Racialisation of Haafus:
How do non-white visible minorities experience discrimination in Japan?

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the experiences of discrimination and identity among half-Japanese (Haafu) individuals from non-White and non-East Asian backgrounds. Despite increasing global rates of multiracial individuals, current identity formation models do not capture the experiences of those outside of western cultures, where homogeneity is valued over diversity. Within literature on identity and discrimination in Japan, multiracial and multiethnic individuals are often considered as one homogenous group. This informed my research questions of: "how do non-White visible minority Haafus in Japan experience discrimination?" and "how do non-White visible minority Haafus make sense of their identity after experiencing discrimination?".

To explore these research questions and add to knowledge in relevant literature, six non-White Haafus took part in semi structured interviews. Participants' non-Japanese halves were African American, Dominican/Ghanaian, Indian, Indian-British, and Mexican backgrounds. All participants had lived in Japan before the age of 18 for a period of one year, and experienced discrimination in Japan. At the time of the interview, participants were aged 24 to 33, and were no longer residing in Japan. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyse data and resulted in four Group Experiential Themes (GETs): 1) "Japaneseness is decided by others"; 2) "Racialisation in Japan"; 3) "Understanding and navigating discrimination"; 4) "Navigating my identity". Each GET included three to four sub-themes.

Most participants reflected on their difficulties growing up or spending time in Japan, due to the 'othering' behaviours that exist in Japan. One of the key findings from the study related to how non-White backgrounds are viewed in Japan, due to the prevalence of racialisation. Participants reflected on the predictive behaviours they were ascribed, due to their skin colour, phenotype, and cultural or religious backgrounds. In addition, participants also discussed the difficulties they faced in identifying discrimination, due to the normality

and hegemony of racialised discourse in Japan. Participants also discussed the importance of support, but highlighted barriers in accessing support in Japan. Participants reflected on their racial journey from childhood to adulthood, and some felt more confident as adults to embrace their racial backgrounds.

As a result of these findings, I have made recommendations for clinical practice, and the consideration of context, culture, background, and societal attitudes when working with individuals of multiracial backgrounds. Furthermore, I make suggestions for future research to consider the commonality of my participants' experiences across different environments and how sex differences may also play a role in racialisation. I present my focus on my research paradigm, utilising a phenomenological epistemology and critical realist ontology and acknowledge its implications across the study.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations and Terminology

BPS: British Psychological Society

CBT: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

CoP: Counselling Psychology

DPA: Descriptive Phenomenological Analysis

Gaijin: Foreigner or Outsider

GET: Group Experiential Themes

GT: Grounded Theory

Haafu: Half-Japanese Individual

HCPC: Health and Care Professions Council

IPA: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

NA: Narrative Analysis

NWVM: Non-White Visible Minority

PET: Personal Experiential Themes

TA: Thematic Analysis

UEL: University of East London

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United States of America

Chapter I: Introduction

Overview

This introduction chapter will provide context to my doctoral research project concerning how non-White visible minorities experience discrimination in Japan. I provide an account of my personal context and how my study is relevant to the field of Counselling Psychology (CoP).

Personal Context

As a half-Japanese and Israeli male who spent the majority of my childhood and adolescence in Japan, I became aware of how others perceived and treated me differently, and subsequently how that influenced my actions and ability to view myself as Japanese. In my childhood, I found how my identity revolved around being 'Haafu' or half-Japanese, rather than as someone who was born and raised in Japan, where I felt a focus on my differences rather than the similarities that I had to others.

As a result my difficulties relating to others and the lack of education in English, my parents chose to send me to an international school. In these schools, I encountered many expatriate children, but also other Haafus who could relate to the same struggles I had in being 'included' or considered as Japanese. However, during adolescence, I noticed how my experiences began to differ from others around me, and how society perceived me and categorised me differently. It felt as though I was seen as threatening as I encountered experiences where strangers would run away from me if I asked for directions in Japanese, avoided on public transport, and being stared at by others. These experiences intensified as I grew older, where at age fourteen I was called a terrorist in Tokyo's most popular meeting spot Hachiko, being racially profiled by police on a weekly basis from around sixteen years old, having my Israeli family mocked by my Japanese family, and many other discriminatory experiences. It was only at this point, that I noticed how White Haafus (i.e., half Japanese and half White) were seen as something different than myself, and that even though I had White

skin myself, my phenotypic Israeli features identified me as a different category to other Haafus around me. Throughout my upbringing, I was encouraged by family to hide my Israeli background and state that I was Australian as this was seen as less controversial. Once I did this, I found how others glamourised my background rather than the narrative of Israel being 'dangerous' or rife with terrorism.

In light of these experiences, I was interested in studying this topic further. Throughout my master's degree, I was taught about identity development models but felt frustrated as it did not appear to capture the experiences of multiracial individuals, such as myself, who grew up outside of the west. As a result, I looked into what studies might be present in Japan, but similarly found how research was based primarily on White Haafus, where difficulties of self- and ascribed identity are similar, but major differences in terms of the severity of discrimination were understated. Considering the drive for multiculturalism in therapy, I found how there was an absence of information relating to those outside of Eurocentric areas and for those with a similar background to myself. Therefore, I became interested and passionate about providing a space for similarly overlooked individuals to voice their experiences.

Positioning as a Researcher

In line with the underpinnings of CoP, my positionality as a researcher is of the belief that experiences are impacted by subjectivity. Across the spectrum from positivism to relativism, I position myself and identify with a phenomenological epistemology and critical realist ontology. This comes as a result of my experiences, in which I felt as though a 'truth' does exist, i.e., racialisation as social structure, but that each individual accesses this differently and is influenced by their subjective experience.

However, as a scientist-practitioner and in congruence with my epistemological positioning, I value all research, regardless of epistemology or methodology. I believe in the importance of furthering my knowledge as a practitioner through research, and contributing

to the field as a researcher, which helps assist the clients that we see in our roles as CoP practitioners.

Relevance to Counselling Psychology and Rationale

Increasing global mobility and interactions have contributed to increases in multiracial individuals around the world (Törngren et al, 2021). Specifically in London, 40% of residents are thought to be born outside of the UK (Office for National Statistics, 2022). Therefore, the importance for Counselling Psychologists (CoPs) and allied professionals to understand potential differences in racial identity development and treatment on a global scale is evident, as our clients are more likely to be of mixed-race origin.

However, research has repeatedly demonstrated how our current understanding of therapy is criticised for its Eurocentrism, with the underpinning ideals of counselling theory and racial identity development focusing on autonomy and individualism (Sumari, 2008). These issues are acknowledged by CoP guidelines that HCPC (2023) and BPS (2017) publish, as they stipulate how psychologists need to: a) understand the current and historical discrimination that minority individuals have faced; b) acknowledge the culturally biased perspective within western psychology; c) understand individuals as social and relational beings; d) understand the diversity of experiences due to context.

In order to uphold the aforementioned practices, CoPs and allied professionals must be informed by research on experiences of identity and discrimination for a wide array of multiracial and multicultural individuals. As such, researchers such as myself must address the dearth in literature that would inform practice. My contribution to the body of literature specifically hones in on non-White Haafus' experiences of identity and discrimination in Japan. Having identified my personal reasons for undertaking this project, the following chapter will demonstrate the gap in relevant literature and the importance of addressing it specifically amongst non-White Haafus in Japan.

<center>**Chapter II: Literature Review**</center>

The experience of discrimination as a non-White Haafu

Prevalence of multiracial individuals has significantly increased globally, due to increasing international mobility leading to increases in mixed partnerships (Törngren et al, 2021). This is reflected in the birth rates of mixed children in contemporary society; in 2012, 2.4% of the US population reported as mixed, whereas in 2017 one in seven children were multiracial or multiethnic (Törngren et al, 2021). Spain reported similar trends where around 11% of Spanish individuals are now multiracial (Törngren et al, 2021). Japan also reflects similar trends, where there has been a 12.5 times increase in international marriages over the last four decades (Taba, 2021). In fact, this number is expected to further increase due to a tripling of foreign nationals residing in Japan over the last four decades (Taba, 2021). Yet, research utilised in understanding multiracial experiences does not appear to reflect these shifts in multiculturalism and diversity (Sumari, 2008; Törngren et al, 2021).

Throughout the review, it is apparent that current identity formation models do not encompass the complexity of experience for mixed race individuals outside of the western realm, as the basis of identity research is primarily within western settings (Törngren et al, 2021). Accordingly, difficulties associated with identity development for individuals have been considered as an intrapsychic process, where external issues of discrimination have often been disregarded. However, over time, research has begun to highlight the impact of experiences of discrimination or difficulties with external validation on identity, and how this is further complicated for those of multiracial or multiethnic origin.

In the context of Japan, existing literature suggests that individuals of mixed Japanese origin face additional barriers in their identity development, as they must navigate their identity and sense of belonging in a collectivistic culture striving for homogeneity rather than diversity (Törngren & Sato, 2021). As a result, individuals are perceived as different and face discrimination due to their phenotype, as they encounter difficulties with 'belonging' to their

<center>4</center>

home country (Törngren & Sato, 2021). Across the review, it appears how these contextual difficulties influence the ways in which individuals navigate, assimilate and encounter issues with their racial identity and sense of belonging. Additionally, half-Japanese individuals of non-White and non-east Asian origin face further obstacles due to social structures of racialisation that attribute certain perceptions and behaviours to their non-Japanese race. This subset of individuals can be described as Non-White Visible Minority (NWVM) Haafus, which will be the focus of this thesis.

Key constructs: Race, Ethnicity, Whiteness, Discrimination, and Racialisation

Race & Ethnicity

Prior to the review of the literature in identity and experiences of multiracial or multiethnic individuals, it is important to understand and differentiate the constructs of race, and ethnicity, as they can often be used interchangeably.

The term race is defined as a socially constructed categorisation of individuals which is based on biological or genetic differences, primarily through visible identifiable markers such as phenotype to classify individuals to specific groups (Sato, 2024; Törngren, 2018). Alternatively, ethnicity is considered as the identification that an individual may have to their cultural origins, whether or not they practice them (Törngren, 2018). In this sense, ethnicity refers to one's cultural roots, i.e., behaviours and attitudes that are influenced by social, political, and historical factors and their own relationship to those roots (Sato, 2024).

Whiteness

Whilst racial classifications refer to phenotype or visible differences, ethnic classifications of Whiteness must also be considered, as Whiteness is conceptualised as the privileges that are associated with the dominant culture in Euro-American areas (Lindner, 2018). Therefore, ethnic classifications of non-White are whether individuals self-identify as the non-dominant culture within Euro-American cultures. Therefore, the term non-White is both in reference to racial, as well as ethnic classifications, where individuals may have

5

White skin, but may classify themselves as non-White due to their ethnic identity belonging from outside of Euro-American cultures.

Racialisation and racial discrimination

Racialisation refers to the processes in which individuals or groups are defined by their shared characteristics, i.e., phenotype, race, culture, religion, nationality or class (Arudou, 2016; Lett et al, 2022). The process of racialisation occurs as race is defined as a social construct without biological or physiological meaning, allowing for prejudice to distort and alter the perceptions of what race entails (Arudou, 2015; Gonzalez-Sobrino & Goss, 2019). Racialisation is achieved through these distortions and categorisations, where predictive behaviours are then attached to individuals as a result of their race and are differentiated from the 'dominant' social group. As a consequence, these narratives of race become normalised and embedded, therefore limiting the abilities in which racial groups are able to interact with society, social structures, and institutions (Arudou, 2015). In addition, the narratives regarding race could also be influenced by the process of colourism, in which favourable attitudes and privileges are associated with lighter skinned people of colour in comparison to those with darker skin tones (Hunter, 2007).

Racial discrimination, or racism, can then result for individuals and can be defined as interactions that one may have on an individual and systemic level (Gee & Ford, 2011). Systemic racism refers to interactions that one has with larger social systems, ideologies, or practices that produce disadvantages for minorities (Lett et al, 2022). Alternatively, individual racism can be experienced in two ways: internalised, where racism involves negative self-perceptions; or interpersonal, where overt or implicit biases are expressed between individuals (Lett et al, 2022). Additionally, interpersonal racism may not always be communicated overtly, as individuals may experience these biases through racial microaggressions (Sue et al, 2007). Racial microaggressions are described as daily instances verbal or behavioural indignities, which may be intentional or unintentional. This may be

communicated through derogatory comments, or racial slights toward a person of colour (Sue et al, 2007). For example, racial microaggressions can manifest through microinvalidation, in which individuals communicate beliefs of racial or ethnic minority citizens being foreigners, leading them to feel alien in their home country (Sue et al, 2007).

Theoretical Framework of Identity

Initial models of identity development depicted the process through stage models, where most notably, Erikson's (1968) psychosocial theory described experiencing and resolving conflicts to progress through stages and in developing appropriate strengths. Erikson (1968) described that during adolescence, individuals face developmental crises around identity vs. role confusion: where adolescents aim to establish a sense of self, often feeling confused and insecure about themselves and how they fit into society. Through progression, individuals garner the ability to live according to societal standards and expectations (Erikson, 1968). However, subsequent research suggested how multiracial individuals, who often face discrimination, fitting into society, obtaining security of self, and living according to expectations may present additional challenges compared to those from a singular racial background (Gibbs, 1987; Herring, 1992).

Following these monoracial models, research began to consider the complexity of racial identity, and the societal challenges that multiracial individuals encounter of being associated with two worlds but not belonging to either (Stonequist, 1937). Poston (1990) proposed a tentative model of biracial development in the USA consisting of five levels: a) personal identity; b) group categorisation; c) enmeshment and denial; d) appreciation; and e) integration. Whilst he identified some of the external pressures that multiracial individual may face, the model has been criticised for the lack of recognition of discrimination and depicting identity as a static and linear process (Renn, 2008).

Subsequently, research focused on multiracial individuals as part of a culture, context, and environment, viewing the experience as multifaceted and heterogenous (Pedrotti et al,

2008). For example, Root (1996) looked at identity development in the US as a dynamic process whereby biracial individuals: 1) hold and merge multiple perspectives; 2) shift ethnicity and race situationally; 3) have a multiracial central reference point; d) create a home base in one identity; and e) opt out of racial categories (Renn, 2003; Root, 1996). Moreover, external factors of family influence, gender, personal history, or social class were considered in what influenced multiracial individuals' choice to identify with one group (Hernández Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Wardle, 1998).

However, Root's (1996) model suggests that individuals can choose to undergo stages, depicting this as an internal process, where the involvement of both internal and external processes may be downplayed (Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2005). Specifically, how the perception and approval of others impact identity formation, as they suggested that identity confusion and conflict is experienced if there is an apparent gap between their self and ascribed identity (Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2005). Therefore, where diversity may be accepted in western communities, other societies where homogeneity is central, this apparent gap may feel more acute and limit one's ability to claim their racial background (Törngren, 2018). As a result, it may be that individuals in homogenous societies experience a consistent state of identity confusion or conflict.

These environmental differences have been discussed through Törngren et al's (2021) research integrating data from nine different countries across the globe: the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden, Canada, USA, Japan, Spain, Singapore, and Israel. They identified how the personal constructs and self-identity of an individual was dependent on factors such as country of birth, visible differences, spoken languages, ethno-racial composition, societal attitudes, and political structure (Törngren et al, 2021). In addition, the model highlights the differences between contexts and cultures, and suggest how in Japan, where homogeneity is valued more than diversity, multiracial individuals tend to stand out and face difficulties due to their visible differences and ethno-racial composition (Törngren, et al, 2021).

8

Therefore, this may suggest a lack of applicability of previous models to individuals in non-Western settings, as their contextual, societal, and cultural factors are different. Additionally, previous identity models have heavily relied on data in the US, and specifically for those with White origin, where 74% of participants identified as White (Sneed et al, 2006). Furthermore, cultural values of autonomy may not be as valued for individuals living in collectivistic societies, where group cohesion may be more desired than diversity. It appears that in previous identity models, issues relating to ethno-racial composition, societal attitudes, and phenotype may not be considered, where an individual may choose to identify with one ethnicity to avoid discrimination (Törngren, 2018). Therefore, in the context of Japan, discrimination may not just be any factor but could be a driving aspect to an individual's identity development.

In learning from these differences in experiences and identity development, CoP may be able to adapt existing therapeutic interventions to promote effectiveness in developing therapeutic rapport, conceptualising our clients' history, and presenting problems, and promoting culturally responsive therapy. Therefore, the inclusion of international research further allows CoP to continue to recognise the current and historical discrimination that minority individuals have faced globally and for practitioners to tailor their treatment accordingly (BPS, 2017; HCPC, 2023).

Racial Diversity in Japan

As indicated previously, the most recent statistics indicate the growing number of foreign nationals, international marriages, and multiracial children in Japan (Taba, 2021; Törngren, 2022). These figures are expected to increase due to the growing number of foreign nationals in Japan, where in 2015 it was stated that around 140,000 foreign citizens were a spouse of a Japanese citizen, and around 18,000 births were of Haafu children (Taba, 2021). It is important to note that the number of Haafu individuals being reported in Japan is likely to be underestimated due to the lack of statistics available for those in elementary, middle, or

high school (Taba, 2021). In addition, Japan's legal requirement to declare one nationality by the age of 22 proposes another issue in the accurate reporting of Haafu individuals (Arudou, 2016)

Despite the increase in children from mixed origins, Japan still holds an ethnonational narrative and strives for homogeneity, where being 'Japanese' is based on the physical appearance and ethnic origins of the individual (Sato, 2024). As a result, the dependency of physical appearance as an indicator of their 'Japaneseness' creates a phenotypical rubric and a binary paradigm, as those who do not hold a typical 'Japanese' phenotype are considered as a Gaijin, a derogative but widely accepted term for a foreigner. Whilst Gaijin is commonly used to describe 'foreigners', the literal translation of the Japanese characters would indicate 'outsider' (Arudou, 2016).

Due to establishing Gaijin or Japanese status through phenotype, it has been suggested that it reflects two groups of mixed-race individuals: invisible and visible minorities (Arudou, 2016). Invisible minorities are multiethnic individuals who have visual and biological markers enabling them to 'pass' as Japanese, which could be individuals who have their non-Japanese origins in other Eastern Asian regions (Arudou, 2016). Visible minorities are mixed race Japanese individuals who, due to phenotypical differences, do not 'look Japanese', and therefore are perceived and treated as non-Japanese or a Gaijin (Kimura, 2021).

Furthermore, social structures of racialisation appear to have a profound impact on the experiences of how individuals are treated and divided (Arudou, 2016; Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). Historically, this narrative of the inferior 'other' and the binary paradigm was encouraged from the Japanese government, as they enacted policies that further divided the Japanese/Gaijin paradigm. For example, discriminatory actions continue to remain legal to this day, as policies and rights for foreigners regarding tracking, policing, housing, and education remain different and allow for them to be carried out (Arudou, 2016). In turn, these

discriminatory actions are often conducted based on the phenotypical rubric and how public policies perceive foreigners as a threat to the public order of Japan (Arudou, 2016).

Therefore, the ascription of predictive behaviours for racialised groups could be reflected in the narrative of skin colour in Japan, where Whiteness is held in higher social esteem and symbolically perceived as 'pure' or 'clean' (Arudou, 2016). Additionally, this narrative of Whiteness being perceived as 'pure' also relates to the similarities to the dominant skin tone in Japan, and how they historically constructed their standards of beauty (Arudou, 2016; Haque, 2024). As a result, those who have darker skin tones and features outside of Euro-American ideals, are seen as undesirable, less 'Japanese', dangerous, unattractive, and overall negative (Arudou, 2016; Törngren & Sato, 2021).

Literature Review findings

Experiences of multiracial and multiethnic individuals globally

In examining the global research for those with multiracial or multiethnic backgrounds, discrimination and identity confusion appear to be often experienced (Franco et al., 2021; Nagatsuka, 2023). Across research, the majority of multiracial individuals reported experiencing racial slurs and racism more frequently than monoracial people of colour, and also reported specific identity stressors in relation to their stigmatised racial group (Franco et al, 2021). Multiracial individuals also reported experiences of invalidation, which related to their behaviours, phenotype, and identity (Franco & O'Brien, 2018). Specifically, identity incongruent discrimination was commonly reported, which is defined as the discrimination based on the perceived identity of the individual, which is not congruent with their self-identity (Franco et al, 2021). This incongruence was experienced as a disconnect between their self-perception and perceived identity, generating a sense of confusion, lack of clarity, and instability of one's identity (Franco et al, 2021). As a result, multiracial individuals have shown to also disengage from their identity and detached from any racial group (Buckley & Robert, 2004). Specifically, identity incongruent discrimination has been suggested to link to

the detachment, as otherwise individuals are compelled to have to prove their identity to others, which can be perceived as an emotionally draining and pointless task due to the incongruence being based on perceived appearance (Franco et al, 2021).

Consequentially, these forms of discrimination have been associated with poorer mental health outcomes, such as decreased self-esteem, psychological and physical adjustment, possibly due to the lack of stability, attachment, or confusion with regards to self-identity (Franco et al, 2021; Huang & Stormshak, 2011). It could be argued that poorer mental health outcomes are generally experienced due to the psychological distress that often arises from being on the receiving end of discrimination (Woo et al, 2019), regardless of identity confusion. However, when examining the experiences of mental health consequences among multiracial and multiethnic individuals, the specificity of experience of identity ambiguity and confusion seems to be at play (Ng et al, 2017). A meta-analysis reported similar findings, where racial ambiguity and reduced access to culturally sensitive healthcare was related to elevated depression rates in racial minority groups (Kalibatseva & Leong, 2014).

Moreover, the race of the individual may alter the ways in which identity formation and experiences differ (Woo et al, 2019). It is suggested that those who are distinctly different from the dominant group, i.e., African Americans in the USA, there may be a heightened consciousness for belonging and kinship with a specific group (Schulenberg et al, 1997). This may be a result of the increased propensity for those of colour to face negative stereotypes, cultural conflicts, systemic racism, where group cohesion may provide necessary support to navigate those issues (Schulenberg et al, 1997). Without this, adolescents may face difficulties in obtaining a secure sense of ethnic or racial identity and may encounter difficulties in healthy functioning in adulthood (Schulenberg et al, 1997).

Considering the consequences highlighted above among Western countries, where diversity is generally more accepted, issues relating to identity confusion and belonging may

be more pronounced in Japan due to their homogenous and collectivistic culture (Arudou, 2016; Nagatsuka, 2023). The following section will discuss the literature for the experiences of multiracial and multiethnic individuals in Japan.

Experiences of Haafus and Foreigners in Japan

Within the relevant research in Japan, there appear to be issues in the transparency about analysis that researchers have utilised. As a result, there are several studies where I am unable to indicate what type of quantitative or qualitative analysis was conducted.

In a study conducted by Yoshida and Oikawa (2012), 108 Japanese biracial participants completed a 52-item survey measuring the outcomes of being Biethnic and the background variables that predicted those outcomes. Statistical analyses of factor analysis and multiple regression suggested that having less experience living outside Japan and having a non-Japanese parent who was not East Asian (i.e., being a visible minority) contributed to 'being treated differently' (Yoshida & Oikawa, 2012). Additionally, they found how individuals thought of themselves as Japanese and acted as such, but it was only through others seeing them as 'different' that they realised their differences. In their discussion, Yoshida et al (2012) explored how the ethnicity of participants' non-Japanese parent was influential in how they were treated. Despite its limitations, the positivistic stance focusing on the cause-effect relationship for bi-ethnicity and experience in Japan identifies various issues and barriers that this population may face (Yoshida et al, 2012).

