

Crossing the Ethnic Boundaries: Diversity Promotion Effort of Museum Professionals in the United Kingdom

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1. Introduction

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has put its place of activities towards emerging countries. Collaboration across borders has been spread over many countries including successful conferences in Zambia (2014) and Taiwan (2015). However, this is about the museums versus museums external relationship. How about the internal ethnic relationship in the US and European museums?

In the US, the Mellon Foundation concluded in its report “Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey” that the US museums are still staffed mainly by Non-Hispanic White with the underrepresented minorities. “72% of Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) museum staff is Non-Hispanic White, and 28% belong to historically underrepresented minorities” against “the American population is 62% Non-Hispanic White” (Mellon Foundation 2015,3). What is the situation in UK?

(1) Firstly, the methodology upon which this research depends is explained. (2) Secondly, the UK policy to promote diversity is scrutinized. (3) Thirdly, the response of ethnic minorities is analyzed. Followed by its influence on museum exhibition contents and visitor ethnicity figures (4, 5). Lastly, (6) possibility of further improvement is examined.

2. Methodology

The focus of this research is on museum diversity promotion effort in UK. This paper aim to find out what diversity promotion effort has been taken in terms of staff demography, and what is the response of ethnic minorities. The author also examines its impact on exhibition contents and visitors from ethnic minority background.

Diversity Management is a concept of Human Resource Management where organizations with diversified workforce are supposed to improve performance. The author used Sandell’s conceptual framework of diversity management in museums where three elements of workforce diversity, collections/programs diversity, and audience diversity are interrelated. (Sandell 2015, 216)

The research was carried out from two angles; i.e. UK policy maker's intention (rhetoric) and each museum's action (reality). Towards this end, the following research questions are set;

- How is the idea of diversity promotion reflected in policy making in UK?
- What diversity promotion measures are taken by each museum as a practitioner?
- What is the numerical response of ethnic minorities to those efforts?
- How the staff diversity affected museum exhibition contents and visitors from ethnic minority background?
- What is the implication for the future?

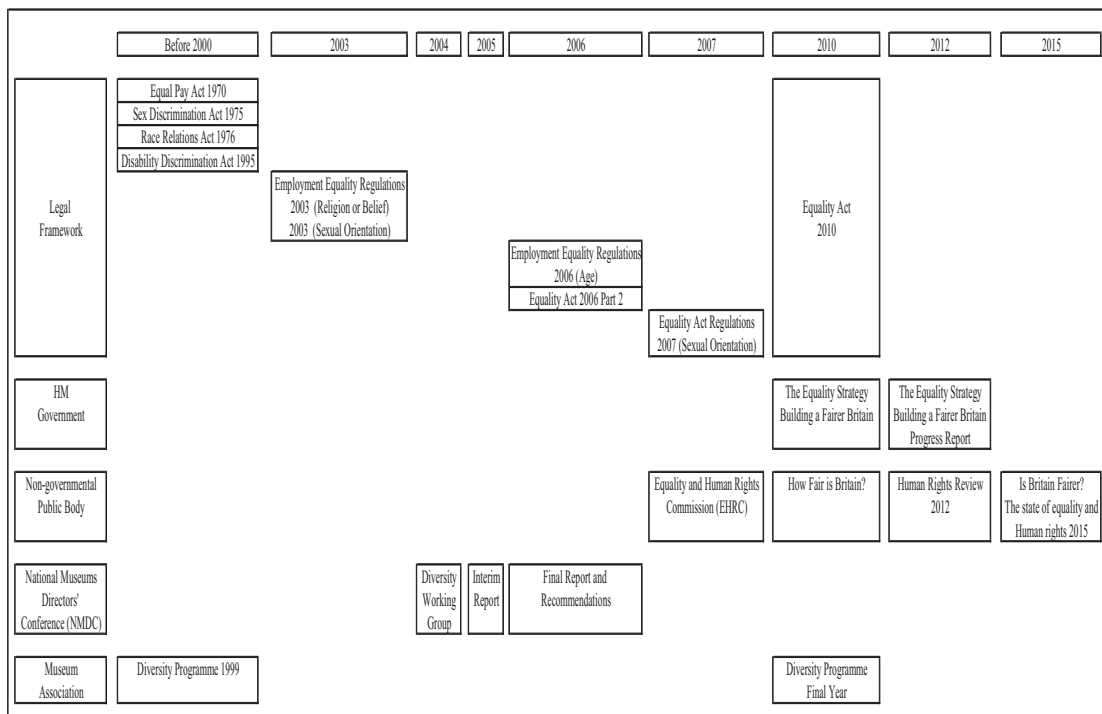
The author reviewed the government papers and reports, followed by major museum's diversity policy documents. The numerical response was verified by UK demography statistics and staff diversity figures of museums. The author also verified the exhibition contents and the transition of visitor figures of ethnic minorities.

