

EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARS

Jaziea Farag is an award-winning Children's author, an Education Advisor for Wales for a Fostering Agency and Speech and Language Specialist Teacher. She is an Early Years and Racial Trauma Consultant and currently completing her PhD. Her research interests include creating feelings of belonging for families in Early Years settings as well as educational and vocational aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic learners and the links with Racial Trauma.

She has been teaching for over a decade in Wales and formerly taught during the Educational Reform in Abu Dhabi and as a part of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Team for a Local Education Authority. She is an active champion of Anti racist practice in education and works closely with DARPL to facilitate training for Governors, Practitioners and Senior Leaders to nurture their journey to anti-racism. A highlight of her career so far was being asked to set up the first Teacher Network for BERA.

During my years of teaching and now as a consultant my thoughts on the fundamentals of how children learn have stayed predominantly the same. I have always considered that children learn best when they feel safe and valued. I strongly believe that it is meaningless planning for learning unless you first plan how you are going to meet these basic needs for all children in your setting. To do that, I feel that practitioners need to focus not just on the resources, environment and learning experiences but the values, wellbeing and self-awareness of all the adults who are interacting with the little people in your care. I think we sometimes underestimate and undervalue the power of a positive role model and the impact of the connections they build with young people. I therefore always try to reflect on how I am feeling and my responses when I enter a classroom or setting as I truly believe that an enthusiastic adult that shows interest can really spark engagement and therefore learning. Another area of education that I always try to incorporate into my practice no matter where I am working is the involvement of the wider community around a child and ensuring that I am not working in isolation, this should include families and members of the community.

My first memories of school are great ones. Laughter, friendships and lots of outdoor play. I attended a Primary School with a high level of culture and diversity in terms of its pupils until I was 7, and then we moved out of the area, so I attended a very different school from Year 2 onwards. Moving to this school was the first time I became aware of my race and have vivid memories of the first day and several events that followed where I felt othered, alone or very 'on display.' Through the entirety of my education, I was never taught by anyone that looked like me and it is only looking back and reflecting, that I realise the impact that had on me personally and the influence it had on my teaching philosophy. It led me to really spend time when I was in the classroom planning for a diverse and inclusive education, but it wasn't always easy to find the information or resources particularly in Wales. This is when my interest in the family as a source of support and learning began and the quest to ensure that all children get to see themselves reflected in their education. A lot of my professional choices have stemmed from those values and this project looking at Educational Scholars has just filled me with joy and 'a-ha' moments as well as more questions. We need to give learners a fuller education so that they can make their own informed decisions.

Jaziea Farag



DR. INEZ BEVERLEY PROSSER



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Inez Beverly Prosser (1895 - 1934) was a psychologist, teacher and school administrator. Prosser was one of eleven siblings and the oldest girl. She expressed a keen interest in education from a young age and was the first of her family to go to university where she earned a degree in teacher training.

During this time Prosser created a college fund for her younger siblings and six of her eleven siblings went on to earn degrees.

She became a teacher and then an assistant headteacher in a few segregated schools in Texas.

In 1927, she received her master's degree in Educational Psychology and was a lecturer at Tillotson College and then Tougaloo College.

In 1933, she became one of the first Black women to achieve a Ph.D in Psychology.

DR. INEZ BEVERLEY PROSSER'S WORK

Dr. Prosser's most influential work in the world of education and psychology was her doctoral 1933 dissertation titled 'The Non-Academic Development of Negro Children in Mixed and Segregated Schools'.

This study focused on the experiences of Black children in segregated and 'mixed' schools and how these experiences impacted their personality and mental health. The study was an extension of research carried out by Mary Crowley who compared the academic achievement of Black children attending segregated and 'mixed' schools.

The size of the study was small, with Dr. Prosser interviewing 64 Black children, and because of this she tried not to make any absolute conclusions. However, what she found was that Black children who attended mixed schools often felt marginalised. She believed that Black children received a more nurturing environment and balanced curriculum in segregated schools. She also noted that children's experiences in mixed and segregated schools would vary, with some Black children coping well in mixed schools depending on their personality.

When one considers how vitally important the emotional reactions are to an individual life, he is persuaded to recommend that personality might justly have precedence over curriculum and character growth about academic training. The school first of all should be a place where everyone has an opportunity of forming the habit of happiness early in his career to the end of consummating a well integrated life.

(Dr. I. B. Prosser)

Dr. Prosser's work highlighted that race and racism greatly impact the development of a child's personality.

Her study has hugely influenced research on the impact of segregation including racial identity and social and education reform.

REFLECTIONS ON DR. INEZ BEVERLEY PROSSER'S WORK

What does 'the habit of happiness' mean to you? How do you and your team support all children to develop this habit?



We all have biases. Take a moment now to think honestly about what your own biases are. Carry this reflection into your practice as an educator - what do you notice? What impact might your biases be having on children?



What change might you make in your practice in the light of Dr Prosser's work?



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