From Their Point of View: A collaborative approach to exploring the educational experiences of Black Caribbean boys in secondary school.

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"Woforo dua pa na yepia wo."

When you climb a good tree then we push you.

Akan Proverb

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List of Abbreviations	
Abbreviation	Full Term
BC	Black Caribbean
BESD	Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties
BPS	British Psychological Society
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease (identified in 2019)
CRT	Critical Race Theory
DFE	Department for Education
EP	Educational Psychologist
ESN	Educationally Subnormal Needs
HCPC	Health and Care Professions Council
LA	Local Authority
SEMH	Social and Emotional Mental Health
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
ToC	Theory of Capital
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist
UEL	University of East London

Abstract

Historically, Black Caribbean children have faced disadvantage in education. From the 1970s Black Caribbean pupils received fewer O levels than white pupils and were over-represented among those classed as educationally subnormal. In the last decade, a continued trend of Black Caribbean boys over-represented in permanent exclusions in comparison to their white counterparts. Research also shows that Black Caribbean boys are disproportionally identified with SEMH in secondary schools. This research aimed to provide Black Caribbean boys with a unique opportunity to share their lived experience of secondary school within the UK. A collaborative element was used. 4 Black Caribbean boys formed a focus group to construct the interview questions. The study adopted a qualitative design with semi-structured interviews. Four boys between 14 and 15 years of age were interviewed. The researcher adopted an interpretivist epistemological stance and used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to interpret the data.

Seven superordinate themes were identified across the participants: 'Positive influence of peers', 'The perceived negative perceptions of black people', 'Dealing with the perception of teachers', 'Effective support from teachers', 'The impact of school policy and initiatives' 'The influence of family' and 'The impact of teachers of the same ethnicity'. The researcher identified from the findings experiences which fostered the resilience of the participants. Collaborating with the students ensured that their voices are foregrounded in the research. Implications for Educational Psychologists and school professionals are suggested, along with suggestions for further research.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Overview of Chapter

This chapter introduces the rationale for this current research, providing the historical and national context for the experiences of Black Caribbean (BC) students within the UK. A theoretical framework is offered to support exploring the experiences of BC students. The researcher's position and motivations are detailed followed by a summary.

1.2 Historical Context of education for Black Caribbean pupils within the UK

It would be important to review the historical context of education for pupils of BC heritage given the topic of research. The relative under achievement and inequalities faced by BC pupils with the education system has been highlighted and researched over decades (Demie & McLean, 2017).

These inequalities were highlighted in Bernard Coard's book entitled 'How the West Indian Child Is Made Educationally Subnormal' (Coard, 1971). Coard argues that the underachievement of Black youth was socially constructed and politically conditioned. Whilst working in a youth club, Coard noticed that Caribbean children were constructed as subnormal through the misuse of culturally biased assessments and the misallocation of BC and other immigrant minorities to educationally subnormal schools (Wallace & Salisbury, 2021).

Following this the select committee in 1977 raised their concerns regarding the poor academic performance of pupils of BC heritage and requested an independent inquiry (Rampton, 1981). The government agreed to an inquiry on all the needs of children from all ethnic backgrounds but with particular focus given to BC pupils. The Rampton report (Rampton, 1981) highlighted the underachievement amongst BC pupils. The Department of Education and Science (DES) conducted a school leavers survey, which collected data on the education qualifications, age on leaving secondary school and first destination of

a 10% sample of all school leavers in a given academic year. For the 1978/79 survey, six Local Education Authorities (LEAs) with high concentrations of children from ethnic minority groups provided information from all state secondary schools within their areas agreed to. Information was obtained on 1,403 Asian, African or West Indian school leavers of whom 799 were West Indian (BC Heritage) (Rampton,1981). This approximately represents half of the school leavers of ethnic minorities in England. The survey recorded certificate of secondary education (CSE) and Ordinary level (O-levels) achievements in English and Maths. Only 9% of West Indians achieved higher grades (|A to C in O level or 1 in CSE) in English and 5% in Mathematics. The report concluded that West Indians as a group were failing in the education systems (Demie & Mclean, 2017). An attributing cause proposed was the 'unintentional racism of teachers' through their stereotyped view of West Indian children, which may have proved a self-fulfilling prophecy (Rampton, 1981).

The Swann Report, (Swann, 1985), was a government response to the concerns of the West Indian community in the late 1960s. This was recognised by the Select Committee on Race, Relations, and Immigration in 1977 who recommended a high level and independent inquiry be conducted to investigate the causes of underachievement of West Indian children (Swann,1985). The report shared the same view of underachievement seen in the Rampton report and proposed two causes for this being intelligence Quotient (IQ) and socio-economic factors in comparison to their white counterparts. When socio-economic status is considered the disparity between IQ scores of west Indian white British pupils were reduced. Swann (1985) does acknowledge that social and economic deprivation is experienced more intensely by west Indians due to the discrimination in employment and the housing market. Swann wants to shift the discourse around west Indian achievement to socio-economic status rather than IQ, which was debated by Coard (1971) as a culturally biased tool used to disadvantaged West Indian pupils. There was controversy around the use of IQ tests as they did not account for the cultural difference of west Indian children. Additionally, a leaked report titled 'Haringey Comprehensive Schools' which was known as the Doulton report (1969) suggested that where west Indian pupils form

the majority of a school population, the academic standards would drop (Haringey, 2021).

Similar to the Rapton report (1981), the Swann report (1985) suggested that teachers' attitudes towards and expectations of West Indian children were influenced by stereotypical and negative views which proved to be a self- fulfilling prophecy and could be seen as a form of unintentional racism.

The voice of West Indian parents in the Swann Report is reflected on also. Parents feared that West Indian children were wrongfully placed in Educational Subnormal Needs (ESN) schools as well as were concerned about the increasing number of West Indian children being suspended or excluded (Swann, 1985). A report from the ILEA in 1967 showed that 28% of the population of ESN schools were black pupils compared to 15% in mainstream schools (John-Baptiste, 2021). Having the label of Educationally subnormal was stigmatising and limited academic and employment opportunities to these people (Coard 1971, John-Baptiste,2021)

"Students from ESN schools wouldn't go on to college or university. If they were lucky, they'd become a labourer. The term was paralysing and killed any sense of self-confidence and ambition." Professor Gus John (John-Baptiste,2021).

It is important acknowledge that the history presented gives an understanding of the educational landscape the BC boys are placed in. Although the inequalities described were not particular to BC males, it is important to note the history detailed as they form a pervasive picture of the outcomes faced by BC boys in secondary school.

1.3 Educational outcomes experienced by Black Caribbean boys

There continues to be a long-standing experience of disproportionality in exclusions, attainment and identification of Special Educational Needs. and disadvantage for BC students (Strand and Lindorff, 2018;Demie, 2021; Demie & McLean, 2017). This relates both in how their needs are identified and how they are excluded from school which could contribute to diminishing opportunities for learning.

Strand and Lindorff (2018) conducted research looking at the ethnic disproportionality in the identification of Special Educational Needs (SEN). The research involved a comprehensive analysis of all pupils aged 5-16 to determine the current extent of ethnic disproportionality, and whether age, sex, and socio-economic factors, such as poverty and neighbourhood deprivation can account for ethnic over- and underrepresentation, looking at all types of SEN (Strand, 2018). BC and Mixed White and BC pupils were found to be over-represented in those identified with SEMH needs. The extent of this disproportionality is seen from 2005 to 2016 with prevalence rates moving from 1.9 % to 2.8% despite the change in terminology from BESD (Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties) to SEMH (Social, Emotional Mental Health). This could be due to the fact the description of the SEMH is said to be "challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour" (DFE, 2015) regardless of what the potential driver could be for these behaviours. When controlling for gender, most of the disproportion in the identification of SEMH with BC were seen with boys is secondary school.

It was explained that this could be because SEMH is more socially constructed, in the sense that they rely on pupils' behaviour/performance being interpreted in terms of expected patterns or norms. A frequently proposed explanation for the over-representation of Black pupils with SEMH is inappropriate interpretation of ethnic and cultural differences including teacher racism, low expectations and a failure of schools to provide quality instruction or effective classroom management. This resembles the reasoning given for underachievement of West Indian children in the Swann report (Swann, 1985). Despite the passing of

decades, potential teacher racism and pervasive negative stereotypes for this group appears to persist.

Demie (2019) presents the picture of the disproportionate exclusion of BC pupils when exploring the experience of BC pupils in school exclusion in England. Nationally in 2014-15, it was found that 0.08% of the pupils enrolled in a school were permanently excluded. 0.28% of BC pupils were permanently excluded indicating that they were more than three and a half times as likely to be permanently excluded as pupils overall. Considering the data by gender, BC boys were even more over-represented in the permanent exclusion statistics. The only ethnic group that had higher rates of permanent exclusion nationally were "Gypsy/Roma", a relatively small ethnic group. The over-representation of BC pupils in the exclusion statistics has been noted for many years (DFE, 2022). BC pupils were nearly four times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion than the school population as a whole and were twice as likely to receive a fixed period exclusion (Demie, 2021; Demie 2019). This has led to the formation of organisations such as No More Exclusions who seek to bring an end to the racial disparities in exclusion rates (No More Exclusions, 2022).

 Further to this, the Timpson Review (2019) encourages the collaboration between schools and local authorities to support children who are at risk of exclusion. In the technical note added to the review (Graham, 2019) it was shown that BC boys had 74% greater odds of permanent exclusion. Since EPs mainly work under the umbrella of the LA, EPs can work collaboratively to ensure that, in this case, BC boys are not disadvantaged. This would make research in this area important in support of this agenda.

Events took place in America surrounding the death of George Floyd at the hands of law enforcement. This sparked protests not only in the United States but also in locations around the world including the United Kingdom (Lee, 2020). This energised the Black Lives Movement (BLM) and raised the issues that racial inequalities still exist. The Black community in the UK felt the instances of police brutality witnessed in America were mirrored in the UK. For example, Mark

Duggan, who was suspected to be in possession of a gun in 2011 was shot and killed by the police (Scott,2020). In Scotland in 2015, Sheku Bayoh died after being restrained by police (Cowan, 2022).

Events around the BLM put a spotlight on the racial equalities that still persist across different sectors in the UK, including Education.

Non-Profit organisation such as 'No More Exclusions' showed solidarity with BLM and their efforts to reduce racial inequality in the number of permanent exclusions experienced (No More Exclusions, 2022). They aim to prevent and stall the historically disproportionate numbers of BCs and Mixed White BCs being excluded.

As has already been noted, between 2010 and 2021, the statistics concerning permanent exclusions across England in state funded secondary schools show that BC pupils have consistently been excluded at a higher rate than White British pupils. Only of Gypsy Roman or traveller heritage were excluded at a higher rate than BC pupils. In terms of gender, boys were disproportionately affected more than girls (DFE, 2022). This highlights the long-standing inequality faced by BC boys is and the pressing matter this should be for policy makers and educators.

In March 2021, the prime minister, Boris Johnson commissioned a report titled 'The report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' to investigate the racial and ethnic disparities in the UK (GOV,2021). The aim of the report was to clarify whether institutional racism was occurring at a systemic level the UK. As part of this report, the education system was discussed and attainment results in GCSEs were reviewed.

Looking at the average GCSE Attainment 8 score across England, shows how BC students have a lower attainment than their white counterparts. Attainment 8 scores measures the achievement of a pupil across 8 qualifications including mathematics (double weighted) and English (double weighted), 3 further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) measure and 3 further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects)

or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list (DFE, 2016) For BC (39.4) and Mixed White and BC (41.0) pupils was over 5 points lower than the average for White British pupils (46.2), or over half a grade lower in each of the 8 subjects included.

In the academic year of 2020 to 2021, Only 30.9 percent of BC Boys achieve grade 5 and above in English and Math, compared to 47.2% of White British Boys who achieve the same. (DFE, 2022).

The current evidence presented above provides the rationale for exploring the experiences of BC boys in secondary school. They have disproportionately been represented in the number of pupils identified with SEMH needs and who have been permanently excluded. It was felt to be important to explore whether statistics are reflected in the experiences of BC boys in secondary school and to consider what we can learn from their experiences to counteract the inequalities faced by this group.

1.4 The researcher's position

As the researcher, I would like to provide my rationale for choosing this topic to research. To understand this, I will share my experience of both my personal and professional experiences that have led to my interest to researching the experiences of BC boys in secondary school. For this section of the chapter, I will be writing in the first person.

I am a 32-year-old Black African male trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) with experience of teaching within the borough in which the research is taking place in. I taught in an inner London borough primary school with an ethnically diverse population. The two years I was a teacher, I encountered a lot of BC families. Prior to training as an EP, I was employed as an Assistant Psychologist in an inner London borough also with a high population of BC families.

As a student in an boys' secondary school, I became more aware that my BC peers appeared to me to have a difference experience and attitude to education. At

secondary school, a teacher created the "ACE" club (African Caribbean excellence). It was explained to us as being a forum to discuss and share our educational experiences to improve our academic attainment and aspiration. I observed that the BC boys within the group reported that there was an absence of encouragement for learning from family. In their homes it appeared that there was not an atmosphere that fostered a positive attitude to learning or see education as significant. They shared that they had the materials to learn but did not have adult support available. So, often when my BC peers were met with challenges with their learning, they described themselves as not being motivated. This made me inquisitive of whether this was the experience of more BC boys in the wider school community, which followed me into my career. Although this provided insight, it could also be a potential source of bias. It is an assumption from this group alone that the lack of educational influences exists among BC families. The group in secondary school was set up based on the premise that BC boys were underachieving, which reflects views of wider society. So, it is possible for my views of BC boys to have been influenced by this.

Working as a teacher, I became aware of which children would be reprimanded for their behaviour, sanctioned, or excluded. I perceived patterns with the pupils who received disciplinaries, but the disproportionality was not spoken of. Often, I would notice that it was BC boys who would often be seated outside the headteacher's office or sitting in their classrooms, missing their breaktimes. This led me to become curious about why BC boys appeared often to receive detentions and negative outcomes. I noticed the narratives held by some of my colleagues about BC boys which seem to further compound their experience. Comments like: "He's always going to be trouble, we had him here since year one," or " Oh no,another Jayden," were examples of the common discourse in the staff room. These comments signified to me that children were being stigmatised based on the prior experiences of adults with children of a similar name or presentation. The regularity in which this was experienced suggested to me how much this was considered the norm. Although their ethnicity was not explicitly referred to, it was difficult for these pupils to counteract this narrative, which led to a cycle of negative experience which limited their learning opportunities. This

raised my awareness of the discrimination for BC boys and my desire to research the experiences of this group.

It is possible for me to project my personal and professional experiences, given the frequency in which I experienced them to assume that this is shared with BC boys presently. I feel being a Black male will make me more relatable to the students. Despite the gender and racial similarities, I am mindful that the difference in ethnicity can impact lived experiences. Bracketing my thoughts prior to data collection would be helpful in reducing bias.

1.5 Rationale for current research

Given the national and local context and the researcher's position, the researcher is interested in exploring the secondary school experiences of BC boys. The researcher felt it would be necessary to gain an insight into how BC boys make sense of their experiences to inform the knowledge base available on this topic. The researcher felt that giving an opportunity for BC boys to share their views would be empowering and that it would be important have their voice central to any suggested change. It is hoped that this will increase the understanding of school staff and professionals to ensure that they will be able to offer effective support and promote anti-discriminatory practice. As a result, it is hoped that the current research would suggest ways in creating more positive outcomes for BC boys.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

To make sense of and explore the lived experiences of BC Boys in secondary school, the researcher drew on a range of relevant psychological theories. Here, the researcher will explain each of the chosen theories that help understand the lived experiences of BC Boys, namely, ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), the ToC, (Bourdieu, 1986) Critical Race theory (CRT) (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001), Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) and Anti-essentialism (Grillo, 1995).

1.6.1 Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory suggest that there are environments, referred to as systems, that directly or indirectly influence human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). He proposes that child development takes place within a complex network of environmental systems, which exist at different levels as seen in Figure 1.2.

The first and most proximal level are the microsystems. A microsystem can be a setting or people a person directly interacts with. For example, this could be a person's family, school, peers, or neighbourhood. Bronfenbrenner suggests that the interactions within this system can significantly shape a child's behaviour or sense of self (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). For example, being repeatedly sanctioned or excluded in school may cause a student to develop a negative sense of belonging at school.

The second level is the mesosystem, representing the interactions between the child's 'microsystems', including interactions with and between parents, siblings, peers and school staff. The mesosoystem is where the person's microsystems interrelate and influence each other. For example, the relationships and interactions between home and school systems.

Thirdly, the exosystem incorporates both formal and informal social structures. This includes microsystems in which a person is involved with but not directly embedded. The ecosystem trickles down to influence development through the other people involved in the individuals' lives. While these structures may not be close in proximity to the child, they may have an indirect influence on the child. For example, this could be the role extended family take in the absence of a parent. In addition, a change in occupation for a parent may change the living standard of the child.

The macrosystem is a set of overarching beliefs, values and norms as reflected in the cultural, religious, and socioeconomic organisation of society that may impact a child's development. The effects of the macrosystem can trickle down through the individuals involved with the child (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). This includes societal and cultural norms, customs, as well as ethnicity and socioeconomic status. It directly refers to the established trends in society and culture (Guy-Evans, 2020). For example, the portrayal of knife and gun crime in the media as being widespread among black people can inform the perception society has of black people. In schools, this can create an unconscious bias and influence staff's interactions with Black students.

The ecological systems theory *(Figure 1.2)* can help explain, for example, the influences the parent-teacher relationship can have on a child's attitudes to school. In addition, how family experiences can shape a child's perception of their environment. Taking a wider look at the interactions between the macro and exosystem it is possible look at the role of mass media in the portrayal of Black people and how that can shape attitudes in society thus either to perpetuate negative stereotypes or provide positive images of BCs. This theory provides a useful framework to understand the environments known as 'systems' in which the children reside and how they impact the lived experiences of BC boys in secondary school.

Figure 1.1 *The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner,1977)*

Chronosystem
Environmental changes that occur over the life course

Macrosystem
Attitudes and ideologies of the culture

Exosystem
Extended family and neighbours

Mesosystem

Microsystem

Parents' economic situation

School board

Family

School

Health services

CHILD

Peers

Mass media

Religious organization

Neighbourhood playground

Government agencies

Daycare facility

Social services and health care

1.6.2 The Theory of Captial (ToC)

The Theory of Capital (ToC) was produced by Bourdieu (1986). This suggests that 'Capital' serves as an element in which we can explore and evaluate the processes of embodiment (how capital can present itself in visible form), acquiring and accumulating knowledge (gaining facts, skills or information relating to a type of capital) as well as reproduction (the process in which capital is gained, given or shared with others) by people within a specific society. Capital can be defined as 'accumulated labour' in which a person can establish or grow their position within a particular society. Depending on the social context, capital can exist in three forms: social, economic, and cultural.

Economic capital can be described as the individual assets an individual possesses. This can either be converted into money or considered 'institutionalised' for example, ownership of property, financial wealth. Cultural capital is the form of capital which is seen as interchangeable with economic capital. Cultural capital can exist in three different forms: the embodied, the institutionalised and the objectified cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The embodied state relates to the cultural preferences and behaviours of a society or context. For example, a person's accent or skills they possess. Another form is the institutionalised state of cultural capital which refers to a person's credentials, qualifications or authority. Lastly, the objectified state of cultural capital relates to the material possessions of a person and their cultural significance to that society or social context. For example, having designer clothes may be valued by pupils and gives a student a certain social status (wealthy, cool, interesting etc.) amongst their peers.

The third form of capital is social capital; Bourdieu's idea of social capital is about 'who you know', the network of relationships a person has and their significance to that social context or society. This network can consist of relationships that are created and established or those that are inherited (family). The importance of social capital is that being associated with a certain individual or group can be used to boost one's position in a social setting or society. In relation to the current research, the experiences of BC boys in secondary school can be characterised by the accumulation of capital. For example, cultural capital when shared between students or between student and teachers can create a collective identity which fosters strong relationships, building an atmosphere of belonging. This might be a significant component to the experience BC boys have at secondary school. In addition, the transmission of cultural capital from parents to children can determine or contributed to a child's success within a social context. For example, families with more capital in its embodied and institutionalised state would have more educational success (Paschos, 2019).

Also pertinent to this theory is the two concepts of 'habitus' and 'field'. Habitus refers to the physical embodiment of a person's capital. For example, the habits, skills and dispositions we may have due to lived experiences. A person's habitus is revealed when placed in a certain social context, also known as a 'field. Fields are the various social and institutional arenas in which a person expresses and reproduce their dispositions, and where each field has unique forms of capital and rules (Gaventa 2003). A person's experience of power is different depending on the field they are in, so context and environment are key influences on habitus. For example, a BC boy may feel more comfortable in an environment with peers of the same ethnicity. A BC boy may be more responsive to teachers with shared cultural capital (e.g ethnicity, race or language).

1.6.3 Critical Race Theory

Critical Race theory (CRT) originated from the mid 1970s in the United States of America. Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman and Richard Delgado were considered the figureheads of this movement to combat the subtle forms of racism that were being experienced (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001). CRT emerged to highlight and challenge the legal process in the courts of America. To demonstrate how they were impacted by personal and political biases of judges. CRT was aimed to address to the issues faced by minorities in the American Judicial system, particularly black people. The aim of CRT was to understand the traditional legal discourse and present criticisms of these (Brown and Jackson, 2013). Traditional legal thinking in America around racism and racial subordination according to CRT is deemed to represent ideas of the white majority and not sufficient to address the inequalities experienced by black people.

A significant tenet of CRT is Interest convergence. Bell (1980) described this as where the white majority will only support issues of racial justice where there is mutual benefit or a convergence of interest, which advances the cause of the white majority. Strongly linked to this was the idea of Racism realism, which suggests racism is inherent and ordinary in society in general. The majority culture (typically white people) promote the ideas of colour blindness and

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meritocracy in order to allow whites to feel consciously irresponsible for the hardships faced by minorities, particularly black people and to maintain power and strongholds within society (Hartlep,2009). Colour blindness refers to the idea of not to see or acknowledge racial differences (Frankenberg, 1993). This allows racism to maintain its influence in society. Second, meritocracy allows the empowered—the status quo—to feel positive and pure When relinquishing portions of their power to no detriment and they receive merit for it (Hartlep, 2009).

CRT proposes that race and races are products of social thought and relations, and it suggests that these are inventions of society, not objective, nor do they correspond completely to any biological or genetic reality. They can be social constructions that are manipulated, changed or retired when convenient. (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001).

Integral to CRT is the use of storytelling and counter-narratives to detail the inherency of racism in society and the racial subordination experiences in the lives of minorities (Brown and Jackson, 2013). Cheryl Harris' (1993) article on 'Whiteness as Property' is a key example of this. It details the story of her grandmother in the 1930's was able to get a job in a store which catered to upper middle-class whites due to her complexion being near white. This illustrated how being white gave access to resources which could give a person greater security in life. CRT believes that social reality is constructed when individual stories like Cheryl's is formulated and exchanged (Ladson Billings and Tate, 1995)

CRT focusses on the outcomes of discrimination rather than the intentions behind the actions of the perpetrators of discrimination (Freeman 1978). For example, the disproportionality of BC boys being permanently excluded from Secondary schools leading to reduce chances of obtaining GCSEs. According to CRT, changes to this would look like excluded BC boys having another opportunity to re-join secondary schools, sit exams or attain other qualifications that will not limit future opportunities.

Anti-essentialism is the idea that different groups (e.g. different ethnicities) may experience similar inequalities, oppression or disadvantage, these groups may have different needs and values that may need to be accounted for differently (Delgado and Stefancic, 2012; Grillo, 1995). The anti-essentialist viewpoint suggests to mitigate any inequality, specific consideration of the needs and values of a group to be analysed as opposed to looking at oppressed groups together (essentialised view). For example, despite the similar socio-economic disadvantage Black African pupils achieve better in school than BC pupils (Strand and Lindorff, 2018). A finding like this would suggest the educational experiences are different for BC pupils and would need to be examined specifically in order to understand the contributing factors.

Included in CRT is the idea of the unique voice of colour. This idea presumes that those of minority ethnic groups are most competent to speak about race. (Delgado and Stefancic, 2012). This is a sentiment echoed in the following quote:

"…we contend that the voice of people of colour is required for a complete analysis of the education system."
(Ladson Billings and Tate, 1995, p. 58)

CRT can be used as an analytical tool to assess racial discrimination and inequalities in schools (Brown and Jackson, 2013). For example, reviewing the ethnic disproportionality in the identification of SEMH needs among BC boys in secondary school. CRT could be used to assess policy and procedures in identifying SEMH needs.

Considering this research, CRT can be used to challenge, for example, quantitative data (e.g., historically disproportionate rates of permanent exclusion for BC boys) to reveal the normalcy of potential racism that could exist in schools today.

1.6.4 Intersectionality

Crenshaw (1989) states that intersectionality is a framework which can be used to understand how the social and political identities of a person come together to form to cause discrimination and give privilege. Intersectionality is a helpful tool that can be used to highlight features of advantage and disadvantage (Runyan, 2018; Crenshaw, 1989). These identities of a person can intersect and overlap to give empowerment or cause oppression. These identities could be gender, sex, race, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, weight, physical appearance, weight and height (Tucker, 2012). For example, BC boys are more likely to be identified as have SEMH needs in comparison to White British boys due to inappropriate interpretation of ethnic and cultural differences made by teachers (Strand and Lindorff, 2018).

1.7 Aims of current research

In this current research, the researcher aimed to explore the experiences of BC boys in secondary schools within the UK. The aim of this study was to:

- Explore the experiences of Black Caribbean boys in secondary school.
- Understand how Black Caribbean boys make sense of their experiences
- Identify what can be learnt from the secondary school experiences of the Black Caribbean Boys.
- Elicit the experiences that promote positive outcomes for Black Caribbean boys.

To achieve those aims, the researcher deemed it appropriate to conduct the research in collaboration with the BC boys. The researcher would like the insight gained by this research to be directed by their expert knowledge gained through their lived experience.

1.8 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the historical and national context of Education for BC children. It highlights the longstanding inequalities in attainment, exclusion and the identification of SEN. Despite being a topic known to educators, legislators, the evidence presented suggests that disadvantages appear to have been pervasive for decades. This chapters gives a theoretical framework that may help make sense of the secondary school experiences of BC boys. Chapter two will cover the systematic and critical review of the current literature on this topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Chapter Two

The purpose of this chapter is to detail the exploration and examination of previous literature regarding the secondary school experiences of BC boys within the United Kingdom. In addition, the chapter will also cover the literature review question. It will cover the steps taken to complete a comprehensive search of the literature. The process is explained step by step with the conditions used to produce the literature results as well as the inclusion and exclusion criteria used to sift through the literature. A critical overview of the findings and the theoretical framework for this research will be explained. Lastly, this chapter will address the gaps in literature regarding this topic and how this will inform the purpose and structure of the current study. This section will detail the literature search completed to answer the following question:

"What can we learn about the educational experiences of Black Caribbean boys in secondary schools within the United Kingdom?"

2.2 Systematic Literature Search Process

A comprehensive literature search was conducted in September 2021 (and repeated in October 2021) to identify studies relating to the educational experiences of BC boys in secondary schools within the UK. To cover a large selection of publications and indexes in psychological and educational research, the EBSCO search engine was used to search the following databases: Academic Search Complete, British Education Index, Child Development & Adolescent Studies, Education Abstracts, Education Research Complete, Educational Administration Abstracts, Education Recourses Information Centre (ERIC) PsycArticles, PsycINFO, Teacher Reference Centre and eBook Collection (EBSCOhost). Additionally, SCOPUS was used as it was felt the disciplines presented in this database may provide relevant literature to this review topic.

2.2.1 Search terms and limiters

A preliminary search of these databases was done using the following search terms: ("educational experiences" or "academic experience" or "school experiences") and ("secondary school" or "high school") and ("BC" or "black students") and ("United Kingdom" or "UK" or "England" or "London"). A limiter was placed on the year of publication to only include literature between the years of 2011 to 2021 to find literature that would reflect the current context.

During database searches for articles, 'limiters' were used to support the screening process according to the pre-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria developed by the author (Table 2.1).

Parameter	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Type	Articles published in peer reviewed journals. Unpublished Theses from universities. Full text available (whether access requires permission)	Articles where the full text is not available. Article or research from unverifiable sources (social media/Wikipedia etc).
Language	Literature must be written in English	Literature that is not written in English
Date of Publication	Articles/Theses that have been produced or published within 10 years.	Articles/Theses that have been produced or published over 10 years ago.
Participants	BC Male students aged 13 to 18 who have experience of the school systems within the UK.	Male/Female or Transgender students from other ethnic groups. BC male students who are not aged 13 to 18 and have no experience of the UK school system.
Research Design	Qualitative analysis of the views and perspectives of the educational experiences of BC Boys in secondary schools within the UK. Include research studies that have a mixed methods design (quantitative and qualitative)	Quantitative analysis of the views and perspectives of the educational experiences of BC Boys in secondary schools within the UK. Use of quantitative measures alone.

