

Society's attitude towards the travelling community in Dublin.

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Abstract

The purpose of the research study was to assess society's attitude towards the travelling community in Dublin area, the Data were gathered from questionnaires and participants, which contained 10 questions in total, five negative and five positive questions before giving out the questionnaires participants were briefed on what the research was all about before handing out the questionnaires. The study is a quantitative research. Two hundred participants took part in this study, 103 females and 97males. A descriptive statistics was carried out to show the frequency and percentage of males and females showing their answers to the ten questions. The researcher predicted that there will be significant differences in how society attitude towards travelling community in the Dublin area. The researcher then found that there was a significant difference as predicted.

Society's attitude towards the travelling community in Dublin

Introduction

The Irish Travelers are one of the oldest and most established minority groups in Ireland. They are also one of the most misunderstood, and are subject to a great deal of often-unjust discrimination because of this. This essay will explore the origins, history, and modern lifestyle of the Irish Travelers, and then examines how the societies perceive the travelers in Dublin area; the origin of the Irish Travelers is somewhat confusing. It is commonly believed that the Travelers are descended from a group known as the Gypsies

According to research in sociology members of a minority group are disadvantaged as compared with the majority population and have some sense of unity of belonging together. Ethnic minority group which makes up the population but can still be referred to as 'minorities' this is because the term 'minority' captures their disadvantaged position such as the travelling community, they have been recognised as an ethnic minority in Ireland. (Giddens 2006).

Travellers are an indigenous minority group, their culture is nomadic tradition they portray themselves as a distinct community and people see them as one, they are Christians, Roman Catholic's. The travellers share common characteristics, tradition and principles which are evident in their organisation of family. They have a distinct lifestyle and culture which is based on a nomadic tradition which sets them apart from the settled population, they also have their own language called the 'cant' or 'gammon' and which can be sometimes referred to as 'shelta' this is language that is mostly used by the travellers to speak with each other, the travellers marry within their own community. Travellers separate themselves by choice which enables them to retain their identity as an ethnic group. Attitude toward the travellers is negative they suffer pressure and opposition in the society. Historical sources confirm, they have been part of Irish society for centuries. Travellers long shared history, cultural values, language, customs and traditions make them a self-defined group, and one which is recognisable and distinct. Their culture and way of life, of which nomadism is an important

factor, distinguish them from the settled population.

Travellers are distinguished by the fact that are an indigenous minority and widely acknowledged as one of the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups in Irish society. Travellers fare poorly on every indicator used to measure disadvantage: unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, health status, infant mortality, life expectancy, illiteracy, education and training levels, access to decision making and political representation, gender equality, access to credit, accommodation and living conditions. 'According to the Economic and Social Research Institute' who concluded that 'the circumstances of the Irish travelling people are intolerable, and that, no humane and decent society, once made aware of such circumstances, could permit them to persist' (ESRI, July 1986)

Who are the travellers?

Travellers' is referred to a nomadic Irish ethnic group. Irish travelers are a small minority group in Ireland. They have been part of the Irish society for centuries they are about 0.5 per cent of the national population; they are a little understood nomadic community, who has many difficulties to overcome if they are to survive as a culture and gain acceptance in Irish society. Among the challenges facing them are poverty, racism and discrimination.

Irish Travelers are Roman Catholic and speak a language that is theirs alone and they are very confident about their identity as a travelling people. They have their own culture, customs, and traditions. They are noted for their musical and storytelling abilities.

Tinsmiths were common among Irish Travelers that the terms Tinker and Irish Traveler were used interchangeably. Today, 'Tinker' is one of many insulting terms for Irish Travellers.

Irish Travelers are poor, undereducated, and on the receiving end of discrimination.

Their life expectancy is lower than average while their infant mortality rate is higher than

average. The Irish Travelers are seen by many as a group of corrupt, bad-mannered, criminals and con artists. People distrust their nomadic culture and their language, 'Shelta'. Many people think it's a secret language purposely developed as a tool to help the Irish Travelers trick innocent people. However, it is an old language, which has evolved with time and circumstances.

The Irish government does not identify Travelers as an ethnic group which limits the protection available to Travellers under National, European and International law. The Government of Ireland defines Travellers as a 'social group' which means that Travellers are simply defined as a group who experience discrimination and poverty, thereby denying that the treatment of Travellers is racism. As Travellers are not recognized as an ethnic group with a distinct culture, traditions, and nomadic history they are denied access to protection for their cultural rights and services which would facilitate their culture. Many examples of this exist in Ireland today such as the boulder policy which has blocked off traditional camping areas to Travellers and the lack of provision of transient accommodation to facilitate nomadism.

