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Concerted Cultivation as a Racial Parenting Strategy: Race, Ethnicity and Middle-Class Indian Parents in Britain

Studies have highlighted the growing phenomenon of ‘concerted cultivation’ wherein middle-class parents are enrolling their children into multiple paid-for organised leisure activities as a way of cultivating their skills and reproducing class advantage. In unpacking the class disparities in children’s organised leisure participation, researchers have largely overlooked the way race and ethnicity inflect middle-class parents’ concerted cultivation strategies. Drawing upon a qualitative study with Greater London-based professional middle-class British Indian parents, this paper argues that the time-spaces of concerted cultivation also serve as sites for British Indian children’s ethnic and racial socialisation (ERS). Two axes are identified along which racial parenting strategies intersect with concerted cultivation practices in these families: ‘cultural (re)production through organised leisure’ and ‘(anti)racism and leisure’. By analysing these processes, we draw out the implications of this interplay between class and race for understanding middle-class parenting and educational strategies in minority ethnic contexts.

Keywords: concerted cultivation, organised leisure, children’s leisure, racial parenting, ethnic and racial socialisation, British Indian

Introduction

Parenting strategies in middle-class families are closely tied to intergenerational transmissions of social advantages. We know from existing research that middle-class parents utilise their class resources – i.e. their economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1996) – and play the ‘education market’ in ways that reap benefits for their children in the immediate as well as long term (Reay 2017, 2010; Ball, 2003). In order to fully understand the extent of middle-class parents’ efforts at class reproduction, researchers

have increasingly directed focus beyond middle-class parents' relationship with schools (Reay 2017, 2010). For example, attention has been directed to the way parents coach their children for the classroom (Calarco 2014; Streib 2011); and how the growth in outside-of-school enrichment opportunities has helped middle-class children garner even more positional advantage in education and future labour market (Vincent and Maxwell 2016; Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson 2014; Vincent and Ball 2007). These efforts are said to be situated within a broader middle-class cultural logic of child-rearing that Lareau (2000) terms 'concerted cultivation', that plays out in contradistinction to the parenting style of 'accomplishment of natural growth' employed by working-class and poor parents. A growing body of literature is now replete with instances of how middle-class parents enrol their children into multiple extracurricular activities as part of this wider strategy of social class reproduction as children are exposed to opportunities to learn skills, build networks and expand their cultural repertoires beyond their formal school curriculum (Reay 2017; Friedman 2013; Lareau 2011; Nelson 2010; Kremer-Sadlik, Izquierdo, and Fatigante 2010; Pugh 2009; Vincent and Ball 2007; Devine 2004). Parental spending in this regard show sizable quantitative differences across social classes (Schneider, Hastings, and LaBriola 2018; The Sutton Trust 2014). This debate concerning parenting logics and reproduction of social inequalities has largely downplayed the importance of race and ethnicity in shaping the educational strategies of middle-class parents. Taking Lareau's concept of 'concerted cultivation' as our point of departure, in this article we draw upon a qualitative study with middle-class Indian parents in the UK to demonstrate the ways in which the dynamics of race and racism reinscribe 'concerted cultivation' practices in these families. By delineating the visibility of racial parenting ideologies within middle-class British Indian parents' enactment of 'concerted cultivation' strategies, we show how concerted cultivation bears both classed and raced connotations in these families. We further draw out the implications of these

processes for understanding parenting cultures in the contemporary UK.

Unpacking Concerted Cultivation: Social Class, Parenting, and Children's Organised Leisure

Coined by Lareau (2000), the concept of 'concerted cultivation' has had enduring influence on subsequent research into parenting practices and the organisation of children's everyday lives in middle-class families (Vincent and Maxwell 2016; Maxwell and Aggleton 2013; Perrier 2013; Irwin and Elley 2011). In her study in the United States with white and African American parents across the class divide, Lareau (2011) found that cultural logics of parenting in these families varied by social class and not by race. The middle-class parents – irrespective of racial identities - adopted an approach to child rearing where they saw themselves as active agents in developing their children's innate talents and soft skills in a concerted fashion. In these families, children's organised leisure activities dominated the pace and rhythm of family life. Consequently, children's everyday lives have become heavily adult structured, with little room for spontaneous self-initiated play. Growing up on a 'steady diet of adult organised activities' (Lareau 2011, 3), middle-class children learn to address adults as relative equals with parents adopting a language of reasoning and negotiation as opposed to directives at home. In contrast to their middle-class counterparts, working-class and poor parents deployed the child-rearing logic of accomplishment of natural growth. These parents saw their job as one of providing for and protecting their children while leaving education in the hands of teachers who possess the professional skills for that task. In doing so, they allowed their children's after school hours to be filled with spontaneous child-initiated plays and interactions with wider kin networks, while strictly reinforcing the boundaries between adults and children through the use of directives rather than reasoning while talking to their children. As Lareau and Weininger (2008, 163) put it: 'whereas middle-