Yet, the literature review revealed a lack of quantitative studies, where Yoshida et al's (2012) was the only one that clearly defined their analysis and methodology. This dearth may be in part due to a lack of recognition of the presence of discrimination; attitudes against Haafus are not considered as 'discrimination' according to the ethno-national narrative in Japan (Haque, 2024). Additionally, Japanese scholarship on minorities has primarily focused on generational foreigners such as the Chinese and Korean population (Arudou, 2015). As a

result, and in a recent trend for research prevailing from universities outside of Japan, qualitative studies may be able to explore phenomena in smaller sample sizes.

Haque (2024) reiterate the influence of phenotype and skin colour, as they conducted an abductive thematic analysis exploring the factors that influence racial discrimination of foreign residents in Japan. In utilising an abductive methodology, they collected data from 25 interviews of foreign residents in Japan, study materials and websites (Haque, 2024). In examining the factors for discrimination, they indicate that being 'non-White' may increase the likelihood of encountering racial discrimination compared to being 'White' in Japan (Haque, 2024). In their analysis, foreign residents reported issues with finding housing, refused or avoided communication, avoided being sat next to on transport, ridiculed in public due to the perceived lack of language ability, and being stared at (Haque, 2024). They suggest that these experiences may be due to the noticeable physical distinction regarding non-White individuals, and the highly esteemed portrayal of 'Whiteness' in Japanese culture (Haque, 2024). Another finding related to the difficulties in interpreting racial prejudice and discriminatory behaviours due to the normality and subtleness of discriminatory attitudes in Japan (Haque, 2024). Participants reflected how they had to distinguish whether discriminatory behaviours possessed racist connotations or not, i.e., whether it was malicious or out of curiousity, after factoring in their own racial and cultural heritage (Haque, 2024).

In relation to the Haafu experience, Taba (2021) examined how half-Japanese students aged 12-15 understand the internal and external experiences relating to their ethnicity and how those experiences related to their ethnic identity. Participants consisted of six individuals of multiethnic origin (i.e., parent of Asian origin) and six with a Caucasian parent from the USA or Europe. Taba (2021) utilised a modified grounded theory approach which resulted in 11 categories relating to positive and negative experiences. Interestingly, discrimination was a theme in both positive and negative experiences, where participants encountered praise for their Haafu origins and helped in uncomfortable situations. On the other hand, they found

negative experiences through being stereotyped, not helped while being discriminated, or discontent, and in most cases the perpetrators of this discrimination were their peers, and in one case a teacher (Taba, 2021).

Oikawa and Yoshida (2007) reiterated these findings through their exploration on experiences of multiracial or multiethnic individuals in Japan. This consisted of focus groups for thirteen half-Japanese participants of Asian, Caucasian, and African American backgrounds that were raised in Tokyo. Their study reported three main themes: a) Unique me: individuals who do not want to be stereotyped; b) Model Biethnic: individuals who want to be associated with stereotypes as they were 'positive' and to use this to their advantage; c) Just let me be Japanese: not wanting to be labelled differently. Three background variables of ethnicity, family structure, and living environment were identified as fundamental in shaping the experiences of participants (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007).

It is suggested that the availability of 'positive' stereotypes may be exclusive to White Haafus, due to the perception and cultural value of Whiteness (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). Furthermore, familial discrimination was also reported amongst non-White Haafus in the study. For example, one participant's grandparents would make derogatory remarks about his father's Black skin colour (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). In addition, the same participant discussed ongoing conflicts between his Japanese family and African American father, and the difficulties he faced witnessing it. It appears how the ethnicity of the individual determined how they were perceived by others, as well as the subsequent treatment they received from others (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007).

This relationship between ethnicity, skin colour and experience in Japan was researched by Aracena (2017), who interviewed seven Black Haafus living in Tokyo. Participants discussed their experiences of living within 'Japanese Beauty Standards' and the difficulties with being a model, being 'Blasian, Okinawan, and Japanese', receiving questions around 'why is your skin black?', experiencing 'best of both worlds', and the

'commodification of Blackness in Japan' (Aracena, 2017). The participants revealed the difficulties of navigating their Blackness in Japan, through the rejection they faced from others, bullying, exclusion from jobs due to skin colour, and lacking validation of being 'Japanese'. Similarly to Haque's (2024) findings, it appears that as adults, participants grew to reflect on, differentiate, and understand other individuals' perspectives as 'not knowing any better' (Aracena, 2017).

Whilst not specifically in Japan, Tanu (2019) interviewed 14 Haafus attending Japanese schools in Indonesia with Indonesian or Filipino heritage. In utilising an ethnographic methodology, they indicated themes of: 'being half Indonesian and dirty', 'challenging Japanese superiority', 'being half Japanese and special', and 'being mixed and cosmopolitan' (Tanu, 2019). The experiences of these participants indicated the negative perceptions they received as a result of their Indonesian or Filipino heritage and 'being looked down' or bullied by their peers (Tanu, 2019). Participants discussed experiences of covering their Southeast Asian heritage due to negative perceptions, feeling embarrassed when their parents spoke their native language to them, and the hierarchical nature of race amongst Japanese individuals. One participant highlighted how the West is superior to Japan and the rest is inferior due to economic perceptions and racial stereotypes surrounding darker skin colours (Tanu, 2019).

In these experiences of discrimination by Haafus highlighted above, I suggest how issues of racialisation are present within the context of Japan, as different political, social, and cultural narratives influence the way Haafus experience discrimination and privilege. In this sense, due to the narrative of Whiteness as 'admirable' or 'desirable', it reflects the perception of how other races are viewed and the negative predictive behaviours that are then associated with them (Törngren & Sato, 2021).

How Haafus navigated their identity in Japan: assimilation strategies

Due to the differences in experiences relating to phenotype highlighted above, it is important to consider how both visible and invisible Haafus navigate their experiences in Japan. Törngren and Sato (2021) aimed to explore the experiences of Haafus' ability to claim their ethnicity, i.e., their ethnic options. They also endeavoured to explore the ways in which participants cope, rationalise, and negotiate a gap within their self and reflected identity. Their research consisted of 29 semi-structured interviews with individuals from backgrounds of the USA, Europe, Australia, Nigeria, Palestine, and other Asian countries. However, the majority of multiracial Haafus with visible differences were from Western backgrounds (Törngren & Sato, 2021). The study reported that both visible and invisible minorities faced different difficulties in ethnic options; visible minorities faced difficulties in passing as Japanese, whereas invisible minorities had difficulties claiming or identifying with their multiethnic background (Törngren & Sato, 2021). This was identified in their themes; "I am not hiding it, but it's not noticed", "I, myself, think that I don't look Japanese", "I am haafu/an international person (half-Japanese)", "I am forever a gaijin", and "I do not have any fixed idea about what I am – identify as a human being" (Törngren & Sato, 2021, pp. 809-815). Their findings suggest and offer an addition to the Japanese-foreigner binary paradigm, as the ascription of identity by others reflected three categories of: Japanese; Foreigner; Haafu (Törngren & Sato, 2021). It appeared that these three identities were ascribed based on the individuals' visible markers such as physical appearance, and therefore provided limitations for individuals with phenotypical differences to claim their identity as either Japanese or even as a Haafu (Törngren & Sato, 2021).

Another qualitative study discussed what strategies mixed-race individuals adopted to assimilate, cope, and avoid discrimination or alienation (Törngren, 2018). The sample consisted of 18 individuals from Asian and Western backgrounds, with one Nigerian participant. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews, and the findings suggested

that practices of racial passing and covering were utilised by participants. Racial passing refers to a person identifying as one ethnicity, but presents themselves differently, to 'pass' as the majority population (Goffman, 1986). Törngren (2018) discussed how invisible minorities may choose to hide their mixed status to avoid discrimination, whereas visible minorities could 'pass' as a foreigner to make their lives easier; accepting that they won't be considered 'Japanese' (Takeshita, 2010). Covering, on the other hand, is a practice where individuals downplay their disfavoured identity (Goffman, 1986). Yoshino (2007) describes how this concept and practice of assimilation refers to conceding to the reality that individuals have to 'cover' their stigmatised self to proceed in life, which can occur through acts like changing names, clothes, and behaviours.

A recent study by Sato (2024) echoed similar notions of how East Asian Haafus who 'pass' as Japanese navigate racial and ethno-national boundaries of 'Japaneseness', and how that may constrain their identity options. Among the 17 participants, it appeared that participants were able to claim and be validated on their Japanese identity, suggesting a congruence between their self and ascribed identity (Sato, 2024). However, it appeared that the process of racialisation also presented itself in terms of others' conceptions of participants' other origins (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). In this sense, individuals who were of Korean or Chinese mixed origin also faced difficulties in being able to embrace their ethnic roots, due to the negative historical connotations and discourses that are prevalent for these countries (Sato, 2024).

Oshima (2014) utilised focus groups for thirteen Haafu individuals, including those from Asian, Caucasian, South Asian, European, and African backgrounds at a university in Tokyo. Some participants reported that it was only during their adolescence that they began encountering a gap between their self and ascribed identities. Additionally, they reported experiencing how their teachers and peers treated them differently, felt embarrassed by their non-Japanese parent, and hid their non-Japanese background. In their adulthood, some

participants reflected on becoming more comfortable with their identity and place in Japan, whilst others continued to experience difficulties.

The above literature indicates the differences in how Haafus may be able to navigate, integrate and assimilate their identity in Japan. Overall, it appears that East Asian Haafus are better able to claim their ethnic identity of a Japanese individual whereas Western or White Haafus may be restricted to claim their foreign or Haafu status (Oshima, 2014). However, due to the perception of Whiteness and importance of skin tone in Japan as a reflection of nationality, NWVM Haafus may be further restricted to only claiming foreigner status (Haque, 2024; Törngren & Sato, 2021). In addition, the experiences of NWVM Haafus appear to differ as Törngren's (2018) participant of half-Nigerian origin reported experiences of overt racism that no other participant had discussed, as they reported being stared at, called a foreigner by strangers, and witnessing her Nigerian father be racially profiled by police. As a result, navigating identity and experience in Japan may present differently for NWVM Haafus, as one participant of Japanese-Palestinian origin reported she wanted to remove her Arabic name due to negative associations and how it could be 'troublesome' in her workforce (Törngren & Sato, 2021). Another participant of Japanese-Pakistani origin claimed they would like themselves more if they were European, would cover her Muslim background, and change her appearance (Oshima, 2014).

Taken together, findings from the literature suggest that negative stereotypes are not exclusively attached to individuals of non-White heritage, as those who can pass as Japanese, i.e., Chinese and Korean Haafus, also experience these racialised messages (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Tanu, 2019). However, one difference may be the ethnic option that these Haafus may face, where NWVM Haafus are unable to hide their ethnic backgrounds due to the phenotypical differences and therefore may be subjected to issues of racial and/or identity incongruent discrimination (Franco et al, 2021; Haque, 2024).

In discussing the different ways Haafus may navigate their identity, Nagatsuka (2023) conducted a thematic analysis, interviewing 17 White Haafus, to explore how individuals received socialisation messages regarding their race, their formation of ethnic identity, and their mental health. They reiterate similar findings of the tensions between identifying as a foreigner and Japanese, where those who 'looked' more Japanese wished to be foreign, whereas those who looked more foreign felt like an 'alien in their own land' and isolated from society (Nagatsuka, 2023). In addition, they provide advice for children, parents, and schools to consider for Haafu individuals. In their advice, they discuss the importance of 'being oneself', having exposure to both cultures and ethnicities, having role models, and for schools to implement diversity discussions (Nagatsuka, 2023).

These findings reiterate previous literature, in which it appears how all Haafus encounter difficulties relating to their identity and discrimination. In relation to the advice that they provide, aspects of 'being oneself', 'exposure to both ethnicities' and 'role models' may involve additional obstacles for those from NWVM backgrounds (Nagatsuka, 2023). For example, as with previous literature, in which there could be a hierarchy in Japan regarding the perception of race (Haque, 2024; Tanu, 2019), the shame and negative stereotypes that arise from racialisation may produce inherent difficulties for children to be themselves or want exposure to both ethnicities. Furthermore, for NWVM Haafus, the ability to find 'role models' may be limited due to the lack of opportunities and media portrayal of NWVM Haafus as negative (Aracena, 2017; Haque, 2024; Yoshida, 2014).

Therefore, NWVM Haafus may be more limited in receiving or seeking support through their experiences. In addition, it appears how the ways that NWVM Haafus experience discrimination may be different, as well as the ways in which they are able to navigate their identity due to their phenotype and skin colour (Aracena, 2017; Haque, 2024). As a result, I argue that it is imperative for research to examine the experiences for those with

20

non-White backgrounds given the presence of racialisation in Japan and the research for mixed race individuals globally and their difficulties with mental health.

Methodological and Epistemological Critiques

In the literature highlighted above, there appear to be issues regarding their methodology, epistemology, and transparency (Yardley, 2000; Willig, 2013). Firstly, most qualitative papers present issues with transparency as the authors do not discuss their research paradigm, analysis method, and reflexivity, and in some cases a clear statement of research questions are absent. For example, Aracena (2017), Törngren (2018), Törngren and Sato (2021), Sato's (2024) research all reference an analysis, but there is no further information provided on the chosen analysis or its process. Therefore, it remains unclear as to what the process was in their analysis, how they conducted it, or reflexivity regarding their choices made.

In addition, after delving into the literature highlighted so far, it appears that there is an underrepresentation of NWVM Haafus within Japanese identity research. Amongst the participants of the above studies, three of 13 (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007), 10 of 116 (Yoshida et al, 2012), one of 18 (Törngren, 2018), two of 29 (Törngren & Sato, 2021), and none of Taba's (2021) 12 participants were of non-White Haafu origin. Despite the underrepresentation, NWVM Haafu participants repeatedly reported different experiences from White Haafus, which could be reflective of a non-homogenous sample.

Within most of the qualitative studies reviewed, there is no discussion or reference regarding their epistemological position. This, in turn, poses issues regarding how prior researchers approach the studies, i.e., research paradigm, and their positionality as researchers (Morrow, 2007). Given that the research paradigm also indicates the standards in which the research is evaluated, the lack of transparency regarding the studies reviewed presents an issue in critically evaluating these studies (Morrow, 2007). Moreover, due to this lack of transparency, it becomes difficult to locate the social positioning of the researcher, their role,

the participants role, and the full context of the study (Morrow, 2005). As a result, there is a gap in our knowledge of this phenomena, as we are unaware of how researchers utilised themselves, their motivations, assumptions, biases, interpretations, or whether they had bracketed this in their analyses (Morrow, 2005; Morrow, 2007). These limitations in the standards of transparency and rigour then influence how research is able to inform practice and policy, as we are unable to assess the quality of research (Morrow, 2005). Despite the issues highlighted in previous research, it is important to note how imperative previous researchers such as Törngren and Sato (2021) have been to the current landscape of identity research in the context of Japan and acknowledge their contributions to the field. Furthermore, it is also important to note that as these researchers are not within the field of psychology, but rather through migration and ethnic studies, and therefore may hold a different lens on transparency and rigour regarding research (Steltenpohl et al, 2023).

The aforementioned methodological and epistemological criticisms highlight the need for phenomenological research that is consistent and coherent through recruitment, data collection, and analysis. Whilst discrimination is a way to define and categorise one's experiences, the process of racialisation reflects a critical realist ontology as this existing social structure and the mental health consequences are experienced differently by each individual. This presents an opportunity in which a phenomenological approach can explore the experiences of each individual, where they are considered the expert in their experience. In addition, given the nature of consequences that these experiences may have regarding one's mental health, consideration of context, understanding individuals as relational beings, I argue that CoP research is positioned perfectly to explore this phenomenon (Morrow, 2007).

Research Gap and Rationale for the Study

Despite the importance of deepening knowledge of the experiences of being a NWVM in Japan, this phenomenon remains underexplored. Whilst identity research has indicated that discrimination is a central theme across experiences regardless of phenotype, it

seems that an individual's visibility and phenotype play an influential role in how multiracial Japanese individuals experience discrimination (Haque, 2024). This is highlighted in the substantial differences that are reported for NWVM Haafus: i.e., experiences of overt racism, policing issues, societal discrimination, and familial issues (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Oshima, 2014; Törngren & Sato, 2021). Despite these differences in experiences, no study to date has explicitly sought the experiences of discrimination for NWVM Haafus through a phenomenological perspective, and little interpretation or discussion is made regarding the differences in these experiences.

Therefore, this gap indicates how much remains to be understood for the experiences of multiracial or multiethnic individuals in Japan, and specifically, how NWVM Haafus experience discrimination and make sense of their identity. It is evident how impactful experiences of discrimination, invalidation, and identity confusion is to mental health based on the experiences of multiracial individuals globally (Franco et al, 2021). In researching this, CoP practices would benefit through the wider understanding for those not only outside of the western realm, but also understand the diversity of experiences and identity development.

Moreover, the lack of scientific rigour that seems apparent within this field, highlights how I could fill this gap as a researcher rooted within CoP's scientific and humanistic value base. This would be achieved through careful consideration and rationale behind my decisions, explicitly stating my research paradigm, and transparency throughout my research process (Morrow, 2007).

Research Aims

The present study is concerned with addressing the gap in the literature by exploring how NWVM in Japan experience discrimination, and to understand how participants understand their identity following discriminatory experiences. Additionally, this study aims to deepen the understanding of NWVM Haafus in Japan, and to add to the existing body of literature to shed light on the experiences for those who identity as NWVM Haafus.

In order to address these aims in a scientifically rigorous manner, attention to methodological or epistemological transparency and coherence is essential (Morrow, 2007). The following chapter will discuss my methodological choices and how I addressed the research questions.

Research Questions:

1. How do non-White visible minority Haafus in Japan experience discrimination?

2. How do non-White visible minority Haafus make sense of their identity after experiencing discrimination?

Chapter III: Methodology

Overview

This chapter will explore the methodological, epistemological, and ontological perspectives that have been adopted in this study. Additionally, this chapter will provide a basis to how my research paradigm informed my choice in methodology for the research project.

Research Paradigms in CoP

Research projects within the field of CoP begin by considering the researcher's philosophical assumptions and their research paradigm (Willig, 2012). Guba & Lincoln (1994) define research paradigms as belief systems, which are rooted in ontological (views on reality), epistemological (nature of knowledge and researcher-participant relationship), axiological (place of values) and methodological assumptions (Morrow, 2007). Therefore, researchers in CoP must be aware of the assumptions and tensions of each paradigm, and how their paradigm informs the foundations of their research and choice in methodology (Morrow, 2007).

Epistemology, ontology, and axiology

Differences in epistemological positions can be seen across a continuum that is reflective of the researcher's ontology (Willig, 2012). This ontological continuum: realism; critical realism; and relativism, depicts the role that the researcher adopts from 'objectively' studying the participants to co-constructing knowledge (Willig, 2012). Furthermore, ontology depicts how the researcher views reality: whether there is a single reality that is observable and measurable (realism); that a *true* reality does exist, but measuring and observing this reality is imperfect (critical realism); or the idea that multiple realities exist (relativism) (Ponterotto, 2005; Willig, 2012).

As for epistemological positions, there are differences in the ways in which authors categorise them. Ponterotto (2005) proposes that the researcher's epistemological stance can

be positioned on a continuum: positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, and interpretivism. Willig (2012), however, captures epistemological stances into three categories: realist, phenomenological and social constructionist.

A positivist paradigm aligns with a realist ontology, as it is based upon the idea that the world is made up of structures and objects, which have a cause-effect relationship with each other, indicating a 'true' reality that is observable and measurable (Ponterotto, 2005). Due to dissatisfactions with the positivistic stance, post-positivism or critical realism arose (Ponterotto, 2005). Whilst post-positivists similarly acknowledge an objective or 'true' reality, they argue that accessing this reality is limited and therefore is measured imperfectly (Ponterotto, 2005). Within this paradigm, the researcher's role is that of a detective, in which they aim to uncover or discover reality, and often take a passive role where they strive for objectivity rather than a co-creation of knowledge (Willig, 2012).

Secondly, the phenomenological paradigm (also known as constructivist-interpretivist; Ponterotto, 2005) aims to develop knowledge about the subjective experiences of the individual. Therefore, the focus is phenomenological as it seeks to understand the experiential world of the participant. This is achieved through a hermeneutical approach in which deep reflection can shed light on meaning that is less readily available at first glance (Ponterotto, 2005). This position assumes a relativist ontology, which rejects the notion of a 'true' reality, but instead believes that knowledge is subjectively constructed by the individual, therefore resulting in multiple, and equally valid realities (Ponterotto, 2005; Willig, 2012). In this paradigm, the researcher co-constructs knowledge alongside the participant through the hermeneutic circle, thus making researcher reflexivity imperative (Ponterotto, 2005; Willig, 2012).

Thirdly, the social constructionist approach focuses on language as a determining factor in how people construct versions of reality (Willig, 2012). It assumes that human experiences are mediated by language and utilises participants to provide information on the

socially available discourses about the specific phenomena, and how that shapes the participant's experiences (Willig, 2012). The social constructionist approach also assumes a relativist ontology, as this perspective views how individuals construct meaning in specific contexts, and the role of the researcher is to deconstruct and view how phenomena have been constructed (Willig, 2012).

My Research Paradigm/Positionality as Researcher

Along this spectrum, I adopt a critical realist position, which states that an external reality does exist, which I argue is the social structure of racialisation, but is experienced and meaning is made subjectively by individuals (Willig & Rogers, 2017). In considering an epistemological position, I found myself deliberating and considering tensions that exist between a phenomenological paradigm and my critical-realist ontology (Willig, 2012; Ponterotto, 2005). This is due to some authors positing that the phenomenological paradigm aligns best with a relativist ontology (Willig, 2012). Whilst my ontology does assume a 'reality' based on social structures (i.e., that discrimination is a real phenomenon), my aim is to develop knowledge into how these social structures are experienced, rather than to understand these structures (Willig, 2012).

Ultimately, my deliberations fit with Morrow's (2007) argument for methodological pluralism; recognising tensions to appropriately fit the paradigm according to my research question. I propose that an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) best suits my research aim highlighted above, as it's concerned with the study of experience (phenomenology), the process of interpretation (hermeneutics) and idiography (Willig, 2012; Smith et al, 2009). The subsequent sections will explore the theoretical basis for IPA and how my research paradigm informed my decision to adopt IPA in this research project.

Theoretical Foundations of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

IPA is concerned with an individual's lived experience of a phenomenon (Smith et al, 2009). In exploring a phenomenon such as discrimination, the researcher seeks to understand

how an individual makes sense of their experience, and interacts with the accounts of the participants through interpretation to understand their experience (Tuffour, 2017). Therefore, the researcher is integral to the research process (Peat et al, 2019), which is highlighted by the three central tenets of IPA: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is concerned with the study of experiences, in a way where an individual examines how experiences are perceived and appear in their consciousness (Tuffour, 2017). When applying this to research, phenomenological research seeks to understand an individual's experience of a specific phenomenon, where the researcher interacts closely with the experiential world and deep reflections of the participant (Willig, 2013). Throughout the interactions between the researcher and participant, knowledge is co-constructed, and insight is gained for the phenomenon under study.