As stated, the Irish government does not recognize Travellers as an ethnic group which limits the protection available to Travellers under national, European and international law. However, the Traveller Movement continues to struggle for Travellers to be recognized in order to gain such protection. In an Irish context, membership of the Traveller community is named in the Equality legislation as a group in need of protection from discrimination. This is in addition to the ethnic ground.

The national government regularly runs publicity campaigns to prevent racism from taking root against its new immigrants.

Many private organizations are attempting to eradicate the racism suffered by the Travelers and to address their problems. In the past thirty years, laws have been passed in an attempt to stop the racism and alleviate the problems of poverty as well as a lack of health care and

education. Results have been mixed. Early on, the government attempted to help the Irish Travellers by trying to assimilate them into Irish society. Eventually, the government realized that they didn't want help at the cost of giving up their culture. Civil rights has become the focus. Anti-hate laws as well as laws prohibiting discrimination against Irish Travellers in employment and education have been passed over the course of the last several years. The Irish Travellers have organized to lobby for their rights. On a broader scale, they have joined Romani groups to call attention to the problems of all the nomadic cultures throughout Europe.

The ability of many Irish travellers to adapt economically has been severely frustrated by a number of factors. These include significant limitations placed upon their mobility by the restriction of suitable sites, preventing them from conducting trade, accompanied by competition from an increasing number of businesses established by the 'settled community' in relation to scrap metal, recycling and tarmac.

The impact of these factors on the traveller economy, together with the lack of sufficient serviced sites, has been identified as the key explanation for the increasing marginalisation of Irish travellers in relation to employment, health, housing and education.

Another factor that contributes to the disadvantaged status of the traveling community in Ireland is long-term unemployment. Only 11% of the communities are in paid employment, while 70% of those who are economically active have had no paid work in the last ten years. Poor levels of educational attainment and high levels of illiteracy are also key issues.

The vast majority of travelers hold no formal qualifications, and 92% have no qualification

equivalent to or higher than junior certificate. There are high levels of non-attendance at secondary school and almost nonexistent attendance at tertiary level.

In schools, Travellers are often segregated into separate classes in school, besides the segregation in classes many parents find it difficult to support their child as they did not attend post primary education (for example help with homework)

The effects of this racism are not hard to find. Most Travellers lack self-esteem. Pride in their cultural identity is a very new experience and confined to the minority who have had some adult education. For others, self-destructive and even anti-social behaviour arises out of this total experience of racism.

In order to tackle education problems that travelers experience the government set up a programme called “Youth reach” in different locations across the country, the programme is aimed at early school leavers between the age of 15 to 20, the percentage of females who take advantage of this programe is 63% compared to 37 % male counterparts.

Ethnic minority can be referred to an individual belonging to those ethnic communities which do not make up the majority of the population in any state and also do not form their own nation state anywhere such as the travellers. The Travellers community by characterization is an ethnic group, which the researcher will be using for her essay.

Travellers are an indigenous minority group, their culture is nomadic tradition they portray themselves as a distinct community and people see as them the y are one they are roman catholics .the travellers share a common characteristics, tradition and values which are evident in their organisation of family. they have a distinct lifestyle and culture which based them on a nomadic tradition which set them apart from the settled population, they also have their own language called the ‘cant’ or ‘gammon’ which can be sometimes referred to as

'shelta' this is language that is mostly used by the travellers to speak with each other, travelers marries within their own community. Travellers separate themselves by choice which enables them to retain their identity as an ethnic group. Attitude toward the travellers is negative they suffer pressure and opposition in the society. Historical sources confirm, have been part of Irish society for centuries. Travellers long shared history, cultural values, language, customs and traditions make them a self-defined group, and one which is recognizable and distinct. Their culture and way of life, of which nomadism is an important factor, distinguish them from the settled population.

Poor living conditions play their part. Travellers are eight times more likely to live in overcrowded conditions than the general population of Ireland. Many still have seriously curtailed access to basic amenities such as running water, electricity and sanitation, including some of those living on serviced sites.

In 1998, Parliament passed a law requiring local authorities to provide accommodation for their travellers populations by 2004. For travelers living on the road, "accommodation" means resources at maintained "halting sites," like hot and cold running water, garbage collection and enough space for children to play safely. That would resolve much of the hostility from the rest of Irish society, for the reason that conflicts usually arise when travellers stop in communities worried that they will leave an unpleasant mess when they move on.

But few of Ireland's city or county councils have even completed a plan on how to provide traveller accommodation. In 1995, a government task force recommended that 3,100 halting-site berths should be provided by 2000. Only 127 were completed.

Moreover, one mainstream politician has proposed new legislation that would increase the power of local governments to evict travellers from areas where they are not wanted including confiscating their caravans even if those authorities are not providing the halting

sites that are required by law.

Travellers Health

The Department of Health in 1994 published a national health strategy it recognized equity as one of the three fundamental principles: “The pursuit of equity must examine variations in the health status of different groups in society and how these might be addressed”. (Quinn, 2005, p. 240).