In addition, research
that has a collaborative
element.

Table 2.1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

2.2.2 Initial search results

This search completed with EBSCO yielded a result of 53 studies. Based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, there was only one relevant piece of literature. To identify additional articles, the researcher added the terms "student views" or "student perspectives". This was to ensure that a variety of terms were used to capture all relevant articles. The search managed to identify 55 articles. Duplicate articles were automatically removed, and the search results were further reduced to 21 articles. Applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, however, there remained one article that met the inclusion criteria. This article was also identified in the previous search that yielded 53 articles.

An additional search on SCOPUS was conducted to identify possible articles that were not found using EBSCO. The same search terms with the addition of "student views" or "student perspectives" were used including the same limiter on the year of publication. This search found 13 articles. Using the inclusion and exclusion criteria, ten articles were sifted by their title, whilst one article was sifted after reading the abstract. This left two relevant articles, one that was previously identified in the initial EBSCO search.

2.2.3 Snowballing

Reviewing the references from both articles, another article was identified through snowballing. One of these articles were considered relevant since the research methodology used was primarily qualitative but discussed practices that promoted the achievement of BC pupils. The year of publication of this article was 2005. Due to this, the researcher wanted to find out whether there would be any older pieces of literature that fitted the inclusion criteria. Given this, the researcher decided to expand the limiter used on the year of publication in the

initial searches done on EBSCO and SCOPUS. The limiter was expanded from 2000 to 2021.

The SCOPUS search produced the same results as the initial search done on SCOPUS, so no further sifting was required. However, the EBSCO search resulted in 76 articles. When reviewing the articles, the results were reduced from 76 to 37. 36 articles were sifted by their title, leaving the same article by Lewis (2016) identified in the initial EBSCO search completed.

A PRISMA flow chart summarises the literature search process (Figure 2.2). *The number represented includes the second search on EBSCO (with expanded limiter on the year of publication) and article identified through snowballing.*

```
┌───────────────┐   ┌───────────────────┐   ┌───────────────────┐
│               │   │ Articles          │   │ Articles          │
│ Identification│   │ identified from   │   │ identified via    │
│               │   │ database search   │───│ hand searching,   │
│               │   │ (SCOPUS and       │   │ UEL repository,   │
│               │   │ EBSCO) n=145*     │   │ relevant journals │
│               │   │                   │   │ and EthOS n=245   │
└───────────────┘   └───────────────────┘   └───────────────────┘
```

Identification | Articles identified from database search (SCOPUS and EBSCO) n=145* | Articles identified via hand searching, UEL repository, relevant journals and EthOS n=245

Screening | Articles screened by title and abstract n=306 | Articles excluded (e.g. duplicate records, off-topic) n=77

Eligibility | Full text articles screened for eligibility n=7 | Full text articles screened and removed n=3

Included | Articles included in review n=4

2.2.4 Literature search of relevant journals and other sources

For the search to be comprehensive, a search was also conducted on the UEL repository, Ethos and within relevant journals. The findings from theses searches are summarised below.

UEL Repository

On the UEL repository site, the following terms were used in the search engine. ("educational experiences" or "academic experience" or "school experiences") and ("secondary school" or "high school") and ("BC" or "black students"). This produced 44 results. From conducting a title sift, only one relevant piece of literature (Robinson, 2020) was found.

Ethos

Ethos is a nationwide database, which holds over 500,000 theses. To ensure, that the literature comprehensively reviewed theses, this site was chosen to conduct a search. Firstly, the following terms were used to search "educational experiences of BC boys in secondary school within the UK". These terms produced one record in the search results. The results from the search were small and the researcher decided that a broader search may yield more findings. The terms "within the UK" were removed to achieve a broader search. Seven records were found from this search. This was reduced further to two (Gosai,2009; Upton, 2012) once a title sift was done.

Relevant Journals

Two journals were chosen due to their relevance to the research project. The searches were conducted online on Taylor and Francis using these terms: The Experience of BC pupils in secondary school. The term "pupils" was chosen to yield larger results. Thirty-three records were found searching the Ethnic and Racial studies journal. Thirty-one articles were sifted from their title, whilst one article was sifted following a review of their abstract. Only one article matched the criteria.

The exact terms were used to search the Education Review, which gave 29 article results. The term 'pupils' was substituted for "students" to explore whether this would produce more results. From the change in terms, 30 articles were found and sifted to leave one article (school exclusion BC pupils).

Due to the increase in article results, the search within the Ethnic and Racial studies was repeated using the term 'students' instead of 'pupil' or 'boys', which found 130 articles.

2.3 Sifting Process

During the sifting process, 306 articles were removed based on a review of their title and abstract.

This supported the narrowing of the results produced and promoted the relevancy of the research. The limiters set were: peer-reviewed, English language and post-2011 (changed to 2000 upon finding relevant literature from 2005, but nothing additional was found). The researcher also conducted manual searches of reference lists to identify additional relevant literature.

In summary, the search generated 389 studies for further screening. After duplicates had been removed (77), titles and abstracts were screened according to further inclusion and exclusion criteria not already screened as part of the 'limiters' to initial searches (Table 2.2). Two hundred ninety-eight records were screened by title, whilst eight were screened by their abstract. Following this screening phase, six articles were screened for eligibility to be included in the review. Three articles were removed following the analysis of the full text. An additional article was found through hand searching on Google. With the remaining studies, four articles were included in the review. (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Studies included in this review

Gosai, N	2009	*Perspectives on the educational experiences of African/Caribbean boys.*
Robinson, T.	2020	*'Narratives of High-Attaining African Caribbean Boys: Perceptions of Peer and Family Influences in Education'*
***Simon, S. L.	2019	*A voice for the unheard achievers: An exploration of the educational narratives of achieving BC adolescent males in secondary mainstream education.*
**Upton, J.	2012	*Hope and the city: a case study of the resiliency adaptations of British boys of African or Caribbean cultural heritage attending Year 7 at an urban secondary school.*

***This article was found through hand searching on google.

**Due to the lack of qualitative research exploring the secondary school experiences of BC boys within the UK these studies were included in the literature review. They have participants of both African and Caribbean descent so findings will not entirely reflect the experience of BC boys.

It has been suggested by Thomas and Harden (2008) that the principal aim of qualitative reviews is to reach 'conceptual saturation', arguing that 'it may not be necessary to locate every available study because, for example, the results of a conceptual synthesis will not change if ten rather than five studies contain the same concept, but will depend on the range of concepts found in the studies, their context, and whether they agree or not' (p. 3). It is not anticipated that this search has missed any relevant research. However, four studies are considered to provide a strong basis for establishing conceptual saturation.

2.3.1 Full-Text review

As shown in Figure 2.2, 7 articles were considered eligible for full-text review. At this stage, three articles were removed. One of the articles focussed on the views of the staff regarding effective ways to promote the achievement of BC boys rather than their lived experiences. At the same time, another article from the review was excluded at this stage due to the research exploring the secondary school experiences of BC boys through the views of SENCOs, Headteachers, Parents, School staff and Educational Psychologists. One article was removed due to the research not exploring or investigating the direct views of BC boys in Secondary Schools. This process led to the four remaining articles for critical review, shown in Table 2.2. To assess the quality of the research in each article, the researcher used the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) (CASP, 2018). This enabled the researcher to consider several factors for each paper, including the validity of the results, the appropriateness of data collection methods, the aims and purposes of the research, ethical considerations, and the utility of the research (please refer to Appendix 2.1 for an assessment of each full-text article read).

2.4 Key Themes from the Literature Review

Following a critical appraisal of the four articles that were considered most relevant to the research, key themes were gathered and synthesised. These themes were established to answer the literature review question, which is:

" What can we learn about the educational experiences of Black Caribbean boys in secondary schools within the United Kingdom ?"

The researcher examined each of the articles identified and plotted the themes in a list along with evidence from each article to support the theme (please see Appendix 2.2). The themes were then cross-examined and grouped to produce superordinate themes that the researcher identified from the literature review.

As a result, the researcher produced a list of themes, which are as follows: negative stereotypes and perceptions of black people, the influence of peer experiences, making sense of teacher actions and relationships, and influences of family. The researcher will now explain how each theme is discussed in the four articles.

2.4.1 Negative stereotypes and perceptions of black people.

In Upton, 2012, participants felt that the portrayal of black people as victims or involved in gang crime engendered a feeling of discrimination. In regard to their academic aspirations, the experience of discrimination appeared to affect the extent to which they could be self-determining as they anticipated stereotyped reactions from others.
Respondents in Gosai, 2009 felt that there was a stereotyping of black people that pervaded society. The high-achieving BC boys in Robinson's study (2020) identified that some teachers stereotype and discriminate against BC students in general, which in turn affects their self-esteem and academic performance.

2.4.1.2 The influence of peer experiences.

Three participants in Simon (2019) shared how negative peer interactions impacted their secondary school experience. Boris, a participant in the study, ignored others who were 'not worth his time'. Rio described the start of his secondary education as 'reckless' as his behaviour was negatively influenced by his peers. In addition, Johnathan's experience of bullying saw him assume a protective or advocatory role of those he viewed as being bullied.

BC boys appeared to prioritise friendships that increased their social status, which may have impacted their academic work (Upton, 2012). Upton (2012) found that participants' responses revealed that BC boys face coping dilemmas at secondary school where they either conform to the expectation of peers or remain independent and do not seek to appeal to others.

In the Gosai (2009) study, a shared culture amongst BC peers was seen as a resource. The BC boys identified peers with shared ethnicity as having a positive impact on their education. Speaking Creole (cultural language) helped peers understand lesson content more clearly.

Further to this, the BC boys selected friends based on academic ability and potential, common views and interests (Robinson, 2020). Peers were seen as a source of support when dealing with the demands of school. For example, practical help with revision and homework. The participants mentioned a competitive dynamic between peers, being encouraged and inspired to attain higher aspirations. Observing the negative choices of peers in secondary school and observing the consequences informed their own behaviour choices. Participants also explained how they dealt with peer perceptions. One boy altered his self-presentation to keep the persona of being relatable. Another boy masked his feelings of stress and anger to maintain his popular reputation.

2.4.1.3 Making sense of teachers' actions

This theme covers how the BC boys across the studies make sense of a teacher's actions and how this informs their relationships with staff in school.

Two studies identified how teachers with shared ethnicity or culture appeared to have an influence and capability of encouraging positive outcomes. Johnathan from (Simon, 2019) attributed his success in English to the great relationship he had with his teacher, who was from BC origin. In Gosai's (2019) study, mutual respect was found between Black professionals and students. This set an atmosphere for these Black teachers to challenge and counteract stereotypes through emotional and educational support.

The students identified a hierarchy with teacher staff being afforded coercive power through the school reward/sanction system (Upton, 2012). Participants from two studies experienced teachers showing concern for their academic attainment. Rio shared that teachers were concerned when his current attainment did not meet his predicted grades. Upton (2012) identified in his study that the BC boys felt teachers were more trustworthy if they acted in their best interest.

Gosai (2009) found that all respondents felt teacher negativity had a negative influence on their performance at school. They would respond to this negativity by behaving in ways that would adversely affect their educational outcomes. Students presented with 'challenge' or 'protest' behaviour in response to what they perceived as unfair treatment.

Two boys from Robinson's (2020) study mentioned that teachers discriminated against African Caribbean pupils. Nigel and Shaun found teachers would attribute negative stereotypes along with other black boys or be seen as anomalous from them (Robinson, 2020). This led these students to distance their Black peers that are low achieving. Further to this, participants in this same study used self-presentation strategies (masking stress and anger) to manage teachers' perceptions, presenting them as academically achieving.

2.4.1.4 The influence of family.

Across these studies, participants noted the influence of family on their secondary school experience.

Upton (2012) found that parents impacted the aspirations of BC boys through the behaviours they encouraged or through the examples they set. Similarly, the BC boys in the Robinson (2020) study felt their goals and mindset toward their secondary education were influenced by their family. In addition, siblings acted as a buffer against negative influences and helped with managing friendships. All the boys in this study detailed how their family experiences of life and education influenced their view on obtaining a good education. Luke, from this study, wanted to emulate his family's successes. In contrast, Junior witnessed the hardship experienced by his parents, working long hours and sees a good education as a way of avoiding this outcome. All boys detailed their family experiences of hard work and overcoming instances of racism and discrimination as strong motivators for academic success.

In Simon (2019), two participants described how their families helped them seize their educational opportunities at secondary school. Rio spoke of his father intervening to prevent his behaviour from negatively impacting his grades. This helped him to be 'back on track'. Boris recognised how significant his mother's support was when he did not receive support from his English teacher. He also spoke of the availability of his parents when he required them.

Gosai (2009) found that teachers perceived black parents as an obstacle to their boys' education. They felt parents did not engage with schoolwork alongside their boys and attended parents' evenings. Non-Black teachers believed that Black parents could not adequately contribute to the success of the Black boys due to the majority coming from working-class backgrounds.

2.4.2 Strengths and Limitations of studies.

As part of the review of literature, the researcher reviewed the strengths and limitations of each of the articles included in the final literature review, shown in Table 2.3. This was carried out using the CASP criteria

Table 2.3 Quality appraisal of articles using CASP criteria

	Article			
CASP criteria	Gosai, N. (2009). *Perspectives on the educational experiences of African/Caribbean boys.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. England: University of Birmingham.	Upton, J. (2012) *Hope and the city: a case study of the resiliency adaptations of British boys of African or Caribbean cultural heritage attending Year 7 at an urban secondary school.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Wales: University of Cardiff.	Robinson, T. (2020) *'Narratives of High-Attaining African Caribbean Boys: Perceptions of Peer and Family Influences in Education'.* Educational Psychology Research and Practice 6 (1), 1–11.	Simon, S. L. (2019). *A voice for the unheard achievers: An exploration of the educational narratives of achieving BC adolescent males in secondary mainstream education.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Birmingham.

Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?	Yes	Yes	Yes.	Yes
Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes,
Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?	Yes, although using a focus group of parents to develop questions for the interview may not be reflective of their experiences.	Yes	Yes, narrative methodology could offer insight into pupil's interpretation of peer and family experiences.	Yes, although multiple case study design leads to lack of control and the rigidity of the life story schedule may limit the narratives captured.
Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?	No, participants identified by the school and selected by staff. Views may not be representative.	Explanation for the selection of Year 7 students offered. However, the participants are still at	Inclusion criteria clearly explained but no detail on how participants were selected (voluntary or	Yes, it was appropriate.

		an early stage of their secondary education.	involuntary) which would raise question on how representative the sample is.	
Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?	Yes, semi structured interviews along with observations.	Yes, engaged in free talk with participants before initiating the interview.	Yes, two 1-hour long interviews conducted three months apart. Interviews allowed students to give a rich account.	Yes, semi-structured interviews were used.
Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?	Researcher presence in observation may influence students.	Yes, researcher used person centred approach to reduce power differential between participant and researcher.	No detailing of how the researcher's position can impact the research process.	Yes, the researcher acknowledges shared heritage and gender could impact findings.

Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?	Yes	Yes	Preserving the confidentiality of participants explained. No consideration for the impact of retelling adverse experiences.	Yes
Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?	Analysis process not clearly defined	Yes but did not give a clear idiographic account of the student's experiences	Yes. Analysis process explained thoroughly.	Thematic analysis was conducted with each data set. Completed inductively and deductively.
Is there a clear statement of findings?	Yes, similarities and differences between findings from different settings shared.	Yes, clear statement on how the Hope theory was generated.	Yes	Yes
How valuable is the research?	The research suggests challenging the dominant discourse around BC boys in order	Implications for the Educational Psychologist in considering	Highlights how EPs should be mindful of the complexity of factors that	Helps to understand the key events and influences on the

	to promote better outcomes. Inclusion of Black history and culture in the curriculum.	the resiliency factors when working with black students.	impact the education of BC boys. It shows the utility of the findings in informing pedagogy that positively influences their identities.	educational experiences of BC boys.

2.5 Rationale for Current research

As mentioned in Chapter One, considering the national statistics on exclusions and the over-identification of SEN, as well as the researcher's lived experiences, the researcher was interested in exploring the lived experiences of BC boys in a secondary school within the UK. The literature reviewed highlights areas in the researched topic that the researcher planned to explore in this current study. The systematic literature review showed that there is a lack of participatory research projects that explore the secondary school experiences of BC boys. This coincides with the design of the interviews, which were not directed by those who would have experience with the researched phenomenon. Researchers either chose to use a framework or a focus group of parents to shape the questions that were asked of the students in the interview to gain insight into their lived experiences in secondary school. The approach to data analysis in these studies did not allow for a thorough idiographic account of the students' experiences to be given and reduced the influence of the researcher's interpretation. In addition, the samples used in these studies were not self-selecting.

The systematic literature review revealed that BC boys feel the presence of negative stereotypes about Black people, which they perceive filters into their experience with teachers and school. Experiences with peers serve as guidance for their behaviour choices, observing the negative sequences experienced by peers and choosing actions that lead to favourable consequences. In addition, shared ethnicity amongst peers appeared to be a resource where BC boys could support each other in class in their dialect. In relation to teachers, students experienced discrimination and felt a sense of hierarchy which felt disarming of any self-advocacy. Positively, some BC boys felt that sharing ethnicity with teachers gave staff a level of influence and rapport with the students. Lastly, the aspirations of students were shaped by family and their experiences and contributed positively to their attitude towards education.

For the current study, the researcher felt it was important to foreground the voices of the participants in the research for it to be transformative and empowering in nature. It was thought that this would be useful as it allows the research to be guided by those with expert knowledge of the explored phenomenon. The researcher wanted the research to be conducted alongside the BC boys and allow their perspectives to inform the knowledge base on this topic. It was hoped that this would yield findings which could help to inform how BC boys in secondary school could be supported to achieve more positive outcomes and increase the awareness and understanding of school staff and professionals (including Educational Psychologists) about what contributes to their experience of secondary school.

2.6 Summary

This chapter has systematically and critically reviewed the previous research regarding BC boys in secondary school. The findings suggest that BC boys can face negative stereotypes and perceptions from other people. In addition, significant relationships with peers and teachers can be instrumental to their success. Family, too, can bear a strong influence on their self-perception and motivation in life and education.   The literature review revealed that research on this topic is extremely limited and mostly carried out outside of the UK, with 4 UK-based studies being found. The current research aimed to explore students' experiences adopting a collaborative approach. Chapter three will go on to explain the methodology used by the researcher for the current study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction to Chapter 3

This chapter will outline the methodology for the current research. It includes an overview of the aims and purpose of the study, the research question, and the researcher's ontological and epistemological positions. The chapter will then outline the research design, recruitment procedure, participant characteristics, data collection and analysis methods, and the rationale for selecting these methods. Ethical considerations, as well as the trustworthiness of the data, are explored. The researcher also discusses how their role and positionality may impact the findings.

3.2 Research Aims and Purpose

3.2.1 Aims

This research aimed to explore the secondary school experiences of BC Boys through qualitative research methods. It aimed to empower students to share their views about their experiences and have them at the centre of the research. In addition, the research aimed to take a collaborative approach in that some of the BC boys participating in this research formed a focus group to develop the questions for the data collection and refine the research question. In this way, the participants helped ensure that the research reflects those with a lived experience as a BC boy in secondary school in the UK. It is hoped that this will increase the understanding of the experiences of BC boys and highlight practices that can inform the work of educational professionals, including Educational Psychologists.

3.2.2 Purpose

This research aims to be exploratory, as little is known about the phenomenon (Smith, 2013). As highlighted previously in the literature review (see 2.2.1), there is a lack of research investigating the qualitative experiences of BC boys in secondary school, specifically in the United Kingdom.

The research also has an emancipatory purpose and includes a collaborative element. A group of the participants, who were BC boys, participated in developing the research question further and refining the questions the researcher asked in the interviews. It was hoped that this person-centred approach would help the participants feel empowered, valued, and heard. In addition, the research project aimed to give the participants a safe space to share and have their perspectives shape the investigation into their own experiences in secondary school.

3.3 Research Questions

At the initial stage of the research project, based on the aims and purposes of the research, the following research question was formulated:

1. What can we learn from the experiences of BC boys in secondary school in the United Kingdom?

As mentioned, the researcher adopted a collaborative approach. This approach involved participants of the study generating and devising the questions explored in the individual interviews with participants.

The research question was subsequently refined with the group of participants in the focus group. They created a list of six questions that could be used to explore the experiences of BC boys in secondary school. The questions are as follows:

1) How do you feel you are viewed by others in school?
2) To what extent do peers influence your school life?
3) How has home life and family impacted your life at school?
4) Can you tell me of an experience where you have been treated unfairly?
5) To what extent do you feel supported by teachers?
6) To what extent do you feel your culture is understood by teachers?

These questions formed part of the interview schedule (Appendix 3.1)

3.4 Ontological, Epistemological and Axiological Positions

Ontology is the study of being. It is considered the study of what exists and what is considered reality. Closely related is epistemology. Epistemology refers to "how a phenomenon can come to be known" (Giacomini, 2010). Moreover, axiology refers to the researcher's values and how these may affect the knowledge gained (Creswell, 2003). Therefore, researchers must be explicit about their ontological and epistemological positions, as well as their axiology, as these determine how data is collected and analysed (Willig, 2008; Crotty, 1998).

3.4.1 The researcher's Epistemological Ontological and Axiological Positions.

A constructivist ontological position was adopted for this research. The researcher believes that BC boys construct their understanding and knowledge through their experiences at secondary school and how they reflect on these (McLeod, 2019).

The researcher also acknowledges the phenomenological aspect of this research as being a BC Boy in Secondary School is a distinct phenomenon. The researcher wanted to understand the 'conscious experience' from the subjective or first-person point of view (Smith, 2013).

The epistemological stance of the researcher is interpretivism. The BC students in this research have their own subjective experiences of secondary schools. The researcher's role is to immerse themselves in their discourse and discover the

meaning and importance attributed to their experiences. The researcher engaged closely with the students' accounts through the analysis and interpretation stage to ensure that the views presented in the findings reflect the participants' perspectives. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was adopted in line with this position. The IPA method used to analyse and interpret the students' accounts is described later in this chapter (section *3.9.3.1)*

Regarding axiology, the researcher collaborates with the BC boys in the study to explore their experiences. It was essential to the researcher that the research was conducted in a culturally responsive way and worked to empower the participants to create change (Mertens, 2017). Therefore, the researcher worked in collaboration with the BC boys as they have expert knowledge of the researched phenomenon. It felt important to collaborate with the participants and foreground their voices in this research.

3.4.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism holds that humans construct knowledge by interpreting experiences they have in the world. From this position, it poses that knowledge is earthed in one's subjective experiences within the context in which we live our lives (Green, 2010). The researcher aimed to gain access to the developed meanings that the participants brought to their experiences and the broad cultural and experiential contexts in which the perspectives were formed (Hiller, 2016). However, it is important to note that the researcher was interpreting the participants' accounts and therefore brought their worldview, beliefs and experiences to the process (Greene, 2010; Hiller, 2016).

3.5 Research design

The researcher used a qualitative research design to keep with the constructivist and interpretivist positions. Qualitative research is an activity that 'located the observer in the world' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It is typically suited to a researcher who would like to explore people or things in their natural setting, addressing meanings individuals attribute to social or human situations/issues.

Given that the aims and purposes of this research are to explore the secondary school experiences of BC boys and the meaning they have given to these, this was felt to be an appropriate approach to research design.

3.6 Research Participants

3.6.1 Recruitment of participants

Given the choice of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as an approach to analysis, the researcher recruited a small number of participants (Smith et al., 2009). A total of 8 students were recruited through a purposive volunteer sampling method. Participants were selected because they could grant access to the phenomenon (secondary school student identifying as a BC boy). The researcher first shared information regarding the research with their contacts with schools within their placement Local Authority (LA) and in neighbouring LAs also. Once a school registered their interest, the researcher then requested their key contact within that school to share information and consent letters with the parents/carers of participants that appeared to fit the inclusion criteria.

3.6.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

For a person to be eligible to take part in this research, they had to fit the criteria detailed in Table 3.1.

It was necessary to focus on male students that identify as BC, given that they would be best placed to provide access to the phenomenon under study (Smith et al., 2009). The reason to specifically focus on males is that this research is concerned with eliciting their experiences due to the disproportionality in exclusion and the identification of Special Educational Needs, as noted in previous studies (Strand et al., 2019). In addition, the need for these students to have attended a secondary school within the United Kingdom was appropriate. The literature review highlights there is limited research exploring the subjective experiences of BC boys in secondary school within the United Kingdom.

Table 3.1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Participants

Criteria	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Stakeholder	Student who currently or previously attended Secondary School or Higher Education in the United Kingdom	Student who currently or previously attended Secondary or higher Education outside of the United Kingdom
Student's gender	Male student	Female/Transgender students
Student's age	Students aged 13 to 18 years of age.	Students aged below 13 or older than 18 years of age.
Student's ethnicity	Student that identifies as a BC.	Students that identify as another ethnicity other than BC.

3.6.3 Recruitment strategy

Stage One. The researcher created an invitation letter containing information on the research (Appendix 3.2) and a consent form (Appendix 3.3) and gained ethical approval from the University of East London (UEL). The researcher then shared the invitation and information letter with their contacts in schools within their placement LA and to schools in neighbouring boroughs.

Stage Two. Upon receiving initial interest from one school, the researcher then requested approval via email from the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to conduct the research in their setting.

Stage Three. Once approval from the SLT had been received, the researcher replied to the email, requesting a member of staff to liaise with. Information and consent forms were given to the school to share with parents or carers of students that fit the inclusion criteria. The researcher gave a two-week window for participants to return their consent forms.

Stage Four. Eight students returned the relevant consent forms at the end of the two-week window. Four participants were assigned by the researcher, at random, to the focus group, and four participants were selected, at random, to be interviewed. The researcher visited the school to arrange a time for the focus group and interviews.

3.6.4 Participant Characteristics

All the participants identified themselves as BC boys. Demographic information about each participant is detailed in Table 3.2. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the participants' anonymity.

Table 3.2

Participant information

Participant	Participant's Year Group *	Allocation to Focus Group/Interview
BC1	Year 10	Focus Group
BC2	Year 10	Focus Group
BC3	Year 11	Focus Group
BC4	Year 11	Focus Group
Vernon	Year 10	Interview
George	Year 10	Interview

Troy	Year 10	Interview
Winston	Year 10	Interview

There is homogeneity among the participants. Within the focus group, participants were BC males from Year 10 and 11. Those interviewed in this research are BC, male and in the same year group.

3.6.5 School Context

Participants were from a faith-based secondary school in South London. It caters to both male and female students aged 11 to 16. The school has a population of 900 pupils, with a high proportion of black and ethnic minority students.

3.7 Data Collection

Given the aims and purposes of the research exploring the secondary school experiences of BC males in the UK, the researcher decided that a focus group and interviews were the most appropriate methods of data collection, and further details on this decision are provided below.

The research procedure is summarised in Table 3.3

Table 3.3 Research Procedure

Phase	Method	Aim	Number of participants
1	Focus group	To devise interview questions	4
2	Individual semi-structured interviews	To explore participants' lived experience	4

3.7.1 Focus group

Focus groups allow multiple voices to be heard at one time (Smith, 2019). The researcher decided to have an advisory group for the students who have lived experience of the phenomenon to determine the type of questions that would be asked during the subsequent individual interviews with different participants. The researcher added this collaborative element to enable the discourse of the research to be shaped by the voices of those with direct experience of the phenomenon. The aim was to remove the adult-centred nature of the research as much as possible and shift towards a more person-centred approach to data collection. This approach prioritises the voice of the students, thus fulfilling the emancipatory purpose of the research (Aldridge, 2015, p. 31, as mentioned in section 3.2.2).

The researcher acted as a facilitator in the focus group. The research question was posed to the group, and the researcher asked the group what questions would need to be asked to get an answer to the question. The researcher provided support to ensure questions were phrased in an open rather than a closed way. The participants in the focus group were able to identify as a group and with the broader group of BC boys within the school. Before meeting as a group, the BC boys discussed the research with their parents and were prepared to talk about their experiences, thus building rapport and affinity.

Through the process of reflexivity, the researcher also noted their own lived experience (as a black male who has attended secondary school and worked as a teacher in the UK) and that this may resemble in some ways the participants' own experiences, so using the focus group aimed to address this potential bias from the researcher's assumptions, interest and experience being introduced into the data collection and analysis.

