An exploration of high achieving Black Caribbean young people's racialised experiences of their secondary school education

Grazielle Carvalho Gomes

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Abstract

The narrative around the educational outcomes of Black Caribbean students in the UK often revolves around low achievement and experiences of school exclusion. This study aimed to explore the secondary school experiences of high achieving students from a Black Caribbean heritage who attended their entire educational career in the UK, as the voices of this group have rarely been represented in research. It also aims to identify participants' educational aspirations and their perception of the support needed to achieve them.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather participants' views. A participatory element was introduced in order to ensure that the interview questions were relevant to the educational experience of this group. The interviews' transcripts were analysed using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. A Critical Race Theoretical lens was also applied to the data, examining ways in which race and racism shaped the educational experiences of participants. In addition, this study was situated within a social constructionist paradigm. It assumes that the school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils are impacted by socially constructed narratives, which have been enacted with a socio-political agenda. Adopting this paradigm aimed at identifying ways in which these constructs operate for the marginalisation of Black Caribbean students within the UK Educational System.

Results demonstrated that participants' experiences of secondary school were significantly impacted by systemic racism. This included teachers' low expectations despite the strong academic ability of this group of participants. Factors intensifying and minimising participants' racialised experiences were identified. These findings help to challenge notions of academic inferiority of Black Caribbean students due to the high academic ability of this group of participants. Tentative recommendations for Educational Psychology practice are presented and directions for future research are suggested.

Student Declaration

I declare that while registered as a research degree student at UEL, I have not been a registered or enrolled student for another award of this university or of any other academic or professional institution. I declare that no material contained in this thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award. This thesis is the result of my own work and investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references in the text and a full reference list is appended. I declare that my research requires ethical approval from the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) and confirmation of approval is embedded within the thesis.

Grazielle Carvalho Gomes

Signature: ..... Date:

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Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables (in the order of appearance in the text)

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Study aims

This research is part of the fulfilment of a Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology Programme. It sought to explore high achieving Black Caribbean YP's racialised experiences during their secondary school education.

The aims of this study were twofold. Firstly, it aimed at hearing the voices of high achieving Black Caribbean YP around their racialised experiences of secondary school. Hearing the experiences of young people whose academic achievement is in direct contrast to the deficit discourse around the ability of this group, may help to construct an alternative narrative around the academic ability of BC YP in the UK.

The second aim of this study was to explore high achieving BC YP's educational aspirations for the future and their perceptions of what could be helpful in supporting them to achieve their goals. As Educational Psychologists, we are expected to support the development and learning of young people until they are 25 years old (DfE, 2015). Therefore, hearing the future aspirations of the participants in this study may help to inform our understanding of how to best support BC YP to achieve their goals. In light of the aforementioned aims, this research endeavoured to answer the following two research questions:

1. What are high achieving Black Caribbean young people's racialised experiences of their secondary school education?
2. What are high achieving Black Caribbean young people's future educational aspirations and what support they need to achieve them?

Since the aims and research questions have been stated, I will continue this chapter by presenting a glossary of the key terminology used throughout the research followed by a list of abbreviations. After that, I will discuss the relevance of this study to EP practice. I will then present a historical overview of the data on Black Caribbean pupils' statutory education in the UK. Subsequently, a critical perspective on the educational achievement of this group will be offered followed by reflections on academic achievement as a national educational priority. To close the chapter, I will state the position and reflexive approach adopted throughout the research followed by the rationale for the organisation of this research.

1.2 Terminology

It is important to define some of the terminology that will be used throughout this study in order to conceptualise the terms within the context of the theoretical perspective guiding this research. The following terms will be used repeatedly throughout this study:

African Caribbean: A person of African ancestry whose family came from the Caribbean before emigrating and who self identifies, or is identified, as Afro-Caribbean (Bhopal, 2004)

Black : Black has been capitalised as a political stance to unify people of African ancestry. As Kinouani (2021) argues, its capitalisation is an attempt to create a home in 'Blackness' as a recognition of the loss of national and cultural ties via the displacement of people through the transatlantic slave trade.

Colour-blindness: The belief that racial group membership and race-based differences should not be taken into account when decisions are made, impressions are formed, and behaviours are enacted (Apfelbaum, Norton & Sommers, 2008).

Identity: A social-psychological construct that reflects social influences through imitation and identification processes and active self-construction in the creation of what is important to the self and to others (Adams & Marshall, 1996).

Institutional Racism: The system whereby policies and traditions, sometimes unwittingly, favour a particular racial or ethnic group, may be less obvious but may disadvantage large populations (Bhopal, 2004).

Race: Socially constructed identities usually based on skin colour (Leonardo, 2002).

Racialised: The process through which racial meaning is attached to something that is perceived to be "unracial" or devoid of racial meaning (Gonzalez-Sobrino & Goss, 2019)

Racism: A belief that some races are superior to others, used to devise and justify individual and collective actions that create and sustain inequality among racial and ethnic groups (Bhopal, 2004)

White people. A socially constructed identity based on white skin colour (Leonardo, 2002)

Whiteness. 'A set of assumptions, beliefs, and practises that place the interests and perspectives of White people at the centre of what is considered normal and everyday' (Gillborn, 2015, p. 278)

White Supremacy: 'A process and persistent state of affairs that is prevalent in the Western world where the interests of White-identified people are given precedence over the interests of other groups through political, social, economic and cultural structures and practises that have evolved over centuries and are maintained and continually recreated by these structures and through individual actors and actions (conscious and unconscious).' (Walton, 2020, p.80)

White privilege: 'An uneven distribution of social capital or property which can be parlayed into greater social and economic advantages for White citizens.' (Chapman, 2013, p. 103)

Young people: People from the age of fourteen to 25 years. This definition follows the extended age of local authority statutory responsibilities to include young people up to the age 25 years (DfE, 2015)

High achieving young person: A young person predicted to achieve grades BBB+ in their A-level examinations (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2012)

1.3 List of abbreviations

BC: Black Caribbean

CYP: Children and Young People

YP: Young person or young people

EP: Educational Psychologist

EPS: Educational Psychology Service

1.4 Relevance of this study to Educational Psychology Practice

EPs are under the statutory duty to seek to empower CYP by gathering their views to inform the support aimed at them (DfE, 2015). Hearing the views of BC YP about their racialised secondary school experiences may help to create culturally appropriate educational opportunities aiming at improving the educational experiences of this group.

In addition, EPs are under a professional duty to use psychological knowledge to understand the factors that impact on the development of CYP (HCPC, 2016). Hence, EPs must be aware of socio-cultural processes and educational practices that lead to the marginalisation of the CYP we serve. Therefore exploring the views of BC YP may help to understand helpful practices and factors that served as barriers in the educational experiences of this group.

Moreover, the SEND Code of Practice (2015) increased the remit of Educational Psychologists to include supporting young people aged 19 to 25 years as a pledge to support them in their transition into adulthood. This development required EPs to support YP aiming at improving outcomes in terms of employment and training as well as independence skills guided by young people's views and aspirations. Gathering the views of post 18 BC YP may help to understand what is required in terms of supporting them to achieve their future goals.

As I will present in the next section of this chapter, reports commissioned by the central government have focused on the underachievement and exclusion rates of BC pupils. EPs work with educational settings to support the improvement of outcomes for CYP. Therefore, we are likely to be called upon to support the needs of this group. Understanding the educational experiences of high achieving BC pupils is likely to provide EPs with valuable information to inform helpful support to improve the educational experiences of BC pupils.

1.5 Pupil data on Black Caribbean education in the UK - A historical overview

A scoping review of the gov.uk reports around the educational experiences of Black Caribbean pupils over the last few decades, the educational and government policy formulation around the educational experiences of Black Caribbean CYP is entrenched with narratives of academic underachievement (Swann, 1985; Strand, 2007). Despite being one of the longest established

minority communities in the UK, Black Caribbean communities continue to experience marked educational inequalities (Gillborn, 2008). A number of reports in the 1980's focused the underachievement of this group compared to other ethnic groups (Rampton,1981; Swann, 1985).

In terms of secondary achievement, The Swann report presented evidence on the GCE and O level examination results, which were qualifications equivalent to the current General Certificate of Secondary education (GCSE). The data presented showed that 3 % of BC pupils (then referred to as West Indian students) obtained A-C grades compared to 16% of leavers from other ethnic groups. In terms of English language and Mathematics , BC school leavers achieved 9% and 5% respectively compared to 29% and 20% of leavers from other groups. In terms of A levels, 2 % of BC students obtained a pass compared to 12% of other leavers. In terms of progression onto university degrees, 1% of BC students went on to university compared to 3 % of students from other ethnicities.

1.6 More recent government data

In 2021, there were over 8.9 million pupils on roll in state funded educational settings including primary, secondary, special schools and alternative provisions. The percentage of pupils classified as being from minority ethnic backgrounds is 33.6% with Black Caribbean and Mixed Caribbean heritage pupils form 1% and 1.6% respectively of the statutory student population in the UK (DfE, 2021). At the start of their formal education at the age 4 to 5 years, 68% of the BC pupils achieve the expected developmental goals in terms of attainment. This is slightly below the national average of 71% of pupils. The gap between BC and pupils from other ethnic backgrounds widens as they progress in their school education. At age 10-11, 56% of BC pupils meet expected standards of reading, writing and Maths (DfE, 2020). This gap continues to widen as BC pupils progress onto their secondary education with only 34.8% achieving a grade 5 or above in their English and Maths GCSE. This is the lowest of all ethnic groups except for pupils from Gypsy/Roma and Irish traveller heritage (DfE, 2021).

The literature also points to the overrepresentation of Black Caribbean pupils in exclusion data in British schools which has been reported for decades. Black Caribbean pupils are over three times more likely to be permanently excluded from schools than their white counterparts (Timpson, 2019). Although this pattern of over-representation is more prevalent in secondary school, it is present from the Early Years Foundation stage through to Key stage 4. The repercussions of this is that pupils who are excluded from schools are less likely to achieve 5 or more GCSEs, are more likely to commit crime , be unemployed, and have worse health outcomes (Gazeley, 2010).

1.7 Factors affecting the academic achievement of BCP - Critical Perspectives

In 1971, Coard highlighted the systemic factors contributing to making Black Caribbean children 'educationally subnormal' in the British School System. These included institutional racism, culturally insensitive psychological assessment of BC CYP and teachers' lack of understanding of the needs of this group. Coard discusses the impact of differential educational provision as a way of subjugating BC pupils in the UK. He remarks that, 'Discriminatory provision of education to different classes or ethnicities or other groups within a society is the single most powerful tool for subjugating and marginalising those who are denied any, or inferior, education.'(p. 66). BC pupils' access to differential provision seems to have been facilitated by institutional educational decisions made at national level in the UK (Gillborn, 2008). For example, the tiering system in England consists of entering students at age 14 and 16 to different test tiers with students sitting exam papers varying in levels. Decisions around which test tier students are entered for is made by their subject teacher, hence individual teacher judgement ultimately guides the maximum grades students can achieve. Historically minority ethnic groups are less likely to be entered for the higher tier examinations with a direct impact on test outcomes (Tikly et al, 2006). Teacher discretion in decisions around tiering is problematic particularly in light of evidence of negative racial biases against Black pupils affecting teachers' blind assessment of these groups (Gillborn & Youdell, 2000). In addition to this, the historically inadequate training of teachers in terms of understanding the needs of minority children may also impact on teachers' attitudes and expectations about minority children (Tomlinson, 1982).

There were also structural changes to the examination system that disproportionately affected minority students including BC pupils, increasing the White-minority gap. Gillborn et al. (2017) highlight that the White British-Black Caribbean school leaver gap had been steadily narrowing from 1998-2013 until two changes to the achievement benchmark were introduced. The researchers refer to the introduction of five or more A-C grades including English and Mathematics by the Labour government in 2006; and the English Baccalaureate adopted by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition which required higher pass grades in English, mathematics, two sciences, a modern or classic foreign language and either history or geography. White students were historically more likely to select these subjects and this increased the racial inequality on minority students' attainment.

1.8 Critique on achievement as a national educational priority

The data presented by the government illustrates the focus on objective notions of academic success in terms of evaluation of test performance according to an imposed standard criteria (Spence & Helmreich,1983). The educational system exists in a climate of demonstrating students' high achievement to meet demands of oppressive league tables. I view this approach to assessment as problematic for a number of reasons. The assessment system assumes equality of learning experiences and access to educational input for all pupils, failing to take into account individual, cultural, and linguistic differences between pupils (Bishop and Glynn, 1999). Moreover, a number of factors can affect students' performance in examinations. These include social support, psychological distress and their beliefs in their own abilities for achievement (Duraku & Hoxha, 2018). Results of major examinations such as GCSEs and A-level have been found to have a particularly negative impact on those who receive low grades (Harlen & Deakin-Crick, 2002). Assessing pupils' progress is certainly an important aspect to ensure students meet learning expectations and institutions provide quality education. However, the way in which it is currently being undertaken in the British Educational system illustrates what Paulo Freire (1972) conceptualised as the 'Banking' Concept of Education. This concept refers to the process whereby students are 'deposited' information by teachers. In this process, instead of engaging with learning as active creators of knowledge, students are mere receptors of information. This process poses a barrier to students' growth, which is further problematised when the information is unrelated to the student's context and interests. Freire argues that valuing pupils' knowledge and experiences is integral to liberation and humanization of knowledge. This is particularly relevant in the context of this research since concerns around schools' scant engagement with Black Caribbean culture and history as well as the relevance of the school curriculum to minority students have been raised by three generations of this group (Demie & Mclean, 2017) . Freire suggests that the freedom from educational oppression is achieved through 'conscientização' (conscientization), a process whereby students become conscious of oppressive teaching and learning practices and engage critically with their learning, promoting change. In terms of the high achieving participants in this research, they may have achieved a level of conscientization in order to support them to navigate an educational system which may have been unconducive to their success.

In my Educational Psychology practice I take a child-centred, humanistic approach to achievement focusing on improving the individuals' quality of life and promoting growth (Roger, 1980). In line with this approach, I advocate for learning experiences that are accepting of and congruent with the

individual needs of students. Within a child centred approach, assessment is a tool of inquiry into how to advance pupils' learning, with emphasis on their personal and social development. This view appears to contrast with the perspective advocated by the UK educational authorities' reports where high achievement is based on grade level standards.

I also adopt an ecological stance to child development (Broffenbrenner, 1979). Through this perspective, learning is impacted by a complex relationship between the various interrelated systems around the child, namely: the microsystems, referring to the immediate systems around the child such as family and school; the mesosystem, referring to interactions between the child's microsystems; the exosystem, consisting of events and structures that take place within other systems affecting the child's experiences such as parental employment and the media ; the macrosystem, which are socio-cultural factors such as social policies and cultural ideologies ; and the chronosystem which refers to environmental changes that take place over the child's lifetime . Through this lens, the educational outcomes of Black Caribbean pupils is viewed as a result of a complex interaction between the various systems rather than the within-child discourse of perceived educational inability. As highlighted in the previous sections, I draw particular attention to the impact of the macrosystem in terms of educational policies and cultural ideologies that disproportionately affect the educational outcomes of this group.

1.9 Positionality and reflexivity

The position researchers chose to adopt influences their approach to conducting the research. Positionality is identified and articulated through an ongoing process of reflexivity. Researchers are expected to acknowledge and reflect upon aspects of themselves infiltrating the research, aiming at understanding their influence on the research process (Cohen et al., 2011).

A researcher's positionality is identified through reflections in relation to three areas: 1. the subject under investigation; 2. the research participants, and 3. the research context and process (Holmes, 2020). My choice to investigate the educational experiences of a minority group was strongly influenced by a drive to promote social justice and to support the emancipation of disempowered CYP and their families. In terms of 'the self' within this position, it stems from my long-standing career in education primarily working with marginalised groups. This position aligns with a drive to fulfil the Educational Psychologists' professional duty to understand and challenge issues of social injustice and inequality. However, I am aware that my position assumes that this group of participants will have experienced racialised discrimination during their secondary education which

may not have been the case. In terms of my choice of participants, I am aware that choosing to explore the experiences of BC YP was influenced by my own racialised educational experiences as a Black person.

In relation to the research context, my decision to explore the experiences of high achieving YP stems from my critical stance in helping to create a counter-story around the long standing deficit based narrative surrounding the educational experiences of BC CYP in the UK. This position has been strongly motivated by my own experiences of racism as a Black student within an educational institution during my training as an EP.

The reflections above in relation to my personal and professional experiences influencing my position as a researcher are illuminating in terms of the preconceptions that I brought to the research process to the point of writing this chapter. My pre-conceptions have also influenced the theoretical underpinning guiding this research which may further implicate in interpretations I make throughout the research context. I am aware that this research is situated in a different socio-cultural context to that of most of my personal experiences and participants may have had potentially contrasting experiences. Moreover, I am assuming that participants in this research have been disempowered in relation to having not had their voices heard. An open and self-reflective approach will be required to keep these assumptions in check. In addition, continued reflexivity through every state of the research process will be paramount in minimising biases particularly when analysing the data and discussing findings.

1.10 Rationale for and organisation of this research

The present study hopes to contribute to the literature around the racialised school experiences of participants from the perspective of high achieving Black Caribbean pupils themselves. As it will be explored in detail in the methodology chapter, Critical Race Theory, holds that racialisation is a central factor affecting the experiences of people of colour. This claim seems substantiated by findings from existing research presented in the literature review chapter of this study. However, little seems to be known about racialised educational experiences of high achieving young people from a Black Caribbean heritage.

In terms of the rationale for the second aim of this research, a review of the existing research highlighted conflicting findings around the aspirations of BC pupils. Further exploring this area from the perspective of high achieving BC YP may contribute to our understanding of this group's future

educational hopes. In addition, this exploration may give important information to education professionals, including EPs, in terms of helpful support practices from the perspective of the young people themselves.

In order to guide the development of this research a literature review on the educational experiences of BC pupils was undertaken and will be presented in chapter 2. In chapter 3, I will describe the methodological approach adopted to meet the aims of this research followed by the presentation of the findings in chapter 4. In chapter 5, a thematic discussion of the findings will be put forward. In the last chapter, I will present an evaluation of this study which includes tentative recommendation for future research and EP practice.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

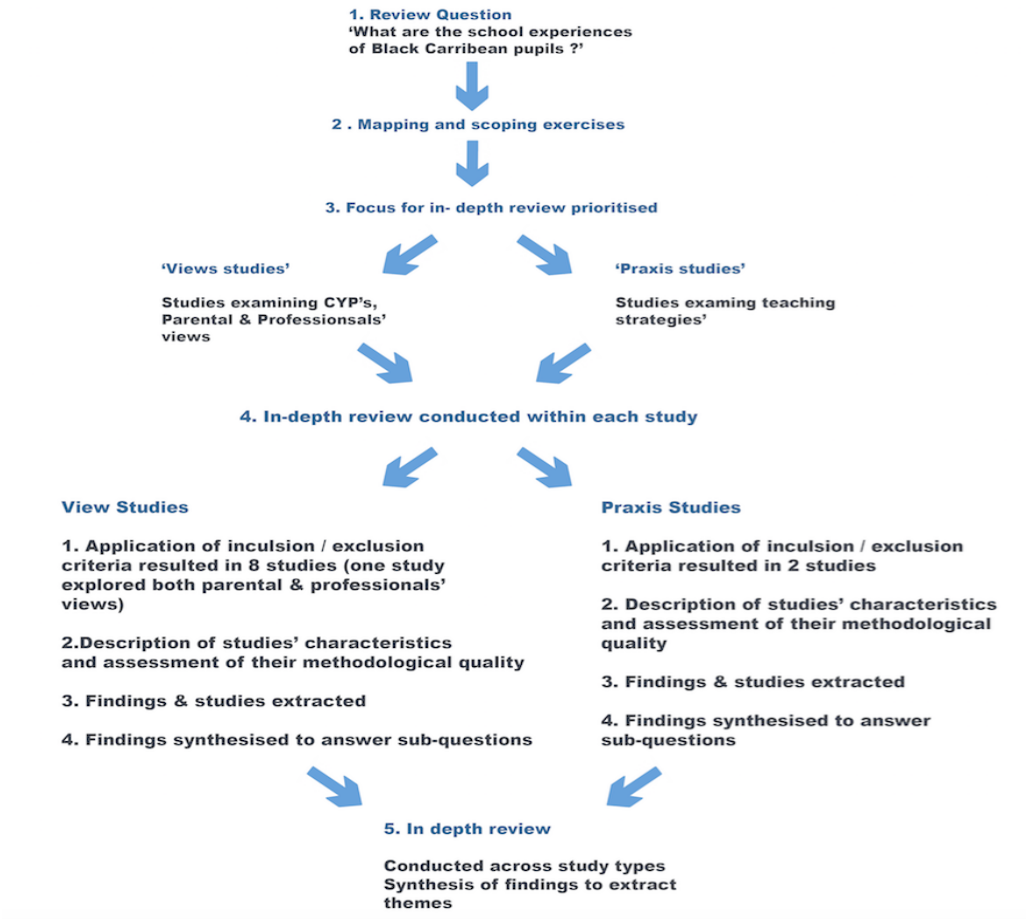
A literature review was undertaken to explore the school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils with no specific focus on racialisation. The rationale behind this approach was to gain insight into the factors that have been highlighted by previous research as impacting the experiences of this group more broadly. This approach was considered important as one of the criticisms on the theoretical framework underpinning this research is that it places race and racism as central to the inequalities experienced by people of colour above socio economic factors (Cole, 2009). Hence, broadening the scope of the review would help to investigate whether racialisation had featured in previous literature as a pertinent factor affecting the experiences of this group. The review aimed at answering the following question: 'What are the school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils?'.

Here school experiences are limited to the UK statutory education (primary and secondary academic career, which includes post 16 to 18 education). I acknowledge that the factors implicated in the school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils may be complex and interconnected and this review will not capture all of its nuances. The aim of this chapter was to provide insight into some of the key findings in the literature within the past 18 years. It endeavoured to provide a critical view of the studies, aiming at identifying the gaps in the literature.

2.2 The review process

The review process is outlined in Figure 1. It contains 5 stages which will be discussed below.

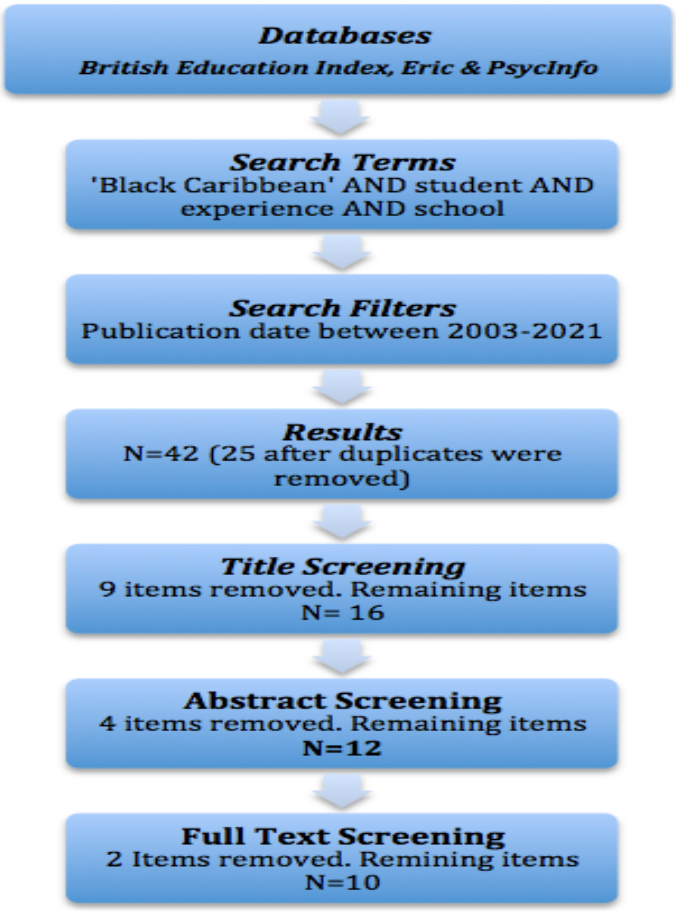
Figure 1. The review process



2.3 The mapping exercise

The mapping exercise is illustrated in Figure 2. It consisted of three stages, namely, 1. Systematic search; 2. Screening and application of inclusion and exclusion criteria; and 3. Classification of studies into 'pupil views', 'parental views', professionals' views and 'Praxis' studies.

Figure 2. Mapping Exercise



2.3.1 Systematic search

A full description of the search strategy can be found in Figure 2. A systematic search was undertaken on the 22nd July 2021 through databases with a focus on educational (British Education Index and Eric) and psychological research (PsychInfo). The exact same search was repeated on the 30th July to attempt to retrieve as many relevant references as possible for a comprehensive review. The literature search was approached with a broad scope aiming at capturing the main factors previously identified in the literature surrounding the educational experiences of Black Caribbean

CYP. It explored aspects of statutory school education with no focus on a particular stage of development. The rationale for this was to allow a broad exploration of the multiple issues impacting Black Caribbean children and young people's experiences across their school education. I used a number of search strategies to identify recent relevant papers (2003-2021). It yielded 42 results, with 25 items remaining after duplicates were removed. The rationale behind limiting the search from 2003 needs to be contextualised within reports of the history of the educational achievement of this group in the UK. The discourse around the persistent educational underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils compared to other groups has been part of the educational policy debate for a number of decades. Reasons for this were put forward by Coard (1971) who argued that institutional racism, particularly low expectations from teachers drove the beliefs that the West Indian children were 'educationally subnormal'. A number of reports in the 1980's and 1990's highlighted the underachievement of this group compared to other groups (Rampton 1981, Gillborn and Gipps 1996). In 2003, two strategies were launched by the UK government that may have potentially impacted on the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. The Aiming High: African Caribbean Achievement Project (DfE, 2003) aimed at developing a whole school approach to raising the achievement of African Caribbean pupils. The project appears to have helped to put race equality issues on participating schools' agenda (Tikly et al, 2006). This may have had an impact on Black Caribbean CYP experiences of school. In addition to this, the Blair government launched an underperforming secondary school improvement programme named The London Challenge. It ran from 2003-2011, being extended to Greater Manchester and the Midlands in 2008. One of the aims of the project was to reduce educational disadvantage and therefore it may have potentially impacted on the educational outcomes and experiences for BC pupils. Secondary schools, particularly in London, improved significantly during this period and researchers have attributed this change to the implementation of this programme (Hutchings, 2012).

2.3.2 Screening and application of inclusion and exclusion criteria

Following title and abstract screening 13, studies did not meet the inclusion criteria (Appendix 1, Table 2). The remaining 12 studies underwent full text screening and 2 further studies were excluded on the basis of inclusion/exclusion criteria. The 10 studies that met inclusion criteria are listed in Table 1 below.

The nature of the review question rendered the search items to have a similarity of approach around exploring people's views. The majority of the items meeting the inclusion criteria focused on the views of Black Caribbean children and their parents with one item also exploring professionals' views. Two of the included items explored pedagogical strategies aimed at supporting Black Caribbean students' educational experiences. These papers were classified as 'Praxis Studies' in this review. Harden et al (2004) suggest methods and stages for systematically reviewing literature exploring 'View' and 'intervention' studies and their method was used throughout this review. 'Views' studies are characterised by the authors as research holding people's voices at the centre of the analysis. Although the method was designed to explore health related literature, I believe that its person-centred approach offers a valuable tool to review and appraise the literature around people's experiences in other domains such as education.

2.4 Focus for in-depth review

This stage of the review refers to scrutinising the papers for classification according to the focus of their area of enquiry. Two classifications emerged as follows:

2.4.1 Studies exploring participants' views

From the 10 included studies, 8 were 'views studies'. Five of these explored Black Caribbean CYP's perspectives of aspects of their school education, two studies explored parental perspectives of their children's experiences of education and 1 study explored the views of professionals working with Black Caribbean pupils. From this classification, sub-review questions were generated as follows:

a. What are the views of Black Caribbean pupils of their educational experience?
b. What are the views of parents of Black Caribbean pupils of their children's educational experience?
c. What are the views of professionals working with Black Caribbean pupils of their educational experience?

Table 2. List of the studies included in the systematic literature review

Study	Focus
Butler -Barnes, et al, (2008). Teacher-based racial discrimination: The role of racial pride and religiosity.	Exploring private regard and religiosity beliefs as protective factors for school bonding among African American and Black Caribbean adolescents.
Chapman, T. K., & Bhopal, K. (2019). The perils of integration: Exploring the experiences of African American and Black Caribbean students in predominantly white secondary schools.	Exploring the experiences shared by African American and Black Caribbean students' in mixed-race schools.
Charles, M. (2019). Effective Teaching and Learning: Decolonizing the Curriculum.	Utilizing Afrocentricity teaching practice to support Black students' affective, conative, and cognitive skills
Demie, F. (2021). The experience of Black Caribbean pupils in school exclusion in England.	Investigating the reasons for overrepresentation in exclusion statistics in England.
Doharty, N. (2018). "*I Felt Dead": Applying a Racial Microaggressions.*	Exploring students' experiences of racism when being taught Black History in school
Law, I., Finney, S., & Swann, S. J. (2014). Searching for autonomy: Young Black men, schooling and aspirations.	Exploring the relationship between being a young Black male and educational/career aspirations.

Ochieng, B. M. N. (2011). Black parents speak out: The school environment and interplay with wellbeing.	Investigating the perceptions of Black parents and the influence of the education system on the wellbeing of their adolescent children.
Strand, S., & Winston, J. (2008). Educational aspirations in inner city schools.	Exploring pupils' educational aspirations and the factors that influence them.
Vincent et al, (2013). Three generations of racism: Black middle-class children and schooling.	Investigating the educational experiences of 3 generations of Black Caribbean families from the perspective of the 2nd generation.
Wallace, D. (2018). Safe Routes to School? Black Caribbean Youth Negotiating Police Surveillance.	An exploration of how Black Caribbean male youth experience stop and search to and from school and how this informs young people's understanding of race and ethnicity.

2.4.2 Studies exploring teaching strategies to support the identity of Black Caribbean pupils (Praxis studies)

From this classification, a sub review-question was generated as follows:

d. What are the teaching practices applied to support Black Caribbean CYP and how effective are they?

2.5 In-depth review

This stage involved conducting an in-depth review of the studies in order to describe their characteristics. The initial assessment identified features of the studies such as the location, sample characteristics and findings. Table 2 contained in Appendix 1 outlines details of this assessment. In terms of the location, the great majority of the studies were undertaken in the UK except Butler-Barnes et al (2008) which was based solely in the US. Two papers (Chapman & Bhopal, 2019; Wallace, 2018) discussed US and UK samples. The samples of the remaining studies were UK based only (Charles, 2019; Demie, 2021; Doharty , 2018; Law , Finney & Swann, 2014; Ochieng, 2011; Strand, & Winston, 2008; Vincent et al, 2013). Having a mostly UK based body of research in this review is useful in terms of the findings being relevant to the context of the present study.

In terms of age group, the majority of the studies explored the experiences of secondary school pupils aged 12-15 years (Butler-Barnes et al, 2008; Chapman & Bhopal, 2019; Doharty , 2018; Law , Finney & Swann, 2014; Strand, & Winston, 2008; Wallace, 2018). Two studies investigated the views of parents whose children were between 12-18 and 8-18 years respectively (Ochieng, 2011; Vincent et al, 2013). Demie (2021) explored parental views but did not explicitly state the age of the pupils. One of the Praxis studies (Charles, 2019) explored teaching practices aimed at primary school children aged 7-10 years. Overall, the studies in this review focused on secondary school age children with much less attention paid to primary school and post-16 pupils. None of the pupil views studies used primary age or post-16 samples. The parental views studies had a broad scope of ages, focusing on the experiences of pupils in mid-primary to post-16 education. As for the Praxis studies, the teaching strategies were delivered to pupils aged 7-12 years.

In terms of gender, with the exception of Law and colleagues (2014) who explored the views of male participants only, the majority of the CYP's views studies gathered the views of male and female pupils (Butler -Barnes, et al, 2008;Chapman & Bhopal,,2019; Strand, & Winston, 2008; Wallace, 2018). Two of the parental views studies did not state the gender of participants' children (Demie, 2021; Ochieng, 2011). However, through the quotes used to illustrate findings, it can be noted that Ochieng's participants were parents of male and female children. Vincent et al. (2013) gathered views of mothers and fathers about their own school experiences. Similarly to Vincent and colleagues' study, the Praxis studies included male and female pupils in their sample. Overall, the studies in this sample offer a representation of the educational experiences of male and female Black Caribbean students. However, it lacks findings of the views of pupils who identify as non-binary.