The National Health Strategy focused on travellers health and agreed to publish a policy based on the task force recommendations. It focused on Travellers participation in health promotion, to support and allow Travellers the use of primary healthcare services and plan easy services under the General Medical Services scheme.

According to Fay in Farrell *et al* 2001 social exclusion and inferiority among the Travellers is seen as the reason why they don't participate equally in the society due to the hostility of the majority population towards them.

According to the black report 1980 “from birth to old age those at the bottom of the scale have much poorer health and quality of life than those at the top. Gender, area of residence and ethnic origin also have a deep impact” (Farrell, 2001, p. 100).

In 1986 Economic and Social Research Institute reported that:

- Over ½ the Traveller population are under 15 years of age and 40% are under 10 years of age.
- Up to the age of 24 years, there is a higher ratio of Travellers compared to settled people. After that the ratio falls sharply.

- Only 5% of Travellers live up to 50 years old.
- 1% of Travellers live to be 65 years compared to 11% of the settled population.

Travellers health is greatly worse compared to the settled community. Travellers as distinct cultural group have a distinctive health requirements and needs exceptional consideration in the health service, there is a gap between the Travellers health and the settled population the 1987 Health Status Study report lead to worries over the Travellers health the study which shows that:

- Traveller infant mortality is 3 times higher than the national average.
- Settled men have a life expectancy of 75 years compared to Traveller men who have a life expectancy of 65 years.
- Settled women have a life expectancy of 78 years while the travellers women life expectancy is 65 years.
- Travellers death rate is significantly higher for all causes of death among than the settled community.
- The infant mortality rate for travellers children is more than twice that of the majority population,
- The life expectancy of travellers is far below the nation average is around 20% lower than that of the general population.
- Only 10% of the traveller population is over 40 years of age and only 1% are aged over 65.
- Travelers of all ages had very high mortality rates compared to the irish population
- Travelers had more than doubled the national of still birth.

- Travelers had higher rates of morbidity for all causes of death
- Travellers women lived on average 12 years less than settled peers

Murphy CM *etel* claimed that Travellers are only now reaching the life expectancy that the settled population reached in 1940. Travellers health are affected by some issues which includes accommodation, discrimination and lack of awareness of services and barriers that prevents them from getting the services. The sites allocated to Travellers are not suitable “they are beside dumps with noxious fumes and vermin; graveyard or main roads with higher risk of accidental injury”. (Murphy CM, 2000, P.128).

Travellers sites are often located far away from health centres, no public transport and no postal service. Postmen do not deliver post to sites that are unofficial they only go to official sites when they have a lot of post which means sometimes they get the post too late and appointments are missed and the hospitals will conclude that Travellers never keep to their appointments. Due to the poor living conditions of the Travellers it makes them suffer from more diseases and illness they tend to look after their health because they find it hard to keep to a doctors appointment because they lack facilities such as transportation to meet up to the appointments.

Experience of prejudice and discrimination by Travellers affect every aspect of their life such as doctors not accepting to enrol them. “a lot of doctors refuse to take Travellers on their list, this means you have no way of getting treatment for your family when they are sick and you have to wait until the health board forces a doctor to take you on and this can take months”. (Murphy, 2000, p. 129).

According to Fay in Farrell et al. 2001 social exclusion and inferiority among the Travellers is seen as the reason why they don't participate equally in the society due to the hostility of

the majority population towards them.

Travellers Accommodation

Hayes stated that the housing (Traveller accommodation) Act 1998 was the first legislation put in place to address Travellers accommodation. To access Travellers need for halting sites in their area .It require each local authority in five years to state how the accommodation needs will be fulfilled in the Travellers area. Even with the legislation there has not been improvement in the situation of the Travellers.

Between the period “1995 and 2002 only 129 new halting sites bays were produced out of the 2,200 units needed. (Haye,2006, p. 264). The number fall short numbers of unit needed . The government is behind their promise because only 111 of the needed 2,200 Traveller units have been made available. The section 32 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998. The Act gives more power to the local authorities to move Travellers against their will, and without an alternative accommodation. “The Irish Traveller Movement conducted a telephone survey from the period August 2001 to August 2002 and found that 471 families had been served with notices to move on without been offered any alternative accommodation“. (ITM)

According to the IT M the United Nation Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Right considered force eviction to be: “the permanent or temporary removal against the will of individual” and from the home and or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to appropriate forms of legal or other protection”

The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Acts, 2002 was introduced to criminalise anyone who trespasses on a private and public land. Section 24 which amends the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act, 1994 provides:

“a person without the consent of the owner, shall not enter or occupy any land or bring on that land any object which might either damage the land or effect any amenity attaching to the land or prevent other people using the land” (Irish Traveller Movement).