Initially, Husserlian phenomenology, or descriptive phenomenology (Giorgi, 1985) posited undertaking the examination of experience through the concept of intentionality, this being the act of stripping away preconceptions and biases to uncover the essence of the phenomenon itself (Eatough & Smith, 2017). In research, this method approaches the accounts of participants at face value, refrain from looking beyond the data, and assumes the possibility of 'bracketing'; being the researcher's ability to put aside their assumptions, biases, and beliefs (Willig, 2012).

However, Heideggerian phenomenology rejected the idea that bracketing is a possibility, as reflection is a process that occurs within a given context (Heidegger, 1962; Willig, 2013). In turn, interpretive phenomenologists step outside of the accounts of the participants and consider and reflect on the wider social and cultural contexts (Willig, 2012). Additionally, interpretive approaches focus on exploring the meaning of an individual being in the world and how that meaning influences the choices that they make. Therefore,

interpretive phenomenologists utilise presuppositions, viewing them as an integral part to the process of interpretation and hermeneutics (Willig, 2013).

Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics refers to the theory behind interpretation and meaning, where meaning depicts a fluid concept that is continually revised and interpretated to gain insight (Tuffour, 2017). Within this, meaning is obtained through the researcher's interpretations and requires the researcher's detective work to co-construct meaning (Tuffour, 2017). In doing so, the researcher engages with the double hermeneutic, where the participant's meaning-making of a phenomenon is captured through the perspective of the researcher's sense-making process (Tuffour, 2017; Willig, 2013). Therefore, to assist the meaning-making process, the researcher actively engages with the hermeneutic circle; referring to an iterative process where our understanding as a whole is related to our understanding of individual parts of an experience (Peat et al, 2019). Additionally, the hermeneutic circle also considers the context to which the experience is being described, that cultural, historical, and the personal context of the researcher is inevitably bound to the interpretation of the data (Peat et al, 2019).

Idiography

The idiographic approach within IPA espouses a commitment to the uniqueness of each individual experience, and values the concept of subjectivity (Tuffour, 2017). As such, IPA researchers are required to offer a detailed and nuanced analysis for each individual case, before progressing to the next participant, and prior to any comparisons being drawn across cases (Tuffour, 2017). In doing so, IPA research gathers a homogenous sample of participants to ensure that the phenomena being studies is understood from a shared perspective and context (Smith et al, 2022). In utilising this idiographic approach, the researcher is able to capture idiosyncrasies within each individual experience and valuing subjectivities, whilst ultimately being able to reflect on patterns that may emerge across cases.

Limitations

One of the primary criticisms of IPA revolve around the lack of emphasis it places on language (Tuffour, 2017). Firstly, it does not account for whether the participant and researcher have the required skills or fluency to communicate the complex nuances of experiences (Tuffour, 2017). Secondly, these difficulties in fluency and communication may be further complicated in international research, due to both researchers and/or participants being unable to express their experiences in their native language. As IPA heavily relies on the accounts and reflections of participant experiences, this creates a further issue into their ability to reflect and the researcher's ability to interpret. The relevance of this is discussed in subsequent sections.

Rationale for IPA

Qualitative research in CoP allows the researcher to employ multiple methodologies, such as Grounded Theory (GT), Descriptive Phenomenological Analysis (DPA), Narrative Analysis (NA), and Thematic Analysis (TA). Whilst exploring each methodological approach is beyond the scope of this thesis, I will be discussing how the current gap in literature and my positioning as a researcher led me to adopt IPA.

The literature review highlighted a gap in the current understanding of identity and experiences of discrimination for multiracial or multiethnic Japanese individuals in Japan. In viewing the available literature of Haafu's in Japan, it appears how experiences and issues relating to discrimination were central themes regardless of racial or ethnic background (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Törngren & Sato, 2021).

However, literature highlighted how experiences of discrimination varied depending on phenotypical characteristics such as racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds (Haque, 2024). Therefore, I argue that a social structure in the context of Japan such as racialisation does exist, but experiences of discrimination are subjective and dependent on individual characteristics and societal assumptions of race and ethnicity. Furthermore, despite

acknowledgment from previous studies of colourism and racialisation in Japan (Törngren & Sato, 2021), no research to date has specifically explored the experiences of discrimination amongst NWVM Haafus.

Therefore, existing literature highlights a gap that could be filled utilising a phenomenological approach. Specifically, IPA's ability to provide an in-depth understanding of my participants' lived experiences can explore the subjective experiences of racialisation and discrimination amongst NWVM Haafus (Smith et al, 2009). In turn, this could assist CoP's understanding of context, culture, and how identity and discrimination is experienced in environments such as Japan. Moreover, in utilising the double hermeneutic and my role in co-constructing knowledge, I believe as a Japanese-Israeli who experienced racialisation and discrimination in Japan, I can engage with the text as a cultural insider and reflect on the socio-cultural context and the participants meaning-making process (Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2012). Whilst I may be able to engage with the text as a cultural insider, I also recognise my position as an outsider given my White skin tone, and how colourism may also play an influential role in discrimination and participants meaning making process. The oscillation between being a cultural insider and outsider is discussed further in the discussion chapter. Taken the above points together, I suggest that IPA is most suited to explore a complex and emotionally laden phenomenon such as discrimination, allowing to give a voice to both myself as a researcher, but also the participants who have historically been overlooked to voice their experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2015).

Grounded Theory (GT) was considered, as its aims are to develop "a theory that accounts for a pattern of behaviour which is relevant and problematic for those involved" (Glaser, 1978, p. 93). Whilst GT may have answered a research question relating to the cause of non-White Haafus experiences of discrimination, suggesting a discoverable reality, it does not explore how non-White Haafus experience discrimination. Alternatively, GT may have answered the research question of 'how do NWVM Haafus form their identity?' which is

important due to the lack of non-western multiracial identity models. However, this may not have explicitly focused on both identity *and* discrimination among NWVM Haafus in Japan. As a result, due to the conflicts with my phenomenological perspective, and how the literature highlights a gap of how NWVM Haafus experience identity in the context of discrimination, it was deemed inappropriate.

Descriptive phenomenological analysis (DPA) was also rejected due to its viewpoint that participant's accounts are taken at face value (Willig, 2012), meaning that I would only be describing their experience, rather than how my interpretation forms part of the meaning making process (Willig, 2012). Furthermore, DPA's viewpoint on bracketing was particularly misaligned with my values as a researcher (Willig, 2012), as my experiences as a NWVM Haafu is what informed my decision to research this topic, and ultimately will influence the way I interact with the data and my participants.

Other approaches such as discourse analysis and narrative analysis were also deemed inappropriate due to their incongruence with my research paradigm. These approaches typically adopt a social constructionist approach, therefore positing a relativist ontology, but placing more emphasis on language, culture, and other mediating factors (Willig, 2012). Whilst I do value that how experiences may be influenced by other factors, as highlighted above, I still maintain the assumption that we are able to access the meaning individuals make and argue that a social structure or a *reality* does exist in which we experience differently.

Procedure

Ethics

Ethical approval was granted by UEL's Research Ethics Committee to conduct interviews in English for non-White half-Japanese individuals living in the UK or USA (Appendix A). An advertisement was posted on social media (Appendix B), which invited interested participants to take part in the study. The poster included my details, an

introduction to the project, the extent of participation, criteria for eligibility, and that interviews will be conducted remotely. A consent form was provided to each participant, ensuring they had read and understood the information sheet (Appendix C & D). At the end of the interview, participants were also emailed a debrief sheet (Appendix E).

Audio and video recordings were taken via Microsoft Teams and were stored on UEL's OneDrive, which is password-protected and encrypted. Additionally, access to the folder was limited to myself and secured via multi-factor authentication. Consent forms were also stored on OneDrive but were stored separately from recordings to ensure confidentiality and minimise re-identification of the participants. During the transcription, confidentiality was secured by immediately omitting any identifiable information for the participant, i.e., names, location, etc.

Sampling Method

I adopted a purposive sampling method in this study, where an inclusion and exclusion criteria was created to produce a homogenous sample that would be appropriate for the research question (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith et al, 2022). The criteria were as follows:

- 18-35 years old
- Have one Japanese parent and one parent of non-White and non-East Asian origin
- Experienced discrimination in Japan
- Lived in Japan for at least one year consecutively
- Fluent in English language
- Currently living in the UK or USA

I decided to specify this age range as individuals of mixed origins were more likely to be assured of their cultural identity with age (Fatimilehin, 1999). Therefore, utilising this age range could allow participants to recall their experiences through childhood and discuss their process of identity development further (Arnett, 2000). Secondly, recruitment of participants

with one non-White or non-East Asian parent, as defined in the introduction section, was conducted through the poster (see Appendix B). Thirdly, whilst I wanted to narrow down a sample that would reflect a similar experience, I wanted to refrain from pre-determining a subjective experience such as discrimination. This led me to define discrimination as a self-reported experience, rather than defining it for participants, as this would be conflicted with my epistemological position, that whilst racialisation as a social structure exists, this process is experienced subjectively and differently.

The period of 12 months was to ensure that individuals had adjusted to the culture of Japan, could describe their experiences of discrimination, and how they make sense of it in the context of Japan (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). As mentioned earlier, language is often considered a major limitation to IPA research. Therefore, in this study, fluency in English speaking skills were a requirement to take part in the study (Appendix B). Whilst conducting the interviews in Japanese was considered, I ultimately decided that English would be better suited due to my difficulties in translating advanced levels of Japanese, which topics of discrimination may encapsulate. Other considerations regarding this choice will be discussed later.

Finally, the current location of the participant was also considered. Initially, I wanted to interview participants who were currently residing in Japan, as this could provide a benefit in capturing the current issues and barriers that NWVM Haafus may be encountering in Japan and potentially empower these individuals by speaking of their difficulties. However, in research supervision, it was decided that participants currently living in Japan will be excluded from the study, as this could put them at higher risk if they were still living these experiences. Additionally, Japan suffers from cultural stigma in discussing mental illness (Ando et al, 2013) and structural barriers in accessing mental health services, i.e. Japan's mental health services being mostly privatised and cultural stigma around accessing services (Kanehara et al, 2015; Setoya, 2012). Therefore, individuals in Japan may refrain from

exploring these difficulties, especially if they are currently experiencing discriminatory behaviours in real time. It was therefore safer to interview individuals currently residing in the UK or the USA (and not in Japan) where support services are accessible so that I may signpost participants upon debriefing.

Sample Size

IPA research within a professional doctorate setting recommends recruiting between four to ten participants (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). In this study, I recruited six participants, which is congruent with IPA's idiographic approach to capture nuanced data (Smith et al, 2022). A sample size of six participants was deemed appropriate to provide the required richness of data in IPA, whilst remaining small enough where the idiographic commitment to IPA is maintained (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011).

Recruitment

This study focused on the phenomenon of discrimination experienced by individuals who identify as half Japanese and half non-White and non-East Asian. Therefore, recruitment focused on identifying and inviting those who experienced discrimination to participate in the research. Recruitment commenced after my data management plan was approved and ethical authorisation was granted by the University of East London's Psychology Ethics Board (Appendix A).

Participants for this study were recruited via a research poster advertised through social media groups for half-Japanese individuals (WhatsApp & Facebook) (Appendix B) and asking acquaintances of mine to send the poster to appropriate individuals/groups. Once individuals expressed interest by contacting me via email, I asked participants for demographic information to filter their eligibility for the study. This included asking interested participants for their age, ethnicity, their length of stay in Japan, and their current location of residence.

Once eligibility was met, I asked participants for their preferred time, current availability, access to Microsoft Teams, and for any questions they may have for me. No individuals asked to withdraw from the study. Several participants were deemed unsuitable due to their ethnicity not fitting the criteria. Three participants were recruited via social media, and three via my personal network. I had no prior personal contact or relationship with any of the participants of the study. All the interviews were carried out in English, with most participants occasionally using Japanese to describe phrases, areas, and culturally specific terminology. Four interviews were carried out via video, and two via audio only, which lasted between 45 and 58 minutes.

Participants

Six participants took part in the research study, and their demographics are presented below (Table 1). To ensure anonymity, participants were provided with pseudonyms, and all identifiable information in the transcripts have been omitted or altered. Four participants identified as female and two participants as male and ranging from 24 to 33 years old. All participants identified as half Japanese and half non-White and non-East Asian, racially, or ethnically. Participants' non-Japanese half varied in ethnicity from Indian, Indian/British, Ghanaian/Dominican, Mexican, and African American.

Participants described differences in their location in Japan, ranging from major cities in prefectures such as Tokyo and Hyogo, to more rural areas in Japan. However, all participants spent at least one year during their childhood or adolescence in Japan attending primary or secondary education in Japanese or international schools (see Table 1). I believe that my sample of six participants displays a variability in experiences that enable an in-depth account of each unique experience to discrimination and their identity.

Table 1

Demographics of Participants

Participant	Age	Sex	Non-Japanese Ethnicity	Rural or City	Current Location	International or Japanese School
Sonia	Late 20's	Female	Ghanaian/Dominican	City	USA	International
Mia	Late 20's	Female	Indian/British	City	UK	International
Josh	Mid 20's	Male	Indian	City	USA	Both
Emily	Early 30's	Female	Mexican	Rural	USA	Japanese
Akiko	Early 30's	Female	Indian/British	Rural	UK	Japanese
Kevin	Mid 20's	Male	African American	City	USA	Both

Note. Age group for participants: Mid 20's (24-26 years old), Late 20's (27-29 years old), Early 30's (30-33 years old).

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were adopted to gain an in-depth account of the participants' lived experiences, whilst capturing the nuances within individual experience (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith et al, 2009). The interview schedule (Appendix F) consisted of open-ended and non-directive questions to enable participants to provide their account and definitions of discrimination (Smith et al, 2009). In addition, when creating the interview schedule, I consulted with others with lived experience of the phenomena in Japan. The individuals I consulted with had a look at my interview schedule and agreed with my questions relevance to the topic.

When considering the pre-interview discussion, two points were considered in research supervision. Firstly, due to participant's multilingual abilities and that for some of them their native language was Japanese, we considered how language may play a further role in their communication of experiences. Therefore, participants were encouraged to speak Japanese to describe any culturally relevant or specific colloquialisms but would be asked to describe them in English to the best of their ability. This decision would be to lessen the potential loss and transfer of meanings as a result of translation (Van Nes et al, 2010). Secondly, a discussion as to whether to disclose my own experiences of discrimination as a NWVM Haafu in Japan to participants was considered. Whilst this could make participants

feel more comfortable, we decided against this as this may influence the participants

responses or steer them to discuss similar experiences or utilise my own definitions of

discrimination. Furthermore, the potential influence this may have would go against my

epistemological position that individuals experience the process of racialisation differently.

Interview Schedule & Changes in Questions

The interview schedule (Appendix F) was constructed following recommendations by

Smith et al (2022) and revised after the first two interviews in research supervision. The

interview schedule was followed as a vague guide to different topics to allow participants to

be comfortable and explore what their individual experiences are, rather than it dictating the

participant's accounts of discrimination (Adams, 2015).

During the initial stages of the interview, the questions were constructed to gain a

glimpse into the participant's context, overall experience, and identity. By doing so, it was

designed to introduce both the participant and researcher to their experiences in Japan and

doing so in a less emotionally intensive manner. Therefore, the first question was constructed

as *"could you tell me about what it was like to live in Japan?"*, which was then followed up

by *"to what extent do you identify as Japanese?"*. Once an idea of the participant's context

was discussed, it was then followed up with *"what do you regard as discrimination?"*, which

was a prompt designed to understand the participants definitions of discrimination, rather

than imposing my own. The choice to allow participants to define discrimination was

reinforced by my epistemological and ontological positions, as I approached the research

questions through a lens that the processes of racialisation and discrimination were 'truths'

but is experienced differently by each individual.

The main questions relating to the first research question (i.e., "how do non-White

visible minority Haafus in Japan experience discrimination?"), revolved around asking

participants *"throughout your time in Japan, could you describe to me what forms of*

discrimination you experienced?", and *"in past research, some individuals of non-White*

origin discussed difficulties with policing, family and cases of overt discrimination from the public, have you experienced any of these in your time in Japan?". Subsequently, participants were also asked *"do you think there are differences between White and non-White experiences?"*, which was to allow them to explore challenges specific to their racial or ethnic identifications and to their experience of racialisation in Japan.

The second research question (i.e., "how do non-White visible minority Haafus make sense of their identity after experiencing discrimination?") was focused on in the second half of the interview schedule where participants were asked questions such as *"how did you navigate these experiences?"*. Subsequently, I wanted to focus on the participant's protective factors by asking *"did you receive any support around these issues?"* and prompting them to explore *"to what extent was it helpful?"* and *"what in retrospect might you have wanted more support with during or after?"*. In order to further explore the participants experiences of their identity development, questions were asked of *"compared to your other identity, how do you feel about your Japanese one?", "how would you have liked to relate to your Japanese identity",* and *"what could have helped with that?"*. Finally, participants were invited to discuss any other relevant topics that were not covered in the interview.

Whilst the overall interview question tended to flow from participant experiences, question 8 of: *"Do you think the extent to which you identify as Japanese is related to your experiences of discrimination in Japan? If so, how?"* seemed to interrupt the flow of the interview, as the overall subject matter was around support and how the participants navigated experiences of discrimination. Additionally, there appeared to be confusion to the wording and the question, therefore, this question was removed from the interview schedule. Furthermore, question 6 of: *"Do you think there are differences between White and non-White Haafu experiences?"* was added after the first two interviews. The question was added as during the initial two interviews, participants appeared to explore issues around this topic.

Therefore, this question was added to allow participants to explore this area more explicitly and with more time.

Conducting interviews

Interviews were conducted between September 2023 and November 2023 via Microsoft Teams. Due to time difference and work commitments, two of the interviews were rescheduled. Prior to the interview commencing, I had a brief introduction with participants to discuss expectations, concerns or questions, recordings of the interview, and that the interview would commence with a brief introduction of themselves (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Furthermore, I reiterated that at any point during the interview, they had the right to withdraw, not answer a question, or pause the interview if they wanted to. I also reminded them that until the point of transcription, where a date was given, they were able to withdraw their data at any point, but after anonymisation that this would no longer be possible. The ability to withdraw was reiterated at the end of the interview, after the recording had been stopped. Throughout the interview, a digital copy of the interview schedule was kept reminding me of the topics and questions I wanted to ask. During the interviews, I kept a reflexive journal to jot personal feelings that arose, and as a way to ensure researcher self-care and transparency in the research process, which will be discussed in the reflexivity section.

After the interviews concluded, all topics and questions were covered, with one participant needing to take a break due to feeling emotionally overwhelmed. At this point, we took a few minutes to allow the participant to feel comfortable, and I encouraged them to take as much time as needed, or whether they wished to conclude or pause the interview, to which they declined. I believe with this and other participants, I was able to remain attentive to the participant's experiences of exploring an emotionally laden phenomenon such as discrimination. Whilst I had some concerns of adopting a researcher role, rather than resorting to a therapist role, the interview schedule and reflexive journal was utilised to

ground myself and maintain focus on the questions and the participant's experiences. Once the interviews concluded and the recording had been stopped, I had a 5 minute debrief period with them, for them to discuss the interview experience, any concerns, or questions they had, and to encourage them to contact me if they had any further questions. Afterwards, a debrief letter (Appendix E) was sent to them via email.

Data Preparation

All of the audio/video recorded materials were transcribed manually by Microsoft Word, and the recordings were played through the use of Microsoft stream's software on UEL's OneDrive. All transcription, encryption and storage of recordings and documents were done on my personal laptop, operating Mac OS, which is also password protected. During the transcription process, language-specific terms were kept in Japanese to ensure the meaning of the phrases were kept, and translations were provided as close as possible to be understandable in English (Yardley, 2000).

Analytic Process

The following section will provide a summary of steps that I adopted in conducting IPA. This section is provided to offer transparency of the analytic strategy and to assess the commitment and rigour demonstrated in the research (Yardley, 2000; Yardley, 2017). The data was analysed using IPA according to Smith, Flowers, and Larkin's (2022) step-by-step guidelines. Despite having conducted IPA before in previous academic research, I utilised these guidelines due to recent changes in terminology and procedure that Smith et al (2022) offer.

Step 1: Reading & Re-reading

In the initial steps of conducting IPA, Smith et al (2022) advise becoming immersed in the data. I engaged in careful repetitive reading of the interview transcripts, and also followed Smith et al's (2022) recommendation to listen to the audio-recording at least once

whilst reading the transcript. Additionally, I noted down initial observations and recollections of the interview experiences as per Smith et al's (2022) guidance.

Step 2: Exploratory Noting

Using Microsoft OneNote, I created a column for 'exploratory comments' next to the transcript of each interview (Appendix H). I approached this step with an open mind; noting down anything of interest, with a goal to familiarise myself further with the participant's account (Smith et al, 2022). I focused on the participant's explicit meaning, content of the matter, and the meaning that they derive from key objects such as relationships, processes, events, etc. (Smith et al, 2022). Alongside this, I focused on some interpretative noting as it allows a deeper understanding to develop of the participant's account, and relating it to its context, usage of language, and abstract concepts (Smith et al, 2022).

Across this step, I encountered feelings of being stuck and overwhelmed by how much information to capture, which Smith et al (2022) describe as a common experience. I consulted with my research supervisor, engaged with my reflexive journal, and revisited Smith et al's (2022) steps to regain a focus on the task. In engaging with this hermeneutic and reflective component, I found that I was developing confidence in my ability to make sense of participants' accounts (Smith et al, 2022).

Step 3: Constructing Experiential Statements

This step involved turning the exploratory notes into concise statements of the participant's experiences. In doing so, it allowed me to consolidate my thoughts so far and engage with the accounts of the experiences differently, as I was no longer relying solely on the transcript itself, but on the notes taken during the previous step (Smith et al, 2022). I conducted this step by creating another column adjacent to my exploratory notes in OneNote (Appendix H), where I was able to reflect on my exploratory notes but also the transcript if needed. This allowed me to engage with the hermeneutic circle, where the note is interpreted in relation to the whole and vice versa (Smith et al, 2022). Initially, I encountered some

difficulties in finding the balance between the participant's original words and my own interpretations. I found that by engaging with my research journal (see Appendix G), supervision, and with patience, I was able to find this balance and develop my confidence in trusting my own interpretations and ability to capture the participants words.

Step 4: Connecting Experiential Statements

The process of connecting experiential statements was conducted digitally, by placing each experiential statement on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. I utilised this format to visually map and place all the statements on a page so it would be easier to organise which statements connected with each other. Each statement was treated with equal importance across this step of analysis, and I followed Smith et al's (2022) recommendation to initially follow my hunches for clusters that I suspected. After following these hunches, I also tried to remain flexible with clusters by shifting statements around viewing clusters in novel ways (Smith et al, 2022). Ultimately, not all experiential statements were utilised, as indicated by Smith et al (2022), and some were subsequently discarded.

Step 5: Naming Personal Experiential Themes & Organisation

Following the previous step, I began to organise the clusters in Microsoft Excel, following the same format that Smith et al (2022) illustrate. Afterwards, I separated them into what I viewed as initial hunches of Personal Experiential Themes (PETs). In doing so, each experiential statement of sub-theme included the page number, so that it produced an evidence trail where I can revisit the text and so that I could see what brought these experiential statements together (Smith et al, 2022). Once I organised the sub-themes together, I reflected on what it was that these sub-themes were capturing and how the participant viewed these experiences. The process of naming the PETs involved revisiting the text and reorganising the sub-themes, so that I was able to capture the theme in a coherent manner.