The following step involved examining in more detail the appropriateness of data collection methods to ensure reliability, validity and/or trustworthiness of findings. Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6 in Appendix 2 contain features of each study type and they facilitated the examination of this information. Seven of the 10 reviewed studies used qualitative methods (Chapman & Bhopal,2019; Demie, 2021; Doharty, 2018; Wallace,2018; Ochieng. 2011; Vincent et al, 2013; Charles, 2019), two employed mixed method approaches (Law, Finney & Swann, 2014; Strand, & Winston 2008) and one used quantitative measures only (Butler -Barnes, et al, 2008). Of the studies that employed qualitative methods three studies used focus group interviews (Butler -Barnes, et al, 2008; Strand, S., & Winston, J., 2008; and Demie, 2021). Four studies used ethnographic methods incorporating a mixture of semi-structured interviews (Ochieng, 2011; Wallace, 2018) and fieldwork notes (Charles, 2019; Doharty, 2018). The latter were interpreted via Africana phenomenology and Critical Race analysis respectively. These rich qualitative designs appear suitable for gathering the views of participants.

The two studies applying mixed-method approaches adopted a focus group design using qualitative questionnaires designed to explore the area of focus of the research. The focus groups allowed for qualitative information to be gathered, enriching the findings from the quantitative analyses (survey and direct questions questionnaire). The study employing quantitative measures only utilised inventories and scales to gather CYP's views. This research investigated the relationship between factors e.g. teacher discrimination and school bonding, using a large sample (total sample N=810, N=360 Black Caribbean pupils). Quantitative methods are suitable for studies using large samples, as the phenomena under investigation would then be considered representative of the population

(Queiros, Faria & Almeida, 2017). However, quantitative methods alone may not gather the intricacies of the lived experience.

Transparency of the studies was assessed in relation to the researcher making reference to seeking consent from participants. Only two studies (Butler-Barnes et al, 2018; Ochieng, 2011) made reference to seeking and obtaining consent.

2.6 Assessment of the studies' methodological quality

The assessment of the methodological quality of the studies was carried out to assess validity, reliability and/or trustworthiness of the findings using seven quality criteria described in Table 7 (Appendix 3). Trustworthiness refers to methods that can ensure the research process has been carried out rigorously (Guba, 1981). Validity refers to the extent to which a concept is accurately measured in relation to the appropriateness of the data collection tool in measuring what the study is proposing to investigate. Reliability relates to the consistency of a measure in relation to producing similar results each time it is used (Heale & Twicross, 2015). The purpose of this process was not to exclude the studies on the basis of their quality unless they failed to meet the majority of the criteria. Rather this process aimed to use the framework to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the studies. The studies in this review fell short of meeting some of the methodological criteria with only one study meeting all 7 criteria. Details of studies' scoring in relation to the criteria and number of criteria met by each study can be found in Tables 8, 9 and 10 (Appendix 4).

All CYP's and professional views studies as well as the Praxis studies met criterion 1, appropriately contextualising their research within a theoretical framework. One of the parental views studies (Ochieng, 2011) offered a limited discussion around previous findings and no clear theoretical framework. However, the remaining studies met this criterion including Demie, 2021 (which also discusses professionals' views).

Criterion 2 was identified as a strength in the body of research of this review with all items in the 4 study types clearly stating the aims and objectives of their research.

Criterion 3 was met by most of the studies across all study types. With the exception of one of the CYP's views studies (Strand & Winston, 2008) all the remaining studies made explicit reference to

the rationale for sample selection and how access to participants was gained. However, an identified weakness in relation to this criterion was that only one study (Wallace, 2018) made reference to reflexivity, acknowledging the potential impact of his understanding of the young people's experiences due to not being a native of their cities. The lack of reflexivity in the corpus of this review is problematic since the majority of the studies used qualitative methods where the researchers' personal views and experiences may be of great significance when interpreting the results.

Criterion 4 was met inconsistently across all study types. Most of the CYP views studies fell short of offering a clear description of sample characteristics with only 2 studies being specific about the recruitment process and sample size with specific participants' characteristics stated (Butler -Barnes et al, 2008 and Wallace, 2018). The parental views and professional views studies showed a similar trend with the majority of the studies not meeting this criterion (Ochieng, 2011 and Demie, 2021). The latter is also a professionals views' study. In terms of the Praxis studies one of the studies did not state the gender of participants or how participants were recruited (Charles, 2019). A particularly problematic flaw of some of the items in this review is the utilisation of the term 'Black' to refer to students of Black African and Black Caribbean heritage. This approach fails to recognize the unique ways in with each of these identities may impact their experiences.

Methodological description (criterion 5) was a strong aspect of the body of research included in this review. All studies contained in each study type used an appropriate choice of method to gather evidence for the proposed area of investigation. Half of the studies offered detailed description of the tools used to collect and analyse data (Butler –Barnes et al, 2008; Law, Finney & Swann, 2014, Strand & Winston, 2008; Wallace, 2018; and Ochieng, 2011).

Criterion 6 was a weak aspect of the items in this review. Apart from Wallace (2018), the remaining studies discussing CYP's views and Praxis studies did not state steps taken to ensure validity, reliability and trustworthiness of findings. In contrast, two of the parental views studies (Ochieng, 2011; Vincent et al, 2013) presented robust discussions around the measures taken to validate their findings, including involving families and colleagues in the interpretation of the data at different stages of the research process. The remaining study on parental views (Demie, 2021) did not make reference to attempts to address issues of validity, reliability or trustworthiness. The same applies to when the researcher presented the views of professionals.

Criterion 7 referred to the inclusion of original data to evidence how the data was being interpreted. All study types showed strength in this area with the great majority of studies presenting examples of participants' quotes for each theme or argument made. Some studies were particularly strong in meeting this criterion and offered examples from multiple participants to illustrate each theme (Chapman & Bhopal, 2019; Ochieng, 2011; Doherty, 2019).

The majority of the studies in this review ensured reliability, validity and/or trustworthiness of findings. I can therefore conclude that the studies in this review offer an acceptably methodologically sound body of evidence for the educational experiences of Black Caribbean children and young people. The corpus of this review shows overall methodological robustness with the study types meeting 5 of the 7 methodological criteria.

2.7 Extracting findings of studies

The studies' findings were extracted through a systematic approach using evidence tables in Appendix 2. This process allowed me to gain an in-depth knowledge of findings for all the studies in the review and across study types.

2.8 Synthesis of findings

In order to synthesise the findings, an adapted version of Lockwood et al.'s (2015) aggregation method was used. Aggregating is a process that allows the findings across studies to be broken down, examined and then combined into emerging themes. Pre-defined and emerging themes that contained evidence in the original study (quotes or psychometric questionnaire data) were extracted to contribute to the synthesised findings. Each study was analysed and findings were classified according to their level of 'plausibility'. The methodological clarity criterion number 7 (Inclusion of sufficient original data to mediate between evidence and interpretation) was used to assess the plausibility of the studies' findings. A score of 0 rendered studies 'Unsupported (findings not supported by the data)'. A score of 1 classified findings as 'Equivocal (findings accompanied by an illustration lacking clear association with it and therefore open to challenge); and studies with a score of 2 and above were considered 'unequivocal (finding accompanied by an illustration that is beyond reasonable doubt and therefore are not open to challenge)'. All studies in this review were classed as 'unequivocal' as illustrated in the tables 11-14 (Append. 5).

2.9 Classifying studies

As previously mentioned, the 'views' studies were classified and grouped according to CYP's, parents' and professionals' views. The teaching practice studies were classified as 'Praxis' studies.

2.10 Comparing and contrasting findings

The tables in Appendix 2 were used to compare and contrast findings to extract similarities and differences within and between study types. This process facilitated the exploration of the views of the different systems (CYP, parents and professionals) since it would not be expected that they would hold similar viewpoints about Black Caribbean CYP's experiences of school. Apart from the findings, these tables contain sample characteristics. These were used to explore similarities and differences across studies which facilitated cross referencing of methodological and sample characteristics to try to account for variations in findings. For example, two studies explored the aspirations of children and young people with contrasting findings. Law, Finney & Swann (2014) found no evidence of low aspirations in Black Caribbean students, whilst Strand & Winston (2008) presented evidence of low educational aspirations in their sample. Through observing the tables, it became apparent that the latter study draws on a school from inner city areas with high levels of deprivation and unemployment with pupils showing low levels of school attendance and low examination results. The former study did not report on the exact context of their sample population other than that they were multicultural secondary schools with varied intake of inner city pupils. The socio-demographic factors experienced by the sample in Strand and Winston's study may explain the disparity of findings between the two studies. Crucially, it was also noted that Strand and Winston, appeared to have committed 'epistemological violence' against their interpretation of their findings. Held (2020) states that Epistemological violence occurs when: " (a) omission of the concepts embedded in the lived experience of othered peoples and (b) interpretation of findings of difference between peoples to be caused by inherent inferiorities of those who are already othered, so as to cast them as problematic and/or of lesser (or even sub) humanity."(p.350). Strand and Winston failed to discuss racial related challenges faced by BC pupils when presenting their findings around disaffection and commitment to schooling. They appear to apply White middle-class conceptualization of aspirations with no reference made to seeking participants' views of what aspirations means to them in relation to their identity. The authors discussed educational aspirations in relation to 'higher' and 'low', with the former relating to aspiring 'the professions'. They used examples of a Bangladeshi girl's aspiration to go to college as 'higher' and 'better' than the Black

Caribbean girl's desire to be a famous singer. In contrast to this approach, Law, Finney & Swann (2014) contextualises educational aspiration within ethnic differences in relation to the negative impact of 'gangsta' culture, racial stereotyping and streaming in the educational experience of BC CYP, impacting on their aspirations.

Cross-referencing the information from the tables also revealed similarities between findings. Demie (2021) found that parents viewed the stereotyping of their children as negatively impacting the rate of school exclusion experienced by this group. Similarly, Chapman and Bhopal (2019) found that students perceive racial stereotypes as driving teachers' assumptions that Black Caribbean students do not achieve and require behaviour modifications. Comparing the sample characteristics of these two studies highlighted the fact that Demie's studies claimed to include different systems in order to triangulate information around reasons for high rates of school exclusion. However, pupils' views were not included in the study which raises questions around giving voice to those the research aims to represent. Further discussion around the studies' findings will follow in the themes section.

2.11 Thematic Synthesis

Table 15 below outlines the themes extracted from the synthesis of the studies' findings. This process was undertaken by integrating predefined themes from the original studies with the themes emerging from analysing the amalgamated findings. The findings revealed mostly similar themes across the study types in terms of the factors impacting the educational experiences of Black Caribbean CYP. Although the literature review search explored the educational experiences of this group broadly, nine out of ten papers found that racialised challenges are an integral part of the school experiences of this group. This corpus of research helps to validate CRT's claim for the centrality of race in the experiences of people of colour. In addition, racialisation featured in findings reporting the views of CYP, parents and professionals offering evidence from an ecological perspective.

From the perspective of the pupils, three themes emerged, namely, institutional racism; stereotypes around their identity, ability and behaviour; and CYP's affective relationship with school. Themes emerging from the findings of the parental and professional views studies were related to institutional racism and stereotypes. In terms of the Praxis studies, two themes emerged, namely, institutional racism as a barrier and culturally sensitive teaching practices. Institutional racism

expressed in a variety of ways was the most prevalent theme across all the study types. The majority of the negative experiences of Black Caribbean pupils appear to stem from institutionally racist practices such as, teacher discrimination, differentiated behavioural sanctions, racial surveillance and the delivery of an Eurocentric curriculum. These experiences have been grouped into sub-themes that will be discussed as part of the umbrella theme of Institutional Racism.

Table 15. Emerging themes according to study type

Study Type	**Theme**	**Sub-Theme**
CYP's Views	Institutional Racism	● Teacher low expectation of Black Caribbean pupils ● Surveillance (From teachers & police) ● Differentiated behaviour sanctions
	Stereotypes	● Academic Inferiority ● Behavioural problems ● Hard masculinity (gangster culture, violence) ● Microaggressions
	Affective Relationship with school	● Disaffection (emotional & behavioural attachment to school), ● Low commitment to school ● Low levels of school bonding ● Educational Aspirations
Parent's Views	Institutional Racism	● Teachers discrimination ● Differentiated behavioural sanctions applied to Black Caribbean pupils ● Overt racism (name calling) particularly in predominantly white settings ● Eurocentric Curriculum (Curriculum lacks Caribbean history affecting children's self esteem

	● Stereotyping	● Children viewed as 'violent' particularly boys
Professionals' Views	Institutional Racism	● Illegal exclusions (managed moves, pupils being sent home early) ● Lack of diversity in the workforce/Lack of training around diversity/inclusion ● Culturally insensitive curriculum ● Differentiated behaviour sanctions
	Stereotyping	● School staff's cultural stereotyping of Black Caribbean children and their families
Praxis Studies	Institutional Racism	● Culturally insensitive curriculum ● Teaching practices that legitimise White supremacy and reinforces Black inferiority ● Microaggressions – Students experience microaggressions when being taught Black History
	Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	● Black learners' identity can be restored through using culturally responsive teaching practices (e.g. using multimodal and multiliteracy approaches)

2.12 Themes across studies

Due to the overlapping themes across the study types, they will be discussed in terms of similarities and differences between the views of CYP, parents and professionals. This analysis will also aim to discuss teaching strategies that may facilitate or hinder the positive educational experiences of this population.

2.12.1 Institutional Racism

Findings revealed that educational professionals including Head Teachers and Educational Psychologists viewed institutional racism against Black Caribbean pupils as a contributing factor to the disproportionate number of school exclusions of Black Caribbean pupils in the UK (Demie, 2021). EPs felt that school staff associate Caribbean heritage with experiencing violence within the family. Both groups of professionals acknowledged that institutional racism in schools is a result of structural racism in the wider society, making reference to the lack of Black representation in school and other professional workforces including the police and educational psychology. In addition to this, EPs reported that schools apply illegal exclusions to Black Caribbean pupils, advising parents to take their children out for part of the day or to a different school or else they will be permanently excluded. Similarly, school staff reported that Black Caribbean parents are told by schools to move their children to a different setting, resulting in pupils attending many different primary schools. Staff reported on the overstaying of Black Caribbean pupils in Pupil Referral Units, which are designed to be a temporary measure to support reintegration into a mainstream setting. Parents also referred to wider structural racism as affecting the school experiences of their children (Ochieng, 2010). Problem-based portraits of Black Caribbean Males in the media impacts on teachers' perceptions of their children as problematic, hence differential behavioural sanctions being applied. Parents described their adolescent children's experiences of discrimination in the classrooms and at playgrounds, which were viewed to affect the children's educational outcomes.

Findings indicate that institutional racism towards Black Caribbean pupils is pervasive and systematic. Second generation middle class parents reported on their own overt experiences of racial name calling and physical violence by school staff and peers including 'gollywog' and 'jungle bunny' (Vincent at al, 2013). They acknowledged that their children's experiences of racism may be less likely to be explicit but it still potentially undermines and marginalises their children at school. Mothers recalled their experiences as school girls, referring to 'hiding' to avoid overt racism around name calling, which led to feelings of isolation. Female pupils in Chapman & Bhopal (2019) also reported trying to stay unnoticed to avoid teacher discrimination and microaggressions. Being part of a racial minority was shown by a couple of papers to increase the risk of racial discrimination within the school (Vincent et al, 2013; Chapman & Bhopal, 2019).

2.12.1.1 Teacher Discrimination

Students reported that teachers held deficit perceptions about their academic performance, which decreased their overall engagement with school (Chapman and Bhopal, 2019). This may offer some explanation for the BC pupils' school disaffection reported by Strand and Winston (2008). Teachers' negative attitudes towards this group was also reported by parents and EPs who felt that it leads to school disengagement and exclusion (Demie, 2021). Parents shared the view that their secondary aged children were being discriminated against by teachers. They reported that in early years their sons appeared confident and engaged in school. However, as they progressed into secondary education, they started receiving complaints from their children's schools. EPs raised issues around the learning needs of this group not being met, which may help to explain the secondary school difficulties reported by parents. Discriminatory practices led families to remove their children from certain schools, having a negative impact on their educational outcomes (Ochieng, 2010). Parents felt that staff's lack of cultural competence plays a part in how they perceive Black Caribbean pupils, which impacts on exclusion rates (Demie, 2021). Teacher's negative attitude towards Black Caribbean pupils was also reported by a researcher during their fieldwork observing the delivery of a Black History Unit to secondary school pupils in England (Doharty, 2018).

2.12.1.2. Racial Surveillance

Another theme emerging from this review related to institutional racism is school staff's over-surveillance of Black Caribbean pupils compared to White students. This seems to be particularly pervasive in majority White schools and is shown to be experienced differently by male and female students (Chapman & Bhopal, 2019). As previously mentioned, Caribbean girls reported trying to become unnoticed by teachers, whereas the surveillance of male students was viewed as more difficult to avoid (Butler-Barnes et al, 2018).

Findings showed that the over-surveillance of Black Caribbean pupils is not restricted to school staff on school grounds. Pupils reported experiencing stop and search by police on the streets and on public transport while in their school uniform (Wallace, 2018). These experiences of over-surveillance affected the young people's sense of belonging and instilled mistrust in law enforcement. The institutional racism referred to by a Head Teacher in Demie's (2021) study in the form of lack of representation of Black people in the police force may exacerbate these feelings for young people. Moreover, students felt that they were rendered suspicious and worthy of scrutiny by

the police which ties in with findings of negative stereotypes reported by some of the studies in this review. In addition to this, over surveillance of Black Caribbean students limits their engagement in school (Chapman & Bhopal, 2019). This may help to explain findings of high levels of disaffection, low commitment to school and low levels of school bonding by this population.

2.12.1.3. Differentiated behavioural sanctions

Educational Psychologists and parents reported that behavioural sanctions are applied more severely for the same behaviour to Black Caribbean boys compared to White pupils. This was viewed as one of the reasons for the disproportionate rates of school exclusion of Black Caribbean pupils (Demie, 2021). The parent sample from Ochieng (2010) corroborated this view, reporting on the out of proportion rates of suspension and exclusions within their community, which increases their risk of engaging in behaviours such as crime, smoking and drug consumption affecting their lifestyle and wellbeing. The CYP in Chapman and Bhopal (2019) also reported receiving modified behavioural sanctions. They viewed racial stereotypes as driving teachers' assumptions that they require more severe discipline measures.

2.12.1.4 Delivery of a Eurocentric Curriculum

Issues of teaching practices around a culturally sensitive curriculum were the focus of both Praxis studies in this review. Doharty (2019) explored Black Caribbean pupils' experiences while learning Black history during Black History month in the UK. They found that secondary pupils are subjected to various types of microaggressions creating a White/Black (civilised/uncivilised) binary and reinforcing stereotypes of White people as superior and Black people's inferiority. Through their findings, Doharty, attributes the pedagogical practices pupils experienced during Black history month as stemming from institutional racism in the form of educational policies that legitimise and extend White supremacy. The pedagogical practices observed to gather data for the study were based on stereotypes of deficit-informed images of Black people around poor intellectual abilities and dehumanisation of slaves. This is in line with the views shared by pupils in Law and colleagues (2014) who felt that education programmes aimed at improving their achievement made them feel 'dumb'. These findings that curriculum and teaching practices preserve White domination are in line with other findings in this review around wider structural and institutional racism affecting and shaping Black Caribbean pupils' experiences of school. Doharty (2019) highlighted that the teacher as an agent of wider institutional racism conceptualised Black History in a demeaning and insulting

manner to Black students. Demie's (2021) participants referred to problems around the insufficient staff training on inclusion as well as lack of a diverse workforce as contributing factors to the high rates of school exclusion of this group. These are in line with Doharty's (2019) attribution to teachers' attitude as representative of a wider structural racist society.

In contrast to the pupils' experiences and culturally insensitive pedagogical practices reported above, Charles (2019) explored the impact of using the 'Reframed curriculum units of change', which are based on visual materials in line with the realities of Black experiences. The researcher found that using the materials and teaching strategies that values the identity of the Black learner promotes asset building and empowerment for Black Caribbean pupils. Both findings from the Praxis studies are in line with the views of parents in Ochieng's (2010) study, where a Eurocentric curriculum was viewed as affecting the educational outcomes of their children. Parents expressed that a curriculum containing embedded Black Caribbean history and experiences would enable their children to value school, potentially enhancing their academic achievement, self-esteem and wellbeing. Taking these views into account, being exposed to a Eurocentric curriculum may help to explain findings referred to earlier around the disaffection and lack of school bonding reported by Black Caribbean CYP (Strand & Winston, 2008; Butler-Barnes et al., 2018).

Charles (2019) also draws attention to the fact that Black history is taught as a non-compulsory separate unit during Black History month in the UK without assessing their content which keeps notions of the 'Negro' alive.

2.12.2 Stereotypes

Black Caribbean pupils reported being victims of microaggressions as a result of stereotyping e.g. 'the way the teachers see you', peers and teachers feeling threatened by Black Caribbean students' (Butler-Barner et al, 2018). Teachers' and peers' attitudes towards students in the classroom reinforced stereotypes of academic inferiority of Black Caribbean students. They are seen as academically inferior by teachers and as 'cool' by peers for their musical preferences. As a result, students felt pressured to achieve as a way of disproving stereotypical assumptions about them in terms of gangster culture and violence. Pupils shared that their parents believed they should work 'harder than everyone else' because of their colour (p. 1120). Similar to the parental views around the role of media in feeding into wider structural racism, the young male participants in Chapman & Bhopal (2019) referred to the stereotyping of Black males as gangsters or into violent behaviours as

impacting the teachers' perceptions of Black pupils. Negative stereotyping was viewed by parents as contributing to the overrepresentation of Black Caribbean pupils in exclusion statistics with Black Caribbean boys in particular being 'branded' as violent (Demie, 2021).EPs and professionals such as advisors for behaviour management also perceived stereotyping of this group as threatening as being a contributing factor. A participant in this study made reference to the physical characteristics of large black boys as impacting on how their behaviour is perceived. In addition to school staff and wider society, racial stereotypes about Black Caribbean young men were expressed by female pupils in relation to romantic relationships (Law, Finley & Swann, 2014). Racial stereotyping around romantic relationships e.g. 'he is a woman beater' suggests that the 'hard masculinity' stereotype of Black Caribbean male has been internalised by the young people themselves. Findings showed that an important part of Caribbean identity was attached to ideas of 'hard' masculinity and involvement in gangs as markers of the transition into adulthood. This concept appears to tie in with findings of Black Caribbean youth undergoing an adultification process ("manning up") which stops them from sharing their experiences of 'stop and search' with the police while on their way to and from school with their families or school (Wallace, 2018).

2.12.3 Affective Relationships with school

Black Caribbean pupils reported low levels of school bonding (positive perceptions of school, attachment to peers and teachers and involvement in academic and extracurricular activities) (Butler-Barnes et al, 2018). This finding was correlated with perceptions of high levels of teacher discrimination. This effect showed gender differences, being more significant for boys. The authors also showed that, contrary to Black African pupils, the effect of private regard (pride in their racial identity) did not act as a protective factor for Black Caribbean youth in terms of their connection with the school environment. Similar findings around the affective relationship of Black Caribbean pupils with school were reported by Strand & Winston (2008). The authors investigated educational aspirations of various ethnic groups in inner city schools and showed that Black Caribbean pupils reported the highest level of 'Disaffection/ negative peers' (feeling bored in class, wanting to leave school and get a job, and having friends who laugh at those who do well in school) amongst the 10 ethnic minorities and the second lowest score for 'commitment to schooling'. High levels of disaffection/ negative peers were strongly associated with low educational aspirations across the groups. Contrasting CYP's views in relation to low future aspirations were found by Law and colleagues (2014). Black Caribbean young men expressed a desire to achieve having high aspirations about their future academic success. It is worth considering that this sample was taken from a

summer school cohort at Leeds University. These contrasting findings may be explained by the latter sample having a family unit as a form of aspirational capital e.g. family members who had gone to university.

2.13 Critical Summary

This review drew on data from a total of 10 studies exploring the views of CYP, parents and professional as well as teaching practices (Praxis) employed to support Black Caribbean CYP. It aimed at answering the following question: 'What are the school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils?'. Findings demonstrated that racialised experiences permeate the experiences of this group. Institutional Racism and negative stereotyping of Black Caribbean pupils were recurring themes across all the three types of 'views' studies as negatively affecting the educational experiences of BP pupils. Institutional Racism also featured in the 'Praxis' studies as a factor shaping the teaching practices offered to this group. Conversely, culturally responsive teaching practices featured as supportive of Black Caribbean pupils' cognitive skills and their relationship with learning.

Particular areas of strength in the body of research in this review are clear identification of the aims of the research; appropriate choice of research method with clear description of the methodology. Apart from presenting 'unequivocal' methodological quality, the studies present findings on the perspectives of the different systems, drawing on the views of CYP, parents and educational professionals. This is particularly relevant to the present study as EPs are expected to adopt a systemic approach to their practice. Moreover, the majority of the studies were undertaken on the UK population, which increases the potential applicability of the findings to the context of the present study.

In terms of limitations, the studies lacked robustness in the description of sample characteristics and evidence of the authors' reflexivity. Although the methodological quality of the studies was 'unequivocal', the majority of the studies failed to report on considerations around the impact of the researcher's own world views on the interpretation of the findings. This is concerning since 90% of the studies used qualitative methods of data analysis where the researcher's views may have a particular impact on the interpretation of the data. Also, the professionals' studies included the perspectives of school staff such as Head teachers and behaviour mentors. None of the studies explored teachers' views, which is problematic since they are the professionals having the most

direct contact with pupils in educational settings. Another limitation was around defining participants' ethnicity. Some studies referred to Black CYP, not always making it clear whether CYP were from a Caribbean or African heritage. Therefore, aspects of the findings could not be used in the synthesis. This 'one-size-fits-all' approach to conceptualising Blackness fails to take into consideration the unique ways in which the CYP's diverse ethnic identity may affect their experiences of school. In addition, one of the studies only utilised quantitative measures to explore the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and school bonding, without gathering more nuanced qualitative accounts of the YP's experiences.

In terms of the gap in relation to the focus of the studies in this review, only one of the studies reported on positive outcomes around high aspirations of young Black Men (Wallace, 2014). The remaining papers overwhelmingly explored the challenges experienced by this group, particularly in relation to academic achievement, school disaffection and school exclusion. In this regard, exploring the views of Black Caribbean young people who have successfully concluded their statutory education despite the institutional barriers highlighted by the studies in this review, may offer insight into the factors that contributed to their academic success. This approach may provide evidence to educational professionals and policy makers upon which to develop educational provision and support services for this population. In addition, findings in this review suggest that the challenges experienced by this group appear to increase during secondary education. Therefore, this study will focus on the high achieving Black Caribbean young people's racialised experiences of secondary school. The following chapter will focus on justifying and discussing the methodology used for collecting and interpreting the data in this study.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Chapter Overview

The aim of this chapter is to describe the methodological approach adopted to collect, organise and analyse the data for this study. I will begin by highlighting the ontological and epistemological stances driving this research followed by a discussion on quantitative and participatory approaches. After these, I will offer details around the recruitment process and participants characteristics followed by information on the data collection instrument. Subsequently, I will offer reflections on the ethical considerations of undertaking this study as well as around research reflexivity. Towards the end of the chapter, I will present the method of data analysis and the theoretical framework underpinning this research. To close, I will demonstrate the steps taken to analyse the data by providing one worked example of the process for one participant's transcript.

3.2 Epistemological and Ontological Positions

Scientific enquiry requires researchers to position themselves in relation to what constitutes reality (Crotty, 1998). Crucial to this process are the Ontological and Epistemological assumptions guiding the research, which I will turn to next.

3.2.1 Ontology

Ontology refers to the study of the nature of reality (Crotty, 1998). It includes claims made about what social reality is, what constitutes it, and the interactions between its elements (Blaikie, 2010). This research adopts a social constructivist ontological stance, assuming that reality is constructed through social activity (Neuman, 2003). From this perspective, it is assumed that prevailing definitions of reality in relation to the school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils have been enacted with a socio-political agenda for the marginalisation of minoritised groups. In this context, I am adopting a critical view about the implications of different views of the nature of truth in relation to the educational experiences of high achieving Black Caribbean YP. By placing their views at centre stage and drawing upon their constructions of reality, I aim to challenge oppressive versions of reality in relation to notions of inherited inferiority of Black Caribbean students. This approach combined with a critical investigation of the literature on the educational experiences of Black Caribbean students aims to examine which version of reality offers insights to promote positive change.

3.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and that which would be known (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). In this research, I adopt a social constructionist stance on knowledge creation. Social constructionism maintains that humans extract understanding of the world through social processes that tend to support dominant belief systems (Allen, 2005). It holds four key assumptions as follows (Burr, 1995):

1. A critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge:

This is based on the position that no objective, unbiased observation of the world exists. With regards to this research, this assumption invites me as the observer of participants' experiences to critically examine problem-based socially constructed discourses impacting the school experiences of Black Caribbean Young People. I will assume that participants' meaning making may also be impacted by the prevailing social discourse.

2. Historical and cultural specificity:

This assumption holds that the understanding of the world into defined categories and concepts is historically and culturally specific. Hence, the concept of race was constructed for specific historical and political reasons. This research adopts the premise that the categorisation of people into racial groups has been historically constructed to perpetuate hierarchies of social power rather than being biologically defined. I will adopt an understanding of race in relation to slavery and its historical implications for power relations across the different racialised groups.

3. Knowledge is sustained by social processes:

Knowledge is constructed through daily interactions between people. This assumption highlights the power of language in establishing and maintaining socially accepted ways of defining knowledge. In relation to this research, I aim to critically examine how knowledge has been defined and sustained in the UK educational system through the language participants use to describe their experiences. Their narrative may create knowledge that differs from the prevailing within-child notions of deficit.

4. Knowledge and social action go together:

This assumption holds that different ways of constructing the world require different social actions. Viewing race as a social construction calls for action towards addressing marginalisation and oppression created by social hierarchies based on race. This research has a political agenda around promoting social justice. I will aim to draw on participants' descriptions of their experiences to guide recommendations for EP practice aimed at improving the secondary school outcomes of Black Caribbean pupils.

3.3 Qualitative approach of enquiry

Crotty (1998) suggests that the researcher's epistemological position drives the theoretical perspective that informs the choice of methodology. The epistemological stance and theoretical framework in this study lend themselves to qualitative methods. Qualitative research stems from the fundamental premise that each individual experiences the world in fundamentally idiosyncratic ways (Peck & Mummery, 2018). They are inductive and interpretative by nature, whilst refraining from inferring causal relationships among variables (Hoepfl, 1997). Qualitative methods are concerned with exploring 'how' the phenomenon comes into being, exploring the context in which it occurs from the perspective of participants. This notion lends itself to the social constructionist principle that reality is socially constructed. In addition, the focus on giving voice to the individual experiences of participants, lends itself to the CRT's tenet of experiential knowledge where the truths of those being silenced can be expressed (Matsuda et al, 1993). CRT researchers advocate for the use of qualitative methods which facilitates in-depth research and analyses of human experiences (Parker and Roberts, 2011). Qualitative research is concerned with 'what' something is, exploring the subject under investigation in its entirety and from its various parts (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). In its core is a drive to gain a 'deep understanding of what a subject matter is, in all its real-world complexity, and an ability to describe, explain and communicate that understanding' (p.37).This research aims to explore how the individual educational experiences of Black Caribbean young people were shaped in their entirety, by honing into individual aspects of their narratives aimed at understanding their complexity. In this context, qualitative methods seem to lend themselves well to exploring the views of this group.

3.4 Participatory approach

'It is important to recognise the role of power and oppression in relation to knowledge production (McGrath & Johnson, 2003). CRT is underpinned by a social justice stance advocating for creation of knowledge that addresses racialized marginalisation and inequality. Research using a CRT framework should strive to disrupt passive production of knowledge by incorporating the multiple experiences of people of colour in the research process (Hylton, 2012). Hylton suggests that a key consideration by which this can be achieved is applying an inclusive and participatory approach to the research methodology. Participatory research is committed to impacting the lives of participants not only directly but more broadly by promoting social change (Dodson and Baker, 1995). In addition to this, participatory research is concerned with issues of power and agency in the

production of knowledge. Knowledge production becomes a product of the voices of participants whilst dispersing the power of the researcher.

Levels of research participation vary by degree. This study incorporated a participatory element in the research design by obtaining support from a young person of Caribbean heritage participating as 'collaborator' and contributing to the design of the research questions. Interview questions can be participatory if decision making around their use and implementation is made collaboratively between the researcher and participants (Watson & Marciano, 2015). This approach aimed at ensuring that the identification of relevant issues to be explored in the interviews stemmed from the experiences of the community involved.

The data collected during the discussions with the collaborator was not used as part of the analysis. Instead, his collaboration was captured in the form of the interview schedule. After he described his experiences about a specific issue, I asked the following question, "How would you word a question to other participants about this topic?". Careful consideration was given to the wording of the questions to ensure they remained open and with room for expansion (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

During my interactions with the collaborator, his knowledge and experiences were genuinely valued. As a researcher, I am committed to producing research where the voice of participants is the 'golden thread' running through the project. This stance comes from a commitment to challenging oppression in the creation of knowledge. I would have relished a greater participation of the young people taking part in the study throughout the entire research process. However, limitations posed by the Covid-19 pandemic meant that such design was very difficult to implement. However, I believe that using methods of data collection and analysis whereby the voices of participants take centre stage has gone some way to addressing this limitation.