3. Diversity promotion effort in UK

3.1. Legal Framework, UK Government Policy Making

“In the late 1990s, there was a shift of conceptual and theoretical meanings of diversity from an equal opportunities focus to a diversity focus” (Gold 2013, 341). Reflecting this, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) was established in 2007 combining the three commissions (including that for Racial Equality). The Equality Act 2006 gave EHRC a duty to report regularly how equality and human rights are improving in UK. In 2010, the Equality Act 2010 was enacted merging five previous Acts (including Race Relations Act and Equality Act) and three Regulations into one single Act. EHRC continued to produce a report, “How Fair is Britain?” in 2010, “the Human Right Review” in 2012, and “Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality and human rights 2015.” There also came up the cross-government equality strategy “The Equality Strategy - Building a Fairer Britain” in 2010 (HM Government 2010). They made a progress report in 2012. The overview is summarized in Figure 1.

Figure 1 History of Legal Framework, UK Government/Sector Bodies Policy Making



Source: Gold, 2013

3.2. DCMS, Museum Organizations

When it comes to a departmental strategy which governs cultural field, Department for Culture, Media and Sports (hereafter, DCMS), as a museum fund provider, require the sixteen sponsored museums to report Key Performance Indicators (KPI), some of which are visitor and workforce figures by black Asian and minority ethnic (BAME).

National Museum Director’s Council (hereafter, NMDC) started its diversity promotion effort earlier than those governmental actions. The cultural Diversity Working Group was set up in 2004 followed by the Final Report and Recommendations in 2006. Three general recommendations were accepted at the Director’s Conference (NMDC 2006,1). NMDC tried to encourage the member museums to achieve numerical goals as number of ethnic staff, visitors, and even trustees.

Museum Association made a diversity promotion effort from training side. In 1999, Museum Association launched the Diversity programme of positive action training for people from black and minority ethnic background (BAME). The aim is “to make museum careers more accessible to people from BAME background through targeted positive-action training”. Up to 2010, “130 people and 50 museums and galleries participated” in this scheme (Shaw 2013,4).

3.3. Museums and Galleries

Each museum has made its own diversity policy. Some examples of major museums are summarized in Table 1;

Table 1 Major Museum's Equality/Diversity Policy

<p>British Museum Equality and Diversity Policy (British Museum 2005, 1)</p> <p>The British Museum values and respects the diversity of the audiences and its staff and is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making its collections and services available to the full range of audiences, respecting their diversity • recruiting and developing a diverse staff at all levels, including paid staff and Trustees • maintaining appropriate procedures in relation to equality and diversity • acting in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
<p>National Portrait Gallery Equality Action Plan (National Portrait Gallery, 3)</p> <p>The Gallery aims to recruit and retain employees from the widest talent pool and not just selected parts.</p> <p>The Gallery's Recruitment Policy and Guidelines ensure effectiveness at delivering a diverse range of employees.</p> <p>National Portrait Gallery Strategy Corporate Plan 2016-19 (National Portrait Gallery, 4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop staff as an essential resource through the extension of staff diversity, training, development and learning programmes.
<p>Equality and Diversity at the V&A (V&A 2014, 1-2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our goal to integrate equality and diversity into everything that we do and ensure that all aspects of the Museum — the staff profile, the collections, audiences, programmes and events — reflect the diversity that exists within society in the 21st century. • We believe that increasing the diversity of our paid and unpaid workforce will enable us to respond better to the needs of our current and future audiences. • We will actively maintain participation from: Black Asian Minority Ethnic BAME; and Disabled people. <p>V&A Strategic Objectives (V&A HP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide diverse audiences with the best quality experience and optimum access to our collections, physically and digitally.