Step 6 & 7: Other participants and Group Experiential Themes

The penultimate step of analysis involve repeating the same process for each participant. Smith et al (2022) reflect on the importance of treating each case as its own individual merit, rather than imposing previous interpretations or findings onto other accounts. Through this process, I did encounter some difficulties in previous biases arising, which Smith et al (2022) argue is an inevitable part of IPA research. However, by following the previous steps rigorously, engaging with research supervision, journaling (Appendix G), I was able to allow new themes and entities to emerge (Smith et al, 2022).

After all accounts are analysed on their own merit, the final step looks for divergent or convergent patterns across PETs, to create Group Experiential Themes (GETs). This was done through an Excel spreadsheet, in which all PETs from participants were placed in a column next to each other. I decided to use this strategy as it allowed me to view similar PETs next to each other and compare sub-themes of their experiences. Initially, I ended up with seven GETs, after which I consulted my research supervisor to gain guidance on condensing these further. After meeting and also looking through Smith et al's (2022) recommendations, I condensed these down to four GETs. Once this was completed, I then placed the GETs into a word document, in which I could place appropriate quotes underneath, so that I could also display my thought process behind organising these themes in that way.

Reflexivity and Interview Process

Throughout the interviews, I found that difficulties of being racially, or ethnically non-White or non-East Asian were apparent, as interviewees tended to discuss their differing experiences to White Haafus without being prompted to do so. Therefore, it seems as though these different difficulties and barriers that this population felt, seemed to be a particularly salient aspect of their lives. Additionally, within some interviews, participants explicitly vocalised that they were processing, or reflecting on their experiences from a different perspective. This seemed to mainly revolve around their lack of support, minimising

discrimination, and finally naming that they experienced discrimination. This could be indicative of the lack of 'space' given to individuals, the complexity of this topic, and how social structures in Japan make it increasingly difficult for individuals to reflect and disentangle their experience from what is 'socially acceptable'. However, offering a causality of this would be incongruent to the phenomenological nature of the study.

Reflexivity was a key component to the interview process, which was practiced through reflexive journaling. I adopted a reflective-practitioner model from CoP, where two types of reflective practice was utilised: reflection-in-action (during the interview) and reflection-on-action (after the interview) (Hanley & Amos, 2017; Schön, 1983). These two practices allowed me to ground myself and re-engage with the participant's experiences, and reflect on them further in research supervision or personal therapy. Throughout my reflections, I noticed how I had certain expectations of others' experiences, as I questioned why I experienced specific overt discriminatory experiences, and also experienced some level of researcher fatigue. For example, after a participant expressed 'being lucky that they didn't experience much discrimination', I noted whether it was "my fault" or whether "I was the problem" within my own experiences, which was later taken to personal therapy.

Additionally, I noticed issues with the scheduling of my interviews, and how outside personal difficulties were influencing my ability to stay present. Throughout the recruitment process, I felt pressured to collect my data as fast as possible, where the first 4 interviews were conducted within nine days of each other, and the first two being done on the same day. In doing so, I was not able to give myself enough time to process each interview in a topic that is emotionally demanding (Kumar & Cavallaro, 2018; Pinto et al, 2022). Additionally, throughout the data collection process, there were unexpected events and traumatic life events occurring that paralleled some of the topics in the interviews. Due to the Israel-Gaza conflict, where aspects of hiding and constructing alibis were present in my life, discussing topics with participants that paralleled these similar issues felt exhaustive and difficult to stay

present with. After noticing how these traumatic life events, prior life trauma research, and unexpected events began to impact my abilities, I decided to take a break from research and adopted researcher self-care methods of personal therapy and research supervision (Kumar & Cavallaro, 2018).

Appraisal of Quality in Qualitative Research

The validity of qualitative research can be demonstrated through using Yardley's (2000) criteria that indicates the importance of commitment and rigour; transparency and coherence; sensitivity to context; impact and importance.

Commitment and rigour is seen as the in-depth engagement with the topic and their responsibilities with the data (Yardley, 2000; Yardley, 2017). This quality reflects the researcher's demonstration of thorough data collection, expertise and skilful application of methodology, and their consistency for analysis and in-depth interpretation. Through adopting the step-by-step procedure highlighted by Smith et al (2022), I ensured the consistency of analysis, and that data collection would be considered reliable. Despite some difficulties appearing throughout the interviews, my use of a reflexive journal allowed me to stay with the participant's experience to the best of my ability.

Secondly, transparency and coherence refers to the research's clarity and cogency (Yardley, 2000). Therefore, researchers are responsible for demonstrating a clear presentation of analysis and data collection through careful detailing of their process to collect, code, and offer excerpts of their data to showcase their process for interpretation. Throughout the literature review, it was apparent how this aspect was mainly absent as researchers failed to demonstrate what analysis was chosen, their steps to analysis, choices in data collection, or research paradigm. Therefore, I recognise the importance of criterion in evaluating qualitative research and have demonstrated my transparency and coherence through the use of detailing every procedural aspect of this research and reflexivity sections throughout the thesis.

Thirdly, sensitivity to context refers to the awareness that is shown to the participant's perspectives and environment, and how this may influence the data. This is due to the sociocultural, historical, and linguistic setting of the research, and how that may influence the participant's ability to reflect and how we as the researcher interpret the data (Yardley, 2017). Throughout this study, a major consideration was given to the language of the interviews conducted and how I could empower participants to discuss and communicate their experiences without feeling restricted by the linguistic context of English. In consideration of this, and the propensity of bilinguals with code switching (Azuma, 1997), being the alternating use of two languages, I decided that this could enhance the reflection of participants to use whichever language they felt comfortable to depending on the experience they were communicating. Additionally, sensitivity to context was also considered through the potential disclosure of the participant geographic upbringing in Japan. I encountered certain tensions due to wanting to protect anonymity, as NWVM Haafus are uncommon in Japan, especially in more rural areas, whilst being able to give context to the location of the upbringing. Ultimately, I decided to disclose the location without attaching any of the participant's information to it, and stated in the demographic table whether they were brought up in rural or urban areas in Japan.

Lastly, impact and importance refers to the studies requirement to produce knowledge that is useful, whether this is through its practicality, ability to generate hypotheses, or how we view the world (Yardley, 2017). I focused on this through applying a CoP lens to identity development and experiences of discrimination in a Japanese context, where the majority of this research takes place in western contexts. In doing so, I argue that we can understand the importance of context and widen our understandings of identity development on a global scale outside of the individualistic settings in the West. Furthermore, this may allow us to understand the experiences of multiracial development from a non-western lens and provide ways to better support these individuals struggles.

Summary

Throughout this chapter, I provided an account of the methodology, rationale for IPA, and procedural aspects of this research. Additionally, this chapter utilises Yardley's (2000) appraisal qualities by transparently and coherently presenting every stage of the methodological aspect of this research with substantial reflexivity as to my thought process behind these decisions.

Chapter IV: Analysis

Chapter overview

This chapter will display my analysis of the accounts of the participant's experience of discrimination and identity in the context of Japan. The categorisation of themes is displayed through the participants experiences, which is displayed through both excerpts and my interpretations. The findings indicated four Group Experiential Themes (GETs), and between three to four sub themes each, which showcase both the convergence and divergence of the participants' experiences, which is displayed in the table below (Table 2).

Table 2

List of Themes

Group Experiential Themes	Sub-Themes
Japaneseness is decided by others	I am Japanese, but others do not think I am
	Being evaluated and proving I am Japanese
	There is a way to be Japanese
Racialisation in Japan	Being racially profiled
	People look down on my race
	Tensions within my family
	Hierarchy of race
Understanding and navigating discrimination	Intentions and differentiating discrimination
	Feeling doubt and confusion
	My coping strategies
Navigating my identity	An Inferiority Complex as a child
	Looking for support
	Shapeshifting and being a chameleon
	Integrating my identities as an adult

Group Experiential Theme One: "Japaneseness is decided by others"

All participants voiced their difficulties during their time in Japan of not being considered as Japanese. Participants voiced an incongruence between their self- and perceived identity from other Japanese individuals due to differences in their appearance, thought process and experiences. Josh captures the essence of this as he states:

"Because of my diverse set of experiences, it makes it very hard for me to maybe quote unquote think in a Japanese way, even though there's no such thing. But I think there's a societal expectation of what thinking in a Japanese way is. And two, I mean, because of the way I look, the way I talk, my height. Umm, I think that people, will never truly see me as Japanese, so I think when I'm in Japan, it's hard for me to like confidently identify as Japanese." (Josh, 99-103)

As a result of these differences, phenotypically or 'behaviourally', it created difficulties in the participants abilities to feel secure in their self, as they felt as though they were being evaluated or tested for their 'Japaneseness'. For some individuals, this meant having to prove that they were Japanese through language ability or even by showing their passport. Furthermore, some participants voiced what the societal expectations of being Japanese are, i.e., behaviours, phenotype and language, and that it is within meeting these criteria that one can be considered Japanese. Therefore, this GET attempts to depict the exclusivity of being considered 'Japanese', and the how participants made sense of their experience as being excluded or othered by their fellow Japanese counterparts.

Sub-theme one: "I am Japanese, but others do not think I am"

Most participants indicated that there was an incongruence between their self-identity and how they were perceived by others. All participants described how they internally aligned or considered themselves as Japanese first, due to their upbringing being primarily in Japan or, for those who lived abroad during childhood, that their home felt culturally Japanese. Despite their internal alignment, it appears that participants experienced difficulties in being considered or thought of as Japanese by others.

"I have that sort of like, you know, identity crisis where I don't look the part and I'm always treated like I'm an outsider. I'm always treated like a foreigner, so it's like trying to relate to a group of people that you feel like you have so many parallels to draw, but they feel like, oh, you're just an outsider, you know." (Sonia, 71-74)

Sonia (Japanese Ghanaian/Dominican) mentioned that her life revolved around her Japanese maternal side of the family, due to her parents' divorce. Sonia states how she relates closely to her Japanese side, but due to her 'appearance' or phenotypical differences, describes an unreciprocated experience of relating to others; while she draws parallels to her peers, her peers appear to engage in 'othering' behaviours as Sonia reflects how she was seen as 'just an outsider'. This sentiment of being othered is echoed by Josh:

"I did feel as I was growing up and becoming more self-aware that because of the way I look, perhaps that was, you know, darker skinned. Perhaps I kind of grew a lot taller than other folks around me too quickly, and I think... I always felt this invisible wall around myself. Whenever I'm trying to interact with, you know, even peers or even, you know, strangers or even people just working at shops, I always felt this, uh, this constant otherness. And I think that was a little difficult for me [...] because all I wanted was to just be seen as being from the country that I was born in." (Josh, 38-45)

In Josh's experience, he discusses how an 'invisible wall' was present between himself and his peers and expresses how impactful that was for him as a child to not be considered as Japanese. Josh's depiction of his struggles is captured by how all he wanted was to 'just be seen as' Japanese, which could be indicative of the lack of validation that was present for Josh growing up. Additionally, Josh discusses how his difficulties worsened with age, due to changes in his appearance becoming more apparent as he grew taller and changed. Similarly, Kevin describes his experiences of realising how different others were treating him and the changes in his perception.

"I definitely started realising more myself, that there's like people are... like not treating me different but like kind of in a way, [...] when I was on a train, people won't sit next to me, every everywhere else would be full. [...] And that's when I started realising that I was like oh OK, I'm like really different, because I felt I was Japanese because I spoke

Japanese, I was raised by my Japanese family. I consider myself Japanese, you know, but that's when I was like oh, I guess I'm not." (Kevin, 50-56)

Kevin's narrative focuses on the realisation of his differences and the incongruence between his own perceptions as a Japanese person due to his upbringing and how others viewed him. His experiences appear to involve a questioning of his own self-identity, as it involves his realisation that he may not be as Japanese as he thought due to his experience of others' perception of him. It appears that for most participants, it was this lack of validation or 'othering' that they found influential in how they perceived themselves.

Sub-theme two: "Being evaluated and proving I am Japanese"

Most participants also described a process in which they felt observed for what parts of them were Japanese or not, and in some cases needing to prove that they are Japanese due to the questioning from others around them. Akiko discusses her experiences of feeling evaluated for her 'Japaneseness':

"Yeah, there was a sense of performance. […] it wasn't exactly like a test of your 'Japaneseness' as such, but everything, everything you did, I felt like everything that I did or could do would be assessed in this sort of breakdown way of like how Japanese it was or not. So, not just like my talking, but like my actions my, like, my gestures, how I responded to foods or my manners, it was always sort of broken down [...] It was always sort of being analysed in like, what bits and pieces of me were foreigner-ish and what bits and pieces of me were Japanese-ish" (Akiko, 92-104)

Akiko's narrative indicates the constant evaluation and analysis of her 'Japaneseness', where her language fluency, actions, gestures, food choices, and manners was being monitored by others around her. Additionally, the dichotomous evaluation of what aspects of Akiko are 'foreign-ish' or 'Japanese-ish' could reflect the binary thought process of being Japanese. Moreover, the language of 'testing' from Akiko could be interpreted to reflect the exclusivity to be Japanese. Josh echoes a similar sentiment:

"Whereas when I'm in Japan, I feel like I'm constantly being judged for what aspects of me are or are not Japanese, and I think that makes me question whether I'm really Japanese because I feel like there's this constant evaluation happening." (Josh, 95-98)

In Josh's experiences, a similar notion of the dichotomy of Japanese and foreigner is present. In his case, he reflects how he begins to question whether he is 'really Japanese' due to the Japanese-foreigner evaluation. This constant judgement from others appears to be experienced as others scrutinising 'foreigner' behaviours, as there is an underlying 'othering' tone and disapproval to Josh's behaviours. This judgement can also occur from appearance as Mia's explains when she arrives in the immigration line in Japan:

"People actually chase me and they're like, すいません (excuse me). And I'm like, oh, my God, I was like, shove my passport in their face. And I'm like, I'm in the right line and I think it is, it is heart-breaking to think that, you know, your country will never accept you, even though you think that that's your home." (Mia, 36-40)

In Mia's quote, she explains how she is evaluated by her appearance at the airport and deemed as a foreigner. Additionally, Mia's frustration within this experience is interpreted from her description of having to prove her Japanese nationality by shoving her 'passport in their face'. Her frustration may also be indicative of the frequency in which her nationality is challenged due to her appearance. Mia also describes how these experiences of being doubted as Japanese at first glance influence her feelings as a Haafu, as it reflects how she will never be accepted by the country she considers as 'home'. It appears that for some participants, the examination of their 'Japaneseness' appeared to also influence their own perception of their identity and whether they were Japanese enough.

Sub-theme three: "There is a way to be Japanese"

Across this sub-theme, some participants discussed what it is to be 'Japanese', and the expectations from others. Participants commented on different factors such as language, behaviours, fashion, and appearance and how important these factors are in being considered

Japanese. Moreover, participants described how the ability to 'pass' as Japanese appeared to be a significant factor in being 'Japanese', as even when language ability or fashion standards are met, if individuals appeared to look 'different', they will be considered as foreign.

Emily introduces the concept of being 'Japanese' through her depiction of herself:

"If I'm amongst Japanese like I do look Japanese and I know how to act like a Japanese because I was like raised by a Japanese and a Mexican who spent 20 years learning how to be Japanese right. So, I do actually, because I do also dress like Japanese and not because I'm trying to pretend that I'm Japanese, but because that's who I am." (Emily, 234-238)

In this excerpt, Emily portrays what being 'Japanese' is, and the multiple facets that are involved in this concept. As stated above, Emily highlights how appearance, or 'looking Japanese', being behaviourally or culturally Japanese, and her alignment with Japanese fashion helps her be considered as Japanese. She indicates how she also can 'pass' as Japanese when she is with other Japanese individuals. Akiko also highlights her abilities to 'pass' as Japanese as she discussed:

"I realised was that I was really lucky that I was very very very Asian passing. Because what tends to happen for me is that I can sort of go through, and on the whole, they would treat me as Japanese [...] I guess don't really have I suppose those more stereotypical [...] White Haafu features. So, like my hair is very black and my eyes and everything is very black as well." (Akiko, 180-187)

Akiko portrays how her ability to 'pass' as Japanese is a privilege and indicates how appearance is the most important factor in being 'Japanese'. Both Akiko and Emily identified their ability to pass as Japanese, which could be attributed to their lighter skin tones, but also their phenotypical similarities to Japanese individuals. As for other individuals with racially different backgrounds, where skin colour differences were more apparent, that despite their

ability to speak and align with Japanese customs, their ability to be considered Japanese was limited.

"In Japan, I'm always going to be an outsider, no matter how good my Japanese is, […] back then I was, you know, speaking pretty fluently and so no matter what, because I don't look Japanese and Japan is a homogeneous society, I'm always going to be an outsider, and I've sort of like accepted it." (Sonia, 272-276)

Sonia's excerpt captures the inability of those with phenotypical differences to be considered as Japanese. She explains her meaning making process that despite her previous fluency in Japanese and career in a Japanese company, due to the nature of the homogeneity of Japan, her appearance is what deems her as an outsider. Additionally, Josh reflects on his frustrations that he cannot 'present' as Japanese due to his appearance despite fulfilling other 'requirements':

"And another thing was that my name is Japanese, you know? […] what do I need to do, like do I need to wear a sign that says like I am Japanese? Like I can speak Japanese (sighs) like what... How do we move past these kinds of situations?" (Josh, 165-168)

Josh's body language and tone alongside his rhetorical question regarding how to move past these situations suggest an experience of frustration. He expresses that despite his name and fluency in Japanese, his darker skin tone may limit his ability to fit the criteria of being 'Japanese'. It appears that the primary criteria to 'be Japanese' relies on the ability to 'pass' as Japanese, i.e., having phenotypically similar features such as skin colour, height, hair, and eye colour. Furthermore, without this ability to 'pass', other components of 'being Japanese' such as behaviours and fluency in language appear to be insignificant.

Group Experiential Theme Two: "Racialisation in Japan"

This GET captures how racialisation presents itself in Japan. All participants discussed an experience in which they were subjected to prejudice from others due to their race, skin colour, culture, or other phenotypical features. The participants discussed these

experiences of discrimination through being racially profiled, encountering negative stereotypes of their non-White background, contending with familial tensions, or receiving comments from their family members. Throughout these experiences, participants disclosed how they felt ashamed of their non-White heritage, and for some how they wished they were 'White' as White Haafus were seen as more 'prestigious' or 'celebrated'. All participants discussed their meaning making of racialisation in Japan as they highlight how race is presented hierarchically, and their view of how their non-White heritage falls within this 'ranking' system. Ultimately, all participants highlighted how 'White Haafus' were treated better or perceived as 'elite', and how this narrative is perpetuated and engrained within Japanese society through stereotypes, beauty standards and media portrayal.

Sub-theme one: "Being racially profiled"

All participants described some experience in which they were racially profiled by others in Japan. In this sub-theme participants described how they, or a family member, were discriminated against based on their appearance through their cultural, ethnic, religious, or racial differences. Mia recalls how her father was discriminated against by a child when she was younger:

"My dad is Indian and he's like, it's quite tall, he has a ponytail, has a beard. So like that does not help, he used to wear a turban and so I know he's gone through quite a lot of discrimination. Like when he first moved, like obviously taxis wouldn't stop for him. And in kindergarten, [...] after 9/11 happened, he wore turbans still back then, and so this kid in my class went up to him and told him that he was a terrorist." (Mia, 216-221)

Mia's experience of witnessing her father be called a terrorist by her peer in kindergarten portrays how individuals from different religious or racial backgrounds can be seen as threatening or dangerous. Moreover, the fact that a child communicated this appears to indicate the societal perception of other backgrounds, and the negative connotations attached to cultural differences. Mia also identifies specific phenotypical features that can be

56

perceived as threatening to others in Japan as having a 'beard, ponytail, turban' and being 'tall'. The concept that foreigners, particularly those with darker skin tones, being considered dangerous is also discuss by Kevin as he recalls being stopped by police during high school:

"I would always get stopped by the police for 職務質問, stop and frisk, you know, always. Like one, one day I got stopped four times, [...] I just get stopped by the police and they be like, oh, can I just search you? Just randomly walking in the street in the middle of the day [...] I would, I would obviously be like, OK, sure, because I don't have anything. [...] And then after they finish, I'm like oh, can you search that guy? [...] a Japanese salary man (white-collar worker). And [...] he would say oh no, no, he doesn't look 怪しい. He doesn't look suspicious, […] So, what, did I look suspicious? And he's like oh no, you know, like stuff like that. [...] the day I got stopped four times, I took my shirt off, I dropped my pants off (raises hands in the air), […] this is my fourth time bro, like, go ahead." (Kevin, 98-126)

Kevin's experiences of being racially profiled by the police highlights the preconception that law enforcement have of individuals with darker skin tones. Additionally, the police's response to Kevin that he is being stopped as he looks 'suspicious' also indicates how different individuals are perceived and the normality of it in Japan. Kevin's initial response of agreeing to the stop and frisk as he 'does not have anything' to hide presents a dilemma as regardless of his response, he may be trapped to further questioning and suspicion if he refuses. Additionally, his responses to the fourth 'stop and frisk' also portrays the difficulty and helplessness that he may have endured, as he begins to strip down in the middle of the street. The perception and differences in treatment for those with different backgrounds by the public is echoed by Emily through her experience in a Japanese spa in Tokyo:

"I give my name everything and when I arrived at the lobby they said, oh yeah, yeah, you're this, you made a reservation. OK, but we don't accept foreigners here" (Emily, 343-345)

In Emily's experience, it can highlight how quickly the judgment is made to refuse entry to an individual, as Emily had previously contacted the spa, made a reservation, and was accepted to do so. It seems that over the phone, as Emily has previously stated herself that she 'sounds Japanese', it appears that it was only upon arrival that the staff immediately assumed that Emily was a 'foreigner' and refused her entry. Emily states how she was eventually let into the spa, after having a conversation with them, reassure them that they knew how to use the amenities, and after Emily showed her Japanese passport. Additionally, Josh recalls an experience during his driving lessons:

"My instructor, got into the car and the instructor wouldn't speak to me. Umm, and was just kind of just looking very disgruntled, and then I started speaking to the person [...] one of the things they had asked me was oh are you religious? And I had said like I'm not, you know, and then he said ah 良かった, like thank God you know that you're not religious. And I just that just kind of really got to my head because […], like if I was, what would have, you know, what would have happened?" (Josh, 150-161)

Josh identified in the interview of how this driving school was in a major city in Japan, where there is a diverse community of individuals due to the prevalence of international schools and immigrants. In his driving lessons, Josh's description of his 'disgruntled' instructor and how he was ignored in the beginning appears to relate to his appearance and perceived lack of ability to speak Japanese. After Josh speaks to him in Japanese, he finds that he is then questioned on his religious beliefs, and then the instructor 'thanks god' that Josh is not religious. Josh's experience of the instructor indicates how Josh interpreted the instructor to feel relieved. The relief could be interpreted to indicate a relaxation from threat, possibly due to the assumptions made of different backgrounds. Additionally, Josh's questioning of 'what would have happened' if he was religious highlights that this could be a threatening situation for him.