3.5 The recruitment process

Table 16 in appendix 6 contains participants' recruitment criteria. All participants were aged between 18-25 years and had at least one Black Caribbean parent. They attended primary and secondary education in the UK and were predicted to achieve at least BBB in their A-levels examinations.

A number of recruitment strategies were used. I sought support from the leadership teams of sixth form colleges and secondary schools within the local authority I was on placement at. I also approached universities and organisations involved with Caribbean communities across the UK. In addition, I posted the recruitment leaflet on social media platforms and disseminated it to Trainee Educational Psychologists and to Black Caribbean families within my EPS.

Information about the study was sent to the aforementioned institutions. This included a letter of consent (Append. 7) and recruitment leaflets (Append.8) to be shared with prospective participants. Young people who expressed interest in taking part in the study were sent the study's information letter and the consent form. They were also offered the opportunity to ask any questions before consenting to participate. Participants were offered £20 (to help design the interview questions) and £15 (to be interviewed) for their participation.

3.6 Participants' Characteristics

Five high academic achieving young people from a Black Caribbean heritage who met the criteria were recruited to take part in this study. This included one research collaborator and four participants who were interviewed. The first young person who expressed interest in participating in the research was asked to take part as a collaborator in order for the research schedule to be developed. The discussion with this participant was not used as data. As previously explained, his input was used solely to help to inform the interview questions. During the session with the collaborator, he disclosed that he was a Psychology student and that acting as a collaborator could contribute to his understanding of undertaking psychological research.

Table 17 below illustrates participants' characteristics. Although not part of the recruitment criteria, all participants disclosed that they were undergraduate students in universities in England at the time of taking part in the study. Two participants identified as female and three identified as male (including the collaborator). Although data about participants' sexual orientation was not specifically sought, one of the male participants described himself as gay. As we shall see in the findings chapter, this aspect of his identity appeared key to his experiences of school.

Table 17. Participants' Characteristics

Pseudonym	Role	Gender	Location of school attended
Ashby Elias	Participant	Male	Bedfordshire/ East of England
Buddy Pine	Participant	Male	Southwest London
Dominica Bryan	Participant	Female	North London
Megan	Participant	Female	Berkshire/Southeast of England
N/A	Participant/Collaborator	Male	Northeast London

3.7 Data collection

Semi-structured interviews were the data collection method used in this study. The rationale for choosing this method, the process of designing the interview schedule as well as how the interviews were conducted are discussed below.

3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

Human beings are storytellers by nature (Mishler, 1991). Interviews offer a platform for people to tell their stories upon which projects with politically emancipatory potential can be developed (Gergen, 2001). Interviews are recognized as one of the primary ways to collect data in phenomenological designs (Creswell, 2013).

I chose semi-structured interviews as the method of data collection in this study. In contrast to the restricted nature of structured interviews, semi-structured interviews utilise open ended questions, encouraging participants to speak freely about their experiences (Smith, 1996). My aim in using this method was to allow sufficient flexibility for participants to expand on their answers allowing their personal experience to guide the process. This flexible approach to data collection is considered a fundamental aspect of the inductive principles of phenomenology (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009) Semi-structured interviews promote in-depth exploration of a topic whilst remaining responsive to participants' views (Bartholomew, Henderson, & Marcia, 2000). By adopting this approach, I intend to potentially elaborate on existing knowledge or discover new knowledge about this group's experiences of secondary school.

The interviews were undertaken online due to Covid-19 restrictions. Each interview was made using the interview schedule as a guideline and lasted between 45-60 minutes. I was mindful that face to face interviews have traditionally been conducted offering a valuable opportunity to build rapport with participants. In order to ensure richness of content, I asked follow up questions to participants as interviewees tend to elaborate less on topics during online interviews (Krouwel, Jolly & Greenfield, 2019).

In my experience working with children and young people I observe their body language as part of gaining a sense of their emotional state. I was mindful that by undertaking online interviews my ability to do that would be more limited than in face-to-face interaction. Therefore, when participants disclosed potentially upsetting experiences, it was important to show highly engaged listening and sensitivity to their accounts. I also allowed them space before proceeding with the interview. My being a Black woman may have supported them to feel that their experiences were being validated and understood.

Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed. Reflections on each transcript and analysis of the data were logged in the research diary.

3.7.2 The development of the interview schedule

The interview schedule can be found in Appendix 9. There were seven open ended questions in total, but not all questions were asked to all participants. This is because participants may have explored the topic when answering a different question. The questions were developed using two sources: input from the collaborator and insight from the finding from the Literature review papers.

In terms of the input from the collaborator, his reflections around his school experiences were discussed and reflected upon using the CRT tenets as a framework. Three questions were derived from his input. Firstly, his descriptions around discriminatory practices within schools in terms of Black pupils' hair was discussed in relation to colour blind policies that fail to take into account the disproportionate impact that school policies and practices may have on students of colour. This led to a question around school sanctions. Secondly, he described the casual way in which minoritised groups were described by peers as 'the road man group'. This triggered discussions around the normalisation of racial insults from which an interview question around racial microaggressions was

derived. Thirdly, he referred to the lack of Black representation in the school council. This was discussed in relation to the CRT's interest convergence tenet around the impact of the lack of Black voices in decision-making, impacting outcomes for Black students. This discussion generated a question around Black representation in the school workforce.

The literature review papers also contributed to the design of the interview schedule. Since the findings revealed racialisation as a key feature in BC pupils' experiences, the initial question was an open exploration asking participants the following: 'Tell me about race in schools?'.
The literature review findings helped to inform one further interview question around interactions with school staff. Previous findings reported that teacher discrimination and racial surveillance negatively impact the experiences of Black Caribbean pupils (Chapman and Bhopal, 2019; Demie, 2021; Ochieng, 2010; Butler-Barnes et al, 2018). By asking an open question around their interactions with staff, I hoped to explore participants' views of how they were perceived and treated by school staff.

In summary, input from the research collaborator was key to informing the topics explored in the schedule. His narratives were interpreted using a CRT framework aimed at identifying patterns of discrimination and marginalisation of BC pupils. This approach led to questions suggested by the collaborator which he considered relevant to explore racialised secondary school experiences of this group. Further, findings from the literature review papers around the impact of race on the educational experiences of BC pupils as well as challenging interactions with school staff also helped to inform the interview questions.

3.8 Ethical considerations

This study followed ethical guidelines from the University of East London Ethics Committee and the British Psychological Society (BPS, 2014). Ethics approval was obtained including for a change of the research's title (Append. 16). The ethical considerations that I identified are discussed below.

3.8.1 Informed consent

Informed consent is a process upon which research participants gain a clear understanding of the research and any risks posed by it (Manti & Licari, 2018). Steps were taken in this study to ensure participants understood the nature of the study and what their participation involved before agreeing

to take part in the study. Young people who were interested in taking part in the study and met the criteria were provided with an invitation letter with detailed information about the study (Append. 10). They were offered the opportunity to ask additional questions about any aspect of the study that was not clear to them. Once they understood what their participation involved and agreed to participate, participants were asked to sign a consent form (Append. 7). Prior to initiating the interviews, I offered them further opportunity to ask questions in case any queries had arisen since they provided written consent. Participants also received a debrief letter detailing steps that would be taken to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the data they provided (Append. 11).

3.8.2 Confidentiality

This research paid close attention to the Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2021) in regards to maintaining privacy and identity of participants. Participants were provided with a letter containing information about how their personal information would be handled. Prior to collecting the data, participants were reminded that the information they share as part of the research process would be kept confidential. The exception to this would be if safeguarding concerns were raised or identified, in which case the safeguarding lead of their previous college would be informed. Any personal information by which participants could be identified was anonymised by assigning pseudonyms chosen by the participants.

3.8.3 Right to withdraw

Psychologists must be sensitive to issues of perceived authority or influence over research participants in relation to their rights (BPS, 2017). I was mindful that revisiting stressful events may cause psychological distress (Hobfoll et al, 2007). Therefore, it was important to consider the potential negative emotions that participants could experience as a result of speaking about their experiences of school. Prior to collecting data, I reminded participants of their voluntary participation and that they could withdraw from the interview at any point without explanation. I also remained mindful of participants' non-verbal cues, in order to respond accordingly to any signs of distress.

3.9 Research reflexivity

Research reflexivity is a concept referring to the researcher's critical reflection on the type or knowledge produced by the research and how it has been achieved (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

Researchers can be faced with “ethically important moments”, with regards to situations in the research process that require considerable moral reasoning in relation to upholding the dignity and autonomy of participants when making research decisions.

It is important to recognize that meeting with a researcher during an interview may bring issues of power into play. In order to address this, I reiterated their positions as experts on their lives, emphasising the value of their knowledge and experiences. I also aimed at instilling a sense of ownership and agency in participants by highlighting the importance of their contribution in potentially promoting broader social changes (Gaventa and Cornwall, 2006).

Creswell (2013) calls attention to the importance of ‘bracketing’, the process by which the researcher minimised the impact of their own preconceived beliefs on their interpretation of the phenomena being investigated. Throughout the entire research process, I utilised a research diary to log reflections about my interactions with the data. This process helped me to remain mindful of instances in which my own experiences as a Black woman impacted on my interpretation of participants' experiences of education. I was aware of the impact that hearing participants’ racialised experiences had on my emotions. To support me with processing them, I used a reflective diary with wellbeing tools designed by Kinouani (2021). This diary aided me to refrain as much as possible from allowing my own experiences to slip into the interpretation of the data.

3.10 IPA in relation to the Epistemological and Ontological positions

IPA was developed as an alternative research paradigm due to dissatisfaction with the focus on quantitative methods in psychological research (Smith, 1996). The aim was to bring to psychology an approach concerned with the systematic examination of the ‘experiential and qualitative’ aspects of human experience (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.4). This methodology assumes that people are inherently self-reflective and actively seek to extract meaning from their experiences by engaging in reflecting on them (Smith & Osborn, 2008). It is used to explore experiences of a small, fairly homogeneous group of individuals who have experienced a particular phenomenon, generally 4-10 participants for professional doctorates (Clark, 2010). It offers a framework upon which individual perceptions and lived experiences are encouraged and valued, placing individuals as an essential part of the reality of their experiences (Larkin, Watts & Clinton, 2006). In this light, IPA will place the young people in this study as authorities in their own educational experiences. In addition, I believe

that IPA methodology offered a powerful tool in which to explore the experiences of High achieving Black Caribbean young people since to my knowledge, their voices have rarely been heard within research in the UK.

In order to conduct a thorough IPA analysis, researchers should have an understanding of the philosophical underpinning of the approach (Noon, 2018). IPA is founded on three key philosophical premises: phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography. These will be discussed below.

3.10.1 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a method of inquiry originally conceptualised by key figures including Heidegger and Husserl (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Husserl argued that reality exists as a 'phenomenon' resulting from individuals' lived experiences (Fouche, 1993). He maintained that phenomenologists should focus on individuals' unique perceptions of objects and events (Smith & Osborn, 2008). This approach is in line with CRT's tenet of the centrality of experiential knowledge. As shown by previous research, phenomenology is cognizant with the social constructionist stance adopted in this research, offering a window into personal meaning in a social context (Abbey & Dallos, 2004; Mo, Viljoen and Sharma, 2022). Moreover, as I shall explore further below, Heidegger's concept of Dasein (Being-in-the-world) 'resonates with IPA's understanding of people and the worlds they inhabit as socially and historically contingent and contextually bound' (Eatough & Smith, 2017, p. 4). The latter quote describes the inherently social constructionist nature of IPA, in terms of placing the lived experience within a socio-historical context.

3.10.2 Hermeneutics

The subjective nature of phenomenology within IPA brings about the notion of hermeneutics. This philosophical underpinning was conceptualised by a number of theorists including Heidegger and Gadamer. It refers to the theory of interpretation whereby a phenomenon can be explored through people's perceptions and use of language (Freeman, 2008). Heidegger argued that people interact with the world by 'dasein', being with and interpreting the things within it. He claimed that through active involvement in the phenomenological analysis, the researcher will bring their own lived experiences, preconceptions and assumptions to the analysis, which he described as 'forestructure'. This phenomenon is difficult to mediate and researchers need to engage in ongoing reflection on the interference of their preconceptions, giving priority to the experiences of participants (Smith,

Flowers & Larkin, 2009). As a researcher, my interpretation of their accounts is also socially and culturally constructed. It is therefore assumed that the understanding of the phenomenon will be co-constructed, resulting from my own meaning making of the participants' understanding of their experience. Hence, there is a recognition that in interpreting participants' experiences, there will be an inevitable interplay between their meaning making and my perspectives and values. I am assuming this to be particularly worthy of reflection since I am Black and may have projected my own experiences of Blackness onto that of the participants.

There is a recognition that the researcher only has access to what participants share about their experiences. Researchers engage in 'double hermeneutics' in the sense that they are making meaning of participants' meaning making of their experiences (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

Another important idea in hermeneutics theory with relevance to IPA is the concept of the hermeneutic circle. It defines interpretation as a dynamic process in which to understand the whole, the parts need to be understood and the reverse is also true. IPA embraces this circularity into the process of interpretation, allowing flexibility in the order in which the data is explored.

3.10.3 Idiography

Idiography refers to the detailed exploration of the perspective of individual participants before attempting to interpret the manifestation of the phenomenon within the whole sample (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Idiographic approaches contrast with monothetic approaches to inquiry, whereby claims are made at sample level with no identification of individual data. It explores the single case in its own right before attempting to draw possible interconnections and differences between participants' accounts of a phenomenon (Smith, 2011). IPA adopts this approach to enquiry, with a focus on the 'particular' in relation to exploring rich details around participants' accounts of their experiences, aimed at gaining an in-depth analysis. The particular also refers to the particular people, and how experiential phenomena is understood from their perspective (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). It is important to highlight that the experience relates to the phenomenon and it can be accessed through people's unique context and meaning-making of the phenomenon.

Drawing on the three principles above, IPA appears to be in line with CRT's methodological frame of centring the analysis on the lived experience of people of colour. Moreover, IPA is cognisant with

CRT methodology by acknowledging that the researcher will bring their own experiences into the analysis, hence deconstructing notions of objectivity and neutrality in research (Ladson-Billings, 2003). In summary, IPA seems a suitable methodology for investigating High Achieving Black Caribbean YP's experiences of their secondary education in the context of this study.

3.11 Limitations of IPA

IPA explores participants' accounts of their experiences through language. It relies on participants' ability to engage in the process of reflecting on their experiences and to relay them in a way that mirrors their actual experience. It has been claimed that it may be a challenge to communicate the complexity and intricacies of subjective experiences, particularly for those who are not familiar with expressing themselves in this way (Willig, 2013). However, this criticism devalues the diversity of ways in which language is used to describe human experience, discriminating against other ways of using language. This assumes a preferred standard of communication, which may be rooted in systemic centring of Whiteness as being superior to other cultural and racial identities and customs. This premise is in direct conflict with the values proposed by this thesis. I have endeavoured to encourage participants' individual communication styles as an integral and valuable aspect of their identity. I am taking the position that through their verbal expression I will be able to gain insights into how this sample of Black Caribbean young people make sense of their experiences of school.

However, I acknowledge that in sharing their experiences in the context of narratives, their descriptions may differ from the lived experiences themselves (Smith, Flower & Larkin, 2009). The act of reflecting on the experience and expressing their thoughts in an in-depth way may affect the Black Caribbean young people's perception of their experiences of education.

There is criticism around the challenges researchers face when attempting to remain truthful to the subjectivity and individuality integral to the idiographic aspect of IPA whilst attempting to identify similarities across the data (Wagstaff & Williams, 2014). I am concerned about this limitation in relation to the analysis as I am particularly interested in the richness of subjective experience. Noon (2018) suggests that it may be more difficult to elucidate common themes from very small samples. He highlights that a sample of approximately 5 participants may help to maintain the idiosyncratic nuances of individual participant's experiences.

Another criticism of IPA is its phenomenological focus on the experience. It may only offer participants' perceptions of their experiences of a phenomenon without exploring the reasons they occur (Willig, 2013). It does not make claims about the nature of things in the world. In addition to this, whilst it aims to gain in-depth accounts of individual experiences, it may not deepen our understanding of why accounts may differ between subjective experiences (Willig, 2008). In relation to this thesis, I am concerned that participants' accounts may not move beyond the experiences themselves which may limit the understanding of the phenomenon itself. An open interview schedule using follow up questions such as 'tell me more about this', 'why do you think that is?' may support participants to explore reasons for their experiences. In terms of the different accounts between participants, drawing on previous findings in relation to the experiences of this group and on my awareness of the social structures that contributed to their experiences will be crucial in understanding and interpreting their experiences.

3.12 Critical Race Theory as a Theoretical Perspective

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a race conscious theoretical framework aimed at understanding inequality and the deep patterns of exclusion experienced by people of colour. CRT scholars align their thinking with social constructionist epistemology, endorsing that the concept of race is socially constructed. As such race is "created, reinforced and regulated, covertly or otherwise, in discourse' aiming to serve a socio-political purpose" (Nyika & Murray-Orr, 2017, p.425). The social categories existing in societies today have been established based on arbitrary phenotypical differences. These have been used to create social hierarchy and the White supremacy ideology (Ladson-Billings, 2003).

CRT strives to demonstrate that the meaning attached to the ways in which people of colour are racialised at different historical and cultural points, serves to produce and maintain systems of majoritarian power (Solarzano, Ceja & Yosso, 2000). In addition, it endeavours to examine how systems of oppression could be reversed to promote racial/ethnic liberation and anti-subordination (Matsuda, Ichitani & Mtsuda, 1987).

3.12.1 CRT and education

The construct of race permeates the educational experiences of students of colour (Bennett & Lee-Treweek, 2014). Racialised experiences such as teacher discrimination and disproportionate

behavioural sanctions serve to maintain the marginalisation of students of colour. Black students are perceived as academically inferior and violent by teachers (Demi, 2021). These stereotypes are claimed to be used to justify teachers' low expectation of students of colour and notions of genetic determinism and cultural deficit entrenched in educational systems (Solorzano, 1997).

CRT scholars have strived to expose and challenge practices and policies upon which the marginalisation of students of colour is maintained in education (Solorzano, 1997; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005). They have identified 5 main tenets central to the application of the framework to the field of education as follows:

3.12.1.1 The intercentricity of race and racism

CRT endorses that racism is multifaceted, being part of the everyday experiences of people of colour (Gillborn, 2006; DeCuir & Dixson 2004). It should not be interpreted as single events of discrimination that can be dealt with in isolation. In fact, racism is deeply ingrained in people's perceptions of racial categories, law and privilege (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Due to its common practice, racism becomes difficult to recognise and to challenge particularly when discourses of objectivity and equal opportunity are at play (Delgado, 2003). Moreover, CRT embraces the concept of intersectionality, originally articulated by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1991. Intersectionality within CRT acknowledges that racism intersects with other converging forms of marginalisation e.g. gender, class, ability, which affect and amplify an individual's experience of discrimination (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Crenshaw, 1991)

The over representation of White educational professionals hinders the understanding of the educational needs of minority groups (Aronson & Meyers, 2022). CRT scholars have called for standards in terms of job and educational opportunities to be revised, considering the lived experiences of marginalised groups to promote social equity (Taylor, 2017).

In addition, exploring the individual experiences of Black Caribbean male and female young people from their own perspectives may shed light onto how various forms of oppression manifest themselves from the perspective of intersectional individuals avoiding oversimplification of the human experience (Joseph, Viesca, & Bianco, 2016;Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). It may also help to understand the various forms of oppression and marginalisation, recognising that racism and oppression are manifested through various aspects of the identities of people of colour.

3.12.1.2 The challenge to dominant ideology

CRT analyses and challenges mechanisms aimed at disguising the self-interest and systems of power of dominant groups such as discourses around meritocracy, colour-blindness, equal opportunities and objectivity (Yosso et al, 2009). Colour-blind narratives fail to recognise the impact that systematic discrimination has had on the lives of people of colour. In addition, equal opportunity narratives maintain White supremacy ideology by preventing actions around equitable policies and practises to promote positive change. Flecha (1999) exposes how the colour-blind approach in European countries has morphed into 'postmodern' racism, which rejects historical claims of racial inferiority/superiority. Instead, the discourse becomes around the cultural differences hindering access to resources by ethnic minorities, hence the segregation of these groups. CRT views the notion of meritocracy as not race neutral. It serves to maintain systems of power, legitimising the disproportional share of resources held by Whites (Delgado, 2003).

CRT analyses the construct of 'Whiteness' as entrenched with ideological assumptions around privilege and domination of social, cultural and political resources based on phenotypic characteristics (McIntosh, 1989). It is viewed as the ultimate 'property' inextricably granting White people racialised rights to enjoyment, reputation and status as well as the right to exclude (Harris, 1993). The White identity became associated with property rights. This notion stems from slavery labour exploitation of Blacks as properties as well as from the removal and extermination of Native Americans. When segregation law was reversed, whiteness as property remained in place by taking a more covert form which maintains the status quo, protecting the interest of white people.

A key focus of CRT is to articulate how racial power manifests itself in social structures and institutions (Crenshaw, et al, 1995). Schools are powerful institutions disseminating wider cultural values. They tend to proliferate White norms and traditions, preserving Whiteness as property (Lewis, 2001). As highlighted by some of the papers in the literature review chapter, the Eurocentric national curriculum in the UK marginalises and disempowers students of colour who become disaffected with the educational systems (Doherty, 2018). By adopting a colour-blind institutional culture and failing to recognise the specific needs and barriers faced by students of colour, schools perpetuate their marginalisation. Therefore, I believe that a racial analysis exploring the complex and multiple ways in which Whiteness manifests itself in the educational experiences of marginalised pupils may be key to understanding and exposing how educational inequities continue to take place in educational institutions.

3.12.1.3 Commitment to social justice

CRT's social and racial justice agenda brings attention to the concept of 'interest convergence' to expose and explore racial injustices around civil gains (Bell, 1980; Yosso et al, 2009). Derrick Bell in his article "Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest Convergence Dilemma" (1980) exposed that the interest of Blacks is only taken into account and acted upon when converging with White people's self-interest. The Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Education fund had been battling against school segregation for a number of years without success. However, in 1954 the Supreme Court ruled in favour of Brown, ending school segregation. Bell postulated that rather than being an act to promote justice, the decision was motivated by the fact that the US wanted to repair the negative image of America that had circulated around the world, caused by images of the Klan violence against Blacks. The US had entered the Cold War against the Soviet Union and wanted to influence the minds of the majority coloured people in the Third World, hence the Supreme Court's decision to end school segregation.

Taking the Interest convergence into account, Milner IV & Howard (2013) drew attention to the recognition that educational advances for people of colour will only happen concomitantly with the interests of Whites. Addressing educational inequalities may threaten their dominant position and that of future White generations. The authors emphasise the importance of including the voices of people of colour in decision making in Educational policy. This would offer critical reflections on the role of teaching practices on historical inequalities and inequities.

A crucial aspect exacerbating educational inequalities is the inadequate teacher training around issues of diversity and inclusion (Ladson-Billings, 1999). However, it is not sufficient to offer occasional 'continued professional development' courses to teachers if meaningful changes in understanding of issues of race and racism are to occur.

3.12.1.4 The centrality of experiential knowledge

CRT views storytelling as a powerful tool for cultural preservation and formation of belief systems (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The stories told by the dominant culture validate their identity and superior positioning as a naturally occurring phenomenon. CRT scholars endorse that experiential knowledge is critical to understanding and legitimizing racial discrimination (Calmore, 1992). It advocated for the importance of creating knowledge that culminates from the lived experiences of people of colour. Counter-narratives play a crucial role in giving voice to groups whose voice and

consciousness have been devalued and ostracised (Delgado, 1989). By creating counter-narratives through mediums such as storytelling, family history and chronicles, people of colour can elucidate injustice by exposing experiences of racism and oppression overlooked by White people (Calmore, 1992). Marginalised groups such as Black slaves, Mexican-Americans, Native Americans and feminist activists have all shared stories as a way to preserve their psyche and to lessen subordination.

As we shall see later in this chapter, an approach based on phenomenological principles was chosen to analyse participants' depictions of their school experiences. Placing the experiential knowledge as a liberating force is in line with the principles of phenomenology and with a focus on understanding the essence of the lived experience (Creswell, 2007).

3.12.1.5 The interdisciplinarity perspective

CRT originated in the mid-1970s from Critical legal studies, which challenged the use of the neutral terminology used in the legal system rooted in class-based political ideology (Roithmayr, 1999). These studies demonstrated that the structures and practices of the legal system supported the perpetuation of White supremacy and the systematic subordination of marginalised groups. CRT argued for issues of race and racism to become central to discussions around issues of discrimination (Parker, Deyhle & Villenas, 1999). As a result, CRT pushed its theoretical application beyond the legal field being applied to a number of disciplines including education (Bell, 1995).

3.12.2 CRT Summary

CRT offers a set of perspectives and methods upon which to identify, examine and challenge socio-structural mechanisms serving to maintain the marginalisation of people of colour (Solorzano, 1997). Racist narratives are embedded within powerful socio-political systems. In the context of education, discourses normalising race and racism have helped to perpetuate inequalities in educational outcomes between White and Black people in the UK and elsewhere for centuries (Nyika & Murray-Orr, 2017). Using a CRT framework has helped to expose the ways in which oppressive teaching practices, colour-blind policies and Eurocentric curriculum negatively affect the educational experiences of Black Caribbean pupils (Doharty, 2018; Vincent et al, 2013). Colour-blind approaches to education and policy poses a dangerous threat to discussions and actions around the impact of race in education and other outcomes. It serves to maintain power and interest of dominant groups whilst suppressing the voices and needs of minority groups. CRT researchers in education

have challenged the discourse around the inequity of educational outcomes being a result of Black cultural practises and poverty (Dixon & Rousseau, 2005)

3.12.3 Critique of CRT

A number of criticisms have been directed at CRT. There is an argument that CRT theorists have claimed that race is 'constructed', however the concept of race has not yet been adequately theorised (Darder and Torres, 2004).

Questions have also been raised around the theory's sole focus on race without accounting for the impact of capitalism and neo-liberal practices on the marginalisation of individuals (Cole, 2009; Darder and Torres, 2004). Cole (2009) claims that issues around labour outsourcing outside the country and lack of training opportunities creates unemployment and poverty in White working-class communities as well. Gillborn (2009) offers a counter argument that it is imperative to analyse the inequalities of contemporary society rather than applying a purely class reductionist view. Failing to recognise the impact on race helps to maintain the existing racially constructed hierarchies. The author claims that this criticism stems from a misunderstanding that CRT views Whites as equally powerful. Rather, CRT holds that all Whites benefit from a White supremacist world.

Criticism has also targeted CRT's emphasis on contemporary systems of racism and oppression. It has been claimed that the theory lacks a historical perspective of how colonial processes and practices continue to shape present dominant and discriminatory ideologies (Stewart-Harawira, 2005). However, rather than ignoring the role of colonialism, CRT highlights that modern racism presents itself not as overt acts of discrimination but rather it permeates the way society operates. This stance exposes racism as entrenched in societies impacting discourses and social practices (Gillborn, 2006).

There has also been criticism of CRT's focus on racialised social structures within the US claiming that the theory adopts a restricted approach to examining the legal structures within the US borders without considering the significance of its conceptual framework outside that context (Golberg & Essed, 2002). However, CRT theorists have argued that, to study forms of domination in different countries, their specific cultural practises need to be observed (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). In the UK, CRT has been applied particularly in the field of Education, placing racialised experiences at the core of educational and outcomes inequalities for CYP (Gillborn, 2005)

CRT's rejection of an objective truth has also received criticism, particularly in relation to its use of narrative-based forms of data (Delgado, 2016). CRT scholars have responded to this criticism by claiming that a positivists approach to enquiry in the social sciences have marginalised and silenced people of colour, serving to perpetuate White supremacist ideology (Crenshaw, 2002; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000).

Despite the above criticism, CRT has grown in strength in the past two decades, dynamically offering an epistemological and methodological tool upon which educational and law theorists have investigated the experiences of marginalised people of colour (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015). In relation to this research, I believe that CRT and the tenets explored above, offer appropriately critical lenses upon which to investigate the experiences of BC YP in the UK. I endorse that its focus on race as the main factor driving the power inequalities and serving to maintain disadvantages of marginalised groups, offers a robust framework upon which to challenge the pervasive discourse around the academic ability of this group. I believe that CRT offers a systematic approach upon which to unpick the various racialised elements that may be at play when investigating participants' lived experiences, also opening opportunities to consider other aspects of participants' intersectional identities that may intensify their experiences of discrimination.

3.12.4 CRT in the context of this research

CRT played a critical role as a theoretical framework in guiding various elements of this research. Firstly, it helped to inform my decision around the focus of the study. As it will be highlighted in the next chapter, the review of previous research helped to identify gaps including research exploring the views of high achieving Black Caribbean pupils. As discussed earlier in the chapter, CRT adopts that offering a counter narrative from the perspective of marginalised groups is key to dismantling oppressive social discourses.

As previously explained, the CRT tenets were also used to guide discussions around the collaborator's views on BC YP's secondary school experiences when generating the interview questions. In addition, the CRT framework was used to support my interpretations around the impact of race and potential patterns of exclusion and discrimination on the participants' educational experiences. Through this theoretical perspective, I examined participants' narratives, which helped

to expose how racialised ideologies, policies and practices may have affected their experiences. I was mindful that CRT has mostly been used to analyse racialised social structures in the US. However, the fact that 9 out of 10 studies in the literature review reporting racialisation of this group were UK based, helps to validate the use of this framework to interpret the experiences of BC pupils in the UK educational system. Nevertheless, careful consideration of the UK's social context was paramount in examining how/if the CRT tenets applied to the educational experiences of the sample in this study. This approach helped to ensure a meaningful and context appropriate application of the framework.

3.13 Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted utilising an IPA interactive process, following the steps suggested by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). A description of the analytical cycle will be presented including an illustration of how each the step was undertaken for one participant. A complete cycle of analysis was undertaken on each transcript before proceeding to the next one.

I began the data analysis through an iterative process where I undertook multiple readings of the transcripts in order to 'immerse' myself in the original data. Each reading deepened my familiarity with participants' experiences, opening new layers of meaning. This step was followed by an 'initial noting', a three-level annotation of the transcripts. This stage involved a detailed exploration of the 'descriptive' and 'linguistic' features of the transcripts, leading to 'conceptual comments'. Following the 'initial noting', participants' narratives were annotated in relation to the CRT tenets. Details about each of these steps can be found in turn in the next sections, including figures to illustrate how the steps were undertaken for one participant.

3.13.1 Descriptive comments

This initial step of the annotation involved a thorough analysis of the transcript extracting key words and features used by participants to describe their experiences. Elements such as physical space, relevant people and self-conceptions emerged from the data, revealing deeper understanding into participants' experiences. The underlined words and phrases in Figure 3 below illustrate the selected descriptive comments from one participant's transcript.

Figure 3. Illustration of selected descriptive comments

Original transcript

GCG: Thinking about your experiences of secondary school, if you could tell me about race in general.

DB: Um hum, okay, hum… in terms of my whole secondary school experience, or in terms of my social life or academia?

GCG: In terms of anything you would like to share with me.

DB: Uh, okay, um, in terms of race, in secondary school I went to quite a **diverse** secondary school. So I wouldn't say I was the **minority** but I wasn't the **majority** as a **black girl**. However, because I was quite **high achieving** from year 7 in my classes I was a **minority.** There wasn't a lot of black people in erm like **top sets,** especially **black boys.** So yeah, in terms of that me and probably two other **black girls** was in my classes, I never really, I felt like in terms of race, ... (hesitates) what else can I say, Erm sometimes I felt I guess had to **prove myself**, or **work a bit harder** compared to like the **white people** in my classes. And I guess sometimes it was hard trying to…(long pause) because I was like in the **top sets** but I was black **it was kind of hard to find where I fitted in**. so yes I guess that is my first initial things to say.

GCG: And you said that you felt you had to prove yourself. Can you tell me a bit more about that?

DB: Yeah, I feel that like what I **heard a lot and I still hear to this day** i had it **throughout secondary school, sixth form and now at university** was that , oh **I didn't think you were that smart or I'm surprised,** so I felt like I always had to like **prove how** smart I was and prove that I like earned my place in those top sets. And I feel that that has affected how I am to this day. I put a lot of pressure on myself in terms of my academic work. And I like to overachieve. Erm, because A lot of people would be surprised and wouldn't believe that you belong to those top sets or those spaces. But then **at the same time**, there wasn't a lot of black people in the top sets .Erm, to a lot of the other black people who weren't in my classes I wasn't seeing as black enough I guess,or… you're like a nerd. So I guess I always had to prove myself to them, that I was black... (long pause) enough. Erm, and that being smart doesn't make you not black. Which I think I've gotten a lot better now. But when I was at the start of secondary school, it was like WHAT!? (loud voice)You're a nerd, how are you in the top set? There were literally like 3 black girls and maybe 1 black boy and the rest of the class was white. So yeah.