According to ITM the law was introduced when over 1,000 Traveller families were camping on their own on a public land they lacked accommodation because there was no progress in providing a temporary accommodation, 1,200 Traveller families living in camps do not have access to basic amenities including water, toilets and waste collection.

The Policy was introduced without consulting the Travellers organisation, the Act discriminates against Travellers nomadic culture as Travellers will not be able to move, and they are afraid that staying back would be committing a criminal offence, they will be prosecuted to pay a fine and three months imprisonment. It is vital point out that the Government fundamental duty by law is to provide for the ‘annual patterns of movement of Travellers’ (Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998), which too they have failed to do.

Travellers in education

Travellers educational status is considerably lower than that of their settled peers and unmatched by any other community in Irish society, the census in 2002 revealed that for 54.8 percent of travellers, primary schools education was the highest level of education they obtained and that 63.2 percent of traveler children under the age of 15 had left school. It is argued that a contributing factor to low levels of attainment of travellers in education is lack of visibility of traveler culture within the school system. This may contribute to feelings of isolation experienced by travellers children. Many travellers children are aware that their identity will pose a problem for them in school. Furthermore, it is difficult for travellers to see the positive outcome in staying on in mainstream education as many travellers experience

discrimination in trying to obtain employment

Employment

Traveller participation in the mainstream labour force is very low. This low participation is attributed to a number of factors: a preference for self-employment and work in the Traveller economy, discrimination, lack of skills and qualifications, low pay and poor work conditions, nomadism. The vast majority of Traveller households are dependent on social welfare.

Discrimination and racism

Travellers experience of racism and discrimination can lead to feeling of being a social outcast, having low self-esteem travellers experience discrimination on a daily basis for example,

Travellers are sometimes refused entry or access to public places such as shops, cafes, cinemas, launderettes, leisure facilities, clubs and so on, and even some individual experience verbal or some form of physical abuse because of their identity. The travellers have also reported incidents of insurance companies refusing to provide them with motor insurance cover, some doctors refuse to treat them.

At an institutional level travellers experience segregation in the provision of social welfare services. they are asked to sign on, at different times to the rest of the country and in Dublin all Travelers who claim Supplementary Welfare have to do so in one separate health centre, regardless of where they live. Reality is this is done to provide them with a service that respects their nomadic lifestyle; however nothing could be further from the truth, which is that it is done in order to discriminate against them more efficiently. Social contact with

settled people is minimal because Travelers have been denied such contact. (Lentin R. & Mcveigh R. 2002 pg 57)

It is an unquestionable, although disheartening, fact that the Travellers have a long history of being subject to blatant discrimination and racism, and it is not a secret that many people in Ireland still hold to these behaviors today. It is important to note that the type of marginalization that the Travellers have experienced has changed over the years. Historically, the Travellers were viewed as a distinct minority group, but were not necessarily explicitly discriminated against. This is because they, for the most part, remained largely unseen and ignored by those in mainstream Irish society. However, beginning in the mid-twentieth century, increased efforts were made to assimilate the Travellers into this society. This is the point at which hostilities against the Travellers became more widespread, and at which the Travellers began to be subjected to blatant racism (Fanning B 2002)

The marginalisation of Travellers in Irish society is acknowledged by people of varying political positions and approaches. Past policies, while designed to overcome this marginalisation, have sometimes exacerbated the situation because of a failure to grasp the nature of the oppression experienced by Travellers. In particular, the denial of discrimination and racism, combined with a racialisation process, contributed to that marginalisation. In order to address this situation there is need for a comprehensive approach involving statutory and voluntary bodies. Legislation, information, and awareness-raising are needed to protect people and to overcome obstacles to equality. In the context of a growing acknowledgement of the dangers of racism throughout the European Union, there is an additional impetus and opportunity to face up to this challenge in Ireland, as well as throughout Europe.

Literature review

Discrimination

In Ireland the 1995 task force report outlines the different types of discrimination experienced by travellers at the individual or interpersonal level and at the institutional level. According to the report, this discrimination experienced by travellers can be direct and indirect, intentional or unintentional.

Murphy CM & McDonagh (2000 pg 115), stated that Travellers in Irish settled society suffer from the experience of prejudice. From this prejudice comes an action which is termed discrimination. Discrimination is the acting out of peoples' prejudice, which is not just a concept but a lived reality for travellers. This reality is well documented by surveys. One such survey carried out by Irish traveller movement quotes the following results

The main sources of that discrimination are reported as:

- Pub owners (71%)
- Owners of discos and clubs (40%)
- The Gardai (38%)
- Shop owners (37%)
- County councils (33%)
- Housing authorities (33%).

