An investigation into the experiences of African and African-Caribbean students whilst on teaching practice in South London primary schools.

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Contents

Abstract

This study investigates the experiences of racism of Black student teacher Post-graduates whilst on teaching placements as part fulfilment for their degree. Places on the Post-graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course are highly sought-after at this London University where the student body is predominantly White. The research highlights the fact that the PGCE course is predominantly female so a Black feminist discourse is used in tandem with Narrative Inquiry (NI) to bring their stories to the fore. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is used as a framework to provide the tools and aid in the articulation and translation of the students' testimonies. CRT moves to identify how Whiteness is embedded in schools, which are identified as microcosms of society, and helps to throw light on the more covert and subtle manifestations of racism evinced in the students' narratives.

The study explores the psychological and emotional burden the students are subjected to due to an unspoken external pressure to 'fit in'. The notions of *'microaggressions'* and *'double consciousness'* are explored in terms of how the students experience being surveilled but also engaging in self-surveillance so as not to be seen as disrupting too much the status quo of the White somatic norm encountered in schools. It highlights the level of resilience the students have in managing to complete their school placements, a compulsory component for successful completion of the course as well as the safe spaces they have to resort to.

In terms of professional practice, the study concludes that the need to continually educate teacher trainees about the discourse of Whiteness and racism is an on-going Sisyphean task.

Abbreviations

BME	Black Minority Ethnic
CRT	Critical Race Theory
CBT	College-based tutor
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
IFS	Institutional-focussed study
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
NI	Narrative Inquiry
PGCE	Post-graduate Certificate of Education
RQs	Research Questions
SoE	School of Education
TDA	Training and Development Agency
HEI	Higher Education Institution
TA	Teaching Assistant

Declaration

I confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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Signature:

Name:

Date:

Acknowledgements

I am very glad to have arrived at the stage where I can finally hand in my thesis. It has been a long and winding road and I am very grateful for the people who have kept me company along the way. Thank you very much to the students who willingly gave up their time, wanted their stories to be heard and trusted me to make that happen. I am very grateful for the support I have had from colleagues and my grateful thanks go to my institution which financed a significant portion of my EdD.

I have had a number of tutors over the years and have learnt something different from each of them; all of which has stood me in good stead. I am, however, eternally grateful to Professor Heidi Mirza and Dr. Denise Hawkes. Without their patience, input, belief, cajoling and laser-eyed critique, this thesis would not have happened.

My final thanks go to my partner, Stuart, who has supported me unstintingly, acting as a very responsive sounding-board along the way and my son Merlin who has shown a great deal of patience when waiting for access to my laptop.

Reflective statement

The following statement is an outline of my progression on the EdD (Home) programme. It has been a long and, at times, arduous journey to get to this point, having first registered for the EdD in 2006. This statement will reflect on the modules I participated in as well as an evaluation as to how they have acted as stepping-stones along the path to my thesis. There were times when it was not always clear how what I was reading or learning could further my desire to complete my EdD. However, in retrospect, I recognise that the process was wholly transformative in the way I now view the world, my role as an educator and my position in both.

'Foundations of Professionalism (FOP)' was the first module on the EdD course and was an engaging and involving immersion into the programme. The essay linked to this module considered *'To what extent has the increased profile of teaching assistants, since 2003, impacted on the professional status of primary school teachers in the U.K?'* The tutors encouraged the creation of a discursive space where I enjoyed the opportunity to reflect on a topic that I rarely had the opportunity to discuss in my daily lecturing role.

Having worked as classroom teacher with teaching assistants (TAs), of varying levels of capability and of involvement, for 10 years before becoming a lecturer, I considered it timely to be undertaking a course that questioned the notion of whether teaching was actually a profession or a semi-profession. The assignment looked at the policy proposals that were to be implemented to increase the level of Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs). I concluded that such a move could have a potentially divisive effect amongst the TAs with their former colleagues, whilst at the same time causing friction with classroom teachers. The premise being that the introductions of HLTAs was a way to de-professionalise teachers by stealth with their qualifying standards being almost identical to those of qualified teachers.

As enjoyable as engaging with the relevant discourse and literature surrounding this topic was, an area of development noted in my feedback was a further need to acquire fluency and utility with the requisite academic language when writing at this level.

The second module that followed was Methods of Enquiry 1 (MoE1). The title of the proposed study was *'What are the perceptions of African and African-Caribbean Parents' involvement in their children's education?'* Reflecting on the title now and the research questions (RQs) that aimed to quantify/qualify using a mixed methodology, the level and perception of involvement of African and African-Caribbean parents, I can see that I was very new in my understanding of how to compose RQs and the implications that might be inherent in the title/questions. These implications could involve wrongly signposting my epistemology as well as the discourse I might engage in whilst writing the assignment. There was also the initial idea that this work would form the basis of Methods of Enquiry 2 (MoE2). In the initial stages of this assignment, there were ethical issues that came to the fore which provoked awkward questions and drew attention to my own naïvety when considering topics for research as well as how the RQs might best be formulated. The issues of race, bias and the assumptions that can be made from a point of subjectivity were new insights for me as was underlined through discussions with my tutor.

Overall, I found this module challenging for a number of reasons. Primarily, I found little evident connection between the assignment / module and Foundations of Professionalism. I tried to find a connection in order to make sense of what we were being asked to do on the module as the content and skills I was having to acquire, had no relation to what I had previously experienced whilst doing my Masters, FOP or my current professional practice. Another reason for the difficulty encountered during this module was not being able to envisage undertaking a research methodology process and carrying out a piece of research when I had never embarked on such an initiative before. The question of how I intended to sample, for example, as noted in the formative feedback, along with my role as a participant-researcher were, at the time, difficult concepts to realise. In addition, the task of interviewing was purely hypothetical and it was difficult for me to conceive of any of the complexities that could arise when doing so, as well as how the choice of interview could help enrich or stymie the process. When I later undertook MoE2 it was the concrete, practical aspect of this module as opposed to the abstract nature of MoE1 that helped clarify aspects of that course.

The third module was the *Initial Specialist Course: Leadership and Learning in Educational Organisations* and my assignment title was *'Does a matrix-leadership paradigm undermine the notion of a leader?* The impetus for this assignment came from the professional environment I found myself in on a daily basis. I hoped that by researching organisational

structures and forms of leadership, I could gain some insight into how and why my workplace functioned the way that it did. One of the new fields of study I came across was that of 'emotional leadership' which I found fascinating and thought-provoking. Accessing the literature available to me gave me some insight into the psychology of management and the power structures that can develop. For example, engaging with the work of Morgan (1997) and his work on the organisation as a system, had a significant impact on my analysis of the school settings my thesis participants found themselves in.

In the formative feedback for this assignment, it was noted that my writing style was 'chatty', a point that had been made with my FOP assignment. So, developing a more acceptable academic style of writing whilst maintaining my own style, was a facet I continued to work on throughout the doctoral process. For this assignment, I had to consciously devise and use a timetable in order to ensure that I had enough time to complete both my assignment and professional role as well as get to grips with being a new mother. I regretted that I did not have enough time to really delve into the subject matter and critically reflect upon some of the themes that came up.

Methods of Enquiry (MoE2) was the fourth module which involved carrying out *'A Small-scale Study on Conflict and the Resolution of Conflict in a British University School of Education Setting'*. The idea was that the skills and strategies established in MoE1 would be built on and consolidated in MoE2. This assignment correlated with the one that was carried out for the Initial Specialist Course in that they were both situated in my place of work and both looked at an aspect of management and leadership. The subject matter for this paper, however, proved to be more delicate along with the ethical minefield to navigate. It involved issues of confidentiality for work colleagues and the prospect of producing a piece of research that could be unflattering in the way it reflected the staff view of conflict, endemic dissatisfaction with the leadership and the way that was handled by the leadership/management. This experience impressed upon me the importance of being clear about and adhering to the requisite ethical guidelines (BERA, 2011) and ensure that my study was compliant with the ethical requirements of both the IoE and my workplace. The same processes were followed for my thesis.

MoE2 helped to contextualise the strongly theoretical aspects of MoE1. Carrying out this study moved the whole concept of MoE2 from the abstract to the concrete and I could more

fully appreciate certain aspects of MoE1 that had previously mystified me. Creating and utilising something as simple as the concept of a timeline was now more grounded in real time. The notion of interviewing, and the form an interview could take, now had greater significance during this module. I also learnt that interviewing was a lot harder than a new researcher, such as myself, would have given it credit for. I used a semi-structured schedule to interview my colleagues. When it came time to analyse the data, I realised that following up pertinent points was sometimes missed, the importance of letting the interviewee speak and not feeling the need to fill in the pauses with speech was another learning point.

Submission for the MoE2 assignment was deferred due to external pressures. Work pressures had increased, I had a young child and my partner had been very unwell for a period of time. I could have given up at this stage but was determined to carry on, partly because I found study a place of respite.

The final module before my thesis was the Institution-focused study (IFS) with the essay title *'An investigation into the experiences and perceptions of initial teacher education (ITE) from the perspective of Black Minority Ethnic (BME) students'.* My interest in this topic area arose from a personal recognition of the apparent dearth of students who reflected my own ethnic background. This was in addition to the fact that I was also the only non-White member of staff working in the School of Education during the 4 years since I had been hired. Engaging in discourses surrounding ethnicity, gender, equality and equity were analysed and reflected upon in the theoretical narrative used for both the IFS and thesis. This module was a watershed for me in that I came across Critical Race Theory as a theoretical framework and epistemological lens for viewing the world and my place in the world of work. It was like stepping off a bank into deep water and finding that I could not only float but swim. I had been circling the Charybdis-like field of race for quite a while leading up to my IFS. I had touched upon it in MoE1 and MoE2 but with the IFS and thesis, the field had moved centre stage and I finally grasped the nettle. My reticence was around confronting the discourse around racism, what that would mean for me as a Black woman and mother of a young Black boy who was just about to encounter the institutionally racist British educational system (Ouseley, 1999; Bourne, 2001; Troyna and Carrington, 2011 Gillborn, 2015).

By the time I came to write my thesis, I had left my previous place of work but wanted to build on what I had gathered and experienced during my IFS. The aim was to look at the experiences of Black teacher trainees when they were outside of what was considered the diversity haven (refer to any U.K University diversity/inclusion policy) and when in schools as teacher trainees. Getting to grips with the structure of the thesis as well as attempting to find a way for my voice and way of expressing myself was difficult at this point. Discussions with my supervisors at that time over my use of terminology were challenging but helped to open up particular avenues on how I could move forward with my thesis. Using CRT as a theoretical framework and NI as a methodology allowed me to look beneath the surface of what was being said. I acknowledged my personal experiences as perhaps influencing my analysis but in a way I believe allowed the strength and poignancy of their stories to emerge.

At the time of writing, I am considering the help that I have had along the way. I have had a number of supervisors and have learnt valuable lessons from each one. I believe myself very lucky to have ended with two supervisors who act as the head and heart compasses for my thesis and I am profoundly grateful for their support. My partner has also been unstinting in his belief that I could complete and has been more than a sounding-board for some of my ideas. The next stage is to consider how what I have learnt can be used with impact and to do justice to the incumbent level of responsibility to not bury the stories of the students who took part in the final study.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Backdrop

At the time of writing, Europe and the U.S are reaping the political whirlwind. In June 2016, the majority of the U.K voted for *'Brexit'* i.e. for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union. It has not been a union without conflict but has been one that has brought benefits and sureties, both financial and in territorial defence. This vote seemed to unleash a wave of racism (Dodd, 2016; Institute of Race Relations, 2016; Mortimer, 2016) that surprised and shook many, myself included. The jackboot racism of the 70s and 80s seemed to spring back, fully formed as if it had never resigned its place in the political forum, public debate and consciousness. French presidential elections are due in 2017 and the prognostics are that Marine Le Pen, leader of the far-right *Le Front National* could win the election (Pasha-Robinson, 2016; Rothwell, 2016) although recent history has proven that predictive polls should be adhered to with some caution. Donald Trump, the now President-elect of the United States has chosen as his senior counsellor and chief strategist Steve Bannon, a man said to espouse racist and anti-semitic views as well as being chief executive officer of a far-right media outlet. The next Leader of the Free World's[1] own Presidential campaign was endorsed by the far-right Klu Klux Klan.

The importance of these disturbing events was pointedly articulated by Catherine Mayer (co-founder of the Women's Equality Party) who stated that the U.S *'is not just the biggest economy, it's the biggest exporter of ideas. This is something that impacts all of us'* (Mayer, 2016). The political sway of the U.S in terms of its ideology, how that affects its interaction and influence on the rest of the world, its impact in the media, arts and sports to name but a few spheres of influence, serves to underline the unsettling times we are, in the near future, heading towards on a global scale. This forms a view of both the political and societal backdrop to my thesis.

Prologue: Institutional-Focussed study

The aim of this thesis is to navigate and narrate the experiences of Black students whilst on teaching practice in South London schools as part fulfilment of their Post-graduate certificate in Education (PGCE). The study considers the discrepancy between the school-based rhetoric of inclusion and parity and the paradox that this then gives rise to when confronted with their narratives of isolation and dissonance. This paradox became evident when I analysed the narratives and testimonies of the students that were previously interviewed for the Institutional-focussed study (IFS); a study undertaken as part fulfilment for the Doctorate in Education (EdD).

As a precursor to the thesis, the IFS came about as a result of my growing interest and concerns about race and teacher education. The main aim was to investigate the experiences of Black African and African-Caribbean teacher trainees I tutored at the institution I worked for. Combined with that, was a personal recognition of the apparent absence of Black students on the ITE course along with the fact that I was also the only Black member of staff working in that particular School of Education (SoE). Another strong impetus was the relative paucity of literature and research available narrating the experiences of Black students in a UK setting as opposed to the majority of the studies which were found to be coming out of the US (Graham, 1987; Foster, 1998; Warikoo, 2004). The research process revolved around gathering the narratives of Black African and African-Caribbean teacher trainees. The first stage involved a focus group where the students discussed the following questions that were in turn raised by some of the extant literature:

1. *Were you aware of the SoE's race policy?*

2. *Do you consider the SoE to be culturally diverse in its students and lecturers? Do you feel yourself reflected?*

3. *Do you think note should be made of your ethnicity in any way?*

4. *What does culture mean? Can you define it?*

5. Did you feel that you had equal access to getting on this course? If not, discuss why.

Themes were elicited and then further developed via one-to-one interviews. Questions and themes emerged during the IFS that I felt deserved further investigation, for example, what happens when you are actually out on placement in schools? This basic question formed the foundation of this thesis.

Whilst exploring the visible topography of the data from the IFS, themes such as isolation, ostracisation and lowered expectations came to light during the analysis of the data gathered from their interviews. These were not new and just echoed what previous researchers (Osler, 1997; Swann, 1985; Solórzano, Ceja, and Yosso, 2009; Gillborn, 2012; Strand, 2012; Wright, 2013) had found when they had looked into the experiences of Black students generally in education.

One theme that resonated deeply amongst the students and myself was the reluctance of school staff and University tutors to acknowledge the catalogue of incidents which, when viewed in isolation, were seen, then ignored, as being minor misunderstandings. Often, the student was seen as having a persecution complex or '*a chip on [their] shoulder*' (Lander 2011b, p.13). However, as my research showed, these incidents were reproduced on campus during seminars with White students making overt and active choices not to sit with Black students. The effect was cumulative and when viewed alongside other such incidences, such acts could be deemed as:

- Microaggressions (Solórzano, Ceja and Yosso, 2000) i.e. elusive acts of racism
- Discriminatory acts enacted in passive-aggressive forms of conscious racism
- Or, perhaps even '*dysconscious racism*' (King, 1991), an uncritical acceptance of the status quo in relation to racism and racial equality.

These acts demonstrated an unwillingness on the part of the staff on the teacher training course and the majority White cohort of teacher trainees to engage in a critically anti-racist discourse. In turn, unpacking this reluctance alluded to the contours of Whiteness (Leonardo, 2002 cited in Gillborn, 2005), the inherent hegemony and the pervasiveness of White privilege holding sway in that particular institution.

When reflecting on the paradox that was central to, and inextricably linked to the testimonies that students re-told during the IFS, I was reminded of the play, *'Hamlet'*, (Shakespeare, 1993), from my A'level days. One of the major thematic schemas that ran through the play was the difficulty in separating appearance from reality, seeming from being. A brief summary of the play is that Hamlet thinks himself mad when he sees his father's ghost which then tells him, that he, his father the King, was murdered. Hamlet feels impelled to act, out of duty to his father but also out of impotent oedipal rage, directed towards his mother whom he sees as weak in her betrayal of his father's memory by her hastily arranged marriage to his uncle; the King's brother, whom the ghost claims was his murderer. The allusion I draw from using *'Hamlet'* as an analogy is that the students interviewed for the IFS did not want to believe that they could have been treated differently due to the colour of their skin. Yet the miasmic thoughts were there. Just as Hamlet did, the students questioned themselves and their experiences. Did they *really* happen or did they just misinterpret the action/comment/look? Did they *really* experience an act of racism, albeit covert? Would voicing testimonies be put down to their active febrile imaginations and having a chip on their shoulder (Lander, 2011b)? Hamlet did not want to believe either what the ghost said or of its existence, which could have been a figment of his fevered mind or something more sinister.

Contours of racism

> *" What's in a name? That which we call a rose*
>
> *By any other name would smell as sweet"* (Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene II)

The above quotation from '*Romeo and Juliet*' illustrates a central point that came out of the IFS that no matter the euphemism being used, I understood that the students were referring to

acts of racism. The resultant effects of these euphemistic acts of racism engendered the same negative thoughts and emotions i.e. the sense of being demeaned and being isolated never mind how the acts were cloaked. For many reasons, this was a difficult acknowledgement to make on the part of the students, with one of the students, Sandra (IFS) expressing the emotional and psychological toll, *'call it paranoia…I don't know if this is just me'.*

One of the themes noted in the IFS, in relation to the narratives of isolation and belonging, was the overall absence of the word 'racism' to describe what had happened. It was deeply interesting to note that although the term was not openly voiced, the effects of it were. Students hedged around the topic. This relates back to a discourse around *'an unwillingness to name the contours of racism'* (Leonardo 2002, cited in Gillborn, 2005, p. 488). An analogy that came to my mind when later analyzing this phenomenon came from the ideas and theories used by astrophysicists to detect the presence of black holes i.e. not by seeing the hole itself but by its *effect* on neighbouring astral bodies. Acts of racism could be so subtle as to be nigh on invisible, analogous with black holes, and have as devastating an effect. The effects of the covert or hidden acts of racism could then be doubted, by both the person who experienced them and whoever might have been called on to help ameliorate the situation. Emotional responses or reactions could be put down to hypersensitivity or paranoia (hooks, 1992). Any counter-narrative or discourse that aimed to unsettle the prevailing status quo, was met with silence, ignorance or a denial that these concepts were being played out around them and the disbelief that they, the White staff and White students, could be party to it and beneficiaries of it. I would suggest that one explanation for the institutional blindness encountered during the IFS, was that for the White staff and White students profiting from the privileges of Whiteness, it was so normative, so commonplace, as to be unrecognised. It could be speculated that to acknowledge that there could have been a counter experience for a significant number of its student body who felt isolated and treated as lesser because of their ethnicity, would have been a step too far for the predominantly White staff.