3.13.2 Linguistic comments

This stage involved highlighting the nuances of language including changes of tone, fluency and hesitation. These nuances complemented the descriptive words or sentences referred to above, contributing to the conceptualisation of broader themes. For example, the words and phrases highlighted in yellow in Figure 4 below illustrate the participant's hesitation when describing their experiences of having to prove herself worthy of being in 'top sets'. Further down the text, the pauses and utterances brought to sharp focus the conflict and challenges they experienced around being part of majority White high achieving groups.

Figure 4. Illustration of selected linguistic comments

Original transcript
GCG: Thinking about your experiences of secondary school, if you could tell me about race in general. DB: Um hum, okay, hum… in terms of my whole secondary school experience, or in terms of my social life or academia? GCG: In terms of anything you would like to share with me. DB: Uh, okay, um, in terms of race, in secondary school I went to quite a **diverse** secondary school. So I wouldn't say I was the **minority** but I wasn't the **majority** as a **black girl**. However, because I was quite **high achieving** from year 7 in my classes I was a **minority.** There wasn't a lot of black people in erm like **top sets,** especially **black boys.** So yeah, in terms of that me and probably two other **black girls** was in my classes, I never really, I felt like in terms of race, … (hesitates) what else can I say, Erm sometimes I felt I guess I had to **prove myself**, or **work a bit harder** compared to like the **white people** in my classes. And I guess sometimes it was hard trying to…(long pause) because I was like in the **top sets** but I was black **it was kind of hard to find where I fitted in**. so yes I guess that is my first initial things to say. GCG: And you said that you felt you had to prove yourself. Can you tell me a bit more about that? DB: Yeah, I feel that like what I **heard a lot and I still hear to this day** i had it **throughout secondary school, sixth form and now at university** was that , oh **I didn't think you were that smart or I'm surprised,** so I felt like I always had to like **prove how** smart I was and prove that I like earned my place in those top sets. And I feel that that has affected how I am to this day. I put a lot of pressure on myself in terms of my academic work. And I like to overachieve. Erm, because A lot of people would be surprised and wouldn't believe that you belong to those top sets or those spaces. But then **at the same time**, there wasn't a lot of black people in the top sets .Erm, to a lot of the other black people who weren't in my classes I wasn't seeing as black enough I guess,or… you're like a nerd. So I guess I always had to prove myself to them, that I was black… (long pause) enough. Erm, and that being smart doesn't make you not black. Which I think I've gotten a lot better now. But when I was at the start of secondary school, it was like WHAT!? (loud voice)You're a nerd, how are you in the top set? There were literally like 3 black girls and maybe 1 black boy and the rest of the class was white. So yeah.

3.13.3 Conceptual comments

This step was concerned with applying an interpretative approach to analysing participants' comments (see 'conceptual comments' column in Figure 5 below). In the example below, this step involved making links from the participant's descriptions, moving away from the isolated comments around only having a few Black students in her class into developing a broader conceptual coding around 'belonging'. In order to minimise the imposition of my own interpretation of participants' accounts, bracketing was utilised by cross referencing my interpretations of their descriptions with reflections from the diary entries. However, it became apparent that I was finding it difficult to allow myself to be part of the process of interpretation for fear that my personal experiences would over influence them. To overcome this barrier, it was useful to reflect on the interaction between the data

and my analysis of it as a 'Gademian dialogue', whereby my interpretations were inevitably based upon my personal and professional knowledge, leading to a new understanding of the participant's world.

Figure 5. Illustration of emergent conceptual comments

Original transcript	Conceptual comments
GCG: Thinking about your experiences of secondary school, if you could tell me about race in general. DB: Um hum, okay, hum… in terms of my whole secondary school experience, or in terms of my social life or academia?	There seems to be a real awareness of the different ethnicities and their positions in terms of majority/ minorities within the school population.
GCG: In terms of anything you would like to share with me. DB: Uh, okay, um, in terms of race, in secondary school I went to quite a **diverse** secondary school, I wouldn't say I was the **minority** but I wasn't the **majority** as a **black girl**. However, because I was quite **high achieving** from year 7 in my classes I was a **minority.** There wasn't a lot of black people in erm like **top sets,** especially **black boys**. So yeah, in terms of that me and probably two other **black girls** was in my classes, I never really, I felt like in terms of race, … (hesitates) what else can I say. Erm sometimes I felt I guess had to **prove myself,** or **work a bit harder** compared to like the **white people** in my classes. And I guess sometimes it was hard trying to… (long pause) because I was like in the **top sets** but I was black **it was kind of hard to find where I fitted in**. so yes I guess that is my first initial things to say.	Awareness of gender/race. Using black girls and black boys but white people. Achievement was given a focus from the start of the interview. Feeling pressure to achieve, working beyond expectation to prove herself/ assumption that blacks don't achieve if she has to prove people wrong Refers to white people rather than gender specific comments. Difficulties with sense of belonging due to being a black high achiever in a predominately white group.
GCG: And you said that you felt you had to prove yourself. Can you tell me a bit more about that? DB: Yeah, I feel that like what I **heard a lot and I still hear to this day** i had it **throughout secondary school, sixth form and now at university** was that , oh **I didn't think you were that smart or I'm surprised,** so I felt like I always had to like **prove how** smart I was and prove that I like earned my place in those top sets. And I feel that that has affected how I am to this day. I put a lot of pressure on myself in terms of my academic work. And I like to overachieve. Erm, because A lot of people would be surprised and wouldn't believe that you belong to those top sets or those spaces. But then **at the same time**, there wasn't a lot of black people in the top sets .Erm, to a lot of the other black people who weren't in my classes I wasn't seeing as black enough I guess,or… you're like a nerd. So I guess I always had to prove myself to them, that I was black (long pause) enough. Erm, and that being smart doesn't make you not black. Which I think I've gotten a lot better now. But when I was at the start of secondary school, it was like WHAT? (loud voice) You're a nerd.	Repeated experiences of microaggressions around her academic abilities across educational career. Awareness of teacher and peers' low expectation of her achievement throughout secondary and university careers. Returned to the issue of working above and beyond to prove herself Having a sense of being smart and yet having To prove herself to others Lasting effect of feeling pressurised to achieve Others' low expectation of her academic abilities. Others' denial of her sense of belonging. Conflicting feelings around belonging? Others' questioning of her Identity. Assumptions/stereotypes around black underachievement.

3.13.4 CRT tenets as an analytical tool

Once the three steps above were completed, a CRT analysis was undertaken. This involved identifying the participant's racialised experiences in the text and cross referencing them in relation to CRT tenets relevant to their narratives. For example, the texts highlighted in green in Figure 6 below refer to the participant's description of the disproportionately low Black student representation

in her top achievement set. This was interpreted using the 'Challenge to dominant ideology' in terms of meritocratic notions of achievement and the educational system's failure to recognise the impact of discrimination on educational outcomes for Black students. Following on from that, there is a description of the systematic experiences of microaggressions around her academic abilities. This was interpreted using the 'Intercentricity of race and racism' tenet which holds that racism is part of the everyday experiences of people of colour.

Figure 6. Illustration of the use of CRT tenets as an analytical tool

Original transcript	Conceptual comments	CRT tenets
GCG: Thinking about your experiences of secondary school, if you could tell me about race in general. DB: Um hum, okay, hum… in terms of my whole secondary school experience, or in terms of my social life or academia? GCG: In terms of anything you would like to share with me. DB: Uh, okay, um, in terms of race, in secondary school I went to quite a **diverse** secondary school. I wouldn't say I was the **minority** but I wasn't the **majority** as a **black girl**. However, because I was quite **high achieving** from year 7 in my classes I was a **minority.** There wasn't a lot of black people in erm like **top sets,** especially **black boys.** So yeah, in terms of that me and probably two other **black girls** was in my classes. I never really, I felt like in terms of race, … (hesitates) what else can I say. Erm sometimes I felt I guess had to **prove myself,** or **work a bit harder** compared to like the **white people** in my classes. And I guess sometimes it was hard trying to… (long pause) because I was like in the **top sets** but I was black **it was kind of hard to find where I fitted in.** so yes I guess that is my first initial things to say. GCG: And you said that you felt you had to prove yourself. Can you tell me a bit more about that? DB: Yeah, I feel that like what **I heard a lot and I still hear to this day** i had it **throughout secondary school, sixth form and now at university** was that , oh **I didn't think you were that smart or I'm surprised,** so I felt like I always had to like **prove how** smart I was and prove that I like earned my place in those top sets. And I feel that that has affected how I am to this day. I	There seems to be a real awareness of the different ethnicities and their positions in terms of majority/ minorities within the school population. Awareness of gender/race. Using black girls and black boys but white people. Achievement was given a focus from the start of the interview. Feeling pressure to achieve, working beyond expectation to prove herself/ assumption that blacks don't achieve if she has to prove people wrong Refers to white people rather than gender specific comments. Difficulties with sense of belonging due to being a black high achiever in a predominately white group. Repeated experiences of microaggressions around her academic abilities across educational career. Awareness of teacher and peers' low expectation of her achievement throughout secondary and university careers. Returned to the issue of working above and beyond to prove herself Having a sense of being smart and yet having	'Challenging to dominant ideology' (meritocratic notions of achievement/unrecognised marginalisation of Black students impacting outcomes) 'Intercentricity of race and racism' – systematic experiences of microaggressions throughout secondary school

3.14 Developing emergent themes

As the 4-level exploration of participants' narratives was completed, a rich nuanced picture emerged. It was here that the concept of 'dasein' became clear, helping me to understand their lived

experience. This process involved amalgamating participant's conceptual comments and the CRT analysis referred to above to extract emergent themes. Figure 7 below illustrates this process for one participant.

Figure 7. Illustration of the development of emergent themes

Original transcript	Conceptual comments	CRT tenets	Emergent Themes
GCG: Thinking about your experiences of secondary school, if you could tell me about race in general. DB: Um hum, okay, hum… in terms of my whole secondary school experience, or in terms of my social life or academia? GCG: In terms of anything you would like to share with me. DB: Uh, okay, um, in terms of race, in secondary school I went to quite a **diverse** secondary school. I wouldn't say I was the **minority** but I wasn't the **majority** as a **black girl**. However, because I was quite **high achieving** from year 7 in my classes I was a **minority.** There wasn't a lot of black people in erm like **top sets,** especially **black boys.** So yeah, in terms of that me and probably two other **black girls** was in my classes. I never really, I felt like in terms of race, … (hesitates) what else can I say, Erm sometimes I felt I guess had to **prove myself**, or **work a bit harder** compared to like the **white people** in my classes. And I guess sometimes it was hard trying to… (long pause) because I was like in the **top sets** but I was black **it was kind of hard to find where I fitted in**. so yes I guess that is my first initial things to say. GCG: And you said that you felt you had to prove yourself. Can you tell me a bit more about that? DB: Yeah, I feel that like what **I heard a lot and I still hear to this day** i had it **throughout secondary school, sixth form and now at university** was that , oh **I didn't think you were that smart or I'm surprised,** so I felt like I always had to like **prove how** smart I was and prove that I like earned my place in those top sets. And I feel that that has affected how I am to this day. I put a lot of pressure on myself in terms of my academic	There seems to be a real awareness of the different ethnicities and their positions in terms of majority/ minorities within the school population. Awareness of gender/race. Using black girls and black boys but white people. Achievement was given a focus from the start of the interview. Feeling pressure to achieve, working beyond expectation to prove herself/ assumption that blacks don't achieve if she has to prove people wrong Refers to white people rather than gender specific comments. Difficulties with sense of belonging due to being a black high achiever in a predominately white group. Repeated experiences of microaggressions around her academic abilities across educational career. Awareness of teacher and peers' low expectation of her achievement throughout secondary and university careers. Returned to the issue of working above and beyond to prove herself Having a sense of being smart and yet having	Intersectionality 'Challenging to dominant ideology' (meritocratic notions of achievement/unrecognised marginalisation of Black students impacting outcomes) 'Intercentricity of race and racism' – systematic experiences of microagressions throughout secondary school	Being a minority within a white majority Intersectionality between race and gender shaping black YP's experience Achievement as a way of proving people wrong about black ability Feeling pressured to achieve Conflict between belonging and high achievement Others' low expectation of black students academic abilities Pervasiveness of microaggressions Proving oneself Low expectation of achievement affecting the self Pressuring the self to achieve Conflict around belonging

3.15 Searching for connections between themes

This process involved using a series of strategies leading to the generation of superordinate themes. Similar topics were identified (abstraction), and related themes were grouped together generating superordinate themes. This step was initially undertaken manually, and subsequently entered into a

table (append. 12), referencing the location of quotes within the transcript. Themes such 'beauty vs Blackness' and 'achievement vs Blackness' were merged into the superordinate theme of 'Negative feelings towards the Black body'. The identification of superordinate themes marked the end of the cycle for an individual participant. Following this, the process was repeated for the next participant. In order to prevent my choices of words from one transcript to influence the choices I made on the following, I recorded each individual participant's analysis on separate sheets. Only after the process was finalised for all transcripts, was the data collated into a table.

3.16 Identifying patterns across cases

This stage of the analysis involved cross examining the data and identifying patterns across participants. Table 19 in Appendix 13 illustrates the process of grouping the themes into a colour coded table, using specific examples of participant's transcripts to illustrate the concept of the wider themes. At this stage, themes such as 'surveillance' and 'sanctions' merged into 'differential treatment'. Also, 'parental involvement' and 'pursuing justice' merged into 'advocacy'. The new themes seemed to capture the concepts within the initial superordinate themes.

Chapter 4. Results

4.1 Chapter outline

The purpose of this chapter is to present my interpretation of how participants' accounts of their experiences amalgamate into superordinate themes across the data set. Extracts of participants' transcripts were used to demonstrate where my interpretations have stemmed from. I have endeavoured to provide thorough samples of participants' accounts of their experiences, which are sometimes in the form of phrases as well as single words weaved into my interpretation of their experiences.

When exploring the first research question, three superordinate themes emerged from participants' narratives, namely ‘systemic racism’, ‘risk factors intensifying the impact of racialised experiences’ and ‘factors minimising the impact of racialised experiences’. In terms of the second research question, emerging superordinate themes were ‘future aspirations’ and ‘creating positive change’. Each superordinate theme contains subordinate themes which incorporate nuanced experiences that tap into the broader theme. Tables 20 and 21 below are illustrations of each superordinate theme and their respective subordinate themes in relation to answering each research question. They also include participants' information in relation to whether or not they experienced the concept captured by the theme.

Following the aforementioned tables, an exploration of how each participant attributes meaning to their experiences will be presented in turn. An idiographic approach was adopted aimed at honouring the candid ways in which participants shared their experiences with me. I tried to value each individual experience and maintain their unique idiosyncrasies. Some nuances such as hesitation and repetition of words during the interviews indicated that this may have been the first time participants had been asked about certain racialised experiences. I attempted to present their accounts in a way that their individual experiences take precedence over the whole corpus of the data. A summary of findings will be presented at the end of the chapter where a thematic discussion of each superordinate and subordinate theme is presented. The thematic discussions draw on similarities and differences in participants' experiences of the themes.

Table 20. Superordinate themes and their respective subordinate themes in relation to the first research question

What are the high achieving Black Caribbean heritage young people's racialised experiences of secondary school education?

Superordinate Theme	Subordinate Theme		AE	BP	DB	M
Systemic Racism	Disproportionate Black representation in school workforce		x	X	x	X
	Differential Treatment		x	x	x	X
	Teachers' low academic expectation		x	x	x	x
	Microaggressions		x	x	x	
	Stereotypes		x	x	x	
Risk Factors intensifying racialised experiences	Lack of sense of belonging		x	x	x	x
	Challenges around identity		x	x	x	
	Intersectional challenges		x	x	x	
	Negative feelings towards the Black body		x		x	
Factors minimising the impact of racialised experiences	Academic achievement and determination to achieve goals		x	x	x	x
	Advocacy	Parental advocacy		x		
		Self-advocacy	x	x		
		Teacher advocacy	x			x
	Supportive staff		x	x	x	x
	Pride in own heritage		x		x	

Table 21. Superordinate themes and their respective subordinate themes in relation to the second research question

What are high achieving Black Caribbean young people's aspirations for the future and what do they need to achieve them?

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes	AE	BP	DB	M
Future aspirations	Exploring possibilities	x			
	Clear next step		x		x
	Contributing to improving the experiences of others	x	x		x
Creating positive change	Community support (online, organisations)	x	x		x
	Decolonizing the curriculum	x	x	x	
	Developing Identity in Blackness	x	x	x	
	Role models	x	x	x	x

4.2 Ashby Elias' (AE) experiences

AE attended two secondary schools in Bedfordshire in the East of England. His recollection of his experiences of secondary school were filled with memories of challenging racialised experiences. He had a sense of 'being targeted' by 'quite a lot of teachers' which often led to receiving differential sanctions by 'bearing responsibility *out of all of (his) friends'*. He reported on repeated experiences whereby he felt he was being accused *of 'doing something when it was not me'*. AE's language around these experiences suggests a sense of being attacked and singled out. He seems to have given systematic thought to those experiences in terms of whether or not they were racialised and concluded that *'Too many events happened not to be some subconscious (racial) thing about it…'* He reported on an incident where a teacher searched his workspace when accusing him of eating in class. The extract below depicts his description of the teacher's behaviour as *'a massive drama'* also telling him to *'stand up'*. His descriptions imply feelings of the teacher's exaggerated reactions and power dynamics towards him. It also seems that 'pausing' the lesson was relevant to AE as the teacher's actions were in front of the whole class:

‘ (the teacher asked) Ashby what are you eating? And I was like writing. I was like, ‘oh like nothing’ and she like pauses the whole thing (a lesson) and makes a massive drama out of it. And she was like, ‘Stand up!’ and she was like checking all of my area and (there was) nothing, nothing.’

AE reported on the majority White teaching staff which could have exacerbated his feeling of being othered and unfairly treated by teachers. He said he had one Black teacher in upper school as well as a few Asian teachers. He seems to view the Asian teachers as understanding of his ethnically minoritised experiences, taking them ‘seriously’. His language when describing his interactions with these teachers indicate that he viewed them as maternal figures, potentially as a way of seeking protection from the hostile interactions with other teachers.

‘ I really got on with her (Black teacher) and it was like you know when teachers kind of treat you kind of like their children. It was kind of like fun and I'd always like be speaking to them and whatnot.’

‘I spoke to my (South Asian) science teacher who I'd be like who was kind of like my mum for like the whole of upper school’.

The latter statement refers to AE bringing to the teacher’s attention one of the incidents where other teachers held low expectations of his academic achievement. AE was supposed to be predicted a grade A in his A-level examinations after achieving a B in his mock exams. When asking his new teacher if he could be awarded an A grade for an early entry application to Cambridge University, he received the following response:

‘She just said, ‘people like you don't go to Cambridge’. The only thing she knew about me apart from my name was the fact that I was doing ok in school. It was just me standing there in front of her. So it's just like at that time, like I think that was a big time where it was like a really big setback.’

Applying to Cambridge University seemed to have required a lot of effort from AE to ‘boost up my personal statement’. His language around ‘big setback’ and repetition of the word ‘big’ intensified by the word ‘really’ suggests the impact the teacher’s low expectations had on his confidence with the application. Another teacher also showed surprise when AE told him that he had been offered an interview at Cambridge University as he described:

“He goes, he goes, Cambridge? Like, “you?”

AE's racialised experiences were not only confined to teachers' low expectations of his abilities. He described the relentlessness of his experiences of racism from his peers and could 'not remember *a week that (he) could go through without someone saying something to me '*. He described:

'People would make jokes all the time to like say like Kunta Kinte or they'd talk about my hair or have I been just like, have I been left in the oven too long, or making jokes as if like I'm their slave or something like cotton or anything like that.'

The above extract showed that AE received insults about aspects of his physical appearance, potentially implying their racial superiority and his submission as a *'slave'*. However, he uses the word 'jokes' to describe his peers' derogatory comments towards him. It appears that he internalised the notion that his peers had no intention to insult him.

This internalisation transpires when AE speaks about being made to feel like 'an inconvenience' by teachers and peers if he raised racist comments as problematic. In the extract below he used phrases such as 'it was just me' and 'not saying anything' which suggests that he felt unsupported and silenced in his experiences of racism. He also seemed to fear losing his friends:

'It felt as if like anything that I'd bring up that someone said was wrong or this, that and the other. Even teachers thought that I was being the issue. In school it was me just like not really saying anything because I didn't want to like lose friends because I was being an inconvenience or anything like that.'

AE's decision to be silent may also have stemmed from his awareness of the stereotypical images of Black youth held by teachers in his school. He recalled a teacher's comment about a group of Black students:

'A comment was made from a teacher saying that like they (the students) looked, Uhm, intimidating like walking around the school'

AE's racialised experiences appear to have intensified greatly when he transitioned from a multi-ethnic school into a majority White high school. The lack of diversity in the new setting impacted on

his sense of belonging which he perceived to have affected his sense of identity. In the transcript below, he builds an image of something unreachable, unknown and unconducive to forming an identity:

' Being moved to like a (school in a) village where that was completely like out of my league, like different to what I'd known before and that's when I think the time that would have been like crucial to me, forming an identity was just not there, so yeah.'

The search to develop a sense of identity in Blackness at the new school appeared to have been a struggle for AE. He reported that '*Race for me was never something that I could have like an identity in'*. A major conflict for him seemed to have been the disparity between being exposed to discussions around Blackness at home and the silence around these issues at school. He explained:

'I could go to my grandparents and like, they'd be telling me all kinds of things and like I know that like my race is something that I wanted…But at school it was very hard to like actualise it (his Black identity) when I didn't really have support'

AE's experiences of racism and lack of support from adults are likely to have contributed to his struggle actualising his identity at school. In addition to these, he spoke about the negative impact a Eurocentric curriculum had on his ability to develop an understanding of what makes him who he is through learning activities. The absence of content on Blackness outside of references to slavery seems to have further silenced the expression of his identity. He explained:

'Race and things like that aren't really present in like the main like curriculum. And I remember that a lot of times where I've been in school, I think in my work, I felt like I wanted to like claim it (Blackness) as an identity.'

Apart from experiencing racial discrimination throughout his secondary school, the intersection of aspects of his identity seems to have exacerbated AE's experiences of marginalisation. He reflected on being gay and Black and how these intersectionalities aggravated the challenges he experienced at school. He referred to Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital to explain his lack of identification with the dominant culture of the school in relation to race and gender. The intensity of his feelings of deprivation of social resources is demonstrated by the repetition of the words 'didn't', 'any' and 'anything'. He explained:

'I think being Black and then also being gay in school I feel like I didn't… I didn't really have anything like… I felt like I didn't have any kind of you know, like Bourdieu's cultural capital like I didn't have any…

He spoke about his negative views of his physical appearance and his desire for what he described as '*Eurocentric beauty standards'*. Although he makes a vague reference to wanting to look differently in other aspects of his appearance, he explicitly talks about his desire to have 'straight hair'. Fluctuating between expressing desire (I wish) and rejection (I wish I didn't), it seems that he not only struggled to find his identity but he also rejected the most visible aspects of his Blackness. In the quote below, he shows a clear awareness of the links between his experiences of racism and his lack of self-acceptance and a regret about his physical appearance:

'Because other people would comment about like my skin or my hair. I always used to kind of think to myself, Oh like I wish I looked like this, I wish I had straight hair, I wish I didn't look like this.'

There seemed to have been factors that minimised AE's distressing racialised experiences. For instance, he perceived being a high achiever as a 'status', which acted as a protective factor against racist comments from peers. He reported that when he began to consistently achieve high grades, his social life, which had been very difficult up to that point, seemed to improve. His use of words such as 'top', 'status' and 'intelligent' in reference to himself in the extract below suggests feelings of empowerment as a result of achieving academically:

'I'd be getting like the top of the class in like a lot of things. It felt like a status but not a status. But a kind of status where, uhm people knew that…like I was kind of intelligent and I feel like then I'd hear things a lot less about… hear a lot less microaggressions… My social life began to change and stuff like that.'

AE spoke about the sense of isolation and invisibility he experienced from male figures in his life by not having a connection in terms of his interests. He expressed proving himself worthy of being visible through his academic achievement as he explained:

'I felt like the only time where people really took an interest in me was when I said, like when I started to do well. So where I feel like it's just proving myself to these people as well.'

Another factor that seems to have been helpful in relation to dealing with racialised challenges in school was a culture of storytelling about the family's heritage and racialised experiences at home. He seems to have found their shared experiences 'reassuring' in terms of validating his sense of injustice in relation to the racial discrimination he experienced at school. His need to be 'pushed' to be proud of himself demonstrates his difficulty with feelings of pride in who he is. However, he seems to have achieved this in some sense towards the end of his secondary school years. He described:

'*I think It (conversations) always stems from like me saying that, oh like a teacher said this or like this person said this or this happened at school. They'd tell stories of like their experiences and just like reassuring me that it (racial discrimination) was just kind of nonsense. I can't really describe. It's like uhm…pushing me to have like pride in who I am. And I think a lot of that I did take to school.'*

The impact of White supremacy seemed to have impacted not only his daily experiences of school and his self-esteem but also his ability to develop an understanding of career paths he could pursue. However, since he has entered a prestigious university, he seems to have realised the range of career paths that he could enter. His self-doubt and the sudden realisation of the new possibilities are demonstrated by phrases such as 'never have thought' and 'in my grasp' in the quote below:

' I think even a few years ago I would never have thought like being an investment banker or anything like that is like ever in my grasp but coming here and realising that like that's so attainable. I think…I want to be successful…'

Although he reports to have realised the range of career possibilities accessible to him, AE seems to return to his desire to express his identity in his career such as writing 'poetry' or working 'in fashion'. His use of the phrase 'authentically me' demonstrates his negation of his previous experiences of '*trying to fit in'*:

'But my main goal is to have some kind of career where I can be like authentically me…I feel like I want to be able to incorporate what I'm really passionate about or like my identity into something that I do.'

When reflecting on the future, he expressed gratitude to his grandparents and the teachers who heard his concerns about his experience of discrimination in school also sharing that he wanted 'to do well for them'. The use of this sentence appears to carry a sense that AE finds it difficult to view himself as worthy of his achievement and needs to do it for others. He expressed a desire to replicate the support he received from them to other Black students by becoming a teacher in future:

'I think when I get to about like 40-45, I really want to then become a teacher because I want to help other people like me and how my teachers helped me'.

In terms of support needed to achieve his goals, he viewed a networking platform where Black professionals would talk about their '*trajectory*' into a variety of professions as helpful in terms of '*broadening the spectrum'* of possible career paths Black Caribbean young people could take. He explained that he was not exposed to Black professional role models which affected his ability to '*see his place in the world'*. He remarked:

'I don't really know what I want to do because I don't know what I can do. (It would be helpful) to be able to like familiarise myself (with a variety of professions) and knowing that other people like me do it.'

He believed that 'being represented in everything that we (Black students) do' would have helped him to see himself entering those professional fields:

'If going through school, I was seeing that the world is filled with like say, Black investment bankers, academics, like something to do with the arts, or like the media or something like that. Not necessarily blatantly … but just incorporate it into like the curriculum like into like lesson plans, but just subtly. I think that would have created a (career) window in my mind.'

4.3 Buddy Pine's (BP) experiences

BP is a young man from a mixed Jamaican heritage. He attended a 'd*iverse*' boys' only secondary school in South West London.

Teaching staff's low expectations of his academic abilities and behaviour were commonplace throughout his school career, particularly before they realised that he '*was really engaged'* in his learning. He shows a sense of confusion, around these assumptions not knowing '*why*' teachers perceived him in the way they did since this contradicted his behaviour and sense of self.

'They would think of me as being more aggressive than other kids, I don't know why. And they would also think that you know, maybe I'm not engaged in the class, but actually… after two or three lessons or something they were like, oh, this kid is actually really engaged. You know, he's smart, he knows what he's talking about and all this. Then they would change and they'd be more friendly towards me after they got to know me.'

Staff's initial assumptions around BP's behaviour seem to have instilled in him a level of anxiety around their views of himself as a student. He speaks about displaying some unnatural behaviours in order to '*overcompensate*' for being Black. The strategy around being '*extra friendly'* may have been used in order to deconstruct teachers' perceptions of him as aggressive. He commented:

'I think also that I had to overcompensate throughout my secondary school experience about how I'm perceived by other people… Especially teachers so as I'm walking in I'd always say like "oh hello" to the teacher and all this. I would know that they would make assumptions about me, therefore I would overcompensated so I would be, erm, as in be friendly, extra friendly or sociable and that sort of thing.'

Apart from being conscious of being perceived as aggressive by staff, BP showed awareness of school exclusions being inflicted primarily on Black boys in his school. This may also have influenced his overcompensating behaviour as a way of preventing it from happening to him.

'I can remember uhm, this didn't used to happen to me, but I remember exclusions as well. Exclusions from school used to always, like most of the time, happen to the Black kids.'

His reflection on his experiences of school demonstrates a high level of awareness of the racialised nature of his experiences. He described himself as being able to navigate '*any social group'* in his secondary school. Thus, BP experienced staff's attitudes towards groups of students of different ethnicities which may have put him in a position of understanding the differences in the way staff interacted with different groups of students. He describes staff's differential surveillance of Black students as '*the norm'*:

'If there's anything like funny going on or even like laughing, the teachers would always come walking over (to him and his Black peers) and looking and stuff. It was every single day so we just

thought it was normal, it was the norm rather. So that used to happen all the time but, like White kids doing the same thing it didn't really happen.'

He also spoke about the differential treatment he received from teachers compared to his White peers. He speaks about the difficulty of verbalising what exactly was different about staff's treatment of him, which is further highlighted by his hesitant speech. However, the use of the word '*comprehensive*' in the quote below may relate to his difficulties understanding why Black students were being discriminated against:

'*They always used to judge me in a certain way and it's hard.... It's hard to… it's hard to… verbalise everything that goes on in a comprehensive way. But I always find that people like me can also relate to what they (teachers) do and the fact that they would just treat me in a… in a certain way.'*

BP expressed frustration at teachers' unfair treatment and low expectation of his achievement despite being an exceptionally high achieving young person. The A-level predicted grades are of great significance at this point in a student's career as they are used by universities to guide decisions around course entry offers. He shared his experience of teachers assigning him a lower predicted grade than peers who achieved lower grades than him in their mock exams. He described:

'So I got second highest (grade) in the class and I got predicted a B for Physics. But there were people that got lower (grade) than me, White and Asian students and got predicted higher (grade) than me. They got predicted A's even though they got lower than me in the exams. I was very annoyed at that as I watched it.'

In contrast to the challenging experiences mentioned above, BP had a more understanding relationship with Black teachers. He described the racial identification between himself and teachers of colour to be of a '*personal*' nature, a deeper level of understanding of his experiences. This promoted a better engagement with learning as he explained:

'The Black teachers… They understand it. They understand you personally more I feel. Uhm, like that happened to be the case with me. I would get along with him better. I wanna be around in the school like more.'

Apart from the racialised challenges in relation to his academic abilities and differential treatment compared to White and Asian pupils, BP also experienced discrimination against aspects of his

physical appearance. He spoke about early experiences of teachers reprimanding him on his hairstyle to his mother:

'I used to have cornrows and long, long hair and a big Afro when I was younger and something happened. I recall teachers like saying something to my mum about that'

BP placed significant importance on his ability to express his identity through his appearance and that played a part in his A-level college choice. He achieved 9 A* grades in his GCSE examinations and he was encouraged by adults to apply for a place in grammar Sixth Form colleges. However, his perceptions of discrimination against his appearance in one of the colleges impacted on his decision not to take a place there. He described the comments made by a member of the senior leadership team about his appearance as follows:

'Next time you come none of this (pointing to his hair style), none of this (pointing to his earring). I'm like, I'm gone, I'm never coming back here again after that.'

Despite the racialised challenges BP experienced in secondary school, he seems to have felt a sense of belonging and he did '*get along with people'*. However, he transitioned from a diverse secondary school to a majority White high ranking university. He speaks about experiencing '*imposter syndrome*' as a result of lack of Black student representation. His use of the phrase '*someone like me*' implies BP's feelings about his current university not being an institution for Black students.

'So yeah, I feel like imposter syndrome is something that I experience…like I'm not really meant to be here or someone like me is not really meant to be here.'

He also described his eagerness to connect with another Caribbean student he met in the cafe as an attempt to build a sense of belonging. His language around '*us*' markedly suggests a sense of feeling othered:

'We literally thought let's connect and stuff 'cause there's not many of us here'

BP's descriptions of his experiences demonstrate that some factors helped to minimise the negative impact racialised challenges posed on him. When describing his experiences of being placed in a special educational needs group when he did not have identified SEN, he uses phrases such as '*the*

next day' to describe his mother's proactiveness in holding the school accountable for doing this. This incident happened in primary school and it seems to instigate challenging feelings for BP to this day, potentially because of the recurring low expectation from teachers throughout his secondary school career. The immediate response from the school demonstrates the effectiveness of his mother's advocacy in remediating his experience.