Source: Various Museum Documents

British Museum's policy reflects all factors in Sandell's conceptual framework and complies with the Equality Act 2010. National Portrait Gallery's policy concentrates on workforce diversity and has no mention of collections / programmes diversity and audience diversity. However, the Gallery also has a strategic level of diversity plan. V&A's policy reflects all factors in Sandell's conceptual framework in more details.

Thus, Diversity policy is widespread across museums with different emphasis on factors in Sandell's conceptual framework and NMDC's key recommendations, however not all museums set diversity issues up to strategic level.

4. Response of Ethnic Minorities

In order to measure numerical response of ethnic minorities to those efforts, I selected minority ethnic rate (BAME) as % of the workforce. I referred Civil Service Statistics data (by Office for National Statistics) as a benchmark. These are summarized in Table 3.

Table 2 Transition of Ethnic Minority Rate (%)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
British Museum	22.0	21.0	21.0	20.0	20.0	21.5	18.3	18.6	20.1
National Gallery	17.8	18.7	18.1	19.1	18.7	18.0	18.7	19.2	18.1
National Portrait Gallery	11.0	13.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	13.0	13.0	17.0	14.0
Imperial War Museum		6.0	5.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.5	6.4
V&A		11	13	13	16	17	18	22	20
Minority Ethnic (All Level)	8	8	9	9	9	9	10	10	11
Minority Ethnic (Senior Level)	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	7	7

Source: Civil Service Statistics, Annual Reports, etc.

Ethnicity rates of those museums, except for Imperial War Museum, stay above average ethnicity rate of civil service employees. However, there are little signs of improving figures in response to Equality Act 2010 and NMDC's positive action to improve ethnicity rate by encouraging numerical goals. National Portrait Gallery and V&A show a positive growth trend. Presumably, this is because the museums are eager to make a diversity promotion effort at the museum's Strategic level. British Museum and National Gallery constantly shows the high figures without growth. Some figures of British Museum are even higher than ethnic demography rate of 19.5% in UK (Census 2011, 2). V&A also shows the higher figure than ethnic demography rate of 19.5% in UK in 2014 and 2015.

MA's survey to Diversity scheme participants states, "98% participants felt that Diversity had either been very important or important to them starting a career in the museum sector. 90% gained work in museums after completing Diversity training, and 74% are still working

in the museum sector. Further, 61% are working in museum management or are on track to work in museum management, and all management-level trainees secured employment in museums soon after completing training” (Shaw 2013,11). Thus, MA’s diversity promotion effort inspired a reputation by recipients of the Diversity scheme. However, “the Diversity scheme is successful but small and is only scratching the surface of the under-representation of people from minority-ethnic backgrounds” (MA 2007, 38).

5. Influence on Museum Exhibition Contents, Visitor Ethnicity Figure

In order to measure staff diversity’s influence on museum exhibition contents, I selected the past exhibition list in museum’s home page. I counted up the exhibitions related to ethnic culture and divided it by total exhibitions (Table 4).

Table 3 Transition of Exhibitions related to Ethnic Minority Culture (%)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
British Museum (Special)	100	67	60	100	60	40	50	50	50	40
British Museum (Free)	50	70	50	69	82	50	50	50	43	73
British Museum (Total)	60	69	53	75	75	47	50	50	44	63
National Gallery	na	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Portrait Gallery	10	0	0	0	17	0	0	17	0	0
National Maritime Museum	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imperial War Museum	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
V&A	12	13	22	20	0	20	13	8	13	29

Most museums, except British Museum, keep almost zero exhibition rates concerning ethnic culture. V&A keeps figures somewhere between British Museum and other museums. This is not odd figures when we look at the reality of the museum contents. For example, National Maritime Museum displays UK maritime history where overseas ethnic culture is irrelevant. V&A displays ethnic culture at the range of 10-30%. And, there are little signs of those figures

in response to Equality Act 2010 and NMDC's positive action. It is fair to interpret that V&A mainly deals with design culture of modern age, so overseas ethnic culture is relatively irrelevant.

British Museum displays ethnic culture at the rate of more than 50% almost every year. However, there are little signs of those figures in response to Equality Act 2010 and NMDC's positive action. The ethnicity rate level is high, but it becomes lower after 2010. It is fair to interpret that British Museum historically deals with ethnic cultures originated from its colonial legacy. British Museum's high profile of exhibitions concerning ethnic culture is because of its historical collections. This is reflected in British Museum's organization where high profile of ethnicity related departments and broad base of archaeologist curators to deal with overseas ethnic culture are observed.