3.7.2 Individual interviews

As the researcher's purpose was to engage in a detailed exploration of the secondary school experiences of BC males in the UK, individual interviews appeared to be the best and most appropriate method:

"The qualitative research interview is further described as "attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experience, to uncover their lived world" (Cresswell & Poth,2018, p.3)

As the research is concerned with eliciting the individual experiences of the students and the meaning they give to these, it was felt that interviews would enable the researcher to explore these in-depth and would allow the researcher to adopt a curious position and delve deeply into the stories of the students to gain as much insight as possible.

Secondly, an individual interview gives students a safe space to explore their experiences and views. The researcher acknowledged that an in-person individual interview would allow the researcher and the student to build a rapport, creating a comfortable atmosphere to share what might be potentially sensitive and emotive to the student.

3.7.3 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are commonly used in research and are described as a method where a flexible interview schedule guides the conversation between the researcher and the participant. This typically consists of a list of topics, questions, and probes to support the participants' responses. The order of questions usually is at the researcher's discretion (Dejonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). The researcher has an interview schedule with broad topics or questions and a suggested order and wording for the questions but can modify the wording and order of the questions. The researcher can also ask unplanned and follow-up questions to gather further or clarify information. Given the freedom a researcher

has with this method, it may be hard to replicate the interview, thus reducing the confirmability of the findings.

Based upon the aims, exploratory purpose, and flexible design of this study, and how the researcher perceived themself to be a 'novice' in conducting research, semi-structured interviews were selected as the most appropriate data collection method.

3.7.4 Design of the Semi-Structured Interview schedule

Before the interviews took place, the researcher held a focus group. The researcher introduced the four BC boys in the focus group to the research question: 'What can we learn from the experiences of BC boys in secondary school in the United Kingdom?'

The focus group participants were asked to consider the questions that would elicit the student's secondary school experience. The students and the researcher considered the main areas and topics that comprise their experience in secondary school. At the end of the focus group, six questions were developed. These will be explained further in Section 3.8.1

3.8 Procedure

3.8.1 Advisory Group

As noted, the researcher initially held an advisory group with four students. The school had arranged a small room and a staff member from the school to sit in on the discussion for safeguarding reasons. The advisory group participants were introduced to the research topic and told the focus group's purpose. The intention of the focus group was for the participants to guide the researcher in the interview questions pertinent to gaining insight into the BC male experience in secondary school.

Here the researcher introduced the initial research question to the students 'What can we learn from the experiences of BC boys?' and asked the following questions: "What questions should I be asking?", "What do you feel has been significant during your secondary school experience?"

The researcher's aim here was to ask open-ended questions about certain points to elicit more description and meaning that the participants have attached to specific themes and topics.

To develop an interview schedule, the researcher gave an overview of the themes raised. The students devised open questions that the researcher could use to conduct the semi-structured interviews. The group created six questions, which can be seen in Appendix 3.1.

3.8.2 Interviews

Face-to-face interviews were held on the school premises. The researcher was provided with a small room for the interviews to take place. Considering the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face interviews were allowed to take place, provided that the school's risk assessment was followed (Appendix 3.4).

At the beginning of the interview, the researcher engaged in free talk with the student to create a calm atmosphere, build rapport and reduce any potential power dynamic between the researcher and interviewee.

Before the interview started, each participant was introduced to a visual (Figure 3.1) to support their responses in the interview. In addition, the participants were given time to familiarise themselves with the questions as an opportunity to clarify what any questions meant before starting the interview.
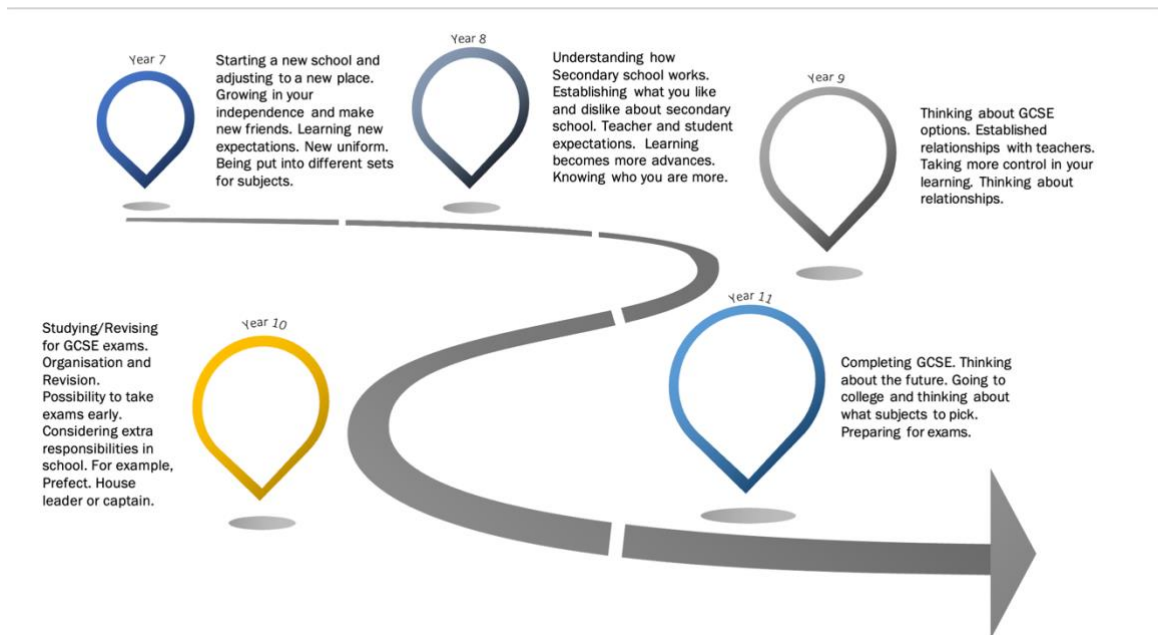
Figure 3.1 *Visual used to support the participants' responses.*

Adopting an IPA style approach to interview, the researcher used the interview schedule as a guide to questioning. Further prompts and probes were given to the students by the researcher to explore and get an in-depth insight into the experiences of the students and the meaning attached to them.

Each interview was audio recorded using a dictaphone. Upon completion of the interview, the audio file was saved on a secure drive and deleted from the dictaphone.

The interviews (which contained no personal or identifying information) were transcribed verbatim by a third party and verified by the researcher to ensure accurate transcription.

3.8.3 Timeline

Participants were recruited over eight months between September 2021 to March 2022, and interviews were conducted over one week. A timeline was created to monitor the research process.

3.9 Data analysis

Considering the research topic, the researcher reviewed various methods of qualitative data analysis and determined that Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was the most appropriate and discounted other approaches to analysis for the reasons discussed below:

3.9.1 Thematic analysis

This method of analysing qualitative data involves searching across different sets of data to identify patterns and repeated themes (Braun & Clarke 2006). It is known for describing data along with the interpretation of selecting codes and constructing themes. Since it is designed to search for common or shared meanings, it is less suited for examining unique meanings or experiences from a single person or data item (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Given the aims and purposes of the research, the researcher would like to use a form of analysis that would focus on the meaning and importance attributed to experiences by each individual.

3.9.2 Narrative Analysis

Narrative analysis can be described as a method of analysis to interpret the text of accounts in storied form. Narrative analysis is more concerned with how the story is told, the chronology of events and the language used to describe events within the story (Cresswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher acknowledges that there is utility in looking at how the students tell their stories and the language used. However, the researcher felt the current research is more concerned with the experiences shared and the meaning given to them. Using a Narrative analysis approach, it would possibly take away from this particular exploration.

3.9.3 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

IPA is an approach focused on examining how people make sense of significant life events and experiences. It is an approach underpinned by phenomenology, hermeneutics and ideography (Smith et al., 2009).

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach concerned with the study of human experience. It is particularly interested in what being human is like and the things that matter to us that constitute our lived worlds.

Hermeneutics is the theory of interpretation. This was generated originally as an attempt to provide sure foundations or interpretation of biblical texts. Now it has been developed and is concerned with methods and purposes of interpretation itself and the possibility of uncovering the intentions of the original meanings of the author. It is used to examine the relation between the context within which the text is produced, for example, its historical genesis in the past and its context and interpretation.

IPA has an idiographic focus. This means that there is a particular focus on an individual's experience rather than the claims made by a group of people who have experience of the same lived phenomenon. It is interested in offering a detailed, nuanced analysis of instances of lived experiences (Smith et al., 2009). For the researcher, IPA's idiographic approach highlights how one phenomenon (secondary school education) is experienced by a particular individual (a BC boy).

IPA is ideal for this research as it was deemed to be suitable for the aims and purposes of the study. The researcher wanted to explore the lived experience of BC boys and the meaning these individuals attached to their time in secondary school. In addition, given that there is a small sample for this research, this would mean that it would allow for deeper analysis.

3.9.3.1 IPA Procedure

The focus of IPA analysis is to turn the attention of the researcher towards the participant's sense-making of their experiences. Instead of having a fixed method, IPA is underpinned by a set of common processes which move from the individual case to the shared and from the descriptive to the interpretive (Smith et al., 2009). There are also underlying principles to the analysis. This involves the researcher having a commitment to understanding the participant's point of view and a particular focus on personal meaning-making in a particular context. The

common processes and principles together can be applied flexibly according to the analytical task given. The six IPA steps are summarised below, and an example of how the researcher applied the process is provided in Figure 3.2 and in Appendices 3.5 and 3.5.1.

IPA Step One: Reading and Re-reading the transcripts

The first stage of analysis is reading and re-reading the transcripts. It is advised that the researcher listens to the audio recording of the interview whilst reading the transcript first. It is suggested that having the voice of the participant in mind during subsequent readings of the transcripts would help for a more robust analysis. This is to ensure that the participant becomes the focus of the analysis, slowing down and consuming the information presented in the transcript.

Step Two: Initial noting

The researcher is required to read and examine each line of the transcript to produce a comprehensive commentary on each data set. This involves making three types of comments: descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments, as detailed in Table 3.4. The aim at this stage is for the researcher to comment on the participant's views. This includes why they may have a certain view and how it developed before progressing into the interpretation of the views. For this part of the analysis procedure, the researcher read through the transcripts, using individual colours to highlight the descriptive, linguistic and conceptual aspects of the transcript (descriptive in green, linguistic in yellow and conceptual in pink; Figure 3.2).

	Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. So yeah. Okay. That's interesting to hear. Tell me, in school, how do you feel you are viewed by others?	
	George: I think in a sympathetic way. Obviously, the teachers, they may have had a different experience, but they know that we have some similarities and some differences, so they can see our point of view where we're coming from and what's happening. But the students I think is the same thing as well, but they don't really look at as deep as the teachers might have, but I think I'm viewed in a normal way like every other person in the school.	Perceives that teachers may be aware of the individual differences between black people. Anticipates that teachers may be sympathetic towards him. Percieves maybe that there is something to feel sorry for.
Understanding of culture shaping the perception of students and their behaviour.	**Interviewer:** Okay. You mentioned something in particular about how you're viewed by teachers, can you tell me more about that?	
	George: I think like the teachers could see where you're coming from or what's really happening or the traditions that we might have grown up with as it might go with them as well, so then they can see why we do some things or act a certain way, why we act different and stuff like that.	Perceives some teachers may have an idea of their culture which shapes how they view the character, personality and behaviours of himself.
	Interviewer: And when you say traditions, what do you mean?	
Understanding the different aspects that shape out character.	**George:** Maybe doing our hairstyle in a different way to certain people or, I'm not really sure, but just doing certain things that are different to other people.	Elaborates on what he meant by 'traditions'
	Interviewer: Okay. You mentioned hairstyles, and what do you think is different about hairstyles? How do you think that that's important?	
	George: I think it's important, because as a student, our hairstyle embraces us and gives us a name and a feeling about us. We do what we want to do, so sometimes when we come in with a new hairstyle, we feel like a type of happy way to have that hairstyle that really for us, it embraces us.	For him it is important to know how a hairstyle can showcase the identity of the students.

Figure 3.2 *Example of colour coded transcript.*

Table 3.4 Details on the meaning of each commentary style.

Commentary Style	Purpose	Characteristics
Descriptive	Understanding the content of the interviews.	Key words, phrases and sentences. Including events and experiences described.
Linguistic	Exploring the language used and its meaning.	Noting any use of figurative language or language chosen for effect, repetition and laughter.
Conceptual	Interpretation of how the participant's experiences is understood.	Making inferences and hypotheses based on personal knowledge and psychological theory.

Step Three: Developing Emergent Themes

The comments made in step two are reviewed by the researcher. After reviewing the comments, the researcher considered the emerging themes from the comments made. These themes were developed from the data, commonality in the comments made and the researcher's interpretation. The researcher brings together the experiences mentioned by the participant with the researcher's understanding of their experiences. Emergent themes were then grouped together with accompanying quotes. All themes related to the research question and the theoretical framework of the research and those that did not were included in this stage.

Step Four: Connections between emergent themes

The researcher looked to establish links between the themes and grouped them into higher-level themes. At this stage, the researcher is pulling together the emerging themes and producing the structure that points out the most interesting and important parts of the participant's discourse. To assist with this stage, as

suggested by (Smith et al., 2009), the researcher created a document with the emerging themes and printed them out. The themes were then cut out and grouped together based on their similarities. Each group of emergent themes were given a label which became the superordinate theme. The emergent themes under the superordinate theme were regarded as subordinate themes (Appendix 3.4.1).

Step Five: Moving on to the next case

The researcher repeats the process with the next case, ensuring that each case is treated in its own right. The researcher can do this by bracketing their ideas from previous transcripts to keep the ideographic commitment of IPA (J. A. Smith et al., 2009). This continues for each subsequent case.

Step Six: Looking for patterns across cases

The researcher created a map of the superordinate and subordinate themes for each participant. Each map is aligned side by side, and the researcher begins to look at the commonalities amongst both superordinate and subordinate themes.

Findings at this stage can be found in section 4.3.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought ethical approval from UEL and received this approval in August 2021 (Appendix 3.5). Amendments were made in January 2022 to allow for the research to take place in person. This was approved in January 2022.

Using the ethical framework provided by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC,2018), the researcher was mindful of managing risk throughout the research process. Asking these students to share their secondary school experiences could cause emotional distress. Reasonable measures were put in place to mitigate this and promote beneficence (refer to section 3.10.5).

The researcher was aware of the need to respect confidentiality. Participants may choose to disclose matters that are personal or intimate. It is important to ensure that participants are aware that the researcher will act in their best interest and only disclose information if the participant or others are at risk of harm or breaking the law (HCPC, 2018).

In addition, the research was honest in regard to how the participants' information would be used throughout the research process. This involved ensuring that participants knew of their entitlement to withdraw from the research process or their data with clear parameters on how to do this.

This demonstrates how the researcher managed the ethical concerns with the use of the HCPC framework and BPS guidelines (BPS, 2021; Health and Care Professions Council, 2016) which were integral to promoting and protecting the interest of the participants.

3.10.1 Informed consent

Prior to the start of the research, the parents of the participants and the participants themselves (that fit the inclusion and exclusion criteria) were given information about the research detailing what their involvement would the form in which data collection would happen. The researcher wrote the information and consent forms using simple and concise language to ensure that the material was accessible. The consent form was handed out by the school along with the information letter. Once the consent forms were signed and returned, the researcher organised a schedule for the focus group and interviews to take place.

At the time the research was taking place, the researcher gave an opportunity for the participants to gain clarity on the purpose of the research and to ask questions they may have. Each participant was given a debrief form after the research, and the researcher explained their right to withdraw their data and also support services they could access if they had been adversely affected by their participation in the research.

3.10.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The participants were informed prior to the research taking place, in the information letters, that all identifying features in their data would be anonymised. For example, names of people, places and significant details were replaced with individual pseudonyms. Each participant was ascribed a pseudonym at the commencing of the research to ensure that the researcher could identify a participant's data should they desire to withdraw their data.

3.10.3 Right to withdraw

Each potential participant was notified of their right to withdraw from the research at any point in the information, consent and debrief letters. Every student that took part in the research was made aware of their right to withdraw without any disadvantage or prejudice. In addition to this, the researcher made participants aware of their right to withdraw their data up until the point of analysis.

3.10.4 Data protection

Prior to the commencing of the research, a data management plan was developed and followed through the course of the research process (please see Appendix 3.6). This was reviewed and approved in April 2021. In accordance with the data management plan, transcripts and recordings were stored on a password-protected hard drive before being moved to the secure UEL One drive. Recordings and Transcripts were stored in separate folders. Back-ups of the transcripts were kept on a password-protected cloud service provided by UEL (OneDrive for Business). The long-term preservation plan for the data is in line with the UEL research data management policy (maximum of five years).

3.10.5 Protection of the participants.

There was a potential for emotional distress in the disclosure of certain experiences the participants had in secondary school. The experiences of the participants may be sensitive and delicate. This could be heightened when talking to an unfamiliar adult. The researcher took a few measures to protect participants from potential harm.

At the start of the research, the researcher engaged in 'free talk' with the participants. This involved having conversations about unrelated topics to the research and the researcher sharing some aspects of their personal interest (likes, dislikes, experiences at work or studying). This was an attempt to create an atmosphere and rapport in which sensitive information could be shared. It was also necessary for the researcher to adopt more accessible language and as well as reminding participants of their right not to disclose any experiences they did not feel comfortable with. Having this approach can address any possible power imbalances that may be present between the researcher and the participant.

The researcher also engaged in 'active listening'. This is where the researcher listens to the participants and repeats a summary of key points the participants have shared. The research was done to validate the thoughts, feelings and experiences of the participants, ensuring they felt valued.

At the end of the research, each participant was provided with a debrief letter (see Appendix 3.7) which detailed a list of services which could be accessed should they feel adversely affected because of their participation in the research.

3.10.6 Protection of the researcher

Given the aims, purposes and motivation behind this research, the researcher was aware of the potential risk to themselves. There was potential for the discussion around secondary school experiences to elicit emotional experiences due to the researcher's own experiences.

To combat this, the researcher sought time in supervision to reflect on thoughts and feelings as they arose. In addition, the researcher also kept note of their feelings and thoughts throughout the research to bracket their experiences and separate them from those of the participants.

3.11 Validity and Trustworthiness

To establish trustworthiness, the researcher used the four criteria points created by Lincoln and Guba (1985). These criteria are known as credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. Throughout the research, the researcher employed strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of this research (see table).

Criteria	Purpose	Strategies applied
Credibility	Give confidence that the results are a true reflection of the participants involved.	The researcher ensured that they acquired the necessary knowledge and skill to carry out their role in the research. Detailed analysis and engagement with transcripts to maintain the voice of the participants. Supervision and oversight at each stage of the research process. Debriefing with research supervision to ensure research protocol was followed.

Dependability	Ensuring results are repeatable if the research was conducted again with the same sample.	The researcher used questions that were developed by students within the focus group.
Confirmability	The confidence to which the results would be approved by other researchers.	The researcher used a reflective diary to note their thoughts and feelings throughout the researcher process. Followed the same analysis process for each data set.
Transferability	The extent to which the results can be generalised to other contexts or settings	Purposeful sampling to ensure that participants can provide an account of the live

	phenomena being researched.

Table 3.5 *Criteria to assess trustworthiness.*

3.11.1 Credibility

Credibility was ensured by the researcher through close examination of each of the transcripts during analysis. This is to maintain the voice of the participants through the stages of analysis and interpretation. The researcher included direct quotes to support the themes identified.

3.11.2 Dependability

The researcher ensured that the research was logical and replicable. This was demonstrated by providing a detailed description of the research procedure. A recruitment trail was provided, highlighting how participants were sourced and how many subscribed to the research, along with clear inclusion and exclusion criteria.

3.11.3 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the extent to which there is confidence that the results provide a true reflection of the participants' experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The researcher's background and experience meant there was potential for bias to influence the interpretation of data (Thomas, 2017). To ensure the confirmability of the data, the researcher engaged with regular reflection throughout the research process, detailing their thoughts and feelings in a diary. In addition, the researcher had supervision which acted as a space for the researcher to disclose any emotions, thoughts or distress that arose from the research.

3.11.4 Transferability

Given that this research was conducted with a small sample size, it is not possible to generalise the results to the wider population reflected in this study. Given the nature of the research, there is only a certain extent to which transferability can be achieved.

3.11.5 Catalytic Validity

Adopting a collaborative approach to this research ensured that the structure and content of this research were determined by those with experience of this researched phenomenon. Allowing the participants to develop the interview schedule empowers and centres the research on areas pertinent to the sample, thus maintaining authenticity.

The interview process provided participants with the freedom to express their experiences and feelings. Adopting an interpretivist stance allowed for active exploration of the significant events in the participants' lives rather than exploring the researcher's ideas.

3.12 Researcher Reflexivity

Considering the nature of the research, it would be important to share information about the researcher that may influence the research. The researcher is a black male who has attended secondary school in the UK. In addition, the researcher has experience teaching BC boys when they worked as a teacher. The interest in this topic stemmed from personal experience and research. As a teacher, the researcher observed what could be perceived as stereotyping of BC boys. Following this, the researcher found in a study done by Professor Steve Strand (Strand, 2018) that BC boys across the UK were disproportionately identified with Social and Emotional Mental Health needs. So, the researcher was curious about what may be the experience for BC boys. There is potential for the personal and work experiences of the researcher to influence the interpretation of the data. To combat this, the researcher has kept a reflective diary throughout the research process. The researcher was mindful of making notes in their diary of when their experience may be influencing the interpretation of data. An example of this is seen in circumstances that the researcher's influence may have brought on.

3.13 Summary

This chapter has outlined the aims and exploratory and emancipatory purposes of the research, the research question, the constructivist ontological, epistemological, and axiological position of the researcher, the qualitative design of the research, data collection methods and analysis. Ethical and trustworthiness issues have also been addressed. Chapter four presents the research findings.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction to Chapter 4

In this chapter, the researcher will present the research findings. To keep to the idiographic focus, the researcher will share the superordinate and subordinate themes from each participant's interviews. Pseudonyms have been used to protect participants' anonymity, as well as the anonymity of any teachers mentioned.   Direct quotations will be used to support the themes mentioned. This chapter will begin by presenting the superordinate themes that were identified by the researcher from the four interviews, followed by the sub-themes within each of the superordinate themes. Direct quotations will be used to support each theme. As described in Chapter 3, the researcher will then share the commonalities across the participants' secondary school experiences. The chapter will then be concluded with a summary of the findings.

4.2 Individual Interview findings

There is an ambiguity of description in some of the subordinate and superordinate final themes, such as the influence of family and the perception of teachers. It is multi-layered, and there is complexity in terms of response to the perceptions and expectations placed on the BC boys.

4.2.1 Vernon

Vernon is a 15-year-old student (Year 10) who has attended this secondary school since Year 7. He lives at home with his parents with three siblings, two of whom have attended university. Vernon overall felt positive about his secondary school experience.

Vernon's superordinate and subordinate themes are presented in Figure 4.1
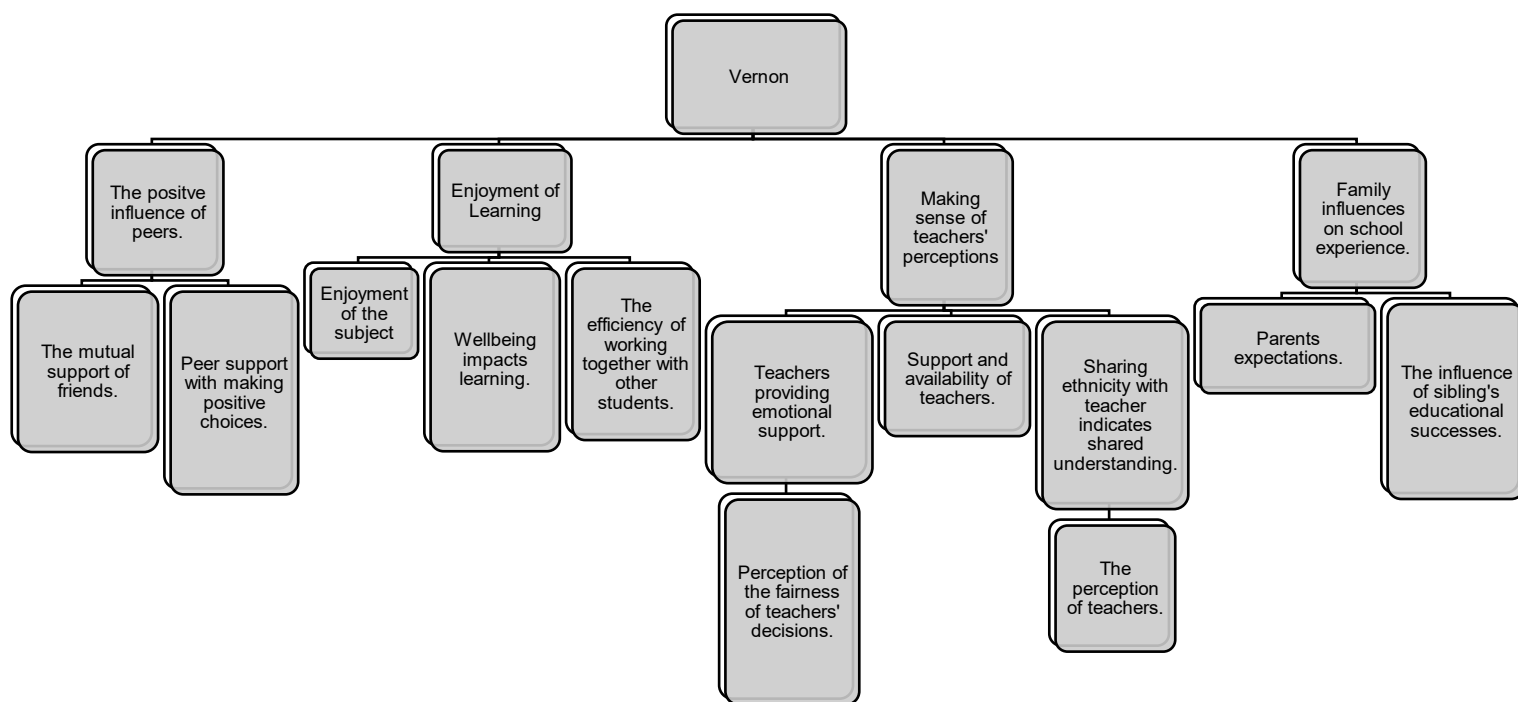
Figure 4.1 Vernon's Superordinate and Subordinate themes

4.2.1.1 Superordinate Theme: The positive influence of peers. In this theme, Vernon reflects on how his peers have been a positive influence on his school experience.

4.2.1.1.1 Subordinate Theme 1: The mutual support of friends

Vernon explained how the mutual support amongst friends motivates him with his learning. He feels that he and his friend are encouraged by the support.

"I think he views me as a good friend because I help him, and he helps me. And as I said before, my friends motivate me, I motivate him as well, and yeah."

Vernon said his friends motivate him by reminding him to prepare for exams and revise.

"By telling me to do stuff, as I said about the tests, or to revise or something."

Vernon's experience of mutual support from a peer seems to validate them as a 'good' friend. For Vernon, it appears that the support from friends in school helps him to engage with and organise his approach to learning. He appears to benefit from friends who can pre-empt and prepare for upcoming assessments.

4.2.1.1.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Peer support with making positive choices.
Vernon shared how friends support him in preparing him for an upcoming test or picking the right behaviour choices.

"It's like, I didn't really revise as much, but sometimes my friends would tell me, "Oh yeah, if we have a test, we need to go revise." And if I'm going to do something silly, my good friend would tell me, "Don't do that," or stuff like that."

Vernon admits that he does not always revise appropriately and can make silly choices. In both instances, peers support him in making choices that promote positive outcomes. From this, peer support seems significant to Vernon in providing him with oversight over his choices with revision and behaviour in school.

4.2.1.2 Superordinate Theme 2: The enjoyment of learning. With this theme, Vernon reflects on the factors that impact his engagement and enjoyment of learning in secondary school.

4.2.1.2.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Enjoyment of the subject.

Vernon felt that he is more likely to participate in lessons he enjoys:

"If it is a subject that I really like, I would put my hand up, answer questions, and then I do the work quickly or try to get it done quickly, and then I'd go to extensions and just do my work to the best quality I can."

In addition, Vernon noted that English was a subject he currently struggles with, given the literature they are reading.

"If the topic is boring. Like in English, we just did Macbeth, and I didn't really find that interesting. So yeah, that would be, I'd be less invested in that."

The demand of the topic, particularly reading and writing demands, also played a role in his enjoyment and engagement with English:

"We just had to do a lot of reading and a lot of writing, and then we had to do lots …and that was so much effort."

4.2.1.2.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Wellbeing impacts learning.

Vernon explained that if he is *"tired or something bad happened that day, or he is in a bad mood,"* he would be less invested in his learning.

For Vernon, his well-being is important when considering his attitude and engagement with learning. Feeling rested and positive help him feel more 'invested' in learning.