In this sub-theme, all participants voiced their experiences of situations where others made assumptions about them due to their racial, cultural, or religious backgrounds, which resulted in being denied access to establishments, police stopping them, comments about their race, or being thought of as suspicious. It appears that whilst both Akiko and Emily, who both identified as Asian passing, discussed experiences of racial profiling, the experiences for participants with darker skin tones revolved around being 'suspicious' or 'dangerous', as both Kevin, Josh, and Mia recall experiences of being stopped or having the police called on them.

Sub-theme two: "People look down on my race"

This sub-theme considers the ways in which their race is perceived and specifically how they felt that it was looked down upon during their childhood. All participants disclosed some experience in which they heard negative stereotypes or comments about their skin colour, and how that indicated the perception of their race from others. Kevin discusses his experience at a Japanese kindergarten:

"So, one day I came home crying [...] I jumped in the shower, and I started scrubbing myself really hard [...]And then my mum was like, oh, what's going on? And then I guess everybody was calling me dirty and like there's a, you know, Totoro, the Japanese film, there's a character まっくろくろすけ (soot gremlins), that black dust, floating dust. I guess they called me that, and I was like, really upset." (Kevin, 26-35)

Kevin's experience highlights how engrained the perception of race and how being darker was seen as dirty in Japan, due to the prevalence of these narratives amongst children in kindergarten. Additionally, this experience depicts the impact this had on Kevin as a child as he attempts to 'clean' himself from the 'dirtiness', as though attempting to remove his skin tone and race. Whilst the literal translation of the Totoro character is 'soot gremlin', in this context the translation is closer to the term 'blackie'. This degradation and narrative of darker skin tones being considered as 'dirty' is echoed by Sonia:

"Oh, don't you want to like, lighten your skin and it would make you look better? You'll look dirtier if you have dark skin. You don't want to tan because you don't want to get darker." (Sonia, 157-159)

As Sonia captures here, the narrative of darker skin being dirtier appears to be engrained within Japanese culture and its perception of beauty, which will be discussed in a later sub-theme. Furthermore, Sonia describes experiencing others using the 'N word' around her as she was growing up.

"And then a lot of people were trying to use the N word and then, you know, look at me when they would use it or when we were studying and there would be an N word in it. [...] And then there were lots of kids who were Japanese and, you know, not Black, who'd be using the N word to describe like kids from on [the army] base, cause a lot of kids were Black." (Sonia, 180-184)

Sonia explains how Black individuals were perceived in Japan, and how that was similarly engrained from a young age. The usage of the 'N word', whilst others looked at her, or it being used to describe Black Haafus on the army base indicates the ways in which Japanese or other international school children viewed individuals from Black backgrounds. Mia explains a similar experience of others perceiving her Indian heritage:

"I remember in the grade above us, there was […] a full Indian kid and he used to be like, so made fun of and like people with turbans and like even people I consider my friends now. [...] Indian culture was seen that way with like the funny accents and the turbans, and I remember people my grade just making fun of it and not, I guess they didn't realise that. That's me, like, that's my family." (Mia, 115-120)

Mia indicated how she witnessed an Indian student being 'made fun of' by her peers and friends during her childhood, and how others did not realise that was also related to her and her 'family'. In turn, the viewpoint that Indian culture was reduced to 'funny accents and turbans' could be interpreted as how in Mia's experience, that Indian culture was perceived as

something worth mocking. Similarly, Josh narrates his experiences of being half-Indian and the negative stereotypes of:

"Being seen as lesser than, whether that be in terms of like intellect or, you know, like I guess what you're capable of. And […] the socioeconomic background, like there was just this assumption of like oh you're from India, so you must be poor, you must do XYZ." (Josh, 133-136)

In Josh's experience, he narrates how others looked down on his non-White heritage of India and attached specific traits of being 'poor' and having 'lesser intellect/capability'. Josh and other participants depict a process in which they are reduced to negative stereotypes of their non-White culture. Similarly to the previous sub-theme, it appears that this aspect of being 'looked down up' could be more prevalent for those with racial or phenotypical differences as Akiko and Emily both identify their ability to pass as Asian.

Sub-theme three: "Tensions within my family"

All participants but Kevin, discussed some aspect in which there appeared to be some tension within the family due to their multiracial backgrounds. Some participants discussed ongoing difficulties with their family, whereas others discussed past difficulties, but over time both families learnt to accept one another.

Mia recalls her experience in asking her Indian grandparents:

"What was your biggest disappointment of dad? And they went, it was marrying your mum, and now it's very different, like they love her" (Mia, 260-262).

The strength in the narrative that her parents' marriage is the biggest disappointment is indicative of the potential tensions within interracial marriages, and how children manage to contain these tensions. Sonia discusses her experience in how her Japanese family perceived her father after her parents divorced.

"I think he was just struggling to sort of navigate his own life. Umm, which has nothing to do with him being Black, but I think my grandparents were like oh see, you know,

Black people are deadbeats, and you know they're not hard working and they're unintelligent. They have the sort of like negative, umm image of Black people in general." (Sonia, 302-306)

Sonia expresses her family's preconceptions of 'Black people' and how they attribute her father's difficulties and subsequent divorce to him being a 'deadbeat', 'unintelligent', or 'not hard working'. Sonia explains later in the interview her difficulty in containing these tensions as she states:

"I know they don't... they mean well. But it was definitely hurtful to group, you know, a lot of people into this one category and that felt like a jab at me a little bit, you know, by extension." (Sonia, 334-336)

Sonia captures her difficulties as she explains how her grandparents 'preconceptions' of her father were 'jabs' towards her by extension. Whilst she recognises that they may 'mean well', she also describes how her grandparents appear to not acknowledge that Sonia is half-Black, and how those preconceptions apply to her as well. It could be interpreted how their viewpoints of a 'deadbeat', 'unintelligent' and 'not hard working' may also be internalised by Sonia as she may feel that they see her in a similar light.

Akiko describes how, due to these tensions within her family, she must hide her Indian background from her Japanese grandmother.

"My mum said we just like, yeah, just keep it quiet from your grandmother that your dad's half Indian, because, like we've never, we've never mentioned it to them [...] yeah just make sure like your grandma doesn't find, doesn't hear about that, because [...] she would not like that." (Akiko, 141-148)

Akiko captures the ongoing tensions within her family of how she has never been able to be open or communicate her Indian background to her family. She explains how as her father can pass as White; her mother has always communicated to others that she has married a 'White man'. Akiko explains her difficulties with containing these tensions:

"I'm also very aware that there's always that what if question of like what? What would have happened? Would I have then seen a part of my grandma, which I would have, which I would have liked less too. So, it's that little sort of uncertainty in, it's like having the ground being a bit soft under my feet, always." (Akiko, 470-473)

Akiko indicates anxiety surrounding the containment of these tensions, as she remains unaware and afraid to tell her grandmother of being half-Indian. Whilst on one hand, she expresses that her grandmother may not care anymore, she also explains the fear of finding out as she may see a side of her grandmother which she may not like. It appears how the shame in her family and anxiety regarding her grandmother finding out is maintaining these tensions within her family.

In summary, this sub-theme depicts the tensions that may exist within NWVM Haafu families. Most participants reflected familial tensions, whether this related to comments, negative stereotypes, or hiding their background, and indicated internal difficulties that were associated with managing these tensions.

Sub-theme four: "Hierarchy of race"

All participants disclosed experiencing the differences in race and how hierarchical race was perceived in Japan. In all cases, participants explained that White Haafus were seen as the 'elite' group as they were 'celebrated', portrayed positively in the media, and met the beauty standards in Japan. In turn, participants explained how these narratives influenced how other perceived them in Japan. Akiko explains how when she was young, she discovered a website where Haafus:

"Were ranked like which Haafu were most desirable [...] it was so weird it's just seeing sort of person, like personality traits sort of being associated with like with different bloodlines and then different mixes." (Akiko, 164-168)

Akiko explains how she found it comparable to dog breeding, and how these personality traits were being associated with the race or background with the individual.

Akiko's narrative of this to dog breeding captures the dehumanising nature of this website is as it reduces individuals to 'bloodlines' and perceived 'traits' of their race. In this sense, the website appears to gamify Haafu backgrounds through a breeding game to create a 'desirable' Haafu. The desirability of White backgrounds is explained by Sonia:

"I feel like half White, half Japanese kids are, you know, treated like this elite group of people. And like I said before, Japanese people do put White people on pedestals [...] I don't know if it's their wealth or their beauty, or you know what it is, if it's like the media that perpetuates this like superiority." (Sonia, 395-398)

Sonia voices how White Haafus were perceived and treated as an 'elite' group of people, and how perceptions of wealth, beauty, and media narratives contributed to their 'superiority'. As a result, Sonia explains how that influences how NWVM Haafus are perceived as due to the idealisation of White Haafus it:

"Backfires for other people who don't fit into that category, which are, you know, people of colour. And I think half Japanese, half White kids sort of get that celebration [...] their features, [...], their experiences are celebrated, you can speak English, […] French, that's amazing. But if you're half Black or have anything else, and you speak their mother tongue, it's not, as you know, celebrated […] or respected, admired." (Sonia, 402-407)

Sonia additionally explains how the treatment of NWVM Haafus is influenced due to the idealisation of White Haafus, specifically in the aspects of celebration and respect of their non-Japanese heritage. Emily explains how she perceived these differences in treatment when she went to a University in Tokyo.

"I definitely recall some like, favourable attitude towards White looking haafus versus other people. And it's just how teachers would phrase things or 褒める (praise). [...] the way they would say like good job, where it was just a little bit of the teachers like better attitude towards, perhaps White haafus... because yeah, at the end of the day, umm, their looks are

64

more similar to, what has been portrayed as positive in media in Japan. You know, whiter skin, lighter hair, lighter coloured eyes, thinner bodies." (Emily, 435-441)

Emily's experiences in a university could depict how engrained the hierarchy of race may be in Japan. As a result, she witnesses White Haafus receiving better treatment, praise, and attitude as she attended lectures. In this quote, Emily indicates her meaning-making process, as she attributes these differences towards the beauty standard in Japan and how desirable these traits are in Japan.

Similarly, as a consequence of the beauty standard in Japan, Akiko expresses her experiences where her:

"Grandma might have been in the supermarket just like, you know, pointing me towards makeup that I had, like sort of whitening in them." (Akiko, 326-338)

Akiko suggests how the perception of beauty in Japan as 'whiter skin' influenced her family to guiding her to use makeup with whitening in them. As a result, this experience can be interpreted in how Akiko's family views race and their potential preference for whiter skin. The experiences highlighted in this sub-theme encapsulates the perception of race and preference for being 'White', as it appears to communicate a negative view of non-White backgrounds.

Group Experiential Theme Three: "Understanding and navigating discrimination"

Across all participants' accounts, there were reflections on how they understood and navigated experiences of discrimination as NWVM Haafus. Most participants reflected on how they differentiated between what was 'intentional' or 'neutral' discrimination, as at face value experiences may present as discriminatory, but when understanding context and their intent, it was intended to be helpful. As a result of the nuances and subtlety of discrimination in Japan, some participants were left confused and doubtful about their experiences and questioned whether they did in fact experience discrimination, or whether they should be struggling. In turn, the final sub-theme explores how participants navigated experiences of

discrimination, which mostly reflected ways of 'choosing your battles' and 'ignoring' the experiences. It appears that participants grew to expect these occurrences and how they had to adjust their expectations and find a 'positive', as otherwise it would influence their happiness in Japan.

Sub-theme one: "Intentions and differentiating discrimination"

In this sub-theme, all participants disclosed difficulties in understanding discrimination due to the nuances and complexity of how it presents in Japan. Most participants expressed how there are differences in the intentionality of what others are trying to communicate, and how in most cases they may not regard prejudicial experiences as 'racist' or deliberate 'discrimination'. Akiko captures these nuances as

"It's one of those things where, people are not being deliberately discriminating. Like it's often, I guess, well intentioned is a strange way to put it... neutrally intentioned, not intending any harm." (Akiko, 231-233)

Akiko's description of how some of her experiences of discrimination were not intentionally harmful but 'neutral', could depict the nuances of discrimination and the importance of understanding intentionality behind what others are saying.

Emily echoes a similar sentiment as she recalls experiences in childhood.

"I recall my uncle saying a few times: this is my niece Emily, she's a foreigner, 外人の子 (foreigner's child) umm, and I didn't mind. I didn't see that as discrimination in a bad way, but if you, if you put it in the discrimination term that that I just said, it could be discrimination, right (laughing). But I just didn't feel it that way, I didn't feel it on the negative side and my granny would say very similar things as well." (Emily, 175-179)

Emily voices the similarities between her experiences and what she considers 'discrimination'. Despite this congruence, Emily states that the intentions behind her family's actions let her understand that they were not 'negative' and how she felt positive about her relationships with her family members. On one hand, this could be interpreted as minimising

her experiences, as Emily downplays the way in which her family may have 'othered' her by introducing her as a 'foreigners' child'. However, Emily also explains how:

"it always helped along the conversation, you know [...] not being fully raised in Japan, […] there's vocabulary that I lack." (Emily, 193-196)

Emily acknowledges that whilst this could be deemed as discriminatory, her understanding and meaning making of it was that her family introduces her as a foreigner's child to assist and let others know how to communicate with her.

In addition, the nuance of discrimination is understood by Kevin as he states that:

"Japanese people, it's kind of like they kind of don't know, that they are discriminating in a sense, they're not really being racist. […] they're just not used to being around, different people. Because they are [...] one race country, you know. […] if you go to like countryside's in Japan like they just, you're just new, people haven't seen you, so seeing, you know people like White people or dark-skinned people, you know, they're just like, wow, they are kind of interested too in a sense. It's not like, yeah, it's not like they're looking down on you necessarily." (Kevin, 75-83)

Kevin presents and differentiates racism and discrimination in Japan. It appears that in his experience, this differentiation is due to the lack of exposure that Japan has to other countries due to its homogeneity and monoracial history. Additionally, his narrative of how others may be 'interested' in you due to your background presents how 'novel' individuals with multiracial backgrounds are. Therefore, Kevin's sense-making and differentiation of discrimination presents a picture of 'ignorance' and 'lack of exposure', rather than prejudice and racism. In the context of the interview, Kevin presents contrasting narratives as on one hand he understands discrimination resulting from the novelty of NWVM Haafus, but previously stated the prejudice that comes from being African American. This contradiction could be interpreted as an attempt to resolve a cognitive dissonance for why he was prejudiced due to skin colour, and the confusion that can result from the experiences of

discrimination in Japan. It could be that Kevin's understanding as a 'novelty' can allow him to continue to navigate discriminatory experiences as he can 'sympathise' with others, rather than viewing his experiences as discriminatory. Some participants also disclosed these difficulties with feeling doubt and confused over their experiences of discrimination, which will be explored in the following sub-theme.

Sub-theme two: "Feeling doubt and confusion"

In the previous sub-theme, participants explored the process in which they made sense and differentiated discrimination in Japan. Most participants elaborated on how they were able to understand their experience through context and how Japanese individuals may not be discriminatory with malicious intent, but rather through a lack of exposure and ignorance. Despite this sense making, participants also appeared to struggle with understanding and feeling confused by their experiences, as they felt 'gaslit' at times, or struggled to identify whether they were discriminated against and why it happened.

Kevin discusses this confusion of intent and questioned whether he did something wrong as he was getting stopped by police:

"I was like, I was like, I don't have anything. Why are you stopping me? Like why? Why did you stop me? You know, what did I do?" (Kevin, 122-124)

In Kevin's experience, he begins to examine what he did in this situation to be stopped multiple times by police throughout his teenage years. Kevin's narrative could be interpreted as an experience of self-blame, as he is unaware of why he is being stopped, and questions whether he was in the 'wrong' and did something to enable this prejudice. It appears that due to the lack of clarity of why he is being stopped other than looking 'suspicious', he attempts to understand what he is doing to appear that way, rather than remaining with his assertion that it could be due to the police officer's prejudice.

Josh voices the 'gaslighting' he felt in his struggles to be accepted as Japanese:

"I just wish there was someone who would help me escape the kind of gaslighting I would feel. Which was that like, am I wrong for kind of struggling with this? Am I wrong for like wanting to be Japanese, or like wanting to be perceived as Japanese." (Josh, 348-352)

Josh expresses the isolation he felt in struggling with his lack of validation as a NWVM Haafu. Josh's experience posits the internalisation of the narrative of being 'othered' and questions his sense of reality as he wonders whether he is the only one, or feeling confused whether he should want to be Japanese.

Sonia voices her difficulties in identifying whether she was discriminated as she wonders:

"I didn't experience... discrimination, overt discrimination at least, I don't know if I was just like unaware or, you know, it just slipped by me and people just didn't do it when I was old enough to understand." (Sonia, 223-225)

Interestingly, Sonia discusses how she was not overtly discriminated against and questions whether she did not notice or old enough to understand. Sonia seems to be suggesting that her experiences of others calling her the 'N-word' and being bullied in Japanese summer schools were not experienced as overt discrimination. It could be that Sonia is defining overt discrimination as experiences involving the public, police, or from society. Similarly, Akiko states that she did not experience:

"Overt public discrimination. It wasn't that sort of experience of, say, I was stopped by the police, and I was asked whether I was carrying a 外人 pass (foreigner identification card) or anything like that. It was because mine was very sort of quiet and […] sort of a self-imposed sort of a... no, I mean it wasn't self-imposed mostly." (Akiko, 490-493)

Akiko reflects a similar sentiment to Sonia, where they appear to highlight the severity of discrimination in Japan and downplay their own experience. It could be that this doubt and 'gaslighting' of whether they experienced 'discrimination' creeps in when their experiences are more nuanced, as other participants depict a similar feeling. In Akiko's

experience, the self-doubt and blame are apparent as she posits how some of her experiences were 'self-imposed', highlighting the difficulties in delineating what discrimination in Japan looks like.

Across this sub-theme, participants appeared to struggle in determining the intentionality behind discrimination and whether they were discriminated against in the first place. Some participants highlight a severity to discrimination and as they were not 'overtly' discriminated, i.e., experiences involving the public or police, they felt that they were not discriminated against at all. However, for those who did encounter so-called 'overt discrimination', they seemed unsure of the intentions or confused by why it happened in the first place.

Sub-theme three: "My coping strategies"

Due to the experiences of discrimination, all participants reflected on the ways in which they navigated their experiences. All participants discussed how they learned to 'move forward' with their lives, whether they adopted ways to ignore the situation, choosing their battles, or finding ways to use their situation to their advantage.

Mia reflects on her ways to navigate these experiences as an adult as she "learned not to let the discrimination get to me it's not worth my time. I'm there to enjoy my time there and don't really care if they don't think I'm Japanese" (Mia, 396-398).

It appears that as Mia grew older, she reflected on how these experiences influenced her emotions and ability to enjoy her time in Japan. As a result, Mia explains that she no longer 'cares' and 'ignores' these situations so she can enjoy her holiday in Japan. One interpretation may be that as Mia became an adult, she was able to rely on her internal validation of her Japanese identity, as she no longer cares if others don't think she is 'Japanese'.

Alternatively, the ways in which participants 'ignore' discriminatory experiences may be due to feeling helpless and unable to change the status quo in Japan, as expressed by Sonia:

"I mean, as long as I look different, I don't think there is anything that could really help because Japan is a homogeneous society. That is sort of what binds people together, I think. Umm... and so as long as I have different features, I don't think I'm ever going to feel that sort of, you know, feeling of unison and togetherness." (Sonia, 585-588)

In Sonia's narrative, there seems to be a limited internal locus of control regarding change in Japan, as she indicates that if she 'looks different' nothing can help her feel relatable or 'unison' with Japanese peers. Other participants reflected on this sense of control by 'choosing their battles' due to the emotional difficulties associated with being discriminated against.

"So, I just close my eyes, and just walk away, so that I don't have to feel the anger or the disappointment or just like questioning, you know, like if it's really bad, I would, I would intervene, you know. Obviously, if [...] somebody's [...], calling somebody nigga, [...] or just being like very racist to somebody. I would definitely go up to be like yo and I would stop it, but if it's not like a very direct, I just learned to walk away and just stay happy." (Kevin, 431-437)

Kevin captures the emotional turmoil that he experienced when he was younger of feeling 'angry', 'disappointed', or self-questioning when he experienced discrimination. It appears that as he got older, he learnt to walk away from these situations so he can remain 'happy'. Furthermore, Kevin also states that these strategies are also dependent on the context of the situation, and how depending on the severity, he will also intervene. It could be argued that both the reactions and strategies to navigate discrimination appear different dependent on the age and context of the participant.

In the context of being an international school student, Mia discusses how she was able to find ways to use her 'foreigner' perception to her advantage.

"And it was like once I got into high school [...] it just became, [...] how can we use this to advantage? [...] we managed to go drinking because we looked older, and […] get away with like having a fake ID […] and we could pretend that we didn't speak Japanese." (Mia, 295-301)

Mia discusses her experiences of finding ways to use her non-Japanese perception to her advantage, as she recalls how she was perceived as 'older' and that she could pretend that she 'didn't speak Japanese'. It appears that the inability to not speak Japanese could indicate a freedom in which one's expectations are not confined to Japanese standards. Therefore, Mia's notion of using her NWVM Haafu background to her advantage may reflect the ability in which she was able to oscillate between being 'Japanese' and 'foreign'.

In summary, it could be interpreted that a central theme of helplessness is apparent through the participants' experiences, as all of them disclose an inevitability of discrimination occurring. As a result, participants employed strategies of ignoring these difficult situations, as they all reflected on the emotional impact that these experiences had on them, and that it was not 'worth their time'. Despite the different ways in which participants navigated this through their age, none of them recalled a way to stop discrimination, but more so how to survive, blend in, or emotionally cope with the aftermath of the events.

Group Experiential Theme Four: "Navigating my identity"

Throughout all participants' accounts of their experiences of discrimination were reflections on how they subsequently navigated their identity as NWVM Haafu individuals. This theme depicts how participants reflected and internalised feelings of insecurity due to feeling 'othered' through their non-Japanese and non-White 'half'. Additionally, participants reflected on how they sought emotional support, which for most participants resulted in realising that there were no available support systems. Interestingly, some participants

reflected on the difficulties in asking their parents for support, as they felt as though this would be a 'burden' or that they may not understand. As a result, participants communicated how they attempted to assimilate to their surroundings and tried to change aspects of themselves, whether phenotypically or behaviourally to feel less different than their peers. Ultimately, participants disclosed how they view themselves now as an adult, and for some, reflected on their ability to feel more confident and that their multiracial backgrounds were more integrated.

Sub-theme one: "An Inferiority Complex as a child"

This sub-theme explores the processes in which the participants navigated and made sense of their identity as a NWVM Haafu child in Japan. In most accounts, participants discussed contending with difficult emotions growing up, where insecurities about appearance and identity arose. The title of the sub-theme is inspired by Emily's experiences on the barriers that NWVM Haafus overcome through her notion of an 'inferiority complex'.