Table 4 British Museum

Name	Title		Academic History
H.F.	Director	Department	PhD Art History
D.O.	Senior Curator, Head of Research Space	na	MA Digital Humanities
J.S.	Senior Curator,	Greece and Rome	PhD Archaeology
J.G.	Curator, Head of Americas	na	PhD Archaeology
G.S.	Curator, Section Head Oceania	na	PhD Aboriginal Studies
J.C.	Curator	Africa, Oceania, and the Americas	PhD Archaeology
E.G.	Curator	Africa, Oceania, and the Americas	MSc Anthropology
C.S.	Curator	Africa, Oceania, and the Americas	PhD
M.M.	Curator	Ancient Egypt and Sudan	PhD Egyptologie
T.B.	Curator	Asia	Mphil Archaeology
T.C.	Curator	Asia	?
J.H.	Curator	Asia	MA Chinese Language and Literature, Chinese and Fine Art
I.R.	Curator	Asia	PhD History of Art
M.W.	Curator	Asia	PhD Art History
A.G.	Curator	Asia	PhD Art History
R.A.	Curator	Coins and Medals	?
B.C.	Curator	Coins and Medals	?
V.C.	Curator	Coins and Medals	PhD Classical, Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies and Archaeology
A.D.	Curator	Coins and Medals	Archaeology
T.H.	Curator	Coins and Medals	?
G.W.	Curator	Coins and Medals	PhD History (Scandinavia)
H.W.	Curator	Coins and Medals	PhD Archaeology
D.B.	Curator	Greece and Rome	PhD Classical Archaeology
P.H.	Curator	Greece and Rome	PhD Archaeology
I.J.	Curator	Greece and Rome	PhD Archaeology
T.K.	Curator	Greece and Rome	PhD Archaeology
T.O.	Curator	Greece and Rome	?
A.S.	Curator	Greece and Rome	PhD Archaeology
A.V.	Curator	Greece and Rome	PhD Archaeology
N.A.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	PhD Archaeology
F.S.	Curator	Middle East	PhD Art and Archaeology
S.B.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	PhD Archaeology

P.B.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	?
O.C.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	?
C.E.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	?
R.H.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	Archaeology
R.J.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	Archaeology
J.R.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	?
N.S.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	PhD candidate
D.T.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	PhD candidate
L.T.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	Horology
G.V.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	?
N.W.	Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	PhD Art History
S.C.	Curator	Prints and Drawings	?
K.S.	Curator	Prints and Drawings	PhD
M.L.	Project Curator	Middle East	PhD Archaeology
S.J.	Project Curator	Asia	PhD Ancient History
C.M.	Project Curator	Asia	?
B.A.	Project Curator	Coins and Medals	?
R.B.	Project Curator	Coins and Medals	?
D.C.	Project Curator	Coins and Medals	PhD Ancient History
P.K.	Project Curator	Coins and Medals	MA History of Asian Archaeology
E.P.	Project Curator	Coins and Medals	?
R.T.	Project Curator	Greece and Rome	PhD Maritime Archaeology
G.B.	Project Curator	Middle East	PhD Archaeology
B.H.	Project Curator	Middle East	PhD Archaeology
M.L.	Project Curator	Middle East	PhD Archaeology
A.M.	Project Curator	Middle East	PhD Candidate
L.B.	Project Curator	Britain, Europe and Prehistory	PhD History of Art
A.M.	Exhibition Curator	Ancient Egypt and Sudan	PhD Egyptologie
L.B.	Keeper	Africa, Oceania, and the Americas	PhD Anthoropology
N.S.	Keeper	Ancient Egypt and Sudan	PhD Archaeology
P.A.	Keeper	Coins and Medals	?
J.F.	Keeper	Greece and Rome	?
J.T.	Keeper	Middle East	BA Archaeology
R.B.	Keeper	Portable Antiquities and Treasure	PhD Archaeology
H.C.	Keeper	Prints and Drawings	Art History
E.O.	Assistant Keeper (Curator)	Ancient Egypt and Sudan	PhD Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology
V.P.	Assistant Keeper (Curator)	Middle East	PhD Islamic Art
J.A.	Assistant Keeper	Ancient Egypt and Sudan	PhD Archaeology
D.A.	Assistant Keeper	Ancient Egypt and Sudan	PhD Archaeology
I.R.	Assistant Keeper	Ancient Egypt and Sudan	PhD Egyptology
D.W.	Assistant Keeper	Ancient Egypt and Sudan	?
S.C.	Assistant Keeper	Middle East	BA Archaeology
I.F.	Assistant Keeper	Middle East	PhD Assiriology
A.F.	Assistant Keeper	Middle East	PhD Archaeology
S.S.	Assistant Keeper	Middle East	PhD Archaeology
N.T.	Assistant Keeper	Middle East	?
J.T.	Assistant Keeper	Middle East	?
G.B.	Assistant Keeper	Prints and Drawings	Art History
J.R.	Assistant Keeper	Prints and Drawings	?
S.V.	Assistant Keeper	Prints and Drawings	History of Art