4.2.1.2.3 Subordinate Theme 3: The efficiency of working with other students.

Vernon finds that working alongside another student helps him to complete work more quickly.

"Usually where we do partner work, me and my friend Carol, we sit next to each other in maths, and we always get the work done quickly, or if it's like a

whiteboard, we get the answer quickly."

He enjoys collaborating with other students and says it is *"better than working with myself."*

Collaboration with peers aids Vernon's efficiency in completing tasks at school. It may make him feel more successful than when he is learning individually. His preference for working with peers adds to his enjoyment of learning.

4.2.1.3 Superordinate Theme 3: Making sense of teachers' perceptions and actions.

This theme reflects Vernon's views on the perceptions of teachers and their actions. He considers what they contribute to his school experience.

4.2.1.3.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Teachers providing emotional support.

Vernon recognised that for him having an adult show empathy when experiencing, a bereavement was significant to him when dealing with his loss.

"There are times like when my granddad died like two years ago, I told Ms Fickle and then she just helped me. She's helped me get over it, basically."

The support received from teachers provided comfort for Vernon. Although he did not take every offer of help, he acknowledges and appreciates that there is help on offer.

"It was just comfort, basically. They would say, "It's okay. It's alright." And then, if it looked like I would… Well, recently, my grandma died as well, and I had my head on the desk, and Ms Jees, let me go out of the lesson. And then Miss Ins, it was said that I could stay with her for the rest of the day, but I didn't."

Vernon felt positive that his needs were valued and prioritised.

"It made me feel good because it showed me that they actually cared instead of just saying, "Take your head off the desk."

Vernon was able to identify that teachers have shown awareness of his emotional well-being. He felt his needs were prioritised as teachers did not reprimand him for having his head on the table but provided a space for him to contain his emotions.

4.2.1.3.2 Subordinate Theme 2: The support and availability of teachers.
Vernon felt that the support offered with his learning at school was helpful. He noted that the staff would address his need for help and not dismiss it.

"If I don't understand something and they actually help me, instead of just saying, "We can go over it in the next lesson."

He also appreciates the availability of help from teachers, whether it is within structured or unstructured days in school.

"I think it's a very good extent because whenever I need help, they help me in lessons or outside of lessons. And whenever, or if I do need to talk to a teacher, there would be a teacher around to talk to you."

In his school experience, Vernon has had teachers who recognise and respond promptly to his learning needs. Knowing that this support is available from teachers across the school day provides Vernon with a sense of reassurance.

4.2.1.3.3 Subordinate theme 3: Sharing ethnicity with teachers indicates shared understanding.
Vernon explained that if a teacher shares the same heritage as him that they would be more likely to understand him.

"Seen as I'm from Jamaica. If a teacher is from Jamaica, then I'll know that they understand."

Vernon believes that being from the same country will result in a shared understanding of his lived experiences, which ultimately leads to a greater understanding of himself.

4.2.1.3.4 Subordinate Theme 4: The perceptions of teachers.

This theme reflects Vernon's views on the perceptions that teachers have of him. Vernon believes that teachers view him as a good person with altruistic qualities.

"They see me like a good guy. I don't know how to explain it, but they would see me as a good person in a way. A good person helps people, generous, kind, yeah."

Vernon noted that the perception of teachers is impacted by the level of effort he appears to give in the lesson.

He mentioned that *"Just when I don't put in the effort, that's when they'll see me as a bad learner."*

Vernon appears confident of the perception teachers have of him in his experience at school. What he believes of their perception could indicate that Vernon has a positive self-concept. Vernon is aware of behaviour that would change the teachers' perceptions of him.

4.2.1.3.5 Subordinate Theme 5: Perceptions of the fairness of teachers' decisions.

Vernon explained he noticed that the group of pupils that were *"kept behind"* to be reprimanded were "all the black people in the class."
However, he was unsure of whether this was intentional as he said, *"I don't think that was on purpose. I hope not."*

Vernon notes that, although they do not happen often, there are situations in which there can be some unfairness.

"It's *just that at the end of lessons, even if my side of the room wouldn't be talking, the other side also gets let go, and then we'd have to stay for, stay back a*

little bit, and then we get let go, and I just don't see how that's fair."

This is something he does question, saying, "*Why are they allowed to go when I can't go at the same time as them?"* However, this is something now that "doesn't *really bother"* him anymore.

It appears that Vernon is observant of his teachers' decisions but lacks clarity on their intentions on occasions. As instances of unfairness are infrequent, Vernon is less inclined to believe teachers are biased or have ulterior motives.

4.2.1.4 Superordinate Theme 4: Family influences on the school experience.
The following theme shows how Vernon's family have influenced his experience of secondary school.

4.2.1.4.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Parents' expectations.
Vernon felt that there was an implicit expectation from his parents around his academic attainment. It is not in the form of pressure but a desire for him to do well.

"Yeah, I think it's just in the air, but they've said it a couple of times, but not like, if I don't do good, I'm going to get in trouble. It's just that they want me to do good, I guess."

Vernon has a sense of expectation from his parents to perform well academically. From the communication he has had with his parents, the expectations are not negatively reinforced but projected as a desire for Vernon to do well.

Vernon noted that his parents encourage him to exceed his own expectations of himself academically. He mentioned, *"I don't know if I can,"* in terms of meeting those expectations.

Vernon recalled that at a parents' evening where they (his teachers) said that he was *"doing good",* but for his parents *", there's always better."*

Vernon's mother shares her high aspirations with Vernon. In reply, he emphasises what he feels he is able to achieve at present.

"I think I got six in one of my subjects, and then my mom said I could get a nine, and I was like, "Well, that's the best I could do for now."

Despite the good intentions Vernon believes they have for him, he alludes to their expectations being beyond his level of competence. Vernon notes the best he can do presently, showing awareness of his capabilities, which counteract his mother's raised aspirations. It seems he may be directing her to appreciate his current achievements and to pace her expectations**.**

4.2.1.4.2 Subordinate Theme 2: The influence of sibling's educational successes.

Vernon feels motivated to do well by the academic success of his brother and sister. As they have done well, he believes he is capable of following in their steps. He perceives that his parents will be disappointed if he does not do well at school.

"I feel like if I do worse, significantly worse than my brothers and sisters; my parents would be disappointed in me because there's a standard they have set, I think."

Given the familial history of academic success, Vernon feels he is predisposed to succeed academically. He perceives his siblings' success as a standard that his parent would expect him to meet. Not performing 'significantly worse' seems to be an implicit pressure that he feels, given his parents' desire for him to do well.

4.2.2 Troy

Troy is a 15-year-old student. He lives at home with his mother, stepdad and brother. He has experience attending more than one secondary school and offers his experience attending schools in different localities. Troy was very conscious of the social and political climate for Black people in the UK.

Troy's themes are presented in Figure 4.2.
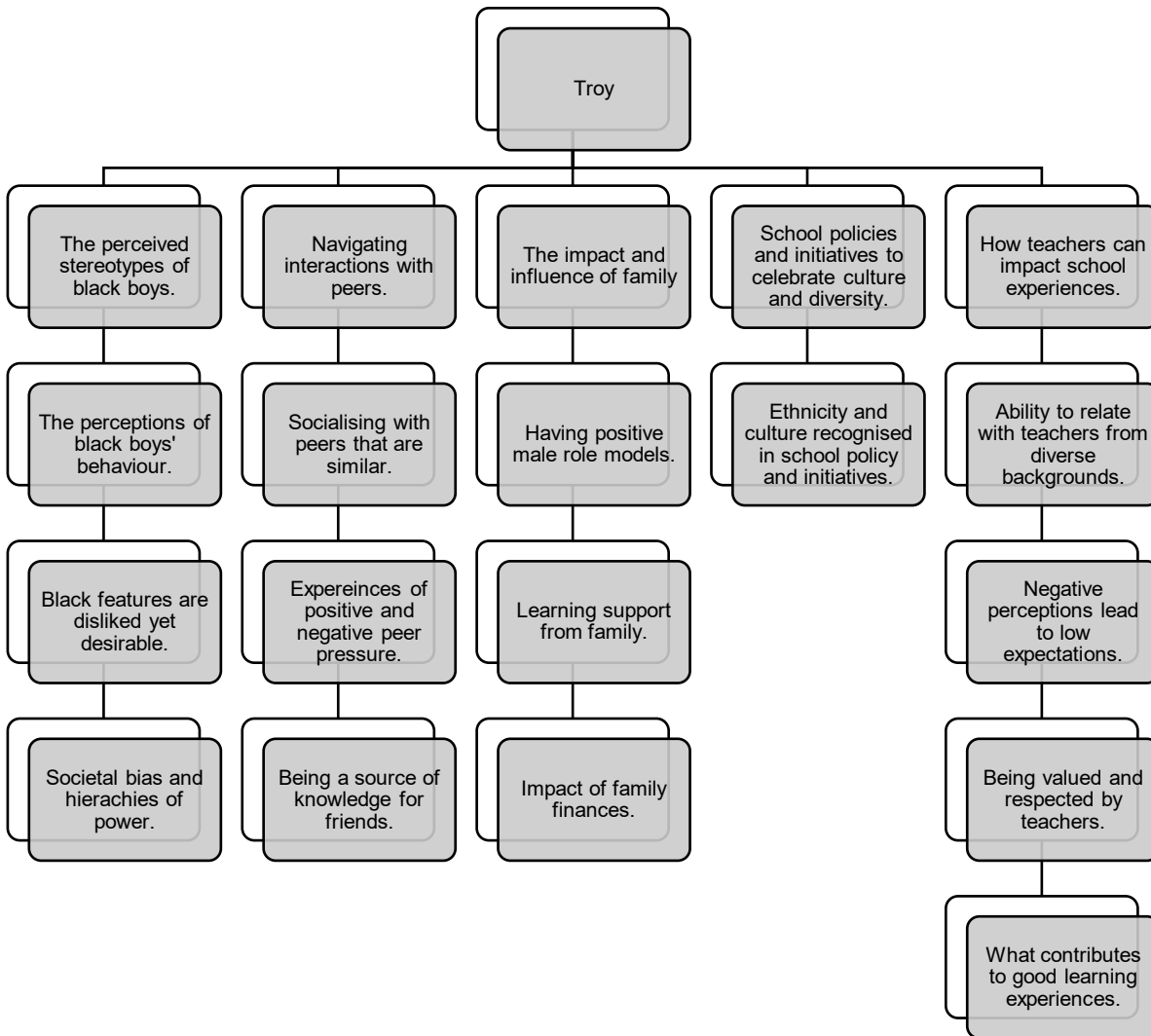
Figure 4.2 Troy's Superordinate and Subordinate themes.

4.2.2.1 Superordinate Theme 1: The perceived stereotypes of Black boys.

This theme reflects how Troy's negative perceptions of black people impacted him.

4.2.2.1.1 Subordinate Theme 1: The perceptions of black boys' behaviour.

Troy explained how his playful actions with a friend could be misinterpreted as aggressive behaviour by other people:

"Sometimes you'll be with your friends, you sometimes goofing around, and maybe you punch them, and you're being friendly, and they're like, "Oh, you need to stop that." You're acting the worst at that point."

He feels people expect him to conform to a stereotype of being a Black boy. For example, *"the point of being black is that you are violent."* Troy believes that as a black male, you cannot show any *"microaggression"* (anger) as *"they'll think the worse things, isn't it?"*

Microaggressions, for Troy, appear to mean expressions of displeasure or anger linked to a stereotype. He thinks he would be assumed a *"criminal sometimes, or you could be assumed as a very violent person."*
With the example of his older cousin, however, he sees a template of how he should compose himself and act:

"Sometimes you see the way he acts, and I'm absolutely like, "Okay, that's the way you should act. It's inside, so you can't really do much that you could do certain things in society, and you are frowned upon that sometimes."

Troy, therefore, is aware of the potential stereotypes people may have and how he has to counteract them by being mindful of the emotions he displays. He believes he cannot behave naturally, as this would further reaffirm the perceived stereotypes that others may hold.

4.2.2.1.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Black features are disliked yet desirable.
Troy shared how he finds it challenging to understand the conflicting views of other ethnicities regarding black features (facial and bodily features). He describes different ethnicities as consistently changing, whereas Black people feel comfortable with their appearance:

"When they want to go out to sun tanning, for example, to get a tan, I don't tan. Obviously, we don't really tan as much. We just go slightly darker, but our appeal isn't just to lay in the sun and become something that we are not, but we're just

happy with what we are. They like to change a lot. For example, like before, you were frowned upon to have big lips or look or big bum, for example, but now it's always the exact reverse. People are getting injections on their lips to make them puffier like us and bigger bums like us in general."

Troy believes that Black people are simultaneously fetishised and criminalised. An appearance once criticised is now embraced as beauty and emulated by others. For Troy, he sees this in the way people like to tan or change body features (lips and bum).

4.2.2.1.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Societal bias and hierarchies of power.
Troy believes that medical constructs like *"BMI Index"* (Body Mass Index) are made from a *"white man's perspective"* and do not account for the fact that black people have *"denser bones."*

In addition, having a *"very ethnic surname"* like *"Ejirooluwa"* [not the participant's name] would not serve you well when looking for a job and may lead to negative assumptions. For Troy, having a name that appears to be more commonly English would lead to more positive assumptions being made about your character compared to a foreign name:
"So if you see someone named John Smith or something, I can't think of a generic name, John Smith, that sounds very English. But if you see someone like Ejirooluwa or something like that, they would be like, "Okay, I don't know if he speaks English or if he's an immigrant or just came out of prison…."

Troy believes that Black people are disadvantaged by medical constructs such as BMI and constructs people have about foreign names. It appears Troy believes Black people are systematically discriminated against within health services and employment. These are constructs he believes are formed from the "white man's perspective", which ties into the subordinate theme around there being a hierarchy in which the "white man" has power.

Troy expresses that there is a *"hierarchy"* where *"people view us (Black people)*

the worst. They won't view us positively in the western world. They see us as underneath." Troy explains that Black people are viewed negatively in society, placing them at the bottom of the perceived hierarchy with *"usually the white man on top."* This perceived hierarchy seems to put Troy as subordinate to his white counterparts. The idea of 'the white man on top' could reflect Troy's experience of power and who he sees in positions of power, bolsters his belief that the 'white man is on top'.

4.2.2.2 Superordinate Theme 2: Navigating interactions with peers.

This theme reflects Troy's experience of interactions with peers and coping with peer pressure.

4.2.2.2.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Socialising with peers that are similar.
Troy explained that he would tend to make friends with people he feels he is similar to: *"So, when you want to make friends, you want someone that's naturally similar to the way, their personality is going to be similar to you."*

In addition, he referred to how students of different ethnicities could relate to other things, for example, hairstyles:
 "What if you have curly hair like my sisters, for example? It's not going to be the same." Here, Troy uses the example of black girls. His "*sisters"* will find it easier to relate to each other regarding how they should look after their hair as they share the same hair type, being *"curly"*.

Troy shared that he challenges himself during unstructured times of the school day to speak to peers he would not typically associate with and students he would not be known. He would step outside his *"comfort zone"* and:
"be in other places," for example, *"…where other people wouldn't recognise you, because sometimes there'll be people in your area and they'll talk to you. It's like a massive friend group, but not close friends. You wouldn't be in a group chat with them, or you won't be talking to them on the phone, but you talk to them where every time you go to break. If you see them, you're like, "Hey, person, you're going to go to lunch or something?"*

Troy forms his friendships based on similarities, which typically could be by personality, ethnicity or features that would, in turn, lead to having similar experiences. However, Troy does pursue opportunities to go 'outside' his comfort zone at school and interact with those he would not typically associate with.

4.2.2.2.2. Subordinate Theme 2: Experiences of positive and negative peer pressure.

Troy explained that he experiences positive peer pressure when a peer is impressed by his ideas and encourages him to share them with the class to contribute to the learning.

"*They could positively pressurise you, say you're in class, and you have an idea you want to share, and you don't want to share it, and you're talking to your friend, and they're like, "Hey, boy, why isn't your hand up? Tell me the idea." And you tell them, and they think it's a really great idea, so they're like, "No, put your hand up." They grab your hand, push it up and make sure it's up. And then you say your idea, and it actually helps. That's the way they positively pressurise me."*

This experience led Troy to feel esteemed by his peers. The encouragement from his peer has enabled him to contribute his ideas to class discussion and possibly helps others.

Troy explained how he could be pressured by peers to make advances to a girl he is attracted to, even when he is not prepared to do so:
"*Other ways, sometimes like in school, even if you like someone a little bit, they'll pressurise you to ask them out, for example, even if you're not ready. That happens a lot in school. They'll pressurise you to ask out this person, even if you're not ready. See, if you like someone, you like someone, but you don't always want to move to the next step. Maybe it's just a simple crush or something."*

Troy explained how there is an expectation from peers that he should be promiscuous in his romantic endeavours. He describes his peers moving quickly into accumulating romantic endeavours: *"They want to move too fast. They want to just like, "Hey, look, you have this one, you have this one, you have this one. They're just trying to stack up more people..."* This contrasts with his preference to have a single partner with which he can build an intimate friendship. *"Personally, what I want is just like a calm, stable thing, so we could just talk."*

If there is a supply teacher, Troy expressed frustration that peers can cause disagreements that can persist during the day. In this situation, a peer was arguing with him regarding where he should sit in the classroom:

"I got to sit down, and there's other people around me. I'm sitting in my usual seat. We have a supply, so everyone's in different seats, isn't it? Everyone's in scrambled seats. Someone said, "Hey Troy, can you move? I want to sit there." I will say, "No," because this is where I want to sit, this is where I usually sit, and it's at the back of the room, so the teacher can't see me doing anything stupid, like playing games or something. So, then we ended up having this argument about if I wanted to move out of the seat or not. Eventually, the teacher tells the other student to sit in his original seat, but he's just angry at me for the rest of the day. I find it funny because, again, angry over a seat."

Troy explained that there are pressures from peers to conform or comply, which can be a challenge. However, being assertive in your preferences reduces his chances of succumbing to pressure. From Troy's experience, dealing with peer pressure relies on teacher support.

4.2.2.2.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Being a source of knowledge for friends.

Troy finds that he is motivated to be more knowledgeable than his friends. For him, this is a friendly competition in which he can have the *"ultimate bragging right,"* where you can say to a friend *", I bet you don't know this, and then give them a cool fact, and they're like, oh man, I didn't know."* Having *"more*

knowledge in your brain" for Troy means he can be a resource for others. *"If you need to revise, just come to me, I'll give you everything."* For him, *"that's bragging rights ".* Being more knowledgeable is something that he esteems himself on. He gave an example of how he found out about a *"Black samurai in 15 something, the late 1500s,"* and the Japanese *"tried to rub off the guy's skin colour because he thought it was black ink."*

Troy feels that having more knowledge makes him credible amongst his peers. In addition, he feels the acquisition of more knowledge can help him add value to others.

4.2.2.3 Superordinate Theme 3: The impact and influence of family.

This theme reflects how Troy feels his family has impacted and influenced him in his secondary education experiences.

4.2.2.3.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Having positive male role models.

Troy shared that thought about his biological father and his absence can *"overwhelm him."* He explains that: *"When you think of one negative thought, it comes into another, then it overwhelms you."* This can start his mind to wonder: *"why he never ….why he ditched my sister and me in the first place? We don't know why. Fourteen years to come back, and he didn't choose to."* Troy noted that to prevent this trail of negative thoughts. He reminds himself that he has *"a stepdad to take up that role. I already have a father figure."*

Troy notes his positive experiences with his stepdad and describes him as a *"very nice person."* He appreciates his presence in his life and sees him as a person who is preparing him for the transition into adulthood, something he feels was not provided by his biological father:

"He is actually going to offer me a job in his company. He works in security, so he's helping me get my life set, something my real dad didn't do."

Troy noted that he has a positive relationship with his grandfather, brother and cousin. He notes that *"a lot of male figures in my family."* His grandfather gives him advice about how he can care for his parents.

"He sometimes tells me how to help my mom because my parents are getting older now. My mom's 42, and my stepdad is 51, so they're getting older, so the more time passes, the less they'll be able to do and more independent I'll have to be than this."

His older cousin is someone who he sees as a *"role model"* with their *"life sorted"*. Troy says, *"every time he comes, he's always in a suit. He's just had his life sorted. We don't see him too much because of family gatherings. Normally, you don't just see every family member every day. But when he is there, he helps out a lot. I'm trying to think about what, but he's just helpful, I guess, and I can't define it in words."*

Troy describes the male figures he has in his life and how they adequately address the absence of his biological father. The positive experiences with his cousin, brother, grandfather and stepfather eclipse the void left and prevent him from being 'overwhelmed' by his father's absence.

4.2.2.3.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Learning support from family.
Troy refers to his family as *"impacting him a lot."* Troy described how his brother would share his learning resources and support him with revision:
"My brother sometimes will leave his old books, so I'll sometimes revise, and he would show me these and I'll be able to pick up some extra things that I didn't know the teachers liked and they wouldn't tell you."
His mother would offer Troy support with his GCSE subject options. His mother was able to provide him with advice on what to consider when picking his options:

"They impact a lot, to be perfectly honest. When I wanted to pick my options, I didn't know what to pick personally. I wanted to do something computer tech, but that wasn't an option. So, my mum said, "pick something that you feel would be fun. When you're learning, you want to be engaged, and if it's fun for you, you

want to be engaged as well. Pick the ones that are useful but pick the ones that you enjoy as well."

Troy described how his mother expects him to *"do something productive with your mind."* This would lead him to *"watch some education channels, for example, and learn about things I haven't learned about before."*
 Troy's stepdad was there to support him with writing his CV. He helps Troy with his current choices based on his future ambitions: *"He would tell me how to write your CV, for example, because work experience is coming soon, and because I want to be a lab scientist when I'm older, so I want to have chemistry or biology, he's helping me write my CV for it."*

Troy's experience demonstrated the impact his family had on his learning. He is supported with learning but also to reflect on what he enjoys studying and how his aspirations inform his subject choices. Troy appears confident about his school experience, given the family support he receives.

4.2.2.3.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Impact of family finances.

Troy explained the impact his family's financial experience had on his secondary education. He initially started his secondary education at his present school but then moved away to another area, meaning he had to attend another school. After his mother and stepdad got married, his mother stopped *"getting money from the government",* which led them to move back to the area he presently resides as they *"couldn't afford the bigger house."* The family's financial situation significantly shaped Troy's school experience. Social welfare support appeared to create changes that were pivotal in their experience.

4.2.2.4 Superordinate Theme 4: School policies and initiatives to celebrate culture and diversity.

The theme reflects how school policies and initiatives around culture and diversity have impacted Troy and his secondary school experience.

4.2.2.4.1 Subordinate theme 1: Ethnicity and culture recognised in school policy and initiatives.

Troy explained how the "*Halo code"* that was introduced creates acceptance around black hairstyles like "dreads" or "afros." This policy for him is a demonstration by the school that there is an understanding of his culture and their way of being: "*You could wear durags in school because it helps with your hairstyle sometimes. They accept that now. They didn't before, so they understand our culture now. They understand the way we see things."*

Troy explained that his school creates lots of opportunities to celebrate culture. The school recognises Black History Month, "*where people were allowed to wear the attire of their culture."* Other ethnicities are also accounted for in the "Hispanic month", where *"lots of Hispanic food in the cafe, in the lunchroom."*

4.2.2.5 Superordinate Theme 5: How teachers can impact school experiences.

This theme reflects Troy's thoughts on the impact of the perceived attitudes and actions of teachers.

4.2.2.5.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Ability to relate with teachers from diverse backgrounds.

Troy said that the school has teachers from diverse backgrounds. He finds that this makes it easy to relate to teachers. Teachers can join in on conversations around cultural topics, such as food. In addition, they can share their own experiences too: "*Sometimes there'll be teachers that are from different cultures that understand and that off the chat when you're talking about something, the teacher overhears and want to join in the conversation too, because they genuinely like it, isn't it? Sometimes I talk about how you need to fry your bakes. You can't have a squishy or doughy meal, and my teacher wanted to chime in and learn how to make it, especially about food, you can tell."*

Troy appears to identify more readily with teachers from diverse backgrounds as they could engage with similar cultural experiences (making food). Having teachers from different cultures fosters more intimate and positive interactions.

4.2.2.5.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Negative perceptions lead to low expectations.

Troy experienced his brother being labelled as a *"troublesome boy."*
An email was sent mistakenly to his mother where his brother was described as *" that type of boy that is naughty and always likes to get into trouble."*
This has led him to believe that teachers will *"sometimes... view you as a troublesome boy."*

Troy believes some teachers *"will always view other students as less than others."* They will pass comments such as *"he won't amount to much."*
In addition, this view, he feels, leads them to have lower academic expectations for some students compared to other students:
"This person might do much, or he might be able to do a lot more than him. He won't be able to get a grade nine on his essay. He could only achieve like a grade six or something."

4.2.2.5.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Being valued and respected by teachers.

Troy mentioned that his own secondary school experience had changed him positively. He finds that everything in secondary *"is more mature, more natured to making us young adults."* He finds that the adults in school make him feel that *"it's not like a hierarchy."* All students are treated the same *"no matter your race or anything."*

Troy values the praise he gets from his teachers. However, there are occasions where he feels the praise can be generic and specific to the individual students.

"Sometimes, if you get a reward letter, your friends would say the same thing, and it would look like, "Oh, you just changed the name." For example, it's not

support, and it maybe seems like it's scripted. It's not scripted, but that's the way it's coming off. It's coming off like everyone gets the same."

In Troy's school experience, he stresses that teachers treat him with respect and equality. Praise is valued when given intentionally to him so that it can be personally attributed to him.

4.2.2.5.4 Subordinate Theme 4: What contributes to good learning experiences.

Troy says the lack of Black representation in education impacts him. He finds that learning is incomplete without contribution. Black people have made to the body of knowledge taught. "*It impacts me because then it's like people doing history, they're not learning, they're not getting the full picture, for example, they're only getting half of it. You can't just look at an incomplete puzzle and say, "Well, that's what happened."*

Troy felt that he has positive relationships with his teachers and that *"all the teachers try to help...they give advice on how I could do the thing."* He also finds that the current interventions support him well with his learning. Troy mentioned they should happen more often.

"After school, you go to these math interventions or science; that's what they're doing. I think they could do that more often. It makes me feel secure that they have these. They could support me in ways."

He liked it when the teacher incorporated classroom learning into games to create excitement and engagement with learning: *"…You create in a way a game show and you could go up higher levels, but you could go up higher levels, and you could get like maybe prizes. Maybe the prize is a five-minute, not five minutes, 30 minutes game time or more. And when you beat, you have a big reward."*

Troy also finds that music can be helpful when you are doing a less motivating and engaging task, and he suggested the school could implement better strategies. For example, *"…like listen to music when the class is boring, which is annoying because when I study, I find with music everything is just bare. When I'm doing chores, I do with music. When I study, I do with music. Music is your best friend, basically, when it comes to generally annoying things to do. No one wants to study, but with music, it makes it feel better because you have something that can stimulate your senses."*

Troy believes help and support are available from teachers, and interventions effectively support his learning. Troy felt the lack of Black representation in history lessons means the education received is incomplete and not teaching the 'full picture'.

4.2.3. Winston

Winston is a 15-year-old child who is currently in Year 10. He lives at home with both parents and is the only child. Winston describes himself as a quiet, kind and helpful person. He also has family that attend the same secondary school as him.