Research into attitudes towards Travellers was also carried out in Dublin in 1972-73 and 1988-89 by Michael Mac Greil as part of wider research into prejudice in Ireland. He used the concept of social distance as the basis for his work. This is a measure of the degree of intimacy to which a person is willing to admit a member of a particular group. For instance Traveller are often called cheats and criminals. It has been assumed that Travellers choose to live in dirty condition without respect for their surroundings or others around them. These myths and misunderstandings promote racism and discrimination, and have prevented Travellers from achieving equality in accommodation, health, education and other public and private services.

A subsequent survey carried out in Dublin in the summer of 1998 by Philip Curry, which included a question asking respondents to complete a social distance scale, showed that on

average, the group which was perceived to be the farthest from the individual was the Travellers. Given that Travellers are formally recognised as an ethnic group, prejudicial attitudes expressed towards them are therefore racist. A nationwide survey by Citizen Traveller of over 1,000 people in January 2000, which examined attitudes to Travellers & minority groups, showed that 42% of the population feel unfavourably disposed towards Travellers.

The people who are negatively disposed toward Travellers tend to be more prejudiced than the average person, but that their prejudice tends to be accentuated in the case of Travellers. Irish times 16/10/04. Research by Sinead Casey and Michael O'Connell published in(2000) into Traveller living in Ireland sited in S. Murphy (2000) showed that 'Outright racist insults e.g. knackers' had been experience by 64.2% of people interviewed; 'racist jokes or snide remarks' by 45.8% of people interviewed and 'actual physical attacks' by 16.7% of people interviewed.

Anti-Traveller Discrimination and Racism

Racism describes the practice of a dominant group, the settled community, that uses its power to block the minority group, the travellers, from practising their ethnicity, from living their culture, or ultimately, from being travellers. This is a practice that labels culture of travellers as deviance and seeks to impose the values of the dominant group on the travellers. It is the racism of the settled majority that is at the root of the economic, political and cultural exclusion of the travellers (Pavee Point 1992.)

In a public attitudes survey published by the governments 'Know Racism' campaign in February 2004 72% of respondents agreed that the settled community do not want members of the Traveller community living amongst them, while 48% disagreed that Traveller make a positive contribution to Irish society. For the Traveller Community, this forced exclusion from Irish society is something over which they have no control or choice and comes within

the definitions of discrimination or on occasion racism. Statistics are available to reflect these levels of discrimination. For example, 59% would not welcome a Traveller as a next door neighbour and 48% would not consider a Traveller competent to serve on a jury. MacGreil in *Prejudice in Ireland Revisited* (1996) states that Irish travellers are still seen and treated as a lower caste in society. According to his research findings there has been a substantial deterioration in attitudes towards travellers since 1972, leading him to conclude that Irish people's prejudice against travellers is one of caste-like apartheid.

O'Connell 1997, local politicians in the following news papers account illustrate how the negative portrayal of Irish travelers contributes to the ideological racist discourse. Under a section on crime in *Sunday Independent*, 1(4 April 1996) remarks of a Fianna Fail councilor at a Waterford County Council meeting quotes:

“The sooner the shotguns are at the ready and these travelling people are put out of county the better. They are not our people, they aren't native.”

They are dirty and unclean. Travelling people have no respect for themselves and their children (county councillor quoted in the *Irish times*, 13th March, 1991).

These people have been a constant headache for towns and cities throughout the country (county councillor quoted in the *cork examiner*, 13th June, 1990).

Good relations knackered: the conflict is not between settled and traveller. Its between decent people and knackers (the *Sunday independent*, 31 august 1996).

They are a constant problem, moving from one open area to another and creating problems (county councillor quoted in the *cork examiner*, 13th June, 1990).

These samples of media coverage of travellers provide some indication of how travellers are perceived and treated in Irish society O'Connor (1994) argues that such coverage and the social relations associated with it constitute a form of racism.

Policies

Government policies and official reports which since the 1980's have begun to recognize Traveller culture however have been directed towards the values and interests of the dominant culture. These include official approaches to the education and accommodation needs of Travellers. While recognising Traveller identity the approach has not been culturally appropriate for the Traveller community. More recent reports such as the Task Force Report on the Travelling Community (1995) seek to acknowledge Traveller culture and identity in a positive light and to address Traveller issues from a human rights perspective. The Task Force Report also made a number of recommendations that would challenge racism and discrimination by protecting Travellers in the law and providing a system of redress.

Membership of the Traveller community was identified as one of the nine grounds for discrimination under the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000. During 2003 the Equality Tribunal 2003 decided 68 cases on the ground of membership of the Traveller community. Only two of these cases were brought under the Employment Equality Act 1998 while the remainder were heard under the Equal Status Act 2000. Refusal of service in licensed premises accounted for a large proportion of the Equal Status cases on the Traveller ground in 2003; however the jurisdiction to hear case in relation to licensed premises has now been moved from the Equality Tribunal to the District Court (The Equality Tribunal, Legal Review 2003).