class children often are treated as a project to be developed, working-class and poor children are given boundaries for their behavior and then allowed to grow'. Owing to these class-based differences in the pace of family life, middle-class children had a hectic schedule of organised activities while their working-class and poor counterparts enjoyed – in the words of Lareau (2011, 309) - a more relaxed and 'child-like' childhood.

This theorisation of 'concerted cultivation' has been critiqued on multiple fronts. Despite involving both white and Black parents, Lareau downplays the impact of race and racism on parenting strategies (Manning 2019, Vincent et al. 2013). Moreover, her model of class-based child-rearing implies an internal homogeneity within the middle classes and falls short of accounting for the complex ways in which middle-class parents negotiate these discourses (Rollock et al. 2015, Perrier 2013, Irwin and Elley 2011). Nevertheless, existing studies resonate with the broad argument that 'concerted cultivated' is an integral part of the wider phenomenon of intensification of parenting (see Vincent and Maxwell 2016), which constructs the appropriate methods of child-rearing to be child-centred, expensive and labour intensive (Hays 1996). Often described as 'enrichment activities' in the UK policy context (Training and Development Agency for Schools 2007), organised leisure activities have become central to the social construction of a 'good childhood' and therefore facilitating children's participation in these activities has become an index of 'good parenting' (Manning 2019, Vincent and Maxwell 2016). As concerted cultivation becomes the normative discourse of child-rearing, it is buttressed by a wider acceptance of 'parental determinism' (Furedi 2010) which holds that every parental decision has long term implications for the child's future. Indeed, on the basis of their study in London, Vincent and Ball (2007) argue that faced with the urgency of class reproduction, middle-class parents treat 'enrichment activities' as an investment in the future of their children, for the skills learnt through these activities will enable their children to corner positional advantage in both education and

labour market. This growth in middle-class children's immersion in organised leisure coincides with the decline in their independent mobility and unsupervised play - spurred largely by risk anxieties of stranger danger and fear of traffic accidents (see Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson 2014). Concerted cultivation as a conceptual lens therefore captures this crucial shift in children's lived geographies.

Concerted cultivation as a site of ethnic and racial socialisation (ERS)

The existing literature on concerted cultivation, in casting it as a process of intergenerational class reproduction, has largely failed to appreciate how race and ethnicity play out within this framework (Cheadle and Amato 2011). Whilst a body of literature looking into the ethnic and racial socialisation (ERS) of racialised minority children has emerged in recent years (Juang et al. 2018; Iqbal 2014; Barn, 2013), the ways concerted cultivation and ERS practices overlap have been left untapped.

Ethnic and racial socialisation (ERS) defines a framework for understanding how children learn about their own racial and ethnic identities and family histories, grapple with racial and ethnic differences around them, and come to comprehend processes of racialisation and racism (Barn 2013; Hughes 2003). ERS does not flow exclusively from parents to children but is dynamic and multidirectional (Fatimilehin 1999). In this article, however, we explore a particular route to children's ERS: namely the strategies of racial parenting (which encompasses related concepts like racial fathering and racial mothering) that underpin racialised minority children's ERS. The notion of racial parenting emphasises the fact that minority ethnic parents think about and negotiate race, ethnicity and racism when raising their children (Manning 2019). Thus, racial parenting strategies seek to promote positive development of racial and ethnic identities in children and equip them with strategies for negotiating systemic racism in society (Edwards 2019, Barn 2013, Twine 2004). Drawing

upon these perspectives and building on recent scholarship on racial parenting (Manning 2019, Edwards 2019, Lan 2018; Rollock et al. 2015, Vincent et al. 2013), we argue that the microgeographies of concerted cultivation also serve as sites where minority ethnic middle-class parents enact racial parenting strategies. Although studies looking into the overlap between concerted cultivation and ERS in minority ethnic families are few and far between, and many researchers only report incidental findings on this issue without actually drawing upon the vocabulary of either concerted cultivation or ERS, we can glean useful insights from these vignettes.