Source: Mueum HP and other open sources

In order to measure visitors from ethnic minority background, I selected minority ethnic rate (BAME) as % of the UK visitors. This figure used to be a performance indicator for all sponsored museums to report to DCMS. However, the data have “no longer collected from 2012/13 onwards to reduce the burden of data collection”. (DCMS 2015, 15)

Table 5 Transition of Ethnic Minority Visitors Rate

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
V&A	11%	13%	13%	16%	17%	18%	22%	20%
National Gallery	na	na	na	15%	16%	14%	11%	16%
National Portrait Gallery	0%	0%	24%	10%	11%	8%	11%	13%

Source: Civil Service Statistics, Annual Reports, etc.

Three museums seem to show positive growth trend except odd figure of National Portrait Gallery in 2010 and National Gallery in 2014. However, there are little signs of improving figures in response to Equality Act 2010 and NMDC’s positive action. According to DCMS, the rate is simply related to DCMS’s own effort to “encourage more widespread enjoyment of culture, media and sport” where “DCMS has identified three priority groups (including black or minority ethnic groups) in its strategic objective 2008-11 (DCMS 2013, 8).

6. Implication for the Future

As a social equity, the staff diversity rate has to be as high as ethnic demography rate in UK, i.e., 19.5% (Census 2011, 2). British Museum and V&A almost achieve this criterion, and National Portrait Gallery comes closer to this level. The ethnic demography rate is growing and is higher in London, where majority of the sponsored museums are located. So, there is still a long way to go to achieve this criterion.

Here, I would argue that low profile of ethnic minorities in museums is not only because of racial inequality but also because museum jobs are not so attractive to ethnic minorities.

In UK, “a significant period of unpaid work experience combined with a postgraduate qualification in museum or heritage studies may be the minimum requirement for entry into the profession” (Sandell 2010, 208). The entry gate is narrow and costly. Even after entry, they are not paid much in museums again. According to MA Salary guidelines 2009, starting salary of postgraduate qualification holders is £19,750-23,750 (MA 2009, 6) while average salary in UK is £27,440 (Office for National Statistics, 2015: figure 18, annual figure calculated by author).

Table 6 Salary Guidelines 2009

Collections and Learning	
Entry I: A basic entry or trainee level role (no postgraduate qualification)	£ 16,000-19,250
Entry II: An entry Level role (with postgraduate qualification)	£ 19,750-23,750
Career I: 2-3 years experience and knowledge (reasonable responsibility)	£ 24,250-26,750
Career II: Development of some expertise (strategic and advocacy responsibilities)	£ 24,750-31,250
Career III: Substantial knowledge, skills, experience (manage a team)	£ 31,250-36,250
Senior Level 1	£ 31,250-36,250
Level 2	£ 36,250-42,500
Level 3	£ 42,500-68,750
Visitor Services	
Entry II: An entry Level role (with postgraduate qualification)	£ 14,500-16,000
Career I: 2-3 years experience and knowledge (basic responsibility, customer care)	£ 16,000-19,250
Career II: Development of some expertise (strategic and advocacy responsibilities)	£ 19,250-24,250
Senior Level 1	£ 24,250-31,250
Level 2	£ 31,250-36,250
Level 3	£ 36,250-47,500

Source: Salary Guidelines 2009, MA

When it comes to industrial demand by ethnic minorities, they are likely to choose “make money” jobs. Top 5 industries for men with highest proportions of ethnic group are as follows (Census 2011, 14).