Themes for Winston are presented in Figure 4.3
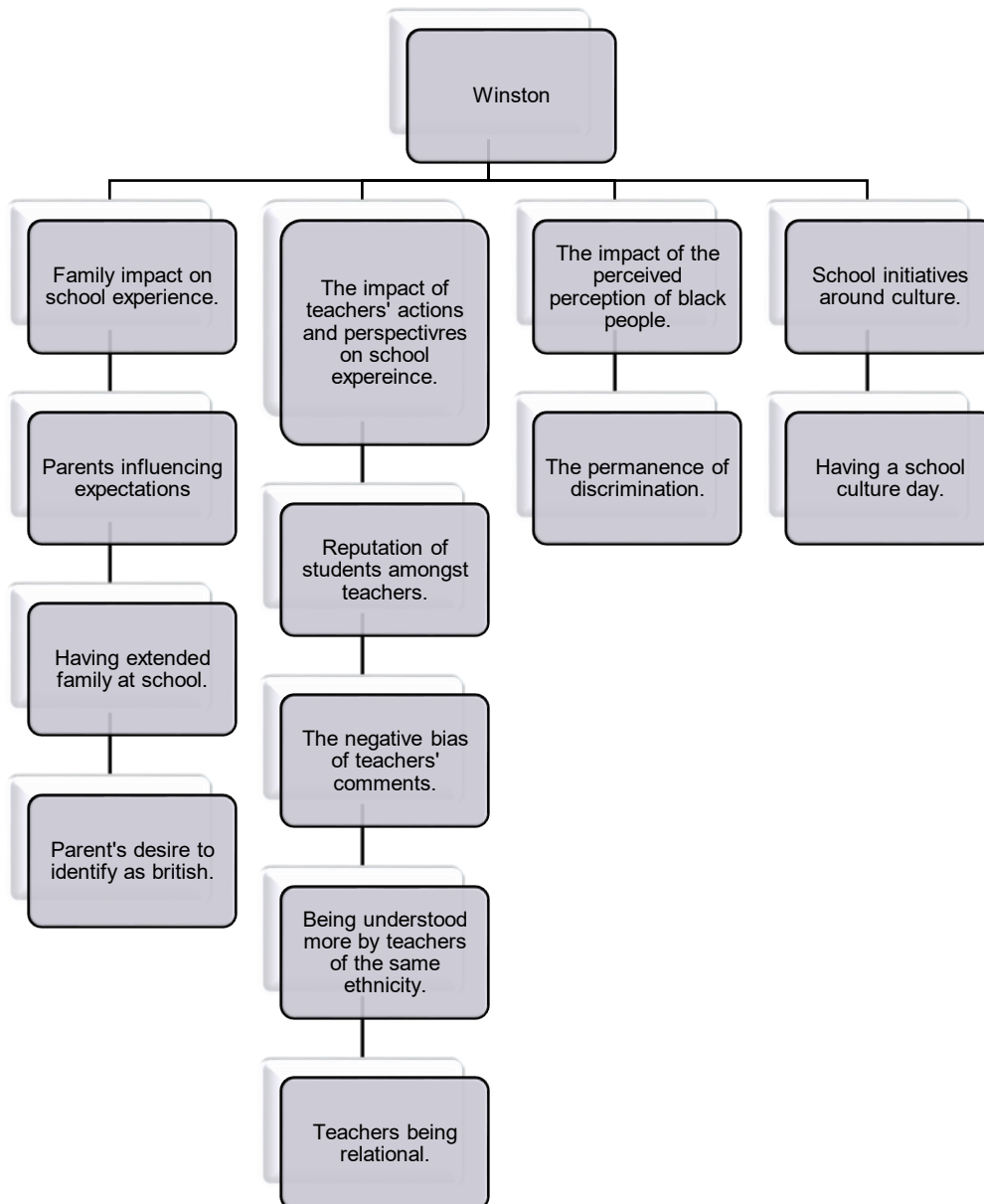
Figure 4.3 Winston's Superordinate and Subordinate themes

4.2.3.1 Superordinate Theme 1: Family impact on school experience

This theme reflects Winston's thoughts on his family's influence on his secondary education.

4.2.3.1.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Parents influencing expectations.

Winston shared his parents' expectations of him in the future to have a career of his choosing: "*They want me to have a career, but not anything specific.'*

But they don't want to be on the streets; they don't want me doing up all of that." Through his comment, his parents' preferences around how he spends his time recreationally influence the choices of places he goes: "*My parents are quite strict with that, and they don't really want me to go in places doing rubbish stuff. Being the next black boy in the news."*

Winston noted that his parents are *"heavily focused"* on their jobs which give him "*great motivation"* to get *"heavily focussed on work."* His father has worked at his job for *"20 something years."* He also refers to how his mother's job shapes her expectations of him: "*I guess it impacts because she can see first-hand how people that don't really get GCSEs and stuff, how they end up. I guess also, how if your parents aren't on good terms and always fighting and stuff, what also happens to the child. So, I guess that also gives them more extra motivation to keep me on track."*

Winston explained that his parents are on hand to support him with his education. He said, "*they keep me on track...always asking when is the next test."* Although he also mentioned, "sometimes *I'm annoyed by it."*

The image of Black boys in the media and their experiences of work bears weight on the parents' expectations of Winston. They see a focus on education as an avenue to escape the 'streets'. Winston describes his parents as 'heavily focused' on their jobs and wants to emulate this with his learning. The demonstration of this shows it is possible for him also.

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4.2.3.1.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Having extended family at school

Winston has family who attend the same school as him: "I have a cousin in the school, actually. He's in year eight, and we go along well. We go home sometimes together." He feels the presence of his cousin acts as a deterrent from him making bad behaviour choices: *"I guess if I know that I'm about to get up to no good, he's going to be there to know. It's almost like he's an extra reminder that your family is always here. So that also gives me that extra factor in my decision-making. Let's say if I am up to no good, that he would tell my family."*

Winston is aware of the presence of relatives at school, which creates a sense of surveillance. The possibility of his parents receiving feedback is a consideration in making good behaviour choices at school.

4.2.3.1.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Parents' desire to identify as British.

Winston mentioned that his parents do not want him to identify as Caribbean outside the home. He referred to his parents as not wanting him to *"be like them because they say I'm British."* He added: *"They don't want me to speak like them, but it's great to be able to speak like them."* Winston shared that his parents "*know how bad things can be in the Caribbean."* This refers to the life experiences or habits of people his parents have known. *"Dad's old friends, they always have a cigarette in hand and rum in the next hand."* The parents hold a negative perception of Caribbeans, which is projected onto Winston. He is encouraged to say he is British and speak like he is British at school. This implies a belief by his parents that his ethnicity is likely to be negatively received.

4.2.3.2 Superordinate Theme 2: The impact of teachers' actions and perspectives on school experience.

This theme reflects how the support and perspectives of teachers have impacted Winston's school experiences.

4.2.3.2.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Reputation of students amongst teachers.

Winston explained that there are students who have reputations amongst teachers, such as: *"just not doing anything in class, wanting to get out of class, and always in trouble and always in detentions."* These are the students Winston *"wouldn't be with",* which would raise his chances of getting reprimanded. He mentions that his association with these students would also lead him to be targeted: "*Like that person that's always getting in trouble, always getting targeted. I'm not going to be targeted."*

4.2.3.2.2 Subordinate Theme 2: The negative bias of teacher's comments.

When teachers are reporting to parents about his attainment, Winston feels that positive comments tend to be overwhelmed by the negative comments: *"The teacher used to talk all this stuff about what you do wrong, and the one thing she says, well, he or she says that's good about you often gets overshadowed by all the bad things, so it's not pleasant."*

Winston can feel that the comments are unjust and make the positive things happening at school more obscure to parents: *"I guess it's just slightly unfair because they see the good stuff, but my parents, they focus on the bad stuff. So, it's like please just, I know I could do better in that one, let's talk about the good stuff, but they never do it."* Winston explained that he can be unaware of what the teachers may be thinking of him. This can leave him feeling *"slightly on edge."* A particular example was regarding a previous parents evening where he felt as though: *"he has been bashed on by my parents even because I didn't do this, I didn't do that, and then my mom is like, "Come on, get on with it."* Winston feels that teachers can centre on the negative aspects of his school experience, thus not giving a positive reflection of him. This creates a dichotomy between what teachers think about him and what he believes they feel about him.

4.2.3.2.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Being understood more by teachers of the same ethnicity.

In response to the question, "Do you feel your culture is understood by teachers?" Winston felt that teachers of the same ethnicity would understand his culture and have more insight into his way of being as opposed to teachers that are not: *"I guess because some teachers are from where I am from, but the teachers that aren't, I guess they won't understand totally my culture, but I guess hopefully for them, they're trying to understand, but it's slightly a bit like, let's just say not great that they don't know your culture, and they don't really know, let's say you say this type of word, they're not going to understand what you're saying."*

4.2.3.2.3 Subordinate Theme 4: Teachers being relational.

Winston expressed how he appreciates it when teachers ask *"How are you feeling? How has your day been? Stuff like that."* He feels that teachers do *"look out for you on a personal level."*

Winston described himself as not the *"most vocal person,"* meaning that he is less likely to verbalise about he is feeling and for the teachers to understand him on a *"personal level."*

"I'm not going to be the most vocal person, so I know for instance, it's like teachers know those students on a more personal level because they express it more. And since I'm already not that vocal, I would say they don't really know what's going on behind the scenes but didn't really ask at the same time."

In Winston's school experience, he appreciates teachers inquiring about his personal wellbeing given that he can naturally be reticent. It demonstrates to him that teachers want to know and care about him on a personal level.

4.2.3.3 Superordinate Theme 3: The impact of the perceived perception of Black people.

This theme discusses the impact of Winston's thoughts on the perceived perception of Black people.

4.2.3.3.1 Subordinate Theme 1: The permanence of discrimination.

Winston shared his belief that despite any protest against the discrimination faced, racism will always be present to some extent: *"I guess it always reminds me that no matter how much we campaign, there's always some racism."* Despite the interventions, Winston believes that Black people will still experience some form of discrimination. It seems his experiences in society serve as reminders of this.

Winston expressed concerns about not wanting to be *"the next Black boy on the news."* His comment stemmed from what he had seen in the news. However, he did not specify whether this was on broadcast or print media.

"Us Black people, why are we killing each other? We're already discriminated enough, so why are we doing this to ourselves?"

Winston has the impression that outside of school, people would *"look at me slightly differently, but I guess they don't know who I am, so I could be anyone."*

Despite the negative portrayal of Black people in the media, Winston feels known and valued at school. It appears to be outside of school where he feels he is viewed differently.

4.2.3.4 Superordinate Theme 4: School initiatives around culture.

This theme reflects the impact Winston has felt from the implementation of school policy and the initiatives to celebrate diversity at school.

4.2.3.4.1 Subordinate theme 1: Having a school culture day.

For Winston, having a school culture day was positive and an opportunity to be introduced to other cultures through food. Although he felt the attempt was not authentic enough.

"Last year, we had a culture's week on the cafeteria. Every day was a different culture, like Mediterranean, African, and Caribbean, is that I wasn't happy about our Caribbean because they did, I'd say like one burger, I guess. I guess they called it a jerk chicken, well, jerk burger, I guess, but it wasn't."

Winston recognises the initiatives taken by his school to embrace different cultures but feels the representations given could be perfected and improved. He felt the food items made were poor imitations of traditional culinary dishes.

4.2.4 George.

George is a 14-year-old year ten student. He lives with his mother but has regular contact with his father. He enjoys sports, has experience with athletics and is an avid footballer.