Studying Filipino Americans, Posadas (1999) found that US-born second-generation Filipino American parents often enrolled their children into Filipino martial arts, dance, and music lessons, treating them as a means for their children to explore their ethnic heritage. Another such example of structured leisure spaces mobilised by parents for ERS is ‘Jack and Jill’ – an exclusively Black organisation in the United States which provides African American children with extracurricular opportunities and is particularly popular among middle-class Black mothers in white-majority suburbs who want their children to spend time with Black peers from similar class backgrounds thereby contributing to the development of a positive racial identity (Lacy 2007). Lan (2018) found that professional middle-class Chinese immigrant parents in the United States often used their class resources to cultivate, what she calls, ‘ethnic cultural capital’ in their US-born children as a way of instilling ethnic pride and building transnational links, by enrolling them into weekend Chinese language lessons and by subscribing to workshops that teach Chinese yo-yo and lion dance – cultural skills that children go on to perform at school and in community events.

In the UK, however, since most studies have focused on white middle-class families, the literature on concerted cultivation practices in middle-class minority ethnic families is sparse (see Rollock et al. 2015). In the first ever dedicated study of Black Caribbean middle-

class parents in the UK, Vincent et al. (2013) showed that concerted cultivation is constructed in these families as a classed as well as a racial parenting strategy. Parents in their study sent their children to many Black-led organisations to help them build friendship networks with other Black children. One parent spoke about his choice of steel pans as an organised leisure activity for her daughter, which he believes provides his daughter with a link to their Caribbean cultural heritage. Similarly, since the 1950s, with the settlement of post-war immigrant groups, Black supplementary schools for children grew up across London and some provincial cities (Mirza and Reay 2000). These self-funding organisations, run mostly by women on weekends, taught Black children (5-16-year-old) about Black history and Black studies which have been absent in school curricula. Racial concerted cultivation in British Indian families has not been systematically researched, but some indications can be found in incidental findings of other projects. In their study on minority ethnic families, Beishon, Modood and Virdee, (1998) found that alongside popular activities such as sports and music lessons, some British Indian children engaged in Indian cultural activities such as learning Indian folk dance and languages which relate to their ethnic heritage. Others have shown that given the lack of provision within school curriculum, British Indian parents often seize upon opportunities such as language and religious history lessons offered by places of worship and community groups as a means for their children to foster positive ethnic group identities and garner an understanding of their ethnic background (Barn 2008; Beishon, Modood, and Virdee 1998; Nesbitt 1995). By identifying racial parenting ideologies vis-à-vis British Indian children's concerted cultivated through organised leisure, in this article we emphasise the need to look at race and class jointly in understanding educational strategies of parents.

The Study

This article is based on research conducted with 18 middle-class British Indian parents – 10 mothers and 8 fathers - living in and around London. Constituting 2.5% of the population in

England and Wales, the Indian diaspora in the UK is a significant minority ethnic group (Office for National Statistics 2018). Compared to other ethnic groups, including other South Asian groups, children from the Indian community have consistently out-performed their white peers in educational attainment and British Indian adults are markedly better off than other minority ethnic groups in terms of employment rates, hourly pay and entry into highest-skilled occupations (Office for National Statistics 2019a; Cabinet Office 2018). Given their relatively good performance on key indicators, there is a burgeoning segment of middle-class professionals within British Indian communities whose parenting strategies deserve to be understood in their own right. We know that ‘To be White and middle class is not the same as being Black and middle class’ (Rollock et al. 2015, 1). Similarly, it is imperative to understand how middle-class British Indian parents draw upon their class resources and racial and ethnic identities in cultivating their children’s talents and abilities.