An example of Whiteness and its normativity applied to, and embedded in the Curriculum, was mentioned by one of the students. She said how, during an English session, she had pointed out that '*Handa's Surprise*' did not have to be the only book they used to represent diversity and Africa. She had felt uncomfortable that the lecturer was not aware of, or sensitive to the notion that such a book, being used with White teacher trainees who had

limited experiences of ethnic minorities, would replicate the stereotype of Africans living in huts with no idea of modernisation. Or, a tutor screening a video from the 1980s to try and reflect the experiences of Black teacher trainees in the first decade of the 20th century (Angela: *'...it was awful* [I] *blocked it out'*). On reflection, using that video was inadvertently poignantly pertinent. The narratives from the IFS students echoed the stories of Black teacher trainees from a period of 30 years prior (Fordham and Ogbu, 1986; Graham, 1987; Showunmi and Constantine-Simms (eds.) 1995; Wright, 2013). The notion of ingrained Whiteness and of White privilege was evident in the systemic ethos of the SoE. From my own experience, there was a recognition that the Head of the School saw themselves as presiding over a liberal institution that was engaged in encouraging diversity in terms of the ethnic make-up of the students. Yet the lived experiences of the IFS students had them feeling as though they were out of place, Black bodies that stood out. To then engage with the discourses surrounding Whiteness, hegemony, privilege and unrecognised power may have been beyond the pale for an institution that prided itself on its overt dedication to levelling the playing field with its inclusion policies. An overt intention towards these goals is published online as part of the institution's forward planning. Yet the discourse around the non-performativity of these inclusion policies has been well-documented (Deem and Morley, 2006; Ahmed, 2007; Ahmed, 2012). The reality gap between what the document says and what was actually enacted was recognised by the IFS students who regarded the policies as *'just a paper exercise'*.

Research has proven that the playing field has not been levelled and that Black students continue to achieve lower degree classifications than White students as well as having a higher failure rate (Codjoe, 2001; Mirza, 2005; Mirza, 2006; Dhanda, 2008; Gillborn, 2008; Stevenson, 2012; Adams, 2014; Hefce, 2014; Universities UK, 2014). In order to increase the number of Black and minority ethnic (BME) students, if not necessarily level the playing field in terms of admissions, the Training and Development Agency (TDA) 1994 – 2005, made funding available to help attract and increase the number of Black students entering higher education. Research (National Union of Students, 2011; Parel and Ball, 2013; Pilkington, 2013) has shown that both the application and interviewing process is weighted towards maintaining the homogeneity of the predominately White university body of Oxbridge and Russell group institutions, to the detriment of Black and ethnic minority

students who apply to universities. When you read the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) document *'How to include ITT students in your 2012-2013 access agreement'* (2012), there is a recognition that fewer Black and ethnic minority students get into HEIs. However, this is put down to the *'not enough high quality candidates'* and that the *'quality of those* [who apply] *is not sufficient to secure places'* (p.10) but are not these students applying with the same or equivalent grades? The document recognises that Black and ethnic minority students may end up with a lower degree classification than their White counterparts but fails to acknowledge the research (Callender *et. al.*, 2006; Dhanda, 2008; Richardson, 2008; Wilkins and Lall, 2011) available which points to conscious and unconscious racism enacted in HEIs which contributes to this discrepancy.

Whilst funding was available from the TDA, the IFS institution made a concerted effort to recruit students from the African diaspora. However, when the funding was withdrawn, there was a coincidental drop in the number of Black students accepted onto the PGCE e.g. in one year only 3 students out of the 150 cohort were Black or mixed race. It could be read that lip service was being paid to the notion of increasing participation from Black African and African-Caribbean students whilst there was financial gain to be had. For the purposes of this section, 'Black' refers to students from the African diaspora. Both sets of students for the IFS and the thesis self-identified as Black prior to taking part in the interviews via their response to my call which was for Black students. The meaning of the term 'Black' in relation to the students' ethnicity will be discussed in the Findings and Analysis chapter.

Impetus for the thesis

The data from the IFS prompted the question of what happens to the students whilst they were in school? The IFS had looked at the students whilst they were on the course. The PGCE is a 38-week course spread over 10 months (September – July). It involves the students spending 10 University-based weeks and 28 weeks teaching in schools, following pathways in Early Years (Nursery – Key Stage 1 (KS1), Upper Primary (KS2) or General Primary (KS1 – KS2). Taking on board the notion that the University is supposed to be a safe space, open to the notion of widening participation and the presence of more Black students, how then did they fare when they went into schools? Schools are institutions with

their own systems, cultures and codes of being. Schools can be defined as microcosms of society with:

> *'…shared values, shared beliefs, shared meaning, shared understanding and shared sense making […] all different ways of describing culture. In talking about culture we are really talking about a process of reality construction that allows people to see and understand particular events, actions, objects, utterances or situations in distinctive ways…'* (Morgan, p.138, 1997)

As part of my role in Initial Teacher Education (ITE), I was involved in the placement of students as well as supervising them whilst they were on school experience. We had a number of schools that the SoE had a longstanding relationship with. Many of the schools had hired students that had been trained by the SoE, some of whom had been placed at their schools. The schools were, for the most part, in multiracial communities in a South London borough.

Within the SoE it was known that some of our Black students were having a more problematic time in schools. The SoE had to deal with the aftermath of the insensitive placing of students in areas of London that have acquired the reputation of being sympathetic to far-right ideologies (University SED, 2010)[2]. Questions were raised, primarily by the school staff, about their competence and ability to get on with other members of staff. This led me to question the level of engagement and understanding of colleagues when placing Black students in schools. I openly questioned why these students had been placed in particular schools. My colleagues were unaware of being instrumental in creating what could be a heady and traumatic situation by placing students into areas increasingly hostile to ethnic minorities. For example, one White colleague who placed students did not feel any discomfort being in Eltham or Mottingham so did not initially understand a Black student's reticence to go to a school near to where Stephen Lawrence[3] was murdered. They had not acquired the racial literacy to appreciate how disconcerting it could be to be the Black spot on the White page, a concept translated by Angela (IFS) *'I just hate that I can't hide!'*

A significant proportion of the ethnically White British lecturers on the PGCE course at the SoE may have liberal views about education and being part of an ethnically diverse society but the resulting problematic placement of Black students appeared to undermine this generalized view of the SoE's liberal systemic thinking. The lived experiences and the perceptions of the students who had suffered racism whilst on teaching practice e.g. Black students being denied the use of the photocopier whilst White students were given free access, led me to consider the structures of Whiteness, how they are manifested within the school system and the resultant effect on the Black students.

Government drive to change the face of Teacher Training

The government drive, still unabated, towards School Direct (DfE, 2010) has been steady, relentless and has had an effect not dissimilar to Chinese bindweed in the way that the programme has been described as choking the supply of teacher trainees for teacher-training (Bell, 2015). School Direct is a school-led option for teacher training where the majority of the training, and ratification of the student having successfully completed their one year course, is carried out by the school. Students are employed at the school where they are being trained. The former Secretary of State for Education is noted as saying that:

> *'Teaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman'* (Gove, 2010)

However, this direction of travel for teacher training raises a troubling question as to who will be the arbiter for Black students in schools if the judge and the jury are synonymous? In other words, if a School Direct student has a complaint to make about a racist incident or environment in the school they are placed in, they will, in effect, be complaining to people who are their employers and can fail their practice. For the non-School Direct or Provider-Led students, their support and advice can come from their SoE; perhaps a more subjective arbiter.

Under the 2010 – 2015 government administration, there has been a dramatic change to teacher training as well as what is seen as a renewed attack on the professionalism of teachers (Perryman *et al.,* 2011; Brooks *et. al.,* 2012). This has been reflected in the advent of the Equality Act (2010); a consolidation of various legislation that dealt with social inequalities and the demise of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000). This act that dealt specifically with racism and discrimination in institutions such as schools was subsumed into the 2010 Act. On a national policy level, this could appear to suggest that issues to do with tackling race discrimination no longer deserved the prominence they once might have had. This notion would appear to be substantiated by the former Prime Minister David Cameron's views on multiculturalism which he referred to as a '*state doctrine*' (Cameron, 2011), having a less prominent place in our apparent post-race times (Muir, 2013).

The thesis is formed by these research questions:

1. How does racism manifest itself for the students whilst they are on teaching practice?
2. What do they 'see' or perceive as racism enacted in schools?
3. How does what they experience affect their teaching experience? Do the students think that there are consequences for their careers following on from what they have experienced?
4. Do the training institutions i.e. the school and the University, hinder or facilitate the experiences of perceived racism? If so, how is this demonstrated?

A level of anxiety is known and noted when it comes to reporting such incidences, whether it be to the school or the University. There were vocalised concerns as to whether reporting such incidents might affect the students' relationship with the school and the SoE. So the remit has been laid out for this thesis, in other words to interrogate the continuing questions from the IFS in the form of these research questions and give voice to the Black students on the PGCE teacher training course. The additional hope is that the following research will illuminate further what the SoE I work for can do to support Black students whilst in school and generally aid their retention on the course.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Introduction

The first time I encountered Critical Race Theory (CRT) was during an early evening college seminar where it was taught as part of the EdD course. My supervisor who was leading the seminar suggested that I attend. Throughout the series of thought-provoking sessions, he proceeded to use terminology I had not heard used in such a context before. References were made to racism being part of the very fabric of society as well as 'White supremacy', a phrase which brought with it images of skinheads, Union Jacks and racist rhetoric. For me, the issues of race and racism, had always been topics to avoid discussing in too much depth because of the pain and discomfort they engendered within me. If I did broach the topic, I was careful whom I did it with and careful of the language I used, not wanting to offend others or cause emotional harm to myself. CRT proved to be a timely revelation. The language that was used during those seminars and terminologies we were furnished with, such as '*microaggressions*', helped provide the lexicon and, for my part, missing piece of racial literacy that enabled me to look the concept of racism in the eye and to name it; not just its overt manifestations but its subtle, sly ones. Twine's concept of racial literacy dimensions (2006) came through her investigation into the experiences of mixed race children and their parents in what it was to be brought up in the U.K., a setting where their children would be classified as Black with all that entailed. The parents were also very active in *ensuring* that their children recognised their Blackness. The three dimensions or practices emanated from the home and a conscious willingness on the parents' parts to ensure that their children had the tools to fight and protect themselves from what their parents feared would be an ultimate rejection from White society. The parents recognised a society that would disregard their White European heritage and the privilege that came with that; a non-transferable property. The dimensions involved:

1. Giving children the *'homespace'* (Ward, 1996 cited in Twine, 2006, p. 885) to deconstruct the modes of Black representation in the media. Parents enabled their children with ways of thinking and a vocabulary for expression, a de facto Black social capital.

2. The importance of being socialised into Black friendship groups and networks was a second dimension. This involved actively seeking out groups such as Black-led/staffed after school clubs that would educate and induct the children into *'privileged cultural knowledge'* (Twine, 2006, p.889) using additional narratives of Black history to counter the deficit narratives being embedded whilst in the school setting.

3. The third dimension involved surrounding the family at home with positive images of Blackness e.g. books, posters, art work so that the children would further develop positive *'narratives of racial consciousness'* (Twine, 2006, p.893)

Wielding the concept the dimensions inherent in racial literacy along with CRT, and the tools of language inherent within it, I was able to not only engage with a new epistemology but also with a discourse and vocabulary that enabled expression of experiences that I had had as well as the students around me. The following chapter introduces some of the discourse and theories found within CRT.

Black students and teacher education

As a starting point, this study takes into consideration that there has been only a limited amount of research into the U.K experiences of Black students on teacher training courses although there has been research looking into the experiences of Black children in the U.K primary school setting. The majority discourse until the 90s was that Black children were failing due to a deficit in their aspirations, culture and ethnicity. This politically driven discourse was further embedded by the Government lacking in their promotion of diversity training for teacher trainees. The Department of Education and Science (DES) 1971 report 'The Education of Immigrants' (cited in Swann, 1985, p. 546) had stated that:

> '…*it would be impracticable to attempt to ensure that all newly qualified teachers had received a training which would equip them to take charge of classes including a substantial immigrant population immediately on entering schools*.'

There appeared to be a turnaround in thinking when the Home Affairs Committee Report (1981, cited in Swann, 1985, p.541) stated that if the ITE institutions were not equipping the

students with the right tools to dispel stereotypes, including their own, then '*Teachers cannot reasonably be blamed for failing ethnic minority children*' (ibid). Although this conclusion is questionable, the question of the quality and amount of training teacher trainees receive and engage with about diversity was and still is live (Picower, 2009; Mirza and Meetoo, 2012; Pearce, 2012).

'The Swann Report: Education for All' (1985), four years on from the Home Affairs Committee, was perhaps ground-breaking in its attempt to recognize the importance of racism and the need for a progressively inclusive education system. This included the training and increasing the racial literacy of teacher trainees and their HEIs. Also noted within the report was that there could be '*unintentional racism*' (Swann, 1985, p.9) within the school setting. The report was clear in stating that '*unintentional racism*' was having a negative effect on the educational experiences of West Indian children. In terms of classification, no differentiation was made for ethnicity so for 'West Indian' we can read Black. Swann also expressed an urgent concern regarding the need for there to be more Black teachers to reflect the increasingly multi-cultural make-up of the U.K and the collection of statistical data to demonstrate that BME staff were being recruited. The collection of this data still continues but the presence of BME staff does not necessarily mean that an institution (school or HEI) is non-discriminatory in the way it treats and provides for its non-White staff (Puwar, 2004; Pilkington, 2011; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013). Showunmi and Constantine-Simm's (1995) study into the experiences of teacher training and the decline in Black teachers highlighted issues of low expectations, hindered progress and experiences of racism for Black teacher trainees (Osler, 1997). Similar themes were being re-iterated two decades later (Basit *et al.* 2006; Basit *et al.* 2007; Wilkins and Lall, 2011; Wright, 2013). Following concerns over the recruitment of Black teacher students (Swann, 1985; Boffey, 2014; Evans and Leonard, 2014) and retention (Callender, Robinson and Robertson 2006; Mirza and Meetoo, 2012; Wilkins and Lall 2011), strategies to attract this under-represented group, such as those run by the now-defunct Training and Development Agency (TDA), were put in place to increase the number of Black students who successfully applied to ITE courses and successfully completed them.

The low retention rates for Black students teachers were attributed to the isolation and incidences of covert and overt racism that some of the students experienced (Siraj-Blatchford, 1991; Osler, 1997; Davies and Crozier, 2005; Mirza, 2009a, Wilkins and Lall 2011). Students had also felt themselves burdened by the weight of being considered totemic of their ethnic group (McIntosh, 1988; hooks, 1992; Bhavani *et al*., 2005). If they did well and successfully passed their degree, that complied with the liberal script and policies of equality and parity that their University applied to itself. If, on the other hand, the student failed, then that failure was considered their own and due to a deficit in their own capabilities (Osler, 1997; Andall-Stanberry, 2016).

The TDA drive came with a financial incentive to ITE providers to actively increase their quota of Black and minority ethnic students (BME). This approach had some degree of success. By 2005/6, 12 per cent of teacher trainees to ITE came from a BME background (Mirza and Meetoo, 2012). However, any progress such as this was undermined by the 24 per cent of BME students failing to achieve Qualified Teacher Status at the end of their training. This was double the percentage noted for White teacher trainees (Adonis, 2008 cited in Mirza and Meetoo, 2012). By 2014, a situation can still arise where:

> '*17.2% of Black African applicants, and 28.7% of Black Caribbean applicants were taken on by teacher training institutions across all subjects, against 46.7% of White applicants….*[and] *Nationally, while 17% of pupils in the UK are from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds, only about 7% of teachers are.*'(Boffey, 2014)

Mirza (2014, cited in Boffey, 2014) re-iterated that institutional racism was a major factor behind this continuing problem of attracting, applying then retaining BME students, an aspect which appeared to be missed in recent seismic educational policy changes regarding teacher training (Jones, 2015). This leads me to not only question the effectiveness of the strategies that were put in place but also the will of those whose job it was to implement the changes. I then consider the question put forward by Lorde who queried:

> '*What does it mean when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy? It means that only the most narrow perimeters of change are possible and allowable*'. (Lorde, 2007, pp. 110 – 111)

In other words, a system will generally reproduce itself if the ethos and constituent pieces (read staff) remain the same. It could also be argued that the limited sustainability of the strategies that were put in place is down to the will of the bodies charged with implementing them. As Lorde goes on to write:

> *'For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own games, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.'* (Lorde, 2007, p. 112)

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

The master's tools that Lorde remonstrated against are replaced by ones from within CRT that aid us to explore and narrate the Black experience from the standpoint of a Black person. Using CRT as a theoretical framework allows the researcher the opportunity to interrogate the dominant discourse propagated by schools and Universities that they are institutions that uphold the liberal tenets of *'objectivity, meritocracy, colourblindness, race neutrality and equal opportunity'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p.26); ideals that are enshrined within school policy and documentation, an area that will be looked at later on in this chapter.

CRT, as a theory, emerged from the field of law as a response to the dismay expressed at the shortcomings considered inherent in the neo-Marxist field of Critical Legal Studies as well as the delayed progress in terms of social reform in the United States following the profound changes evinced during the Civil Right movements of the 1960s. The two initial advocates of CRT are seen to be Derrick Bell, an African American legal academic and Alan Freeman, a White academic. The seeds of the new movement grew from their recognition that there had to be a radical change in the way systems and methods were enacted in terms of race relations and judicial outcomes for African Americans. This mode of thinking was then later applied to the fields of education and teacher training. Teacher education and the school are spaces in which inequality can be inculcated and perpetuated from the very root with young minds being taught fallacies about who they are and their place in the world by knowing or unconscious educators. The question of how this U.S-based theoretical framework has influenced and illuminated the U.K context has been discussed by Gillborn and Warmington (2015). They note that in conjunction with the fundamental convergence along the lines of race discourse, CRT in the U.K setting has progressed in other ways, a major focus on the role of education as opposed to the legal field in the U.S being one of them. Furthermore,

they argue that within the discourse surrounding CRT in the U.K, intersectionality is a central premise, especially when discussing race and class intersections; perhaps more prominent in the U.K setting because of a British social history and legacy. (Chakrabarty, Roberts and Preston, 2012; Gillborn and Ladson-Billings, 2017). CRT methodology also acknowledges not only the centrality of race but also the intersectionality of race and racism with other forms of discrimination and domination e.g. subjugation based on race, gender, *'surname, phenotype* [and] *accent'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p.25). CRT allows the thinker and interrogator to apply ideas that call to account hidden and embedded ways of thinking which have served to uphold domains of White privilege and White supremacy.