Minister O'Donoghue declared in April 1998 that the rise in expression of racism was "a matter of considerable concern and regret to all responsible people" and that combating racism was "definitely" on the Government agenda, The government has announced its intention to reform the prohibition on Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, thou it gave no indication of the nature of the reforms or a timetable for them.

In February 2000, the government accepted the recommendation of an inter-department

group on the integration of travellers to run a national anti-racism public awareness campaign. This was to be launched in autumn. The Government came out in 2002 with a broad strategy to combat racism which includes the following:

- The integration of anti-racism training into all areas of education.
- The inclusion of the issue of racism in the curricula of the formal education system and in the training programmes for police, the judiciary, government administrative officials and other public officials.
- A review of curricula and teaching methods in order to eliminate prejudices and racist attitudes.
- A reform of the criminal justice system to develop an internal culture of anti-racism.

Traveller Parents Perceives Education

Bhopal (2006) argues that many travellers parents perceive education as a stepping stone to enable their children to gain more respect in society, however as Pardifield and Jourdan point out attitudinal differences exist even within families

Levinson and Spakles (2000) observed that conflicting responses from some individuals who, whilst recognising the value of education, remain obstructive in terms of involvement in the education system that could tarnish the outlook and behaviour of their children.

Lloyd et al. (1999) and Derrington and Kendal 2004 reported that teachers' expectations which were stereotyped and grounded in the assumption that travellers' pupils are inherently disadvantaged because of their cultural background.

Stereotyped beliefs can also depress teachers' expectations in relation to attainment.

Derrington and Kendal (2007) noted that teachers' expectations of travellers' pupils were

unreasonably low that even in schools where teachers' expectations were recognised as an issue, there were rarely any strategies in place to address this.

Health

According to Parry et al (2004) that say that health problems among travellers are between two and five times more common than in the settled community. Power (2004) also agrees that travellers in England experience significantly poorer health than the settled population.

Parry et al. (2004) found that:

- Health problems amongst Gypsy Travellers are between two and five times more common than in the settled community;
- Gypsy Travellers are more likely to be anxious, have breathing problems (including asthma and bronchitis) and chest pain. They are also more likely to suffer from miscarriages, still births, the death of young babies and older children; and
- Gypsy Traveller women are twice as likely to be anxious than Gypsy Traveller men.

Lack of suitable living conditions and basic amenities impacts on the health of Traveller families and in Northern Ireland there are high levels of ill-health (Reynolds et al., 2003; Power, 2004). Gypsies and Travellers in England are reported to experience

significantly poorer health than the settled population (Power, 2004). Adult Gypsy Travellers nationally are also reported to experience higher levels of stress and have a far lower life expectancy than the settled population (Lawrence, 2005; Power, 2004).

However, Lawrence (2005) notes that, according to recent studies, ante-natal support is not reaching all Gypsy Traveller women, citing evidence that, in 2004, stillbirths amongst the Traveller population were identified as 17 times higher than the national average, while infant mortality was reported to be 12 times higher. Gypsy Travellers also suffer more miscarriages and still births than other minority ethnic groups. Reasons put forward for this include lack of uptake of ante-natal care due to fear of certain services and reluctance to discuss health issues with strangers and difficulties in accessing care. Also highlighted are stressful environmental factors such as lack of access to good facilities (most Traveller sites in England are located some distance from local services, while many unauthorised sites lack even basic facilities such as toilets or refuse collection) and the threat of eviction (Lawrence, 2005)

There will be null hypothesis; the researcher predicts that there will be a statistical significant difference in society attitudes towards the travelling community in the Dublin area.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire

The researcher designed the questionnaire and gives its title society attitude towards travellers in Dublin area

Measure

The researcher will be using quantitative method of research which is primary survey, and its aim is to measure, quantify and categorise using a questionnaire to measure the opinion and attitude of male and female towards the travelling community in the Dublin area. The questionnaires will contained 10 question, five positive and five negative questions. Give some examples of your questions, how are they scored? ‘Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree’ to ‘strongly disagree’what will be the range of scores??

Design

The research was a quantitative study, were a descriptive statistics was used to show the percentage and frequency in males and females in the questions answered.

Procedure

The researcher gathered the all participants and briefed them all what the research is about and give them a clear understanding of what is involved, also inform them their right to decline to take part in or to withdraw from the research programme. In accordance with their duty of confidentiality, the researcher will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all records or information produced in the course of this research, with participants and informs them of any changes which might take place following the initial discussion and agreement. and also the avoid any thing that could influence the result e.g. like people known to the

researcher will be avoided to participate as the researcher believed that this might influence them in their decision, to notes of the level of noise, tiredness, normal stress and health condition and the temperature will be taken into consideration. The researcher will print 200 copies of questionnaires, which will be for “the older adult and young adult” for completion, 100 for younger adults and 100 for older adults.