Table: List of Study Participants

Families	Name of Participants (Parenting Role, Occupation)
Family 1	Simi (Mother, HR Professional) Manoj (Father, IT Programme Manager)
Family 2	Swati (Mother, Senior Dentist) Alpesh (Father, Software Engineer)
Family 3	Nisha (Mother, Teacher) Mahesh (Father, IT Project Manager)
Family 4	Divya (Mother, Housewife) Vikas (Father, IT Contractor)
Family 5	Maya (Mother, Account Executive) Jayant* (Father, Head of Sales)

Family 6	Veena (Mother, Housewife) Jagadish (Father, IT Consultant)
Family 7	Jyoti (Mother, Housewife) Shekhar* (Father, Entrepreneur)
Family 8	Aparna (Mother, Housewife) Sumit (Father, Software Client Lead)
Family 9	Paramjit (Mother, Project Manager) Jaswinder (Father, IT Consultant)
Family 10	Bhavna (Mother, Medical Doctor) Jignesh (Father, Management Consultant)

*= Did not take part in interview

With the exception of four housewives, the parents who took part in the study worked in the knowledge economy as highly skilled professionals with annual household incomes ranging between three to five times that of UK's median of £28,400 (Office for National Statistics 2019b). These middle-class parents held university degrees and were all homeowners. Although all the parents were of Indian heritage, 6 were born in the UK to Indian migrant parents while the rest (12 parents) were born in India and migrated to the UK in the last two decades and had subsequently taken up British citizenship. The children of these parents were between 8 and 12 years of age. The families were recruited through a combination of different pathways including Facebook groups, community contacts, and snowballing where parents self-selected themselves. Each participant has been assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity.

With an aim to understand parents' subjective meaning-making around children's organised leisure activities, one-to-one semi-structured narrative interviews were conducted

with each parent at their family home. Demographic details including income and educational levels were collected before the interview using a form. The flexibility afforded by a semi-structured approach enabled us to gather rich data about participants' everyday lives, family histories and their approach to parenting. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim. In interpreting and analysing the interview data, we used a narrative framework. Narrative analysis enables us to find narrative meanings (Kim 2015) which are produced collaboratively by the participant and the researcher in interaction with their context (Esin, Fathi, and Squire 2013). Narrative meanings give us access not to an unmediated reality but to the way lived experiences are storied and recollected by people. In making sense of these stories, we deployed both the hermeneutics of restoration and that of demystification (Josselson 2006) – that is, we saw the stories from the perspective of the participants and then decoded implicit meanings in order to “think beyond the surface of ... [the] text” (Riessman 2008, 13). In interpreting the data, we used three tools of narrative coding - ‘broadening’, ‘burrowing’, and ‘storying and restorying’ - advanced by the educational researchers Connelly and Clandinin (1990) to develop the themes discussed in this article. Broadening refers to the broader context of the story which in this case relates to an understanding of parenting cultures and the biographies of the participants. Next, burrowing was used to focus on the specificities of concerted cultivation within parental accounts and its intersection with race and racism. Storying and restorying point to the iterative distillation of the core themes in a way that represents the complexity of the racial concerted cultivation process.

Findings

Parents in the study devoted their time, energy, and money in facilitating their children's participation in a plethora of organised and paid-for leisure activities. In parental accounts of these processes, race and ethnicity played out along two main axes. Firstly, parental

narratives constructed leisure lessons as sites for the transmissions of ethnic cultural identities. Secondly, experiences of racism both within and outside the spaces of leisure impacted the way parents strategized about particular leisure activities. In what follows, these two axes will be analysed using parents' interview narratives.

Cultural (re)production through organised leisure

The UK school curricula do not offer any systematic avenue for children - whose parents took part in this study - to appreciate their own cultural heritage, particularly with respect to Indian, British Indian, or colonial history (see Heath 2016). Although Religious Studies (RS) offers these children a cursory understanding of their religious backgrounds, they generally do not have options in their schools to learn their heritage languages. English is the predominant language in all the families which participated in the study, but India-born parents seemed to use their heritage languages beside English or even a combination of the two such as Hinglish (Hindi and English) when talking to each other and to their extended family members while using English as the chief medium of communication with their children. Nevertheless, many of these parents, both UK-born and India-born, have attempted to arrange for their children to learn what they deem to be their heritage language through structured lessons outside of school (see Barn 2008).

Mother of two and telecommunications professional Paramjit grew up in London in a Sikh family, where Punjabi was the predominant household language. Her London-born Sikh husband Jaswinder too can speak Punjabi but now at their family home in the home counties, English appears to be the only language deployed by them. Paramjit has recently enrolled her daughter Jasleen (8) for her first Punjabi lesson in the hope that she develops a positive ethnic identity as she further explains:

It's a nice skill to have because then she can speak ... with the family. In this class they not only learn about the language they also learn about the culture, the Sikh history. And I don't even know half of it to teach her myself.