"I do see a lot of […] an inferiority complex... and that's when you get, you get beaten up, […] not only by your surrounding or comments that could or could not be towards you, but from yourself as well." (Emily, 560-563)

Emily's reflections on an inferiority complex encapsulates the different ways in which participants experience insecurity both externally and internally. It appears that Emily may also be alluding to internalising external messages and how that can lead to 'beating' yourself up. In Mia's case, she voices how her insecurities regarding her Indian heritage manifested through her difficulties in being different:

"I just remember growing up and I hated being Indian. I literally used to be like I wish I was White." (Mia, 109-110)

In this quote, Mia showcases her difficulties through the "hate" that she felt of her non-Japanese side, and her desire to be 'White'. Her desire to be White suggests an

internalised 'shame' of her own Indian heritage and indicator of how strongly she wished to avoid being seen as different. Interestingly, Mia's desire is to not be fully 'Japanese' but half White, meaning that she will still be considered Haafu and therefore 'different' to the Japanese public. This could be indicative of Mia's awareness of a hierarchy of race during her childhood and a desire to not be perceived as inferior.

Other participants discussed a process of how their insecurities manifested in ways of feeling inferior. Josh explains how his experiences during childhood of being 'othered' made him alter his behaviours and feel anxious around others.

"These micro instances that kind of occur over time, which really made me... uh, I think going to my cell a little bit more and be on edge every time... In, you know, in public or trying to make a friend or I feel like it created a lot of these I guess like these complexes within me." (Josh, 62-65)

Josh voices how his lack of relatability to others made him feel more 'on edge' or anxious to get to know others. In this narrative, it seems that Josh's constant experiences of being 'othered' made him retreat into his 'cell'. This metaphor captures the isolation that Josh may have felt as he anticipated rejection from those around him. Akiko also discusses her experiences through a metaphor based on the context of troubles in her village, where invasive animal species were perceived as a threat to the village's rice paddy fields:

"I ended up sort of sympathising a lot with these like invasive animals who are like suddenly in the paddy fields, and just like the way people would engage with them, and maybe I like sort of projected." (Akiko, 499-500)

In Akiko's narrative, her comparison and relatability to 'invasive animals' captures the loneliness and could be interpreted in a way that she is considered as a nuisance to those around her. Akiko's comparisons to "invasive animals" could indicate her lack of belonging and relatability to others, and how she may have internalised those perspectives and insecurities as being seen as 'less than' or shameful of her heritage.

In summary, it seemed that participants' account of 'inferiority' in childhood revolved around feelings of being 'othered' and not wanting to be different. It appears their insecurities in childhood stem from an experience of shame around their NWVM Haafu heritage, as participants seem to attribute their difficulties to phenotype, such as skin colour. Additionally, Akiko's relatability to invasive species depicts the extent to which individuals were seen as outsiders and 'inferior'.

Sub-theme two: "Looking for support"

A common experience for many participants in seeking support was realising that there was none available to them. It appears that most participants discuss navigating these issues by themselves, and at times felt unable to reach out due to either not wanting it to be minimised, appear 'weak', or that they were unaware of where to search for it. As a result, all participants described the inability to find support and felt isolated in their experiences as children. Emily discusses the lack of available support to her as she explains:

"Umm, no, no, no support whatsoever. And I think I didn't look for support and that could be the big reason why, or maybe there's a lack of it (laughs). I actually don't know, like is there support, do you know if there is?" (Emily, 476-478)

In this segment, it is apparent how limited the availability of the support was for Emily, as she goes on to ask whether support is available that I am aware of. Emily's question to me could be indicative of the lack of support that is still currently available to those with mixed race backgrounds in Japan. The sentiment that there is no support is echoed by Akiko when I asked her about whether there was any support available for her: "No, why would there be? (laughing)" (Akiko, 509*)*

Akiko's response to my question showcases her experience of a commonplace standard in Japan regarding support and awareness of these difficulties. Akiko's blunt tone and laugh regarding this indicated how frustrating this lack of consideration is, and that NWVM Haafus are not still considered in Japan.

Josh offers his reasoning as to why it may have been difficult in accessing support as a child:

"Because I think that one of the things as children what might happen is that we experience things, and we might not want to tell our parents because we don't want to burden them, or we don't want them to think that we're failing or, you know, weak." (Josh, 412-414)

Josh voices his difficulties in receiving support from his parents due to the pressures that he felt in communicating his distress. It appears that his communication of struggling to his parents may have translated to being considered 'weak', 'failing', or as a 'burden', which could be indicative of the pressures in Japanese society as well as his non-White heritage. Additionally, Mia reflects on the difficulties in receiving support from her peers as she felt as though nobody would understand her difficulties in international schools.

"There were no other half Indian kids […] international schools, they always boast about you know like we have 30 nationalities […] it's like actually more than half of them are like European or American [...] and then east like China, Korea. [...] I think through my 18 years is or like, [...] I probably knew about 4-5 Black kids in like the whole school […] and like Indian kids, probably the same. [...] I just think that I felt so alone and that no one would understand because there was no one to talk to about it." (Mia, 444-453)

Mia voices the sense of loneliness that came from being in an international school, that despite being in a 'diverse' setting, it felt isolating due to the inability to relate or feel understood by her peers. As a result, Mia discussed navigating her difficulties by herself due to the lack of representation and relatability around her both in and out of international schools. The lack of representation both in schools and the media was echoed by multiple participants, where Akiko describes:

"Umm, I feel like if I was younger and I'd seen like more people […] like me, in the media [...] I think it would have made like, yeah, like a message. Like I said, I clung on to, I pointed at Rola and I was like, even though I didn't like her very much, […] at least she was there (begins to cry)." (Akiko, 591-595)

Akiko's body language, tone, and her tears as she describes her experiences in searching for support suggests the difficulties and loneliness she felt during her childhood. She describes that despite not liking Rola, a celebrity with Japanese-Bangladeshi descent, she 'clung' onto her as she felt comforted that 'she was there'. Akiko's experiences could indicate how role models were unavailable to look to for support. Rola was also brought up by other participants due to them being the first celebrity that they felt represented by.

Whilst most participants discussed not receiving support, Sonia described that she was able to have support from her peers:

"Umm, I don't know if it was support, but I definitely had good people in my corner who never let me feel crappy […] And that sort of social embrace I think really helped navigate a lot of the challenges I had." (Sonia, 498-503)

Despite the 'social embrace' that helped Sonia navigate difficult moments in her identity, Sonia does start the quote with some apprehension as to whether this was 'support'. Sonia does later echo the other sentiment of not feeling represented but continues to attribute her ability to navigate difficulties to the peer support she received.

Sub-theme three: "Shapeshifting and being a chameleon"

Across this sub-theme, participants discussed their experiences in ways they managed their sense of insecurities as a child. In sub-theme one, participants discuss a sense of inferiority through perceptions of their non-White half and the resulting feelings of shame. In sub-theme two, participants described an unavailability of support to manage the experience of inferiority. Possibly a different way to manage was described instead, where participants described changing themselves, either behaviourally or phenotypically, to 'fit in' with those around them and appear less 'non-White'.

Mia voices her experience of distancing herself from her Indian culture due to not wanting to appear any different from those around her:

"I didn't want my grandparents to come to my graduation. […] I guess Indians were just different […] so I just really remember trying to, like, detach myself from that and like, not embrace that culture." (Mia, 113-123)

Mia explores her conflicting thoughts during childhood in wanting to fit in with others and doing her best to do so by 'detaching' herself from her own culture through hiding herself and her non-White family members. Mia highlights that her negotiation of her identity growing up related to feelings of shame around her non-White heritage, wishing to be White, and fear of being 'made fun of' by her peers around her. In this sense, Mia captures the additional barriers that NWVM Haafus face in their identity as they are seen as dissimilar in an already excluded group of individuals.

Akiko also explains how she navigated these difficulties by trying to conform to Japanese standards:

"I'm a woman and in terms of conforming to like sort of expectations of like femininity […] like I don't conform physically, but there might have been parts where I conformed a lot behaviourally instead to compensate, and one of the things you do as a Japanese woman is that you keep things quiet […] and endure." (Akiko, 519-523)

In this narrative, Akiko describes her inability to conform phenotypically to 'Japanese' standards, and as a result she behaviourally did so. Akiko explains how her family passed down their notion of a 'Japanese woman' was to endure and be quiet about difficulties. It could be inferred the desperation that Akiko could have felt in trying to conform in any way and relate to her Japanese counterparts. Sonia offers a differing experience in which despite her phenotypical differences, she attempted to change herself physically as much as possible to fit in with others.

"I straightened my hair chemically and permed it straight for like years from like when I was in fifth grade to when I was a senior in high school […] so I could fit in. I didn't want to go and tan with my friends because I didn't want to get darker. So, I actively did those

things when I was really insecure, and I wanted to just fit in. And so, I think that is, that was maybe my way of coping and being closer and closer to someone I'm not." (Sonia, 433-439)

In Sonia's experience, she describes the process in changing herself 'phenotypically' to fit in with her peers and others around her. As a result, she describes this process to:

"Shapeshift[ing] and be like a chameleon." (Sonia, 481)

Her description of a 'chameleon' encapsulates her navigating her identity, as she restricts going into the sun and straightening her hair to contend with her feelings of insecurity. It is important to consider the context in which these participants adopted these strategies to 'fitting in', as both Sonia and Mia were in international schools, whereas Akiko grew up in rural Japan. As a result, Sonia and Mia may have had an option in conforming phenotypically as they were surrounded by other Haafus, albeit mostly White Haafus, whereas Akiko was the only Haafu in her village. Despite the environmental differences, participants experienced similar feelings of not belonging or adopting some strategy to fit in with those around them.

In summary, this sub-theme considers the strategies that individuals adopted in contending with their difficulties regarding their identity and feelings of their non-White and Haafu heritage. The above quotes highlight how participants chose to conform to those around them and attempted to change their appearance or behaviours as a child, so that they could feel less different than their peers.

Sub-theme four: "Integrating my identities as an adult"

Across this sub-theme, participants discussed their experiences in integrating their identities as an adult. Most participants disclosed an improvement or confidence in their identity as a NWVM Haafu, in which they felt more able to embrace both of their cultures. However, some participants disclosed their ongoing difficulties in feeling confident with their Japanese half, due to their feelings of inadequacy or not feeling accepted by their Japanese side. All participants had moved away from Japan for several years, and some attributed their

improved confidence to this decision to move away. As a result, this sub-theme is termed as the 'integrating my identities as an adult' to capture the divergent experiences of participants in feeling confident and accepting their racial or ethnic backgrounds.

"I'm just going to do what I want, and you know, continue to live and embrace Japanese culture the way I was raised, and I'm OK with it if people, [...] think of me as an outsider like I really don't care, but that came with years and years of working on your confidence and, you know, being really proud and confident in who you are. And I think I've reached that point in my life where, you know, I'm proud of who I am. I'm proud of my accomplishments, my background and everything." (Sonia, 276-281)

Sonia expresses the shift in her perspective over years of working on her self-confidence as a NWVM haafu. Sonia seems to recognise how influential being validated by others is throughout her upbringing but is at a point in her life where she feels able to confidently identify and be proud of her backgrounds. In a latter part of the interview, Sonia describes what she believes is important in being confident, and attributes how positive life experiences enabled her ability to be proud.

"I think the most beautiful thing you can do and the most confident thing you can do, is to embrace who you are naturally [...] I was always like told, you know, you have like, curly, crappy hair, and then I come here [USA], and people are like, oh, my God, your hair is like, so nice and beautiful. So, I think that was also like the positive experiences I had as an adult, that really helped me concrete my decision to really be confident in who I am naturally" (Sonia, 440-455)

Sonia appears to reflect the consistent messaging and criticism of her appearance in Japan, and how that made it difficult to embrace who she was 'naturally'. Furthermore, it is within her distance from Japan, leaving a homogenous and collectivistic country where beauty is defined through a specific criterion as discussed previously, that she felt more embraced and encouraged in her phenotypical differences. Additionally, it is within these

positive experiences that she attributes her ability to feel confident and proud of her background and appearance. Kevin also discusses his ability to feel proud of both of his backgrounds and how he was able to integrate his identity through recognising what Japanese culture has to offer.

"I love being Japanese, and I want Japanese people to be more proud of who they are [...] I think we have, yeah, I think we have one of the sickest cultures and cuisines, food, umm... of course we have really cool history, just like the crafts, like the craftsmanship... just skills and it's just I think it's so amazing [...] I'm a Japanese at heart, you know. I was raised by my Japanese side family, born, and raised there [...] Yeah, but I love, yeah, I love being African American and I love being Japanese, so yeah." (Kevin, 502-527)

In Kevin's experience, it seems that he focuses on the positives that Japan has to offer and his upbringing by his Japanese family that allows him to feel confident and proud of his background as a NWVM Haafu. Alternatively, Akiko offers her ongoing difficulty to identify confidently as Japanese.

"I mean, then the idea would be lovely if I could just say I'm Japanese without hesitating, or to think of be like, yeah. Because I'll say like, I'm Japanese, but I always feel like somewhere inside this like this sort of inadequacy of not quite." (Akiko, 633-635)

Akiko indicates how her difficulty in integrating her identities is rooted in her inability to identify as Japanese. It could be inferred how Akiko struggles with her internal feelings of being 'not quite' Japanese enough due to the difficulties she experienced relating to being externally validated by others of her Japanese half. Additionally, this lack of congruence appears to be a difficulty that Akiko contends with as she wants to be able to identify as Japanese without hesitating.

This sub-theme represents the differences in experiences for identity development across participants. It appears that for some, as they entered adulthood and encountered positive experiences regarding their phenotype, culture, and background, that they felt proud

and confident in their racial identity. However, as Akiko indicates, her experiences as an adult

indicates an ongoing inadequacy regarding her Japanese identity.

Chapter V: Discussion

Overview

This final chapter will initially provide a summary of my novel findings, analysis, and conclusions that were drawn from the GETs. Afterwards, I will discuss my findings and contextualise them to previous literature. Thirdly, I critically evaluate my study, and provide my considerations to the limitations that relate to the methodology. Subsequently, I provide the implications of my study, and how it could offer insight into CoP practice in working with multiracial individuals. The chapter will conclude with my suggestions for future research and a summary of the thesis.

Novel findings

The analysis provided numerous novel findings that can contribute to the field of identity research in the context of Japan. Initially, this study provides additional contexts within how racialisation is experienced within Japan, which is indicated through the sub-theme of 'hierarchy of race'. Whilst previous literature has indicated the prevalence of racialisation, no study to date looked at ethnically or racially non-White participants and their experiences of how their race was perceived by others. Secondly, the study captures the difficulties and confusion regarding the labelling of discrimination, as most participants felt apprehensive to identify their experience as 'discrimination'. Whilst previous literature such as Haque (2024) identified that Haafus may contextualise discriminatory experiences through their race, i.e., understanding the intentions behind actions, no study to date indicated the difficulties associated with labelling discrimination as such. Thirdly, this study indicates the difficulties in accessing support in Japan. Whilst previous literature discusses the importance of familial and peer support, or the importance of a 'role' model (Nagatsuka, 2023), this study adds to the literature by discussing how non-White Haafus may face additional barriers accessing this support. For example, due to the salience of racialisation, it may be that the

perpetrators of discriminatory messaging are family and peers, or the inability to have 'role models' due to the lack of opportunities given to non-White Haafus in media.

Summary of findings

The analysis of participants' accounts addressed the research question of how NWVM Haafus experienced discrimination and how they subsequently made sense of their identity. All participants attributed experiences of discrimination to their racial background, and reported varying ways in navigating their identity as a NWVM Haafu. Most participants reflected on difficulties navigating their identity due to discriminatory experiences through childhood, but also how the confidence in their identity grew in adulthood.

The GET of 'Japaneseness is decided by others' captured how participants felt othered and unable to relate to 'Japanese' individuals despite their best efforts to prove that they are 'Japanese'. Some participants reflected on the concept of what being 'Japanese' is and their inability to match those conceptions. The second GET of 'racialisation in Japan' reflected the specific discriminatory experiences that participants encountered in Japan and how others attributed characteristics to participants due to their race. Additionally, participants reflected their understanding of the differences between White Haafus and non-White Haafus, and the prevalence of a hierarchy of race in Japan. The third GET captured participants' experience of 'understanding and navigating discrimination'. In turn, some participants described how their meaning making of discriminatory experiences left them feeling confused about whether they were at fault for it occurring. The final GET, 'navigating my identity', captured the processes by which individuals perceived their identity from childhood to adulthood and the ways in which they sought emotional support throughout.

Discussion of the findings in relation to existing literature

Group Experiential Theme one: Japaneseness is decided by others

Within this GET, the ability to identify as 'Japanese' was divided into three sub-themes of: 'I am Japanese, but others do not think I am'; being evaluated and proving I am

Japanese; 'there is a way to be Japanese'. The first sub-theme, 'I am Japanese, but others do not think I am' referred to the experiences of incongruence between the participants self-identity and ascribed identity from others. These findings are echoed in previous studies such as Törngren and Sato's (2021) theme of 'I am forever a gaijin – identifying as a foreigner', where participants felt unable to claim their identity as a Japanese individual and therefore claimed their foreign heritage. Similarly, Törngren (2018) highlighted the same inability to claim Japanese identity, where a Nigerian Japanese participant discussed how despite stressing her Japanese nationality, others continued to only focus on her differences and that she was only 'Black'.

In Törngren's (2018) sub-theme, the participants describe a similar process in how their skin colour or phenotype was a primary indicator in their lack of 'Japaneseness', and subsequently ascribed the identity of a Gaijin. My participants reflected on how their personal identity shifted, as they had mostly considered themselves as Japanese due to their upbringing, language ability, and cultural alignment. Furthermore, my participants commented on the experience of identity incongruent discrimination or cultural homelessness through an 'invisible wall' due to their phenotype, and how that influenced the way they were 'othered' and treated as a Gaijin. Josh highlights the lack of validation he felt from others, and his desire of wanting to be seen as the 'country he was born in', which is echoed in Nagatsuka's (2023) theme of feeling 'alien in their own land'. It appeared how it was only when they encountered this 'constant othering' that they recognised the differences between them and other Japanese individuals, which reiterates Yoshida et al's (2012) findings. Importantly, Rockquemore et al (2005) discusses that this gap between the self and ascribed identity is where identity confusion and conflict may occur, where individuals may face subsequent issues in their identity and mental health (Franco et al, 2021). This sub-theme sheds light on the inability for visible minorities to be accepted as 'Japanese', and how this

may be informative to treatment in understanding the normality of cultural homelessness and identity incongruent discrimination within Japan.

The second sub-theme, 'being evaluated and proving I am Japanese' captured the experiences in which individuals felt evaluated and critiqued on their ability to be 'Japanese'. Participants reflected on Japanese standards, their language ability, food taste, etiquette, etc. and felt they had to prove their Japanese citizenship when questioned for it. The finding was consistent to some degree with previous literature, where Black Haafus' were 'challenged all the time' in their claim to be Japanese (Aracena, 2017). However, in my study, participants discussed the complexity to this 'challenging' and the specifics of what and how they felt constantly evaluated on their 'Japaneseness'. Previous literature suggests the prevalence of group inclusion/exclusion within collectivistic societies such as Japan, where behaviours such as peer exclusion may occur (Akiba et al, 2010). Therefore, the evaluation of 'Japaneseness' may be a way for others to decide whether or not to include or exclude Haafus', and their belonging in Japan. As a result, participants in my study reflected on the pressures that arose with this constant evaluation and internalising these exclusive behaviours as they questioned their own belonging in Japan.

The third sub-theme, 'there is a way to be Japanese' depicts the view of what 'Japaneseness' is, wherein participants reflected on how language ability, thinking, and understanding Japanese culture all play a significant role in how to be 'Japanese'. This sentiment is echoed across previous studies as they highlight how language ability, nationality, name and cultural awareness all play a significant role in being able to present as Japanese (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Törngren & Sato, 2021). However, the ability to claim one's Japanese identity seems to rely upon appearance and phenotype, as appearance is apparent from the initial encounter, and therefore is an immediate marker to judge one as a foreigner (Törngren & Sato, 2021). This inability to claim identity despite fulfilling all the 'requirements' apart from appearance is apparent in the current study as for Akiko and Emily,

who are able to 'pass', found how their language ability helped showcase their 'Japaneseness'. Sonia and Josh, who have darker skin colours, claimed how because they do not look Japanese, they will always be an outsider. Therefore, ethnic options for NWVM Haafus may be limited to only being a 'foreigner'. These limitations may be a result of the perceptions of race, and synonymous nature of Haafus being exclusively perceived as White Haafus (Yoshida, 2014).

Overall, this GET considers the challenges that are associated with the lack of external validation as a Japanese individual and social exclusion. In this study, participants reflected on how these challenges may be exacerbated by their phenotypical differences and the perceived lack of relatability others have with them is due to their non-White status. In turn, this GET presents how individuals internalised peer exclusion and questioned their own sense of belonging, and that despite identifying primarily as Japanese, they will never be considered as that due to their appearance being so distant from the 'norm'. This contributes to the body of knowledge for Haafus in Japan, but also the awareness of issues in diversity for treatment, as practitioners should be aware of the difficulties associated with cultural homelessness and identity incongruent discrimination, and the influence that this has on one's mental health (Franco et al, 2021).

Group Experiential Theme two: Racialisation in Japan

The second GET of 'racialisation in Japan' depicts how participants experienced discrimination relating to their skin colour, culture, religion, or phenotype. These experiences are divided into four sub-themes of: 'being racially profiled', 'people look down on my race', 'tensions within my family', and the 'hierarchy of race'.

The first sub-theme of 'being racially profiled' referred to the processes in which individuals encountered experiences where 'threatening' behaviours were assigned to their non-White backgrounds. This finding was consistent with previous literature, where a Japanese African Haafu reported witnessing their African parent be stopped by the police on

the basis of their race (Törngren, 2018). Findings in my study add to the literature as participants reflected on the prevalence of racial profiling in Japan, and none of the participants reported experiencing 'positive stereotypes' as Oikawa and Yoshida (2007) and Taba (2021) reported. This may be due to the 'positive stereotypes' being exclusive for Caucasian Haafus due to the narrative and perception of race, which will be discussed later.

In this study, it is important to note that half of the participants reported experiences with the police, in which all of them had darker skin colours. One participant, Mia, discussed how this may be due to sex differences, as males may be seen as more threatening, whereas females may be more prone to being sexualised or victims of sexual harassment. Additionally, Kevin revealed issues with the police occurring generally twice a month, and up to four times in a day due to his 'suspicious' appearance. These findings reiterate a 2022 survey of 2094 foreign nationals in Tokyo indicated that 63% of individuals reported experiencing stop and searches by police within the last five years (Haque, 2024). Additionally, 73% of those respondents reported multiple interrogations by the police, with no justification as to why they were being questioned (Haque, 2024).

Furthermore, all participants disclosed other issues of racial profiling occurring to them, including being denied entry into establishments, called a terrorist, and having taxis not stop for them. Mia also adds to the difficulties with discrimination, stating how other phenotypical or cultural features such as a 'turban', being tall, and having facial hair may exacerbate discriminatory actions. In turn, it could be how these 'characteristics' of religion, culture, skin colour and phenotype are racialised in Japan and are seen as a 'threat'. Consequentially, racial profiling issues have also been associated with significant mental health difficulties relating to humiliation, powerlessness, self-blame, social withdrawal, loss of trust in authorities, and restricting one's movement in public spaces (Plümecke et al, 2023). In turn, the propensity for NWVM Haafus to experience racial profiling and discrimination (Haque, 2024), may lead to increased difficulties in their mental health.

