

# Barriers of teaching revealed by teens

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Researcher Pratibha Hare and her son Max.

British teenagers of South Asian origin have revealed some of the reasons why they are put off entering the teaching profession, new research has revealed.

A lack of positive role models, perceptions about stress and workload, plus salary and [career](#) aspirations deter them from becoming teachers, according to University of Derby researcher Pratibha Hare. Yet her research also found that the teenagers surveyed value the importance of the teaching profession and feel the classroom environment would be enriched with more teachers from ethnic minorities.

The 41-year-old mother-of-one from Duffield, was inspired to undertake

the research after finding little published literature about the barriers to teaching in the UK among ethnic minorities.

Pratibha has just been awarded top marks for her final dissertation as part of her BA (Hons) Education Studies degree and will graduate at the University's Annual Awards Ceremonies with First Class Honours.

Her study entitled: *It isn't just a white profession - exploring the under-representation of ethnic minorities within the teaching profession* was welcomed by her University tutor Ann Kenny who said: "Further research into the under-representation of teachers from the British Asian population is critical in addressing issues of diversity and inclusion in education."

She interviewed 40 White British, British Pakistani and British Indian sixth-formers at a sixth form college in Derbyshire about their future career aspirations as part of her research and also conducted a focus group.

She wanted to discover:

- What influences British South Asians when considering their career choices - would they consider teaching, and if not, why?
- What are their perceptions of the teaching profession?
- How important is it that the teaching profession reflects the ethnic diversity of British society?

Of the 18 White British [students](#) surveyed, 44% said they would consider teaching as a career. Of the 22 students of British Indian and British Pakistani origin, just 27% said they would consider teaching.

When analysing a lack of successful role models for teenagers, Pratibha found that of the 18 White British students, four of their parents worked

in the teaching profession, while of the 22 students of British Indian and British Pakistani origin, just one parent worked in teaching.

She said: "The research offers an insight into the feelings of teenagers today at a time when they are considering their career options.

"It highlights not only reasons why teenagers, especially from ethnic minorities are not choosing [teaching](#) as a career but also highlights that more needs to be done to attract them to the profession otherwise the under representation of [ethnic minority](#) teachers is a trend that may well continue.

"Feedback from the students overwhelmingly indicated that if they had a greater ethnic mix of teachers bringing a range of cultural perspectives to lessons this would enrich their classroom environment and provide role models that all students could identify with."

Pratibha would like to build on her research findings and is considering working in career guidance or mentoring for young people from ethnic minorities.

Provided by University of Derby

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