- Paramjit

It is the link between the Punjabi language and the Sikh religion that Paramjit celebrates. She believes that learning Punjabi will help Jasleen connect to her religion better. Moreover, knowledge of Punjabi is seen to enhance Jasleen's ability to interact with family members, including grandparents who have limited command over English and prefer to speak in Punjabi. Most other parents in the study too highlighted these links between heritage language acquisition and communication with grandparents or relatives, as well as the association between ethnic language and religion. Paramjit, however, feels unable to teach Punjabi to Jasleen herself. This is further confounded by the fact that like most of the other schools, Jasleen's school does not offer Punjabi lessons within the school curriculum. Therefore, motherhood prompted Paramjit to look into her Punjabi roots with a renewed interest as she wanted her daughter to grow up with an awareness of her Punjabi Sikh heritage. Paramjit therefore resolved this need by sending Jasleen to Punjabi language lessons as an enrichment activity.

Besides heritage languages, parents regularly made references to Bollywood – a term used to describe the mainstream, Mumbai-based, Hindi-language film industry in India – as an emblem of Indian cultural productions. Bollywood music is popular across participating families and watching Hindi films together constitutes a big part of shared leisure experiences in these families. A corollary of the family pursuit of Hindi film watching, is the organised leisure activity of Bollywood and Indian classical dancing. Both of these were popular choices. For instance, Mahesh sees dancing as part of the family tradition:

In my family's side and Nisha's [wife] family's side, the kids start Bharatnatyam (a South Indian classical dance form) at a young age. So, the expectation, if you like, is that a girl child will start Bharatnatyam at an early age. And if you get an opportunity [to do Bharatnatyam] here in the UK, then why not? [...]. She shouldn't be at a disadvantage because she's not in India.

- Mahesh

Mahesh, 50, was born in India and migrated to the UK thirteen years ago. He is now a British citizen and his daughter Saumya (9) was born in the UK. Based in a town on the edge of London, Mahesh and his wife Nisha have found a local Indian dance instructor for their daughter. Saumya now goes for a weekly hour-long dance lesson, where she receives training in both Bharatnatyam and Bollywood dancing. In the quote above, Mahesh foregrounds gender in articulating the link between his Indian cultural heritage and his daughter's enrolment in Bharatnatyam lessons. Bharatnatyam owes its origin to the temple dance of 'sadir' from the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where until 1920s this dance form was the exclusive reserve of devadasis or hereditary courtesans affiliated to Hindu shrines (Gaston 2005). After the devadasi system was banned in 1947, this dance form was delinked from its ritual function in temples, rebranded as 'Bharatnatyam' and began to be performed by urban, educated women (Srinivasan 1985; Gaston 2005). The social background of the new practitioners was seen to 'purify' the dance and make it a respectable form of classical art that middle-class, upper-caste families like Mahesh's came to embrace and where it is still practiced largely by women (Srinivasan 1985). Bharatnatyam has since spread across India and its global diaspora, becoming synonymous with Indian culture and performing arts (see O'Shea 2007). This historical trajectory of Bharatnatyam reveals how 'traditions' that are understood to be deeply rooted in ethnic identities are not 'timeless' but are subject to social change and are historically constituted by the cross currents of class, caste, and gender within defined social formations.

The *raison d'etre* that Mahesh provides for his racial parenting strategy of concerted cultivation reveals yet another key dimension of British Indian parenting. He, much like other India-born parents in the study, takes his own childhood experiences in India as well as the cultural infrastructures that are available to children in India as his point of reference as he engineers his daughter's ERS through leisure – to ensure she does not lose out '*because she's*

not in India'. This articulation of cultural belonging, in continual dialogue with that part of their British Indian identity, which is far away, qualitatively marks India-born parents apart from their UK-born counterparts. The UK-born parents nurture their transnational links to India and they carry a positive sense of their Indian ethnic identity but when it comes to their racial parenting strategy, they draw largely from their own British Indian childhood as well as the extended ethnic networks that they have developed within the UK through their own parents and kin groups. It bears pointing out that the parents of India-born parents are all based in India, and none of these parents have family networks in the UK. Therefore, any understanding of the way race and ethnicity make tracks within concerted cultivation strategies requires paying attention to the subtleties of 'ethnic positionings' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992). Although all British Indians have a shared collective positioning vis-à-vis other groups especially in Census and Government reports – the ethnic social capital/resources that members of this group can muster in their pursuit of a racial concerted cultivation not only depend on the class resources at their disposal but also on the points of cultural reference, inter-generational relationships and social networks that they can draw upon (Hunter et al. 2019; Barn 2018). In the latter sense, UK-born and India-born parents undertake their racial concerted cultivation from different vantage points that affords particular material and discursive ethnic resources.

