditions (Payne, 1995).

The most comprehensive report on the region currently available is the 'State of the South West' (South West Observatory, 2008), however this is a report that covers the entire South West Region. The English regions are sub-national units, the largest being the South West, covering an area from Cornwall to Gloucestershire; and whilst this publication contains only limited sub-regional data it does illuminate high levels of underlying deprivation. Unemployment; skills; and productivity, as well as economic growth were all demonstrably below the regional average (in addition to being below the national average) in 2008. This fact has not been ignored by policy, and numerous targeted studies have identified key areas for regeneration (Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Economic Forum, 2007; Cornwall Children and Young People's Partnership 2008; Local Intelligence Network Cornwall, 2006). Significantly, the region's Development Agency found that funding (and other policy initiatives) increased economic inclusion in the area despite not being one of the core guiding principles of the department (South West of England Regional Development Agency, 2007).

A key area of policy intervention in the area is the Objective One funding programme of the European Union, and the subsequent Convergence programme. Cornwall qualified for this fund in the 2000 to 2006 round, and whilst the allocation process has been subsequently questioned (Gripaios and McVittie, 2003) the impact of the programme has been shown to be significantly positive (South West Observatory Skills and Learning (SLIM), 2008). A key indicator for this round was the development of skills in the region, and small scale research carried out by Husk (2009) demonstrated the significantly low levels of students who felt faced with serious barriers to higher education. Indicators such as these, along with the large scale reports by bodies such as SLIM (2008), show some distinct development on key indicators.

However, whilst the policy response has been in many respects effective and timely, some have argued that it has simply had little or limited effect. Some studies which have examined the areas of regeneration have discovered highly localised impact (Cemlyn *et al.*, 2002). One proposed reason could well be the aforementioned relationship between Cornwall as a sub-region and the South

West region as a whole. Statistics produced for the region do not often reflect the situation in Cornwall, which may in turn play a detrimental role in the policy produced for the area:

“There is a vicious circle...Statistics produced for the South West show it to be prosperous...Regional policy is aimed at overall prosperity for the region and in this is successful. Cornwall is simply not noticed and policies sensitive to its particular needs are not formulated.” (Williams, 1992: 27)

Cornish ethnicity and social exclusion

In an area of undoubted disadvantage then, who suffers most? It has been demonstrated that ‘Cornish’ is a theoretically valid ethnic grouping and that indigenous ethnic groups in deprived areas are an at-risk category. It was also demonstrated that the group exist in significant numbers. Could it be said then that the indigenous people of Cornwall suffer exclusion disproportionately to other groups?

This question has, once again, not been addressed on any large scale in the literature, indeed it has remained the ‘elephant in the room’ as far as correlations are concerned. Studies which have highlighted the importance of research in the field have been those that have used proxy variables (where measuring ethnicity has been difficult) or those that have utilised small scale interviews. One of the indications that there was a sociological question of interest arose in the examination of the migratory characteristics of Cornwall (Williams and Champion, 1998; Williams and Harrison, 1995). This work compared the long term population with the characteristics of the in-migrants. An association was shown between long term residency and deprivation, and whilst the inequality seems to reduce over time there is evidence that the indigenous population experience social change differently. Specific problems have been identified, associated with long term residence, particularly acute are the differences in housing (Buck *et al.*, 1993).

The same proxy, long term residence, was utilised by Thornton (1996) in research that examined the differences between that population and second home owners in the same area. The questionnaire analysis showed that there were marked differences in occupational background, with the local population being over-represented in the manual classes. Possibly a closer proxy to Cornish ethnicity is birth in the County, and again research has shown that there is some association with under-representation in the more affluent sectors (Hennessy *et al.*, 1986).

Using such proxy variables as long term residence and birth does however raise a range of methodological issues. Firstly, as Aldous and Williams (2001) point out, there is a significant difference between the long term population, birth, and Cornish ethnicity. Identity is a complex phenomenon, with many individuals choosing distinct ethnic categories. Indeed Aldous (2002) found that it is by no

means even birth that is the most important factor in Cornish ethnicity. Further, there is a significant problem conflating class and Cornish ethnicity and research must be certain as to the variables that are being measured.

Research by both Burley (2007) and Aldous (2002) demonstrated the phenomenon of a migratory elite in Cornwall, whereby in-migrants are more likely to be in the professional and middle classes than the local population. Burley (2007) refers to the gentrification of the region by such migrants. As has been shown, there is a link between long term residency and deprivation in Cornwall (Williams and Harrison, 1995); thus it is possible that any associations between ethnicity and deprivation are actually associations between class and deprivation.

Aldous (2002) used research carried out in the area to argue that whilst the class issue remains important, the complex nature of ethnic identification can be used to separate out the variables. No association was found between *self-identified* ethnic Cornishness and deprivation; and whilst this could be because of measurement issues it is hypothesised that self-identification itself is the important factor. Aldous (2002) did indeed find associations between length of residence and parental occupation as expected (the study concentrated on young people). She also demonstrated that those of long residence are over represented in the manual occupations, supporting the idea of migratory elite. Thus the lack of relationship between self-identification and deprivation becomes important.

'The change in the countryside, the Cornish perspective' is the report that describes the findings of a study that sought to monitor the changes in Cornish countryside; importantly though the results were broken down by self-identified Cornish and non-Cornish (Griffiths, 1989). Allowing for other factors, the report demonstrated that the Cornish were more likely to work in the agricultural sector; work closer to home; and earn (on average) 15% less than a non-Cornish neighbour. The Cornish respondents were two to three times less likely to hold positions in the tertiary sector, and thus were more likely to live in rented accommodation.

Conclusions

The arguments put forward in this paper demonstrate the little that is actually known about the linkage between ethnic group membership and social exclusion in Cornwall. Indeed, the little that is known remains tentative and raises significantly more questions than have been answered. Large scale surveys using proxies and anecdotal evidence suggest that the Cornish are an 'oppressed minority' (Jay, 1992: 16), yet a detailed examination has yet to be published.

It was shown that a suitable model of ethnicity in this instance was the *ethnie* as described by Smith (1988), and that this model applied in a very real sense to the people of Cornwall. The group exists, and exists in significant

numbers, highlighting the need to examine them in detail. It was subsequently argued that groups of this type are often exposed to social exclusion factors to a greater extent than others in similar areas of disadvantage. That Cornwall is already an area that suffers some disadvantage is well documented, and therefore the question emerges: do the Cornish suffer this disadvantage worse than other groups in the area?

Whilst this question has not been addressed in any depth directly, what can be said in summary is that the Cornish are more likely to be over-represented in the manual classes; earn significantly less; and suffer worse housing conditions. What is necessary then, to inform policy in the area as well as develop the sociological knowledge of a potentially at-risk group, is research that *directly* addresses the following question:

Is there an association between self declared ethnic status, specifically Cornish, and social exclusion factors, as dictated by indicators such as the B-SEM matrix, in Cornwall?

Such research would examine in detail the links between ethnicity and social exclusion, beginning with a mapping of the Cornish as a group. Those that feel their primary ethnicity to be Cornish have not previously been collated in any real sense, except in the Census data. This data has been shown to be flawed, and so improvement is necessary before links with other factors could be demonstrated. The conclusions of this proposed research would represent an advance in the sociological knowledge of ethnic group membership, as well as having important implications for existing local policy formation.

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