George's themes are presented in Figure 4.4

```
                                    George

   The interpretation    The perceived    How the expereince    The influence of    The influence of
   of hairstyles.        perspectives of  with peers' impacts   school policy and   family.
                         teachers.        school experiences.   initiatives.

   Assumed stereotypes   The understanding of                   The use of school   The impact of a
   around black          culture leads to   Friendships that    policy to encourage single-parent home.
   hairstyles.           different perspectives influence posiitvely acceptance of
                         on behaviour.                          diversity.

                         Having a reputation  Opinions formed   Having initiatives to The benefit and
                         amongst teachers.    based on clothing. celebrate culture.   support of parents'
                                                                                      shared school
                                                                                      experience.
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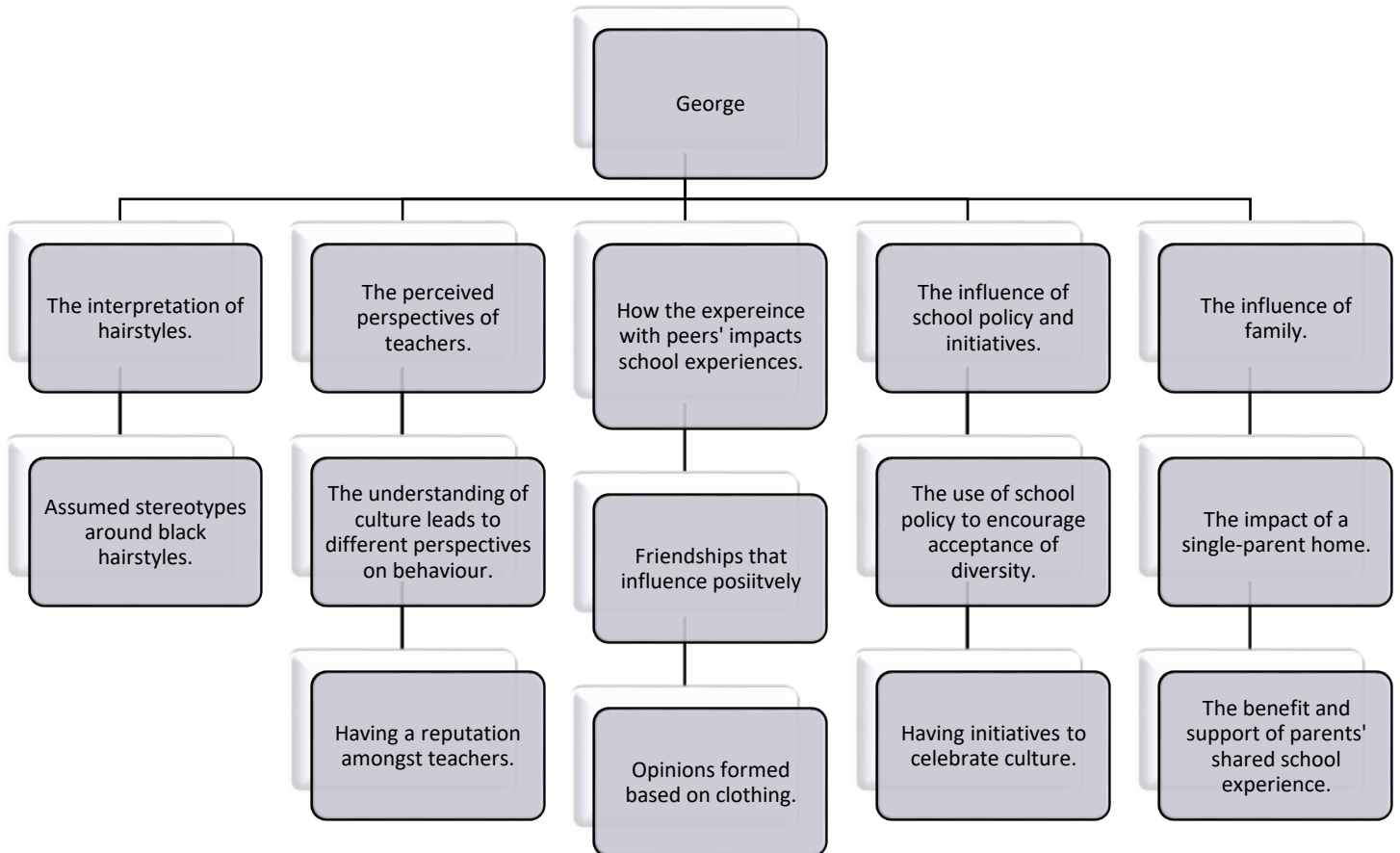
Figure 4.4 George's Superordinate and Subordinate themes.

4.2.4.1 Superordinate Theme 1: The interpretations of hairstyles.

The following theme reflected George's perspective on the importance of hairstyle to BC culture and people's negative perception of it.

4.2.4.1.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Assumed stereotypes around Black hairstyles.

George explained the importance of hairstyle and how a hairstyle can communicate a sense of identity for Black people. He said: *"Our hairstyles embrace us and give us a name and a feeling about us."*

George believes that his hairstyle is a form of personal expression. The use of 'our hairstyles' suggests there are hairstyles associated with BCs and tie in with their identity. He mentions that people (particularly parents) may not prefer what may be deemed as *"Black hairstyles"* as some believe it may give an impression of someone you intend or do not feel you are:

"Yeah, some parents might not like braiding their children's hair or having dreadlocks and stuff like that or having it to a certain length or something…. They might have a reason to it, or something in the past that's happened to them, or something they've heard about them with their hairstyle, so they might not want anything to do with that hairstyle or things like that. I think there's a stereotype of maybe if you have a certain hairstyle or a hair certain length, you look like a type of way or a type of person, but really you are not that type of person; you just like the hairstyle; I guess."

George noted that by having certain hairstyles like *"dreadlocks"* someone may assume who you may be and your beliefs:

"So if I'm having dreadlocks, some people might think you're a Rasta."

Rasta refers to a person who is a Rastafarian (Believer in Rastafarianism). George added that having dreadlocks may communicate to people that one is a *"dangerous person."*

George describes how lacking an understanding of the origins of hairstyles can lead to people making the wrong assumptions. Certain Black hairstyles are frowned upon and are associated with being threatening.

4.2.4.2 Superordinate Theme 2: The perceived perspectives of teachers.

This theme reflects the influence the teachers' perspectives have had on his experience of secondary school.

4.2.4.2.1 Subordinate theme 1: The understanding of culture leads to different perspectives on behaviour.

George explained that having an understanding of the *"traditions"* they grew up with would possibly help teachers understand why students of his ethnicity behave differently:

"I think like the teachers could see where you're coming from or what's really happening or the traditions that we might have grown up with as it might go with them as well, so then they can see why we do some things or act a certain way, why we act different and stuff like that."

George feels that having teachers of the same ethnicity provides *"comfort"*. He perceives they are more likely to understand him better due to the possibility of being exposed to the same experiences growing up:

"As me as a student talking to another Caribbean teacher gives me more comfort because I feel like they can also relate to the things I say or maybe do. I feel like they can understand or they grew up with the same things or certain preferences that I might have that others might not. But having that one Caribbean teacher or multiple, it's like you have others that are just like you and have been in your shoes."

For George, people valuing and understanding his perspective is a significant theme in his relationship with peers and adults.

George shared that he finds he is more receptive to the advice he receives from teachers of the same ethnicity:

"I feel like hearing from a teacher that's of your culture can also help you with decisions, or when they give you a motivational talk you really take in as they're from the same culture as you. So, them having similar background to you will make me really take it in more. So, when they're giving more talk or helping me pick decisions, I can see where they're coming from, and they can see where I'm coming from, and what options I'm going go with and why I would want to do it. And yeah, it's helpful, I guess".

The perceived likelihood of shared experiences with teachers of the same ethnicity creates understanding. These teachers would be better equipped to understand and deal with BC boys' behaviours. Furthermore, an atmosphere of influence is created that makes George more receptive to advice from teachers of the same ethnicity.

4.2.4.2.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Having a reputation amongst teachers.
George reported that peers *"known for making everyone laugh or doing silly things and making silly choices,"* are susceptible to being blamed for negative behaviours in the classroom:

"They could just be known for making everyone laugh or doing silly things and making silly choices. So even if the teacher might know that and recognise that, so then they'll probably just pick who's most likely to do that silly choice, and it might be for once, they're not doing anything."

Here, George shares that students who are regularly reprimanded tend to be blamed. This makes it hard for students to counteract these perceptions, possibly leading to more negative consequences.

4.2.4.3 Superordinate Theme 3: How the experience with peers impacts school experience.
The following theme reflected George's view of good friendships and how friendships have helped him academically.

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4.2.4.3.1 Subordinate theme 1: Friendships that positively influence school experiences.

George valued genuine friendships, where people sought to care for his wellbeing. When describing what genuine and healthy friends do, he said,

"what do they do? Just checking up and asking questions seeing, are you okay. How are you feeling today? How's your mental state? And stuff like that. That could really help someone that really needs to be checked up on, that some people might hide in them by themselves, but maybe that, friends checking up on one another can really help someone."

Having friends that check up on him is something he finds supportive in school. George feels that mutual understanding of perspectives in friendships is important. Having a friend that understands his perspective is linked to *"having a sibling in school"* since they can put *"themselves in your shoes, and you put yourself in their shoes."*

Beliefs such as this serve as a directive in choosing whom he associates with at school:

" I think once you choose your peers wisely, then they should know. But when you get rid of the ones that you don't think would care for you, put themselves in your shoes, I think you should be fine."

George felt that his friends at school positively influence him. Firstly, his friends' academic performance can motivate him to do well.

"At school, I think they influence me in a good way. Like when you're doing a test, and you get your results and you hear your friends' results, it makes you want to do, well."

In addition, a competitive element is added, making George *"want to do higher and get better than them."* His friends' learning success serves as a benchmark for his attainment, something to meet or even surpass

George feels that having friends who care for one's wellbeing and value one's perspectives creates a familial bond. These two aspects help George identify fulfilling and healthy friendships at school. Those friendships serve as a support for him. Having friends who attain higher than him academically motivates him to do better.

4.2.4.3.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Opinions formed based on clothing.
George notices that peers can judge others based on what they wear. For him, the degree to which this affects an individual is dependent on their mentality, which is knowing what they like and not fixating on what others believe:

"It depends how I think you are mentally. I think if someone came and said something about my coat being expensive, it wouldn't really affect me. But if someone said that it's cheap, it still wouldn't affect me because, at the end of the day, it is about how you like what you are doing and not really about how others think about what you are doing".

He explained that some students esteem themselves based on their clothing. The more notable the brand, the more esteemed they may feel amongst peers. Although, this is not a value he holds himself:

"I don't think it means anything, but some people see it in a different way. Let's say having a Gucci coat, it will make them feel like there are some who are maybe different to others feeling like, 'I'm coming to school with designer coat, and you are not,' or they're putting a point out saying that they can afford a designer coat at a young age, but others can't maybe."

George observes that clothing can be a symbol of superiority for some peers who wear it with the intention of making others feels inferior. It appears to be a show of wealth. He felt that being assured of one's personal preference regarding clothing can guard against this influence.

4.2.4.4 Superordinate Theme: The influence of school policy and initiatives.
The following theme reflects the impact of school policy and how initiatives taken within the school support the understanding of BC culture.

4.2.4.4.1 Subordinate Theme 1: The Use of School Policy to Encourage Acceptance of Diversity.
George feels positive about the introduction of the *"Halo Code"* at his school because it encourages acceptance of natural and protective hairstyles. He feels the policy has provoked thought about what hair means for BCs and different ethnicities:

"Now that I think that's been introduced, everyone has been really thinking about it deeply, about hairstyles that people are doing and how they like it."

Prior to the code being introduced, George did not experience discrimination around his hair at school but feels the presence of policy gave importance to what was already present and visible to the school population:

"Before the halo, I think it was still the same, but people didn't really think of it in a deeper meaning. But obviously, people wouldn't really judge your hair in a way or see a meaning behind it, but now I think it's still the same, just not really been in depth".

George feels the use of the policy highlights the significance of hairstyles to Black people and their lived experiences and promotes respect and tolerance.

4.2.4.4.2 Subordinate theme 2: Having initiatives to celebrate culture.

George explained how culture days at school allow students to embrace and display the various cultures at his school. They are an opportunity for others to see and affirm one in one's culture:

"Maybe, like when some people dress up in a typical Caribbean, that your culture would wear something, the teachers might like it or give you compliments, which would make you feel better about your culture, or make you want to embrace it even more by a teacher complimenting me about it, or bringing in food from that culture, I guess. The teachers might know about it and might want to try some which could build someone confidence or how they feel about their culture."

It provides comfort to George to see others of different and the same background positively enjoy his culture:

"It feels good seeing that there's also others with the same type of culture so that when people are sharing Caribbean food, it was, this was nice because everyone with that culture was really embracing it and just having fun with the culture".

George feels the culture days at school create a mutual appreciation of the existing cultures. Furthermore, teachers have an opportunity to engage with different cultures too. These factors create a sense of confidence in their heritage for students, including George.

4.2.4.5 Superordinate Theme 5: The influence of family.

The following theme reflects the influence of family on George and his secondary education experience.

4.2.4.5.1 Subordinate Theme 1: The impact of a single-parent home.

George recognises his father's absence but is consoled by the fact that he is still contactable. For him, the contact negates any possible negative impact of his father's absence:

"I don't think it's impacted me that much because I speak to him sometimes over the phone when I best can or the time is right. So, knowing that he's still there, but not really around, it doesn't really impact me".

Although he acknowledges the difference his father's physical absence makes, the difference for him is resolved in his relationship with his mother. George refers to her being his *"best friend and my mum."*

"It does feel different, having one parent, but it's being replaced because my mom's basically my best friend and my mom."

He emphasises his mother's significance in describing their relationship:

"It's just me and my mom. So having her is basically having like a big sister. Some people say a number one best friend because sometimes I might want to be alone, but sometimes when I'm there, she also will know how I feel. She's supportive".

Again, as with his friendships, George values his mother's ability to see things from his perspective, which makes her supportive. *"She would put herself in my shoes."*

George seeks solace in *"…knowing out there, I'm not the only one".* He is aware that many young people like him live in single-parent homes. In addition, although his father is not physically with him, he is confident that his father keeps him in mind:

"I don't feel any different on any type of way about it, because I know that he's still out there, still there, still about, and I still speak to him more over the phone, so I know that he's still doing well, and he also does check up on me".

The repetition of *'still'* may communicate the consistency in which he experiences his father despite his physical absence.

4.2.4.5.2 Subordinate Theme 2: The benefit and support of parents' shared school experience.

George's mother's academic progress motivates him to do well and continue:

"I think it's good because it is like, you are basically carrying on their legacy, and you want to carry on their legacy in a good way".

It seems to make him feel that achievement is possible. However, it brings pressure that failure would mean he has been unable to uphold the achievement:

"So trying to get the best grades would basically make me personally feel that I know that my mom did it and I completed her work basically, in doing it. Because when she did it, she got good grades. I also want to get good grades because I feel like if I get bad grades and knowing that she did well, it would make me upset seeing that if she can do it as my own mom and she gave birth to me, I should be able to do it as well."

George revels in the support he receives from his family. Not only does he know they are *"looking out"* for him, but they also desire him to reach his *"full potential in school."* This support comes in the form of preparation for tests, not pressuring but supporting: *"When there's a test coming up, they tell you the best option is to help you out on the test so that you're doing the best version and hoping you are if you needed it, being supportive, not applying too much pressure to you on the test. Also motivating you, them talking about their experiences with the subject. And if they did it, just seeing where they're coming from."*

The value of shared experience he felt most significantly was with his mother, who also studied business studies. It helps him revise and understand the career pathways available to him through business studies:

"Especially with business studies, because my mom used to do business in her school, so when there's a test coming up, she helps me revise in business as she used to have a job in business and her experiences in business studies."

Overall, George senses that his family wants him to do well. He benefits from having a shared experience of business studies with his mother. His mother's achievements in business studies give him the self-belief that he can have the same success. Having direct experience with someone who has travelled the same path makes aspirations much more tangible for George.

4.3 Findings across participants.

The last stage of analysis is where the researcher looks at commonalities in the experiences shared by the participants. This was done by printing out the map of superordinate and subordinate themes for each participant and categorising similar themes (see appendix *).

Some themes were relabelled during the process of re-categorising the superordinate themes according to commonalities. For example, in "The impact of the perceived perception of Black people, the impact of Black hairstyles was condensed into the theme "perceived negative stereotypes of Black people." This theme then reflected how the perceived negative stereotypes of Black people impact their secondary school experience.

In this section, the themes included in this chapter are those that occurred in at least two out of the four participants. This resulted in the seven superordinate themes presented in Figure 4.
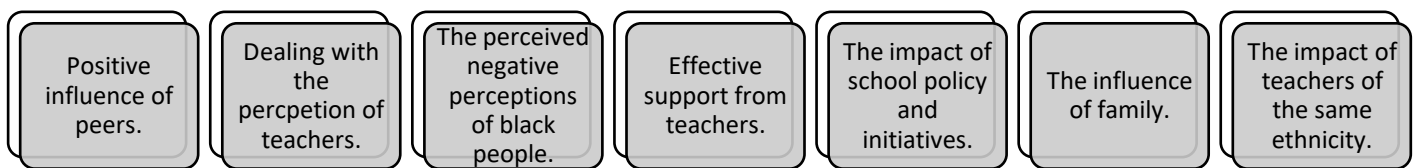
Positive influence of peers.	Dealing with the percpetion of teachers.	The perceived negative perceptions of black people.	Effective support from teachers.	The impact of school policy and initiatives.	The influence of family.	The impact of teachers of the same ethnicity.

Figure 4.5 *Common themes across participants*

4.3.1 Positive influences of peers.

Three participants expressed that they have experienced positive peer influences during their secondary school experience thus far. Vernon reflected on how the mutual support with friends was encouraging, where *"I help him, and he helps me. And as I said before, my friends motivate me; I motivate him as well, and yeah."*

George valued his friends sharing his perspective on situations and opportunities they came across to support him. For example:

"I think we also look out for each other, trying to get opportunities for each other. Say, because I play football, say one of my friends might have another friend that plays football, and their teams were holding a trial; I think as a good friend, my peers, they would obviously tell me about the trial to see me do well in football."

Furthermore, Troy experienced peers encouraging him to share his ideas and contribute to class discussions. Troy finds:

"they grab your hand, push it up and make sure it's up. And then you say your idea, and it actually helps; that's the way they positively pressurise me."

4.3.2 The impact of perceptions held by teachers.

All participants discussed the impact of perceived negative perceptions teachers held can have on their and others' secondary school experiences. It was felt that this could inform how the students view themselves, their abilities, and their aspirations. In addition, those perceptions can lead to adverse outcomes for the students. Troy spoke of a teacher who had labelled a sibling in school as a *"troublesome boy"* who would *"not amount to much."* It was felt that this would impact the expectations a student would have of themselves.

Winston shared that some students have a *"reputation"* amongst teachers and peers for *"always getting into trouble,"* and he *"wouldn't be with them and stuff like that"* for fear he might be reprimanded along with those peers.

Similarly, George identified that teachers make assumptions about students who "*make everyone laugh…or do silly things"* as those most likely to cause disruptions in class.

Vernon believes he will be seen as a *"bad learner"* if he does not *"put the effort in."*

4.3.3 The perceived negative perceptions of black people.

Three participants talked about their perceived perception people can have of Black people. These perceptions informed what they thought people would think about aspects of their culture and ethnicity. More importantly, they explained how these perceptions affect how they behave at school. For example, George believed that people would not have hairstyles such as *"dreadlocks"* as they may be deemed "*a Rasta or a dangerous person or something like that."*

Similarly, Troy expressed awareness about people *"looking to prove their point"* about Black people, so he is wary that if he were seen playfighting with friends, people would say:

"*We are just aggressive criminals that are dumb and haven't figured out anything; that just proves their point because we're just punching someone for no reason at that point."*

He also shared his difficulty in understanding the conflicting views of other ethnicities concerning black facial and body features.

For instance, "*you were frowned upon to have big lips or look or big bum, for example, but now it's always the exact reverse. People are getting injection on their lips to make them puffier like us and bigger bums like us in general."*

Winston spoke of not *"being the next black boy in the news… just the boy that gets stabbed."* He believes that not being engaged academically would lead him to the possibility of that fat*:*

"*I want to stay on task, so I don't go off task and end up like that. Yeah, it's always like that reminder in my head when I'm doing something like, do you want to end up like those people, or you don't want to be with them?"*

Unique to Winston was his parent's encouragement for him not to identify as *"Caribbean",* given his parent's perceived knowledge of *"…how bad things can be*

in the Caribbean." Winston believed his parents did not want him pictured as "…*Dad's old friends; they always have a cigarette in the hand, they have rum in the next hand".*

4.3.4 Effective Support from Teachers.

Three participants gave explanations about the help they felt was effective for them during their secondary school experience. Vernon and Winston shared their appreciation of when teachers were concerned and took an interest in their wellbeing. For example, when Vernon was dealing with bereavement, *"Ms Jees, let me go out of lesson. And then Miss Ins, it was said that I could stay with her for the rest of the day."* Likewise, Winston shared that he would like teachers to *"look out for him on a personal level,"* as he is *"not the most vocal person."* He would like teachers to inquire about his wellbeing in order for him to have space to verbalise his feelings. Troy referred to *"maths and science interventions"* that benefited him and that the school *"…should do more often.'*

4.3.5 The Impact of school policy and Initiatives.

Three participants spoke about how school policy has contributed to celebrating and accepting diversity amongst the school population. All the students referred to the *"Halo Code",* which was introduced to prevent discrimination concerning natural and protective hairstyles. For Troy and George, it brought new liberties for students to express themselves and brought about an understanding of their culture.

For example, *"…You could wear durags in school because it helps with your hairstyle sometimes; they accept that now. They didn't before, so they're really understanding our culture now. They're understanding the way we see things (Troy)," "…everyone has been really thinking about it deeply, about hairstyles that people are doing and how they like it (George)."* Winston referred to the school's cultural events as a vehicle to encourage adults to learn more about his culture. For example, *"Last year we had a culture's week on the cafeteria; every day was a different culture, like Mediterranean, African, and Caribbean…."*

4.3.6 The Influence of Family.

All participants described how their family impacted their lives and secondary school experience. They spoke of their parents all *"…wanting them to do well"* in school. Although this was a shared theme amongst all participants, each participant expressed the impact differently. Both Troy and George do not live with their biological fathers. This seems not to have a lasting impact on them as they have relationships to compensate for the absence of their fathers.

For Troy, his stepdad is: *"…very nice. He's a very nice person."* He included that his stepdad intends to support him in adulthood,*"…And when I turn 16, he is actually going to offer me a job in his company. He works in London underground company in the security, so he's basically helping me get my life set, something that my real dad didn't do."*

It doesn't have a lasting impact on George because he still has contact with his father. However, his mother makes up for what he lacks concerning paternal presence.

For example*, "I speak to him sometimes over the phone when I best can or the time is right. So, knowing that he's still there, but not really around, it doesn't really impact me, but it does feel different, having one parent, but it's being replaced because my mom's basically my best friend and my mom."*

All participants spoke about the existence of an academic expectation to perform well. George spoke of the benefit of his mother having done business studies herself as *"…she helps me revise in business as she used to have a job in business and her experiences in business studies."* It also sets the standard for George *"…to get the best grades…it would basically make me personally feel that I know that my mum did it and I completed her work basically…."*

Vernon feels that his parents expect him to emulate his siblings and go to university as he said,*"… they've seen my brother and sister do it, so they probably expect me to be able to do it. And I don't know if I can."*

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For Winston, having an extended family member at school influenced his behaviour and was an *"…extra factor in my decision-making. Let's say if I am up to no good, that he would tell my family."* Winston, George and Troy all mentioned that they received direct help with their learning from family, whether it was *"…they keep me on track...always asking when is the next test (Winston),"* or *"..Helps me revise (George),"* or help with picking GCSE subjects *"…mum just said, "Pick something that you feel like would be fun almost. When you're learning, you want to be engaged, and if it's fun for you, you want to be engaged as well…. (Troy)."*

4.3.7 The impact of teachers of the same ethnicity.

All participants discussed that having experience of a teacher of the same ethnic background positively influences their secondary education experience. Vernon, George and Winston all feel that having teachers from the same ethnic background (BC) is beneficial as those teachers "*will understand*" sharing similar experiences, traditions and the culture of BCs students. For example, George mentioned:

"…talking to another Caribbean teacher gives me more comfort because I feel like they can also relate to the things I say or maybe do. I feel like they can understand, or they grew up with the same things or certain preferences that I might have that others might not." In addition, George mentioned giving greater weight to teachers of the same ethnicity's advice. For example, "*…when they give you a motivational talk, you really take in as they're from the same culture as you.*"

Winston expressed that *"some teachers"* would be able to understand as they *"…they are from where I am from."* However, Troy felt that it is easy to relate to *"…teachers that are from different cultures that understand and that off the chat when you're talking about something, the teacher overhears and want to join in the conversation too…."*

4.4 Summary.

Chapter 4 presents the themes from each participant's unique experience of life in a secondary school within the United Kingdom and those shared across the participants. The findings presented in chapter 4 will be discussed further in chapter 5. Chapter 5 discusses the findings concerning the research question. The findings will also be considered in light of the current literature on this topic and the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 1. The researcher will also go on to discuss the implications and limitations of the research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction to Chapter 5.

The previous chapter detailed the findings from each participant's account and their commonalities. In this chapter, the researcher discusses the findings concerning the research question, linking it to the theoretical framework and literature outlined in chapter 2. Furthermore, the strengths and limitations of this research are discussed, along with the implications of the research and the plan for dissemination.

5.2 Discussion of the findings in relation to the research question.

5.2.1 What can we learn from the secondary school experiences of Black Caribbean boys?

The following themes presented in Figure 5.1 from the findings show what has been learnt regarding the secondary school experiences of BC boys in the current study.
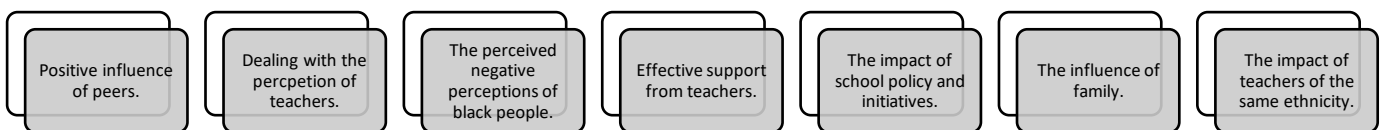
Figure 5.1 *Themes from findings across participants.*

Each theme will be discussed concerning what they help us learn about the experiences of BC boys and are discussed in the light of previous literature.

5.2.2 Positive influences of peers.

This theme relates to how participants have experienced peers positively influencing their secondary school experience. Participants shared how peers have positively influenced them with their learning and emotional wellbeing at school.

Three participants expressed that positive peer influences have been helpful during their secondary education. Vernon experienced mutual support amongst friends, which was beneficial in completing work efficiently, and Troy shared how his peers encouraged him to discuss his ideas in class. This is consistent with the findings from a study by Robinson (2020) in which participants noted that peers helped them cope with the demands of school, including exams and revision. In contrast to the current research, however, Robinson's study looked at the narratives of high-achieving BC boys in secondary school. Although academic ability was not part of the inclusion or exclusion criteria in the current study, BC boys benefitted from peer support regardless of their ability level. These findings can be further explained by Bourdieu's ToC (1986). Bourdieu explains that being in a similar social position (being students) and social space (i.e. classroom) makes it easier to rely on each other for help given the similar experience of demands in the school environment. Peers with different compositions of institutionalised cultural capital (academic ability) and social capital can be valuable resources for the academic success of these BC students.

Furthermore, Gosai (2009) observed that BC boys used their shared language (creole) to explain the concepts taught in class to each other. Drawing further from Bourdieu's ToC, embodied cultural capital appears to have utility in the classroom field. Bourdieu explains that having a particular capital can be an advantage in a particular field. These findings show that having this embodied cultural capital with a peer of a similar social position in this field gave them the power to access what was being taught. Intersectionality theory deals with how different social and political identities intersect to create inequality or advantage (Crenshaw, 1989). Gosai's (2009) findings highlight how the intersections of

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ethnicity and language can be used amongst BC boys as a resource to access learning. The BC boys in Gosai's study benefited from friends who were more academically inclined or had a better approach to learning.

As well as noting that peers were a source of academic support, participants in the current study also mentioned that peers and friends were a source of emotional support. There was a similar feature in Robinson's (2020) study, where BC boys reported that peers supported their learning and personal wellbeing in coping with schoolwork demands. Considering the perspective of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory in this case, the bi-directional influences between students within their peer-group microsystems create these mutually beneficial moments that positively impact their academic performance. However, interactions with peers are not always positive, so it is important to note that the impact of bi-directional influences could be positive or negative. Participants in Robinson's (2020) study stated that observing the negative consequences faced by peers shaped their behaviour choices and with whom they chose to associate.

5.2.3 Dealing with the perceptions of teachers.

This theme covers how the participants' views on the perceptions held by their teachers can negatively influence their experience of secondary school. The participants in this research had to navigate trying to make sense of their teachers' actions and perceived beliefs.

Winston shared that he avoided students he perceived had a negative reputation with teachers to avoid being judged alongside them. This displays how students' perceptions of teachers can influence their behaviour choices, including with whom they have friendships. It demonstrates the power teachers' perceptions could have. Similarly, George mentioned that teachers making assumptions about students with 'bad reputations' increased the probability of such students experiencing adverse outcomes. This shows that students perceive that teachers' labelling could lead to negative consequences. This was a finding consistent with two students from Robinson's (2020) study, who avoided associating with fellow

Black students with a low-ability reputation for fear they would be discriminated against (assumptions of low ability). Despite the students in Robinson's study being labelled as high achieving, they still perceived potential discrimination based on whom they associated with.

These findings can be further understood using CRT (Brown and Jackson, 2013). The students are aware of their teacher's perceptions and can internalise negative assumptions. For example, Troy believed, through a sibling's experience of discrimination, being labelled as troublesome could impact a student's aspirations and self-concept. Through CRT, this can be an example of how Black individuals being constructed as 'troublesome' can discriminate and impact how other BC boys believe they are viewed. Theory of Capital (Bourdieu 1986) helps us see how Troy's brother being viewed as troublesome would lead him to believe how his embodied cultural capital is valued within school, thus impacting his disposition (being wary of discrimination). This coincides with the reports of students in Upton (2012), where students felt that teachers had a critical influence on their progress and aspirations. This critical influence was determined by the student's perception of their relationship with the teacher, teaching skills, and behaviour management. Although Upton's study involved students in Year seven at the beginning of their secondary education, it could be argued that they may still be in a transition phase where they are acclimatising to the new expectations of secondary school, which may create a heightened awareness of the teachers' perceptions.

Experiences around negative labelling and judgement appear to potentially impact what students think of themselves and what they can achieve. CRT helps explain how the negative social constructs of BC boys are detrimental to this group, as the negative perceptions can adversely determine the views and beliefs they hold about themselves (Freeman, 1978). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977) concludes that relationships in the immediate environment, and the microsystem, including teachers, are bi-directional. This means that the interactions between BC students and teachers can change their perceptions of each other. Furthermore, Vernon noted how teachers could

perceive a 'bad learner' based on a lack of effort in class. This shows how teachers' perceptions influence students' views of what makes a successful learner. In Robinson's study (2020), the BC boys used self-presentation skills to manage teachers' perceptions. For example, a student may perceive that changing their use of language (e.g., speaking formally instead of using colloquialisms) or masking their emotions would make them appear more intelligent to their teachers. The perceptions the participants have of ideas held by teachers can cause them to behave in ways that would make them appear as high achievers before their teachers. Teachers must be cognizant of this influence to help students develop positive concepts of themselves as learners. From this, it could be said that the perceived negativity anticipated by the students from teachers shaped how they behaved to counteract this. They could counteract this by masking their emotions or avoiding associating with specific peers.

5.2.4 The perceived negative perceptions of Black people

Three participants shared how they are impacted by perceived negative stereotypes of black people held by society and their influences on their experience at secondary school.

George shared that he believes people have attached negative connotations to hairstyles associated with BC culture. For example, having dreadlocks, *"you are assumed to be a 'Rasta' or 'a dangerous person"*, leads people not to adopt such a hairstyle. Troy believes that people expect Black people to be aggressive, which shapes how he presents himself when stressed to counteract this stereotypical view. These findings were congruent with Gosai's (2009) findings, where BC boys also felt that the negative stereotyping of Black men was pervasive in society. Given the date of the Gosai study, this could suggest that this theme is constant across time.

Winston saw engaging with education as a way of avoiding becoming another Black boy involved in crime. This idea is reflected in Upton's study (2012), where

participants felt that the depiction of Black people in the media encouraged discrimination in society. CRT can further explain these findings, which suggest that ideas about race and ethnicity are products of social thought and that the conceptualisation of BC culture is socially constructed (Freeman, 1978). These constructions perpetuate negative stereotypes to the detriment of how BC people are viewed in society. Furthermore, CRT would deem the prevalence of negative stereotypes mentioned throughout the participants' accounts as evidence of the normalcy of racism towards BCs.

Bourdieu's ToC helps explain the impact of negative stereotypes on BC boys. The portrayal of the embodied cultural capital of BC boys via the media can influence the ideas teachers and peers have of BC boys and thus determine the habitus (perceptions of themselves and others) they are likely to have in a particular social setting such as school. In addition, these ideas can inform teachers' beliefs concerning the ability of BC boys to acquire institutionalised cultural capital (good grades, degrees, etc.).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977) further helps us understand the potential influence mass media in a child or young person's wider environment can have on their development. Within this theory, he describes the various environments a child is exposed to as systems. Two of these systems are the exosystem (social structures such as mass media) and the macrosystem (attitudes/stereotypes held by society). The negative stereotypes about BC (in the macrosystems) found that the participants' accounts can be funnelled through the media (exosystem) and society, which can influence the views and beliefs of other microsystems such as school, family and peers. As mentioned previously, there is potential for bi-directional influences between these students and their teachers, which could reinforce the perceived negative perceptions of Black people. For example, the negative views held in society about BC culture may cause a teacher to have a negative bias towards BC boys leading them to internalise those negative perceptions. The views of teachers held by the students can shape their self-concept and how they relate to the world around them. Through ToC, teachers hold a level of power in school due to their

institutionalised capital (qualifications) within schools. This level of influence within this field (school) could be unconsciously used to inform the value attributed to the embodied cultural capital (ethnicity, behaviours, and culture) and thus determine the habitus (perception of themselves and the world) they develop.

5.2.5 Effective support from teachers.

This theme relates to the teachers' support the BC boys received, which was perceived as effective during their secondary school experience.

Three participants shared how they benefited from and appreciated teachers' interest in their emotional wellbeing. Vernon recognised the support teachers gave him when he suffered a bereavement. The offer of quiet time outside the classroom was welcomed. Winston also appreciated the initiation of teachers asking about his feelings as it allowed him to share his thoughts, given that he described himself as not outspoken.

This has some congruence with thoughts shared by participants in Upton's (2012) study. Participants felt positive about teachers that acted in their best interests. Some teachers seen to instil boundaries and discipline in class and be passionate about their teaching were deemed to act in the BC boys' best interests. The students were able to trust these teachers and viewed them as genuine. In addition, the Upton (2012) study also suggested support that was deemed unhelpful. This included classroom practices such as 'streaming' (placing pupils in classes based on their abilities). In Simon's study (2019), a participant noted that a significantly positive experience in his secondary school education was the concern of his teachers regarding his academic attainment.

This result can be further explained through Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977) because the BC boys in these studies had positive interactions within their classroom microsystems through receiving effective support, which reinforced positive beliefs about their teachers. The findings in the current study

showed that the BC boys felt that effective support went further than academic support and included emotional support. Teachers' concern about academic performance, personal wellbeing and achievement was perceived to be of great value to the BC boys. Such support could be seen to inform the beliefs the boys had about their teachers. For example, the boys were more likely to believe that the teachers genuinely cared about their wellbeing if those teachers took time to consider the boys' thoughts and feelings.

It is also essential to consider the opinions the BC boys shared on teachers' ethnicity when receiving support (this is explored further in 5.2.8). Participants mentioned how teachers of the same ethnicity better understand the participants' lived experiences. George went further and said that teachers of the same ethnicity would be able to understand the reasoning behind the boys' behaviour choices, as he assumed that they would have had a similar upbringing to him and been exposed to similar lived experiences, giving the teacher a particular understanding of the attitudes of the student. In Simon's (2019) study, a participant (Johnathan) recalled that the support he had received to succeed in English was due to his BC heritage teacher. Gosai (2009) shared how he observed mutual respect between Black professionals and the BC boys, which allowed healthy challenges to their behaviour choices.

5.2.6 The impact of school policy and initiatives.

The school's implementation of policy and initiatives helped raise awareness and celebrate ethnic diversity in their school. The school had a policy that allowed students to wear natural and protective hairstyles. For example, they allowed weaves and wigs and students could wear headscarves to protect their hair.

For three of the students, having a policy around wearing natural and protective hairstyles typical of BC culture was considered significant. Troy and George spoke of students enjoying new liberties, such as wearing 'durags' to protect their hair. Troy, George and Winston acknowledged the efforts made by the school to try to emulate cultural dishes despite them not being of the desired quality.

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This can be further explained by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977). It displays how changes within the exosystem, structures such as school policies, can influence the individual child or young person's experience. Although a child may not be directly involved with this structure, changes in the exosystem can shape the participants' experiences within different microsystems, such as school classrooms and peer groups. Implementing a natural and protective hairstyle policy can create awareness and acceptance of a student's individuality, allowing them to feel comfortable at school amongst staff and peers. Such policy changes have led to an environment that acknowledges crucial aspects of different ethnicities, and current research suggests that this can help children and young people understand the cultural differences in hairstyles. As George said, *"now that I think that's been introduced (hair policy), everyone has been really thinking about it deeply, about hairstyles that people are doing and how they like it."*

Furthermore, the impact of school policy and initiatives can be understood in the context of the ToC (1986). The policy and specific days to showcase ethnicities create opportunities for students and staff to acquire knowledge related to cultural capital (particular ethnicities' ways of being, language, food and dress).

The acquisition of this cultural capital could be said to promote better relations between various social groups. For example, peers and teachers of other ethnicities relate to and learn about the similarities and differences they may have with Caribbean culture. This can promote an acknowledgement and prioritisation of what might be significant to the student's identity. However, the participants in the present research felt that not enough effort and care were taken to emulate cultural dishes as they lacked distinct flavours and preparation. Despite acknowledging the effort, the participants felt the school was not well informed concerning their culture. Efforts to improve this would help avoid cultural days being seen as tokenistic. From this research, it would appear that the participants felt that the use of school policy and initiatives to celebrate and recognise BC