'My mum was furious and now me as well, that they didn't tell my mum and I'd been in those sessions for a long time as well. And then my mum found out and she went to the school the next day and immediately then I was back in the normal class.'

BP seems to have learnt to act against discrimination himself. He demonstrated a sense of justice and took actions to ensure he was *'treated the same way as everyone else'* when he felt that his rights were being violated. At the incident about the predicted A-level grades, mentioned previously he raised the issue with the teachers who appeared to *'brush it off'*. As a response, BP wrote *'a really nice email'* to the school advising them that he would raise the issue at an interview he had been invited to take part in with the BBC about A-level results and unconscious bias in schools. He told the school*:*

'If I don't get treated the same way that everyone else would be and stuff, then you know I'm gonna like say this to the BBC. And then all of a sudden my grade changed just like that. It goes to show that that was one teacher messing about.'

BP described himself as '*very ambitious'* and held high aspirations for his planned future in the Tech industry. Within his Neuroscience and Psychology degree he is developing the skills needed to enter his field of choice in relation to '*coding language'* and psychological knowledge for '*understanding clients and relationships'*. He tries '*to network a lot'* and is proactive in creating opportunities outside of his neuroscience degree to succeed within it:

'Outside of Uni, I'm involved in an organisation that has everything to do with the energy industry so its supply distribution, production, renewables, trading all of this.'

He described that '*one thing that's important'* to him is to contribute to improving the educational experiences of other Black Caribbean young people in future. He expressed a desire to use his ability to advocate for justice to '*help other kids in my situation'*. He seems to place the

responsibility of promoting change onto himself. There is a sense that he lacks trust in the educational system in terms of acting to support and protect Black students from experiencing discrimination which is evident in the quote below:

'Like it's up to me…people like me to create, change and break down stereotypes and all of these things. And personally I very much enjoy doing that'.

BP's school experiences seem to have shaped his thinking about potentially helpful support for other Black young people moving forward. He suggested that becoming part of independent organisations such as the African Caribbean Society as '*empowering'*.

In addition, BP believes that knowledge of history '*would make a big impact'* in supporting Black young people to have an '*accurate representation'* of themselves. Building on the importance of knowledge of self, he also spoke about the impact that learning about his ethnic heritage has had on him:

'Yeah, I learned about Caribbean history and everything and it can be very empowering, for me it was very empowering. Then like I did a DNA test and stuff and it's cool uhm…knowing like my ethnic background and everything. It was very sort of enlightening for me.'

As illustrated in the comments above, BP used the word empowering several times. This implies his perceptions of the power imbalance Black Caribbean students experience in the educational system. His school experiences were permeated with incidents in which he may have felt overpowered by the system.

BP spoke about the importance of mentors and role models in supporting Black Caribbean students to realise their potential. He shared a positive experience he had when undertaking work experience in a bank where he found it *'inspiring'* and '*comforting'* to receive guidance from a Nigerian man in a senior position, particularly as it was a majority White environment. There appears to be a sense of longing for these role models in his life as he seemed to have missed these experiences:

'I would say, UM, having people… having role models who are of the same ethnicity as you or you can relate to in some sort of way is one really important thing. When I was growing up, I didn't really have much of that.'

He also highlighted the importance of shared lived experiences. He described attending a talk when he was in secondary school by activist Akala whose race and experiences BP could relate to:

'It was really good to see someone who I identify with a lot (sharing his experiences) ... there's so many parallels between him and me. So stuff like that is really good in uni.'

He emphasises the important role that offering young people opportunities to discuss issues of race play in developing a sense of identity. He reflects on the lasting impact of his experience of secondary school and that of his brother relating them to the developmental stage of Black boys in adolescence:

' Yeah, I think those talks (are important), especially in secondary school, because I feel like secondary schools are a critical period in terms of sculpting an identity and everything, especially for boys...My brother went to the same secondary school as me and we both relate in the sense that it's a very moulding experience of who you are and defines like, like the rest of your life so.'

4.4 Dominica Bryan's (DB) experiences

DB is a young woman from a Jamaican heritage who attended an ethnically diverse secondary school in North London. She began her interview by sharing her experiences of majority /minority groups within her school and the ability sets in which she was placed. Her narrative depicts an awareness of where Black students were positioned within ability groups. She demonstrates a sense of being minoritised within top sets, showing awareness of the increased levels of marginalisation based on race and gender:

'*I wouldn't say I was the minority but I wasn't the majority as a Black girl. However, because I was quite high achieving from year 7 in my classes I was a minority. There weren't a lot of Black people in erm like top sets, especially Black boys. So yeah, in terms of that, me and probably two other Black girls were in my classes.'*

The minoritisation she experienced within the top sets was intensified by the repeated microaggressions she experienced primarily in relation to her academic abilities. Although she refers to them as '*a big problem'* she also reports becoming '*used to them'*. This suggests that these insults were commonplace and may not have been addressed within the school:

'Microaggressions are a big problem in schools. I don't feel racism is very overt a lot of the time. It's a lot of things like, can I touch your hair? how did you get those grades? or Oh, you're in THIS class?! like surprised that you're there…By the end of secondary school I got used to it.'

She reported teachers being surprised at her high achievement in exams, using the word *'shock'* to denote her perceptions of the negative racialised connotation around their surprise. DB felt she had to prove herself worthy of being in top sets:

'They (teachers) had a sense of shock and surprise, Wow you got the highest in the class!'

'*Erm sometimes I felt I had to prove myself, or work a bit harder compared to like the white people in my classes.'*

She also referred to the compounding challenges that microaggressions posed to her in addition to other issues she had to deal with in her adolescence. She referred to secondary school experience as *'really wild'*, which suggests that she did not feel contained. She commented:

'Secondary school is a really wild experience. Identity, boys,.. but being Black you're having to deal with these microaggressions (as well).'

The microaggressions around ability that DB experienced appear to be related to a stereotype related to being '*Black enough'*. She seems to have internalised a type of Black versus high academic ability dichotomy when she used the phrase '*over intelligent'* to refer to her academic ability. She explained:

'If you're well spoken, you're not Black enough, if you're over intelligent, you're not Black enough, if your friends are not all Black , you're not Black enough.'

She reflected on the low number of Black teachers in her school and expressed surprise at the lack of Black parental representation in the school council:

'As I said, yeah,I was only taught by one Black teacher. I think over in the whole school there were a couple, maybe three or four Black teachers, while I was there. And in the school Council or whatever it was called, I don't think there was any, which was surprising because some of them were, uhm, students' parents.'

She made reference to decisions and policies that affected the experiences of Black youth in her school, describing the school as '*not having much tolerance at all'* being '*very quick to get rid of students'*. She talked about the *'unjust'* exclusion of her friend's brother. She uses the phrase '*in the end'* which brings a sense of it being a long process requiring meetings with various bodies. DB's sense of the racialised nature of this experience came from the fact that her friend's mother did not see herself and her son represented in those '*all White'* bodies. She described:

'Her (friend's) mum had to meet with the school, school body or the school council and they were all white people and then she believes that was racial because in the end. Uhm, the exclusion didn't change.But she said there was no evidence of him doing what they said he did.'

Her perceptions on the negative impact of the low rates of Black representation in various aspects of school life is illustrated by the comment below. She elaborates on the importance of representation in terms of the shared lived experiences facilitating understanding of students' perspectives. She also links the lack of understanding of the lived experience as conducive to challenging behaviours:

'I mean, we live very different lives like me as a Black woman, I'm never gonna know what it feels like to live as a White man. It'd be hard for that White man to understand my experiences. So yeah, I feel like it's what made a lot of kids wanna rebel because it's like you're not understanding where I'm coming from.'

DB's sense of the discrimination of Black students in her school is apparent in her description of the differential treatment that her and her friends received from school staff. There is a sense of felt injustice in her questioning of why they were '*always'* targeted:

'I was an easy target for the teacher. Why is it always me and my (Black) friends? People treat you a certain way because you're Black …'

The reference to being treated a '*certain way'* illustrates the difficulty putting racialised experiences into words. However, some other incidents were more overt with staff making stereotypical comments to her and a group of friends:

'The head teacher came over to us and he was like you can't walk in groups bigger than 4 or 5. He was like that's part of a mob mentality. I have seen big groups of White people standing around together, walking around together and not being split up.'

Some factors seem to intensify DB's experiences of racism. She shared her conflict around not feeling that she belonged either in White or Black peer groups, '*being hard to find where (she) fitted in'*. She explained:

'People (teachers and White peers in the top sets) would be surprised and wouldn't believe that you belong to those top sets or those spaces…

At the same time, she experienced a type of ostracism from Black students who were not in her classes. There appears to be a narrative around achievement versus Blackness whereby achievement is viewed as not conducive to an identity in Blackness. This seems to have been internalised by Black students as DB describes:

'To a lot of other Black people who weren't in my classes, I wasn't seen as Black enough. They'd say, there is that smart Black girl'

She also spoke about having to *'overcompensate'* in relation to how she presented herself to ensure that she was seen as '*Black enough'* and be accepted as part of the Black peer group:

'I would get good grades but I would have to overcompensate in the way I talk'

DB's racialised experiences were aggravated by adolescence challenges. She reflected on the difficulties Black girls faced in terms of the development of self-image in teenage hood. She remarked on perceptions of Black unattractiveness aggravating the development of self-image for Black female youth.

'Black girls weren't the, what's that word like? The centre of attractiveness, especially not then. I always felt like it (teenagehood) was worse for Black girls because you're already not deemed as attractive…'

DB spoke about holding a low self-image in relation to her physical appearance, feeling as though *'nothing was ever good enough, my hair, my skin, my body shape'*. She seemed to have internalised Eurocentric beauty standards in terms of attractiveness. She also seemed to hold social expectations about the ideal Black female body.

'I remember feeling very self-conscious, feeling like I was overweight and fat and then it became cool to be like curvy so, I'm not curvy enough but then I wasn't slim enough. Being a Black woman there is more pressure on you to have this perfectly curvaceous body.'

Intersections between gender and race seems to have impacted DB's experiences of discrimination. Her assertive personality was perceived as aggressive. She also felt that she was being masculinised which implies that people's assumptions of aggression are linked to social constructions of masculinity. She explains:

'People would compare you to a boy, like masculinising you. Like oh, why do you talk like that? Why are you so aggressive? I would get aggressive a lot…This is because I was quite vocal and I was taught to always stand up for myself…'

She also spoke about the hypersexualised manner in which boys treated her. This made me wonder whether this treatment was the boys' way of asserting power over a Black girl who, as she described, '*wasn't afraid to speak up'* for herself'. She described the conflict between being masculinised whilst also being hypersexualised below:

'While like on one hand people try to masculinise you, you're also hypersexualised…All of a sudden I became more attractive to boys but it was like over the top.'

There seemed to be factors that minimised the impact of racialised experiences for DB. Despite her academic abilities being the trigger for microaggressions, they also seemed to act as a 'distraction' from the challenges she experienced around her physical appearance. She referred to the '*gratification'* she felt from diverting her focus away from the negative feeling towards her physical appearance.

'Because uhm…I was doing well in terms of academics, I did get some sort of gratification from that sort of distraction. Like where I felt like I wasn't good enough in terms of, UM, my physicality and

my looks or my hair or whatever. And I was experiencing microaggressions.The fact that I was doing well in school it was kind of like a distraction or something. A place where I could get some value from.'

Her strong sense of pride in her Blackness seems to have supported her to maintain her views that high achievement and Blackness can coexist and are both part of who she is. In the quote below, it seems that she tries to provide evidence that she is '*Black enough'*:

'I've always had the majority Black friends. So I've always felt like I'm very Black (smiles) erm, and like proud of my Blackness. Erm, so I never really thought that me being smart would be a problem in terms of how I express my Blackness because I always thought the two could, erm, cross or mix.'

When asked about the kinds of support that could help to promote change, DB returned to her earlier reflections on Black representation. She spoke about the importance of Black representation in teaching roles and remarked that representation needs to be '*not just as cleaners or technicians'*. Here DB seems to be viewing Black teachers as acting as role models in terms of supporting the development of future professional aspirations for students.

'(representation is) the kind of thing that you're not explicitly doing anything, but it's like role models and some things to look up to'.

Developing an identity in Blackness is also viewed by DB as an important step towards change. She believed that supporting Caribbean youth to *'love and understand themselves'* would promote the *'confidence'* required to enter high ranking universities. Reflecting on her current university experiences, she remarked that '*there aren't many of us here'*:

' (lack of support) affects everything, like the pipeline of talent into these workplaces, like the important jobs are going to continuously be White men, If more, uhm, young ethnic people in general but particularly Black people are not helped more (to develop identity and confidence).'

4.5 Megan's (M) experiences

M's parents are from St Kitts and Nevis and Anguilla. She attended a secondary school in Berkshire. She undertook 2 A-level subjects at this school and a third subject at a different Sixth Form college. Her experiences in these settings were markedly different from each other. She reported having a

very positive experience of secondary school where it '*felt like home*.' She went to a *'really multicultural'* school and the absence of perceived racialised experiences was viewed as *'quite comfortable'*. She described it as follows:

'There was never really any problems to do with like racism. I would say overall in general, from my experience that I never had to experience microaggressions.'

Although M reported not experiencing microaggressions, her later descriptions of staff's attitudes towards Black girls' hair indicates that she may not have perceived them as insults. She described:

'They'd (staff) always have a problem with our hair.'

What seemed to have contributed to her strong sense of belonging was the culture of acceptance and inclusion of the school. She described being able to interact with less familiar groups of peers without experiencing racialised issues:

'I could talk to people. I was more comfortable (than at university) with my friends there. I'd say I had loads of friends and if...I had go into groups of people I didn't really know well it would be fine. I wouldn't think 'oh they don't want to talk to me because I... because I'm Black or I don't wanna do this.'

M reported that despite the small rates of Black representation in teaching staff in her school, she did not experience barriers in relation to staff's support and understanding of her experiences as she described:

'I felt like if there was a problem I could go to any teacher there and discuss it regardless of their race or my race. And it could be sorted out.'

I wondered if the school's inclusive ethos came from a top down approach influenced by the lived experiences of a Black member of the leadership team. M seems to have felt particularly supported by him, who was the only Black representation in a senior position in her local area:

'My Deputy Head Teacher (DHT), I think now head teacher, he was actually Black so I think he's like one of the only Black head teachers around my area to be fair...

She recalled staff's high expectations of her achievement and the personalised support she received from her DHT's to achieve her potential.

'He was really good and really helpful in like assisting me personally with what I needed to do and what I needed to achieve.'

Although M spoke very highly about her school, she reported that in the early years of secondary school she experienced staff's assumptions of Black students as having challenging behaviours. According to M, these assumptions appeared to have subsided as she progressed in her secondary career, which indicates that Black students may need to prove themselves to staff in order to deconstruct stereotypes. Below, M described her experiences of staff's assumptions of her and her Black friend's involvement in fights in school:

'There always used to be like, fights…not that we used to fight but there always used to be like fights going on and like they would always first come to us and be like 'oh like what's happened?'

She also described how at the start of her secondary school career, Black students did not have the chance to give their version of situations also being more severely punished:

'For us (Black students) it was immediate. Oh, you're going into isolation, you're going into this, whereas other people had the chance to explain. Or they were given more chances and they're more lenient, whereas we were just straight, you're getting this confiscated. You can't do this. You can't do that.'

M's experienced the second Sixth Form college starkly differently to her secondary school. Staff at her new college seemed to hold low expectations of her achievement. She was predicted a lower A-level grade than she was expected given her academic record. Advocacy from staff from her previous school on M's behalf protected her from receiving that grade, which would have impacted on her university offers.

'It wasn't until my Sixth Form like head of learning spoke to him and said, are these really the grades you're gonna give them? because from what they've seen in the school that they can achieve higher'

She reported the initial struggle she had to achieve in her new college. Since she had a history of high achievement, self-fulfilling prophecy seems to have been at play during this time. Her

performance in Geography, which was her favourite subject, seemed to have been impacted by college staff's low expectation of her academic abilities. She explained her surprise at this phenomenon:

'I was like how is this possible? Geography is my favourite subject, it's what I wanna pursue and I'm getting my lowest grades in this! '

However, her determination to achieve her goals appeared to give her the focus she needed to navigate the lack of support and isolation she seems to have felt while attending this setting . She had a clear career path in mind and she seems to have held that as a priority. She explained:

'*It wasn't a comfortable place for me to be… but I had to go in order to achieve what I wanted to do in life.'*

Her lack of sense of belonging was associated with being a minority in a majority White setting:

'I was one of the only two Black girls that were actually in the school …It didn't feel like home. It wasn't a comfortable place for me to be. I didn't like going there. I felt like an outsider…'

This experience of minoritisation seemed to have been exacerbated when she moved to a majority White high ranking university. She reflected on the initial impact of the transition and on her sense of isolation:

'It literally was a shock to the system when I got here… I could sit in a room with 30-40 people and nobody would speak to me sort of thing. It may not be because of my race. It may just be because of anything but sometimes, that's what it can feel like.'

In terms of future aspirations, M's positive experiences of secondary school led her to aim at a career in teaching. She reported being inspired to study A-level Geography and to pursue a career in teaching because of her DHT and another *'lovely'* teacher who both taught the subject. She described her desire to replicate her experiences to other Black students.

M's awareness of the significantly under-representation of Black teachers compelled her to seek data on the national and local Black representation. Her actions demonstrate how race permeates Black students' concerns around racialised experiences in chosen professions. She also reflected on how

the different aspects of her identity may intersect and impact her experiences of teaching as she described:

'As of recent, it's made me think about how becoming a teacher and me being a Black woman might, uhm not interfere but change my experiences slightly from any other person of any colour or race.'

Apart from contributing to promoting positive experiences to others through teaching, M is seeking to contribute to the understanding of the experiences of Black students in her university. She is currently undertaking her undergraduate research on the topic, which has made her realise *'how lucky'* she has been in comparison to some other Black students.

In terms of support to achieve her career goals, M identified being part of online communities who share the Black professional teaching experience as 'really helpful'. She spoke about the notion of '*dispelling myths'*. This could be linked to the fact that despite the common widespread reports around the racialised school experiences of Black Caribbean students, the main bulk of her secondary school experiences were quite positive with no significant perceived racialised experiences. She commented:

'They (Black teachers on the online forum) have been really helpful in talking about all their experiences and like difficulties you may face while teaching. So using social media to help like…dispel the myths or talk about stuff. It seems like that would be really helpful whilst pursuing my career in teaching.

She also identified role models as key to instilling confidence in students to pursue their professional aspirations:

'If you like, see someone in a position higher than you or something that you want to aspire to be, they kind of act like a role model. So, if I got taught by a Black Geography teacher, in my head, I'd think I can, I can do this, I can become this, I can be in this career'.

Chapter 5. Thematic discussion

5.1 Chapter overview

Having presented each participant's accounts of their racialised experiences of secondary school, I will now turn to a thematic discussion, demonstrating how their experiences of the superordinate and subordinate themes converge and /or contrast. I will also attempt to illustrate how my findings corroborate or differ from the previous findings presented in the literature review chapter. I will discuss any potential new theme emerging from the experiences of participants in this study that may be a new contribution to our understanding of high achieving Black Caribbean young people's racialised experiences of secondary school.

5.2 Superordinate themes related to the first research question

The following subsections will discuss superordinate themes related to the first research question.

5.2.1 Institutional Racism

This superordinate theme refers to acts or systems of racial discrimination embedded in the educational system impacting participants' school experiences. It contains five subordinate themes which will be discussed below.

5.2.1.1 Disproportionate Black representation in school workforce

All four participants reported having only a few Black teachers across their entire secondary school career. For two participants (AE and M), these teachers had a significantly positive impact on their school experiences to an extent that they referred to their relationship in a familial manner. Participants reported the positive impact that Black teachers had on their sense of being listened to and supported against experiences of institutional racism. In addition, a participant (DB) perceived that decisions around a peer exclusion were affected by the lack of Black parental representation in the school council. This corroborates with findings from Demie (2021) around EPs and head teacher's perceptions of the impact of lack of Black representation in decision making affecting outcomes for BC pupils leading to the disproportionate rates of exclusion of this group.

5.2.1.2 Differential treatment

This theme appears to have been experienced by all four participants in a similar way. They reported feeling targeted by school staff and '*bearing more responsibility'* than peers of other ethnicities for the same actions. They described the pervasiveness of the surveillance of Black pupils by teachers and the school's police officer, describing it as happening 'all the time'. The over-surveillance of Black pupils has been well documented (Butler-Barnes et al; Wallace, 2018; Chapman and Bhopal, 2019). Although previous literature suggested that over surveillance is applied particularly to Black boys in schools, a female participant in this study seemed to have had repeated experiences of it. Her description of a Head teacher applying a differential behavioural approach to a group of Black students compared to their White counterparts whilst also making stereotypical comments regarding 'mob mentality' relates to Ochieng (2010) findings around differential sanctions being a result of problem-based portrayals of Black Caribbean students.

A novel finding in relation to the differential treatment of this group was that for the two young participants (BP and M) these experiences seemed to have subsided due to participants '*overcompensating*' or '*proving*' themselves. These compensatory strategies seemed to present significant emotional challenges for participants. In addition to this, the fact that the young people in this sample are high achievers may have contributed to a perceived shift in adults' differential treatment towards them.

5.2.1.3 Teachers' low academic expectations

Despite being high academic achievers, all four participants experienced low academic expectations from teachers. They reported receiving a sense of '*surprise*' from teachers about their academic achievement with one participant reporting '*having to work harder'* than white peers to prove herself worthy of being in high achieving groups (BD). Although these findings are in line with previous research (Butler-Barnes et al, 2018) they differ in relation to the high academic ability of the sample in this study. One particular challenge that participants experienced was around being awarded lower A-level predicted grades than they were capable of achieving according to their academic history. If left unchallenged, this practice would have had a detrimental impact on participants' ability to access university places at prestigious universities. The fact that 3 out of four participants in this study

experienced challenges around their predicted A-level grades may help to explain the very low rates of Black Caribbean students that participants have observed in their current universities.

Low academic expectation was not confined to adults in participants' schools. One participant also experienced low expectation from Black peers in terms of high academic achievement being associated with not being 'Black enough'. It seems that her peers internalised teachers' low expectations of their abilities. Similar findings were reported by Strand & Winston (2008) who reported what the authors called 'negative peers'. This refers to peers laughing at students who do well academically, affecting their commitment to school. However, the young person in this study remained focused on her learning, demonstrating a commitment to showing that academic achievement and Blackness could '*mix*'. In line with other findings (Chapman and Bhopal, 2019), participants adopted strategies to disprove stereotypes. This related to '*working harder'* than White peers to disprove stereotypes around academic inferiority, creating stress and anxiety for them.

Teacher's low expectation seemed to have impacted on a female participant's ability to achieve despite having a history of high achievement (M). This is in line with Buttler-Barnes and colleagues' results although their findings showed this to be more significant for boys. However, this participant had moved to a new school where she did not feel a sense of belonging. This may have further impacted on her ability to engage with learning.

5.2.1.4 Microaggressions

Participants reported experiencing microaggressions in school. These involved regular insults around their physical appearance particularly in relation to their hair. For one participant in particular, these experiences were more overt where routine *'jokes'* about him being a slave were made. Despite the significant effect these experiences had on his wellbeing, they were silenced by peers and teachers, dismissing them as overractions. The nature of his racialised experiences suggests that attending a majority White secondary school may intensify experiences of overt acts of racism, which is in line with previous findings (Vincent et al, 2013).

There appears to have been a sense of normalisation around microaggressions, which seems to have been internalised by participants. The frequency in which these experiences took place may have normalised them as not insults but just '*things people said'* (AE). Furthermore, the normalisation of these insults was apparent in one of the participant's narratives around not experiencing microaggressions in school. Her description of her experiences as '*nothing too severe'* suggests that

little insults may have been normalised in her school. Vincent and colleagues in their exploration of three generations of Black Caribbean experience of schooling in the UK, described the 'amorphous' way in which racism operates in the educational system in the UK, making it difficult to perceive. I wondered if the participant's perceptions of less severe forms of racism resulted from the subtleties and insidious ways in which modern racism operates.

Participants also reported experiencing microaggressions around their academic abilities (DB and AE).The low academic expectations previously discussed seem to drive the insults she received from teachers and peers in terms of their '*surprise*' around her presence in high-achieving groups. DB's narrative around '*liking to overachieve'* may be a strategy to deal with negative assumptions of her academic abilities.

Experiences of microaggressions seemed to have had a significantly detrimental impact on participants' well-being affecting their views of self (AE). These repeated experiences appear to have been traumatising for this participant, leading to his resistance to having his hair cut to avoid being insulted by peers at school. Their experiences of microaggressions were not validated as racial comments but rather viewed as participants '*causing an issue'*. By not recognising the racialised nature of their actions, these insults continued to take place, perpetuating the notion of Black inferiority as the norm.

5.2.1.5 Stereotypes

Stereotyping around aggressiveness was experienced by all participants in this study. Previous findings reported male stereotyping around aggressiveness and hard masculinity (Chapman and Bhopal, 2019; Demie, 2019; Law, Finley & Swann, 2014). Similarly to the experiences of participants in Chapman and Bhopal's study, the female participants in this study also reported experiencing stereotypes around aggressiveness. This suggests that Black female youth may be subjected to masculinization which may be linked to White female notions of femininity.

Another form of stereotyping experienced by one of the participants (BP) related to disengagement with learning. This led to him developing strategies around being 'extra friendly' to deconstruct this stereotype. Similar experiences around school staff perceptions of BC pupils as uninterested in education were reported by Vincent and colleagues (2013). The authors concluded that this and other pervasive stereotypes posed a threat to families' aspirations for their children. Participants elsewhere reported being disengaged with their learning, which correlated with their perceptions of being

discriminated against by school staff (Chapman and Bhopal, 2019). In contrast, the participant in this study viewed himself as '*really engaged'*. I wondered if the protective factors that minimised the impact of racialised experiences may have supported this participant to remain focused and engaged despite his experiences of discrimination.

5.3 Risk Factors Intensifying Racialised Experiences

This superordinate theme refers to factors which intensified participants' challenges in terms of their racialised experiences. Four subordinate themes are contained within it and it is to these that I will turn to next.

5.3.1 Lack of sense of belonging

Although this study focuses on participants' secondary school experiences, all four participants made reference to attending prestigious White majority universities in England. These experiences seemed to have impacted greatly on participants' lack of sense of belonging, creating a sense of *'imposter syndrome'*.

Attending White majority educational spaces seems to negatively impact the secondary education experiences of Black Caribbean students. Attending ethnically diverse schools seemed more conducive to participants' positive sense of belonging (BP and M), with one participant referring to her diverse secondary school and '*feeling like home'*. However, another participant had contrasting experiences in terms of belonging in an ethnically diverse school (DB). This seems linked to stereotypes around Black achievement and challenges stemming from the inclusion/exclusion dichotomy posed by streaming. She experienced significant challenges in terms of isolation in White majority high achieving classes as well as being ostracised by groups of Black students who did not attend her classes. Her experiences seem to contrast with reports of Black students successfully negotiating different roles within 'academic oriented' and 'street oriented' peer groups (Law, Finley & Swann, 2014).

5.3.2 Challenges around identity

Participants referred to developmental challenges in terms of forming an identity in adolescence, which were compounded by experiences of marginalisation and racial microaggressions (AE, BP, DB). These experiences seemed to have been particularly challenging for a participant who attended

a majority White secondary school (AE). Not seeing himself represented in the curriculum apart from slave depictions of Blackness, may have encouraged him to suppress his racial identity in order to try to become assimilated into the dominant culture. Parents in Ochieng's (2010) sample expressed that embedding African Caribbean histories and experiences in the curriculum would support their children to integrate their school experiences with their life experiences. These findings seem to resonate with AE's experiences, as he reported being nurtured around Caribbean culture at home but was unable to integrate it into his learning at school due to lack of support. This seems a reasonable assumption since Black students seem to shift their attention onto the self when they were offered a curriculum that values the Black experience (Charles, 2019). Deficit based images of Blackness around slavery used in pedagogical practices when teaching secondary school pupils during Black History month in England serves to glorify the British colonial past through pedagogical practices that 'negated, nullified, excluded and marginalised Black students' (Doharty, p.125). This helps to contextualise the participant's difficulties to integrate his identity into his experiences of school.

5.3.3 Intersectional Challenges

Participants in this study described experiences of discrimination related with multiple aspects of their identity, which intensified their marginalisation. A female participant reported conflicting experiences around being masculinised in terms of her behaviour being compared to that of boys. She also reported being hypersexualised, where boys attempted to exercise power and '*ownership*' over her body.

Parents in Ochieng's (2010) study argued that BC girls outperform the boys academically and have more opportunities to develop better self-esteem. DB's experiences in her high achieving classes seems in line with these findings in relation to academic performance. However, the intersectional challenges she reported indicate that girls may experience unique challenges which for DB greatly affected her self-esteem.

Another dimension that seems to intensify the experiences of discrimination for one of my participants is his sexuality. Being a gay male seems to create unique challenges in terms of marginalisation from aspects of the dominant culture of the school. The gay dimension of this identity seemed to increase his perceptions of being disempowered in terms of social capital, greatly affecting his self-esteem and sense belonging to the school community. Moreover, these intersectional identities conflict with the 'hard masculinity' stereotype that is often internalised by

Black Caribbean male pupils as a way of creating a sense of allegiance to an area or group (Law, Finley & Swann, 2014). Hence, being '*quite feminine'* might have also aggravated his sense of isolation within the Black Caribbean youth community. The multi-layered intersectional challenges experienced by this participant seems to have a very significant impact on his identity formation, which in turn affected his educational experiences. The sexual intersection of his identity is particularly significant in terms of the developmental stage explored by this study as sexuality is key aspect of identity development in adolescence.

Being Black and male was perceived as a risk factor increasing vulnerability around school exclusions. Although participants in this study did not experience this themselves, they made reference to Black male peers' experiences, describing the racialised nature of school's '*intolerance'* toward Black boys' behaviour. The intersectionality between race and gender in relation to school exclusion was widely reported in the review papers (Demie, 2021; Ochieng, 2010). Parents, school staff and EP's reported on systemic and institutional racialised factors that permeates the experiences of Black boys in particular , leading to the disproportionate rates of BC pupils in exclusion data in the UK. Demie (2021) reported that unidentified learning needs may impact on behaviours that lead to exclusion. The high academic abilities of the male participants in this study may have acted as a protective factor against experiences of exclusion.

5.3.4 Negative feelings towards the Black body

Participants (DB and AE) developed negative views towards their physical appearance as a result of widespread Eurocentric notions of beauty in school. In addition, repeated exposure to microaggressions around Black features such as skin colour, body shape and particularly their hair seemed to lead to a desire to look White. Participants described their physical appearance in derogatory terms such as *'not good enough'*, *'not resembling something desirable'* and '*deemed not as attractive*'. Adolescence being a stage of change in terms of physical growth and identity development may have posed particular challenges in terms of participants' internalised negative self-perceptions. This theme did not feature in the studies in the literature review. As physical appearance is a key factor in the formation of adolescent identity, the developmental stage upon which participants' experiences were drawn may have contributed to the uniqueness of this theme.

A female participant alluded to the intersectional connotations in terms of race and gender in Black girls' experiences of body image and hair. She described the social expectations around the Black female body as being '*perfectly curvaceous'* creating added pressure for Black Caribbean adolescent

girls. Hair being a symbol of personal and social identity, experiencing repeated microaggressions around it, may explain the significant negative impact that experiencing insults about it had on participants' self-image. A male participant also reported significant challenges around his self-perception. He described himself as '*feminine*', which may have contributed to the similarity in which his racialised experiences affected his self-image.

Negative feelings towards the Black body was not specifically discussed in the findings presented in the review studies, parent participants in Vincent et al. (2013) expressed that being over exposed to Eurocentric beauty standards in the media puts pressure on their teenage daughters to straighten their hair. White supremacy in all its forms including normalising Eurocentric beauty standards on children and young people is perpetuated in institutions across society including school. This is likely to be implicated in participants' negative feelings towards the Black body.

5.4 Factors Minimising the Impact of Racialised experiences

This superordinate theme refers to aspects of participants' experiences that seemed to have minimised the impact of racism. It contains four subordinate themes, which are discussed below.

5.4.1 Academic achievement and determination to achieve goals

A novel finding from this study in relation to previous literature is that high achievement seems to act as a buffer, minimising the negative impact of participants' racialised secondary school experiences.

One of the participants achieved 9 A* in their GCSE examinations, which are exceptionally high grades (BP). This may have given him the confidence to self-advocate against experiences of teacher's low expectations around his academic abilities.

Despite the challenges experienced for being a high achiever in terms of their sense of belonging, their ability to achieve academically served as a '*distraction*'. High achievement seemed to shift their focus away from negative feelings around their self-image and from experiences of microaggressions (DB and AE). It also contributed to participants having a social '*status*', feeling better integrated with peers (AE).