At the beginning of the questionnaire the researcher was introduced and the questionnaire was given a title and the instruction on how to fill the questionnaire was given in the following way:

SA – Strongly agree, A – Agree; N- Neutral D – Disagree, SD – Strongly Disagree.

The researcher advises the participant to tick appropriate box.

At the end of the questionnaire the researcher thanked the participant. 100 copies were handed out to each group to fill and all two hundred copies were collected and scored using the following score for negative statement: SA – 1; A – 2; N -3; D -4; SD – 5.

Ethics: there are values that the researcher must uphold when carrying out a research briefed the participant about the nature of the research and what the information and data collected will be used for and the participant consented to take part the research. After briefing the researcher assured the participant that the information and data collected will not be identifiable and that it will not be used for another purpose than the one intended unless if consent has been obtained.

Results

The overall age mean for the 200 participants range from a minimum of 18 to a maximum of 65, having an overall mean of 37.11 and a standard deviation of 12.30. Table 1 and table 2 as seen below shows the frequencies and percentage of males and females in question one and question two.

Table 1: Shows respondents answer to question 1: All travelers are unable to care for their children.

Gender		Frequency	Percent
female	Strongly agree	5	4.9
	agree	22	21.4
	neutral	38	36.9
	disagree	26	25.2
	Strongly disagree	12	11.7
	Total	103	100.0
male	Strongly agree	3	3.1
	agree	26	26.8
	neutral	28	28.9
	disagree	29	29.9
	Strongly disagree	11	11.3
	Total	97	100.0

As shown in table one for the first question females scored a higher % than males in the answers given, were females strongly agreed to the question 4.9% and males showed a percentage of 3.1. Females also showed a higher % than males with regards to strongly disagree were females scored a % of 11.7 and males 11.3.

Table 2: Shows respondents answer to question 2: All travelers are uneducated

Gender		Frequency	Percent
female	Strongly agree	10	9.7
	agree	34	33.0
	neutral	24	23.3
	disagree	23	22.3
	Strongly disagree	12	11.7
	Total	103	100.0
male	Strongly agree	5	5.2
	agree	25	25.8
	neutral	28	28.9
	disagree	31	32.0
	Strongly disagree	7	7.2
	Total	97	100.0

Table 2 as seen above shows that females also scored higher than males in question 2 for strongly agree and strongly disagree. Females showed a % of 9.7 and males 5.2 in the strongly agree answer, for the strongly disagree females scored a % of 11.7 while males scored 7.2%.

This is a reoccurring trend of answer in all ten questions as shown in the output in the appendix that females score higher in all questions as they are more passionate about their answers than males, which can also suggest that females are more affected by this issue than males.

Discussion

The aim of the study was to assess society attitude towards traveller community in Dublin area. The result showed an overall age mean for the 200 participants range from a minimum of 18 to a maximum of 65, having an overall mean of 37.11 and a standard deviation of 12.30. A reoccurring trend of answers in all ten questions as shown in the output in the appendix that females score higher in all questions as they are more passionate about their answers than males, which can also suggest that females are more affected by this issue than males.

The researcher predicts that there will be a statistical significant difference in society attitudes towards the travelling community in the Dublin area, thus the study supports the original prediction. The main issues affecting Travellers is education, accommodation, health, and racism and discrimination. The accommodation issue is very straightforward: there aren't enough units of Traveller-specific accommodation for Travellers in this country. In 1985 the government task force recommended 3,000 units be provided for Traveller accommodation by the year 2,000; to date, only 123 units have been provided.

In terms of education there are a number of issues; one is that in the past Travellers have been refused entry to some schools. Where Travellers have been accepted in the schools they have been put into segregated classes. In terms of the health issues that are affecting Travellers in this country, the infant mortality rate is three times the national average per thousand live births. Again, that can be related directly back to the accommodation situation. If you are living on a site with no toilets and no water and no electricity, it makes access to health services very difficult. People do not want to be going to health clinics if they do not have basic amenities that are going to allow them to look after themselves and wash themselves. Also, the life expectancy age for Travellers is 55 years, the age it was for settled people in the 1940s. And again when you see the improvements of accommodation and the improvements in lifestyle and eating habits, you can see the change in terms of settled people's life

expectancy age. the department of education that allows discrimination at our schools that refuse service to Travellers. You have insurance companies that are allowed to either charge Travellers an excess what theyre charging settled people or else refuse Travellers cover for their car. The only other group of people in particular on the insurance list I think are people who are in certain professions, like people in the entertainment business. But the only group of people who are on it because of their ethnicity are Travellers, and so it works as a blanket discrimination against the whole Traveller community.