Solórzano and Yosso (2002) argue that CRT advances a methodology to help illuminate and account for the presence of racism in the classroom.

> *'...critical race theory in education is a framework or set of basic insights that seeks to identify, analyse and transform those structures and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions in and out of the classroom.'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 25)

There is an acknowledgement on the part of CRT researchers that schools have the power to either collude, knowingly or unknowingly, with the prevalent system of Whiteness and oppress the potential of a child or endow them with the tools to succeed.

It was felt by the emergent Critical Race theorists that the neo-Marxist focus on class did not give a clear and whole picture of the level of inequality, rooted in race, that was being experienced in all areas of society for African-Americans (Giroux, 2000, cited in Yosso and Solórzano, 2005). Race had a fundamental part to play and this was recognized in the formation of CRT. Within CRT, racism is seen as being so rooted in everyday life and society as a whole that the effects of it often go unnoticed, unchallenged or accepted as the norm by both the beneficiaries of White privilege and those who were subjected to it in its more insidious forms, like a hidden virus.

The principle of being '*Othered*' and reflecting on life in liminal spaces has embedded CRT within many fields in the U.S e.g. Latino/a-crit, Asian-Crit, Queer-Crit and an important one for this study being that of education. Over the past decade or so, CRT has been gaining momentum and gaining credence within the UK educational setting. Gillborn (2005) wrote

about what he considered to be the *'tacit intentionality'* (Gillborn, 2005, p.2) of institutional racism being enacted in schools, with *'taken-for-granted'* (ibid) acts carried out by power groups of White stakeholders (e.g. teachers). The people in positions of power perpetuated acts of White supremacy and maintained the status quo, that being the under-achievement of Black students/children (Maylor, 2009a, b and c; Mirza, 2009; Hylton, 2012; Chakrabarty, Roberts and Preston, 2012; Cole, 2012; Warmington, 2012).

Mirza (2006 and 2009a) explored the experiences of women across the intersectionalities of race and gender and the desire to succeed through education. She talks about the *'hidden voice of the women'* (Mirza, 2006, p.4) and the relevance of *'situated knowledges'* (ibid). This is an important point to reflect upon when considering how narratives of experience told through interviews, form part of the framework for this study, helping to throw light on other constructed realities and *'other ways of knowing'* (ibid).

Although it could be argued that there is '*no single position statement that defines CRT'* (Rollock and Gillborn, 2011, p. 1) or a *'canonical set of doctrines or methodologies to which* [CRT scholars] *all subscribe'* (Crenshaw *et al.* cited in Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 12) due to its evolving nature and being responsive to changes in policy and alert to experiential testimony, there are certain tenets that all CRT scholars recognize as being intrinsic to the field:

1. That racism is pervasive and part of everyday existence
2. The importance of storytelling to give voice to the experience of Black people
3. A critique of liberalism and a colour-blind doctrine
4. Whiteness as a property

In this chapter, I will look at these aspects of CRT. The following discussion will outline how the above principles explore the background and illustrate the environment engaged with by the students who took part in this study.

Racism

A significant starting point for CRT is that racism is pervasive, intrinsic to the warp and weft of societal structure and so therefore in our education system (Milner, 2007). As a preliminary perspective, this runs contra to the liberalist view of U.S society engendered by years of affirmative action policies and hard-won changes brought about by the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s. Ladson-Billings, a significant writer in the field of CRT and education, writes that:

> *'CRT begins with the notion that racism is "`normal, not aberrant, in American society'" (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv), and, because it is so enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people in this culture. Indeed, Bell's major premise in Faces at the bottom of the well (1992) is that racism is a permanent fixture of American life. Thus, the strategy becomes one of unmasking and exposing racism in its various permutations'* (1998, p.11)

In recognition of this, it was acknowledged that in order to unmask racism and expose its effects and machinations, the experiences and testimony of African Americans was crucial if there was to be an unpicking and examination of the educational system. However, it is important to note that the more overt manifestations of racism are rejected by a majority of people, no matter their ethnic grouping. Acts of overt racism, crude in their obviousness and wounding in their intentionality, can be confronted and even challenged using legal rulings and policies that have been put together by institutions to ostensibly protect their BME colleagues from discrimination (Single Equality Act, 2010). It is, however, the more subtle forms that can go undetected to the mind, ear and eye that are not attuned to them. Living a life where one must negotiate the rules of engagement with a world that functions on the solid foundations of Whiteness, equips those who have a heightened consciousness, with skills to challenge the inequity and discourse surrounding race with a level of racial literacy. These skills include having the conceptual tools to decipher what is happening and the vocabulary to express it (Twine, 2006). The subtle forms are symptomatic of what Gillborn (2008, p.27) referred to as the *'hidden operations of power'*. Recognising and naming the more elusive forms of racism, such as microaggressions, is made easier with the tools furnished by CRT. Racism works alongside, and as part of White privilege, to maintain the hegemony of a global White racialized minority. Within the field of CRT, this is recognized as White supremacy.

Whiteness and White supremacy

'Whiteness' is a racial discourse, whereas the category of 'White people' represents a socially constructed identity, usually based on skin colour.' (Leonardo, 2002, p.31)

The term 'Whiteness' here has nothing to do with phenotype classification but concerns the discourse surrounding White people as an ethnic and racialised group and the privileges that have been normative and invisible being part of that group. 'White supremacy' is also a term that goes hand-in-hand with any discussion surrounding Whiteness and White privilege. It does not necessarily refer to the far-right groups who espouse racist ideology but it does refer to the dominance and normativity that is inherent in White ethnicity and the privileges, the majority unasked for, that go hand-in-hand with this. When the reality of White privilege is made real, some White people have emphasized the neutrality of their position (McIntosh, 1988; Marx, 2006) and this is a stance I have witnessed when teaching White teacher trainees. When engaged in a discourse around race with my students, I feel compelled to highlight what Leonardo (2002) notes above before exploring the meaning of the term 'White supremacy', a term that immediately has the students on guard. The rationale behind the exploration and explanation of White supremacy is that I consider some of the students will have a more open mind and react less antagonistically (Aveling, 2006) if there is no question of attributed blame for the White privilege that they have consciously or unconsciously been the benefactors of. These benefits manifest in terms of access to better life chances. This is especially pertinent when dealing with questions of hegemony by, what is in effect, a global White minority.

Just as King (1991) stated that White people have internalized an ideological world view which justifies their position, privilege and an, if not always, overt subjugation but an ever-present suppression of Black people (Tatum, 1992). Concurrent with this, there is the idea of internalized racism by Black people. This is when Black people view themselves through the lens of White supremacy (hooks, 1992) whose purpose, like a mirror at the fairground, is to skew and distort the image seen reflecting back. hooks (1992) mentions how this leads to an erosion of self-esteem and a crisis of Black identity. The media, the world of work and education work together to encourage the rejection of Blackness and for it to be replaced with a vestige of Whiteness through the acquisition of accepted codes such as language,

dress education and places of education. Solórzano and Yosso (2001) assert that CRT in education is crucial if we are to *'challenge* [the] *dominant ideology'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2001, p.2) and better educate all who are subject to, and part of, the educational system.

White privilege

Whilst undertaking research to look at the privileging of men in society and their sometimes overt, sometimes unconscious collusion with the structures that helped maintain their positions of power, McIntosh (1988) was confronted by her own unseen White privilege and the recognition that she had been conditioned from a young age to ignore it. Marx (2006) had noted how White women tended to exhibit a level of denial about coming to terms with their White privilege. This would have been especially hard for McIntosh to confront as a feminist who believed in the solidarity of women living under a patriarchal hegemony.

McIntosh began to record mundane actions or conditions that she felt she could rely upon as a White person, regardless of her gender, but her African-American friends and colleagues could not. By unpacking what she termed her *'invisible knapsack of White privilege'* (McIntosh, 1988, p.100), McIntosh realized that she had to *'give up the myth of meritocracy'* (McIntosh, 1988, p.99). This can be illustrated by Phillips (1993) when he refers to this myth of meritocracy as being partly behind the tragedy of *'Othello…A Black European success'* (Phillips, 1993, p.45). Othello was a Black man in a White world who had succeeded in a field considered worthy of admiration (warfare). He was considered an insider as long as he conformed to the script that was written for him, one that he was seemingly unaware of when he married the White daughter of a rich Venetian statesman. Othello believed in meritocracy and a world where your good deeds should speak for themselves.

> *'My services, which I have done the signiory,*
> *Shall out-tongue his complaints'* (Shakespeare, *Othello,* Act I, Scene II, v20 - 21)

Yet, as we know, part of the tragedy of *'Othello'* was that this was not the case. Questions of meritocracy and fairness of treatment is an issue that remains central to the discourse surrounding the experience of Black students (Mirza and Meetoo, 2012) and Black staff

within the academy (Maylor, 2009a; Mirza, 2015) who have felt themselves treated differently and made to feel *'Other',* perhaps through experiencing microaggressions.

Microaggressions: Symptoms of Whiteness

Microaggressions, a concept developed by psychiatrist Chester Pierce in the 1970s, are defined as '*subtle, stunning often automatic and non-verbal exchanges which are "put downs" of Blacks by offenders*' (Pierce *et al.*, 1978, cited in Solórzano, Ceja and Yosso, 2000, p.60) or as *'death by a thousand cuts'* (Singh, 2016). These exchanges are basically part of everyday interactions, however brief they might be, that leave the receiver feeling undermined, undervalued and under attack (Sue and Constantine, 2007). What is also symptomatic of Whiteness and what that entails i.e. privilege and a privileged epistemological position due to having a White ethnicity, the initiator of the microaggression is probably unaware that they have committed an action which has been seen to come from a dismissive view of the ethnicity of the person in front of them. For both parties, having the vocabulary to explain what passed between them can prove difficult because that element of racial literacy is not embedded as part of their knowledge. As Sue and Constantine (2007, p.137) go on to say:

> *'Microaggressive exchanges are so pervasive and automatic in daily conversations and interactions that they are often dismissed and glossed over as being innocent and innocuous. They are, nevertheless, extremely damaging to persons of color because microaggressions impair classroom performance and workplace productivity by creating emotional turmoil and depleting psychological resources'*

The existence of microinvalidations and microinsults, both of which come under the banner of microaggressions are harder to pinpoint and define (Sue and Constantine, 2007). Microinvalidations are described as perhaps the most deceptive form of microaggression as they serve to try and negate the lived experiences of Black people and as Sue and Constantine (2007, p.138) write '*attempt to replace it with the racial reality of White American (oftentimes with damaging consequences to the targets).'* A recent example of this is when, in 2015, the former U.S First Lady, Michelle Obama gave an address at Tuskagee University to graduating students. She made reference to the way she was pictured on the controversial front cover for the *New Yorker*[4] (Goldenberg, 2008), during her husband's re-election campaign, with an 'Angela Davis' style afro and toting a gun and how '*it knocked*

me back a bit.' Professor Angela Davies, as she is now known, is an academic, a civil rights activist and former Black Panther, was once the most wanted woman in America. She was portrayed as a dangerous radical, a terrorist and charged with being Public Enemy No. 1 (Lowry, 2015). The effect of the 'Angela Davies' comment was to mark Michelle Obama as an outsider, as *'Other'*. Lowry's online response to the then-First Lady's speech refers to Mrs. Obama as being *'characteristically self-pitying'* and *'aggrieved'*. I would argue that this was because she had made a stance in speaking out about the microinvalidations she had experienced at the end of a cartoonists pen. He then went on to say that:

> *'she related a series of inconsequential gibes or perceived insults mostly from 2008 that, for her, loom large enough to share with graduating seniors years later.'* (Lowry, 2015).

'Inconsequential'? *'Perceived'*? These words and this statement is a powerful example of what Sue and Constantine (2007) refer to as a microinvalidation where the views of a Black articulate and highly intelligent woman, wife to arguably the most powerful man in the world, are marginalized and diminished in an attempt to move her story from the centre ground back into the shadows so that the White majoritarian narrative can regain the centre ground.

Microinvalidations coupled with microinsults can be words or actions that, again serve to diminish but can be encountered in scenarios whereby a Black person is at the front of a lecture hall or in the corridor of a school and by a look or comment, it would be evident that the students (or parents) thought them either the cleaner or the helper, not the actual lecturer or class teacher (Aderin-Pocock, 2016). Fanon (2008) had earlier described the emotional and psychological impact of this reductivist form of negation where, like *'Othello',* his qualities were not allowed to speak for him:

> *'The evidence was there, unalterable. My Blackness was there, dark and unarguable…The time had long since passed when a Negro priest was an occasion for wonder. We had physicians, professors, statesmen. Yes, but something out of the ordinary still clung to such cases. "We have a Senegalese history teacher. He is quite bright…Our doctor is coloured. He is very gentle."'* (Fanon, 2008, p. 88)

CRT furnishes the researcher with the tools of language and a critical lens to not only see but challenge not only the overt forms of racism, which arguably is an easier task to do, but also throw a light on the hidden and deceptive forms of racism as named within the concept of microaggressions.

The automaticity of these microaggressions ties in with the idea of dysconscious racism referred to in King's (1991) research.

> *'...a form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant White norms and privileges...Uncritical ways of thinking about racial inequity accept certain culturally sanctioned assumptions, myths and beliefs that justify the social and economic advantages White people have as a result of subordinating diverse others. Any serious challenge to the status quo that calls this racial privilege into question inevitably challenges the self-identity of White people who have internalized these ideological justifications'* (King, 1991, p.135)

This quotation from King further illustrates how hidden internalized forms of racism can be, even to the unsuspecting initiator of the racist act. Yet, as has been noted, when discourses surrounding race are attempted within an educational or ITE setting, the responses from the White students can include shock, anger and a denial that they could be subject to racist thoughts and actions (King, 1991; Sue and Constantine, 2007; Picower, 2009; Lander 2011b; Pearce, 2012). Whereas dysconscious racism, as a concept, may be readily used in connection with individuals, institutional racism is a term used to define the structural and endemic aspect of racism within systems and institutions. The notion of a *'[tacit acceptance] of dominant White norms and privileges....[and] an impaired consciousness* (King, 2004, p.73) inherent to dysconscious racism, resonates with the notion of institutional racism.

The concept of institutional racism, coined in the U.S by Charles V. Hamilton and Kwame Ture (né Stokely Carmichael), has been around since the 60's and the rise of the Black power movement; a movement that held as central the forging of unity amongst African-Americans and a call to decolonize the mind. The notion of decolonizing the mind, divesting oneself of the burden of slavery and colonialism, harked back to the ideas and philosophy of Marcus Garvey, Jamaican-born civil rights activist and Pan-Africanist, who is quoted as saying:

> *'We are going to emancipate ourselves from mental slavery, for though others may free the body, none but ourselves can free the mind.'* (Garvey, 1937).

This idea of *'mental slavery'* and *'free*[ing] *the mind'* resonates with the notion of *'double consciousness'* (Du Bois, 2006) and internalized racism later proposed by hooks (1992) where Black people still measure themselves against the deficit model symptomatic of a state where Whiteness is hegemonic and the norm. In an echo of Garvey's pan-Africanism, and later Kwame Ture's (who was influenced by Fanon's work), Fanon wrote:

> *'As long as the Black man is among his own, he will have no occasion, except in minor internal conflicts, to experience his being through others'.* (Fanon, 2008, p.82)

Referring back to the earlier discussion on racism, Bonilla-Silva (1997) posited an alternative to the frameworks that, at the time of his research, were being used to construct a discourse around racism and frameworks that he considered quite flawed. Bonilla-Silva went on further to say that '[r]*ather than viewing racism as a mere idea, belief or attitude, I contend that racism is the ideological apparatus of a racialized social system.*' (Bonilla-Silva, 1997, p.2). This incorporates the notion that society is composed of individuals and if some of these constituent individuals are racist, there will therefore be racist elements in society and the institutions that they then become part of. It is important to recognize this as an aspect of critical race discourse when examining the experiences of minority Black students working in fundamentally White institutions.

Institutional racism

Institutional racism itself is defined as:

> *'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.'* (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.34)

The concept of a society being institutionally racist was first applied in the U.K at the time of The Scarman Report (1981) after the Brixton Disorders. Scarman referred to *'Britain* [as] *an institutionally racist society'* in response to the way the police service had conducted itself during the riots (Scarman, 1981 cited in Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.7). Nearly two decades

later, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson, 1999) brought the concept of institutional racism back to the forefront of public consciousness and speech. The report stated that the insertion of the word *'institutional'* placed the focus where it needed to be i.e. at the level of the institution *'rather than simply with the individuals who represent it'* (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.32). It could be argued that the comment from the Macpherson report offers a less holistic approach to dealing with racism in society in that it appears to shy away from holding individuals responsible for racist actions by stating:

> *'[t]he addition of the word 'institutional' therefore identifies the source of the differential treatment; this lies in some sense within the organisation rather than simply with the individuals who represent it.* (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.32)

This is an important distinction when looking at the experiences of Black students in ITE and on school placement. The student becomes, to some extent, part of the school institution and can be subject to racist acts on the part of individuals who constitute the school, from the school management team to the auxiliary staff.

The Macpherson report notes that without a recognition on the part of *'policy, example and leadership'* (ibid) to acknowledge that there is an issue and that racism exists within their institution, it will continue to flourish undetected and unchallenged; *'It is a corrosive disease'* (ibid). This acknowledgement by the Macpherson report of how institutional racism can become invisible and entrenched is highly significant in terms of what is experienced by Black students whilst on school placement. The report also made reference to the *'unintentional'* and *'unwitting'* racism exhibited by the Metropolitan Police Service during the original investigation into Stephen Lawrence's racist murder and explained it as being due to:

> *'… [a] lack of understanding, ignorance or mistaken beliefs. It can arise from well intentioned but patronising words or actions. It can arise from unfamiliarity with the behaviour or cultural traditions of people or families from minority ethnic communities....Furthermore such attitudes can thrive in a tightly knit community, so that there can be a collective failure to detect and to outlaw this breed of racism…'* (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.17)

This frame of reference would suggest that there needs to be instilled a necessary vigilance to safeguard against racism being enacted and allowed to thrive. However, I would contend that if the enacted behaviour is unintentional, unwitting even dysconscious, then it is difficult for there to be a conscious and reflective proactive response to confronting it. The *'tightly knit community'* that the Macpherson report alludes to, with its overt and covert codes of practice, could be describing the school setting.