Table 7 Top industries for men with highest proportions of ethnic group

Ethnicity	Industry	%
Bangladeshi	Accommodation and food service	36%
Chinese	Accommodation and food service	31%
Pakistani	Wholesales and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	22%
Indian	Wholesales and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	21%
Other Asian	Wholesales and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	21%

Source: Office for National Statistics

Here, average salary of retail industry is £17,940, which is more than that of Entry I,

and that of manufacturing industry is £23,618, which is more than that of Entry II. (Office for National Statistics, 2015: ditto). It is fair to understand that ethnic minorities do not numerically respond to diversity promotion effort provided by concerned parties except for successful Diversity scheme by MA.

Table 8 Salary Comparison

Occupation Gorup	per week	Annual Salary
Senior Level 3 (Collection and Learning)		55,625
Managers, directors and senior officials	784	40,773
Senior Level 2 (Collection and Learning)		39,375
Professional occupations	717	37,268
Career III, Senior Level 1 (Collection and Learning)		33,750
Associate professional and tchnical occupations	594	30,872
Career II (Collection and Learning)		29,000
All employees	528	27,440
Career I (Collection and Learning)		25,500
Skilled trades occupations	490	25,454
Process, plant and machine operatives	454	23,618
Entry II (Collection and Learning)		21,750
Administrative and secretarial occupations	416	21,637
Elementary occupations	346	17,971
Sales and customer service occupations	345	17,940
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	341	17,737
Entry I (Collection and Learning)		17,625

Source: Salary Guidelines 2009, MA. Office for National Statistics 2015

If you look at the museum job search home pages such as that of NMDC, you witness the similar figures in 2016. The real examples are as follows; (NMDC HP):

Table 9 NMDC Jobs

Salary	Job	Museum
£ 6,606-13,213	Retail Service Advisor	Science Museum Group
£ 10,901	School Booking Assistant	Tate
£ 19,500-23,000	Learning Resource Project Developer	Science Museum Group
£ 21,011	Collection Care Administrator	Tate
£ 21,526	Events Administrator	Natural History Museum
£ 23,000-25,000	Senior Education Officer	Wallace Collection
£ 23,000-30,000	Press Officer	National Maritime Museum
£ 23,500	Exhibition Officer	Imperial War Museum
£ 24,360	Assistant Collections Registrar	Tate
£ 24,360	Assistant Curator	Tate
£ 24,309	Project Curator	British Museum
£ 26,342	Textile Conservator	V&A

Source: NMDC Jobs

Similarly, museum curator page of job profiles by National Careers Service also shows salary levels as follows where those of retail merchandise can be compared (National Careers Service HP).

Table 10 National Careers Service Job Profile

Salary	Job
£ 16,000	Starting Salaries for Merchandise
£ 18,000	Assistant Merchandisers
£ 20,000-25,000	Assistant Curators
£ 22,000-25,000	Junior Merchandisers
£ 25,000-35,000	Curators
-40,000	Experienced Merchandisers
£ 40,000-	Senior Curators
£ 60,000	Top Salaries in Large Retail Companies

Source: National Careers Service Job Profile

7. Conclusion

UK government made an effort to try to improve ethnic minority rate in museum staffing by legislating the Equality Act 2010, followed by the cross-governmental equality strategy. NMDC encouraged sponsored museums to manage their own numerical goals of ethnic staffing, visitors and even trustees. Each museum has its own diversity policy and some museums elaborated it up to the strategic levels. MA made a very successful Diversity scheme where ethnic minority students are trained and recruited to MA member museums, however

the numerical impact is marginal.

Through this research, I discovered that ethnicity staffing rate is different across museums, and the figures do not necessarily reflect governmental or NMDC diversity promotion effort. It seems to reflect relations between museum contents (collection programmes) and any ethnic minority culture. There were little signs of museum ethnic staffing rate to influence on number of exhibitions concerning ethnic culture and on ethnic visitor figures. The former is more related to museum contents and the latter is more related to DCMS's own strategy to encourage more widespread enjoyment of culture where BAME is one of the three priority groups. The gap between governments' rhetoric (workplace supply side) and reality (ethnic minorities' work application side) is seen in short supply of museums job vacancies against postgraduate prerequisite and the relatively lower salary level of museum jobs.

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