The second sub-theme of 'people look down on my race' referred to the difficulties that participants faced as a result of their racial heritage. This is consistent with previous literature where participants encountered negative stereotypes of their race, i.e., being Black meant you were poor, more athletic, represented hip-hop or a comedian (Aracena, 2017; Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). Indonesian or other Southeast Asian backgrounds were also associated to being 'gold-diggers', 'maids', or 'poor' (Tanu, 2019). These findings provide additional narratives to the literature as it emphasises the negative stereotypes and perception attributed to those with non-White backgrounds. In this study, it appears how other Japanese or Haafus commented on skin colour and the 'dirtiness' associated with darker or Black skin, but also how the perception of the country created assumptions of their behaviours, capability, wealth, and intellect. It has been suggested how these discriminatory experiences of negative stereotypes have a profound impact on mental health, their feelings of shame, and the view of one's expectation of fairness and their rights (Williams, 2018). Additionally, for adolescents, these experiences of discrimination has been associated with conduct problems, anxiety, and depression (Williams, 2018). As a result, for individuals of NWVM Haafu backgrounds, it could be suggested how there may be an increased propensity for mental health difficulties due to the normality of discrimination in Japan.

The third sub-theme of 'tensions within my family' captures the issues that individuals of non-White backgrounds face in navigating their homelife and family. In the current study, all but one participant reported difficulties, historically or currently, within their family system due to perceptions of race. Previous literature indicates how factors such as family influence or group antagonism play a significant role in the ability for multiracial individuals to develop a sense of identity (Hernández Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). Therefore, this sub-theme reflects the importance of understanding the racial tensions and societal attitudes that may exist within a country, but also within family systems, as this may indicate significant barriers for individuals to develop a sense of identity (Wardle,

1998). Furthermore, given the consequences of identity confusion and instability, relating to decreased self-esteem, psychological and physical adjustment, it could inform how CoP and allied health practices work with this population (Huang & Stormshak, 2011) .

The final sub-theme captures the perception of race through a societal 'hierarchy' of the attitudes of race in Japan. This sub-theme does reflect themes of previous literature, where aspects of colourism and racialisation are discussed, such as the limited availability of positive stereotypes, beauty standards, and superiority of Whiteness in Japan (Aracena, 2017; Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Tanu, 2019). However, this sub-theme contributes a significant amount to existing literature as it delves into the severity of superiority, and how NWVM Haafu's are seen as inferior as a result. The current research depicts this through the desirability and gamification of Haafu backgrounds, through Akiko's experience of viewing a website ranking the backgrounds of Haafu's in order of desirability. Additionally, this same 'desirability' was reiterated through the beauty standards and media in Japan, in which participants reflected on the skin whitening incorporated within makeup in Japan and how that was subsequently pushed to them through family, peers, and society.

As a result of these narratives, some participants reflected on the 'ease' or 'desire' to be 'White', and the lack of celebration that derived from embracing their own cultural or racial backgrounds and language. The celebration and admiration of appearance and bilingual ability was reported across previous literature, in cases where participants were of Caucasian Haafu backgrounds (Nagatsuka, 2023; Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). Moreover, these perceptions appeared to influence participants beyond the 'celebration' of their backgrounds, but also through the treatment that they would receive in university or educational settings, where Emily witnessed White Haafus receiving additional praise or favourable attitudes. In contributing to the portrayal of race and the apparent hierarchy within Japan, this sub-theme communicates the need for treatment to consider how an individual's race may be perceived within the context of Japan and the narratives that are associated with them. The findings

90

across this GET support HCPC (2023) and BPS (2017) standards of conduct in needing to understand the context of individuals, the diversity of experiences, and how their historical or current discrimination may influence them. In the context of NWVM Haafus in Japan, CoP practitioners could therefore seek to understand how the hierarchy of race influenced individuals' experiences, and how their family system viewed their racial backgrounds.

Group Experiential Theme three: Understanding and navigating discrimination

This GET presents how participants went through the process of understanding and navigating their experiences of discrimination and is divided into three sub-themes of: 'intentions & differentiating discrimination', 'feeling doubt and confusion', and 'my coping strategies'.

In the first sub-theme, participants disclosed difficulties in understanding discrimination in Japan due to the nuances and complexity of it. Across this sub-theme, most participants expressed the importance of understanding the intentions behind discriminatory actions in Japan. In most cases, this allowed participants to reframe their experiences from being 'actively' discriminated against to it being 'neutrally' intentioned, where it was a result of Japanese society not 'knowing any better' or 'meaning well'. This process of differentiation appears in previous literature, where a participant in Aracena's (2017) research reiterated the novelty of Black Haafu's and that their experiences are due to the lack of exposure Japan has to other cultures or Haafu's. Haque (2024) also reiterates these findings, where participants also discussed the process of differentiating discrimination and curiousity. As a result, it appears that discriminatory actions were understood in a way where Japanese individuals were not 'intentionally' being racist, but rather that they were unaware of the discriminatory actions due to the homogenous and monoracial background of the country (Haque, 2024).

However, this research differs from previous literature as participants reflect and provide further substance on their meaning-making process. Through interpretation, the

reframing of discrimination could be understood as minimising experiences, as Kevin discusses the novelty and the lack of exposure one has, so therefore Japanese people 'aren't necessarily looking down on you'. Yet, Kevin also reports explicit experiences in which others 'looked down on him' due to his Black background through his comparisons to soot gremlins. Through reframing intentions, Kevin may be able to continue to navigate his experiences in Japan as he can view others as non-discriminatory, and that the perception of him as 'suspicious' or 'dirty', is due to the homogenous nature of Japan rather than a negative reflected self. The same contradiction was reflected in other participants such as Emily, who initially stated that she was introduced as a 'foreigners child' by her family members. However, rather than viewing this as an 'othering' behaviour, which she acknowledged in our interview, she reframes this to where her family members were assisting others to communicate with her and her limited language ability. Across this sub-theme, it reflects the difficulties that may be associated with navigating identity as a NWVM Haafu in Japan, and the meaning making participants made.

Moreover, this sub-theme also reflects the hegemonic nature of racialisation and discrimination in Japan, where participants reflected on their difficulties in determining what discrimination was, potentially due to the normality of discrimination in Japan (Arudou, 2016). Importantly, this may provide clinicians with an insight into how NWVM Haafu's might understand their experiences in Japan, and developing awareness of how navigating identity in a homogenous culture may elicit cognitive dissonance. Additionally, it may be that reframing, minimising, and contextualising their difficulties is used to address the cognitive dissonance and to 'ease' the emotional burden that is involved with experiencing discrimination.

The second sub-theme of 'feeling doubt and confusion' captures the difficulties that participants felt internally due to the previous sub-theme, and how they appeared to struggle to discuss, delineate and identify what discrimination was. Previous research identified the

subtleness of discrimination in Japan (Haque, 2024); however, these findings were novel as previous reporting of this confusion or doubt was not found. The confusion and doubt appeared to manifest when participants internalised difficulties with discrimination and began to question whether they were at fault for it occurring. This was reflected in Kevin's experience of police profiling, as he wondered what he did to warrant a stop and search. Josh also discussed his experience of feeling 'gaslit' as he wondered whether he should be struggling with the lack of validation he received from others. Multiple participants in the study also reported not 'experiencing overt discrimination', however continued to describe experiences in which racial slurs, derogatory remarks, or denial of entry into establishments were experienced. These findings offer potential implications to clinical practice, where it may be important for therapists to highlight, understand, and label these experiences as discriminatory given the confusion and feelings of being 'gaslit'.

The third sub-theme of 'my coping strategies' looked at the ways in which participants coped with experiences of discrimination. Across this theme, participants mostly reflected an attitude of 'ignoring' and not letting experiences 'bother them anymore'. This appears to be consistent across literature, where Haafus with visible differences accepted that they will not belong or be validated as a Japanese individual (Aracena, 2017; Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Törngren & Sato, 2021). In accepting that individuals will not be considered Japanese, it often made navigating their identity easier as they did not feel disappointed when not considered Japanese (Takeshita, 2010; Yoshino, 2007). In this sense, this sub-theme explored how acceptance was a way for participants to not feel disappointed when they encountered 'othering' behaviours, lost hope for acceptance, or how 'ignoring' the discriminatory experiences was a way for them to enjoy their time in Japan and be 'happy'. Previous literature involving Black Haafus has also framed this in a way where individuals lost hope to be considered as Japanese and no longer cared about what others think of them (Aracena, 2017). This study provides an additional coping strategy of 'choosing your battles',

as Kevin discussed his choice to be 'happy' is by 'ignoring' and 'choosing his battles'. He elaborated on how this was learned from his earlier experiences, as he often felt 'angry' and experienced conduct problems as a child. However, in choosing his battles, he found a balance where he could either ignore and maintain his happiness or intervene if he determines that it is 'severe' enough. On one hand, previous literature has suggested that passing or accepting one's identity as a foreigner was to cope with the gap between ascribed and perceived identity (Törngren & Sato, 2021). However, in this study and 'choosing one's battles', which was reiterated by numerous participants, may have arisen due to the learned helplessness of participants through their childhood and the normality of discrimination in Japan (Arudou, 2016). It may be that the choice provides them with some internal locus of control, where individuals are now able to interact with discrimination to some degree, rather than to have it imposed onto them. A further exploration in future research is warranted, as this may provide insight into the considerations for treatment, if the NWVM Haafu experience involves losing an internal locus of control and developing learned helplessness from a young age (Seligman & Maier, 1967). In turn, this may allow practitioners to be aware of the need to address these issues, as learned helplessness has been associated with depression and other difficulties with mental health (Ozment & Lester, 2001).

Group Experiential Theme four: Navigating my identity

The final GET examines the participants' process of navigating identity as a NWVM Haafu throughout their lives and is divided into sub-themes of: 'an inferiority complex as a child', 'looking for support', 'shapeshifting and being a chameleon', and 'integrating my identities as an adult'.

The first sub-theme captured how participants internalised societal messaging of the hierarchy of race and superiority of Whiteness in Japan (Tanu, 2019). In doing so, participants struggled with feeling inferior to other Haafus, discussed their hatred of their non-White background, and desire to be a White Haafu. Interestingly, previous literature

alludes to Caucasian Haafu's wishing to be or look more 'Japanese' so they can claim their Japanese identity, as indicated in the theme of 'just let me be Japanese' (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). However, in my study, participants mainly reflected how they wished to be like their White Haafu peers, rather than Japanese. Oshima (2014) echoes these findings, as their Pakistani Japanese participant reflected that they would like themselves more if they were European. The desire to be White may be a result of some of my participants' environment of international schools, which mainly consisted of White Haafus. Alternatively, this may also reflect participants' perceptions of treatment and privileges that White Haafus benefit from. Indeed, research has indicated that white Haafus are better able to claim their Haafu background rather than be considered a foreigner, be celebrated for their heritage, and considered as desirable (Taba, 2021; Tanu, 2019). Considerations of these feelings of inferiority may be crucial within treatment, due to the associations this may have on psychological wellbeing, such as anxiety, depression, self-doubt and insecurity (Shen et al, 2022). Therefore, the novel findings of this research, which relates to the internalised racism, attitudes of White superiority, and inferiority for NWVM Haafus may depict the complex issues that individuals may seek therapy for.

The sub-theme of 'looking for support' depicted the difficulties that NWVM Haafus faced in seeking emotional support from their peers, family, and environment. All participants reflected on the absence of support systems and the negative attitudes surrounding receiving support in Japan. Therefore, participants described feeling isolated through their difficulties and identity, as they felt unable to relate to those around them and feared being discriminated against if they sought support.

Previous literature has recommended that parents of Haafu children convey positive familial attitudes for all backgrounds and provide a role model for the child (Nagatsuka, 2023; Wardle, 1998). However, my research provides two potential issues with these recommendations. Firstly, most participants commented on negative racial tensions that

existed within their family, where it may be their parents expressing negative attitudes or encouraging their children to hide their background. Therefore, these recommendations may not consider how racialisation may influence the ability for Haafus and their family members to embrace both cultures (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007). Secondly, there may be issues in finding a 'role model' for NWVM Haafus due to their minority status and the lack of embracement for Haafus with non-White backgrounds in the media. This is reiterated by Aracena's (2017) participant who aspires to be a model in Japan but encountered difficulties with systemic racism manifesting through limited job opportunities due to her Black-Japanese mix. These issues were echoed by my participants who discussed the lack of media representation that was available to them. As a result, individuals of this background may face additional obstacles in negotiating their self-perception and how society views them, which may result in difficulties with their racial identity, self-esteem, sense of belonging, and mental health (Hud-Aleem & Countryman, 2008; Wardle, 1998).

The third sub-theme of 'shapeshifting and being a chameleon' depicts how individuals covered their non-White racial identity by changing their appearance or behaviours (Törngren, 2018). Previous literature discussed how Haafus with visible differences were unable to 'cover' their non-Japanese identity due to phenotypical differences, and therefore resulted in 'passing' as a foreigner (Törngren, 2018). Unlike past literature, this study provides novel findings where participants attempted(Törngren, 2018) to assimilate to their White Haafu peers, rather than being 'fully Japanese', as that way they could be 'celebrated'. Participants discussed their experience of hiding their grandparents from others, pretending to be White, not tanning, and straightening their hair. In turn, participants reflected on internal difficulties this resulted in, where some stated the internal shame of their non-White backgrounds as Haafus. These findings appear to reflect the process of internalised racism (Bartlett et al, 2022), in which participants have accepted negative attitudes, beliefs or stereotypes, i.e., shame of their non-White backgrounds, that Japanese society perpetuates.

This could offer an area for therapy to consider and address, where cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) techniques may be utilised to examine maladaptive cognitions and emotional processing (Bartlett et al, 2022).

The final sub-theme portrays participants' view of their identity as adults, and the journey they experienced in feeling confident about their identity. Whilst not all participants reported feeling confident in their multiracial background, most participants attributed their confidence to experiencing positive interactions with others, being comfortable with the gap in their perceived and self-identity and embracing Japanese culture in their own way. Participants also highlighted the importance of being patient, as it was a journey in becoming confident in their own skin and identity. This is reflected in previous literature, where individuals discussed the process and journey of 'being oneself', of understanding and embracing their cultures, and the importance of resilience (Nagatsuka, 2023). As participants in my study all left Japan, it is possible that the distance from Japan allowed them the space to negotiate, understand, and integrate their identity.

As not all participants discussed the confidence in their identities, it may also provide context to the difficulties and arduous journey that confidence and identity integration may entail for NWVM Haafus. As a result, therapy and identity theories may need to consider the lifelong process that may be racial identity development and how context and racial background influences the experiences that individuals face throughout their life (Hud-Aleem & Countryman, 2008; Törngren et al, 2021). Considering these factors may allow therapists to understand the dynamic process of development, influence of external factors, background of discrimination, and racialisation to develop a stronger therapeutic alliance and inform their approach to treatment (Alegria et al, 2010; Sumari, 2008)

Strengths & Limitations

In my study, I utilised IPA to explore the lived experiences of discrimination and identity for NWVM Haafus. I discuss and evaluate the strengths and limitations in the

following section, reflecting on my use of self, the participants, role of language, and the quality of the research through Yardley's (2000) criteria.

Use of self

Throughout the research, I noticed my ability to utilise my experience and knowledge as a cultural insider to the phenomena (Smith et al, 2022). Through my experiences as a NWVM Haafu of Japanese and Israeli descent, I believe I was able to connect with participants, understand their experiences, and elicit information through the interviews in understanding the nuances and difficulties within Japan. For example, my understanding of the Japanese language and context, allowed me to capture the meaning in Kevin's experience in kindergarten. On face value, he was being referred to as 'soot gremlins', but with the use of language and context, the nickname he was being referred as was derogatory and closer to the term 'Blackie'.

As discussed in chapter three's reflexivity, I do offer insight into how my potential over-identification with participants also created difficulties in my mental health and ability to stay present with participants during the interviews. Through journaling and personal therapy, it allowed me to have an outlet and ground myself to stay present with participants as much as possible. Furthermore, by continuing my journaling and personal therapy throughout the analysis stage, I believe it made me more aware of the interpretations I was making (Appendix G).

Despite these potential strengths, I also understand my experiences as an individual with White skin, but with phenotypically Israeli features, may also be different from some participants due to how skin colour is viewed in Japan. Therefore, whilst I experienced pushback and questioning of my Haafu background, I was able to 'pass' or cover my Israeli identity by telling others I was Australian as I spent four years there. I do recognise the differences that may have for my participants who have darker skin, as they may have not had this option. As a result, whilst I may have understood some of the nuances within Japan and

experience as a NWVM Haafu, my inexperience with the added barrier with skin colour could offer an alternative interpretation to the data and analysis.

Participants

In this research, I believe that the participants portray a homogenous sample, but also represented a mixture of different backgrounds. In previous literature, most NWVM Haafus tend to identify as Black, which may capture a different experience to other racial backgrounds. In this study, individuals identified as South Asian, African, African American, and Mexican, and thus it was able to explore the phenomena of discrimination through a variety of backgrounds, which has not been done in previous literature. Additionally, whilst there were some differences in experience depending on the absence of dark skin colour, all participants reflected similar themes and experiences throughout. Therefore, it presents divergent and convergent experiences across how racialisation is experienced in Japan.

Language

As discussed previously, one of the primary criticisms within IPA is concerned with the integral role of language (Tuffour, 2017). In consideration of my research paradigm of a phenomenological epistemology and a critical realist ontology, it is important to recognise that IPA does not consider how language influences the description of the experience. This is due to IPA's emphasis on learning the phenomenon through the accounts and reflections of participants experiences, rather than how issues such as language ability and the representational validity of language may influence the way we learn about the experience (Willig, 2013). In addition, the reliance of IPA on the representational validity of language, does not consider how language constructs reality, rather than describing it (Willig, 2013). Despite this, IPA does state how it does not strive to gather a 'true' representation of the experience through the interview process, but this is still a criticism that can be applied to the current research. In my study, whilst one of the criteria to participate was English fluency, it does not reflect that this is the participant's first language, and for some it may have been

their second or third. As a result, one limitation could be that despite fluency, the description of the experiences may have been limited by language in comparison to their emotional experience.

Quality of Research

Throughout the study, I have followed Yardley's (2000) guidelines to assess the scientific rigour and quality of my research, as discussed in chapter three. This was done through utilising guidelines of 'sensitivity to context', commitment and rigour', 'transparency and coherence', and 'impact and importance'.

As interviewees utilised both English and Japanese throughout the interviews, there is an inherent limitation regarding the transparency of translations. Despite the majority of interviews being in English, participants used Japanese colloquialisms or phrases that they themselves struggled to translate. For example, in Kevin's excerpt of being called the 'soot gremlin' in kindergarten, Kevin did not offer his translation, and I also found difficulties in translating this term. As a result, I consulted with a family member to capture the meaning of this derogatory term. In doing so, we had agreed the closest English comparison may be the term 'Blackie', however as this is not what Kevin specifically described, there may have been a loss in the transfer of meaning. Moreover, whilst I used my own translation, Google, and consulted with family members to ensure its accuracy, specific translations may reflect my interpretation rather than what the participant may have been trying to communicate.

Implications and Recommendations for Clinical Practice

The findings in this study are relevant to the field of CoP and allied disciplines as they provides insight into NWVM Haafus' experiences of discrimination and their identity in the context of Japan. Specifically, the findings may have potential implications in how we understand clients on the basis of their context and their ethno-racial composition, as well as informing theory in identity development.

As discussed previously, CoP practitioners need to consider the cultural bias within western psychology, understand individuals as social and relational beings, be aware of current and historical discrimination for minority individuals, and the diversity of experiences due to context (BPS, 2017; HCPC, 2023). In regard to cultural bias within western psychology, my findings indicate some key differences in the experiences for those in Japan compared to the West. For example, participants indicated how different their experiences are living in Japan and in the US or UK, due to the positive societal and cultural attitudes toward multiracial individual are in the west compared to Japan.

These apparent cultural differences may indicate how racial identity development may differ in Japan, due to negative attitudes toward their non-Japanese heritage, internalised racism, and exclusion from being Japanese. As a result, it presents how impactful societal or external influences are in the context of racial identity development, and how 'stuck' Haafu individuals may be in Japan due to additional obstacles that individuals face. In considering previous models of identity, my findings suggest that Japan may not provide an environment in which 'stages' of those models can be fulfilled. For example, Erikson's (1968) stage of fidelity, where individual's live according to the societal standards and expectations may never be fulfilled in Japan, where NWVM Haafus are considered 'threatening' or 'inferior'. Similarly, Root's (1996) situationally shifting race and ethnicity, may also be restricted in Japan, where individuals may only be seen as foreigners and does not consider how individuals attempted to hide their identities and present as something different. However, if we utilise these identity theories in treatment, this may pose issues in the conceptualisation and treatment plan of clients, as identity theories do not consider how other individuals relate to others, themselves, and society.

Furthermore, the findings also indicate the normality and hegemony of discrimination and racialisation in countries such as Japan, so much that participants encountered issues in identifying their discriminatory experiences. As a result, this may provide clinicians with the

awareness of social structures in non-western countries, and how that may indicate the propensity of current or historical discrimination that an individual may experience. Moreover, this study highlights the diversity of experiences due to context through several ways. Firstly, this study considers those outside of the western context and provides additional insight into how other individuals experience their racial identity. Secondly, it discusses the diversity of experiences within participants, and how despite living in Japan, participants reported divergent experiences as a result of their racial background. For example, some participants were able to 'pass', whereas others felt more restricted, or how some participants chose to 'cover' their non-White heritage and assimilate to being a White Haafu.

One factor to consider in treatment may be how Haafu individuals experience learned helplessness through their experiences with discrimination. It could be suggested that participants experienced feelings of passivity, i.e., not attempting to avoid discrimination, loss of self-esteem, and hopelessness regarding the inevitability of discrimination. These findings are reiterated across previous literature for learned helplessness amongst ethnic minorities (Uomoto, 1986). In turn, this study may offer insight into how treatment could be tailored by addressing issues relating to the control that one perceives, the difficulties associated with learned helplessness, and the importance of context in navigating these issues. Additionally, participants identified difficulties in labelling their experiences of discrimination. This could also be an area for therapy to address, where therapists may utilise techniques for emotional processing, and ultimately labelling these experiences as discrimination.

Another insight into treatment relates to the availability of support. Previous literature has indicated that for marginalised groups, that social safety and support has been one of the most successful coping mechanisms in combating discrimination (Bartlett et al, 2022). However, participants in my study reflected on the lack of available support, as they were unable to find social, familial and support from their schools. Several participants

consistently brought up their desire to be connected with other NWVM Haafus during school, have a space to talk, and for their parents to understand their difficulties. In addition, given the familial tensions that may be present amongst this population, family therapy may be a valuable intervention in providing support for Haafus (Kaygusuz, 2012). It may also be beneficial for practitioners (e.g., CoPs) to consider school workshops as a tool in connecting those with similar backgrounds, and for there to be a safe space to discuss issues relating to discrimination and identity.

In considering the above factors, I believe that the field of CoP can learn from the findings presented and consider the experiences for those who live outside of the western context. I believe the findings from this research can provide an alternative lens in how identity theories may be utilised to understand multiracial or multiethnic individuals, and that we must consider the barriers that individuals face in relation to the context, culture, and the upbringing of their lives.

Recommendations for future research

The current research highlighted various areas in which future research can be focused on to contribute to the knowledge of identity and experiences of discrimination for Haafus in Japan.