The relevance of the Macpherson Report was that it led to the introduction of the RRAA or Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) which stipulated that all schools had to have a written document relating to race equality for their school to adhere to. The RRAA was replaced a decade later by the umbrella-like Single Equality Act (2010) which now encompassed and aimed to deliver protection against racial discrimination, disability discrimination and sex discrimination under the banner of *'protected characteristics'*. In terms of race relations, critics argued that this grouping together would dilute the effectiveness of dealing with issues related to racial discrimination (TUC, 2012). So it is important for this study to consider the implementation and effectiveness of the policies when problems concerning racial equality and social justice are challenged but also to consider the level of performativity surrounding these policies that students may have encountered.

Institutional policies: Acts of Interest Convergence?

When considering the U.K context and the impact of the RRAA in terms of educational policy, interest convergence, a concept found within CRT and devised by Bell (1980, cited in Decuir and Dixson, 2004) acts as a point of reflection. The prevailing discourse surrounding CRT interpreted the introduction of civil rights legislation for African Americans, which up until 1964 were basic rights for Whites only in America, as taking place '*only inasmuch as they converged with the self-interests of Whites.*' (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004, p.28). Within the U.K, following the sustained campaign by Stephen Lawrence's family to see his (White racist) killers brought to justice, the result was the landmark Macpherson Report in 1999. Yet, Gillborn (2008) argues that this Inquiry, which led to the introduction of new legislation, is an example of interest convergence at work. He asserts that the decision to initiate and publicly support the Inquiry coincided with the recently elected New Labour

Government's desire to be seen as crusading and proactive in terms of tackling racism head-on.

Coupled with the concept of 'interest convergence' is the concept of the 'contradiction closing case', both notions devised and terms coined by Prof. Derrick Bell, where hard won reforms are pushed back and 'racism returns to its business-as-usual' (Gillborn, 2008, p.119). Furthermore, the original reform is then used as a moral justification that changes have taken place and society has moved on although its initial power and influence will have been diminished by changes made following on from the initial inception of the policy. Hill Collins (1998) talks along these lines when she refers to the 'new politics of containment' (Hill Collins, 1998, p.14) and how, despite what appears to have been significant political changes in favour of Black women e.g. positive discrimination work policies, they are still 'glued to the bottom of the bag (Hill Collins, 1998, p.13). She raises the point of how Black women are made visible in order to hide 'the exclusionary practices of racial segregation, this new politics produces remarkably consistent Black female disadvantage while claiming to do the opposite' (Hill Collins, 1998, p.14). This conclusion takes us back to CRT and the notion of the 'contradiction closing case' where a change is later seen as superficial as there is a return to 'business-as-usual' (Gillborn, 2008, p.119).

School Policies

Relevant to this study is that schools had to take active steps to tackle racism and racial discrimination. An overt and active demonstration of that would be a school's written policy for racial equality. However, with the introduction of the Equality Act (2010), which superseded the RRAA (2000), schools need now only demonstrate 'due regard' to the needs of 'people with particular protected characteristics' (DfE, 2013, p.22), race being only one of those characteristics.

Research (Deem and Morley, 2006) has been produced which has looked at the different perceptions held by staff when examining their university's equality policies, and the

resulting effects, as well as how diversity might be perceived and understood (Ahmed, 2007). It has to be noted that any move to act on the support provisions laid down by the equality policies might be more readily attributed to whether an act is interpreted as being racist or not. The act or action will be subject to the sociological, psychological and emotional lens of the person who is charged with taking responsibility and acting on the claims made. This is of greater relevance since the Single Equality Act replaced the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) and the government, in 2012, removed the obligation for schools to report racist incidents to their local authorities (Insted, 2012).

It could be argued that the act of requiring schools statutorily to have a written race policy is an act of interest convergence in that the requirement for a written policy suited both political stakeholders as well as a step forward for anti-racists who had long campaigned for equality for Black children in the U.K educational system (Coard, 1971; Troyna, 1992; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Richardson, 2005; Maylor, 2009c). Schools were now being seen to overtly perform as institutions of equity and equal opportunities as well as being champions of diversity. In situations where a student was subjected to overt acts of racism by their classteacher and/or mentor, an HEI in Mirza and Meetoo's study (2012) just de-selected the school. This kind of action is not taken lightly and means that the HEI will not place students at a school that has been found to be in contravention of, as in the case mentioned, race equality policies as well as neglecting their duty of care to the student. This was an action that the HEI I worked for had also carried out in the case of a student being racially abused by the classteacher/mentor she was placed with on school experience.

However, considering the prevailing political climate and increasingly tenuous position of HEIs in being the main conduit for teacher education, de-selecting schools is not an immediate option HEIs would take. Government policy has seen a drive towards School Direct (Burns, 2013; Bell, 2015; DfE, 2015) i.e. teacher trainees being trained in schools and away from the traditional route of teaching being a university-based course. One branch of School Direct is the salaried School Direct route whereby a student is employed by their school whilst training to teach. Increasingly, HEIs are finding their long-nurtured relationships with partnership schools disturbed or terminated as former partners have moved

to take on what was, until recently, the financially attractive role of employing School Direct salaried students.

There is, though, concern amongst colleagues that those students who may be most affected by racism and discrimination within the school setting may be the least willing to speak up. If problems of discrimination do arise in school, the School Direct salaried student has to complain to the school i.e. their employer. The issues around complaining to your employer about discrimination in the work-place is well-documented and not a new phenomenon (Lund, 2006; Gallagher, 2009; Eisenkraft, 2010, Cabrera, 2014, McRae, 2017). The question this situation gives rise to is how would schools deal with issues of racism directed towards their staff and their children? Schools no longer have to record and report to the local authority any incidences of racism (Talwar, 2012) as it is for the school to determine what is meant as racism and what is not. This should work for the more overt demonstrations of racism but what about the more subtle forms? The school system that the students are part of is hegemonically White, both in terms of staffing, epistemological outlook and the inherent privileges that are characteristic of Whiteness. If the school and the students are not schooled in racial literacy (Twine, 2006), practices which '…*provide children of African Caribbean ancestry with resources that assist them in countering everyday racism'* (Twine, 2006), it can then be argued that racist incidences will remain invisible to those who would have the power to do something about any inequality. These racial literacy practices are more involved than having a 'Black History Month' every October but would be an overt recognition of Black people's presence prior to the *'Windrush'* generation*,* contributions and agency over centuries (Fryer, 2010; Olusoga, 2016; Kaufmann, 2017) and an active attempt at decolonizing the Curriculum.

In terms of what is written in the policies, Ahmed (2012) writes about the language of diversity that can be read in equality policies. The presence of this language engages the reader and ensures garnered confidence in the institution's adherence to its written values. As Puwar (2004, p.1) further states:

> *'The language of diversity is today embraced as a holy mantra across different sites. We are told that diversity is good for us. It makes for an enriched multicultural society…In policy terms, diversity has overwhelmingly come to mean the inclusion of different bodies.'*

The question of performativity is invoked when considering the assertion that the words of a policy are performative when the policy 'does' what it says, i.e. *'the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action'* (Austin, 1975, cited in Ahmed, 2012, p. 116). The notion of enacting and performativity was echoed in the Macpherson Report (1999) with its statement that *'it is in the implementation of policies and in the words and actions of* […] *acting together that racism may become apparent*' (Macpherson, 1999, para. 6.24).

In contrast, Ahmed introduces the notion of non-performatives as doing the opposite; *'In the world of the non-performative, to name is not to bring into effect'* (Ahmed, 2012, p.117). By their presence, schools can appear to comply with the idea of equality but this non-performative use of the language of diversity can screen racism (Ahmed, 2007). It could be argued that the document has been produced to cater to an audience and is, in effect, a paper tiger, a document that would appear to be effective and to be adhered to but is fundamentally ineffectual. As evident in their narratives, the students recognized the non-performativity of the inclusion documents:

> Angela (IFS): *'It's there in case you try to play the "race card"'*
>
> Liz (IFS): '[The policy is] *for the government and the university to protect themselves*'

There is a gap between what appears to be the authority inherent in an equality policy and the reality of what it can actually achieve. This notion can be especially applied to the race equality policies to be found in schools that the students attended whilst on school placement in order to determine the actual level of performativity of those documents.

Ahmed (2012) also draws a clear definition as to what *'diversity work'* can be interpreted as being. It can be an attempt, through the use of policies, to transform the institution i.e. school so that there is a convergence between the paper document so that what could be termed rhetoric then becomes reality. The other definition she gives is of the work you or I might do because we do not fit the mould of the institution, are not part of the somatic norm and inhabited spaces within that institution. Puwar (2004) referred to being a '*space invader*' when caught in this scenario. As your presence is unexpected, you have to work harder to allay any concerns or fears that might be engendered by your presence. Recent online

campaigns (2014) by students in the U.S (*I, too, am Harvard*) and the U.K (*I, too, am Oxford*) highlight the diversity work, using Ahmed's second definition, and emotional work that these students have had to expend in terms of diversity work and to demonstrate that they are not '*Other*'.

Hochshild's (1983) work on emotional labour describes the emotional effort or work that is put into making personal views and feelings more palatable to our audience or the onlooker and to signify that we are not alien, or too different to, the rest of the group. In relation to the work space, Fineman (2003) writes about '*emotion scripts*' and how they are used to reinforce the unwritten rules of how we conduct ourselves in work spaces as well as the written ones made concrete in policies. In a school environment, this could be interpreted as following the prescribed dress code or, through observance of the group, knowing which seat can be sat on in the staffroom. Fineman (2003) refers to the concepts of '*surface acting*' where one pretends emotions that are not really felt so one's outward behaviour is changed and '*deep acting*'. The latter involves concealing what one really feels so as to appear to follow the employer's ethos so only the expressed feeling appears to have changed. The employer in this case would be the Headteacher, classteacher and/or mentor. This dissonance between '*deep acting*' and '*surface acting*' can lead to a level of intrapersonal conflict which Lorde (2007), as a Black feminist theorist, refers to when she writes about the '*constant drain of energy which might be better used in redefining ourselves*' (Lorde, 2007, p.115). This could lead to a level of interpersonal conflict or '*emotional labour*' when we are in contradiction with the workplace '*emotion script*'. There are physiological, psychological and ethical implications to be considered (Fineman, 2003) relating to the wellbeing of individuals enmeshed in such situations.

The notion of '*emotional labour*' resonates with Du Bois's notion of '*double consciousness*' (2006) which suggests the work involved in being alert to the gaze of others, how they might perceive you and of '*measuring one's soul by the tape of a world*' (Du Bois, 2006, p.3) that is ultimately critical. The self-imposed self-monitoring that takes place can be exemplified by Fanon's (2008) reference to Sartre where Fanon quotes:

> *'They have allowed themselves to be poisoned by the stereotype that others have of them, and they live in fear that their acts will correspond to this stereotype…We may say that their conduct is perpertually overdetermined from the inside.'* (Fanon, 2008, p.87)

This chimes with the dissonance that can be created between '*surface acting*' and '*deep acting*'. Du Bois goes on to talk about '*two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.*' (Du Bois, 2006, p.3). This strongly expresses, at one end of the spectrum, the pain, hyper-awareness and challenge to well-being that can be experienced when you feel yourself to be a '*space invader*'. A coming-to-terms with this state could be seen to be expressed by Mohanty (2003). She writes that she feels that she is no longer just subject to and living under the Western gaze that would have found her wanting (Fanon, 2008). She refers to what are, in effect, the intersectionalities of her identity and existence as a woman from Mumbai, India who has made her home in Ithaca, New York:

> '*I no longer live simply under the gaze of Western eyes. I also live inside it and negotiate it every day.*' (Mohanty, 2003, p. 530)

The above quotation by Mohanty suggests a reconciliation with what could be warring parts, forged by external and internal pressures, as defined by Du Bois. Mirza (2016) talked about her experiences of honing her accent so as to fit in and not draw that gaze too far in her direction yet this lead to the experience of '*double consciousness*'. The desire to fit in, not to be too different and be accepted as part of a group is a primal one (Freud, 1922) but the colonial gaze serves to create and maintain a level of distance as explored by Lorde and her reference to the master's house and maintenance of hegemony.

Storytelling: Legacy of the griot(te)

> '*...experiential knowledge of people of color is legitimate, appropriate and crucial to understanding, analyzing and teaching about racial subordination...critical race theorists draw explicitly on lived experiences of people of color by including such methods as storytelling, family histories...*' (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p.26)

In CRT, storytelling is a fundamental tool employed by its scholars to challenge the pervading hegemonic discourse. In my study, the narrators are my respondents and through their interviews and unfolding testimonies, they have taken on the role of the griot or griotte, the griot's female equivalent. The roots of storytelling for people from the African diaspora

travel long and deep. The griot, traditionally from West Africa, would be charged with maintaining the oral tradition of his people. He held that history and it was passed along and down through story and music, morphing in forms through colonialism and slavery. Arguably today in the U.K, this is seen in the Notting Hill carnival with its use of calypso and steelpan drums, descendants of the atumpan talking drums of the Ashanti people of Ghana, West Africa where my parents hail from. Casely-Hayford, Topp Fargion and Wallace (2015) assert that:

> '*If language itself goes back millennia in West Africa, then the oral literatures of the region are also of great antiquity. West African oral tradition is made up of a wide range of sophisticated forms that capture and document history values and memory…*' (Casely-Hayford, Topp Fargion and Wallace, 2015, p.15)

The griot, traditionally male, was closely tied to the royal court, acting both as friend and keeper of secrets. They also sat *'outside societal norms'* (ibid) which has resonance with the experiences and counter-narratives of alterity and Blackness found in research (Mirza, 2009a; Mirza, 2009b; Rollock, 2012). These counter-narratives run contra to the majoritarian stories which are accepted as being a true reflection of our everyday lives rather than an aspect of Whiteness which flourishes through the continuation of majoritarian stories (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002; Buras, 2009).

Ladson-Billings (1998) talks about *'naming your reality,* an echo of Freire's '*naming the world in order to transform it'* (Freire, 1993, cited in Buras, 2009, p.429). This gives rise to the notion of the Black experience being put to the forefront through the power of language. This would entail an open acknowledgement of experiences that run counter to the majoritarian stories and counter-narratives that usually form the backdrop of our everyday lives. By putting the Black experience to the forefront, it disturbs and, in some cases, overthrows what has been accepted as the fact of our everyday lives in terms of race and dominance (Essed, 1991; Gillborn, 2008). Race and racial dominance are aspects of the pervasive extant hegemony where *'Whiteness is positioned as normative, **everyone** [original emphasis] is ranked and categorized in relation to these points of opposition'* (Maylor, 2009a, p.58).

There was a call by many of CRT's early pioneers (Crenshaw, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Delgado and Stefancic, 2001; Solórzano et al., 2009) to prize the narrative testimony as a

valid source of data, to challenge the status quo along with the liberalist belief that society was 'colour blind' which, in effect, sustained the belief that it was built on a meritocracy and that all were equal under the law. The use of testimony has enabled CRT, through the use of chronicles, counter-narratives and stories usually told through composite characters whose experiences are based on the epistemological view of a world where Whiteness prevails, to shine a light on another, co-existing, world view that challenges the prevailing one (Gillborn, 2008; Maylor, 2009a) where White supremacy and its majoritarian stories hold sway.

A Black feminist perspective on Teacher Education

> *'When we speak, we are afraid that our words will not be heard or welcomed. But when we are silent, we are still afraid. So it is better to speak'* (Lorde, 1995)

The above quotation from Lorde highlights an aspect that is central to developing a Black feminist methodology, that of putting the voices of Black women that would be silent or silenced to the forefront of the discourse. Using narrative and interviews as a form of personal storytelling from the Black female participants in this study, situating them in the role of the griotte, is how an aspect of CRT methodology has been used to illuminate the experiences of these teacher trainees.

Referring back to McIntosh's work (1988), she described how whilst undertaking her research into and for Women's studies, she became aware of her points of intersectionality as well as of separateness from her Black female colleagues due to the benefits of Whiteness she received. Lorde (2007) would take this and highlight the points of similarity and alliance between Black and White. It is not necessarily the creation of a 'White Ally', *'a concept that is inextricably tied to, not only the notion of "working with, rather for the Other"'* (Giroux 1993, cited in Aveling, 2004, p.1) but more a case of bringing, on an equal footing, Black and White teachers together. As Lorde explains:

> *'...when I define myself, the place in which I am like you and the place in which I am not like you, I'm not excluding you from the joining – I'm broadening the joining.'* (Lorde, 2007, p.11)

Intersectionality, coined and defined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, recognizes the complexity of our identities and therefore the understanding of our experiences. This can be exemplified by looking at the feminist movement in the 60s and a recognition that a Black woman's experiences were not equal to a White woman's (hooks, 1992; Lorde, 2007) due to the political and social view as well as a response to what were seen as racial differences therefore deficiencies, on the part of African Americans. The issue of class was also considered a contributing factor to the schisms created and named through intersectionality theory.

Research has shown how Black teachers have felt themselves subjected to a greater level of surveillance when they are within the educational setting (Maylor *et al.* 2006; Mirza, 2015). An example of this is recounted by Mirza and Meetoo (2012) when they refer to Kalila, a Muslim student teacher, and her experience of what can only be defined as hypersurveillance by her White male tutor, and the resulting humiliation and microaggressions she experienced. So linking the concepts of surveillance as a tool of power for maintaining hegemony, reiterating designated spaces and who can occupy them can be used as a means to reflect on what happens to Black female students in a predominately White, female environment. Moreover, the White woman, although subjugated in society to the male position was still a (unwitting) receiver of privilege (McIntosh, 1988; Lorde, 2007). It was seen in the results of affirmative action introduced in the U.S that, in retrospect, benefited White women more than any other suppressed group (Guy-Sheftall, 1993 cited in Ladson-Billings, 1999).