The BC young people in this study showed strong determination to achieve their goals which has been reported elsewhere (Law, Finley & Swann, 2014). This seemed to contribute to participant's

remaining engaged with learning despite discouraging comments from school staff around their ability to succeed (M and AE). Their straight progression from secondary school to university courses is starkly different from a previous generation of Black Caribbean students who mostly returned to university education as adults (Vincent et al, 2013). I wondered if having widely available access to online support around progression onto university referred to by participants, as well as some support from the few Black teachers they encountered facilitated this change for this generation of Black Caribbean students.

5.4.2 Advocacy

Advocacy against acts of racism towards participants seemed to protect participants against the school's racist practices. Family advocacy operated as a protective factor in terms of reversing a school's unethical decision around placing the young person in a SEN group without them having learning needs (BP). Parental challenges to the school's practice ensured that the participant did not continue missing learning that was appropriate to his level of ability, which could have impacted on his continued academic development. Vincent and colleagues also reported on parents acting against their children being placed in lower academic ability groups in the 60's and 70's. The examination of these findings across a period of over five decades suggests that school staff undermining Black Caribbean pupils' abilities persist in the UK educational system and parental advocacy seems an important protective mechanism against it.

As previously discussed, the issue of low expectation around A-level predicted grades was a significant challenge experienced by this group of participants. Self and teachers' advocacy appeared to be key in challenging and reversing this discriminatory practice. One participant successfully disputed his grade awarded by the school, challenging their actions on the grounds of race (BP). His parent is the one reported above and I wondered if having a role model who was able to challenge discriminatory practices empowered him to advocate for his rights. Black teachers also successfully advocated for a YP's grades to be in line with her academic history (M). It is likely that advocacy was successful in these instances because the racist acts were quantifiable, therefore grade allocation could be successfully challenged. For instance, if a student achieves a B in their exam, the expectation is that they would make progress towards a higher grade in the next exam. However, more nuanced racialised experiences seemed much more difficult to define. When speaking about their experiences of microaggressions and differential treatment, three participants refer to being

treated *'a certain way'* (AE, BP,DB). The intangibility of their racialised experiences makes it easier for these acts to remain unchallenged.

5.4.3 Supportive staff

All participants made reference to supportive staff as conducive to building positive relationships and to greater engagement with learning. More specifically, participants reported having a stronger bond with Black and ethnically minority teachers who took their reports of racialised challenges '*a lot more seriously'*. In addition to this, the two female participants alluded to similarities of race and gender being conducive to greater understanding of their experiences of those identities.

However, there seemed to have been contrasting experiences in terms of the support they received from Black members of the senior leadership team. Experiences varied from significantly positive in terms of a commitment to their emotional and academic development (M) to describing staff as '*Uncle Tom'* due to their lack of supportive engagement with the racialised experiences of Black students (BP).

Although M spoke particularly highly about the support she received from her assistant head teacher, she also described the positive support she received from all teachers across the school '*regardless of their rac*e'. M's descriptions suggest that staff held a strong inclusive ethos, which may have been facilitated by an ethnically diverse leadership team.

5.4.4 Pride in own heritage

Participants expressed pride in their heritage which seemed to help them to deal with racialised challenges. Conversations in the home around their cultural background seemed to play an important part in the development of a 'Caribbean self'. One participant, expressed her pride in her heritage overtly, linking it to guidance from her parents about being proud of who she is (DB). This seemed to have helped her to assert her identity when being othered within White and Black social groups. For another participant, his pride in his heritage seems to have been confined to his home life (AE). A culture of storytelling and sharing experiences by his grandparents seemed to have '*pushed*' him to be proud of himself. When his reports of the racialised nature of his experiences were being dismissed by school staff and peers, he seemed to draw upon his family's shared lived experience, which validated his feelings. These findings contrast with Butler-Barnes and colleagues' around adolescent Black Caribbean's pride in own heritage not being a protective factor against racial

discrimination. Participants in their study were adolescents with an average age of 15. The participants in this study were young adults and I wondered if their increased age contributed to their positive perceptions around their heritage. Moreover the authors used rating scale tools to gather participants' views. It may have been difficult for participants to accurately report on their experiences whilst the findings of this study are based on participants' descriptions of their experiences.

5.5 Superordinate themes related to the second research question

Two superordinate themes were identified in relation to the second research question namely, 'Future Aspirations' and 'Creating Positive Change'. These and their respective subordinate themes will be discussed in turn.

5.5.1 Future Aspirations

This superordinate theme stemmed from an interview question around what aspirations participants held for the future. Three subordinate themes were identified from the data as follows:

5.5.1.1 Exploring Possibilities

Participants showed a strong desire to achieve their career aspirations, which seemed present in both male and female participants. They have all entered university degrees related to their chosen professions. These findings contrast with previous reports around the low aspirations of Black Caribbean pupils (Strand and Wilson, 2008). The low career aspiration reported by the authors was associated with low commitment to school (e.g. attendance, valuing achievement and being hard work) and disaffection/ negative peers (e.g. feeling bored at school, wanting to leave school, peers laughing at those who do well). The questionnaire used by the authors to investigate these aspects of the pupils' schooling did not explore race and racialisation as a factor affecting participants' experiences. Since race seems to be a critical element shaping the educational experience of Black students, it is likely that factors related to racial discrimination contributed to the low commitment to school and disaffection of their sample.

Exploring career paths featured strongly in one of the participants' experiences (AE). The racialisation of his educational opportunities, particularly around not seeing himself represented in the curriculum, impacted on his ability to develop an understanding of career prospects during secondary education. Moreover, not having been encouraged by parents to achieve his academic

potential seemed to impact on planning a career trajectory. Seeking out external support networks when family and friends are not available with regards to career trajectory seems key in supporting Black Caribbean boys to make decisions around career prospects (Law et al. 2014). Utilising this strategy in the form of learning strategies from other minoritised young people through social media seemed critical for this participant's success in terms of securing a university place.

5.5.1.2 Clear next steps

Some participants had a clear vision about their career progression showing interest in the Tech industry and in teaching (BP and M). Factors that seem to have facilitated this were attending a school where staff were committed to supporting them to '*achieve what we could'*. In addition to this, participants seemed to draw on a variety of strategies including external support e.g. '*empowering*' organisations, and internal support from family members e.g. having an older brother who has gone to university. As in Law and colleagues' findings, participants' seemed to draw on 'higher educational' capital (available advice from those with lived or relevant experience of the educational system) and 'aspirational capital' (ability to maintain hopes and dreams) to transition into university education. One of the participants reported being *'very ambitious'*, which was evident by his creating networking opportunities and actively seeking internships in his area of interest. I wonder if the fact that he had both forms of capital, referred to above, supported him to become proactive in creating opportunities to achieve his goals.

Participants reflected on the racialised experiences within their chosen profession (M). Having had challenging experiences in White majority spaces may have prompted her to look into the rates of Black teachers in England. Hearing her experiences triggered me to reflect on the unlikely possibility that White trainee teachers would have preoccupied themselves with looking at the number of people of their race in their profession.

5.5.1.3 Contributing to improving the experiences of others

As a future aspiration, participants expressed that they would like to contribute to the experiences of other Black students (AE, BP and M). This sense of duty seemed to be linked with participants' gratitude towards people who supported them to be successful despite the racialised challenges they experienced. For one of the participants (AE) there was a sense of wanting to succeed '*for'* others who contributed to his achievement. This may indicate a feeling of indebtedness towards those who supported him. The willingness to contribute to creating change may have also stemmed from an

awareness that racism is deeply rooted in the educational system in the UK and that it morphs into more subtle but equally damaging forms of discrimination (DB).

Whilst plans to contribute to change are part of future plans for some participants, others have already created opportunities to contribute to the experiences by undertaking undergraduate research on the Black student experience in majority White universities (M). When interviewing her research participants, she realised '*how lucky'* she is in relation to the nature of the racism experienced by other Black students in her university.

5.5.2 Creating positive change

This superordinate theme refers to participants' perceptions of what could be helpful in terms of supporting them to achieve their aspirations. Participants also considered a number of strategies for improving the experiences of Black Caribbean students in future. These are discussed below.

5.5.2.1 Community support (online, organisations)

'Empowering' organisations seemed to be viewed as supportive of developing a sense of self and opening opportunities for future career development (BP). However, previous findings showed that Black Caribbean boys opposed the support offered by mentoring programmes aimed at improving their academic performance, viewing them as ethnically segregating (Law, Finley & Swann, 2014). The participant in this study may have held a positive view of the groups due to his engagement with the organisation being around strengthening his Black identity rather than his academic abilities.

Participants found that online forums where the Black experience within professions is discussed are helpful in preparing them for what to expect when moving into a new profession. This seems to relate to AE's experience of seeking online support from a blogger whose strategies helped him to gain the skills and experiences needed to secure a place at his chosen university.

5.5.2.2 Decolonizing the curriculum

Decolonizing the curriculum was considered by participants as critical in improving the secondary school experiences of Black Caribbean students.

Similarly to Ochieng's (2019) findings, participants expressed the detrimental impact that not seeing themselves represented in the curriculum had on their educational outcomes, specifically around developing a sense of self and a career prospect. Being exposed to a Eurocentric curriculum may

help to explain the Black Caribbean pupils' 'disaffection' (feeling bored in class and wanting to leave school) reported by Strand and Wilson (2008) since a curriculum that values the Black experience seems to promote engagement with learning (Charles, 2019).The participants in this study suggested that Black history be woven into lessons to create integration of Black contribution to knowledge creation (AE). In addition, claims were made for an '*accurate representation'* of Blackness to be portrayed in the curriculum (BP). I wondered if his participation in 'empowering' organisations supported him to develop an awareness of the stereotypical deficit-informed representation of Blackness in the curriculum. The misrepresentation of Blackness was also experienced by participants in Doharty (2019) where the teaching of Black history evolved around reinforcing stereotypes in terms of low intellect and subservience around slavery whilst promoting White supremacy.

5.5.2.3 Developing identity in Blackness

Developing an identity in Blackness was considered key to supporting Black Caribbean students to *'love and understand themselves'* and to become aware of their potential (AE, BP and DB). Lack of support within the educational system to develop a Black identity was viewed by participants as affecting the '*pipeline of talent'* for Black students 'especially boys', perpetuating a lack of Black representation in a range of skilled professions (DB). Participants expressed the positive impact that knowing their own history and African origins had on developing a sense of positiveness around Blackness, which was viewed as supportive of good educational outcomes (BP).

5.5.2.4 Role models

Participants viewed role models as crucial to improving the educational experiences of Black Caribbean students. They referred to role models as key to instilling confidence and self-actualisation in Black students (AE, DB and M), which is facilitated by the shared lived experience. Some referred to the subliminal messages that seeing Black representation offers *'without explicitly doing anything'.*

Others spoke about a more active approach in terms of role models explicitly mentoring Black Caribbean students, *'inspiring'* them to realise their potential (BP). This was considered particularly important in secondary education as '*it's a very moulding experience'*. Participants identified potential role models as teachers, mentors facilitating work experience and guest speakers in school and universities. For one participant, positive role models had a direct impact on her choice to

become a teacher (M). Conversely, AE held views about the importance of role models stemming from having had little or no experiences of people who acted as role models during his secondary education, leading to difficulties around realising career possibilities.

5.6 Thematic Conclusions

The experiences of the high achieving Black Caribbean young people in this study were permeated by racialised challenges associated with systemic and institutional racism. These factors appeared to impact on participants' ability to develop a racial identity, sense of belonging and on their feelings about their physical appearance. All these risk factors appeared linked to challenges associated with psychosocial development, which are further exacerbated for Black Caribbean young people by racialised experiences. Teachers' low expectations are particularly insightful in the context of this research since participants had a record of strong academic achievement. Moreover, the teacher's low expectations culminated in the allocation of lower A-level predicted grades for participants which could have impaired their ability to secure places at their university of choice. Moreover, the treatment participants received from teachers and peers suggests that institutional and systemic racism shaped the secondary school experiences of this group, with a detrimental impact on their educational outcomes. These findings challenge prevailing deficit-based discourse around Black Caribbean pupils' academic abilities and point to institutional and systemic racism as key factors affecting educational outcomes of this group.

A common theme across all participants was challenges associated with a lack of sense of belonging in relation to their current university institutions. All four participants secured places in some of the most prestigious universities in England, due to their high achievement. These institutions have a low Black student population, which led to participants experiencing imposter syndrome and feelings of isolation.

Participants' descriptions of their experiences also highlighted protective factors that minimise the impact of racialised experiences. In the context of the high academic abilities of this group, high achievement seemed crucial in promoting confidence to participants as well as helping them to actualise future educational plans.

In terms of future aspirations, participants expressed interests in a range of professions which their current undergraduate course will equip them with the skills required to pursue them. Interestingly all participants identified contributing to improving the experiences of other Black students as a

future aspiration which indicates that they viewed their lived experience as valuable resources to promote change. Their narrative suggests that change will not occur unless communities become actively involved.

Participants' support suggestions included 'community support', 'decolonising the curriculum', 'developing identity in Blackness' and 'role models'. These themes seemed to be drawn from their lived experiences in terms of risk and supportive factors that helped them to develop a sense of self leading to career possibilities.

Chapter 6. Research Evaluation

6.1 Chapter overview

In this chapter, various aspects of this research will be evaluated. To start with, I will present reflections on the value of CRT as a framework guiding the different aspects of this research. Next, I will evaluate the outcomes of the research in terms of its aims and whether or not the research questions were answered. After that, reflections on the suitability of the data collection and data analysis methods as well as on the ethical considerations that arose as a result of undertaking this study will be presented. I will then discuss the study's strengths and limitations followed by recommendations for future research. Subsequently, I will present my reflections on the value of this research to school professionals. I will highlight recent developments within Educational Psychology around issues of race and racism followed by tentative recommendations for EP practice. To close the chapter, I will present my reflections on the impact of undertaking this research on me as a researcher.

6.2 Evaluating CRT as a framework of enquiry

The CRT tenets offered a meaningful framework upon which to interpret participants' secondary school experiences. This can be assumed as various aspects of participants' experiences illustrated the claims made by CRT scholars. Their descriptions of the regularity upon which they experienced racialisation is in line with the concept of 'intercentricity of race and racism'. Racialisation was not a single isolated event but a systematic occurrence in the participants' school life. The awareness of racialisation brought about by the CRT framework helped to expose the unique challenges pertinent to participants' developmental stage around racial identity and a sense of belonging in majority White educational spaces. In addition, using the 'The centrality of experiential knowledge' tenet helped to reveal the importance of family storytelling around generational experiences of racism, which helped to validate participants' experiences that were being dismissed by school staff.

CRT scholars claim that lack of Black representation in school workforce hinders the understanding of the needs of Black students. The majority of participants reported the negative impact that the underrepresentation of Black members of teaching staff had on their experiences and outcomes.

Further, using an intersectional lens to interpret their descriptions offered insight into the factors that operated to intensify their marginalisation. Gaining understanding of these specific intersectional challenges is important to educational professionals in order to inform action to address issues impacting on the educational experience of BC pupils.

CRT calls for challenging dominant ideologies that perpetuate the marginalisation of minoritised groups. This tenet seemed pertinent to participants' experiences as some of their challenges stemmed from a colour-blind approach to education. For example, it helped to reveal the detrimental impact of the lack of support reported by participants during their transition into majority White universities. Participants' 'challenging feeling towards the Black body' were not viewed as a within-child issue around their self-esteem. Rather, they were interpreted as a result of being subjected to insults about their physical appearance as well as being over-exposed to White notions of beauty standards.

The 'Interest convergence' tenet helped to interpret a school's decision to review a participant's grade allocation for fear of staff's bias being exposed to the media. In addition, this tenet informed interpretations around the lack of Black representation in school councils, impacting the decision-making process affecting outcomes for Black students.

A limitation of using CRT as an analytical tool was that it relies on language and identity categories in its application and therefore, it could not be applied to participants' non-verbal experiences of racialisation. For example, participants referred to being treated 'a certain way' by school staff and the intricacies of their experiences were not categorised using language. Using IPA as a data analysis method helped to mediate this limitation, allowing for the interpretation of 'silent' racialisation through grasping the emotional experiences within participants' narratives.

In summary, using the CRT tenets to support the interpretation of participants' descriptions provided a meaningful framework upon which to analyse how racialisation operates to marginalise high achieving BC pupils in schools in the UK. The application of the framework to participants' narratives helped to expose levels of discrimination that may otherwise have been concealed. It is important to recognise that some of the interview questions were informed by CRT and therefore participants' answers would inevitably refer to some of the racialised issues highlighted by the framework. However, participants rich and varied descriptions of their racialised experiences validates the issues raised by the questions as pertinent to the secondary school experiences of the

participants. Applied to the evidence provided by their narratives, the framework helped to uncover racialised educational practices that negatively impacting the day-to-day experiences of high achieving Black Caribbean young people. Moreover, the framework helped to identify factors minimising the impact of racialisation. This included family storytelling for its impact on their sense of identity as well as validation of participants' experiences of discrimination.

This study demonstrated how the CRT tenets can be used as a tool to inform various aspects of the research process when interrogating the role of racialisation on the educational experiences of Black students. In particular, this study illustrated the application of the framework to the development of the interview schedule and as a lens to aid the interpretation of participants' narratives.

6.3 Reflections on meeting the aims of the research

The first aim of this research was partially achieved. The study succeeded in hearing high achieving BC YP's racialised experiences of secondary school. However, a recency effect was observed across participants' narratives as they tended to focus on racialisation during their A-level career. Therefore, these research findings may be mostly representative of BC YP's racialised experiences during this stage of their educational career. Asking questions about specific stages during their secondary education during the interviews may have helped to trigger participants' memories of events earlier in their secondary school education.

The second aim of this research was met. Participants articulated their educational aspirations, describing clear plans around entering their chosen professions. They also reported that racialised experiences were a key factor impacting on their difficulties with identifying possible career paths. In terms of support, participants not only discussed what they felt they needed to achieve their goals but they also focused on the support needed to improve outcomes for secondary school BC pupils in future. Interestingly, a common aspiration amongst participants was to contribute to improving the experiences of future generations of BC pupils. This aspiration linked to their views around the importance of role models in improving outcomes for this population.

6.4 Suitability of methods of data collection and analysis

The semi structured interviews were an effective platform upon which to explore the racialised experiences of participants. The open-ended nature of this tool offered a structure to the interviews, whist giving enough flexibility to explore and deepen participants' narratives. This yielded the identification of challenging as well as supportive factors minimising the impact of racialised experiences.

The interview schedule provided a useful platform upon which to explore the racialised secondary school experiences of participants. Using CRT tenets to generate some of the questions elicited rich and candid accounts of participants' racialised experiences revealing that being high achieving did not protect participants from forms of discrimination around teachers' low expectation and stereotyping. In terms of using previous findings to inform some of the interview questions, this approach seemed to have provided pertinent topics to the school experiences of high achieving BC pupils. Focusing on race appears to have helped to validate participants' experiences, which were previously dismissed by school staff as having a racialised nature. However, in order to prevent the recency effect previously discussed, the interview schedule could have included prompts about various stages of participants' secondary school careers.

The research design around collaborating with a BC young person to generate the interview questions helped to ensure that the questions were relevant to this population, which can be assumed by the open and candid way in which participants engaged with the interview questions. However, increasing participants' involvement in the data analysis would have strengthened their voice within the research process.

6.5 Reflections on ethical considerations

Some ethical considerations came to the fore during the interviews. The focus on racialisation led participants to share challenging, systematic experiences of racism. Even though no adverse reactions were observed during the interviews, talking about their experiences may have triggered psychological distress and potential re-traumatisation in participants. Although they were informed of support organisations after being interviewed, participants may not have sought support. Offering

post interview debriefing session may have helped to identify further signposting to address any wellbeing needs (Labott et al. 2013).

6.6 Strengths

I believe that presenting the racialised experiences of high achieving BC YP from the perspective of the young people themselves is the strongest aspect of this research. The voices of this population have been rarely heard in research and this study goes somewhere towards filling this gap.

Another strength of this study was hearing the experiences of male and female participants, which gained insight into the intersectional challenges experienced by this group. This included gaining insight into the unique challenges experienced by a BC young man who identified as gay.

In addition, this study has a methodological strength. It demonstrates how CRT can be used systematically to inform the design of a data collection tool and as a framework to analyse the data.

6.7 Limitations

I recognised several limitations to this study. From an eco-systemic stance, this research did not seek to gain insight into participants' experiences from the perspective of the various systems around them. Adding the views of parents/carers and teachers might have significantly enhanced our understanding of the factors impacting the experiences of this group.

Another limitation of this study is that, whilst it is assumed that EPs possess their own racial biases, the recommendations do not include suggestions around EPs own limitations around unconscious biases. However, it is presumed that EPs hold skills around reflexivity, cultural competence and awareness of power dynamics in interpersonal interactions, which are key to supporting anti-racist practice.

6.8 Future Research

Participants in this study identified the key role of Black and minoritised teachers in minimising the impact of their racialised experiences. Future research could seek to explore teacher's views, particularly around the intersubjective strategies they use when interacting with Black Caribbean young people.

Moreover, in order to help inform curriculum changes, future research could investigate Black Caribbean 'community cultural wealth' from the perspective of parents. This could be helpful to schools in terms of providing culturally relevant materials to support Black Caribbean pupils' learning.

Lastly, EPs play an important role in supporting pupils' transitions across various developmental stages. This research has gone some way in helping to understand the challenges experienced by Black Caribbean young people when transitioning to majority White universities. However, further research is needed to explore this transition, particularly in relation to identifying helpful strategies to support their integration and sense of belonging.

6.9 Reflections on value of the research for school staff

This research offers key insight to school staff including leadership teams on institutional factors creating discrimination and marginalisation of high achieving BC YP within schools in the UK. Crucially, participants' experiences demonstrated that when the leadership team showed a commitment to valuing racial difference and supporting the needs of minoritised pupils, it helped to create a whole school ethos around anti-racist practice. This offers a key insight into the importance of a top-down approach to addressing racial discrimination in schools.

Another key message for school staff is that racialised experiences seemed to impact on participants' sense of belonging. School belonging for secondary age children seems to be largely related to feelings of being accepted, valued and cared about by subject teachers and adults in the school (Hughes, 2011; Roffrey, 2012). The participants in this study perceived the support they received from Black and South Asian teachers as considerably more attuned to their needs than their interactions with White teachers. This highlights the importance of improving Black representation in the school workforce. However, promoting anti-racist practice within schools should not be the role of minoritised teachers. It is important that White members of teaching staff develop understanding of the historical implications around schools as institutions perpetuating colonial power, with White teachers representing notions of racial superiority (Leonardo & Boas, 2013). Participants' experiences demonstrate the importance of breaking the cycle of uncritical historical thinking within schools around the racialised power dynamics affecting the relationship between Black students and White teachers. Leonardo & Boas suggest a helpful framework that EPs could draw upon to support school staff with addressing curriculum and racialised power dynamics issues.

The focus should be on developing race aware teaching practices helping to deconstruct educational inequalities and enact educational justice. To that aim the authors suggest that all teachers should:

- *'Critically reflect on racialised and gendered histories and how implicated they are in them.*
- *Make race and race history part of the curriculum, and fight for its maintenance within the curriculum.*
- *Teach race as a structural and systemic construct with materials, differential outcomes that are institutionally embedded not reducible to identities.*
- *Work to understand and teach race not as a personal crusade but as a socio-historical construct through which we are all (unequally) produced.' (p.322)*

This study's findings provide evidence of BC YP's experiences of differential treatment by school staff adding to similar findings from previous research. It calls for a deliberate approach from school leadership team in supporting staff's skills development around issues of unconscious bias, adopting a critical approach to reflecting on stereotyping of Black students. Particularly, it offers evidence of the negative impact of low academic expectation in terms of A-level grade allocation and its potentially detrimental impact on BC YP's progression onto university courses. These findings call for action around teachers receiving race aware supervision to keep their bias in check when allocating grades to Black students.

6.10 Recent developments within Educational Psychology around issues of race and racism

The EP profession, as with Psychology as a whole, has historically explored race as a variable to promote deficit views of racial groups (Smedley, & Smedley, 2005). However, Educational Psychology has had to reposition itself in response to the Black Lives Matter movement worldwide as a result of the murder of George Floyd in 2020. In addition, it had to respond to the disproportionately negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on communities of colour. As a result, there has been some impetus within the profession towards becoming more proactive in terms of raising awareness of the impact of racial discrimination on outcomes for students of colour. An important instigator of this shift was the much-needed response from the BPS in 2020 recognising Psychology's role in perpetuating Whiteness within the profession through the Psychology curricula. Since then, publications have emerged on the suppression of the voices of people of colour during the EP training, resulting in feelings of marginalisation for Black TEPs (Wright, 2020). Wright advocates for discussions around racialisation in Educational Psychology in order to promote the

racial reconstruction of the profession. In addition, EP and TEP networks such the Black and Ethnic Minority Educational Psychology (BEEP) and the Trainee EPs' Initiative for Cultural Change (TEPICC) have provided valuable platforms for professional development and discussions around equality, diversity and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) issues.

Also, discussions I had with TEP colleagues indicate that EPSs across England are taken steps to promote greater awareness of the impact of racialisation on the lives of the communities they serve. EP colleagues at my own inner London EPS developed reflective conversations sessions around the impact of racialisation and racial trauma, aimed at encouraging organisations to engage in addressing racial injustice (Batuwitage, 2020).

The above examples illustrate some of the recent movement taking place within Educational Psychology towards addressing racial injustice. However, in order to better understand and address issues of racial marginalisation in education, it is key that Educational Psychology research deliberately examines race and racialisation when investigating the educational experience of Black and minoritised students (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014). The present study hopes to make a contribution to that end. In the next section, I will draw on findings from this study to tentatively suggest some implications for EP practice.

6.11 Implications for EP practice

The factors affecting the secondary school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils seem overwhelmingly related to systemic and institutional racism either directly or as a cascading effect impacting on areas of the young people's development. Hence, in order to change this landscape, I argue that intervention to promote anti-racist practice within schools should be at systemic level. EPs are well placed to promote change, helping to identify patterns within educational practices that serve to discriminate and marginalise individuals and groups (HCPC, 2016). They are equipped with organisational consultancy knowledge to help schools to develop school wide anti-racist practices, developing staff's skills to improving outcomes for Black Caribbean and other minoritised pupils.

Participants experienced significant challenges associated with institutional racism, namely 'differential treatment', 'teacher low expectation', 'microaggressions' and 'stereotypes'. They seemed to be triggered by staff and peers' unconscious biases around Black inferiority and cultural biases involving notions of White supremacy and Eurocentrism. EPs should support understanding

of ‘racial realism’ by supporting schools to move away from thinking that racism is the problem of some individual teachers and pupils to viewing it as endemic within social structures. Support should aim at developing staff’s awareness of unconscious and cultural biases, and their impact on interpersonal interactions and decision-making affecting outcomes for minoritised pupils. Particular attention should be on removing teachers’ assumptions of academic inferiority affecting grade allocation, aiming at promoting a positive academic identity and beliefs in Black Caribbean students’ abilities to achieve at high standards (Horsford & Grossland, 2013; Yeager et al, 2014).

Racialised experiences had a significant impact on participants’ sense of racial identity. Findings from this and other studies indicate that a Eurocentric Curriculum and colourblind teaching practices appeared to have had a significantly negative impact on the Black Caribbean YP’s sense of identity during adolescence. Adolescence is a critical time for physiological and cognitive changes leading to identity formation. Apart from knowledge of adolescent development, EPs possess skills around cultural competence. These could be shared with schools to develop culturally and developmentally relevant learning opportunities that embrace students' cultural capital by using their experiences as examples for knowledge creation. The aim should be to foster minoritised students’ liberation from oppression through a cultural dialogue with their experiences during learning (Charles, 2019; Freire, 1972).

Moreover, drawing on the intersectional challenges experienced by participants, EPs should adopt an intersectional lens, supporting staff to reflect on how discrimination is intensified by the different dimensions of young people’s identity. These include understanding of how adultification bias including emasculation and hypersexualisation of Black girls in particular may impact on how they are treated by adults and peers (Epstein, Blake & Gonzales, 2017). Moreover, training around intersectionality should discuss the intensified challenges associated with minoritised LGBTQ+ young people. EPs should encourage the development of a whole school strategy to celebrating difference, tacking sexual identity discriminatory language as well as developing a plan to support LGBTQ+ pupils’ wellbeing needs (Bradlow et al. 2017).

Another key finding stemming from the interactions between racialisation and participants' developmental stage was negative feelings towards the Black body. Schools as institutions operating in a White supremacist world, serve to perpetuate Eurocentric perceptions of Whiteness. This includes notions that White physical appearance is acceptable and desirable whilst attributing negative meanings onto the Black body. This process triggers perceptions of inferiority of the Black body as deviant to the desirable norms of beauty and attractiveness (Harris and Johnson, 2001).

Although this perception is heavily disseminated in other social institutions such as the media, EPs can support schools to reflect on their role in deconstructing children and young people's perceptions of beauty standards around Whiteness through teaching materials and discussions where diversity is valued and celebrated.

Embedding race as part of the curriculum should be an initiative drawn from 'community cultural wealth' (Yosso, 2005). Participants' family members appeared key to supporting YP's identity development through instilling a sense of pride in their own heritage. Cultural knowledge from family members has the potential to enhance staff's ability to provide culturally appropriate practices to meet the needs of minoritised pupils (Harry, 2002). EPs have substantial understanding of working across different systems hence are well positioned to support schools to work in collaboration with families to promote mutual understanding and cultural integration (Broffenbrenner, 1977).

In terms of participants' perceptions around support to improve the secondary school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils, a key recommendation was around role models. The majority of participants identified Black teachers and guest speakers as acting as templates to building aspirations for the future. EPs could use Social Psychological theories of motivation to promote understanding that role models of the same race provide a 'representation of the possible' by changing self-stereotyping and perceptions of external barriers for minoritised individuals (Morgenroth, et al., 2015; McIntyre et al, 2011).

In addition to role models, participants identified mentoring received through organisations and online platforms as helpful in supporting Black Caribbean students to achieve their aspiration. These included empowering organisations and online forums. EPs could support schools with developing mentoring programmes in collaboration with individuals and organisations that support the development of Black identity and career development. This should also include cooperation between Sixth Form colleges and prospective universities around supporting Black Caribbean students with social integration in majority White universities. Successful mentorship requires ongoing support available to mentors (Rhodes, 2005). A key role for EPs could be providing supervision to mentors, supporting problem solving around meeting the individual needs of Black Caribbean and other minoritised young people.

Hearing the views of Black Caribbean young people has guided my thinking around some of the changes that need to take place within schools in order to dismantle and reconstruct the system of discrimination affecting their educational experiences. Apart from the recommendations above, I

also advocate that the voices of Black Caribbean young people continue to inform educational practices aimed at supporting their academic and wellbeing development within schools. Educational professionals are required to place the voice of children and families at the centre of the decisions that affect their lives (UNCRC, 1989; DfE, 2015). EPs are equipped with skills and knowledge around obtaining pupil voice in containing and safe ways. They could support schools to create a safe space where the voices of minoritised pupils are heard and recorded and used to inform actions. The aim should be to continue to identify barriers and supportive factors from the YP's perspective, which should help to shape the interpersonal, instructional and institutional practices affecting the education experiences of Black Caribbean pupils.

6.12 Reflexivity

Engaging in this research project has been both rewarding and challenging. The rewarding aspect relates to my personal growth as a researcher, in terms of strengthening my ability to keep my emotions in check in challenging professional situations. Maintaining a writing record of my thinking was crucial in terms of supporting me to reflect on decisions made throughout the research. This ranged from rationale for the terms used in the literature search, to decisions adopting an idiographic approach to reporting the results. In addition, interviewing participants brought different challenges in terms of my position as a researcher. I related to many of the participants' experiences on a personal level and often wanted to acknowledge them. This was particularly difficult around their experiences of teacher low expectations and challenging feelings towards their hair. I had conflicting feelings around wanting to validate their feelings through our shared lived experiences but I had to refrain from it to ensure trustworthiness of the findings. This challenge was mediated through using principles of attuned interaction instead, using non-verbal communication to demonstrate that they were being heard. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that my experiences may have influenced my interpretation of the data. However, the process of 'bracketing' by using a reflective diary helped me to keep my experiences in check as much as possible (Append. 13).

Undertaking the literature review was challenging as it triggered very difficult emotions. Delving into the literature around race and racism in great depth elicited difficult memories of my own experiences of racism. Some of the work around race based trauma that was being undertaken in the local authority I was on placement at as a Trainee Educational Psychologist, helped me with strategies to deal with these challenges, particularly around looking after my wellbeing when dealing with issues of racism. This encouraged me to take a break from the literature for a couple of weeks to

allow my emotions to be contained. Also using the 'race reflections' resource from 'Living while Black' was useful in helping me to recognise physical reactions to triggers of race-based trauma while exploring by the literature (Append. 14). Noticing physical manifestations throughout the remainder of the research helped me to respond to them to protect my wellbeing. My experiences have implications in terms of considering the wellbeing of Black researchers while undertaking research on issues of race and racism.