Initially, it may be beneficial to consider how different research paradigms may be utilised for further research. In this research, all participants reflected differences in experiences as a result of their non-White and non-East Asian backgrounds. In utilising a positivist approach, it could be beneficial to examine the relationship between racial backgrounds and frequency of discrimination. By doing so, it could provide further insight into the prevalence of racialisation in Japan and how that may influence the way individuals face discrimination.

In addition, Mia discussed that the sex of the individual may also influence what forms of discrimination may be experienced, as males may be viewed as more physically

threatening, whereas females may be subjected to being objectified in a sexual manner. This was not shown in previous literature; however the current study may portray differing experiences as both males discussed experiences of being confronted by police and members of the public. However, one of four females discussed a single issue with the police. On one hand, this could be explored through a positivist perspective where individuals report the frequency and what forms of discrimination they experienced growing up. Alternatively, a phenomenological approach may provide further information into what the specific experiences were and how this was experienced. In doing so, clinical practice would be informed in what may be influential factors in discriminatory experiences, and understanding Haafu individuals historical or current discrimination.

Finally, in this study, where some individuals discussed their confidence in their identity as an adult, one distinction may be the current location of the individual. As all participants left Japan, which was a prerequisite due to ethical concerns, this may also portray a different experience than those who currently live or have only lived in Japan. It also appeared that for some participants, they partly attributed their confidence to leaving Japan and encountering positive experiences with their non-White heritage in the USA or the UK. As a result, once mental health support is more readily available in Japan, it may be beneficial to explore the NWVM Haafu experience for those currently residing in Japan, as they may have not had the opportunity to develop their confidence. This could allow clinicians to further understand the importance of context and location, and how different environments may enable or hinder the process of racial identity development.

Conclusion

This study explored the experiences of discrimination amongst NWVM Haafu individuals in the context of Japan. It utilised IPA in congruence with my research paradigm and the exploratory nature of the study and its value in meaning-making. The analysis focused on the interviews with six NWVM Haafus, varying in backgrounds, and how they

experienced discrimination and made sense of their identity. Findings from the study indicated how discrimination was a frequent experience for participants, and how they attributed these discriminatory experiences to their non-White backgrounds. Participants further discussed the presence of racialisation in Japan by exploring how their non-White background was perceived in society through being attributed negative behaviours, lesser ability, and inferiority to their White Haafu peers. Furthermore, participants discussed how the visibility of their background, i.e., skin colour, was a key in their ability to claim their Japanese background. As a result of the normality of discriminatory experiences, participants reported difficulties in delineating discrimination as they felt doubt or confusion regarding their experience. It appeared that for most participants, the process of coping with these discriminatory experiences was concerned with feeling helpless due to the rigidity of Japanese society and hegemonic nature of racialisation. Despite this, most participants reflected on their shifts in identity from childhood, and that despite the 'inferiority' they may have felt concerning their non-White background, they felt confidence and pride during their adulthood about their identity.

The findings in this study did reiterate previous findings, where participants discussed the apparent gap between their self and ascribed identity, feeling 'othered', and the utility of assimilation tactics such as covering and passing. Additionally, whilst previous literature does allude to the NWVM Haafu experience, findings concerning this population in literature is limited. As a result, this study does offer novel findings to how different experiences of identity and discrimination may be compared to White Haafu's and how pervasive racialisation is within Japan. It appears that whilst all Haafus experience difficulties regarding their identity and discrimination, there are additional barriers in the NWVM Haafu experience.

These findings offer insight into the difficulties of the Haafu experience, and the processes in which they form their identity. In addition, this study highlights the influential

nature of discrimination during identity formation, which previous models have been criticised for understating. In considering the limitations and strengths of my study, I discussed recommendations for future research and clinical practice to continue to expand the knowledge regarding identity and discrimination on a global scale. As a result, this study offers insight for CoP practitioners and theory in understanding this phenomenon outside of the Eurocentric arena, and to assist the provision of support for Haafus.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Notice of Ethics Review Decision

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">

School of Psychology Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION LETTER

For research involving human participants
BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

Reviewer: Please complete sections in **blue** | **Student:** Please complete/read sections in orange
</td></tr>
</table>

Details	
Reviewer:	**Suzannah Hill**
Supervisor:	**Hannah Sela**
Student:	**Ran Kushida**
Course:	**Professional Doctorate Counselling Psychology**
Title of proposed study:	**Racialisation of Haafus: How do non-white visible minorities experience discrimination in Japan?**

Checklist (Optional)	YES	NO	N/A
Concerns regarding study aims (e.g., ethically/morally questionable, unsuitable topic area for level of study, etc.)	☐	☐	☐
Detailed account of participants, including inclusion and exclusion criteria	☐	☐	☐
Concerns regarding participants/target sample	☐	☐	☐
Detailed account of recruitment strategy	☐	☐	☐
Concerns regarding recruitment strategy	☐	☐	☐
All relevant study materials attached (e.g., freely available questionnaires, interview schedules, tests, etc.)	☐	☐	☐
Study materials (e.g., questionnaires, tests, etc.) are appropriate for target sample	☐	☐	☐
Clear and detailed outline of data collection	☐	☐	☐

Data collection appropriate for target sample	☐	☐	☐
If deception being used, rationale provided, and appropriate steps followed to communicate study aims at a later point	☐	☐	☐
If data collection is not anonymous, appropriate steps taken at later stages to ensure participant anonymity (e.g., data analysis, dissemination, etc.) – anonymisation, pseudonymisation	☐	☐	☐
Concerns regarding data storage (e.g., location, type of data, etc.)	☐	☐	☐
Concerns regarding data sharing (e.g., who will have access and how)	☐	☐	☐
Concerns regarding data retention (e.g., unspecified length of time, unclear why data will be retained/who will have access/where stored)	☐	☐	☐
If required, General Risk Assessment form attached	☐	☐	☐
Any physical/psychological risks/burdens to participants have been sufficiently considered and appropriate attempts will be made to minimise	☐	☐	☐
Any physical/psychological risks to the researcher have been sufficiently considered and appropriate attempts will be made to minimise	☐	☐	☐
If required, Country-Specific Risk Assessment form attached	☐	☐	☐
If required, a DBS or equivalent certificate number/information provided	☐	☐	☐
If required, permissions from recruiting organisations attached (e.g., school, charity organisation, etc.)	☐	☐	☐
All relevant information included in the participant information sheet (PIS)	☐	☐	☐
Information in the PIS is study specific	☐	☐	☐
Language used in the PIS is appropriate for the target audience	☐	☐	☐
All issues specific to the study are covered in the consent form	☐	☐	☐
Language used in the consent form is appropriate for the target audience	☐	☐	☐
All necessary information included in the participant debrief sheet	☐	☐	☐
Language used in the debrief sheet is appropriate for the target audience	☐	☐	☐
Study advertisement included	☐	☐	☐
Content of study advertisement is appropriate (e.g., researcher's personal contact details are not shared, appropriate language/visual material used, etc.)	☐	☐	☐

Decision options	
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.
APPROVED - BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES	In this circumstance, 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 at the end of this form once all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to the supervisor. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.

	Minor amendments guidance: typically involve clarifying/amending information presented to participants (e.g., in the PIS, instructions), further detailing of how data will be securely handled/stored, and/or ensuring consistency in information presented across materials.
NOT APPROVED - MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED	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.

Major amendments guidance: typically insufficient information has been provided, insufficient consideration given to several key aspects, there are serious concerns regarding any aspect of the project, and/or serious concerns in the candidate's ability to ethically, safely and sensitively execute the study. |

Decision on the above-named proposed research study

Please indicate the decision:	**APPROVED - MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE RESEARCH COMMENCES**

Minor amendments

Please clearly detail the amendments the student is required to make

Please see attached notes interspersed in track.

Drafting needs improvement in many places to improve clarity and readability. Some sections read as quite muddled – I'm sure the ideas are clearer than they are being expressed. Please review with your supervisor

Definitions needed in reference to title

What is the relevance of radicalisation to this study?

Major amendments

Please clearly detail the amendments the student is required to make

Assessment of risk to researcher

Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?	YES ☐	NO ☐
	If no, please request resubmission with an **adequate risk assessment.**	

If the proposed research could expose the <u>researcher</u> to any kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard, please rate the degree of risk:		
HIGH	Please **do not approve a high-risk** application. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not be approved on this basis. If unsure, please refer to the Chair of Ethics.	☐
MEDIUM	Approve but include appropriate recommendations in the below box.	☐
LOW	Approve and if necessary, include any recommendations in the below box.	☐
Reviewer recommendations in relation to risk (if any):	Please insert any recommendations	

Reviewer's signature

Reviewer: (Typed name to act as signature)	Dr suzannah hill. 16.-07.23
Date:	16/07/2023

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 Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.
For a copy of UEL's Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard.

Confirmation of minor amendments
(Student to complete)

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data	
Student name: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Ran Kushida**
Student number:	**U2178490**
Date:	**25/07/2023**
Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed if minor amendments to your ethics application are required	

Appendix B: Research Poster

Racialisation of Haafus: How do Non-White Visible Minorities Experience Discrimination in Japan?

University of East London

Location:

Microsoft Teams

Study for understanding the experiences of discrimination in Japan

We're looking for adults aged between 18-35, who have one Japanese parent and one non-white and non-East Asian (Haafu) to participate in this study to explore their experiences of discrimination in Japan.

In countries such as Japan, which values homogeneity, haafus are often faced with obstacles which can influence their identification with their cultural identity. Whilst previous research has developed some understanding into the experiences of haafus with White and East Asian origin, individuals of non-white origin are often overlooked despite expressing differing experiences of overt racism, familial conflict, systemic issues, etc. This research seeks to understand these experiences of discrimination further.

Am I eligible?

You may be eligible for the study if you:

1. You are aged between 18-35 years old
2. Have one Japanese parent and one of non-white and non-East Asian origin
3. Currently live in the UK or USA
4. You have spent at least a year in Japan
5. You have experienced some form of discrimination in Japan
6. You are able to speak English to a level where you can speak about these experiences

If eligible, participants will be asked to:

1. Participate in approximately an hour long one-on-one interview, in which you will be asked questions about your experiences of discrimination in Japan
2. Interviews will be recorded

If you are unsure if you meet the requirements, or have any questions about participating in the study, please feel free to email:

Ran Kushida

U2178490@uel.ac.uk

Appendix C: Participant Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Racialisation of Haafus: How do non-white visible minorities experience discrimination in Japan?
Contact person: Ran Kushida
Email: U2178490@uel.ac.uk

	Please initial
I confirm that I have read the participant information sheet dated 04/07/2023 (version 1) for the above study and that I have been given a copy to keep.	
I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	
I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time, without explanation or disadvantage.	
I understand that if I withdraw during the study, my data will not be used.	
I understand that I have 4 weeks from the date of the interview to withdraw my data from the study.	
I understand that the interview will be recorded using Microsoft Teams	
I understand that my personal information and data, including audio/video recordings from the research will be securely stored and remain confidential. Only the research team will have access to this information, to which I give my permission.	
It has been explained to me what will happen to the data once the research has been completed.	
I understand that short, anonymised quotes from my interview may be used in material such as conference presentations, reports, articles in academic journals resulting from the study and that these will not personally identify me.	
I would like to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed and am willing to provide contact details for this to be sent to.	
I agree to take part in the above study.	

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

………

Participant's Signature

………

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

………

Researcher's Signature

………

Date

………

Appendix D: Participant Information Sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Racialisation of Haafus: How do non-white visible minorities experience discrimination in Japan?
Contact Person: Ran Kushida
Email: U2178490@uel.ac.uk

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to take part or not, please carefully read through the following information which outlines what your participation would involve. Feel free to talk with others about the study (e.g., friends, family, etc.) before making your decision. If anything is unclear or you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above email.

Who am I?
My name is Ran Kushida. I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London (UEL) and am studying for a Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology. As part of my studies, I am conducting the research that you are being invited to participate in.

What is the purpose of the research?
I am conducting research into non-white haafus experiences of discrimination in Japan and how they make sense of their cultural identity. The purpose of this study is to examine how discrimination is experienced by this population, as previous research has overlooked how these experiences can differ. I am interested in how we can use these experiences to help inform interventions to aid in cultural identity development and the difficulties associated with it.

Why have I been invited to take part?
To address the study aims, I am inviting individuals aged between 18-35 years old and of Japanese and of non-white/non-East Asian origin to take part in my research.
If you are an individual who meets the additional criteria below, then you may be eligible to take part in this study:

126

1. You currently live in the UK or USA
2. You have spent at least a year in Japan
3. You have experienced some form of discrimination in Japan
4. You are able to speak English to a level where you can speak about these experiences.

It is entirely up to you whether you take part or not, participation is voluntary.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to take part?
If you agree to take part, you will be asked to take part in the following:
1. A 1:1 online interview with myself, in which you will be asked questions about your experiences of discrimination in Japan.

These questions will focus on your experiences, and will involve some detail into what happened, who or what exhibited these discriminatory behaviours, and how you made sense of it. There are no right or wrong answers to the interview questions, and the process will be more like having an informal chat about your experiences. Additionally, information will be asked about your ethnic or racial classification prior to the interview taking place. The interviews will last around 60 minutes, and will be conducted virtually through MS Teams. Therefore, having access to a computer or a phone with access to data or Wi-Fi is necessary. These interviews will be video recorded using Microsoft Teams and uploaded on the UEL drive for secure storage.

Can I change my mind?
Yes, you can change your mind at any time and withdraw without explanation, disadvantage or consequence. If you would like to withdraw from the study at any stage before the interview, you can do so by contacting myself through email. You can also choose to withdraw during the interview by informing the researcher you no longer wish to continue. If you withdraw, your data will not be used as part of the research.

Separately, you can also request to withdraw your data from being used even after you have taken part in the study, provided that this request is made within 1 month of the data being collected (after which point the data analysis will begin, and withdrawal will not be possible).

Are there any disadvantages to taking part?
As this study primarily aims to explore the experiences of discrimination and reflecting on these experiences, it may bring back thoughts and feelings that are distressing. To mitigate against this, please note the following:

Interviews will be conducted in a manner that is empathetic, giving time and space to answer your thoughts without rushing and giving breaks whenever needed.

If you have any specific needs regarding the interview, we can discuss this prior to taking part.

Should you want to seek support following the research, the following organisations offer support services:

UK:
- **Hub of Hope: https://hubofhope.co.uk/page/what-is-the-hub-of-hope**
- **MIND: www.mind.org.uk**
- **BAME Helpline Wales: https://wcva.cymru/bame-helpline-provides-support-in-range-of-languages/**

USA:
- **Lines for Life**: https://www.linesforlife.org/get-help-now/services-and-crisis-lines/racial-equity-support-line/
- **Asian LifeNet 24 Hour Hotline: https://liveanotherday.org/bipoc/asian-americans/**

How will the information I provide be kept secure and confidential?

- Participants will not be identified by the data collected, on any material resulting from the data collected, or in any write-up of the research. Participants will be provided with pseudonyms and information concerning personal details will be redacted or anonymised. The information, along with your consent and debrief forms, will be securely help on the University of East London's One Drive system in accordance with GDPR requirements.
- All data will be transferred via email through my secure university email account.
- Only myself and my research supervisor will have access to the raw data
- Once the data has been anonymised, the data will be available for others to see, i.e. examiners.
- After the study has been completed, contact details will be removed and only extracts of data from the interview transcriptions will be held up to three years, after which they will also be removed.

For the purposes of data protection, the University of East London is the Data Controller for the personal information processed as part of this research project. The University processes this information under the 'public task' condition contained in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Where the University processes particularly sensitive data (known as 'special category data' in the GDPR), it does so because the processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes. The University will ensure that the personal data it processes is held securely and processed in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. For

more information about how the University processes personal data please see
www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection

What will happen to the results of the research?
The research will be written up as a thesis and submitted for assessment. The thesis will be publicly available on UEL's online Repository. Findings will also be disseminated to a range of audiences (e.g., academics, clinicians, public, etc.) through journal articles, conference presentations, talks, magazine articles, blogs. In all material produced, your identity will remain anonymous, in that, it will not be possible to identify you personally.

You will be given the option to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed for which relevant contact details will need to be provided.

Anonymised research data will be securely stored by Dr. Hannah Sela for a maximum of 3 years, following which all data will be deleted.

Who has reviewed the research?
My research has been approved by the School of Psychology 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.

Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?
If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ran Kushida
Email: U2178490@uel.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor:

Dr. Hannah Sela
School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,
Email: H.Sela@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of School Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.
(Email: t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet

Appendix E: Participant Debrief Sheet

PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF SHEET

Racialisation of Haafus: How do non-white visible minorities experience discrimination in Japan?

Thank you for participating in my research study on non-white visible minorities experiences of discrimination in Japan. This document offers information that may be relevant in light of you having now taken part.

How will my data be managed?
The University of East London is the Data Controller for the personal information processed as part of this research project. The University will ensure that the personal data it processes is held securely and processed in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. More detailed information is available in the Participant Information Sheet, which you received when you agreed to take part in the research.

What will happen to the results of the research?
The research will be written up as a thesis and submitted for assessment. The thesis will be publicly available on UEL's online Repository. Findings will also be disseminated to a range of audiences (e.g., academics, clinicians, public, etc.) through journal articles, conference presentations, talks, magazine articles, blogs. In all material produced, your identity will remain anonymous, in that, it will not be possible to identify you personally (all identifying information such as place of work, home locations, names, etc. will either be removed or replaced).

You will be given the option to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed for which relevant contact details will need to be provided.

Anonymised research data will be securely stored by Dr. Hannah Sela for a maximum of 3 years, following which all data will be deleted.

What if I 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 distress or harm of any kind. Nevertheless, it is 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:

United Kingdom:

Hub of Hope
https://hubofhope.co.uk/page/what-is-the-hub-of-hope

MIND:
www.mind.org.uk
Tel: 0300 123 3393
info@mind.org.uk

BAME Helpline Wales
https://wcva.cymru/bame-helpline-provides-support-in-range-of-languages/
Helpline Tel: 0300 222 5720 (M-F 10:30am-2:30pm)
Text No: 07537432416

USA:

Lines for Life
https://www.linesforlife.org/get-help-now/services-and-crisis-lines/racial-equity-support-line/
Tel: 503-575-3764 (M-F 10am-7pm PT)

Asian LifeNet 24 Hour Hotline
https://liveanotherday.org/bipoc/asian-americans/
Tel: 1-877-990-8585 (Japanese Services Available)

Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?
If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ran Kushida (Email: U2178490@uel.ac.uk)

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor:

131

Dr. Hannah Sela

School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,

Email: H.Sela@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of School Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

(Email: t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

Thank you for taking part in my study

Appendix F: Interview Schedule

1. Could you tell me about what it was like to live in Japan?

2. To what extent do you identify as Japanese?

3. What do you regard as discrimination?

4. Throughout your time in Japan, could you describe to me what forms of discrimination you experienced?

5. In past research, some individuals of non-white origin discussed difficulties with policing, family, and cases of overt discrimination from the public, have you experienced any of these in your time in Japan?

6. Do you think there are differences between white and non-white haafu experiences?

7. How did you navigate these experiences?

8. Do you think the extent to which you identify as Japanese is related to your experiences of discrimination in Japan? If so, how?

9. Did you receive any support around these issues?

    a. To what extent was it helpful?

    b. What in retrospect might you have wanted more support with during or after?

10. Compared to your other identity, how do you feel about your Japanese one?

11. What do you think would have been helpful in navigating your cultural identity of being Japanese? / How would you have liked to relate to your Japanese identity? What could have helped with that

Appendix G: Reflective Journal Entry

With this participant, I find myself identifying with their transcript a lot more than I imagined I would. It's interesting, when I'm making my exploratory notes for this participant, I find myself writing 'I', instead of 'they' for specific quotes relating to discrimination. I feel like I really understand this person's experience, as it's so similar to my own. Not only is it the discriminatory actions that I can relate to, but their coping is so familiar with my own. The way they sought support and lashed out. Through that, I also found that I have a lot of feelings that are coming up during my initial stages of analysis. I feel a sense of anger and unfairness when I'm making these notes. One of the quotes from the participant really caught my attention and this came up for me – 昔みたいに可愛くないな – or you're not cute like

you used to be. This was my experience, of how, once I became older, I had made people tell me that I wasn't cute like I used to be, and now looked dangerous or threatening. It was that sudden shift from people being friendly to seeing you as a threat that I can relate to for this participant.

This is something to take further and explore in personal therapy.

Appendix H: Example Analysis Process

Transcript	Line number	Exploratory Comments	Experiential Statements
Researcher: OK, so thanks for coming in. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself first?	1 2		
Participant: Yeah. So, my name is Mia [pseudonym], I'm 27 years old, uh, my background is that I grew up in Japan for 18 years. I went to an International School in Tokyo, and my mum is Japanese, and my dad is Indian, but he grew up in England and so I hold dual nationality. When I was eighteen, I moved to the UK for university, and I've stayed here ever since.	3 4 5 6 7	Growing up in Japan for the all of childhood - 18 years Dual national	I'm a dual national, I grew up and was raised in Japan until I went to University
Researcher: Ok great, and could you tell me a bit about what it was like to live in Japan?	8 9		
Participant: Yeah, so growing up in Japan, I can only say positive things, I think especially because I can't, I just came from a, I guess the international [school] community. We come from a privileged background, going to schools and like private schools and not really like struggling, I guess.	10 11 12 13 14 15	Positivity - 'I can only say positive things' Background of privilege - international schools Freedom, financial security, etc.	'I can only say positive things' about growing up in Japan - I came from international schools which are inherently privileged through freedom and financial security, and Japan felt safe, cared for a supported
Researcher: Mmhmm	16		
Participant: Also, Japan is a very wealthy country and growing up in Japan, and that felt like I always felt safe. <u>I always felt cared for and supported. And it is interesting, I think growing up there, just as someone who's half, because you're never accepted into society there.</u> And so, I think when we were younger, I could really separate myself from that, I would be like, oh yeah, I'm a foreigner like my friends, we're not, actually… we kind of like took the piss out of it like screaming on trains and getting drunk and doing all these things like we just thought we were like, better in a sense. And I think the older you get, you realise, like, God, we are, that's really not great behaviour. But growing up, that was really fun, it's just, yeah, like you feel like the international community is just such a bubble. So it was nice to have that.	17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	Felt safe, cared for and supported Never accepted into society - drastic shift from only positive Finding ways to use 'being a foreigner' to your advantage Thinking you're better International school community/environment as a bubble and fun environment	I was never accepted into society, it was apparent the differences between us and them so we tried to find ways to use 'being a foreigner' to our advantage
Researcher: Umm, yeah, and I guess you know when you were mentioning a bit about not really being fully accepted there, what was that like for you?	28 29		

Appendix I: Key of Themes and Participants

Group Experiential Themes	Sub-Themes	Participants					
		Mia	Sonia	Josh	Emily	Akiko	Kevin
Japaneseness is decided by others	I am Japanese, but others do not think I am	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Being evaluated and proving I am Japanese	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	There is a way to be Japanese			✓	✓	✓	
Racialisation in Japan	Being racially profiled	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	People look down on my race	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Tensions within my family	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Hierarchy of race	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Understanding and navigating discrimination	Intentions & differentiating discrimination	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Feeling doubt and confusion	✓		✓		✓	✓
	My coping strategies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Navigating my identity	An Inferiority Complex as a child	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Looking for support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Shapeshifting and being a chameleon	✓	✓			✓	
	Integrating my identities as an adult	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