You also have TDs and government people in this country who will refuse to accept or acknowledge that Travellers are facing discrimination and racism. That has changed somewhat. The 1995 report of the task force, which acknowledges Travellers culture and way of life, has changed the perception that the government has had in relation to Travellers. It doesnt go far enough -- I mean it doesnt name Travellers as an ethnic minority group -- but it does at least acknowledge that Travellers have their own culture and a separate way of life, and that part of that culture is nomadism. So I think that slowly government departments will change their practice and thinking in relation to Travellers and make sure that they provide for Travellers in a culturally appropriate way. But I think its a fair bit down the road in terms of where were looking at now. (Fanning B 2002 pg 162).

Previous study done over the years have suggested the importance of thid issue in our societ which needs to be thoroughly investigated. According to Parry et al (2004) the health problem amongs travellers are between two and five more common than the settled community. Power (2004) also agree that travellers in enlang experience sinificantly poorer health than the settled population. Adult Gypsy Travellers nationally are also reported to experience higher levels of stress and have a far lower life expectancy than the settled population (Lawrence, 2005; Power, 2004).

However, Lawrence (2005) notes that, according to recent studies, ante-natal support is not reaching all Gypsy Traveller women, citing evidence that, in 2004, stillbirths amongst the Traveller population were identified as 17 times higher than the national average, while infant mortality was reported to be 12 times higher. Gypsy Travellers also suffer more miscarriages and still births than other minority ethnic groups. Reasons put forward for this include lack of uptake of ante-natal care due to fear of certain services and reluctance to discuss health issues with strangers and difficulties in accessing care. Also highlighted are stressful environmental factors such as lack of access to good facilities (most Traveller sites in England are located some distance from local services, while many unauthorised sites lack even basic facilities such as toilets or refuse collection) and the threat of eviction (Lawrence, 2005)

Bhopal (2006) argues that many travellers parents perceive education as a stepping stone to enable their children to gain more respect in society, however as Pardifield and Jourdan point out attitudinal differences exist even within families

Levinson and Spakles (2000) observed that conflicting responses from some individuals who, whilst recognising the value of education, remain obstructive in terms of involvement in education system that could tarnish the outlook and behaviour of their children.

Lloyd et al. (1999) and Derrington and Kendal 2004 reported that teachers' expectations which were stereotyped and grounded in the assumption that travellers' pupils are inherently disadvantaged because of their cultural background.

Stereotyped beliefs can also depress teachers' expectations in relation to attainment.

Derrington and Kendal (2007) noted that teachers' expectations to travellers' pupils were

unreasonably low that even in schools where teachers understood expectation was recognised as an issue, there were rarely any strategies in place to address this.

In a public attitudes survey published by the government's 'Know Racism' campaign in February 2004 72% of respondents agreed that the settled community do not want members of the Traveller community living amongst them, while 48% disagreed that Travellers make a positive contribution to Irish society. For the Traveller Community, this forced exclusion from Irish society is something over which they have no control or choice and comes within the definitions of discrimination or on occasion racism. Statistics are available to reflect these levels of discrimination. For example, 59% would not welcome a Traveller as a next door neighbour and 48% would not consider a Traveller competent to serve on a jury. MacGreal in *Prejudice in Ireland Revisited* (1996) states that Irish travellers are still seen and treated as a lower caste in society. According to his research findings there has been a substantial deterioration in attitudes towards travellers since 1972, leading him to conclude that Irish people's prejudice against travellers is one of caste-like apartheid. A subsequent survey carried out in Dublin in the summer of 1998 by Philip Curry, which included a question asking respondents to complete a social distance scale, showed that on average, the group which was perceived to be the farthest from the individual was the Travellers. Given that Travellers are formally recognised as an ethnic group, prejudicial attitudes expressed towards them are therefore racist. A nationwide survey by Citizen Traveller of over 1,000 people in January 2000, which examined attitudes to Travellers & minority groups, showed that 42% of the population feel unfavourably disposed towards Travellers.

Conclusion

The marginalisation of Travellers in Irish society is acknowledged by people of varying political positions and approaches. Past policies, while designed to overcome this marginalisation, have sometimes exacerbated the situation because of a failure to grasp the nature of the oppression experienced by Travellers. In particular, the denial of discrimination and racism, combined with a racialisation process, contributed to that marginalisation.

There were several limitations to this study as there were more females than males which might have affected the study. Other variables should have also been considered when running the test. Future studies need to be done in order to fully assess this issue and to aid this minority community, so as to also help the government and create awareness to improve education, jobs, accommodation, health and so on.

In order to address this situation there is need for a comprehensive approach involving statutory and voluntary bodies. Legislation, information, and awareness-raising are needed to protect people and to overcome obstacles to equality.

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