Moreover, hearing participants' experiences triggered ethical considerations in terms of reporting them in a 'thematic' format. I felt that using parts of their narrative to illustrate themes would undermine their individual voices. This was particularly pertinent for some participants, as being interviewed for this study seemed to be the first time they were offered a space to share their racialised experiences.

The reflections around honouring participants' experiences through an 'idiographic' reporting of their narratives, triggered questions around pupil voice and participation. Although I obtain the views of pupils with SEND and their families, particularly during statutory assessments, I have not encouraged schools to have strategies in place to specifically hear the voices of marginalised pupils. I will strive to continue embedding this approach in my future practice.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Table for Literature Search Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Table 2. Literature Search Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Study Feature	*Inclusion Criteria*	*Exclusion Criteria*	*Rationale*
1. Participant	Pupils identified as Black Caribbean heritage	Pupils identified as Black from other heritages	This research adopts an intersectionality lens when exploring Black Caribbean young people's experiences of education. Individuals have multiple characteristics (e.g. race, gender) that interact, shaping how they experience the world (Crenshaw, 1989) . With regards to race, participants from other Black heritage may have experienced education differently to Black Caribbean pupils
2. Study Focus	Discussing how being Black Caribbean affects pupil's experiences of school	Not discussing how being Black Caribbean affect pupils experiences of school	Interested in exploring how this aspect of their identity affects the academic educational experiences of this population.
3. Educational Stage	Primary and Secondary education Papers published between 2003-	Attending other stages of education e.g. university	Looking to explore pupils' experiences during their statutory education. Interested in exploring research findings around the school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils since the Aiming High: African Caribbean

4.	Publication date	2021	Studies published prior to 2003	Achievement Project (DfE, 2003) & The London Challenge project (2003)
5.	Location	Pupils attending schools in the UK and the US.	Pupils attending schools in countries other than the UK and the US.	Interested in understanding the experience of Black Caribbean pupils in the UK. However, a substantial amount of research in the field has been undertaken on US populations therefore, this criterion was set.
6.	Outcomes	Studies exploring any aspect of Caribbean heritage young people's primary and secondary school experiences.	Studies not exploring aspects of Caribbean heritage young people's primary and secondary school experiences. e.g. studies exploring post statutory age education	The review intended to gain a broad understanding of a variety of issues Black Caribbean students experience across primary and secondary education. As this is an exploratory study,

Appendix 2. Tables of features of included studies

Table 3 . Features of studies on CYP's views (Adapted from Harden et al, 2003)

Study	Sample Size/ gender	Age/school year	Main findings	CYP's/Parents' views

Butler - Barnes, et al, (2008) (USA)	1170 Back adolescents (810 African Americans and 360 Black Caribbean) *N* = 563 females *N* = 605 males	13–17-year-old/high school	Clearly stated findings. Black Caribbean students experience less school bonding (students emotional and behavioural attached to school)when they perceive high rates of teacher discrimination and moderate (rather and high) levels of religiosity.	Black Caribbean adolescents reported less school bonding, less subjective religiosity and less private regard than African American adolescents. Perceived teacher discrimination was associated with low levels of school bonding. Black Caribbean girls had higher levels of school bonding than boys.

Chapman, T. K., & Bhopal, K. (2019). (USA/UK)	Study 1 N = 97 (total) N = 74 African American N= 23 Black Caribbean Study 2 Total number of participants not stated. However, the report was undertaken only on the Black Caribbean sample N= 8 *N* = 32 females *N* = 65 males	ninth to tenth grade and eleventh to twelfth grade levels for the focus groups, Study 1: 14-19 years old Study 2 : 13-16 year olds	Black Caribbean (and Black African students) attending predominantly white schools experience institutional and structural barriers such as deficit stereotypes and racial surveillance that position these groups as unmotivated and hostile. These barriers prevent them from fully accessing the benefits of attending 'excellent' schools.	Students felt racially stereotyped by their peers and teachers as academically inferior and/or having behavioural problems. They suffered microaggressions associated with racial stereotypes. Students experienced high levels of anxiety as a result of being perceived as academically inferior. They felt pressure to 'be twice as good' as their white peers to prove themselves. Students felt that they were over disciplined compared to their white peers , specifically the young men. Caribbean girls felt that they received increased scrutiny from school adults.

Law, I., Finney, S., & Swann, S. J. (2014). (UK)	All male participants Study 1 : vague description e.g.”N=30-40” across the study but UK sample not specified. However, the authors justified the lack of certainty around the sample in terms of some participants not stating it. Study 2: N= 10	15 years	The majority of the young men (three quarters) showed a drive for personal autonomy and agency which translates into strong educational and career aspirations. One quarter of the young Black men did not see the value of educational opportunities and showed low aspirations in relation to education. Although distinctions of heritage were made throughout the paper e.g. Caribbean or African heritage, no differentiation was made in the discussion with all being referred to as ‘young Black . man’	Some of the findings refer to young African and Caribbean pupils. Only findings that clearly state the inclusion of Black Caribbean students is reported below. e.g. no evidence of lower aspirations showing similar levels of employment aspirations as those held by white pupils 70% of pupils recognized that education was a key means of improving life chances. A quarter of the pupils of ALL backgrounds did not take this view. Black Caribbean pupils, particularly boys felt that ethnic boundaries created by educational programmes aiming at improving the achievement for Caribbean pupils had antagonistic reactions with some viewing it positively and others thinking that it made them feel ‘dumb’ Racial stereotyping around romantic relationships, ‘hard’ masculinity e.g. he is a woman beater . Second study also reports on the ‘myth of low aspirations’ with Black Caribbean young people wanting to continue with further and higher education. Boys sought to talk about their future plans with family members when they had attended university. When parents had lower skilled jobs the boys did not seek advice from them about future careers.

Strand, S., & Winston, J. (2008). (UK)	N = 854 2 phases Phase 1 N 405 = boys N429 = Girls N20 = gender not stated Phase 2 A sub-sample of 48 pupils participated in detailed focus group interviews. N=60	Year 7 (age 12) and Year 9 (age 14) pupils	The low aspirations of Black Caribbean pupils were related to school disaffection, negative peers And low commitment to schooling.	Black Caribbean pupils had the highest levels of disaffection/negative peers of all the 9 ethnic groups and were three times less likely to continue in full time education than pupils with lower levels of disaffection/ negative peers. They also had the second lowest mean score for 'commitment to schooling'. Both of these factors were strongly associated with low educational aspiration scores for this group.

Wallace, D. (2018) (US/UK)	UK sample N=16 female N=14 male US sample N=15 female N=15 male	Grade 10 (US) Year 11 (UK)	Black Caribbean youth's sense of belonging is affected by being rendered suspicious, worthy of scrutiny even during school commute.	Pupils reported experiencing stop and search on the streets and on public transport while in their school uniform. Youth commented on the limited value of school uniform in preventing police stop and search. Youth did not share their experiences with their families or school due to shame and an adultification process ("manning up"). Youth use arguments of exceptionality during their encounters with the police stating that they are not like 'other' Caribbean young people.

Table 4. Features of studies on parental views (Adapted from Harden et al, 2003)

Study	**Sample Size/ gender**	**Age/school year**	**Main findings**	**Parents' views**
Demie, F. (2021) (UK)	N = 76 The focus groups comprised of: Black Caribbean parents N = 14	Gender not stated	Reasons for the overrepresentation of Black Caribbean pupils in exclusion rates include racism in schools, teachers' low expectations and institutional racism, lack of diversity in the school workforce including teachers, educational	Stereotyping on the part of school staff affects decisions around exclusion. Labelling of Black Caribbean children particularly of boys e.g. as being violent.

			psychologists, SENCOs,and lack of effective training of staff on multicultural education, diversity and race issues.	
Ochieng, B. M. N. (2011) (UK)	N= 18 parents (10 families) recruited via purposive sampling	All parents had adolescent children aged 12 and 18 years	Factors such as experiences of racism, the delivery of a Eurocentric curriculum and reliance on suspension and exclusion as forms of discipline in school are key to compromising the wellbeing of Black Caribbean students	Parents described their children's experiences of racism in the classroom and in the playground reporting that discrimination including teachers' attitudes towards their children continues to perpetuate poor educational outcomes for their children . Parents felt that offering a curriculum with aspects of Caribbean history would support their children's positive self-esteem. Suspension and exclusion are unfairly applied to Black Caribbean children
Vincent et al, (2013) (UK)	N + 62 49 mothers 13 fathers	Middle age (exact age range not specified)	Middle class parents perceived their children as experiencing a different type of discrimination and privilege e.g. In relation to their academic skills and sense of identity, to the two previous generations. In terms of what remains the same, the data revealed that, for the third generation, racism may be less likely to be explicit but still retains the potential to undermine, to	Parents recollections of their own experiences of school: Overt racism e.g. name calling from peers and teachers and being treated differently by peers in largely white schools. Chances of experiencing racism increased when being part of a minority in a grammar school.

			marginalise and to threaten.	

Table 5. Features of studies on professionals' views (Adapted from Harden et al, 2003)

Study	Sample Size/ gender	Age/school year	Main findings	Main findings

Demie, F. (2021) (UK)	N = 76 The focus groups comprised teachers N = 15, governors N=17, SENCOs N=8 , Educational Psychologists N=5 School staff, including teaching assistants and learning mentors N=20	Findings suggest a number of reasons for overrepresentation of Black Caribbean pupils in exclusion statistics including racism in schools, teachers' low expectations and institutional racism, lack of diversity in the school workforce including teachers, educational psychologists, SENCOs,and lack of effective training of staff on multicultural education, diversity.	Reasons for the overrepresentation of Black Caribbean pupils in exclusion rates include racism in schools, teachers' low expectations and institutional racism, lack of diversity in the school workforce including teachers, educational psychologists, SENCOs,and lack of effective training of staff on multicultural education, diversity and race issues.	**EP views:** Stereotyping around the values of the children and their families. Institutional Racism, learning needs not being met, issues of illegal exclusions e.g. managed moves. Lack of diversity of professional and school workforce. **School staff's views** Institutional racism, cultural insensitive curriculum , the complexity of the Children moving houses to live with different people within the community; housing issues, poverty, Staff's poor understanding of diversity. Lack of diversity of professional and school workforce.

Table 6. Features of the Praxis studies (Adapted from Harden et al, 2003)

Study	Sample Size/ gender	Age/school year	Main findings
Charles (2019) (UK)	21 participants were involved in this fieldwork; 15 pupils 5 teachers 1 classroom assistant	7 to 10 years	Using teaching material that values the identity of Black learners promotes asset building and empowerment for Black Children.
Doharty (2019) (UK)	7 pupils N = 4 females N = 3 males And 3 teachers N = 1 male N=2 female	Year 8	Students of Black Caribbean (and Black African heritage) experience various types of microaggressions when studying Black history in school.

Appendix 3. Table for Methodological quality and coding criteria (Harden et al, 2003)

Table 7. Methodological quality and coding criteria (Harden et al, 2003)

Criteria	Coding Criteria (0=not met or no evidence; 1= partially met; 2=met; 3=Thoroughly met)
1. An explicit theoretical framework and/or a literature review	0 – Not at all discussed 1 - Superficial theoretical framework and/or a literature review 2 – Some discussion around theoretical framework and /or previous findings 3 – Thorough discussion around theoretical framework and /or previous findings
2. Aims and objectives clearly stated	0 – Not at all stated 1 - Not explicitly stated 2 – Some discussion of the aims and objectives 3 – Aims and objectives including rationale clearly stated.
3. A clear description of the context of the study	0 – Not at all stated 1 – Context not explicitly stated e.g. No reference to the means to which the researcher gained access to the target population. Also, no clear reference to the researcher's reflexivity and as a tool for collecting data. 2 – Some reference to how the researcher gained access to the target population. Some reference to the researcher's reflexivity and as a tool for collecting data. 3 – Thorough discussion around the context of how the researcher gained access to the target population. Also, discussion around the researcher's reflexivity and how it was mediated.
4. A clear description of the sample and how it was recruited	0 – No description of the sample/recruitment process 1 – States participants' characteristics are e.g.

	number of participants and gender. 2 – Some explanation of participants characteristics and recruitment process e.g. school year, gender and age. 3 – Thorough description of sample and how it was recruited including gender, age, SES, and clear distinction between Black heritage
5. A clear description of the methods used to collect and analyse data	0 – No description of the methods used to collect and analyse data 1 –Questionable choice of method to gather evidence for the proposed area of investigation. Some description of the methods used to collect and analyse data. 2 – Appropriate choice of method to gather evidence for the proposed area of investigation. Some description of the tools used to collect and analyse data 3.Appropriate choice of method to gather evidence for the proposed area of investigation. Rich description of the tools used to collect and analyse data.
6. Attempts made to establish the reliability and validity of data analysis	0 – Not discussed 1 – some steps taken to ensure reliability, validity and trustworthiness with little explanation of the purpose of taking them. No method of external criticism mentioned. 2 – Steps taken and with some explanation of the purpose of taking them. A method of external criticism mentioned. 3. Steps taken with a clear explanation of the purpose of taking each step.
7. Inclusion of sufficient original data to mediate between evidence and interpretation	0.No quotes or participants answers used (unsupported findings) 1.Some quotes or participants' answers (in the case of set answers' scales), used throughout the report (Equivocal findings)

	2.Quotes or participants answers (in the case of set answers' scales) or field work observation used for each theme (Unequivocal findings). 3.Multiple examples of participants' answers used from different participants to substantiate arguments. Method of external criticism mentioned (Unequivocal findings)

Appendix 4. Tables of studies' scores against methodology quality criteria

Table 8. Scores for Studies of CYP's views

	1. An explicit theoretical framework and/or a literature review	2. Aims and objectives clearly stated	3. A clear description of the context	4. A clear description of the sample and how it was recruited	5. A clear description of the methods used to collect and analyse data	6.Attempts made to establish the reliability, validity and/or trustworthiness of data analysis	7.Inclusion of sufficient original data to mediate between evidence and interpretation

Butler - Barnes, et al, (2008)	3 Clear rationale and evidence presented around the importance of school experiences impacting pupils sense of school bonding, a sense of emotional and behavioural attachment to the school.Theoretical framework around the Integrative model for the study of developmental competences in minority children (Coll et al, 1996) and the Risk and resilience framework (Fergus and Zimmerman, 2005)	3 Aims of the study clearly stated around examining the impact of private regard and subjective religiosity as protective factors against the impact of racial discrimination on school bonding. Research questions clearly stated.	2 Clear description of the sample context, making reference to the sample coming from the National survey of American life Adolescent supplement (NSAL-A) including compensation amount participants received to take part in the survey.	3 Clear description of the sample including distinction between Black Caribbean and Black African adolescents , age and gender.	3 Clear description of the random sample selection from the survey. Clear description of the subscale tools used as outcome measures for private regards, subjective religiosity, teacher-based racial discrimination, school bonding. Explanation about using Data analytic strategy using MPLUS 7.3 software to perform a regression analysis was explained.	0 Not discussed.	2 The scales had set answers. However, the descriptive statistics for each scale and ethnic group was clearly reported.

			No reference to reflexivity.				

Chapman, T. K., & Bhopal, K. (2019).	3 Extensive Literature review to contextualise the similarities between the Black Caribbean and Black African pupils' experiences of racism in predominantly white secondary schools in the UK and the US using a CRT framework.	2 Some discussion of the aims and objectives around further exploration of the similarities of the challenges experienced by Black youth of Caribbean and African backgrounds.	2 Information given about where participants were recruited from for both studies although the location of the schools for the secondary study is vague (rural secondary schools in the UK)	1 Clear description of the sample for both studies. No reference to the recruitment process.	2 Appropriate choice of methods for both studies Study 1. some reference to the data collection method (semi-structured focus group interviews Study 2. Clear description of methods of data collecting and analysis (Thematic analysis applied to interview transcripts).	0 Not discussed	3 Quotes from different participants used to illustrate each taxonomy of microaggression in the classroom under investigation namely micro-invalidation, micro-insults and micro-assaults.

Law, I., Finney, S., & Swann, S. J. (2014).	2 Extensive discussion with linked evidence of the hostile environment faced by Black people in terms of educational and labour market opportunities in the UK. It draws on the importance of educational aspiration in the context of lack of policies to address inequality and discrimination. However, it vaguely states that the study will be framed within the context of ethnic , cultural and social pedagogy without explaining what these entail.	3 Aims clearly stated around discussing education and life aspirations of Black male youth including Black Caribbean young people. It also highlights the aims of the two studies it draws data from.	2 Information given about where participants were recruited from for one of the studies (second piece). No reference to researchers' reflexivity.	1 study 1 total UK sample with an 'estimated' 30-40 Year- 10 Black male pupils.. Second study reported the number of participants and gender. No breakdown of the number of Black Caribbean and Black African for both studies.	3 Both studies used appropriate choice of method and clear description of the tools used to collect and analyse data. Study 1. Quantitative survey followed by focus group discussion and interviews and ethnographic fieldwork. Study 2 Mixed-method approach using interviews, graphic elicitations, art based methods and questionnaires.	0 Not discussed	1 Study 1 Some quotes specifically from Black Caribbean boys were used. Study 2 Interview quotes and art work used from different participants to substantiate arguments. No method of external criticism mentioned.

Strand, S., & Winston, J. (2008).	3 Introduction draws on evidence around theoretical perspectives around aspirations as well as the differences across ethnic groups.	3 Clear aims around extending the UK data around educational aspirations of pupils in inner city areas as well as exploring factors that influence those aspirations. Research questions also stated.	1 Reference to the rationale for choosing the sample schools around 'facing significant challenges'. However, no explanation of the nature of those challenges was given. Also, no clear reference to the researcher's reflexivity and as a tool for collecting	1 Reference to the year group of pupils and explanation as to why they were chosen. Exact sample size not clearly stated although it could be obtained from a table of pupil background variables. A total of 67 pupils from Black Caribbean backgrounds were included. Gender not specified.	3 Appropriate methods to collect data to answer the proposed research questions. Methods were clearly stated and justified. Researchers used large scale questionnaires and focus groups to explore pupils' aspirations in depth. Areas of exploration in the questionnaires and focus group questions stated.	0 Not stated	2 Quotes from participants focus groups interviews used to illustrate findings

			data.				
Wallace, D. (2018)	3 Extensive evidence presented around policing in schools drawing on four analytical traditions including punishment and mass incarceration, institutional policies and police harassment towards Black youth. Theoretical stance based on CRT,	3 Aims cleared stated around capturing Black Caribbean youth's experiences of stop and search and examine the myth of 'exceptionalism' that impacts their educational experiences.	3 Thorough discussion around the context of how the researcher gained access to the target population. Also, discussion around the researcher's reflexivity around having lived in the areas where the research took place but not	3 Information offered about the number of participants, school year group, gender and class.	3 Appropriate methods to answer the research questions used (in-depth semi structured interviews and focus groups). Focus of the interview questions stated.	2 Some reference to two rounds of coding made to ensure validity of the codes.	2 Participants quotes used to substantiate arguments for each theme in the 'findings'.

			having the same understanding of the cultural nuances and the participants as natives of those areas.				

Table 9. Scores for studies of parental and professionals' (Demie, 2021) views

	1.An explicit theoretical framework and/or a literature review	**2. Aims and objectives clearly stated**	**3. A clear description of the context**	**4. A clear description of the sample and how it was recruited**	**5. A clear description of the methods used to collect and analyse data**	**6.Attempts made to establish the reliability and validity of data analysis**	**7.Inclusion of sufficient original data to mediate between evidence and interpretation**
Demie, F. (2021) *(This study*	2 The author presents	2 Aims are	2 The author	1 Some	2 Appropriate choice of	0 Not stated.	3 Multiple quotes from

explored parental and professional views)	UK national figures on the disproportionate rates of exclusion of Black Caribbean pupils compared to other ethnic groups. Findings on the long term negative impact of exclusions on a variety of outcomes are presented.	presented in the form of research questions	gathers views of pupils, parents, school staff and educational psychologists and offers a rationale for this approach around triangulating the voices of the various stakeholders involved in the pupils' education. No reference to the author's reflexivity was made.	characteristics of the sample offered e.g. professional and parental roles. Number of participants in the focus groups was offered but no overall sample size was offered. However, no gender or ages of participants were offered.	method to collect and analyse data with some level of detailed description. Semi structured interviews and focus groups discussions to collect data.		different participants used to illustrate themes.
Ochieng, B. M. N. (2011)	1 Superficial discussion around previous findings	2 Aims and objectives including	2 Clear context of how the researcher gained	1 Inadequate details about participants was offered e.g.	3 Description of the in-depth interviewing explored. The rationale	3 Clear steps stated to ensure reliability and validity including	3 Multiple examples of participants' answers used from different participants

	in relation to pupils' satisfaction and its impact on various aspects of functioning including academic attainment and health compromising behaviour.	rationale clearly stated with some exploration of the rationale. Aims around presenting accounts of the beliefs and perceptions of Black Caribbean parent on the wellbeing of their children.	access to participants.Some information about the researcher being of Caribbean background but no discussion of how this may impact the analysis of the data.	families having children aged 12 and 18 years. No age or gender of responding parents was offered.	was around offering students the opportunity to describe their perceptions on the relationship between their school experience and their wellbeing. Codes were generated through theoretical reflections and ultimately through the interview transcripts.	cross referencing data with existing findings. In addition to this findings were presented to families and colleagues for validation at different stages of the research process.	to substantiate arguments. Method of external criticism mentioned.
Vincent et al, (2013)	2 Theoretical stance clearly defined around intersectionality and Critical Race Theory. Literature review weaved in throughout the report but not	3 Aims clearly identified with rationale	2 Some information about how the researchers gained access to participants. Considerable discussion around	2 Some description of the sample e.g. number of participants including how many mothers and fathers and their ethnic heritage. No parent age	2 Methodology stated in some detail, informing that data was collected in 2 stages via semi-structured interviews. No information around the interview transcription. Detailed discussion around the employment	3 Discussion around team members bringing different experiences to the reading of the data. Participants were offered the opportunity to choose between	2 Interview quotes used from different participants to substantiate arguments. No method of external criticism mentioned.

	systematically.		reflexivity in terms of the white team members applying critical questioning and awareness of privilege was reported. No discussion on the reflexivity of non-white members.	information. Thir children's age was informed (8-18 year). The 10-year age gap amongst the children may mean a similar age gap amongst parents. Clear information about how participants were recruited	of an intersectional analysis.	being interviewed by a white or Black Caribbean member of the research team.	

Table 10. Scores for Praxis studies

	1. An explicit theoretical framework and/or a literature review	**2. Aims and objectives clearly stated**	**3. A clear description of the context**	**4. A clear description of the sample and how it was recruited**	**5. A clear description of the methods used to collect and analyze data**	**6. Attempts made to establish the reliability and validity of data analysis**	**7.Inclusion of sufficient original data to mediate between evidence and interpretation**

Charles (2019)	3 Extensive evidence presented around the educational curriculum being a tool for perpetuating white supremacy ideology and inferiority and subjugation of Black people.	3 Aim cleared stated around reinstating the self-consciousness of Black students within an educational system that devalues their identity.	2 The researcher also elaborates on the role of the researcher in achieving the aim of the study.	1 Information about the number of children taking part in the study and their ages. No distinction of gender was made. No information given around how participants were recruited.	2 Clear description and epistemological justification for the method of choice (ethnographic approach with Africana phenomenology) . However, no other method of data collection was used to establish whether the teaching method was efficacious in promoting changes in the areas of concern. The author claims that the method can be used without establishing the individual's starting point. However, information on how this can be achieved is unclear. No pre-post	0 Not stated	2 Quotes from teaching sessions used from different participants to substantiate arguments. No method of external criticism mentioned.

					measures to evaluate 'the Black Caribbean inferiority' were undertaken		
Doherty (2019)	3 Comprehensive discussion about findings on factors that affect the underachievement of Black students leading to classroom practices curriculum decision and classroom practices for the teaching of Black history. It applied a CRT perspective to a racial microaggression	2 Some discussi on around ev eryday racism experie nced by Black students in the classroom.	2 Discussions around the context of BHM both in the US and the UK within mainstream schools leading to a single case study design of a mainstream school in England. No reference to researchers' reflexivity.	3 Number, gender, year group and social class of students provided. Role of school staff stated.	2 Appropriate choice of method to collect and analyse data with some level of detailed description. The researcher used ethnographic material from a field-note journal.	0 Not discussed	3 Quotes from different participants used to illustrate each theme

	framework.						

Appendix 5. Tables of Number of quality criteria met by studies of CYP's views

Table 11. Number of quality criteria met by studies of CYP's views

Study	Quality
Butler -Barnes, et al, (2008)	Met 6 of the 7 criteria. It did not report attempts to establish the reliability and validity of data analysis.
Chapman, T. K., & Bhopal, K. (2019).	Met 5 of the 7 criteria. No reference to the recruitment process and no discussion around establishing reliability, validity and/or trustworthiness of data analysis
Law, I., Finney, S., & Swann, S. J. (2014).	Met 5 of the 7 criteria. Stated estimated number of participants for one of the studies. Also breakdown of number of Black Caribbean and Black African students.
Strand, S., & Winston, J. (2008).	Met 4 of the 7 criteria. No clear reference to the researcher's reflexivity . In terms of the sample characteristics, exact sample size and gender were not specified
Wallace, D. (2018)	Met all 7 criteria.

Table 12. Number of quality criteria met by studies of parental views

Study	Quality
Demie, F. (2021)	Met 5 of the 7 criteria. Information on sample characteristics was insufficient. No reference to the researcher's reflexivity was offered.
Ochieng, B. M. N. (2011)	Met 5 of the 7 criteria. Limited previous research discussed at the introduction. Incomplete information about the sample characteristics.
Vincent et al, (2013)	Met all 7 criteria.

Table 13. Number of quality criteria met by studies of professionals' views

Study	Quality
Demie, F. (2021)	Met 5 of the 7 criteria. Information on sample characteristics was insufficient. No reference to the researcher's reflexivity was offered.

Table 14. Number of quality criteria met by Praxis Studies

Study	Quality
Doharty, N. (2018)	Met 6 of the 7 criteria. Did not report attempts to establish trustworthiness of data analysis.
Charles (2019)	Met 5 of the 7 criteria. Information on sample characteristics was insufficient.Did not report attempts to establish trustworthiness of data analysis.

Appendix 6. Participant recruitment Criteria

Table 16. Participant recruitment Criteria

Criterion number	Criteria Description
1	Is from a Caribbean heritage e.g. at least one of their parents is from the Caribbean
2	Is aged 18-25
3	Was predicted to achieve BBB+ in their A-level examinations
4	Attended primary and secondary education in the UK

Appendix 7. Participant Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to participate in a research study

Research focus:

> **'An exploration of high achieving Black Caribbean young people's racialised experiences of their secondary school education'**

I have read the information sheet relating to the above research study and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been fully explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved have been explained to me.

I understand that my involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher in the study will have access to identifying data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the research study has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason. I also understand that should I withdraw, the researcher reserves the right to use my anonymous data after one week of the interview taken place after which the analysis of the data will have begun and withdrawal will no longer be possible.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

…….
Participant's Signature

……..
Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

……..
Researcher's Signature

……

Date: ……..…….

Appendix 8. Recruitment leaflets

8.1. Facilitator recruitment leaflet

8.2 Participant recruitment leaflet

Appendix 9. Interview Schedule

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research project. I'm interested in investigating high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education.

I have seven main questions with possible follow up questions and the interview is likely to last approximately 45 minutes. I will be recording the interview using the recording feature in this platform but please treat the interview as an informal chat. I don't expect you to be an expert on the topic and any of your thoughts and experiences will be meaningful contributions.

If there are any questions you don't feel comfortable answering or would like to come back to, please let me know. You are not under any pressure to continue and may withdraw your participation at any point during the interview. Also, as a reminder, I'll be ensuring any names are anonymised before analysing the data but feel free not to use any personal names if you prefer not to.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

1.Tell me about race in your school?

Prompt: Did you experience that yourself?

2.What do you think about racial microaggressions in schools?

Prompt: Did you experience them yourself?

3.Tell me about the staff's interactions with Black students in your school?

Prompt: How did you experience that?

4.Tell me about the school's sanctions towards Black students?

Prompt : Did you experience them yourself?

5.Tell me about Black representation in the school's workforce?

Prompt: Did this affect the experience of students of colour?

6.Tell me about your aspirations for the future

Prompt: What does that mean to you?

7.What support do you think would be helpful in fulfilling your aspirations?

Prompt: What does that mean to you?

Appendix 10. Participant invitation letter and recruitment letter to institutions

10.1 Co-researcher invitation letter

Invitation letter (young person participating in designing the interview questions)

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you agree to it, it is important that you understand what your participation would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and contact me to ask questions if anything you read is unclear or if you would like more information.

Who am I?

I am a Doctoral student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London and am training as an educational psychologist. I am also currently on placement as a Trainee Educational Psychology in Hackney Educational Psychology Service. As part of my studies, I am conducting the research you are being invited to participate in.

What is the research?

I am investigating high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education.

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that it follows the standard of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been invited to participate as Black Caribbean young person who:

- Is from a Caribbean background e.g. at least one of your parents is from the Caribbean
- Is aged 18-25
- Were predicted to achieve BBB+ in your A-level examinations
- Attended primary and secondary education in the UK

If this applies to you, I am interested in working with you to design my study's interview questions. I am not looking for an expert and any insight would be a valuable contribution to my research.

What will your participation involve?

Your participation would involve supporting me with developing the interview questions, which will be used to gain the views of high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their school education. I feel that, as a high achieving Black Caribbean young person yourself, you are well placed to help to decide what questions would be relevant to gaining information about other high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their school education.

I anticipate that we would need one session of approximately 45 minutes at a time that is convenient to you. The session would involve discussions about your your experiences of secondary school as well as sharing initial ideas of potential interview questions. The second session would involve finalising the interview questions. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, our sessions would take place online via Microsoft Teams. The interview questions you have been invited to help me design aim to investigate the following research questions:

1. What are high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education?

2. What are high achieving Black Caribbean young people's aspirations for the future and what they need to achieve them?

Your participation is voluntary and your input would be very valuable in helping to develop our knowledge and understanding of how high achieving Black Caribbean young people successfully navigate the educational system in the UK.

Your taking part will be safe and confidential

I will ensure that your privacy will be upheld at all times. Any information which may identify yourself or anyone else in your family or your educational institution will be anonymised and audio recordings of the interview can only be accessed by myself. You have the opportunity to stop the interview at any point and you are not expected to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable discussing. The exception to this would be if safeguarding concerns are raised or identified, in which case the safeguarding lead of your educational institution will be informed.

What will happen to the information that you provide?

The audio recording and any personal information about yourself will be saved in my University of East London, password-protected Microsoft OneDrive account which only I have access to. The sessions' recordings will be transcribed directly onto a word document on my password protected Microsoft OneDrive account. The recordings will be deleted upon transcription.

Any information which could potentially identify yourself or anyone else will be anonymised using pseudonyms before the data analysis. Personal contact details will be stored on my OneDrive and will be kept separately from the sessions' data. Your anonymised sessions' transcript will be stored securely at the University of East London data repository for 5 years, at which point they will be destroyed.

My research findings will be fully anonymised and will be shared with my university tutors, colleagues on placement and examiners who will evaluate the quality of my research. They could also be used in academic publications such as journal articles.

What if you want to withdraw?

You are free to withdraw from taking part in the sessions at any time without explanation, disadvantage or consequence before the first session has started. It will not be possible to withdraw your data once the sessions have taken place.

Contact Details

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Grazielle Carvalho Gomes Email: u1944291@uel.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact my research supervisor Dr Miles Thomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ, Email: m.thomas@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ Email: t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

10.2 Participant invitation letter

Participants Invitation letter

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you agree to it, it is important that you understand what your participation would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and contact me to ask questions if anything you read is unclear or if you would like more information.

Who am I?

I am a Doctorate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London and am training as an educational psychologist. I am also currently on placement as a Trainee Educational Psychology in Hackney Educational Psychology Service. As part of my studies, I am conducting the research you are being invited to participate in.

What is the research?

I am investigating high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education.

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that it follows the standard of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been invited to participate as Black Caribbean young person who:

- Is from a Caribbean background e.g. at least one of your parents is from the Caribbean
- Is 18-25 years
- Was predicted to achieve BBB+ in their A-level examinations
- Attended primary and secondary education in the UK

If this applies to you, I am interested in gathering your views and any insight would be a valuable contribution to my research.

What will your participation involve?

Your participation will require you to take part in an interview where you will be asked to share your experiences of your school education.
I would be happy to share the interview questions with you in advance if that would be helpful. I anticipate the interview to take approximately 45 minutes. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the interview will take place online via Microsoft Teams. The interview questions you will be asked aim to investigate the following research questions:

1. What are high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education?

2. What are high achieving Black Caribbean young people's aspirations for the future and what they need to achieve them?

Your participation is voluntary and your input would be very valuable in helping to develop our knowledge and understanding of how high achieving Black Caribbean young people successfully navigate the educational system in the UK. You will receive £15 compensation for your participation.

