



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

# Ethnic prejudice in children aged 3-11: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Dr Ciara Keenan

@metaevidence

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## WHAT IS ETHNIC PREJUDICE?

Prejudice is an attitude, usually negative, attributed towards another ethnic group.

Prejudice in school leads to:

- Academic failure
- Attainment gap
- Challenging relationships with peers
- Lack of motivation to flourish
- Psychological instability

# RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. What role can schools play in reducing ethnic prejudices among children aged 3-11?
2. To what extent can school-based education programmes assist in reducing ethnic prejudice?
3. Which school-based programmes are most effective in reducing ethnic prejudice, and which characteristics may influence their efficacy?
4. Does the effectiveness of programmes vary with regard to the children's age, gender, socio-economic background and racial/ethnic background?

# SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

- Best estimation of reality by incorporating more data.
- Reduction in selection, confirmation, and publication bias.
- More inclusive sample of human diversity.



# REVIEW PROCESS

1. Formulate the Research question – register title with Campbell.
2. Predetermined inclusion/ exclusion criteria.
3. Ensure a robust search strategy – register protocol with Campbell.
4. Uncover and collate all existing evidence through independent screening.
5. Extract the data from those studies which conform to predetermined inclusion criteria.
6. Test the effectiveness of multiple interventions using meta-analysis.



## INCLUSION CRITERIA

- Must use a control group design.
- Must be delivered in school.
- Delivered during normal school hours on a whole class basis.
- Participants aged 3-11.
- Report on an outcome related to ethnic prejudice
- Results permit a reliable calculation of effect sizes.

# SEARCH STRATEGY

The 'pearl harvesting' search method, alongside grey literature searching, uncovered 16,632 studies, of these, 80 were determined to be relevant as determined by pre specified inclusion criteria.



3,710

A **written letter** was posted to 305 prejudice organisations worldwide, various authors contacted, and the **reference lists** of relevant studies were scanned

13,378

3,254 **duplicate** studies were removed from the Endnote library

2,762

All abstracts were screened by **two independent reviewers** using the software, **Abstrackr**. 8,644 studies were excluded for various reasons

12,922

Eight **electronic databases**, four **grey literature databases**, and three **government repositories** were searched



16,632

All potential studies were imported to the bibliographic management tool, **Endnote**

11,406

All studies were carried to **Excel** and 1,972 studies were removed at **title stage** using the find tool

80

2,762 studies were screened at **full text** by two independent reviewers. 80 **relevant papers** were carried through for extraction.



# CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDIES

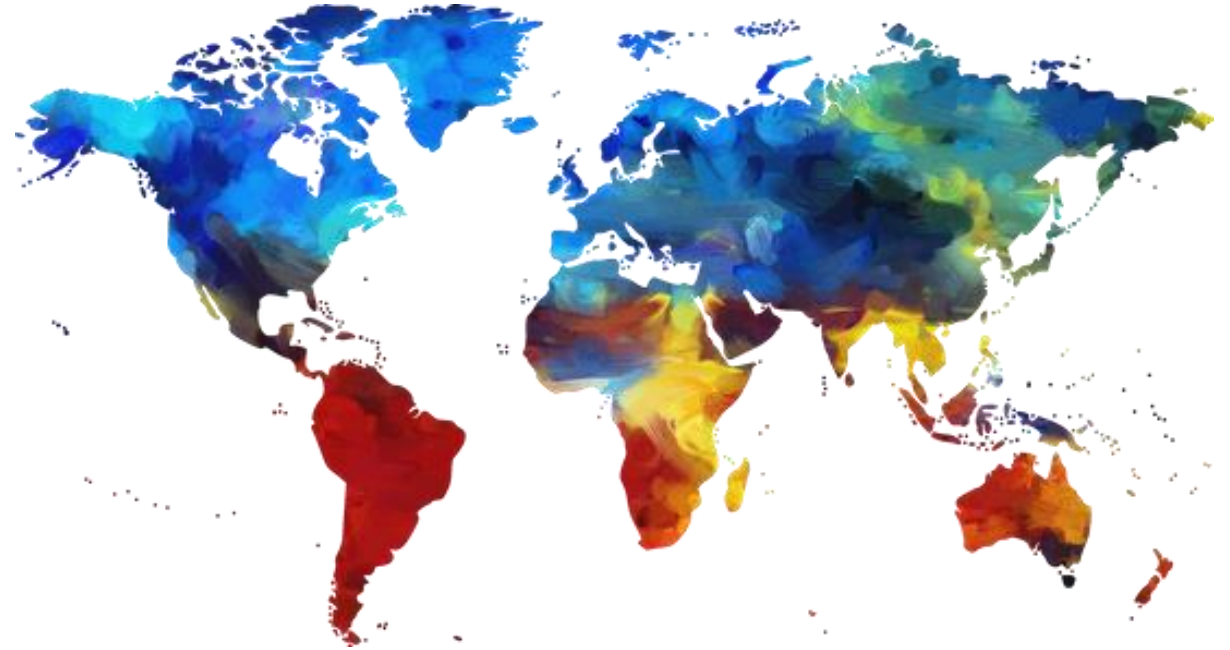
This research found that 101 randomised and quazi-randomised control trials had been conducted in schools since 1980 on children aged 3- 11 with an aim to reduce prejudice

- 56.3% were commercially available literature
- 43.8% were grey literature



# LOCATION OF STUDIES

- 11% were from UK
- 15% from Rest of Europe
- 55% from USA
- 6% from Canada
- 6% from Middle-East
- 1% from Oceania
- 1% from Africa and
- 4% from a mixture of countries



# DATA EXTRACTION

The researcher and a trained reviewer independently extracted information. Consensus was reached through discussion or the involvement of a third reviewer. Variables extracted include:

- Setting
- Demographic variables of interest
- Intervention Characteristics/Study Design
- Theoretical category of intervention
- Control Group
- Dependent variables
- Effect sizes
- Quality



# FINDINGS

**15, 268** children provided data across 101 prejudice-reduction interventions

Compared with control, the intervention condition was associated with statistically significant levels of prejudice reduction (**Hedges'  $g = 0.30$ , 95% CI 0.21 to 0.39,  $p < .0001$** ), suggesting that school-based intervention programmes play a vital role in reducing prejudice.

# MODERATOR ANALYSIS

Moderator analysis revealed that prejudice reduction outcomes were not significantly moderated by various prespecified characteristics, however, strongest reductions in prejudice were observed in:

- Interventions based on a social-learning approach,
- interventions that had longer session lengths,
- children who were older than seven,
- majority group children,
- and in those groups whom were majority male.