Alongside heritage language and cultural activities such as dance and music, other organised leisure activities too are mobilised by parents as potential sites for transmitting ethnic heritage to their children. For instance, Jignesh – an India-born Management Consultant living in London - considers cricket as a part of his Indian cultural heritage that he hopes to transmit to his son. His son Chirag (12) goes for cricket coaching every week, and cricket emerges here as a dominant cultural context of Jignesh's (racial) fathering:

India is a country of cricket so naturally, you know, I'm following cricket day-in day-out, whenever India plays. So, as my son is growing up, he is watching his dad follow cricket. And that's coming from our Indian cultural background. - Jignesh

Cricket was introduced to India by the British during colonial rule (see Guha, 1998). Nevertheless, the fact that Jignesh considers cricket to be an integral part of his Indian 'cultural background' gestures towards the decolonisation and re-appropriation of cricket in India and its diaspora (Appadurai 1996). A wealth of ethnographic literature (see Fletcher and Swain 2016; Raman 2015) has over the years shown that cricket is a key component of the leisure repertoire of South Asian diasporans in the UK. This in turn has driven the infamous Tebbit-test. In 1990, the Conservative politician Norman Tebbit argued that if British South Asians supported their country of origin while watching a cricket match between England and that country, then they are not fully 'integrated' (Yuval-Davis 2007). Tebbit's cricket 'test' of national loyalty resurfaced during the recently concluded Cricket World Cup in 2019 – which was held in England and Wales – where the India vs England match saw large numbers of UK-born British Indian spectators support the Indian team (Pandey 2019). Jignesh, quoted above, supports India in cricket matches and holds a British citizenship; far from being contradictory this demonstrates the 'multi-layered' dimensions of his sense of belonging (Yuval-Davis 1999). The link that India-born Jignesh draws between his fathering and his self-described Indian 'cultural background' of cricket demonstrates one of the many ways in which racial fathering is undertaken within leisure spaces.

In both Mahesh's and Jignesh's narratives, gender underpins racial concerted cultivation processes. While in Mahesh's case Indian dance forms such as Bharatnatyam are projected as an exclusively girl-tradition within the family, Jignesh's narrative showed how tastes for

sports such as cricket are cultivated among boys by the dedicated labour of racial fathering practices. Thus, concerted cultivation through children's enrichment activities is as much a site for ethnic cultural (re)production as it is a site for class reproduction. The above narratives also illustrate that ethnic identities are not primordial or static but are context-dependent processes.

(Anti)Racism and Leisure

Experiences of racism both within and beyond children's leisure spaces prompted conversations within these families around racial and ethnic identities and often motivated parents to re-appropriate certain enrichment opportunities as vehicles for resisting racism. For instance, Maya enrolled her son Rohit (12) into taekwondo classes which he has continued since. During the interview, she explained her decision:

It's [taekwondo] just for self-defence... In school there is a lot of bullying. It's better they learn to protect themselves [...]. Main thing is it's because of ... racism. My son has faced it... They [white children at school] used to tease him because of his accent and then he has to talk in this UK accent. - Maya

Maya grew up in India and she migrated to the UK eight years ago because of her husband Jayant's job. Maya, who has recently started working as an Account Executive, undertakes the majority of the parenting responsibilities as Jayant is out of the country every week. In deciding to enrol Rohit for Taekwondo - Korean martial arts-lessons - she was driven by Rohit's experiences of racism at school. Rohit was born in India and came to the UK at the age of six and resumed his studies here in Year 2 at a state primary school just outside London. He experienced verbal racial bullying at school on account of his Indian English accent. And he is not alone. Another parent in the study, Vikas – an Information Technology (IT) Contractor - reported that his elder daughter Ekta, who is now 13, faced similar bullying at school for her Indian accent when she migrated to the UK with her parents six years ago.