culture created an atmosphere of acceptance and provided the liberty for the BC boys to embrace their culture.

For example, George said, "*the teachers might like it or give you compliments, which would make you feel better about your culture, or make you want to embrace it even more by a teacher complimenting me about it, or bringing in food from that culture, I guess. The teachers might know about it and might want to try some which could build someone confidence or how they feel about their culture".*

Considering critical race theory, if race and ethnicity are seen as a product of social thought, schools can use policy and initiatives to reinforce anti-discriminatory attitudes towards BC culture as well as use initiatives to inform better understanding amongst the wider school population. The use of policy (e.g. around hair) and initiatives (e.g. culture days) could be deemed an anti-essentialist approach to the needs of the BC pupils. However, there could be an interest convergence, where the school implement such policies to address the population's needs whilst receiving merit. It could be argued that policy would be more anti-essentialist or anti-discriminatory to BC boys when it reduces inequality seen in outcomes (e.g. exclusions and attainment) (Freeman, 1978).

5.2.7 The influence of family.

The family was shown to significantly influence the secondary school experiences of the participants in this research.

George spoke of his mother being a significant relationship to him in his father's absence. His mother's shared experience of studying business studies GCSE helped with learning the content and, through this, developed self-belief in his ability. Furthermore, this created confidence in his aspirations and his ability to achieve well across other GCSE subjects.

Similarly, Simon (2019) found that the participant Boris' mother was a significant support to him in his education by supporting him with his English work at home.

Vernon shared the unspoken expectations he felt from his family due to his siblings' academic success and attendance at university. The academic achievement of Vernon's siblings informed his perception concerning his parent's expectations. The influence of the family's achievements could create unspoken expectations of others within that family.

Winston also benefited from observing his parents' experience and attitude to work, which inspired his motivation towards education. This coincides with other studies which found that BC students were motivated by the high standards set by family (Upton, 2012 and Robinson, 2020). The students in Robinson's study also mentioned that they were inspired to prioritise their academic success by witnessing their parents' work circumstances because of limited educational opportunities. In addition, inspiring narratives passed through an extended family (such as grandparents) of overcoming hardship and discrimination to academically achieve encouraged them to value their education and perform well. These family members were seen as role models. These findings coincide with Troy's experience of having examples of role models in his family. He was confident that his cousin was a positive model of behaving and navigating social situations. Furthermore, he received support from his family when considering job prospects and choosing GCSE options.

This current research mentions the absence of two of the participants' biological fathers. These students used other family members' presence to mitigate their fathers' absence. Having the availability of mothers and other figures in their family network seemed to mitigate the impact of not having their biological fathers present. For example, Troy felt that his stepdad helped him with his future aspirations, teaching him how to write a resume, something he would have expected from his biological dad. George also spoke of his mother filling the relational void left by his father. He feels he can confide in his mother about anything. Given that both studies have a very small sample, further research on the absence of fathers for BC boys regarding reliance on family networks is needed.

These findings can be explained by Bourdieu's ToC (1986) in that having an institutionalised state of cultural capital within the family can benefit these boys. For example, George's mother had studied business studies, which meant she could support him with revision. Continuing with the ToC, having the social capital and the network of relationships without their biological fathers helped the boys in this study develop a secure identity enabling them to function effectively in different environments (home and school).

Considering intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), it is vital to recognise how the findings suggest that family influence was different for the BC boys from single-parent homes than those with both parents present. However, this would be hard to justify from a small sample size. From the students' accounts, the absence of their father was remedied by either a stepdad or a present mother meeting duties that their fathers would have otherwise fulfilled. The findings could be a counter-narrative against the cultural stereotype of absent fathers being a causal factor for BC boys' involvement in antisocial or criminal behaviour (Reynolds, 2009). The previous literature and this current research suggest that family significantly influences the experience of secondary school for BC boys.

5.2.8 The impact of teachers of the same ethnicity.

This theme covers the participants' views and experience of having school staff members of the same ethnicity. The participants believed that having teachers of the same ethnicity was beneficial for rapport and exploring their experiences at secondary school.

Three participants mentioned that having teachers of the same ethnicity would improve their secondary school experience. Vernon, Winston and George believe that teachers of BC heritage have more understanding due to the possibility of shared experiences. For these students, having the same ethnicity communicated an increased probability of relatedness between themselves and the teachers. Furthermore, George shared that he would be more receptive to the

advice of BC teachers as he believed they would have a greater understanding of him:

"I feel like hearing from a teacher that's of your culture can also help you with decisions, or when they give you a motivational talk you really take in as they're from the same culture as you. So, them having similar background to you will make me really take it in more".

He suggested a sense of influence they would have to advise and instruct him. In line with this, Gosai (2009) found that Black professionals were more able to challenge and inspire BC students, moving them away from negative stereotypes.

Troy found that sharing similar cultural experiences with teachers made it easier to relate and build rapport with them.

He said, "*the teacher overhears and want to join in the conversation too. So sometimes there'll be teachers that are from different cultures that understand and that off the chat when you're talking about something, the teacher overhears and want to join in the conversation too*".

This was also highlighted in the study done by Simon (2019). One of her participants (Johnathan) attributed his success in English to his close relationship with his English teacher of BC heritage.

These findings can be further explained by Bourdieu's ToC, where shared cultural capital can help build a positive relationship between staff and pupils. Where there is shared embodied cultural capital (language and cultural expectations, among other things) between the students and teachers, it appears to help form and establish relationships which increase the social capital of teachers and students. Concerning Bronfenbrenners's ecological systems theory, the students from these studies experience positive relationships within their microsystems, positively impacting their development. In this research, George, a Caribbean

teacher who understood athletics, was able to guide him in what distance he would be best at running. In the case of Johnathon in Simon's (2019) study, his relationship with his teacher resulted in improved academic performance.

From what the participants shared, it was understood that having shared ethnicity with teachers helps establish rapport and mutual respect with the participants. Shared ethnicity was linked with the assumption that these teachers would have a shared understanding of their lived experiences. This understanding could lead them to relate to the boys' cultural experience, be more receptive to the teacher's advice or comprehend the BC boys' way of being (attitudes and behaviour).

5.3. Limitations of the research.

This section will discuss the weaknesses in the research and how further research could improve these limitations.

5.3.1 Sample size and context of the study.

To be in keeping with the IPA approach regarding homogeneity and the in-depth idiographic analysis required, a small sample size was used for the present research. Given the response to participant recruitment (only eight responded with consent) and the homogeneity among the sample (Cresswell, 2012), four participants were deemed appropriate. This allowed four students to participate in the advisory group. In addition, participants were only recruited from one secondary school in an inner London borough. This means that there are limitations on the extent to which the results can be generalised to the broader population of BC boys in secondary schools across the United Kingdom, and this has not been an aim of the current research. The researcher has provided information on the participants and the school context so that the reader can judge how much the findings relate to other school contexts. For example, the context in which BC boys reside can contribute to their experience at secondary school. For example, attending a school with a low population of BCs may result in a very different experience than a school with a high population of BC boys.

5.3.2 Procedure.

Although it was not deemed necessary in the planning of this research, conducting a pilot study would have been beneficial. A pilot study would have allowed trialling the interview questions with other BC boys. This would have provided the focus group with helpful feedback on framing questions and raised other possible areas of questioning. Due to the limited time for this research, a pilot study could not happen.

In the current research, an advisory group of four BC boys created the interview questions. While conducting the interviews, the researcher gained insight into how receptive the participants were to the questions. The participants had significant prompting to answer the questions. For example, when considering their relationships with staff, the researcher prompted students to think about staff members other than their teachers (e.g. teaching assistant, head teacher, learning mentor). Certain words like 'extent' needed to be simplified to 'how much' when discussing the level of support received at school.

The present research was carried out over an 8-month period which determined the research's scale. Given the timescale and the difficulty of recruiting schools to participate in the study, the research was limited to one school. Staff within schools struggled to carry out their paid role whilst recruiting and following up with potential participants. Attending schools in person at events across the academic year, such as parent's evening, could have made the recruitment process more manageable, provided there was adequate time.

The researcher would have also preferred to share the cross-participant themes with the participants and get their feedback on the findings before presenting them in the thesis.

5.3.3 The competence of the researcher.

IPA is an approach that produces rich and detailed accounts of a person's lived experiences. In this research, a semi-structured interview schedule was used to allow flexibility and openness in the conversation with the students to allow an in-depth exploration of their experiences. To achieve this exploration, it was incumbent on the researcher to be attuned and responsive to ask questions that probe deeper into the participants' experience. Given that this was the first time the researcher used the IPA approach, it was felt that their interview skills were still in their infancy. Although the researcher grew in their questioning confidence with each interview, the inability to discern specific moments and probe further may have led to missed opportunities to gain further information. Considering this, it is essential to note that the researcher worked to mitigate this by reviewing their questioning with the support of their supervisor. This led to questions with similarities being condensed further to reduce the number of questions and allow further exploration concerning responses in the interviews.

5.4 Strengths of the research.
In this section, the researcher details the strengths of the research.

5.4.1 The positioning of the researcher.
In considering the strengths of the research, it is essential to note the positioning of the researcher. The researcher being a Black male, could have been helpful to the research. Given that the current research explores the experiences of Black ethnicity, it was felt that the researcher being a Black male would aid rapport and allow the students to feel at ease. The participants appeared comfortable with the researcher, given the relative ease with which they engaged in free speech and the participants' use of colloquialisms (e.g. slang terms like 'fam' or 'Netflix and chill').

In contrast, Gosai (2009) explained that he was of Indian heritage and was unfamiliar with the vernacular used by the participants in his study. Furthermore,

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he could not judge the tone of colloquialisms used, which impacted his interpretations of his observations. The present researcher is also of a different ethnicity and heritage. However, it did not seem to impact the interactions with the participants as differences in heritage could have been masked by shared race (being Black) and the possibility of identifying with aspects of the research (e.g. having dreadlocks associated with BC culture). This was observed with one participant and in the advisory group, where the participants mentioned that hairstyles were part of their identity.

5.4.2 Collaborative approach.

The present research used a collaborative approach to explore the secondary school experiences of BC boys. The researcher felt this approach would allow the participants with expert knowledge of the researched phenomena to ensure the voices of those with lived experience as BC boys were integral to the research (Aldridge, 2015). This involved setting up an advisory group of four BC boys within the school to devise interview questions. In devising the interview questions, the students selected questions that they felt were appropriate to elicit the participants' lived experiences of secondary school. The researcher observed that participants in the advisory group found this process empowering. The researcher also noticed that the participants in the advisory group were invested in discussing issues that concerned them and collaborating to decide on pertinent matters. The approach valued their input in ensuring the research reflected the thoughts and opinions of people with essential knowledge of what it is to be a BC student.

5.5 Dissemination.

Due to the collaborative approach taken with this research, the participants involved will have a role in deciding how the findings are disseminated in the school and the wider community.

5.5.1 Dissemination to participants.

Once the thesis and viva have been completed, the researcher will meet with the participants. Within this group, the cross-participant themes will be shared. Participants will then be asked to give feedback on the findings, with the researcher elaborating on any information that may appear unclear.

5.5.2 Dissemination to the school and wider community.

The school's senior management team will share a summary of the completed thesis. In meeting the participants, they will decide how they would like to share the findings with the rest of the school and the wider community (staff and parents). The researcher will also share a summary of the thesis with the local authority under whose jurisdiction the research took place.

5.6 Implications for practice .

This section will cover the implications for the practice of EPs and other professionals working with BC boys that are suggested from the research findings.

5.6.1 Experiences of resilience.

The research findings revealed experiences that fostered resilience among the participants and helped promote positive outcomes for BC boys in secondary school. For example, students in this research suggested that strong peer relationships were helpful to their classroom learning and preparation for exams. In addition, the influence of family played a significant role in shaping the

participants' attitudes and aspirations towards education and supporting the participants with taught lessons. When promoting positive outcomes for BC boys, EPs and educational professionals should consider the experiences that fostered resilience for the participants described in Chapter four. EPs can support school staff in ensuring that BC boys have a social network amongst peers and check if they have access to family support for learning. This can help determine the type of intervention to support their learning. Resilience factors such as family and peer support can be considered by EPs and other professionals and included as part of the EPs' framework when engaging with casework involving BC boys. This may involve investigating peer relationships and family dynamics to determine the support network available to the student (and how to promote this further).

5.6.2 Prioritising the voice of Black Caribbean boys.

In this research, the BC boys revealed that their cultural identity plays a significant role in forming and establishing relationships with peers and adults at school.

EPs and other professionals working with BC boys can use approaches that prioritise the voice of BC boys to explore their views and lived experiences at school. This information can be utilised to support BC boys in building positive relationships with school staff and create a shared understanding of their lived experiences where necessary. This could be done using culturally sensitive tools such as SOCIAL GGRRAAACCEEESSS (Burnham, 2012). This framework can help people talk about elements of their identity and how it influences their interaction with the world around them (Drew, 2020) (See figure 5.2).
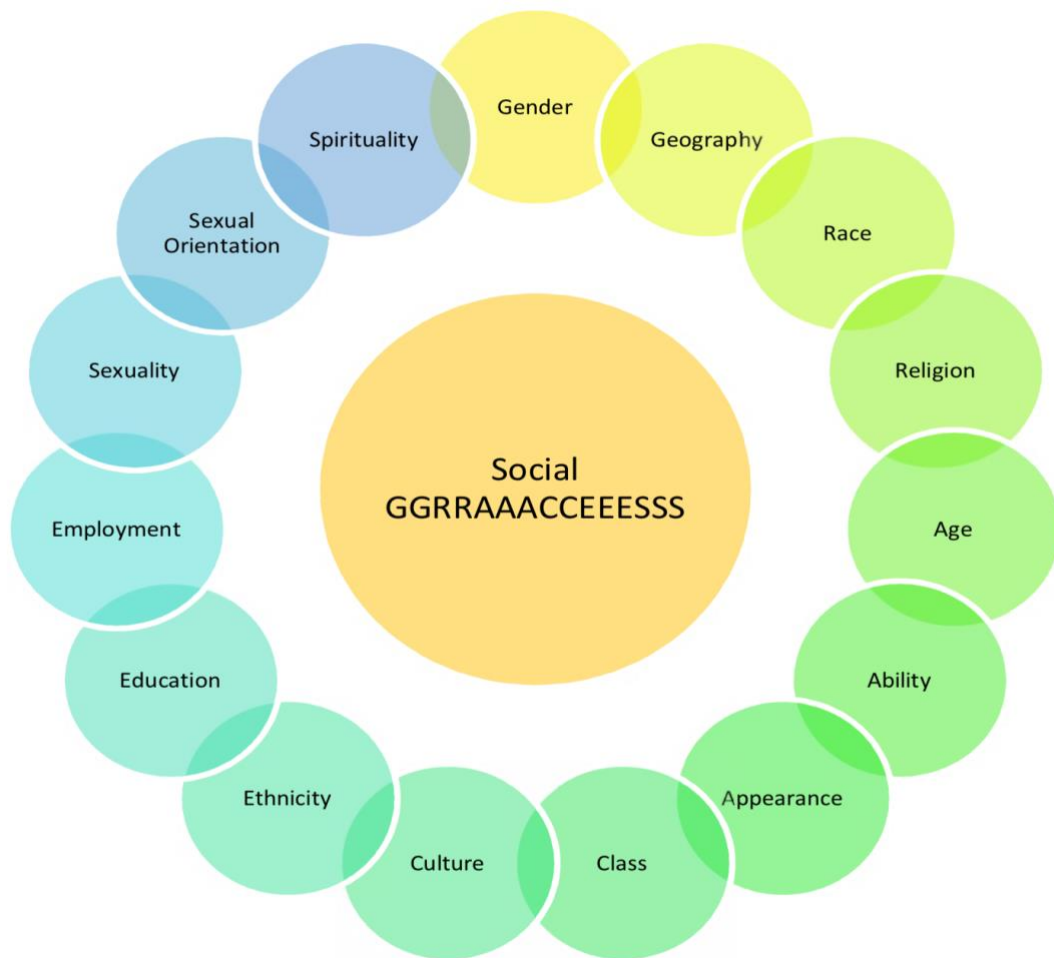
Figure 5.2 A visual of the different elements of identity explored in SOCIAL GGRRAAACCEEESSS.

The current research findings revealed that a shared understanding of cultural experiences appeared important to the participants. Having shared cultural experiences played a role in creating a positive atmosphere where teachers could give the participants constructive feedback. In addition, the participants felt they could be more receptive to the advice given by teachers that share their cultural experiences. While ethnicity may have been a significant contributor to these effects, school staff of BC descent may not always be accessible. In this case, staff need to adopt approaches that keep them curious about understanding the ethnic diversity within the school population. EPs have a role in equipping school staff with approaches (such as SOCIAL GGRRAAACCEEESSS) that they can use effectively. The views and experiences

of BC boys could be used to develop policy around and embed anti-discriminatory practices within schools.

Prioritising the voice of BC boys can transform the way schools and professionals support boys of this ethnicity academically and personally.

5.6.3 Staff recruitment procedures.

Following from 5.6.2, the findings showed that the BC students in this research appreciated having ethnic diversity among the school staff and, in particular, mentioned valuing having staff of the same ethnicity.

An implication for schools is to consider diversity within their staff and school population when recruiting. Schools should make the experience of working with diverse populations and promoting anti-discriminatory practice a significant part of their selection process. The prospective school staff should be able to demonstrate competencies (such as an awareness of cultural differences) that allow them to promote inclusion. Additionally, schools should consider employing staff from various ethnic backgrounds.

5.6.4 The impact of the perceptions of teachers.

The participant's views of their teacher's perceptions were shown to affect their self-perceptions and behaviour. The findings demonstrate that the participants were wary of being labelled with negative stereotypes (e.g., disruptive or troublesome) and being discriminated against because of whom they associated with (e.g., pupils whom the participants deemed to have a negative reputation with teachers). In addition, one participant felt he was a good learner when his teacher deemed his learning effort adequate. Teachers need to be considerate in their approach to pupils, ensuring they are cognisant that their perception of pupils influences how the students behave and what they internalise.

5.6.5 Support the implementation of policy and initiatives in schools.

The findings showed that implementing school policies that allow wearing protective and natural hairstyles and initiatives, such as cultural days, caused the participants to feel that their culture and ethnicity were accepted and celebrated.

This should encourage EPs to work in partnership with schools to identify how they could use policy development to foster greater acceptance and celebration of ethnic diversity within a school population. This could include the review of existing policies and procedures a school uses. Given the participants' experience dealing with teachers' perceptions, schools must consider policies encouraging anti-discriminatory practice. This would help create a school environment with greater acceptance of different cultures.

This research has shown the value of using people with direct experience of the explored phenomenon. A collaborative approach helped ensure that those with expert knowledge of the phenomena researched were at the centre of possible transformative change. EPs could also consider assisting schools in using collaborative approaches when implementing cultural initiatives. For example, schools can encourage the participation of BC people within the school population when organising culture days. In addition, schools could invite input from parents and staff interested in Black history to support Black history initiatives. This would ensure that those with expert knowledge inform the initiatives that are implemented,

5.6.6 Promoting anti-discriminatory practices.

This research revealed the prevalence of perceived stereotypes around Black people, impacting how these BC boys feel others view them in school.

An implication for schools is to consider the impact mass media has in informing the self-concept of BC boys within their school population. Professionals within schools would need to identify opportunities within the National Curriculum to

celebrate and teach positive contributions that Black people have made to history and education. For example, teachers using reading material written by Black authors and other minority ethnic backgrounds and fostering a critical awareness of stereotyping processes.

EPs could work with schools to promote anti-discriminatory practices. For example, EPs can support schools in reviewing their disciplinary procedures and identifying any disproportionality in the data held by schools. This could be looking at children on the SEN register, attainment across different subjects, and fixed and permanent exclusions. Furthermore, EPs could help schools recognise how cultural differences influence the interpretation of behaviours. This will help reduce potential disadvantages for students, especially BC boys, who are overly represented in negative outcomes, such as exclusion (DFE, 2022). EPs and schools can ensure a graduated approach is taken to protect the vulnerable in their school population.

5.7 Implications for further research.

Considering how this current research was conducted, the researcher discusses in this section areas in the researched topic that could be expanded in further research.

5.7.1 Explore the experiences of other ethnic groups.

The present research focuses on the secondary school experience of BC boys due to their over-representation in exclusion data and being disproportionally identified with SEMH needs (Strand and Lindorff, 2018). Further research should explore the secondary school experiences of other ethnic groups. For example, future research could look at students' experiences from the traveller community or mixed white and BC boys, as they are also overrepresented in the permanent exclusion data (DFE, 2022.

5.7.2 Research experiences across different secondary schools.

The current research occurred in one secondary school within an inner London local authority. Future research could look at the secondary school experience of BC boys across multiple schools to examine similarities and differences and why they occur.

Additionally, the current research took place in a school with a high proportion of ethnic diversity. Future research should look at conducting research across different secondary schools, including secondary schools with a low proportion of BC boys.

5.8 Reflections and reflexivity.

In this section, the researcher addresses the potential areas where bias could have influenced the research process. This section is written in the first person.

5.8.1 Researcher bias.

I must explain critical parts of my background and experience to acknowledge potential bias. As explained in Chapter 1, I am a Black male with experience attending a school in an inner London borough. In addition, I was a teaching assistant across two schools and a primary school teacher within the same area the research was undertaken.

My knowledge of the local area and experiences of the schools may produce preconceived ideas about what the research discovers. This could include assumptions about the attitudes of teaching staff and have tempted me to draw parallels between my secondary school experience and that of the participants.

I must acknowledge that my professional and personal experiences influenced this research. To counteract this, I kept a personal diary to record my views and responses throughout the research process to distance them from the

participants. In addition, supervision was also helpful in reflecting on my thoughts and feelings throughout the research process. Furthermore, ensuring that interpretations were evidenced from the participant's accounts with text extracts helped combat bias.

5.8.2 Positioning of the researcher.

It was in secondary school that I first observed a difference in the educational experience of BC boys. I was part of the ACE (African and Caribbean excellence) group, which shared educational experiences to promote academic aspiration. This was my first insight into how my BC peers in this particular group described not having education encouraged and endorsed at home, which was in stark contrast to mine. This affected my views by explaining why some of my BC peers were less engaged with learning. Professionally, as a teacher and assistant educational psychologist, most of the children and young people I consulted reported concerns regarding how most challenging behaviour and social and emotional issues concerned BCs. It is possible that during the research process, this may have influenced how I interpreted the findings, identifying more with experiences mentioned that were closely related to mine. For instance, when interpreting the students' discourse around teachers' perceptions of BC boys, I could consider my experiences with teachers regarding BC boys. Additionally, the discriminatory views I have experienced towards my hairstyles informed my interpretations made of their experience of stereotypical views towards their hairstyles.

The advisory group helped keep my experiences regarding people of BC heritage ringfenced. The advisory group provided questions to explore the participants' experience, which gave me a focus.

In addition, I was aware that my appearance may have played a role in the examples and illustrations the participants used to speak about their experiences. Given that I was wearing a hairstyle typically associated with BC culture (dreadlocks), students in the advisory group and interviews referred to or alluded

to the hairstyle. However, I believe this aided rapport between myself and the participants and enabled them to identify with an aspect of my individuality.

5.8.3 IPA process.

As part of the IPA analysis process, the researcher had to engage in the double hermeneutic. This is where the researcher engages with the participant's account, attempting to make sense of the participant's interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). The researcher's priority was to make the participants' interpretation the primary concern (Smith et al., 2009). To ensure this, the researcher ensured that any sense-making came from the terms of the text created by the participant. If an assumption of the participants' sense-making was made, the researcher ensured that the conversation with the participants could evidence the interpretation. This helped ensure that the findings accurately reflected the data collected. It was time-consuming but often led the researcher to regularly review their interpretations with the content found in the participant's transcripts.

5.8.4 Key learning.

I have found the research process challenging yet rewarding. It has been an opportunity to experience new and novel approaches to research. It has added to my knowledge regarding research methodology.

Given my personal experiences detailed in Chapter One and the current chapter, section 5.7.2, this research gave me more understanding of the experiences BC boys face in secondary school. I was surprised at how the students could resolve issues regarding their fathers' absence and demonstrate emotional resilience. In addition, I was intrigued by how the students felt the presence of policy and how that positively impacted their experience at school. From my observations, the participants were prepared for the interviews and appeared enthusiastic about participating. Collaborating with the BC boys in formulating the interview questions allowed them to feel a sense of control and that their knowledge was valued in ensuring the researcher asked the relevant questions to ascertain their

lived experiences. The advisory group appeared invested; I observed them confer with each other to ensure the questions and wording were representative of their ideas. The students in the advisory group felt empowered by having a forum to speak freely about their secondary experiences and were in control of how their views would inform the questioning used for interviews. I would consider taking a participatory approach in the future.

Conducting the interviews enabled me to hone my questioning skills, thus allowing me to explore the participants' experiences more profoundly.

5.9 Final conclusions

The present research took a collaborative approach in exploring the secondary school experiences of BC boys in one secondary school. This research aimed to give insight into and understand how they make sense of their lived experiences. As a result, it was hoped that this would provide professionals with a greater understanding which might lead to practical approaches to working with this group.

The findings highlighted experiences that fostered resilience for BC boys at secondary school. The participants shared benefitting from positive peer support; having peers encouraging revision and sharing ideas in class is something they felt aided their success at school. Similarly, the participants felt most supported when teachers were interested in their emotional wellbeing and academic progress.

The support of family appeared to influence their aspirations and engagement with learning. Having family with experience in secondary education and parents who encouraged high aspirations positively influenced their attitude towards education.

The boys had beliefs about how society viewed Black people, which was in part endorsed by the wider society and mass media, for example, Black people's involvement in knife crime. This led them to anticipate being viewed by others in terms of the negative stereotypes about Black people held by society. One participant, for example, had the experience of a sibling being labelled as 'troublesome'. Others felt that they had to counteract negative stereotypes, such as being involved in crime or being seen as 'aggressive', by masking their behaviour in ways that conflict with stereotypes. Furthermore, the students felt that certain peers had a negative reputation among teachers, causing them not to associate with these individuals to avoid adverse consequences.

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The policies and initiatives implemented in the school to celebrate ethnic diversity were recognised and welcomed. The participants felt it encouraged them and other students to feel proud and confident of their heritage. It also provided insight to staff and peers about their cultural experiences.

The participants felt that their ethnicity was significant in their relationships. Their friendships seemed easier to form with their peers, given that their shared ethnicity produces shared experiences, resulting in a better rapport. The boys in this research felt they were more receptive toward teachers of the same ethnicity and perceived they would be understood better. Furthermore, the students are more likely to listen to guidance from teachers of the same ethnicity.

The research suggested implications for EPs and school staff. The findings revealed experiences that build resilience for the BC boys, which EPs and school staff can use to promote positive outcomes for BC boys.

Participants disseminating the findings will raise awareness of ethnic diversity among pupils and staff. Their voice will be central to any potential change to address inequalities and promote positive outcomes. It is hoped that schools will be encouraged to engage with the diversity within their population when implementing change. Hopefully, this research will improve the provision and boost the confidence of professionals working with BC boys.

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Appendices

Appendix 2.1 CASP checklist for each article included in the literature review (Gosai, 2009)

CASP
Critical Appraisal
Skills Programme

Section A: Are the results valid?

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?

   Yes ✔
   Can't Tell ☐
   No ☐

   HINT: Consider
   • what was the goal of the research
   • why it was thought important
   • its relevance

   Comments: investigate the exoereinces that affect the success and failure of Black males in English secondary schools. Comparing Black males secondary school experiences within a secondary school and two non-school sites - supplementary school and a youth organisation.

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?

   Yes ✔
   Can't Tell ☐
   No ☐

   HINT: Consider
   • If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants
   • Is qualitative research the tight methodology for addressing the research goal

   Comments: The researcher wanted to explore the subjective views of the Black males. it was felt that a questionairres or statistical information would give insight into the meaning the Black males apply to their social lives.

Is it worth continuing?

3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?

   Yes ✔
   Can't Tell ☐
   No ☐

   HINT: Consider
   • if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)

   Comments: The researcher used a participatory approach (parents) to gain questions for the semi-structured interview. Phenomenological approach to understand how they make sense of the world and build meaning. In addition, an ethnogrophic approach was used to observe participants & non-participants.

4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☑

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected
- If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study
- If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)

Comments: Participants (aged 15 to 16) were identified by the school or selected by staff. No discussion around why certain Black males were not chosen or involved. The non-selected Black Males who would hav self selected for the research may have had views that were rerspresentative of the BM experience.

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

Yes ☑
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If the setting for the data collection was justified
- If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)
- If the researcher has justified the methods chosen
- If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)
- If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why
- If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)
- If the researcher has discussed saturation of data

Comments: Yes, sem-structured interviews were used to collect datato explore expereinces through interaction, rapport and intimacy. Observations were used to see students in their natural setting. Tape recordings of interviews and note taking of observations where chosen as they were less invasive.

6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

Yes ✔

Can't Tell ☐

No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments: Researcher is aware of how their presence in observations could influence students.The researcher being Indian struggled to interpret and understand the colloquiallism used and accents of participants.

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

Yes ☐

Can't Tell ☐

No ✔

HINT: Consider
- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
- If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
- If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments: Researcher discusses about the issues of confidentiality, making sure participants are unidentifiable from their interviews. However, the ressearcher did not consider the possibility of students recalling traumatic experiences and how they would help in the event of this.

8. Was the data analysis
sufficiently rigorous?

Yes ☐

Can't Tell ✔

No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
- If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
- Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
- If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
- To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
- Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments: The reseaercher simply looked at the similiarities and differences between the views and oberservations of Black Males across the settings. No clear analysis procedure used but clearly sets outs structure the results are given.

9. Is there a clear statement
of findings?

Yes ✔

Can't Tell ☐

No ☐

HINT: Consider whether
- If the findings are explicit
- If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments
- If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
- If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments: Researcher deals wit the similarities and differences across each of the settings. The results are discussed with refeence to previous research.

10. How valuable is the research?

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature
- If they identify new areas where research is necessary
- If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other ways the research may be used

Comments: Understanding of how the Black students form different relationships with teachers across the different setttings. Findings could suggest practices that could be shareed across settings.

(Robinson, 2020)

Section A: Are the results valid?

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell
No

HINT: Consider
• what was the goal of the research
• why it was thought important
• its relevance

Comments: This research aims to investigate the perception of peers group and family influences through the narratives of high attaining African Caribbean males.
- To indentify the impact it has on behaviour and motivations to be sucessful.
It is important and relevant as there limited research of high attaining African

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell
No

HINT: Consider
• If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants
• Is qualitative research the tight methodology for addressing the research goal

Comments: The research aims to illuminate the subjective expereinces of high attaining African Caribbean pupils. Narrative interviews are a suitable way to explore the impact of peer group and family influences on the participants. The researchers can elicit how they frame peers and family in their experience.

Is it worth continuing?

3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell
No

HINT: Consider
• if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)

Comments: The researchers believe a narrative methodology could offer insight into pupil's interpretation of their social experiences and the resources they employ to maintain their academic attainment. It can show how individual characteristics bare influence on their expereinces too.

4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell
No

HINT: Consider
• If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected
• If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study
• If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)

Comments: The researcher explained that particpants were selected from one secondary based on a criteria (one black African Caribbean parent and Level 7 in Maths, English and Science at Key Stage 3). There were no further discussions around recruitment. Not clear who selected pupils.

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell
No

HINT: Consider
• If the setting for the data collection was justified
• If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)
• If the researcher has justified the methods chosen
• If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)
• If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why
• If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)
• If the researcher has discussed saturation of data

Comments: Participants had 2 1-hour interviews three months apart with an aide-memoire. The aide-memoire was adapted for the second interview. Narrative interview is appropriate as is shifts the researcher to a listener and places emphasis on the participant's experiences. This is likely to give a more rich account. Narratives are co-constructed with the interviewer.

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6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☑

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments: The researcher considers their bias in making meaning of the liguistic devices used by participants. There is no critical examination of data collection and recruitment.

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

Yes ☑
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
- If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
- If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments: The researchers notes that participants were given pseudonyms. There is no explanation regarding the handling of the impact of this study on participants. No information provided on the process of ethical approval.

8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

Yes ☑
Can't Tell ☑
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
- If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
- Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
- If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
- To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
- Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments: The analysis process is explained step by step. The data to support claims is sufficient and provides extracts from the data to support claims. Differences in motivators for academic success taken in account as well as previous research and how it supports the findings of the research.

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

Yes ☑
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider whether
- If the findings are explicit
- If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments
- If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
- If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments: Credibility of the analysis was only discussed. The abstract offers a clear statement of finding. The discussion clearly explains how their experience of peer influences and family narratives affected their view on education.

Section C: Will the results help locally?

10. How valuable is the research?

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature
- If they identify new areas where research is necessary
- If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other ways the research may be used

Comments: Researcher hopes that the utility of the methodology will encourage professionals to help boys from different racial and cultural background explore their experiences. There could be potential for peer and teacher relationships to be explored. The researcher finds it can be used to tackle complex educational and social issues.

(Simon, 2019)

CASP
Critical Appraisal
Skills Programme

Section A: Are the results valid?

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
• what was the goal of the research
• why it was thought important
• its relevance

Comments: To explore the restrospective and current perspectives of Black Caribbean adolescent males. it focuses on the partiicpants' recollection of key expereinces and events during their educational history

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
• If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants
• Is qualitative research the tight methodology for addressing the research goal

Comments: Yes , as the researcher would like to explore the narratives of their participants and examine how their narrate their experiences. So a qualitative methodology would be appropriate.

Is it worth continuing?

3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
• if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)

Comments: Multiple case study design used although there is a lack of control over this design. The researcher chose a narrative approach as it advocates for the participants and is person-centred. A bespoke narrative process used to examine the co-construction of expereinces and events with multiple realities.

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4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected
- If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study
- If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)

Comments: Adverts for research sent via the EPS in the Local authority to difference schools. Schools that agrred to participate established a link professional which was contacted . Participants (self-identified Black Caribbean males between ages 12 to 16) that returned documentation were selected.

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If the setting for the data collection was justified
- If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)