Hill Collins (1998) writes about the role of the Black female servant and how surveillance was used as a tool to maintain power over her by her White female employer. This could be done because race and class trumped gender (Vincent *et al.,* 2012). Ostensibly, the Black woman could be referred to as *'one of the family'* but not allowed to sit at the table with the family when they had their meals; that would have been unheard of. Hill Collins stipulates that *'White women watched Black women because their race and class privilege allowed them to do so'* (Hill Collins, 1998, p. 21). Lorde (2007) had expanded upon this further when she unpicked American feminist theory and named it 'White American feminist theory', making explicit and visible what she saw as the unspoken mis-recognition of the difference between their experiences and oppressions. This is clear in the following searing quotation:

'...how do you deal with the fact that the women who clean your houses and tend your children while you attend conferences on feminist theory, are for the most part, poor women and women of Color? What is the theory behind racist feminism?' (Lorde, 2007, p.112)

Surveillance is translated into the '*White spaces of the public and private spheres'* (Hill Collins, 1998, p.20) an example being the hypersurveillance that was enacted in the Southern states of America so that Black people would know their place and be kept in their place. The primary school setting in the U.K is predominantly female and White. According to government statistics in 2013, 80 per cent of the school workforce was female with 88 % of the school staff being White British, noting that only 1% were Black Caribbean (DfE, 2014).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has served to explore some of the influences that impact on the experiences of teacher trainees. CRT, as the theoretical framework has been elaborated upon along with themes of racism, institutional racism, Whiteness and the oppressions engendered by White privilege and White supremacy. An exploration of Black feminist discourse was important to engage with so as to further contextualize the experiences of Black female teacher trainees. In addition, an important aspect of the discussion within this chapter has been to impress the significance of their stories told in their own words, moving their stories from the silenced liminal spaces to challenge the majoritarian stories and experiences that had instead been placed at the centre. The epistemological perspectives influenced by Whiteness, are exemplified in the majoritarian stories and experiences that have had a centrality of position and are evident in the majoritarian stories told.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

Introduction

This chapter explores the research methods used in this study and the rationale for their choice. This study used aspects of Critical Race Theory (CRT), discussed in the Literature review, as a theoretical framework to investigate the experiences of Black students training to be primary school teachers at a London university. The use of narrative and storytelling to illustrate the individual's experience is an intrinsic characteristic of both CRT and Narrative Inquiry (NI), the latter being a method to determine via stories and narratives how people make meaning of their lives and experiences. The concept of narrative testimony is realised through the use of a focus group interview followed by individual interviews with the students. This is in keeping with the stance that their vocal testimonies are the starting points to exploring their experiences of being Black, being educated and training in systems that are hegemonically White. The aim of the study is to uncover their encounters of '*othering*', experiences of race and expressions of racism in school with a *de facto* recognition that, for the most part, these encounters are hidden.

Research Questions

It appears that in order to have a fuller view of the Black students' experiences in a system that is predominately White and where the White body is normative, one has to engage with Whiteness and its inherent power and influence. My personal experience as a school teacher, lecturer in ITE and supervisor of students whilst out on placements in school, along with an engagement with the research literature, has led me to identify these research questions:

1. How does racism manifest itself for the students whilst they are on teaching practice?
2. What do they 'see' or perceive as racism enacted in schools?
3. How does what they experience affect their teaching experience? Do the students think that there are consequences for their careers following on from what they have experienced?

4. Do the training institutions i.e. the school and the University, hinder or facilitate the experiences of perceived racism? If so, how is this demonstrated?

These research questions demonstrate that, as a basis for this study, there is already the recognition, via CRT, that racism exists and it does so within the school setting. Jones *et al.* (1997), Basit *et al.* (2006 and 2007) and Wilkins and Lall (2011) document students concerns over explicit forms of racism experienced whilst on school practice whilst Buehler (2012) discusses how prevalent and invasive the notions of race and racism are amongst staff.

It is also important to recognise that school systems are a microcosm of society (Gilroy, 1993, cited in Twine, 2006) in the sense that the constituent members of this system or group are usually from the society or community local to the primary school. As well as this, schools are also held up to a high moral code. This is most evident when, with my students, we discuss the Part 2 of the Teaching Standards (2011) and how they can demonstrate that they '*uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school*' (op.cit., p.14). Part of this moral code prohibits the espousal of views that could undermine the '*treating* [of] *pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect*' (ibid). It does not, however, prohibit a student holding questionable views from becoming a teacher (Marley, 2009). So, a syllogism could be arrived at that if a society can be deemed to be endemically racist, (Bell, 1993; Delgado and Stefancic, 2001) and school systems are made up of people from society, then schools could be seen to be endemically racist, at one extreme of the spectrum, or to just have elements of racism within them (Gillborn, 2005; Adebayo, 2014; Bloom, 2014) at the lesser end.

CRT and Narrative Inquiry: Storytelling and tackling the *'master narrative'* with counter-narratives

Sun and Moon, Power and Whiteness

CRT gives the researcher the methodological tools to devise a way to gather the data and language to interpret what has been experienced through the use of interviews and stories, also termed counter-narratives, as a way of exemplifying a perspective or personal truth. Why are they deemed counter-narratives? This is due to the fact that they challenge the '*master narrative*' (Montecinos, 1995 cited in Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 27) or the '*majoritarian story*' (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 28) which '*[is] not often questioned because people do not see them as stories but as "natural" parts of everyday life*' (ibid). In the students' cases, their stories can be deemed counter-narratives because what is revealed may be the unexposed negative to the positive image that is overtly reflected in many HEIs, that students will be treated fairly regardless of ethnicity. CRT allows for an open discursive space for the counter-narratives that once upon a time would have been silenced or just ignored. The use of interviews and a dialogical process are innate within CRT. A strength of the theoretical framework is that it provides a space for counter-stories of struggle, resistance and resilience to be told; stories that swim against the tide.

Intrinsic to CRT is the recognition that racism and the structures of Whiteness are normative, invisible and perpetually functioning. When referring to work carried out with White pre-service teachers (teacher trainees), Picower (2009) talks about the '*tools of Whiteness*' - emotional, ideological and performative forms of denial of racism - that are wielded as a shield by those who do not wish to, or find it morally and ideologically painful to accept the notion of privileges that they have been party to, for historical reasons and a quirk of evolution. This denial takes the form not only of a '*passive **resistance to** but much more of an active **protection of***' (op. cit., p.197, sic) their position of material and ideological hegemony. The research questions will explore whether this is the position found in the schools where the students were placed and what strategies were put in place by the students to counter this resistance.

A criticism, however, that has been levelled at CRT is what has been labelled as its lack of empirical rigor (Lopez, 2001). This contentious discourse centres on the notion that the personal stories told are subjective, usually told from a place of emotion and subjectivity not of logic and empiricism, therefore not subject to scientific methods and so cannot be considered reliable. Yet when a person talks about an experience that goes to the very heart of them, it would not be unusual for their testimony to be emotional. Emotional narratives do not automatically equal untrustworthy or invalid testimony. This particular discourse

highlights the pervading political, social and legal environment where the stories of alterity and inhabiting liminal spaces for African-Americans led to the theorising of CRT.

Whilst considering the use of CRT as a framework, a thought came to mind about the relationship between the sun and the moon; the moon is always present but we need the reflected light of the sun to make it visible. The moon has to have a celestial ally for it to be seen and noticed. In terms of CRT, this for me, is best exemplified by Bell's (1993) *Rules of Racial Standing* (1 and 2) which highlights a situation Black teacher trainees have found themselves in i.e. an enforced need for an ally, a White ally to make visible and act as translators so that their experience can be heard and, to an extent, understood by those in charge. It is not that the students are literally speaking a different language to that of their fellow students and school colleagues but the appropriation of their story by a 'White ally' gives their stories credence and a wider audience (Rankine, 2015). What I experience as ideological dissonance, in that an ally or qualifier is needed, is best illustrated by the following quotation from hooks (1990, cited in Lawler, 2014, p. 36):

> *'No need to heed your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become my own. Rewriting you I rewrite myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still colonizer, the speaking subject and you are now at the centre of my talk.'*

CRT acts as a lens to frame the narratives of the students and allows the discussion of race and racism to be foregrounded and take its place rather than being the proverbial elephant in the room or spectre at the feast. As a theoretical framework, CRT has natural links with NI. The decision to use the NI and CRT together was based on how NI can fill in the gaps left by CRT. A traditional use of CRT is to create composite characters who then, via the use of counter-narratives, go on to narrate, discuss and unpick imagined scenarios which are steeped in reality (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004; Rollock, 2012; Griffin *et al.* 2014). These characters and the stories that they tell are there to illustrate both the hidden and overt aspects of Whiteness enacted in everyday life. This study takes the concept of counter-narratives but in the form of interviews with the students. Their stories act as counter-narratives in that their testimonies flow against the tide of received wisdom (Delgado and

Stefancic, 2001) at the University i.e. that all is well for all students, regardless of their ethnicity. Rather than use created, composite characters, a decision was made to let the students speak for themselves (albeit with pseudonyms) to avoid another instance of, in effect, silencing their true message. NI allows the researcher to go deeper into their experiences and allows those experiences to be expressed using the students' own words.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000), recognised as the main proponents of NI, explain how narrative inquiries are generally shaped by the experiences of the researcher and how these experiences then impact on how the research is then carried out. This has implications for when considering the influence of what, in effect, becomes insider-research with my holding the dual position of researcher and tutor along with the impact of bias in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

A contradictory criticism, however, of NI is that it can be considered both *'overly personal and interpersonal'* (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 181) which suggests that critics consider the researcher and/or participant too involved with their own story; almost levelling a critique of egocentricity. Conversely, it could be argued that this level of experiential affinity between researcher and participant is a fundamental aspect of the *'co-creation of knowledge'* that Lander (2011a) refers to. Bhopal (2010) makes reference to research that argues that the *'research/interview relationships…should work on a participatory model in which the researcher shares their own biography with the researched'* (Bhopal, 2010, p.188). This notion subverts what has been seen as criticism of NI by emphasising the positive effects of there being a level of inter-connectedness between researcher and participant.

Storytelling and relating narratives are a fundamental aspect of both NI and CRT methodology so as Webster and Mertova (2007) posit:

'In narratives, our voices echo those of others in the sociocultural world, and we evidence cultural membership both through our ways of crafting stories and through the very content of these stories.' (2007, p.2)

The 'sociocultural' world referred to by Webster and Mertova (2007) is affected and shaped by the *'majoritarian story'* we are part of and engage in (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002), a story that *'distorts and silences the experiences of people of color'* (op.cit, p.29). Within these *'majoritarian stor[ies]'* is the *'silence within statements'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p.29) which further underscore the *'master narrative'* and further highlight the *'contours of racism'* (Leonardo, 2002). Narratives or storytelling, in this case, are not to be taken in the same vein as fictional stories that we buy or read for pleasure but rather the *'construction of reality'* (Lander, 2011a). As Webster and Mertova (2007) exemplify NI as being:

'...set in human stories of experience. It provides researchers with a rich framework through which to investigate the ways humans experience the world depicted through their stories' (2007, p.1)

The use of Narrative Inquiry will allow me to explore, through narratives in the form of focus group and individual interviews, the experiences of the participants and look for insights to be gleaned about the institutions or schools they worked in.

Employing narrative to frame ideas can act as valuable tool, especially in terms of using analogies to illustrate the epistemologies of the students within this study by juxtaposition with the themes found in the play, *'Othello'* (Shakespeare, 1993). One of the themes that runs through the play is that of being a Black body in a White space, ostensibly accepted whilst expedient to do so, but fundamentally an outsider in terms of race and class. I do recognise the irony of using a play written by a White Western European male, telling the story of a Black African male to illustrate the real lives of Black women, born, bred and/or living in the U.K. Also, using this as a methodological strand does resonate with hooks (1990) powerful reference to the use of the White voice having legitimating power over and

of the Black voice. However, the recognition of what are, in effect, the structures of Whiteness represented in literary form, is an important facet of the CRT theoretical framework.

The application of these interpretative frameworks and contingent research methods '*would tend to treat knowledge as created and negotiated between human beings*' (Oliver, 2014, p.144). An aspect of this research will be to unpick this '*knowledge*' whetted by the school experience. Is it based on an epistemology generated by Whiteness and, if so, to what extent do the participants have a hand in creating it? Solórzano and Yosso (2002) note the importance of acknowledging the pervasiveness of White privilege in building narratives, or what is taken to be knowledge, about race and that '*people of color often buy into and tell majoritarian stories*' (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 28). The methodological tool of exploring narrative would allow us to unpick that as it allows the participants to tell their own story and, by doing so, create and negotiate an epistemological discourse that runs contra to the dominant one of Whiteness.

The setting and participants

In terms of the concept of Whiteness, my research looks at the experiences of a group of Black female students at a teacher training institution. The setting for the research is a department in a pre-1992 University in south London. It has a long, established history of teacher training. It is part of a much wider body with a worldwide reputation for the Arts and producing award-winning alumni. It is also noted as a high-ranking institution in terms of research output. The ethos of the department is very much steeped in being part of the community and training teachers to work within the local environment and inner London schools. The department is in partnership with over 200 schools across London and the south-East of England. The study was carried out with the participation of students on the Primary Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) 1-year teacher training course.

Ethical clearance for the research had been sought from the IoE where the sensitivity of the research was laid out along with reference to the BERA guidelines (2011). As the

participants for this research were going to be registered students on the PGCE course, verbal approval for the research to take place was asked for from the Head of Department. Due to the timescale that this study has been active for, both the outgoing and incoming Heads of Department were emailed for permission to contact potential participants for the study via the university intranet and this was agreed.

My main starting point for determining which students to contact was based upon using the photographic register that had been collated during their induction. Although I had access to the education database that would be used to later place students, information regarding their ethnicity was not kept on it.

Although using pictures to ascertain ethnicity could be considered a blunt and crude way of determining a sampling frame, this strategy was based on precedence. As in the study carried out by Bhopal and Jackson (2013), a systematic and pragmatic solution had to be adopted:

> '*The main source used to identify the sample was a systematic search of Faculty and Subject areas webpages (staff lists) - using photos supplemented by studying profiles for any indication of ethnicity which individuals themselves identified.*' (op.cit. p. 23)

Even though I had already determined the ethnicity of the participants by way of looking at a photograph, applying that to determine phenotype and an assumption of Black ethnicity of a potential participant, there was a recognition, on my part, of the gap there could be between my classification of the students as Black and their own perception and self-identification as Black (Maylor, 2009b).

An introductory email was sent out to 23 PGCE students. After the email had been sent, one student responded within six minutes. To me, this was an indication of the importance of this study and the timing of this opportunity to create a space in which the students could discuss their experiences. Along with the initial email inviting students to take part, I attached a copy of the consent form that they were asked to read and sign (Appendix 1). The form noted that participants would take part in a focus group interview followed by an individual interview. The header on the consent form was '*Research into the experiences of Black students whilst on school experience*' so by responding to the email and agreeing to take part, the students were verifying that they saw their ethnicity as being Black African, Black Caribbean, Black

British or Black Other, all terms used in the 2011 census (Office for National Statistics, 2011) and, to a certain degree, by members of the African Diaspora. There was the deeper problematic of whether students would want to take part in research that, by definition, was '*othering*' them and marking them as different to the majority of non-Black, students on the course. By responding to the email and having read what this research study intended to do, there was a tacit understanding which was later made explicit during the interview process, that the students self-identified as Black, whatever that term encompassed and meant to them. Within that knowledge was the awareness of how their ethnicity could have a role in how they were perceived and treated.

Two days after the initial invitation was sent out via the intranet, I repeated the invitation, including their personal emails that I had permission to use, and access to, as the then Head of Primary Partnership. The second mailing was conducted to ensure as wide a number of the relevant students received the email. I could not be certain that they would always check their university email but there was a greater certainty that they would check their personal ones relatively frequently. The invitation was only sent out twice. Reasoning being that I did not want to appear over-eager, especially considering the sensitivity of the subject. The (in)visible weight of my insider-researcher role had to be reflected upon when considering the students' willingness to take part in this research. The dichotomy of my position is explored later on.

By the fourth day after the initial email, 14 had responded stating that they would be willing to take part. It was interesting to note that some students did not respond to the invitation so, by definition, did not wish to take part. Another student wanted to discuss the interview schedule and have access to the questions before the individual interviews. I informed her that I was carrying out the research for my doctorate and that the study would be beneficial to students not only whilst the research was being undertaken but for students who would come on the course after she had graduated. The student above was very concerned about the anonymity aspect of participating in the study and, in the end, took no further part.

A link to a Doodle poll, an on-line event scheduler, was sent out to the students to inform them of the proposed date and time of the first set of interviews i.e. the focus group. The way the poll was organised meant that only I could see their choice and that they were willing to

take part. This was in keeping with maintaining the anonymity of the potential participants up to the point of the actual focus group meeting. A room was booked on campus. It was considered practical to use a space on campus, one that they were familiar with and could easily arrive at (Elwood and Martin, 2000). The potential participants were told that the room was just booked under the title of a 'meeting' with no reference being made to the matter of the meeting. A consent form was compiled noting:

- The purpose of the research

- That participation was entirely voluntary.
- That they were free to refuse to answer any question.
- That they were free to withdraw at any time.
- That all participants would be anonymised and their input strictly confidential.
- That the interviews were to be recorded.

This information was verbally re-iterated at the beginning of the focus group interview, as was the need to keep *'in camera',* all contributions, not to repeat outside of the interview process what was discussed in confidentiality. In order to be able to organise their time as the workload on the PGCE is very demanding, the participants were informed that the interview would last 35 – 45 minutes. It was important to set a time scale especially as they were coming to see me during the day instead of studying or after school. All students gave their consent in a written form and a copy of the form was given to them for their own records.

In total, five took part in the focus group interview and seven took part in the individual interviews. Table 1 (Appendix 3) shows that two students took part in both sets of interviews. The students, listed using pseudonyms to maintain anonymity, are not dissimilar to the age range, work experience and educational background of Black female students we usually have on the PGCE course. The table also lists their prior experience before coming to the University. This is to show that they were experienced in working with others in pressured environments. I considered it important to note the age range of the sample to see whether age had been a potential factor in what the students had experienced and to help further elucidate for the reader my analysis of the data.

Impact of Pilot study

A pilot study that I had carried out earlier on in the formulation of the thesis had provided me with the methodological blueprint for this thesis. This was along with a prior view, a cultural knowledge referred to by Tillman (2002, cited in Milner, 2007) and an expectation of what the students taking part in this study may have experienced in school; that of systemic, and in most cases, dysconscious[5] institutional racism that was inherent in an environment where Whiteness prevailed and was normative. In response to the emails that were sent out to twenty self-identified Black students asking for pilot study participants, four responded to take part in the individual interviews. Three of that group took part in the focus group whom, along with an additional three students, meant six in total taking part in the pilot focus group interview. The data and ensuing themes that were gathered from these students is drawn upon in this thesis. These themes were an echo of those found in the literature i.e. othering, hypersurveillance and the stigma attached to mentioning race. It was fully understood by myself as the researcher that the knowledge acquired from the pilot study would have had an effect on how I analysed the data. Due to this, I tried to maintain as objective a stance as possible in the analysis stage.