In response to the bullying, Maya further revealed, Rohit came up with the strategy of accent-switching. His Indian accent helps him connect to his family and diasporic kin networks, while his acquired ability to use a British accent helps him to counter the marginalisation at school. To equip him further with the ability to physically defend himself in case he is subjected to physical acts of racist violence, Maya considers it necessary that he learns martial arts as a structured leisure lesson. Whilst between 6% and 7% of school-aged children in England attend martial arts and boxing lessons respectively (Sport England 2018), the majority of parents in the study had at least one child who trained in martial arts or combat sports as an organised leisure activity. Although it is impossible to draw any inference from these numbers alone, especially from a small-scale qualitative study, the parental narratives of ‘self-defence’ that envelop these figures are noteworthy.

For parents with lived childhood experience in the UK, racism and leisure connected their own formative experiences to their current parenting approaches.

He [Ankit] plays football for Flowerfields Town. They're all [white] English. And in the beginning, I was a bit like ‘I'm not sure, you're the only Indian playing, what if they're horrible to you?’ But to be honest they had a football match once and somebody called my son a ‘Paki’ and all his English team including the coach, they all stuck up for my son.

- Jyoti

Jyoti (42) is a housewife who grew up in London. As a child, she and her cousins were regularly bullied by Darren, a white teenager, in their local park because of which they avoided going to the park whenever Darren was around. These childhood experiences have had an enduring impact on Jyoti, who now wants to ensure that her sons – Ankit (12) and Vishal (15) – do not have to go through such negative experiences. When Ankit joined his local football team, Jyoti was concerned because all members of the team were white. Based on her childhood experiences, she was apprehensive that Ankit might be subjected to racism in an all-white football team. When, during a match, a white boy called Ankit a ‘Paki’ –a

racial slur which has historically been used against South Asians in Britain – his teammates rallied around him and supported him. The support he received does not override the persistent presence of such racial slurs within football games (Lawrence and Davis 2019). Another, UK-born parent Manoj (45) – an IT Programme Manager– who lives just outside London reported a similar incident involving his son Suraj (11):

At a recent football game, I think there was an issue..., it was actually the boys from our school [who] said the P word ... Which was very peculiar because it's a very small school, half of our team were Indians. So, it was very peculiar. The teachers dealt with it. They called the parents in, of the boy who said the word. - Manoj

Since the 1960s, the P word ('Paki') and notions of 'doing a Paki' became a resonant theme in Britain, which translated into a wave of racially motivated violence against South Asian children in school playgrounds and in the neighbourhood (see Troyna and Hatcher 1992). Manoj had endured years of racist bullying on school playgrounds, but he thinks that racism has declined substantially in recent years because his generation of British Asians challenged racism and spearheaded anti-racist struggles (Nijjar 2019). Nevertheless, the re-occurrences of racial slurs in a children's football match indicate how those changes have been accompanied by patterns of continuity. We know that despite considerable involvement at amateur level, British South Asians are significantly under-represented in English professional football (Burdsey 2007). In addressing this issue, researchers have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that professional football in England remains a predominantly white institution where the prevailing narrative that football is 'colour-blind' and meritocratic only serves to reinforce racial disadvantages (see Cleland and Cashmore 2014, Lawrence and Davis 2019). Despite acknowledging the fact that African Americans in her study encountered racism in everyday lives, Lareau (2011) found those experiences to be only incidental to the way cultural logics of parenting played out in those families – which for her were shaped by social class alone. In contrast, we argue that experiences such as the ones

recounted by Manoj and Jyoti are not incidental but formative to the urgency middle-class British Indian parents feel in investing in the concerted cultivation of their children so that they develop a positive racial and ethnic identity. Such incidents also prompted conversations with children around race and racism. Moreover, Manoj found it ‘peculiar’ that children who are friends in school would resort to the use of racist slurs in leisure spaces. Seeming contradictions like these are indicative of the complex nature of racisms faced by racialised minority children irrespective of their class privileges. As Cohen (1988, 83) argues, many white youth ‘experience no sense of contradiction in wearing dreadlocks ... and going to reggae concerts whilst continuing to assert that “Pakis stink”’. These split perceptions rather than being paradoxical are increasingly becoming the norm – which makes context-bound expressions of racism hard to get to grips with (Cohen 1988).