Your taking part will be safe and confidential

I will ensure that your privacy will be upheld at all times. Any information which may identify yourself or anyone else in your family or your educational institution will be anonymised and audio recordings of the interview can only be accessed by myself. You have the opportunity to stop the interview at any point and you are not expected to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable discussing. The exception to this would be if safeguarding concerns are raised or identified, in which case the safeguarding lead of your educational institution will be informed.

What will happen to the information that you provide?

The audio recording and any personal information about yourself will be saved in my University of East London, password-protected Microsoft OneDrive account which only I have access to. The interview recordings will be transcribed directly onto a word document on my password protected Microsoft OneDrive account. The recordings will be deleted upon transcription.

Any information which could potentially identify yourself or anyone else will be anonymised using pseudonyms before the data analysis. Personal contact details will be stored on my OneDrive and will be kept separately from the interview data. Your anonymised interview transcript will be stored securely at the University of East London data repository for 5 years, at which point they will be destroyed.

My research findings will be fully anonymised and will be shared with my university tutors, colleagues on placement and examiners who will evaluate the quality of my research. They could also be used in academic publications such as journal articles.

What if you want to withdraw?

You are free to withdraw from the interview at any time without explanation, disadvantage or consequence. You may also request to withdraw your data even after you have participated, provided that this request is made within 1 week of the data being collected (after which point the data analysis will begin, and withdrawal will not be possible).

Contact Details

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Grazielle Carvalho Gomes, Email: u1944291@uel.ac.uk .

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact my research supervisor Dr Miles Thomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ, Email: m.thomas@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ Email: t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

10.3 Email text to Institution- participant recruitment request

Dear Sir or Madam

I am a Doctoral student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London and am training as an educational psychologist. I am also currently on placement as a Trainee Educational Psychology in Hackney Education. As part of my studies **I am conducting research investigating high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education.**

My research has been approved by the University of East London, School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that my research follows the standard of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

I am writing to you to request your support in identifying potential Black Caribbean young people to take part in my study. Participants need to be a high achieving Black Caribbean young person who:

- Is from a Caribbean background e.g. at least one of their parents is from the Caribbean.
- Is aged 18-25.
- Was predicted to achieved BBB+ in their A-level examinations.
- Attended primary and secondary education in the UK.

If this applies to them, I will be interested in gathering their views.

They will be required to take part in an interview where they will be asked to share their experiences of their school education and I anticipate the interview to take approximately 30-60 minutes. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the interviews will take place online via Microsoft Teams. I will also recruit one high achieving Black Caribbean young person to support me with developing the interview questions to allow them to be relevant to the population that the study aims to give voice to.

If you agree to support me with identifying potential participants who meet the above criteria, I will send you a consent form for you to sign as an agreement to support me with recruiting participants. Once you have identified potential participants, I would ask you to share the information leaflets with them and ask them to let you know if they wish to take part in the study either to be interviewed or to help me with developing the interview questions. They can contact me directly if they wish to participate. I will then answer any questions they may have before seeking their written consent.

I would like to thank you in advance for your support with recruiting participants to my study. If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me Grazielle Carvalho Gomes Email: u1944291@uel.ac.uk.

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact my research supervisor Dr Miles Thomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ, Email: m.thomas@uel.ac.uk. You may also contact the Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ Email: t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

Kind regards,

Grazielle Carvalho Gomes, Trainee Educational Psychologist

Appendix 11. Participant debrief letter

PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF LETTER

Thank you for participating in my Doctorate research study on 'An exploration of high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education'. This letter offers additional information relating to the study.

What will happen to the information that you have provided?

The following steps will be taken to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the data you have provided:

Your privacy will be upheld at all times. Any information which may identify yourself or anyone else will be anonymised and audio recordings of the interview can only be accessed by the researcher. Any information which could potentially identify yourself or anyone else will be anonymised using pseudonyms before the data analysis.

Personal contact details will be stored on my password protected OneDrive Microsoft account and will be kept separately from the interview data. Consent forms, interview recordings and interview transcripts will also be stored securely on my OneDrive account for a year, at which point they will be destroyed.

My research findings will be shared with my university tutors and colleagues at Hackney Educational Psychology Service but in a format that is fully anonymised. It may also become available in academic journals online. Your interview recording will be transcribed within 4 weeks of the interview taking place, upon which it will be deleted. Anonymised data such as interview transcripts will be kept securely in the University of East London data repository for 5 years, upon which it will be destroyed.

You may also request to withdraw your data even after you have participated, provided that this request is made within 1 week of the data being collected (after which point the data analysis will begin, and withdrawal will not be possible).

What if you have been adversely affected by taking part?

It is not anticipated that you will have been adversely affected by taking part in the research, and all reasonable steps have been taken to minimise potential harm. Nevertheless, it is still possible that your participation (or its after-effects) may have been challenging, distressing or uncomfortable in some way as a result of talking about your experiences. If you have been affected in any of those ways you may find the following resources/services helpful in relation to obtaining information and support:

Antenna Outreach Service is a culturally sensitive mental health service working with Black African & African Caribbean people aged between 16 – 25 years old, experiencing mental health problems. They offer advice and practical help.
Email: antenna@outreachservice.fsnet.co.uk, Tel: 020 8365 9537.

The Mix is a UK's mental health support service for young people. They help young people aged up to 25 years. They offer support via confidential helpline and counselling service. Tel: 0808 808 4994.

You are also very welcome to contact me or my research supervisor if you have specific questions or concerns.

Contact Details

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

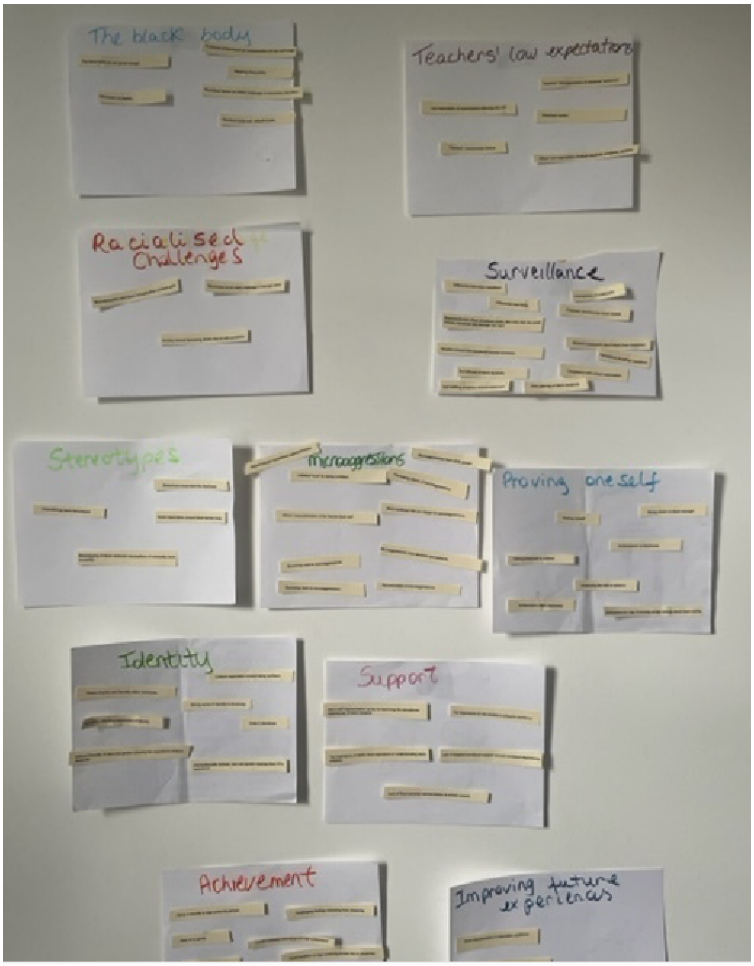
Grazielle Carvalho Gomes u1944291@uel.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact the research supervisor Dr Miles Thomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,
Email: m.thomas@uel.ac.uk
or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ Email: t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

Appendix 12. Establishing connections between superordinate themes

12.1 Manual grouping of emergent themes



12.2. Connections between themes

Table 18. Connections between Themes

Table of super-ordinate themes

Themes	Line/Phrase
Achievement	**Achievement**
Academic achievement as compensation for low self-image	**DB Academic achievement as compensation for low self-image L247-48B -49-50 .Because uhm?I was doing well in terms of academics.I did get some sort of gratification from that sort of distraction. Like where I may felt like I wasn't good enough in terms of, UM, my physicality and my looks or my hair or whatever. And I was experiencing, experiencing microaggressions.The fact that I was doing well in school.It was kind of like a distraction or something. A place where I could get some value from.**
Belonging	Belonging
Conflict around belonging	DB Conflict around belonging (L21/ At the same time there wasn't many black people in the top sets)
Being a minority in high achieving groups	DB Being a minority in high achieving groups (L25/ 3 black girls and maybe 1 black boy and the rest of the class was white)
Meaningful relationships in blackness	DB Meaningful relationships in blackness (L40/ We kind of all understood each other and could relate)
Being othered	DB Being othered (L21/ because people would be surprised and wouldn't believe that you belong to those top sets or those spaces
Racial isolation in high achieving groups due to streaming	DB Racial isolation in high achieving groups due to streaming (L41-43/ because of how the classes were set…I didn't even know a lot of the black people that weren't in my classes)
Alien in own group	DB Alien in own group (L22/ To a lot of other black people who

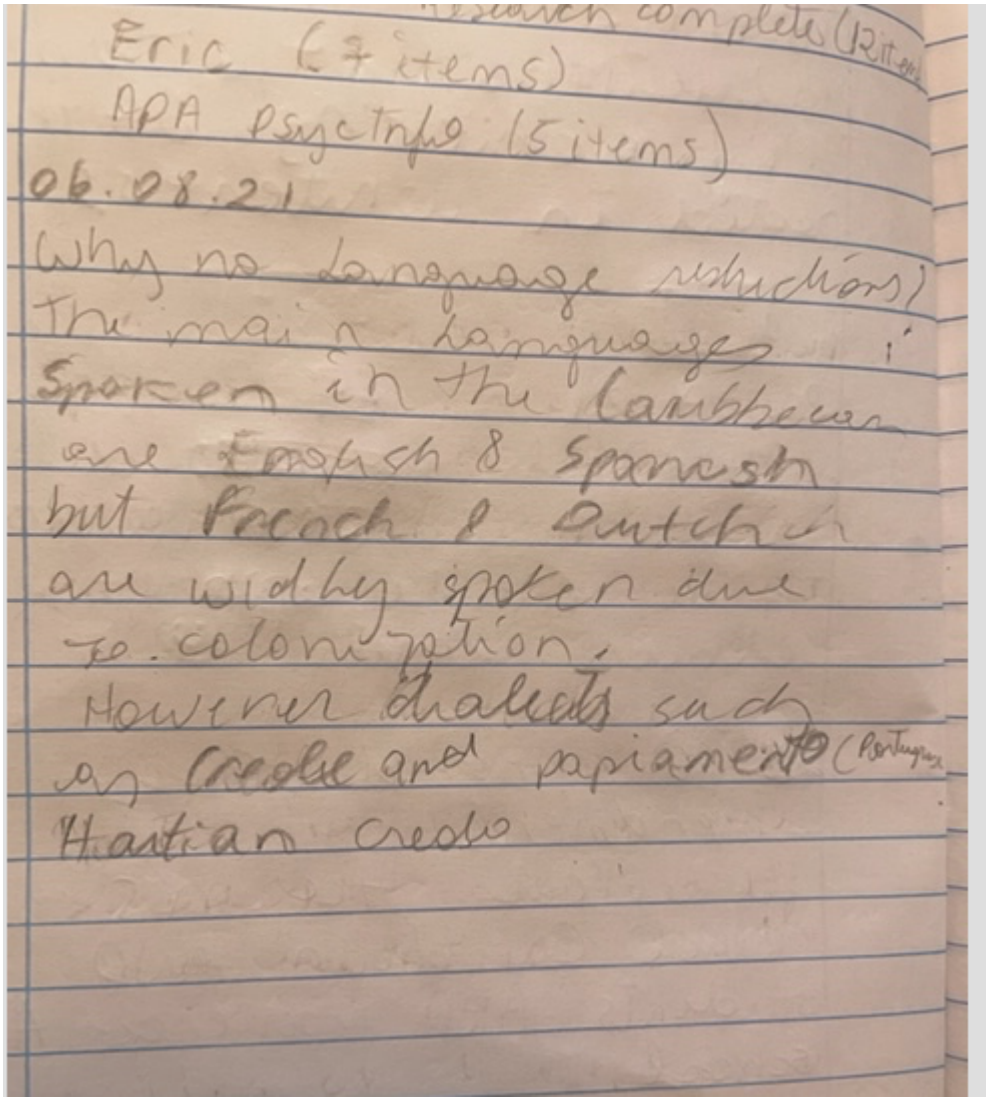
Appendix 13. Identifying patterns across cases

Table 19. Identifying patterns across cases

Achievement
DB Academic achievement as compensation for low self-image L247-48B -49-50 .Because uhm?I was doing well in terms of academics.I did get some sort of gratification from that sort of distraction. Like where I may felt like I wasn't good enough in terms of, UM, my physicality and my looks or my hair or whatever. And I was experiencing, experiencing microaggressions.The fact that I was doing well in school.It was kind of like a distraction or something. A place where I could get some value from.
M: Determination to achieve L227 . It was just a different experience compared to my actual school like I would call that school home and call that one like a visit that I didn't want to go to. But that I had to go in order to achieve what I wanted to do in life. Yeah, so like if I didn't have to do that, I would have chosen to just stay at my school forever (laughter). It's like University, It's just, it's not the same.
(BP) Exceptionally high achievement L 203. We had December exams and I got second highest (grade) in my class . ALSK L 355 I got 9 a*
(BP)Awareness of ranking tables L5. It (his school) wasn't ranked very high or anything like that at all.
Ashby Elias -High achieving as a buffer to microagressions and discrimination L178 like people, would be picking on the black boy...But What can they say when they're doing better than them? AND L 185 I'd be getting like the top of the class in like a lot of things felt as if like It was like a status but not a status. But I kind of status where, Uhm People knew that...Like I was kind of intelligent and I feel like then I'd hear things a lot less about... hear a lot less microaggressions (HE WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS AT THAT TIME) L423 When I was being successful then a lot of people viewed me a lot differently. My social life began to change and stuff like that.
Ashby Elias Engaging more with education at the end of secondary school L180 cause I didn't really take education seriously till year 11 and I just thought oh maybe I'll just like listen in lessons and do what not.
Ashby Elias High academic ability L182 I feel like I just have kind of a good memory.
Ashby Elias-Sense of duty to achieve for those who supported him L434 I need to achieve for like my grandparents, I need to achieve for like my teachers 'cause I don't want to let them down
Ashby Elias Achievement as opening a range of opportunities L477 having gone through the root of like never really thinking of like that, I would aspire to be anything to then now thinking that I've got like the whole world at my feet...Now that's solidified that I do want to become a teacher because I want to be able to give that back to people. So..
Belonging
M: Perceptions of non-racialised experiences - feeling comfortable in own race L16-17 There was never really anything any problems to do with like racism or... anything like that and it was quite comfortable. Yes and no problem though
M: Lack of sense of belonging in majority white uni experience
M:Taking home for granted L 46 it (school) kind of felt like home. I didn't realise it at the time but like every time I enjoyed going to school

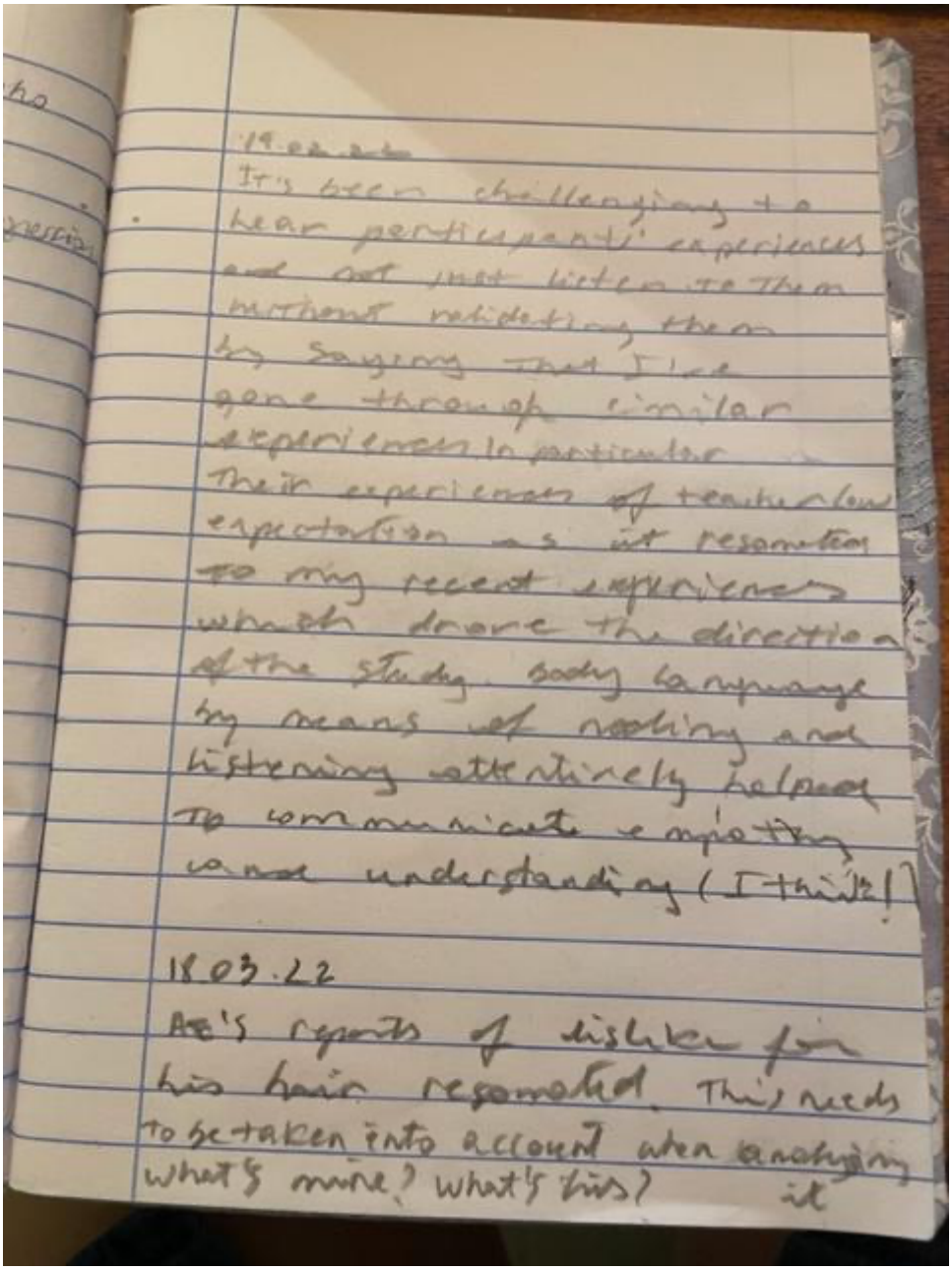
Appendix 14. Reflective diary entries

14.1 Reflections on literature search language restrictions



Eric (7 items)
APA PsycInfo (5 items)
06.08.21
(Why no language restrictions)
The main languages
Spoken in the Caribbean
are French & Spanish
but French & Dutch
are widely spoken due
to colonization.
However dialects such
as Creole and papiamento (Portuguese
Haitian Creole

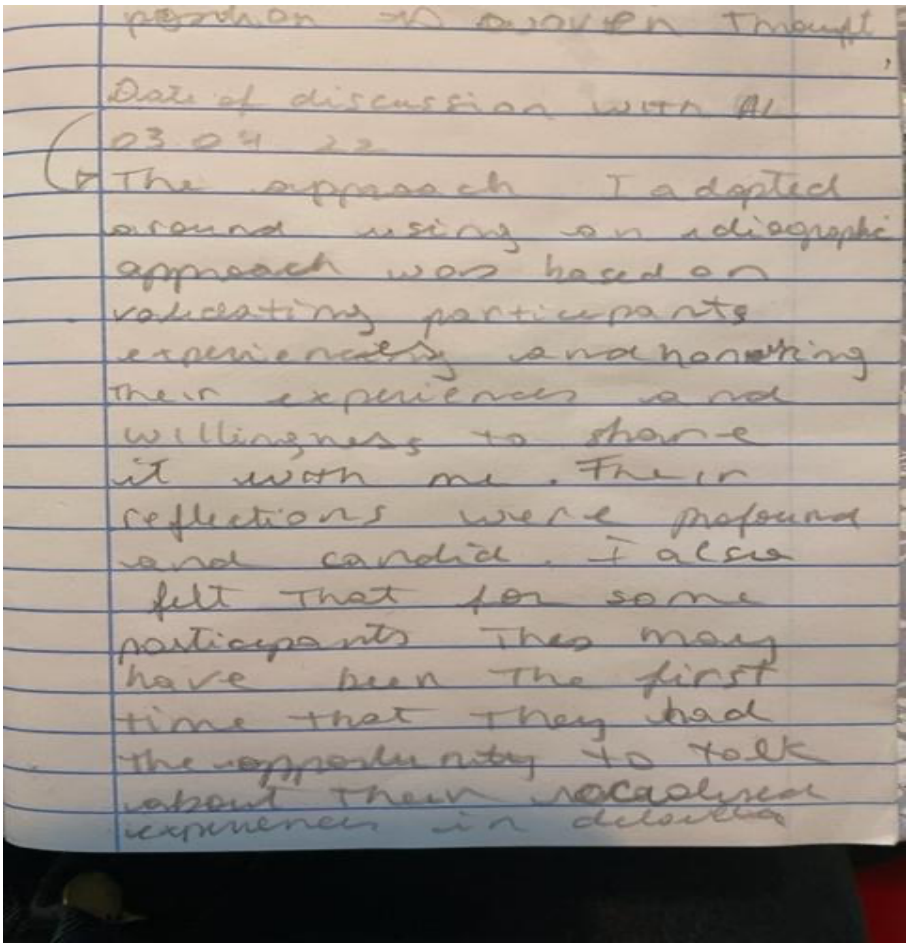
14.2 Reflections on the emotional impact of interviewing



19.02.22
It's been challenging to hear participants' experiences and not just listen to them without validating them by saying that I've gone through similar experiences. In particular their experiences of teacher low expectations as it resonated to my recent experiences which drove the direction of the study. Body language by means of nodding and listening attentively helped to communicate empathy and understanding (I think!)

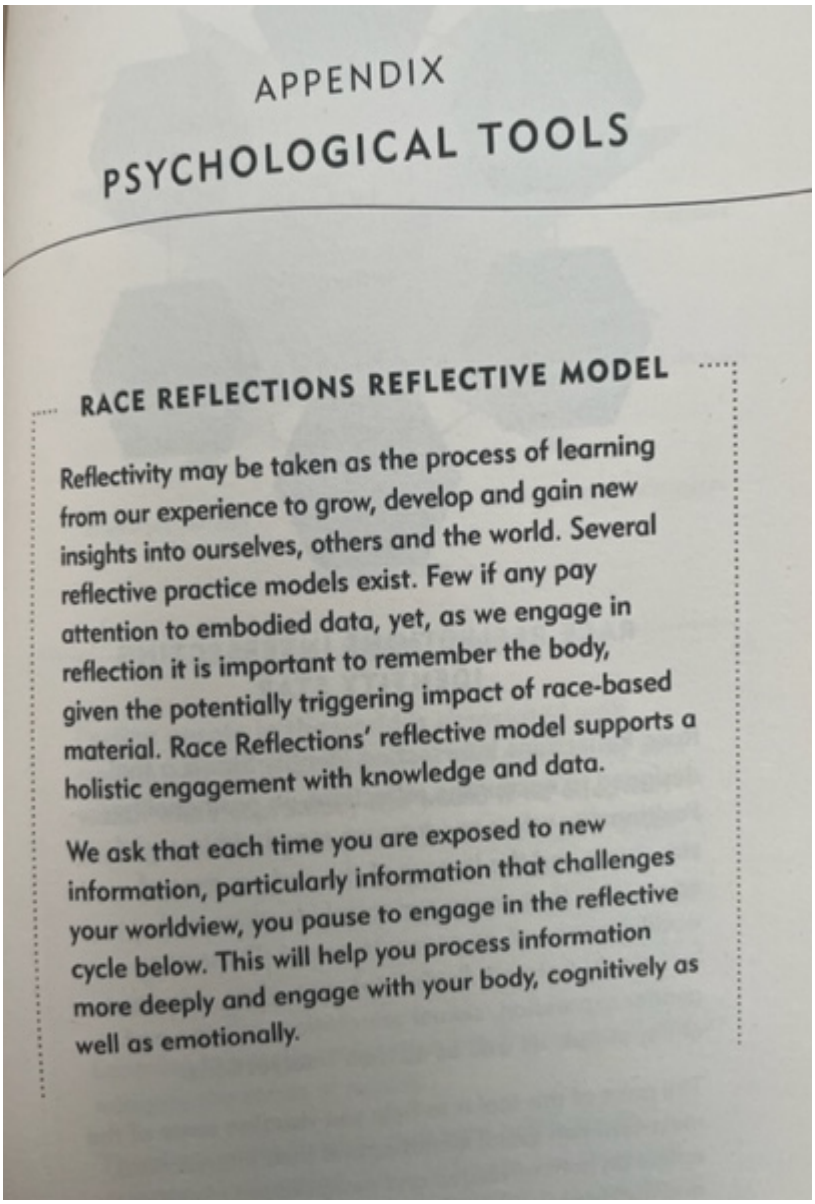
18.03.22
Ade's reports of dislike for his hair resonated. This needs to be taken into account when analysing what's mine? what's his? it

14.3 Reflections on adopting an idiographic approach to reporting the result



Appendix 15. Body sensations - Race reflections

15.1 Race reflections reflective model (Living While Black)



APPENDIX

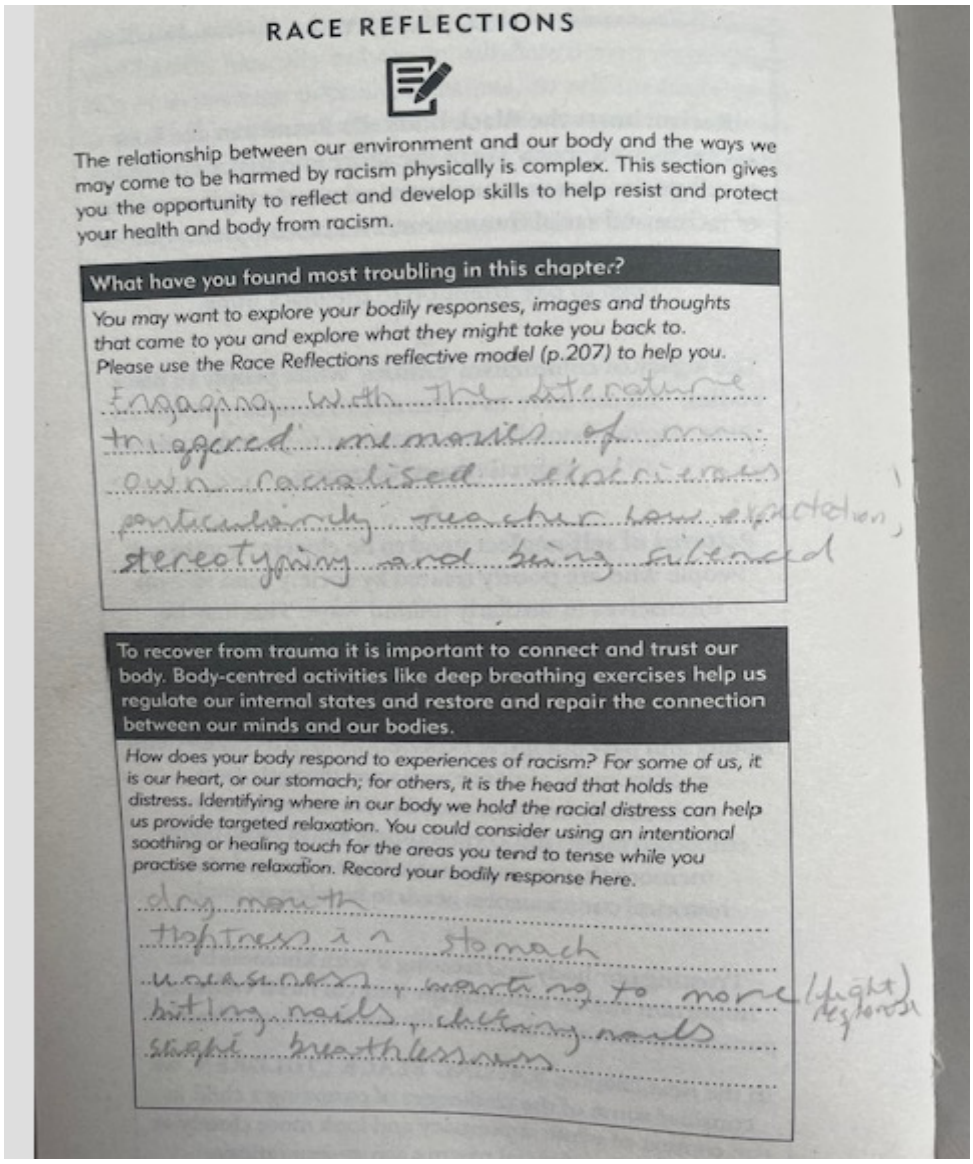
PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOLS

RACE REFLECTIONS REFLECTIVE MODEL

Reflectivity may be taken as the process of learning from our experience to grow, develop and gain new insights into ourselves, others and the world. Several reflective practice models exist. Few if any pay attention to embodied data, yet, as we engage in reflection it is important to remember the body, given the potentially triggering impact of race-based material. Race Reflections' reflective model supports a holistic engagement with knowledge and data.

We ask that each time you are exposed to new information, particularly information that challenges your worldview, you pause to engage in the reflective cycle below. This will help you process information more deeply and engage with your body, cognitively as well as emotionally.

15.2 Race reflections



RACE REFLECTIONS

The relationship between our environment and our body and the ways we may come to be harmed by racism physically is complex. This section gives you the opportunity to reflect and develop skills to help resist and protect your health and body from racism.

What have you found most troubling in this chapter?

You may want to explore your bodily responses, images and thoughts that came to you and explore what they might take you back to. Please use the Race Reflections reflective model (p.207) to help you.

Engaging with the literature triggered memories of many own racialised experiences particularly weather how expectation, stereotyping and being silenced

To recover from trauma it is important to connect and trust our body. Body-centred activities like deep breathing exercises help us regulate our internal states and restore and repair the connection between our minds and our bodies.

How does your body respond to experiences of racism? For some of us, it is our heart, or our stomach; for others, it is the head that holds the distress. Identifying where in our body we hold the racial distress can help us provide targeted relaxation. You could consider using an intentional soothing or healing touch for the areas you tend to tense while you practise some relaxation. Record your bodily response here.

dry mouth
tightness in stomach
wanting to move (fight) response
biting nails, clenching hands
short breathlessness

Appendix 16. Change of research tittle approval form

School of Psychology Ethics Committee

REQUEST FOR TITLE CHANGE TO AN ETHICS APPLICATION

For BSc, MSc/MA and taught Professional Doctorate students

Please complete this form if you are requesting approval for a proposed title change to an ethics application that has been approved by the School of Psychology

By applying for a change of title request, you confirm that in doing so, the process by which you have collected your data/conducted your research has not changed or deviated from your original ethics approval. If either of these have changed, then you are required to complete an 'Ethics Application Amendment Form'.

How to complete and submit the request	
1	Complete the request form electronically.
2	Type your name in the 'student's signature' section (page 2).
3	Using your UEL email address, email the completed request form along with associated documents to Dr Jérémy Lemoine (School Ethics Committee Member): j.lemoine@uel.ac.uk
4	Your request form will be returned to you via your UEL email address with the reviewer's decision box completed. Keep a copy of the approval to submit with your dissertation.

Required documents	
A copy of the approval of your initial ethics application.	**YES** ☒

Details	
Name of applicant:	**Grazielle Carvalho Gomes**
Programme of study:	**Professional Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology**
Title of research:	An exploration of high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education

Name of supervisor:	Mary Robinson

Proposed title change

Briefly outline the nature of your proposed title change in the boxes below

Old title:	An exploration of high achieving Black Caribbean young people's experiences of their secondary school education
New title:	An exploration of high achieving Black Caribbean young people's racialised experiences of their secondary school education
Rationale:	The above title amendment was recommended by the viva examiners to reflect that the research is about race.

Confirmation

Is your supervisor aware of your proposed change of title and in agreement with it?	**YES** ☒	**NO** ☐
Does your change of title impact the process of how you collected your data/conducted your research?	**YES** ☐	**NO** ☒

Student's signature

Student: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Grazielle Carvalho Gomes**
Date:	**31/07/2022**

Reviewer's decision

Title change approved:	**YES** ☒	**NO** ☐
Comments:	**The new title reflects better the research study and will not impact the process of how the data are collected or how the research is conducted.**	
Reviewer: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Dr Jérémy Lemoine**	
Date:	**01/08/2022**	