Methods for data gathering

For this thesis, based on the previous trials with the pilot study, it was decided that both focus and individual interviews would be the means used to gather data. There was the option to employ the use of a questionnaire or a structured interview but those modes would not have allowed me the breadth or free-flow to obtain the in-depth information that would be needed for this study. As an aspect of qualitative research, interviews are also in keeping with the methodological and epistemological frameworks of CRT. In addition to this, Burgess (1988) referred to interviews as conversations with a purpose. This was pertinent because the interview style that was adopted throughout was very conversational and was done so due to my preferred way of communicating with people. This informed the decision to create a semi-structured interview schedule. As with the group interviews, this format would permit both the interviewer and the interviewee the opportunity to be fluid in their exploration of differing areas whilst allowing for a similarity in the questions that were asked of all the participants.

Not by design but by outcome, all the students who took part in the thesis study were women. This gave rise to the notion of using a feminist research methodology. Importantly, Bhopal (2010) argues that there is no general consensus in terms of feminist research methodology but the use of interviews, along with the capturing of people's voices, chimes with Campbell and Wasco (2000, cited in Bhopal, 2010, p. 189) that the purpose of (feminist) research is *'to capture women's lived experiences in a respectful manner that legitimates women's voices as a source of knowledge'* (op.cit.) and mapping the lived experience is a fundamental part of CRT and NI. CRT and NI give credence to the importance of testimony and the narrative of the individual. It was therefore central to the gathering of data that interviews were held with the participants.

All interviews were knowingly recorded at a time suitable to both parties. Throughout the interview process, I kept notes in order to log details such as name, time and length of interview. I also kept additional notes to supplement what I had gathered from the recordings. These notes were later used to inform the analysis of the data.

Focus groups Interviews

First to be held was the focus group interview. Bloor *et al.* (2001) argue that:

> *'The group is a socially legitimated occasion for participants to engage in "retrospective introspection" to attempt collectively to tease out previously taken for granted assumptions'* (Bloor *et al.*, 2001, p.5).

As a tool to gather data via the narratives produced, focus group interviews help illuminate what Bloor *et al.* refer to as *'normative understandings'* (2001, p.4). This echoes the notion of the *'master narrative'* (Montecinos, 1995, cited in Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 27) or *'majoritarian stories'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002); understandings that enable groups to verify their world, epistemologies or co-created knowledge. In order to better grasp the lived experiences of those who may inhabit liminal spaces or who *'remain silenced'* (Hutchinson *et al.*, cited in Bhopal, 2010), Bhopal (2010) talks about the use of qualitative methods, such as interviewing, that are *'flexible* [and] *fluid'* (op.cit. p.189). This very much suited a purpose

of the interviews which was to give the students and myself the opportunity to explore ideas to a greater or lesser degree.

The focus group was a process by which I hoped to gather a significant amount of data from my participants taking on board time constraints for all involved. A potential issue with holding focus group conversations is the question of successfully managing the dynamics of the group so that as many participants as possible would have the opportunity to voice their views (Robson, 2002; Cohen *et al.* 2011). The actions of one participant did lead her to dominate the focus group interview from the beginning. She was unable to attend an individual interview but desperately wanted to express her feelings about the school placement that she had been on. I had to intervene quite firmly so as to ensure that others had the opportunity to speak as none of the other participants wished to interrupt her, recognising her strength of feeling and perhaps a resonance with some of what she was relaying.

There is also the likelihood of '*group think*' (Fontana and Frey 1994, p. 365; Orwell, 2013) that can affect the responses that the other participants could have made (Merton et al. 1956 cited in Fontana and Frey, 1994; Robson, 2002; Cohen *et al.,* 2011). This is borne out of a need to demonstrate consensus with the rest of the group and your justified inclusion (Janis, 1972). What arises from this is a suspicion of the reliability of the knowledge and epistemology produced by the group, where *'group think'* can influence and meld *'these group meanings, processes and norms'* (Bloor *et al.,* 2001, p.4) which an interviewer might presume were already formed prior to the focus group meeting.

In order to draw out this knowledge, a semi-structured model of seven questions was used for the schedule (Appendix 4). The questions were informed by the literature I had encountered but also by the notion of determining the best way of allowing the participants to engage with the research questions. Due to it being an on-going iterative process, questions were adapted for the individual interviews. The semi-structured model also allowed me as the interviewer and the participants to pursue particular threads that arose.

Questions one and two looked at the level of support that the students had received from the University and from the school. These were borne out by the research (Jones, *et al.* 1997; Basit *et al.* 2006; Basit *et al.* 2007; Wilkins and Lall, 2011) that referred to a lack of support from school and/or University tutors whilst on school placement as being one of the reasons Black students experienced a significant lack of progress. Questions three and four revolved around the presence of Black teachers in school, the comfort and self-identification with the term 'Black' and how they felt being seen as Black affected their school experience. Maylor (2009b) argues that Black is a *'contested term'* (op.cit. p.369) and goes on to discuss the varying attempts to define what the term means. She notes that:

> *'Hall encourages us to question the 'negative consequences of ... positionality' (2000, p. 152). ...positioning prospective respondents as 'Black',* [was] *also asking them to conform to an identity which was viewed by some as false and non- specific and/or 'uncomfortable'.'* (Maylor, 2009b, p.374)

Creating the space for the students to, as a group, engage in a reflective discourse around the notion of Black positionality, would also result in illuminating the *'group meanings, processes and norm'* referred to by Bloor *et al.* (2001, p.4) which may have informed that positionality.

The final three questions (5, 6 and 7) centred on the notion of racism being prevalent in everyday situations and settings, including schools that promote the notion of colour blindness and meritocracy (Applebaum, 2005; Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Lopez (2001) writes about how CRT argues against the concept of society as a neutral space and counters the argument that we all inhabit *'a color blind society'* (Lopez, 2001, p.30) but rather champions a lens *'in favor of a critical perspective that recognizes the normality-and thus invisibility-of racism in our daily lives.'* (ibid). This view replicates that of Bell (1993) that once one recognises the daily existence of racism, you have both the tools to attempt a remedy but also the *'gift of prophesy'* (Bell, 1993). This is reminiscent of Cassandra of Ancient Greek mythology, cursed with being able to see the truth of the matter but have her warnings go unheeded.

Individual interviews

'By indirections, find directions out' (Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Act II; Scene 1*)

Following on from the focus group, individual interviews took place. Students had already agreed or not to participate in the individual interviews via the consent form originally emailed to them. Their purpose was to triangulate and further validate the issues and ideas raised during the focus group interview. The interview schedule (Appendix 2) was designed, as Polonius outlined to Reynaldo in the above quotation from *'Hamlet'*, to find out answers in a subtle yet effective manner. Question 1 dealt with pre-conceived ideas students may have held about the school and the areas that they were being sent to teach in. It was important to know what this knowledge was based on and how that then affected the way they perceived the impending school experience. Along with this was whether the students thought the University tutors had an understanding of the potentialities for them being placed in a school in London borough that was the site of the murder of Black student Stephen Lawrence or parts of East London that had seen an upsurge in Far Right political representation within the recent past. Questions 3, 4 and 5 further interrogated the structures of Whiteness in their different forms and how they were encountered and interpreted by the students. Gender was explored with question 2. It was important to see whether they felt that being a woman, working in a predominately female environment, had any impact upon their experience. Or whether that ethnic difference overshadowed gender. The issue concerning social class positioning along with social status was also indirectly discussed. When the majority of the auxiliary staff were of an ethnic minority and had been in the school setting for longer than the student, what perceived effect did that have on where they physically situated themselves (in the staffroom) and ideologically positioned themselves in relation to the auxiliary staff, the majority of whom would have been from an ethnic minority? Questions 6 and 7 looked at the support networks that the students drew upon, their personal resilience and resistance against the structures of Whiteness. The final question was intended to probe not only the students' engagement with the University and school equality policies but also those institutions level of performativity in terms of enacting their policies.

As Breakwell (1995) notes *'people engage in more self-disclosure to an interviewer who they think is similar to themselves'* (op.cit., p. 239). Yet, this insight has profound implications in terms of what data is collected, how it is collected and then interpreted (Egharevha, 2001, cited in Bhopal, 2010). Griffiths (1998) writes about the potential for *'exploitation and betrayal'* (Griffiths, 1998 p.41) with the influence and knowledge being an insider-researcher can bring.

Ethical considerations: 'Positionality', bias and Insider-Outsider

The British Educational Research Association guidelines (BERA, 2011) informed the ethical stance taken whilst this study was being carried out. It was recognised from the outset of this research that for the students who agreed to take part questions could be raised and discussions initiated which could prove sensitive if not painful to the participant. However, I was also aware that I did not want to stymie thoughts and discussion by not asking a question that I, as the researcher, may have felt I would have had difficulty answering. This tension is noted in the guidelines but also resonates with the tension of being both an insider; a Black woman researching on race, but at the same time an outsider as a tutor in a position of power, both interrogator and accomplice. The ethics underpinning both the pilot study and this final thesis had to be navigated with diligence and care along with the intricacies of insider research. Guidelines referring to voluntary informed consent, guarding against causing emotional harm, openness throughout the research process, maintaining the right to withdraw and assuring privacy for the participants were adhered to with great diligence whilst undertaking this study. Students were informed and reminded of these points both via the consent form and verbally from me.

> *'Researchers' multiple and varied positions, roles, and identities are intricately and inextricably embedded in the process and outcomes of education research'* (Milner IV, 2007, p.389).

The intricacy of my position as both tutor and researcher is clearly delineated by the above quotation. I am at lecturer at the University and had been a tutor during taught sessions for some of the participants as well as a supervising tutor whilst they were on school placement. Fontana and Frey (1994) refer to a study carried out by Fine in 1983 – 1984 when they write:

'*What seems to be a conversation is really a one-way pseudo-conversation, raising the ethical dilemma of studying people for opportunistic reasons*' (Fontana and Frey 1994, p.369)

This above quotation harks back to the concerns raised by Phoenix (1994) and Griffiths (1998) around the possibility of a situation being exploited due to the level of what has been understood as insider influence. It has to be noted that, to a degree, my being a tutor meant that I had access to participants and knowledge about them that an outsider researcher would not immediately have. In addition to this, undertaking a study that was looking at the experiences of Black teacher trainees, the resonance of being of the same gender and ostensibly same ethnicity as the students was important and helped to silently emphasise a sense of collegiality. The invisible influence that might be brought to bear by my insider-researcher position, gender and being a Black woman (Phoenix, 1994, cited in Maynard and Purvis, 1994; Bhopal, 2010; Ochieng, 2010), and also that of being their tutor was considered carefully. Phoenix (1994), Osler (1997) and Maylor (2009) noted that having a:

'*communality of racial or ethnic identities and experiences does not always result in potential Black respondents being any more willing to engage with you or the research process, or see you as having any greater understanding and therefore being worthy of sharing their experiences with.*' (Maylor, 2009, p.60)

So, in effect, the perceived advantage of ethnic matching (Ashworth, 1986; Kauffman, 1994; Papadopoulous and Lee, 2002) can be mitigated. Moreover, the shade between insider-outsider positionality had to be navigated with a strong element of objectivity and reflexivity because I was inclined to an element of subjectivity, having shared similar experiences to those expressed by the students.

Bias, neutrality and positioning are major issues for ethical consideration and my position as a researcher had to be taken into consideration and to an extent deconstructed. This can be exemplified by Tillman (2002, cited in Milner, 2007) who states that a researcher involved in the exploration of people of colour's experiences has to consider whether they have the '*cultural knowledge to accurately interpret and validate the experiences* [of others]' (2007, p.388). I very much identified with the situation that the students found themselves in and reflecting on the multi-dimensionality of my role and the inherent power constituted in the position of tutor-researcher, I recognised that it informed the interpretation of what I

perceived as overt, physical codes on display from the participants as well as the overt and covert ones spoken during the interviews. Blair (1998, cited in Gillborn and Ladson-Billings, 2004) argues that neutrality is a myth as far as the researcher is concerned and that they bring a multiplicity of preconceived ideas with them that are difficult to divest oneself of. Osler (1997) further adds to this argument by suggesting that interviewer bias need not necessarily be considered an issue as long as the interviewer is aware that their own prejudgements may have an influence and that the research process occurs *'through the medium of the person [researcher]'* (Stanley and Wise, 1993, cited in Bhopal, 2010). As Osler goes on to say:

> *'In interviewing Black and ethnic minority people, I cannot disregard shared experiences or meanings or adopt a neutral position…personal values are likely to influence research whether or not they are acknowledged'* (1997, p.69)

The above quotation reflected the situation I believed myself to be in. I was very much aware of my almost unconscious objective to blend in with the participants, to almost camouflage myself, as it were, to become part of their pack. Stanley and Wise (1993) refer to the researcher as being *in* the process as well as the medium through which the research is reviewed and refracted, whilst Smith and Osborn (2007) write about the urge to get into the world of the participant to fully understand their standpoint. However, this level of closeness could:

> *'…also create problems, as the researcher may become a spokesperson for the group studied, losing his or her distance and objectivity, or may "go native" and become a member of the group and forgo the academic role.'* (Fontana and Frey, 1994, p.367)

There is an element of power and control in the relationship between me, the tutor, and the students who participated in the study. Translating this to an interviewer-interviewee relationship, it would have been difficult to diminish the perception of being the one in control that is usually an inherent aspect of the interviewer's role. Nevertheless, in order to mitigate what could be considered exploitation of my position, at all times ethical considerations were made regarding their continuing participation due to sensitivity of the research.

Furthermore, it was important for me to consolidate the level of trust that had already implicitly been offered by those who were willing to take part. Believing that I had established a connection with the participants already via my ethnicity and gender, encouraged me to delve deeper and further explore their experiences. In support of this, Bhopal (2010) noted how one of her interviewees (Anita) disclosed how she felt that she could talk more openly to Bhopal as the interviewer because Anita felt that she had experienced the same things and had much in common, ethnicity and gender being two aspects. Ethnic matching (Ashworth, 1986; Kauffman, 1994; Papadopoulous and Lee, 2002) has been advocated as a means of bringing sensitivity and understanding to the research process. This is based on the assumption that an insider will understand the hidden codes behind what is being said (Bhopal, 2010). However, Foddy (1994) questioned whether the interviewee or respondent is reliably able to articulate what they know and remember under interview conditions. If what is remembered is ambiguous then the interpretation of the hidden codes will be based on fragile assumptions.

Participants were assigned pseudonyms in order to preserve anonymity. Seidman (2006) refers to finding the correct pseudonym to do justice to the interviewee and their story as a process that is more intricate and delicate than might have initially been thought. The names chosen were ones that would have some resonance with the participant's own name. The reason for this would be drawn out further in the data analysis chapter. Their interviews were kept on a disc that only I had access to and the disc was kept at my home. Any work that had to be saved on a computer was done so on my personal laptop which only I had access to with a pass code. Participants will have the opportunity to receive a summarised version of the completed research via a re-introductory email from me. This information can be sent to them via their personal email accounts. By the time this thesis is complete, all participants will have graduated and have been in their posts for a minimum of 2 years.

A small but significant reference needs to be made to the question of validity and the research. Loh (2013) makes reference to Chase (2013, cited in Denzin and Lincoln eds., 2013), who used NI as a methodological framework. For Loh (2013), the fact that Chase only *'merely spent two paragraphs'* (Loh, 2013, p.2) out of a total of 73, is revealing in how little emphasis is placed on empirical and positivist outcomes which, as noted previously has been considered a criticism of both CRT and NI.

Data Analysis

Full transcriptions of the interviews were made using a transcription service for timesaving purposes (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). When they were returned, the transcripts were then checked by me to ensure accuracy. Copies of the transcripts were emailed to the students and they were asked to read the transcripts and let me know if they were happy to have me use anonymised direct quotations from their work. Webster and Mertova (2007) note that the opportunity to validate is an important feature when carrying out research that involves narrative inquiry. They were advised to highlight any changes that they wanted to make or have transcripted sections removed. One participant redacted a third of her transcript. The decision was made to use none of its content within this thesis based on the advice I had been given by former supervisors when considering the ethical implications of including testimonies against the will of the interviewee. However, very importantly, the redaction of the interview in itself spoke volumes. A question arose around power and the silencing of voices, Black female voices. The question is further interrogated in Chapter 4.

The first stage of the data analysis began once I had received an email confirmation from the participants regarding their transcripts. As with Lander (2011), words and themes were identified based on Picower's work (2009) on the tools of Whiteness. Alongside this, Solórzano's work (2009) on microaggressions was also used to identify themes. Initial ones that emerged, along with illustrative quotations were written onto cards, colour-coded and then grouped together. These themes were:

- Stereotyping
- Colour blindness
- Othering and isolation
- Microaggressions
- Lowered expectations

In order to maintain the integrity of focus, it was essential to connect the themes with the theoretical framework used to frame the study. Using CRT as a lens to view the data meant that issues to do with race, direct or oblique, were drawn out. The second stage of data analysis was to review the themes and determine whether threads could be further

rationalised and grouped together under an umbrella theme already noted as coming from the literature.

Value of the study

Blair (1998) writes that *'research does not necessarily alter previous theories, but can and often does reinforce what previous studies have found'* (op.cit., p.245). This study will cover thematic areas already researched, in various forms, by other researchers previously named. However, it aims to focus on the experiences of students whilst on teaching practice, away from the relative 'haven' of the university setting. This marks it as different to the prevailing research on Black students in ITE as that body of research has tended to focus on their experiences whilst on the course at the university.

Another key aspect of this study lies in giving Black students a forum to discuss and reflect on what they have experienced, relating to race, whilst on school placement. There is the belief of there being a 'level playing field' when placing Black students in schools and that a 'colour-blind' approach is a necessary one to implement. This stance could, however, be considered naïve, insensitive or even lacking in pragmatism.

The notion is not to engage in or produce a study that is condemnatory of the University but to recognise, and so take account of, the perceptions and lived experiences of Black students whilst training to be teachers in inner London schools; places similar to where they will most likely apply to work. The success of these school placements may be subject to many variables e.g. personal relations with the class teacher, positive and negative prejudgements of what Black students are able to understand and achieve as well as class and gender issues.