# POLICY IMPLICATIONS

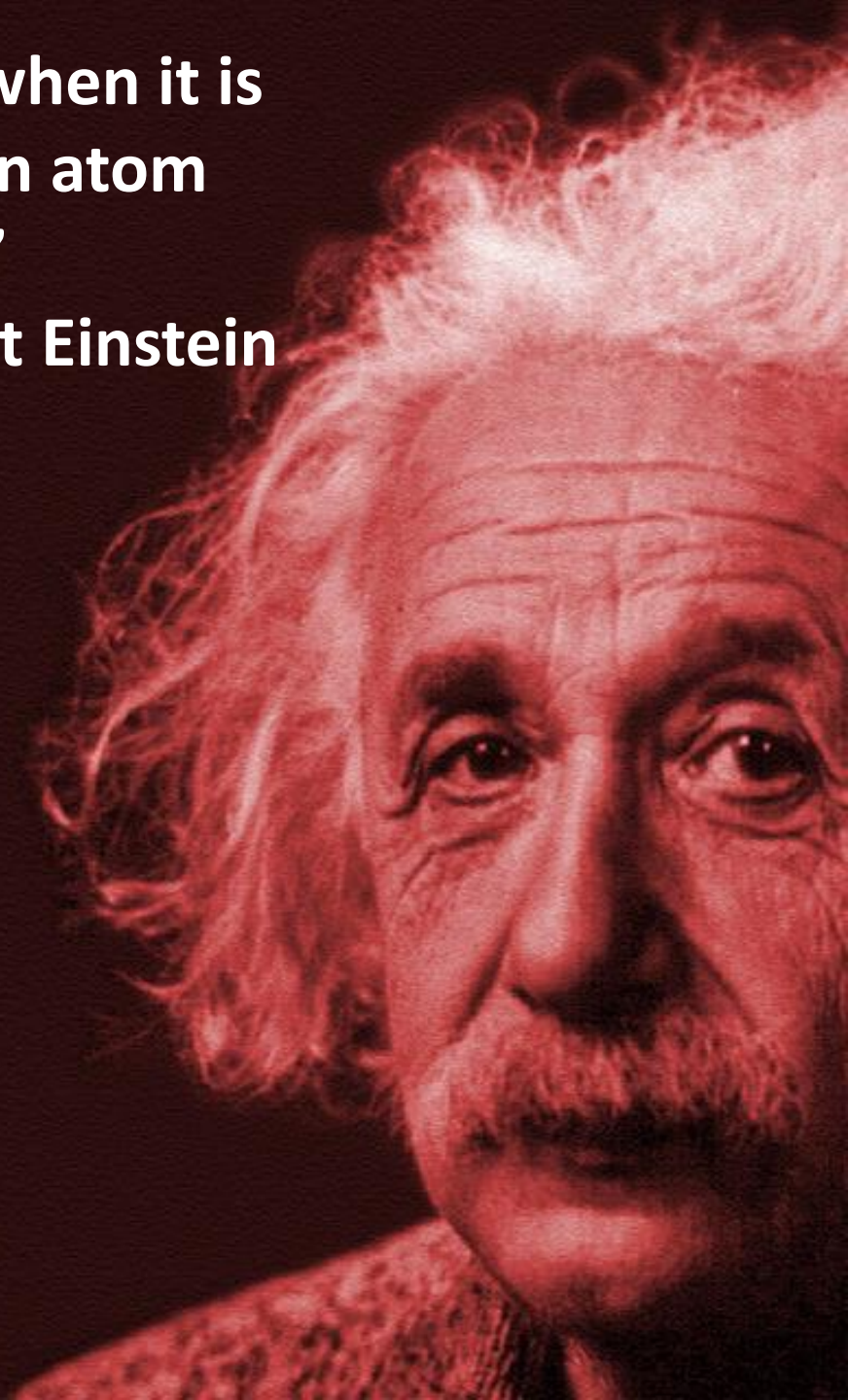
- Provides the most recent, all-encompassing and conclusive evidence.
- Government bodies can make informed decisions about the effectiveness of implementing certain educational strategies as well as the benefits of funding research into specific strategies.
- Prejudice reduction programmes are effective when implemented by teachers and integrated into the curriculum.
- Effects were small or harmful in classrooms where minority group children were the numerical majority. Policy makers should identify the geographical locations where minority group children are the predominant student population and provide schools in these areas with bespoke provisions.

## NEXT STEPS

- Additional coding on programme components
- Test whether the presence of particular intervention components and/or combination of components is associated with greater outcomes.
- Final review will be submitted to Campbell this year

**“What a sad era when it is  
easier to smash an atom  
than a prejudice.”**

**— Albert Einstein**



## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

- Interventions should present longitudinal data gathered at multiple time points.
- Costs of the interventions are unknown.
- 56% of papers did not provide a mean age of the participants.
- Further collaboration with minority group researchers and minority group children may enhance the development of more culturally responsive interventions.



# Thank you

c.keenan@qub.ac.uk