- If the researcher has justified the methods chosen
- If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)
- If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why
- If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)
- If the researcher has discussed saturation of data

Comments: Setting not explained but sem-structured interviews used in order to gather rich, detailed information about an individual's lived expereincesand limits rigid responses.Questions grouped according to chronological trajectory of children within mainstream education.

6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

Yes ✔

Can't Tell ☐

No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments: The researcher acknowledges the intersection of her gender and ethnicity and how her expereinces could influence the interpretation of the data.

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

Yes ✔

Can't Tell ☐

No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
- If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
- If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments: The researcher explained that they adhered to the BPS ahd HCPC guidelines. approved by the British Educational Research Association'Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research. Parental consent sought after, pseudonyms used but no explanation of the after care given to participants.

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8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
- If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
- Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
- If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
- To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
- Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments: Themes were peer-reviewed for inter-rater reliability. in-depth description of the analysis process. key events and expereinces were linked together withnin the story. Data was sufficient to support claims. Links were made with previous literature. Researcher did not critticallty examine their own role.

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider whether
- If the findings are explicit
- If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments
- If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
- If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments: Findings explicitly explained peak, low and key expereinces of each participant given. Themes were peer reviewed for inter-rater reliability. Findings trianguated with literature.

(Upton, 2012)

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Section A: Are the results valid?

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell
No

HINT: Consider
• what was the goal of the research
• why it was thought important
• its relevance

Comments: This research aims to explore how black british students (Black African/Black Carribean) cope with their school and community. It is important because of the disproportional rates of exclusion and low academic attainment of these students compared to their demographically matcheds counterparts.

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell
No

HINT: Consider
• If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants
• Is qualitative research the tight methodology for addressing the research goal

Comments: The methodology is appropriate given they are exploring the lived phenomena of these students and studying patterns of adaptation that builds resilience in these students.

Is it worth continuing?

3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?

Yes ✔
Can't Tell
No

HINT: Consider
• if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)

Comments: The researcher justified that Grounded Theory was appropriate as the researcher wanted to develop a psychological theory from which the narratives of the African Caribbean student. This is used to support those disillussioned with education and those at risk of becoming disaffected.

4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?	Yes	✔	HINT: Consider • If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected • If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study • If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)
	Can't Tell		
	No		

Comments: The suggestion that behaviour issues manifest in Year 8 caused the researcher to recruit from Year 7. The researcher hypothesised that the constructed expereinces in Year 7 would reveal factors that could explain the behaviours. Thorough explanation for the selection of participants.

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?	Yes	✔	HINT: Consider • If the setting for the data collection was justified • If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.) • If the researcher has justified the methods chosen • If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide) • If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why • If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.) • If the researcher has discussed saturation of data
	Can't Tell		
	No		

Comments: Interviews were done in a person centred way, mindful of the power differential between participant and researcher. 'Free talk' was used at the beginning of interviews to engage the young people in natural dialogue. The researcher justified their approach as a way to create a comfortable dynamic between the researcher and participant. Saturation was discussed.

6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

Yes ✔

Can't Tell

No

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments: The researcher considers how being a white male may inhibit conversations regarding issues around race. To reduce power differential, the researcher looked at using a person centred approach.

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

Yes ✔

Can't Tell

No

HINT: Consider
- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
- If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
- If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments: Research was explained through the consent form to parents and students. The right to assent was asserted. Efforts to ensure confidentiality explained.Researcher was thorough in explained to partiicpants that they could not be identified form the data and created safe passage to withdraw.

8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

Yes ✔

Can't Tell ☐

No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
- If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
- Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
- If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
- To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
- Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments: The process of grounded theory was explained stage by stage. Researcher presents a modernised way of doing grounded theory, explaining the different types of coding involved.

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

Yes ✔

Can't Tell ☐

No ☐

HINT: Consider whether
- If the findings are explicit
- If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments
- If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
- If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments: The researcher has split the findings into two chapters. The first chapter is in regards to the coding and the second is a qualitative description of the hope theory. THe researcher highlights Hope was a salient theme.

Section C: Will the results help locally?

10. How valuable is the research?

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature
- If they identify new areas where research is necessary
- If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other ways the research may be used

Comments: The researcher states clearly what was found from the analysis of transcriptions. States that this research gives an understandinf of African Carribean pupils expereinces in school whilst in mainstream education before they were excluded. Research suggests 'Hope Working Alliance' as a construct for the skill set of Educational psychologist.

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Appendix 2.2 Superordinate Themes from Literature Review

Themes across the literature review.

Family influence

Rio acknowledged that his behaviour was unsatisfactory and as a result caused his father to intervene to ensure that he did not waste his educational opportunities. This experience was detailed as Rio's low experience in secondary school. Having the support of family to intervene and put him on the right track. Rio (Simon, 2019).

He expressed that he struggled in English without teacher support, instead disapproval was apparent in his narrative without adequate guidance for progress to occur. His mother's support was therefore paramount. parental influence continued with Boris acknowledging that his parents were there whenever he needed them. Furthermore, Boris detailed his contentment with steady academic achievement but acknowledged the high expectations and standards that his mother set for him. Boris (Simon,2019)

Parents have impact on the aspirations of Black Caribbean Boys either through behaviour control or as role models (Upton, 2012)

Common gold and mindset influenced by family- siblings offered emotional support and advice to manage negative influences and friendships - motivated by high expectations of family and wanting to make them proud (Robinson, 2020)

the researcher found that teachers perceived Black parents to be obstacles to their boys' education. For example, they pointed out that Black parents did not attend open evenings regularly or participate in helping their boys with their schoolwork. The teachers initially stated their belief that because a majority of Black parents did not possess the necessary qualities required to-maximise their boys' success in education, they considered that this condition then led to their boys' negative performance at school. This is the teacher's perception of the parents — (Gosai,2009)

According to some non-Black teachers, the reason Black parents did not possess the necessary qualities to support their boys' greater success in education was because the majority of Black parents originated from working class backgrounds. Lack of social/cultural capital leading to poor attainment of the black boys. (Gosai, 2009)

All boys shared their families' narratives around education and the impact that role models within the family and historical Black leaders had on their views about getting a good education. Whilst Luke talked about wanting to emulate other family members' achievements, Junior described observing his parents' fatigue from working long hours and not having the jobs they could have had due to low academic attainment. They reflected on these family experiences as being influential, to have or avoid the same, and these were strong motivations for their academic focus. The boys co-constructed their identities in the interviews through rich family narratives of triumph over racism, hard- working ethic, academic

orientation and resulting achievement. Their identities were shaped by their families' experiences, and narratives espoused their racial and cultural understandings and allegiances. Nigel recalled his grand- parents' narratives that gave him balanced representations of their achievement experiences: Told them how they failed and succeeded as well as fighting racism. (Robinson, 2020).

Teacher and School practices

Streaming class impact the aspirations of students, feeling like there is a ceiling (Upton, 2012)

Boris had acknowledged experiences of positive teacher feedback and his educational ability in comparison to his peers. Effective support from teachers (Simon, 2019)

Perception of teacher's actions and relationships.
All young people were conscious of being located in a hierarchy, with teaching staff accorded high levels of coercive power by virtue of their superordinate position and the school reward/sanction system. (Upton, 2012)

Rio shared that teachers were concerned and relayed his target grades which were higher due to his SATs results Rio (Simon, 2019)

Teachers were identified as critical influences on the ability of young people to make progress and achieve their aspirations. This rested on the young persons' perception of teachers' professional skills, meaning their subject content, pedagogical and behaviour (Upton, 2012)

Being able to trust teachers who act in their best interest and willing to go 'the extra mile' (Upton, 2012)

All respondents said that teacher negativity had a negative influence upon their performance at school.

Black boys assimilating to the teacher's negativity and reacting to it by behaving in a manner to adversely affect their educational outcomes. Teachers holding negative stereotypical views tended to adversely affect black boys education (Gosai, 2009)

They informed the researcher that sometimes they were compelled to act badly in response to what they considered the unjust negativity of their teachers. They thought their teachers did not behave respectfully towards them. This caused resentment thus contributing to their failure at school. (Gosai, 2009)

Appendix 3.1. Interview Questions

<u>Interview questions</u>

1) How do feel you are viewed by others in school?

Possible prompts: other students, teachers, teaching assistants.

2) To what extent do peers influence your school life?

3) How has home life and family impacted your life at school?

4) Can you tell me of an experience where you have been treated unfairly?

Possible prompts: Falsely accused, discriminated against, refused opportunities.

5) To what extent do you feel your culture is understood by teachers?

6) To what extent do you have support from your teachers?

Appendix 3.2 Invitation and Information sheet

PARTICIPANT INVITATION LETTER

You are being invited to get involved in a research study. Before you agree it is important that you understand what the research is about and what you will need to do. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Who am I?

My name is Daniel. I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London and am studying for a Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child. As part of my studies I am carrying out this research you are being invited to get involved in.

What is the research?

I want to explore your experiences at school as a Black Caribbean male in secondary school. I want to find out what we can learn from your experiences in secondary school. I will be looking at things such as:

- What have been the important moments for you in secondary school?
- What are your good and bad experiences of secondary school?
- How important are the relationships you have with students and/or teachers
- What are the positive things that help you achieve.
- What are the challenges at secondary school and how you are coping with them.
- What leads you to having positive experiences at school?
- How can your voice be used to create any needed change for schools and professionals?

The aim is to have your voice at the centre of the work we do as educational professionals.

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been invited to participate in my research as someone who fits the kind of people I am looking for to help me explore my research topic. I am looking to involve:

- Male students.
- In either years 9, 10,11,12 and 13.
- Students who identify as Black Caribbean.

I emphasise that I am not looking for 'experts' on the topic I am studying. You will not be judged or personally analysed in any way and you will be treated with respect.

You are quite free to decide whether or not to participate and should not feel that you have to take part.

What will your participation involve?

If you agree to participate you will go into either a focus group or to the group of students being interviewed. In the focus group, students will be asked to develop questions that will be asked of the interviewees. This allows the students to decide on the questions that they feel will give the best picture of their educational experience.

Students will meet with researcher either in-person or remotely on Microsoft Teams, depending on the school's preference, for up to up to an hour. All conversations will be recorded in-person or on Microsoft Teams if done remotely and stored securely. I will also arrange to meet with you once I have the findings of the research to check with you that these seem OK.

I will not be able to pay you for taking part in my research, but you will be valuable in helping to develop knowledge and understanding of my research topic

Your taking part will be safe and confidential

Your privacy and safety will be respected at all times.

- Participants will not be identified by the data collected, on any written material resulting from the data collected, or in any write-up of the research.
- Participants do not have to answer all questions asked of them and can stop their participation at any time.

Anonymised transcripts are going to be shared via the UEL research repository after the research has been completed.

What will happen to the information that you provide?

Your conversation with the researcher will be recorded in-person or on Microsoft Teams. This data will be then downloaded immediately to a password-protected drive. Any identifying details (names of place, people) will be anonymised when being transcribed to ensure confidentiality. The main researcher and the research supervisor, Dr Janet Rowley, will have access to the data. Pseudonyms will be applied to all participant names. The anonymised data will remain on the UEL repository for 3 years before being destroyed. You will have 3 weeks from the date of the interview to withdraw the data you have provided. Please contact the researcher by then if you would like to withdraw your data.

What if you want to withdraw?

You are free to withdraw from the research study at any time without explanation, disadvantage or consequence. Separately, you may also request to withdraw your data even after you have taken part, provided that this request is made within 3 weeks 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.

Daniel Acheampong u1944271@uel.ac,uk

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

or

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

INVITATION LETTER

Your child is being invited to get involved in a research study. Before you agree it is important that you understand what the research is about and what your child will need to do. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Who am I?
I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London and am studying for a Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child. As part of my studies I am carrying out this research you are being invited to get involved in.

What is the research?

I want to explore your child's experiences at school as a Black Caribbean male in secondary school . I want to find out what we can learn from your child's experiences as a Black Caribbean boy in secondary school. The sort of questions I will be asking your child will be:

- What were the important moments for you in secondary school?
- What are your good and bad experiences of secondary school?
- How important are the relationships you have with students and/or teachers
- Things that help you achieve.
- The challenges at secondary school and how you are coping with them.
- What leads you to having positive experiences at school?
- How can your voices be used to create any needed change for schools and professionals?

The aim is to have your child's voice at the centre of the work we do as educational professionals.

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Why has your child been asked to participate?

Your child will be invited to participate in my research as someone who fits the kind of people I am looking for to help me explore my research topic. I am looking to involve:

- Male students.
- In either year 9, 10,11,12 and 13.
- Students who identify as Black Caribbean.

I emphasise that I am not looking for 'experts' on the topic I am studying. Your child will not be judged or personally analysed in any way and your child will be treated with respect.

You are quite free to decide whether or not to participate and should not feel that you have to take part.

What will your child's participation involve?

If you agree for your child to participate, they will go into either a focus group or to the group of students being interviewed. In the focus group, students will be asked to develop questions that will be asked of the interviewees. This allows the students to decide on the questions that they feel will give the best picture of their educational experience.

Students will meet with the researcher either remotely or in-person, depending on the school's preference, for up to an hour. All conversations will be recorded (audio only) in-person or on Microsoft Teams and stored securely. Once I have the findings I will send them to the student to check that they agree with the findings.

I will not be able to pay you or your child for taking part in my research, but they will be valuable in helping to develop knowledge and understanding of my research topic.

Your child's taking part will be safe and confidential

Privacy and safety will be respected at all times.

- Participants will not be identified by the data collected, on any written material resulting from the data collected, or in any write-up of the research.
- Participants do not have to answer all questions asked of them and can stop their participation at any time.

Anonymised transcripts are going to be shared via the UEL research repository after the research has been completed.

What will happen to the information that your child will provide?

The interview with the researcher will be either recorded (audio only) on Microsoft Teams or in-person. This data will be then downloaded immediately to a password-protected drive. Any identifying details (names of place, people) will be anonymised when being transcribed to ensure confidentiality. The main researcher and the research supervisor, Dr Janet Rowley, will have access to the data. Pseudonyms will be applied to all participant names. The anonymised data will remain on the UEL repository for 3 years before being destroyed. Your child will have 3 weeks from the date of the interview to withdraw the data you have provided. Please contact the researcher by then if your child would like to withdraw your data.

What if your child wants to withdraw?

Your child is free to withdraw from the research study 3 weeks from the date consent was initially given, without explanation, disadvantage or consequence. Separately, your child may also request to withdraw your data even after you have taken part, provided that this request is made within 3 weeks 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.

Daniel Acheampong u1944271@uel.ac,uk

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

or

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

Appendix 3.3. Consent form

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Parent/Carer Consent Form for a child to participate in a research study

From Our Point of View: A participatory approach to exploring the educational experiences of Black Caribbean secondary school students.

I have the 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 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(s) involved 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 which has been fully explained to me. 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 choose to withdraw, the researcher reserves the right to use their anonymous data after analysis of the data has begun.

Student Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

………………………………………………………………………………………
Student Signature (BLOCK CAPITALS)

………………………………………………………………………………………

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

………………………………………………………………………………………..

Researcher's Signature

Appendix 3.4 Risk Assessment relating to COVID-19

The transmission of COVID-19 for in-person delivery	Possible to transmit COVID-19 amongst the participants and others involved.	Research, Participants and other members of the school community.	2	3	4	Researchers and participants to ensure they have received a negative COVID test at least 48 hours prior to the research. Follow the school's risk assessment regarding being COVID safe. Ensure the room being used is well ventilated. Participants and Researcher are	Researcher to check the school's up to date policy around COVID-19 Risk Rating =6	

Appendix 3.4.1 How superordinate/subordinate themes were arranged.

	Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. So yeah. Okay. That's interesting to hear. Tell me, in school, how do you feel you are viewed by others?	
	George: I think in a sympathetic way. Obviously, the teachers, they may have had a different experience, but they know that we have some similarities and some differences, so they can see our point of view where we're coming from and what's happening. But the students I think is the same thing as well, but they don't really look at as deep as the teachers might have, but I think I'm viewed in a normal way like every other person in the school.	Perceives that teachers may be aware of the individual differences between black people. Anticipates that teachers may be sympathetic towards him. Percieves maybe that there is something to feel sorry for.
Understanding of culture shaping the perception of students and their behaviour.	Interviewer: Okay. You mentioned something in particular about how you're viewed by teachers, can you tell me more about that?	
	George: I think like the teachers could see where you're coming from or what's really happening or the traditions that we might have grown up with as it might go with them as well, so then they can see why we do some things or act a certain way, why we act different and stuff like that.	Perceives some teachers may have an idea of their culture which shapes how they view the character, personality and behaviours of himself.
	Interviewer: And when you say traditions, what do you mean?	
Understanding the different aspects that shape out character.	George: Maybe doing our hairstyle in a different way to certain people or, I'm not really sure, but just doing certain things that are different to other people.	Elaborates on what he meant by 'traditions'
	Interviewer: Okay. You mentioned hairstyles, and what do you think is different about hairstyles? How do you think that that's important?	
	George: I think it's important, because as a student, our hairstyle embraces us and gives us a name and a feeling about us. We do what we want to do, so sometimes when we come in with a new hairstyle, we feel like a type of happy way to have that hairstyle that really for us, it embraces us.	For him it is important to know how a hairstyle can showcase the identity of the students.

1) Teachers understanding culture and traditions can lead to a different understanding of a student's behaviour.

I think like the teachers could see where you're coming from or what's really happening or the traditions that we might have grown up with as it might go with them as well, so then they can see why we do some things or act a certain way, why we act different and stuff like that.

'traditions' are hairstyles and things people do differently.

2) Hairstyle as a part of our identity.

I think it's important, because as a student, our hairstyle embraces us and gives us a name and a feeling about us. We do what we want to do, so sometimes when we come in with a new hairstyle, we feel like a type of happy way to have that hairstyle that really for us, it embraces us.

Maybe they might not personally like their hairstyle themselves, or if they have kids, they might not want their kids to have that hairstyle. But obviously as a teacher, their job is to embrace and be there for students, so they can't really do anything because when you think about it.

3) Perceived negative perceptions/stereotypes of black hair styles.

Yeah, some parents might not like braiding their children's hair or having dreadlocks and stuff like that, or having it to a certain length or something…. They might have a reason to it, or something in the past that's happened to them, or something they've heard about them with their hairstyle, so they might not want anything to do with that hairstyle, or things like that.
I think there's a stereotype of maybe if you have a certain hairstyle or a hair certain length, you look like a type of way or a type of person, but really you are not that type of person, you just like the hairstyle, I guess.

Hairstyles being part of the Caribbean culture.

For example, dreadlocks as a Caribbean, and so I'm having dreadlocks, some people might think you're a Rasta or a dangerous person or something like that, but really you just like their hairstyle and you just want to try it out, and see how you feel about it, and see if you like it. But some others might see it in a different way saying like you're intimidating or something like that.
 I personally don't really like it, how it has stereotypes about hair, because like I said, you might just want to try their hair and see if it embraces you, seeing how you feel about their hairstyle, not really having a meaning to behind it or doing the stuff that you want to do. But I feel like, if you want to try something with your hair, you might as well go for it, because at the of the day it's your hair.

Appendix 3.5 Ethical Approval

School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION
For research involving human participants
BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

REVIEWER: Rachel Tribe

SUPERVISOR: Janet Rowley

STUDENT: Daniel Kusi Acheampong

Course: Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

DECISION OPTIONS:

1. **APPROVED:** Ethics approval for the above named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice) to the date it is submitted for assessment/examination.

2. **APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE RESEARCH COMMENCES** (see Minor Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is <u>not</u> required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made <u>before</u> the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box below when all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to her/his supervisor for their records. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.

3. **NOT APPROVED, MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED** (see Major Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, a revised ethics application must be submitted and approved before any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.

DECISION ON THE ABOVE-NAMED PROPOSED RESEARCH STUDY
(Please indicate the decision according to one of the 3 options above)

2

Minor amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

An important area of research.The following should all be discussed with the supervisor, who is very knowledgeable in this area and with educational settings.   The research question is extremely broad and may require narrowing down. The age range of the participants is too wide, IPA requests a homogeneous sample, a narrower age range will also strengthen the meaning of any results. The methodology will need tightening up. Having a focus group of 8 as co-researchers is mentioned and then 4 individual interviews also needs further consideration and discussion. Asking someone to conduct 3 interviews is quite a lot, the student may find that they experience participant drop out. It is unclear from what is written, why 3 interviews are necessary.

There is a typo, it should be instant access not instance access. The student will need to obtain written ethical approval from the school and this box needs ticking, the student will also need to check if the schools have ethics committees and follow the relevant protocols regarding these.

How will the student ensure that the focus groups involve all the 8 participants? In focus groups, dominant voices or group think can occur, focus groups with young people also require careful consideration. The student will need to consider this.

Suggest that the parental permission letter is entitled parent/carer or similar title, so that looked after children are included or those living in other situations. This needs to be checked throughout all the relevant documentation. The parental consent letter, the debrief letter and the risk assessment form mention Black African and Black Caribbean, but just the latter group are mentioned elsewhere in the application, the letter needs changing to ensure consistency.

The student says that participants can withdraw at any time, what if this is the day before the MSc thesis is submitted? It may be better to give a time frame.

The risk assessment should also consider emotional issues, not just technical ones. Also the risk assessment form mentions up to 16 participants, but 8+4 are mentioned elsewhere in the documentation? This needs making consistent.

Major amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

Confirmation of making the above minor amendments *(for students)*:

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data.

Student's name *(Typed name to act as signature)*: Daniel Kusi Acheampong
Student number: U1944271

Date: 4.9.2021

(Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed, if minor amendments to your ethics application are required)

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER *(for reviewer)*

Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?

YES / NO

If the proposed research could expose the <u>researcher</u> to any of kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard? Please rate the degree of risk:

☐ HIGH

☐ MEDIUM (Please approve but with appropriate recommendations)

☒ LOW

Reviewer comments in relation to researcher risk (if any).

Reviewer *(Typed name to act as signature)*:   Prof R Tribe

Date: 17.8.21

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

RESEARCHER PLEASE NOTE:

For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's Insurance, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

For a copy of UELs Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard

University of East London

School of Psychology Ethics Committee

<u>REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO AN ETHICS APPLICATION</u>

For BSc, MSc/MA and taught Professional Doctorate students

Please complete this form if you are requesting approval for proposed amendment(s) to an ethics application that has been approved by the School of Psychology

Note that approval must be given for significant change to research procedure that impact on ethical protocol. If you are not sure as to whether your proposed amendment warrants approval, consult your supervisor or contact Dr Trishna Patel (Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee).

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	When submitting this request form, ensure that all necessary documents are attached (see below).
4	Using your UEL email address, email the completed request form along with associated documents to Dr Trishna Patel: t.patel@uel.ac.uk
5	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.
6	Recruitment and data collection are **not** to commence until your proposed amendment has been approved.

Required documents

A copy of your previously approved ethics application with proposed amendment(s) added with track changes.	**YES** ☒
Copies of updated documents that may relate to your proposed amendment(s). For example, an updated recruitment notice, updated participant information sheet, updated consent form, etc.	**YES** ☒
A copy of the approval of your initial ethics application.	**YES** ☒

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Details	
Name of applicant:	**Daniel Kusi Acheampong**
Programme of study:	**Professional Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology**
Title of research:	**From Our Point of View: A participatory approach to exploring the educational experiences of Black Caribbean boys in secondary school.**
Name of supervisor:	**Dr Janet Rowley**

Proposed amendment(s)	
Briefly outline the nature of your proposed amendment(s) and associated rationale(s) in the boxes below	
Proposed amendment	**Rationale**
To have the flexibility to carry out the research in-person.	The flexible approach would make it easier to recruit given that schools would have to do less preparation. The engagement with students will be better face to face and produce richer feedback in the focus group and interviews.
Proposed amendment	Rationale for proposed amendment
Proposed amendment	Rationale for proposed amendment
Proposed amendment	Rationale for proposed amendment

Confirmation		
	YES	NO
Is your supervisor aware of your proposed amendment(s) and have they agreed to these changes?	☒	☐

Student's signature	
Student: (Typed name to act as signature)	**DANIEL KUSI ACHEAMPONG**
Date:	**24/01/2022**

Reviewer's decision		
Amendment(s) approved:	YES ☒	NO ☐
Comments:	Please enter any further comments here	
Reviewer: (Typed name to act as signature)	Trishna Patel	
Date:	27/01/2022	

UEL Data Management Plan

Pioneering Futures Since 1898

Completed plans must be sent to researchdata@uel.ac.uk for review

If you are bidding for funding from an external body, complete the Data Management Plan required by the funder (if specified).

Research data is defined as information or material captured or created during the course of research, and which underpins, tests, or validates the content of the final research output. The nature of it can vary greatly according to discipline. It is often empirical or statistical, but also includes material such as drafts, prototypes, and multimedia objects that underpin creative or 'non-traditional' outputs. Research data is often digital, but includes a wide range of paper-based and other physical objects.

Administrative Data	
PI/Researcher	**Daniel Acheampong**
PI/Researcher ID (e.g. ORCiD)	U1944271
PI/Researcher email	U1944271@uel.ac.uk
Research Title	From our point of view: A participatory approach to exploring the educational experiences of Black Caribbean boys in secondary school.
Project ID	U1944271
Research start date and duration	June 2021 - Sept 2023
Research Description	This research aims to look into the educational experiences of Black Caribbean boys in secondary school. I want to find out what we can learn from the educational experiences of Black Caribbean boys in secondary school? Up to 12 participants will be recruited from a south east London borough. Up to 8 participants will be allocated to either focus group or the students being interviewed. In the focus group, students will be asked to develop questions that will be asked to the interviewees. This allows the students to ask the questions that they feel will give the best picture of their educational experience.

How will the data be collected or created?	Data on the participant's names, age, ethnicity, secondary school attended and school year will be collected through a questionnaire. Information would then be exported into Excel format and original questionaries' would be deleted. Focus group of participants will be used to develop interview questions. Likewise, I will be collecting the names and the ethnicity of the parent and carers through a questionnaire via Microsoft Forms. This information would be send to prospective participants through email. The information collected will be then exported in .xls format. This will be then saved securely on the UEL OneDrive. All other local copies will be deleted. Video, audio and text from the interviews with the participants will be collected through Microsoft Teams software. Video and audio recordings will be transcribed by the PI and stored as .docx files on the UEL OneDrive cloud service. These will be pseudonymised at the point of transcription and then the original video recordings will be deleted from the UEL one drive.	
Documentation and Metadata		
What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?	The documentation that will accompany the data are as follows: Participant invitation. This will explain the purpose of the research and what exactly participation in the research will involve. After participating in the research, Participants will be given a debrief letter, detailing the services they can contact if they feel they have been adverse affected by the nature of the research. Blank consent for both parents and students. File name convention showing how the files have been named.	

		Anonymisation log to show how each of the data sets can be identified.
Ethics and Intellectual Property		
	Identify any ethical issues and how these will be managed	The research is an attempt to discover what we can learn from the educational experiences of Black African and Caribbean boys in secondary school. Using the IPA approach, I would have to be aware of the potential power imbalance that may occur with me being the researcher and researched.
		I would need to be aware of how comfortable and willing they would be to share their experiences. I may be asking these students to relive and recall experiences that may have been traumatic and cause emotional distress. Details on the available services to offer emotional support will be detailed on the information sheet. Further to this, students participating may feel that their involvement in the research could be viewed negatively by the school and may face spoken or unspoken reprimand. Participants may also request to withdraw their data even after they have participated data, provided that this request is made within 3 weeks of the data being collected (after which point the data analysis will begin, and withdrawal will not be possible).
		To protect anonymity, the participant's names will be replaced with pseudonyms at the stage of data analysis to help maintain anonymity.
		Identifying details such as names of school staff or location (and other information that may come through the interview process) will also be replaced with pseudonyms. To limit deductive disclosure, participants will be recruited from different schools therefore restricting the possibility of schools or children/families being identified.
		To further protect the anonymity of the participants, indirect identifiers such as age will be replaced with age ranges/secondary school year group.

Identify any copyright and Intellectual Property Rights issues and how these will be managed	**N/A**
Storage and Backup	
How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?	Video and audio recordings will be transcribed by the PI and stored as .docx files on the UEL OneDrive cloud service. The transcriptions will be pseudonymised and original recordings will then be deleted from the UEL one drive. Recordings and transcripts will be stored in separate folders. A back-up of the transcripts will be kept on the H: Drive. Codes that could be used to re-identify a participant will be stored as encrypted .doc files on the UEL H: Drive. Questionaries' and Consent forms will be exported in to excel format and saved to the UEL OneDrive. Alternatively, questionnaires and consent forms filled in electronically will be saved also in PDF format and stored on the UEL OneDrive.
How will you manage access and security?	As soon as the interview has terminated, the data will be uploaded to a laptop and stored on the UEL H: drive which is password protected. Participants will not be able to access the recording via Microsoft Teams as they are from an external organisation. After the interviews have been recorded, videos will be download and uploaded to OneDrive for Business, ensuring local copies of the interviews recorded are deleted. Myself, and the DOS will have access to the data during data analysis. Files/data will be shared with the tutor supervising the research project via one drive for business account when necessary. Transcripts from the interviews will be shared with the supervisor of the project.

Data Sharing	200
How will you share the data?	Once the research is completed and written up, results will be shared with the local authority the research is conducted in. Anonymised data may be shared via the UEL research Repository
Are any restrictions on data sharing required?	Consent forms and questionnaires should not be shared.

Selection and Preservation	
Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?	Anonymised transcripts are going to be shared via the UEL research repository. This information will be shared on the consent forms. Any data that is not being kept will be deleted from the UEL OneDrive. Any back-up copies and copies held via email will be deleted.
What is the long-term preservation plan for the data?	The long-term preservation plan for the data is in line with the research data management policy.

Responsibilities and Resources	
Who will be responsible for data management?	Daniel Acheampong, the lead researcher will be responsible for the management of the data. To ensure that it is stored correctly and it is shared with the appropriate people.
What resources will you require to deliver your plan?	I will require a secure internet connection. I will require a laptop collect and store data collected appropriately. In terms of sharing data, I will need to ensure I have the accurate email address of my research supervisor and those participating in the study.

Review	201
	Please send your plan to researchdata@uel.ac.uk **We will review within 5 working days and request further information or amendments as required before signing**
Date: 06/04/2021	Reviewer name: Penny Jackson Research Data Management Officer

Appendix 3.7 Participant Debrief form

PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF LETTER

Thank you for participating in my research study: 'From Our Point of View: A participatory approach to exploring the educational experiences of BC secondary school students.'
 This letter offers information that may be relevant in light of you having now taken part.

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 conversation with the researcher has been recorded on Microsoft Teams. This data was downloaded immediately to a password-protected drive. Any identifying details (names of place, people) were anonymised when being transcribed to ensure confidentiality. The main researcher and the research supervisor, Dr Janet Rowley, will have access to all the data. Pseudonyms were applied to all participant names. The anonymised data will remain on the UEL repository for 3 years before being destroyed. You will have 3 weeks from the date of the interview to withdraw the data you have provided. Please contact the researcher if you would like to withdraw your data.

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. 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:

ChildLine: ChildLine is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people. They offer advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day. Whenever and wherever you need them, they'll be there. Call 0800 1111.

EACH : EACH has a freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment: 0808 1000 143. It's open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm.

Victim Support: They offer support to young people affected by crime, offering advice and working with professionals to ensure young people get the support they need. You can call their support line for free on 08 08 16 89 111.

If you, a family member or friend are in distress and need urgent help or advice contact **SLaM's 24-hour mental health support line** on **0800 731 2864**.

You are also very welcome to contact me or my 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.

Daniel Acheampong U1944271@uel.ac.uk

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

or

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