I have a role within my institution that involves the placing of students in schools for their teaching practice. An intended outcome of this research is that additional concrete insight can be actively used to help determine the best or, being realistic, least problematic placements for Black students. It is expected that, on both an academic and professional level, that this research will produce data that will inform the University's policy on the placing of Black students in particular areas in London where the somatic norm is White and the community might not be open to having a Black student even if the school ostensibly is.

It will also help to inform the training that tutors have to undergo in order to support students whilst on school experience. Being aware of the synthesised research findings will hopefully enable lecturers to become or remain sensitive and open to the issues some students may face or bring out into the open.

Conclusion

This chapter referred to the blueprint laid down by the pilot study and how it informed the methods applied in this thesis. It also detailed the strategies that will be used to help foreground the narratives of these students. NI, a methodology that allows the personal voice to hold centre stage, will be used in tandem to unpick their stories in the following chapter along with CRT, which recognises the centrality of race, experiences of racism whilst challenging the structures and the normativity of Whiteness.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis: Managing a Black identity in White spaces or Strategies of 'becoming' White

Introduction

All the participants who took part in this piece of research were women of African (Af) or African-Caribbean (AC) ethnicity and between the ages of 20 and 49. All, bar one (Sarah, AC, 20 - 29), had previous experience of teaching and working with children. The majority of their combined experience was in the U.K but two had worked abroad, in Nigeria (Tolu, Af, 30 - 39) and Portugal (Tunde, Af, 30 - 39). Alongside this, data from the pilot study was also extracted and included in this study. John, a young Black male in his 20s, was part of the pilot study and the only male to take part. It had proven difficult to get male students to participate in this study, so I considered it very interesting and of significance to include his testimony as part of the data analysis process.

My experience as a former school teacher and now lecturer in student teacher education, had led to me wanting to investigate and interrogate the experiences of Black Post-graduate student teacher trainees at this particular London University. So the research questions (RQ) which were posed in Chapter 3 (and listed below) were borne out of the experience noted above and a recognition that racism exists in society and therefore schools, seeing as they are part of their local community and staffed by members of society.

1. How does racism manifest itself for the students whilst they are on teaching practice?
2. What do they 'see' or perceive as racism enacted in schools?
3. How does what they experience affect their teaching experience? Do the students think that there are consequences for their careers following on from what they have experienced?
4. Do the training institutions i.e. the school and the University, hinder or facilitate the experiences of perceived racism? If so, how is this demonstrated?

The RQs are directed towards interrogating the experiences of Black teacher trainees in the particular institution that I work for. However, the themes that arose during the analysis stage chimed with and echoed previous research that had highlighted the same areas of lowered expectations, covert racism and stereotyping (Swann, 1985; Showunmi and Constantine-Simms, 1995; Bhavani, Mirza, and Meetoo, 2005; Basit et al. 2006; Wright, 2013). It is important to acknowledge that some of the research cited in this thesis dates back to the mid-1980s when attempts were being made to acknowledge and rectify the deep-seeded roots of racism and inequality prevalent in British society. Scroll forward 30 years to a *'Groundhog Day[6]'* scenario where the same themes arise in research when looking at the experiences of Black students within the context of teacher training and for Black people as members of British society post-Brexit (EHRC, 2016). The overarching themes that were drawn from the data and are going to be explored in this thesis concern:

- Acting White in order to succeed *or* Managing a Black body in a White space
- Microaggressions and dealing with the unseen
- Identity and misrecognition
- The gravity and pervasiveness of Whiteness

Through the interrogation of the student testimonies, it becomes clear that the schools they are placed in, for completion of their teacher training qualification, are spaces where Whiteness prevails and to be White is the norm. The emotional re-shaping they have to undergo in order to rationalise their experiences and succeed in their placements lends itself to the emotional labour they have to perform. Sub-themes around the notion of double-consciousness and the ensuing emotional work will also be interrogated in the following chapter.

Who am I? Where do I fit in?

'I'm a Black man in a White world (I don't mind who I am),
I'm a Black man in a White world (I don't mind who you are) (Michael Kiwanuka, 2016)

'Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think.' (Hall, 1993, p.222)

In this chapter I will examine the surrounding discourse and ensuing questions that arose from the participants around managing themselves in White spaces, the implications this then had for a Black identity within a pre-dominantly White environment and the resultant effects upon how they saw themselves within the school setting. The schools that the students were based in had long-standing partnership links with the University having shared in the training of students over many years. The majority of the schools were in South London, had children from predominately BME backgrounds and where the overwhelming majority of the teaching staff were from White ethnic backgrounds.

The question of 'Who am I?' seemed to underpin the emerging discourse about the students' time in schools. When asked, the students said that initially, they believed that their first identity was as students of the university, although there was a level of ambivalence as demonstrated by Abigail[7]:

> *VP[8]: ...did you see yourself as a* [University name] *student or did you see yourself walking as student through the door as a Black* [University name] *student?*
>
> *Abigail: That's an interesting question actually. I don't know. I don't know if I'd put it as a Black* [University name] *student, I'd just put it as a Black student who's from* [University name]. *So I guess that's technically the same thing but it's not. So I don't know.*
>
> *VP: Explain to me what you mean, technically the same but it's not.*
>
> *Abigail: As in, I don't know, I see them - it's weird, Black* [University name] *students to me says like the two are connected. I don't know, they're just different for me. I think it's because I always think about my race and where I go all the time. So I wouldn't necessarily just solely tie that to the fact that I'm from* [University name]. *So I'm a Black student who is from* [University name].*'*

Analysis of the data uncovers how the question of 'self' was troubled by what they went on to experience due to the gravity of Whiteness and the covert acts of racism they had to withstand. Their experiences as teacher trainees in schools meant that they had to either recognise and accept or reject the identity that others attempted to impose on them and/or draw on their own well-grounded sense of self which existed before and outside of their placement in school. Du Bois (2006) eloquently puts what he describes as this *'twoness'* when he writes about how the Black man feels living in America.

'One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.' (Du Bois, 2006, p.9)

Yet, this idea can be applied to the mainly female participants of this study who were engaged in reconciling who they were, who they were considered to be and what they had to do in order to succeed. The students expressed views about their identity and their lived experiences has relevance for how they positioned themselves amongst the staff and, were in turn, positioned and accepted or otherwise within that White space. The subtle yet profound difference is that in positioning *themselves*, the student becomes the subject and has some control over others' views and perceptions of them. When they are positioned, they then become the object and so subject to other people's constructions of their identity. In his essay on *Cultural Identity and Diaspora,* Stuart Hall (1993) delves into the racialization of ethnic identity, this idea of who we essentially are and a sense of self as a process of becoming. For Hall, our identity is ongoing and in formation, subject to *'ruptures and discontinuities'* (op.cit. p. 225). For the students who participated, they 'knew' who they were in terms of racial and gender identity and presented a facet of that self during our interviews. However, the challenge to maintain the 'truth' of who they thought themselves to be, as Black students, in the context of the classroom and how that vision of self was tempered or strained in spaces of Whiteness became evident in some of the testimonies. Hall (1993) relates his argument on cultural identity and racialisation of the *'Other'* back to the corrosive legacy of colonialism and the interplay of history and power. The fluidity inherent in cultural identity is emphasised and he goes on to say *'identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past'* (Hall, 1993, p.225). This quotation by Hall can be interpreted as reflecting on how we come to be 'known' and named as the *'Other'* under conditions of colonial subjugation; how this process then has a profound effect on how we are seen and, in turn, come to see ourselves.

The construction of one's identity relates to a particular motif that is woven into this thesis that being the story of *'Othello'*. At the time of the play being written in 1603, there was already a burgeoning Black presence in London (Wood, 2012) and, along with it, a prevailing air of colour prejudice and xenophobia towards the increasing Black presence. In papers dating from 1601, Elizabeth I was found lamenting:

'...the great number of Negars and Blackamoors which are crept into the realm since the troubles between her Highness and the King of Spain and are fostered here to the annoyance of her own people' (Orkin, 1987, p. 166).

Finding one's place in society, as a Black person, and holding onto it was as relevant at the time this play was written as it is today (EHRC, 2016, Oppenheim, 2016). Kiwanuka's (2016) song lyrics go some way to express the situation Othello found himself in. On one level, the play is about filial duty, jealousy, love, the gap between appearance and reality but race is *made* to be a contentious point by those who would wish to see the end of Othello. Othello was aware of his Blackness, his otherness (it is noted in the original full title *'Othello, The Moor of Venice'*) and differing social station in comparison to the social stratum he had access to through his marriage to the fair Desdemona. How he is viewed and his perception of self is seen as being dependent on place as well as physical and emotional positioning. This is a concept that can be translated to that of the PGCE students in that by entering and occupying a particular space i.e. the school, a particular perception of self is engendered along with an external perception of that body by members of staff and parents and that the separate views do not necessarily correlate.

One lens through which the student-participants gaze back at themselves is one that CRT recognizes as being fashioned and then polished by the tools of Whiteness. Du Bois frames this as *'double consciousness',* the act of looking at oneself through the eyes of (usually) White others and finding oneself wanting. When left unchallenged, negative thought processes engender a form of internalised colonialism (hooks, 1992; Fanon, 2008) and a sense that what is Black is inferior, be it the use of home language or wearing universal clothing in a style that is attributed as Black and *'street'.* Fanon (2008) wrote about the psychological impact of racism, its denigration of Blackness and how Black people could end up imitating their former colonizers in their demeanour, outlook and negative views of Blackness due to the overt and subliminal message that to do so would be a way to survive or succeed in the world i.e. be allowed to fit in. Our very use of everyday language feeds this subconscious inculcation of Black as being inferior and negative e.g.:

- Black operations (ops) – secret, covert military operations;
- Black ball – to ostracise someone socially;

- Black sheep – usually a disgraced member of the family;
- Black (evil) magic as opposed to White (good) magic;
- Black day – when something sad or unexpected happens;
- Black as one is painted – to be as bad as people say you are and the list could continue.

What became evident through the data analysis, and themes arising, was the students' awareness of this need to fit in and not to be the 'tall poppy'. Trying to 'fit in', not stand out, was a survival strategy employed by the all the students and was at the cost of expended emotional energy. What was also evident was the level of unease experienced when they felt themselves transgressors of whatever they understood to be the fictive kinship (Fordham and Ogbu, 1986; Fordham, 1988), a seemingly voluntary tie between themselves and other Black members of staff. In her research, Fordham (1988) noted how students felt that '*success in society contradict*[ed] *an identification and solidarity with Black culture'* (Fordham, 1988, p. 54). This could lead to accusations of the students 'acting White' or selling out (Bergin and Cooks, 2002) due to them adopting a strategy of *'racelessness'* (ibid), divesting themselves of the tropes of their cultural and racial group identity e.g. vernacular spoken, style of speech along or attendance at different schools to their 'group' (Bergin and Cooks, 2002). Betty[9], a student-participant in the IFS submission (Poku, 2012) put this succinctly when she recalled the *'But you're one of us!'* shocked response of one the Black boys in her class when she had had him removed. She rationalised it as *'a lot of people expect privilege* (sic)*'* from her because she was a Black teacher, albeit a student one. The boy, who was shocked at being sent out, and some of the parents Betty came across, seemingly relied on a fictive kinship borne out of ethnicity and phenotype that Betty did not subscribe to. This is best exemplified by the retort she had received from others that she had *'conformed to the White way of thinking'* (Betty); an accusation that she had sold out, was in effect working with a colonized mind and mentality, an additional affect being that she be blind to fictive kinship. It became important during this thesis to interrogate what the students understood by cultural identity and whether that identity had affected their times in school. This was a question that could be answered, like fitting together pieces from jigsaw puzzle, from different viewpoints by RQs 1, 2 and 3.

A tool of Whiteness is to make the visible invisible. It becomes part of the unwritten and subliminal that Whiteness is normative so, by definition, anything that is not White is non-normative. So a Black body in a White space would stand out, be considered non-normative, not normal. The research questions (RQ) have been posed to try and drill down into what that experience is like for the teacher trainees.

The privileges that are inherent with being part of a White ethnic group are normalized and portrayed as being part of the natural scheme of things (McIntosh, 1988; Hytten and Adkins, 2001; Decuir and Dixson, 2004) and not necessarily to be challenged (Solórzano and Yosso, 2001). By entering these spaces that are predominantly White in terms of the teaching staff structure ('*I went to a school…and the leaders were White, the head teachers were White, deputies White, SENCOs White*' – Ruth[10]), if not the auxiliary staff, the students felt themselves to be '*space invaders*' (Puwar, 2004); entering into an environment where they were made to feel that they had a questionable right to be even if no overt comment was made to suggest that.

Fitting in and 'acting White'

What becomes clear through Sarah's narrative is her awareness of the importance of how she is identified/positioned and her acknowledgment of the need to adapt in order to be successful. Sarah highlights the protective silence she adopts regarding her use of her home language, a fundamental part of her culture, so as not to highlight her difference to the group that she is ostensibly part of i.e. the English-speaking, middle-class, majority White group. She also talked about the need to change and adapt in order to be successful, an aspect attributed to 'acting White' in order to succeed and to challenge stereotypes and low expectations:

> '*African Caribbeans, you have to, from my point of view, we are always being told by society and by the media that no….we're not good enough. And, you know, you're only musicians, singers, actors, basketball players, football players, that's it. So we are always breaking stereotypes. So that means we do have to always be adaptable. The people that do well from African Caribbean backgrounds are the people that can mould and adapt and move through different social groupings.*' (Sarah)

Sarah talked about the tension experienced in terms of using her home language at school with the children or with other members of staff who shared the same language and how she adapted to the situation:

> *'Yes, so for example the way I talk at home is not the way I talk here. My culture at home, we speak Patois, but I can't speak Patois. My culture at home, we speak Patois, but I can't speak Patois here when I'm around white middle class people, because they would look at that and think oh, you're street, or... Or you're ghetto, or you're illiterate. But I can see it's so easy to slip into it ... when I met [naming another student], as soon as I heard her accent, you just slip into it, so easily. Because it's your culture, and it's what you're used to. But you can't do that in certain circumstances. I can never talk like that at work, or in a school, even though I'm working with other African Caribbean children.... Because I would be looked on as being dumb, and also not being as educated as somebody else who doesn't speak Patois. Because there is a perception, and a stereotype, that goes with our culture.*
> (Sarah)

Reading into what Sarah has said suggests both the corrosive and oppressive effects of internalised colonialism and Whiteness that have set the parameters as to what is acceptable. In terms of using accents and sounds that would allow the students to fit in, as Sarah noted, there was an awareness of the effect that had on how well they were accepted into the school. Did they sound like the others around them? Sarah made a conscious decision to sound like the majority White staff and not use her home dialect so as to fit in.

Jennifer had an initial experience that was similar to Tolu's in that she spoke with an accent that was different to her class teacher's. Jennifer spoke with what would be considered a very R.P (Received Pronunciation) accent, unlike Tolu**.** It could be argued that in Jennifer's case, 'sounding' White did *not* help her form a relationship with her classteacher, who was Black. In fact, Jennifer thought it actually hindered their initial connection because of the classteacher's perceptions of her (Jennifer) based on her accent. There could have been un-probed questions around class and age but this is what Jennifer rationalised:

> *J: I didn't have a great time there with my particular teacher, she was a high flyer, young Black woman, unlike yours, she was, right, I'm going to observe you, bang,*

there and then you would get your feedback, mostly negative at the start, you can do this, you can do that, but in a constructive way. I had a tough time with that for a while, because the whole process of almost drilling you down to nothing first…I think maybe people had an issue with my accent at first, the way I speak.

VP: What do you mean by that?

J: Well, I remember years ago, people would say to me, I didn't know you were Black on the phone, you don't speak Black on the phone. I think she had issues with that, but at the end she sort of came through.

VP: Why do you think she would have had issues with that?

J: Well, you hear this voice [Jennifer's own] *and you think, who do you think you are, you know? Maybe people are intimidated by it as well, but at the end of day, we did forge some kind of relationship…*

Like Jennifer and Tolu, Abigail also talked about her accent and the effect she felt that it had had on how she was perceived and her acceptance in the school she was placed in. The narrative surrounding this ties in with RQ 3 which looks at the impact surrounding what was experienced on the rest of their teaching placement. In terms of fitting in, Abigail found that her accent helped ease the path of acceptance for her. She was very knowing, through previous personal experience, of how her actions could make those around her i.e. White TAs from the local community and teaching staff, feel comfortable and unthreatened by her presence.

A: I don't really feel like I had but sometimes I wonder if that's because I've become an acceptable Black person.

VP: And you've become an acceptable Black person because you've made yourself available, smiling?

A: And I think particularly the way that I speak as well [people say] *oh you sound like you're from Essex. And I think that immediately makes people go, oh!*

VP: Relax a bit?

A: They say oh she's used to being around White people. Whereas it's just I've got an Enfield accent because I'm from Enfield. But I think that makes people relax...

VP: ...so if they see your surname, and they obviously know you're Black, if you had an African accent and you'd walked into the school do you think that might have had an effect?

A: Yes, definitely. Again it comes down to the assumptions and the prejudice, because people literally just hear the accent, they don't hear what you're saying, my mum's experienced that so much. Which is why I think she's become quite hardened to the whole profession. She just thinks everyone's racist... So I think, yes, if I had a stronger accent definitely or just a foreign accent [teaching would be harder].

Abigail's narrative vividly highlights the fine line students tread in terms of being considered acceptable. She recognised that her ethnicity, accent and personality (Abigail: *'Just because I think I'm a big girl, I like to kind of laugh a lot and I'm one of those people if I don't...I've got quite a harsh tone as well, which is something that my boyfriend's also mentioned to me as well.'*) might make others feel less comfortable and her accent mitigated this. All this creates a scenario where the students are in a state of vigilance to ensure that they do not offend and this takes energy and emotional work.

Internalised colonialism, that Black people should sound 'Black' but/because sounding 'White' is educated de facto not Black! (Weil, 2002) and the normativity of Whiteness, are more than just ideological concepts, but appear to have a living, breathing aspect which enables them to alter the edges of their reach and maintain fluidity of their parameters. This mutability is witnessed by John. He talks about how, as one of two learning mentors, his clothing of jeans and trainers, was deemed unprofessional even though the rest of the staff wore relaxed clothing.