The parental narratives above demonstrate that concerted cultivation strategies of both UK-born and India-born parents were informed by their experiences of racism, but the cultural memories that those experiences animated were different for both groups. The UK-born parents had faced racist violence as children. As parents now, they recognise the changes as well as the continuities of racist narratives and they see their anti-racist parenting strategies in that perspective. On the other hand, India-born parents like Maya had grown up with considerable privilege in urban middle-class families without experiences of racism. Migration had inserted them into a racially stratified UK where despite their class privileges they and their children are subject to processes of racialisation. These experiences of racism were recent and India-born parents – unlike their UK-born counterparts – could not draw upon lived experiences of anti-racist strategies. Moreover, India-born parents were more likely to articulate post-racial narratives of meritocracy as one mother who is a medical doctor by profession put it: ‘this racism thing ... I don’t want any of my children to even

think about it. They just need to get on. It's their ability [that counts].’ Therefore, the relation between (anti)racism and leisure within the concerted cultivation strategies of British Indian parents were fractured along the lines of generation of migration as both group of parents muster leisure spaces for children's ERS from different vantage points.

Conclusion

This dedicated study of middle-class British Indian parents opened up a space to examine the ways in which race, ethnicity and racism matter in the time-spaces of concerted cultivation. From parental narratives, we identified two interlinked processes - ‘cultural (re)production through organised leisure’ and ‘(anti)racism and leisure’ – through which racial and ethnic subjectivities get constructed in relation to children's concerted cultivation. Thus, viewing middle-class British Indian's ERS through the framework of ‘concerted cultivation’ has enabled us to empirically unpack the racialised nature of class which has wider implications for the sociology of education and parenting cultures.

Firstly, parents' interview accounts showed that many of these parents enrol their children into specific ethnic leisure lessons to transmit ethnic cultural identities and help their children develop a positive appreciation of their ethnic heritage. These parental efforts are aimed at ensuring the continuity of certain family traditions and cultural interests and histories that bind them to their ethnic heritage. However, probing into those specific cultural activities and their links to what the participants circumscribed as their cultural background indicated that ethnic culture is not static or primordial – instead they are subject to social change and historical re-inscription. These Indian diasporic parents were also involved in ‘cultural streamlining’ (Radhakrishnan 2011) whereby they drew cultural boundaries and sought to reproduce a set of desirable cultural norms that are compatible with their present circumstances. This ‘ethnic cultural capital’ (Lan 2018) that parents sought to transmit through leisure was designed to not only play a role in developing a positive ethnic identity

among children; crucially it was intended to unlock for the child new avenues for future transnational mobility with a set of skills – such as knowledge of Indian languages – that can set them apart in the global economy where the rise of India and China are increasingly noted (Paul and Mas 2016). By demonstrating how racial parenting strategies - which in this case relate to the transmission of ethnic cultural capital – are enfolded into concerted cultivation practices, our research refines Lareau's (2011) framing of organised activities in middle-class families. Future scholars must pay close attention to the simultaneous operation of race and class within middle-class child-rearing logics.

Secondly, racism fractures the leisure experiences of these children irrespective of their middle-class privileges. The processes of racialisation of the minority ethnic children by other (white) children display both a sense of change and continuity with the past as historically coded racial slurs continue to be used against these children. In response to racist incidents, parents often initiate conversations around racial identity and racism which directly feeds into the wider process of ERS. Furthermore, certain leisure activities are handpicked by parents as vehicles of anti-racism such as learning self-defence through martial arts. Pulling these narratives together, we argue that experiences of racism are not incidental to the parental logic of concerted cultivation, as suggested by Lareau (2011), but they inform the urgency middle-class British Indian parents feel in mobilising organised leisure spaces of their children's ERS. While Lareau (2011) only makes passing observations about racism faced by Black middle classes, our findings show the implications of racist experiences in the crafting of parenting strategies within middle-class minority ethnic families – thereby advancing a more nuanced understanding of concerted cultivation as a cornerstone of middle-class parenting.

In this article, therefore, we have started a new dialogue within the sociology of education where concerted cultivation is no longer treated as a process of class reproduction

alone. Through fresh empirical materials, we have demonstrated that concerted cultivation – through organised leisure lessons – and racial parenting strategies do not operate in isolation from one another, but they converge and implicate each other. These processes have wider ramifications for thinking about race, class, and parenting strategies. Future empirical research, with other minority ethnic groups and across social classes, is needed to further advance this dialogue.

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