'I started looking around looking around at other teachers and going myself, like, hold on, I'm... you're telling me to do this, but I'm seeing ones wearing jeans and converse trainers and stuff like that, why am I the only person getting pulled up for it just because my other colleague, the other learning mentor is dressed up? So I'm meant to be his spitting image? No, I've got... I can't do that. I mean, he was, like, short, 62-year-old middle-class white guy. I'm tall, six foot xxx Black guy from London, inner city London. And they said their main target kids was to work with the Black African-Caribbean boys. So what, I'm going to be and go... actually come... further isolate... separated [from] *them? It's not going to happen.'* (John)

John highlights the fluid edges of the parameters of what is acceptable to Whiteness in the coded language of dress or just the double standards applied.

Fitting in and 'acting White': Cultural Identity

Professor Sonia Boyce, one of the few Black female professors in the U.K and the first to be elected to the Royal Academy in 2016, succinctly encapsulates what is at the crux of what was experienced by the primary PGCE students in this study in terms of identity.

> *'Whatever Black people do, it is said to be about identity, first and foremost. It becomes a blanket term for everything we do, regardless of what we're doing...I don't say it should be abandoned, (but) am I only able to talk about who I am? Of course, who I am changes as I get older: it can be a life-long inquiry. But why should I only be allowed to talk about race, gender, sexuality and class? Are we only able to say who we are, and not able to say anything else? If I speak, I speak 'as a' Black woman artist or 'as a' Black woman or 'as a' Black person. I always have to name who I am: I'm constantly being put in that position, required to talk in that place...never allowed to speak because I speak.* (Boyce, quoted in Mercer 1995, p.30, cited in Puwar, 2004, p.1)

Boyce's impassioned observation highlights conflicts that were, to varying degrees experienced by the students, one arising from the distance between how they perceived themselves, the perception that they felt was imposed upon them by the White environment that they were part of and an expectation from others that they would speak for and from the standpoint of a Black person. In discussion, it was clear that some of the students had assumed the projected role(s) of what a Black student should be out of expediency, emotionally and politically conscious of the position that they found themselves in, as a Black minority in a White school. It could be said that the White gaze fixed the students into the *Black slots'* (Chambers, 1999, cited in Puwar, 2004b, p.1) that they found themselves positioned in, sometimes even before they had walked into the school, as Tunde later recounts in relation to her school experience and suppositions about her name. However, it could also be argued that their own perception of what it is to be Black in a White setting along with the expectations of other Black students and members of the Black community of what a Black identity should encapsulate, also acted to fit the students into *'Black slots'*.

Throughout this chapter, I will use one of Hall's definitions to frame the notion of cultural identity.

> *'There are at least two different ways of thinking about 'cultural identity'. The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history.'* (Hall, 1993, p.223)

The use of this definition is essential because for the students, as illustrated by Yvonne, racial identity and cultural identity seemed synonymous:

> *'And I love the fact that I can actually throw in so many other things…I teach my children as well that you're not just what you look like. Because my children are so mixed it's ridiculous…my mother's father is Chinese Indian, but I don't, I wasn't brought up with any of that part of the culture, but, you know, it's there, it's, I know about it. And my children know about it. And my husband's father is Jewish, and there's Polish and German and, you know, it's all in there, and they're all aware. They know what it is. And it's, you know, everything's open, and it's just making sure that they know who they are.'* (Yvonne)

In reference to Othello, his view of self and then the way he was represented, Hall (1993) referred to the ideological dissent as coming from *'practices of representation* [and how they] *always implicate the positions from which we speak or write – the positions of* **enunciation** (sic)*'* (Hall, 1993, p.222). One could interpret Yvonne's experience in the light of this. Hall suggests that although we may identify and talk about ourselves in a particular way, based on our own self-knowledge and experiences, our expression of personal identity may not correlate with the views of someone else when they then refer to us.

Kiara expressed the notion of belonging and positionality when she discussed her experiences of being on the course and seeing how the White students treated the small group of Black students, Yvonne (from the pilot study group) amongst them. Yvonne appeared to have the capital and credentials that should have gained her entry to the group she seemed to aspire to. However, as seen from Kiara's observations, *'formal citizenship rights do not automatically translate into substantive citizenship rights'* (Hill Collins, 1998, p.5) so although Yvonne ostensibly had the trappings of Whiteness, which should have

conferred a level of power, she was not White (Hill Collins, 1998). Kiara related an incident that she had seen whereby Yvonne had purposefully placed herself at a table, at the beginning of a Science session, where the other (White) students, would sit.

> *'No, and that was quite… I don't know. I think, for example, if we didn't have* [names 2 other students] *in our group, I think myself and Yvonne would be the ones, we would just be completely shut off. For example, I think I'm quite quiet…And I don't know, with Yvonne, she's more… she wants… I don't know. I noticed a few things as well with the way they treated her, and I think she doesn't like to think that they* [White students] *treated her like that, because she comes from a background where it's… she sees herself as middle class. She's… her husband is White. She has mixed race children. She lives in an area where, you know, it's not completely White, but more White people live there than Black, for example, and she… I don't know, she feels that she… I think she felt that she could fit into that… into those groups when she started the course, and then I think it was a big shock for her, for example, when she saw that they didn't want to mix with her. And, I don't know, there were situations where, for example, we had to get together in the science group, and she really wanted to… well, I thought she really wanted to be with other people rather than be with Black group. And they said, no. They had already decided on who was in their group.'* (Kiara)

Kiara noted that Yvonne seemed nonplussed as well as hurt by the actions of the other students but did not put their actions down to racial discrimination. According to Kiara, Yvonne thought their actions were due to an age gap between her and the White students i.e. they did not want to sit with someone who was older than them. Kiara, however, contradicts this when she rationalises:

> *'If that was the case, I would maybe expect it to be the older lot on a table together regardless of where they were from, but it still wasn't. It was still the fact that the older White people in the group were still with younger White people and the older Black person in the group was with us, so I don't really think it* [it was down to age]…*'* (Kiara)

Another explanation for this scenario related by Kiara could be described as an example of misrecognition found in Lacy's (2007) research where when having experienced discrimination at a shop, the Black middle class participants in her study put the incident down to *'an inability on their part to effectively signal their class positions to store employees'* (Lacy, 2007, p. 112), something which Yvonne seemed ostensibly quite keen to do during the focus group interviews for the pilot study and this was how she was perceived by Kiara.

Misrecognition and identity

Taylor (1994, cited in Maylor, 2009a, p.55) describes non-recognition or misrecognition as a process or act that *'can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false distorted and reduced mode of being'* and how this can have an impact on the formation and perception of identity. The question of identity is an important one in *'Othello'* and has resonance for the participants in this study. There is a jarring dissonance between how Othello believes he should be perceived i.e. as a formidable soldier, war hero, leader of men and the words that are spoken about him, to an initially unsuspecting audience by a jealous, thwarted Iago. Before his arrival, references to Othello as an *'old Black ram'* and a *'Barbary horse'* (Shakespeare, 1993) immediately set the scene and the tone for both Jacobian audiences and modern ones on how to misrecognise him: that Othello is no better than an animal in his looks, bestial in his thoughts and actions when put in civil i.e. White Venetian society.

Trying to waylay the assumptions of others before you have an opportunity to let your actions speak for you and, perhaps not being aware that the 'damage' against you has already been done, can be illustrated by Sarah, who referred to the stereotypes her parents had tried to ward off not long after her birth and long before she was an adult, by the careful choice of her name. Naming a child is a very important act for many cultural, religious and emotional reasons but Sarah's parents were also acting politically and wrapping around their daughter what they hoped to be a protective (White) cloak that would give her precious time before clouds of assumption descended and obscured any views of what she was capable of via a stereotype based on her ethnicity. Sarah was given a *'biblical name',* a popular Europeanized girl's name to help her initially gain entry into White spaces. It was an early, pre-emptive act of managing oneself in a White space, taking on a 'White' name rather than *'creative names…*[like] *Shaniqua'* so as to not be readily dismissed as her parents feared.

> *'Er, my mum gave me a very English name on purpose, Sarah…my brother's as well, Jonathan….I've often had situations where I've applied for jobs, people see my name on the paper, they assume that I'm going to be a White girl. When I've turned up it's like, you're Sarah [laughter], you're Sarah? I've had it a million times and, like, every time I tell mum, do you know what this is what happened again today, she's like, well that's the reason I gave you that name, it's because* [she] *didn't want...the experience she had when coming to this country from the Caribbean, she didn't want that experience of being turned away from jobs and different things when you're signing up, just from the name on the paper… we won't give you some of the creative names that people from my culture come up with… that way when your name's on the*

paper they can see that that's your name and, you know, and it stops that whole thing of, oh you're Black we'll just put it to one side.' [Sarah]

Misrecognition and Microaggressions

Tunde also picks up the conversation around the impact of names and the assumptions that can be made. Ethnicity was important and immediately stood out for Tunde (*'...my class teacher, she was Black. She was the only Black teacher there.'*) She also felt that the school placed her with a Black teacher because they had her name and details from the University, assumed her ethnicity so placed her with another Black teacher.

> *'This might sound silly but when I noticed I had a Black teacher my first reaction was 'why would you put me with a Black teacher? Could it be because you have seen my name beforehand that you place me with a Black teacher?' The impression I had was they thought we'd get on better. I felt a little uncomfortable. I felt from my name they had made their assumptions. There's just an undertone of racism.'* [Tunde]

This stereotyping relates to the notion that Tunde believed that the school held i.e. because she ostensibly shared the same ethnicity as her class teacher, they would probably share similar views and an understanding of a shared culture (Hall, 1993). This could be referred to as a microaggression on the part of the school, a subtle yet palpable way of maintaining the processes of Whiteness i.e. keeping the status quo untroubled, due to the fact that not a word had been spoken but the subliminal message received by Tunde was that her space/place in the school was one defined by ethnicity and colour of skin. It could also be termed a misrecognition of the power of Whiteness in that placing a Black student with a Black teacher is considered thoughtful and supportive (it might well be!) without recognition of the stereotypes and thought processes that led to that decision. This experience relates to RQs 1 and 2 in that it was perceived by the students that stereotyping, as a form of racism, was being enacted. In actual fact, Tunde did get on well with her class teacher and was able to confide in her in what Tunde considered to be quite a hostile school placement. Dickar (2008) writes about the strong racial allegiance mentors/teacher educators had for their students but also how this allegiance was an expectation, as noted in Lucy's testimony. It is evident in what Tunde says that she had thought about her placement and placing with a Black teacher and was both baffled and emotive about it. What Tunde, Tolu and Sarah expressed resonates with Solórzano and Yosso (2002) when they note that an aspect of CRT

methodology is to acknowledge how *'racialised oppression'* can be a blend of concepts difficult to unpick:

> *'...the intercentricity of racialised oppression – the layers of subordination based on race, gender, class, immigration, status, surname, phenotype, accent and sexuality'* (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p. 25)

The comments made by Tunde highlight one of my research foci into the way perceived stereotyping, an aspect of racism, manifests itself in the school placement process and how the students perceived and experienced its enactment in that setting (RQ 1 and 2). It is evident from Tunde's responses that she felt that the racism she had experienced, before she had even walked through the door, was subtle yet manifest to her. So for Tunde (*'Yeah, I just felt I had a lot to prove, I had to be on top of my game all the time'*), racism in schools was not overt and easy to pin point but understated in its performance. These indefinable acts can be linguistically and conceptually defined within CRT as microaggressions (Pierce *et al.,* 1978, cited in Solórzano, Ceja and Yosso, 2000); acts that are symptomatic of Whiteness and serve to make one feel undermined and undervalued.

Although she later says that her relationship with her class teacher was positive, it did make me question *why* would Tunde frame her placement with a Black teacher in this deprecating manner? There is a more insidious notion to be considered here which ties in with the notion of internalized racism and the viewing of oneself through the lens of White supremacy (hooks, 1992; Fanon, 2008). In *'Black faces, White masks',* Fanon delves deeply into the effects of colonialism on those who have been colonized, how the acts of colonialism were then internalised along with a sense of lack and subordination. The internalisation being so effective that Black people then continued in the act of self-negation and oppression on a deeply psychological level. Kiara was both understanding and reflective about one of the Black women on her course and how her attitude reminded Kiara of her Caribbean grandparents in the woman's distancing of self from *'being part of Black culture'*:

> *'I don't know. For me, she reminds me of my grandparents in the fact that they are so into, well, how they are being perceived by White people and the fact that they don't want to have those qualities, the negative qualities of Black people, so they completely…some…well, not all the time, they try to disassociate themselves with the idea of being Black.'* (Kiara)

hooks (1992) wrote about how this warped view of a Black self could lead to an erosion of confidence and self-esteem. This in turn could lead to the unconscious and unrecognized mindset that being placed with a Black teacher as a mentor could not be as effective as being placed with a White teacher as a mentor. This sentiment was further compounded by Jennifer when she described her school and what she understood to be the motivating desire for the Black teachers to work there. It was as if the teachers came to the school *despite* the majority of the children coming from a BME background.

> *'90% Afro-Caribbean children from tough backgrounds, a lot of LSAs, so a lot of SEN problem children…the school itself, tough school, a lot of Black teachers and you know, good staff as well, it's not like it was like coming to a second class school, they were coming there because they wanted to help the children, they wanted to help their own type of children, they wanted to work for these children. Very tough but fair.'* (Jennifer)

This sentiment would seem to suggest an internalised dialogue on Jennifer's part that was able to rationalise why the Black teachers would work at that school. The essence of that dialogue could have been grounded in internalised racism but the end result was to fundamentally benefit the majority BME children in that school.

Maylor (2009a) writes about misrecognition in relation to her experiences as a Black researcher working in White schools, the difficulties the White staff had in engaging with her as a researcher and recognising her position. She recounts an incident where she was asked if she was *'one of the helpers'* (Maylor, 2009a, p. 57) as if the notion that she could be Black and an academic were two irreconcilable concepts. This is echoed by Erolet[11] when relaying how parents and staff responded to her:

> *'…some parents refused to talk to me about anything to do with their child. They would say hello or, some wouldn't even say hello actually…as soon as my classteacher comes, the classteacher that I was placed with comes along, then , you know, they're straight to her and say whatever they had to say or they would acknowledge my partner and not me'* (Erolet)

> *'…even though I had a pass, that said I was a student teacher on it, loads of people still act like I was a TA or want to know what I'm doing there even though it was blatantly obvious what I'm doing there coz there was 6 of us and we were introduced on the first day…'* (Erolet)

Erolet referred to the difficulties she experienced with parents seemingly not wanting to recognise her role as the student class teacher even though they would approach her White student colleague and *'we wouldn't really go into it any more than that but we just acknowledged the fact that it happened (Erolet).'* Leonardo says *'as a collection of everyday strategies* [e.g. Erolet and her White student colleague avoiding the issue]*, Whiteness is characterised by the unwillingness to name the contours of racism'* (Leonardo, 2002, p.32) so there is the adoption of a mutual code of silence which protects and prevents both Erolet and the White student from confronting issues of race in an environment that perhaps did not feel safe. Decuir and Dixson (2004) refer to how schools not only reflect the socio-politics evident in society but are also actors in the co-construction of their own socio-political environment; a construction which maintains the structures of Whiteness.

The subtlety of racism, isolation and othering as an act of Whiteness was alluded to by Tolu when she said of her school:

> *'...they don't want Black students and we could tell because most of their teachers there said to us oh, I'm from* [name of University]*...half of their students are ex-* [name of University] *students and there was no Black students amongst them (VP: all White ex-*[name of University] *students there?) yeah and even one of them, I think her name is* [names one of the staff]*, I think she said she was here last year, she's there now, it's just lots of things are like, you know. (VP: Like what? Because your face is telling me that there were quite negative experiences?) The staff there was, I was there for 13 weeks and I never spoke to the head teacher. You would greet her in the morning and she would just turn her face the other way.* (Tolu)

The sense of being held accountable, for the negative actions of others towards you, was exemplified by Erolet when asked if she had ever mentioned any her concerns to either the school or her University CBT[12]:

> *'No, I wouldn't have mentioned it to, erm, my CBT or anyone in the school because I think you have to be really careful when you start mentioning things like anything to do with race or anything because there's always an issue that you might be misunderstood or…you might be making excuses for something.'* (Erolet)

Erolet's silence highlights the lack of safety in discussing race along with the fear of being blamed for the predicament she found herself in and how the maintenance of silence helps to consolidate the subtle, persuasive and insidious influence of Whiteness. hooks (1992, p.192)

refers to the *'terrorizing force of White supremacy'* which serves to maintain this kind of silence around race dialogue.

What Tolu experienced could be considered a microaggression or even an overt act of racism. There was a differential in her treatment when compared to the White student who was also placed in the same setting as her. In terms of hypersurveillance, Tolu was observed three times by the mentor/deputy Head, a Black woman, whereas the White student was not observed. This can be interpreted in different ways:

1. That the White student was not being as supported as Tolu was because the school was being negligent
2. That Tolu needed the support because she was not doing as well
3. The mentor, perhaps unwittingly, was enacting her own internalised racism; expecting less *and* more of Tolu

> *'She's a White student, I'm a Black student, but the mentor observed me three times, and she was never observed* [VP: So did you see this as supportive?] *No, because she always came in after my Classic Outcome II,[13] because she was always looking for a mistake on my part, she was just always looking for a mistake. If I said something, she would find a fault in it. Either it's my accent, or she won't come out and say it's my accent, she said to* [the CBT] *oh, she doesn't know how to sound TH. I said to her* [the mentor], *what do you mean I don't know how to sound TH, and* [the CBT] *right there in front of me said, can you say, when a child is born, how do you pronounce that?* (Tolu)

This was a humiliating incident for Tolu and it only served to make her feel more isolated during her school placement when recognising that the CBT demonstrated a lack of empathy towards her. In this case, both the college and the school were seen to facilitate and encourage this act of racist shaming. Asking Tolu the question that mocked her pronunciation, also served to if not dehumanize Tolu, then reduce her to a subordinate and an object in front of an onlooker, the mentor. Feeling that covertly her accent was being used to signal her difference was one way in which Tolu felt that racism was being enacted during her school placement.

Tunde had felt that her name, from which an assumption could be made of her ethnicity, had been used to pigeon-hole her as a Black student who would do better with a Black teacher, a simplistic and seemingly homogenous pairing. This is an idea encapsulated by Hall in his

definition of cultural identity. However, it can be argued that it is a form of racist stereotyping to believe that all Black people (or whatever common phenotype they share), due to their ethnicity, must share a similar culture, ideas and values so will get on well with each other. Views of our own identity, and those projected onto us, are *'never identical, never in exactly the same place'* (Hall, 1993, p.222). These differing stances come from different points of view or what can be referred to as positions of enunciation.

Gravity of Whiteness and the markers of a cultural identity

As discussed in chapter 2, Whiteness can be recognized in the acquisition and subliminal knowledge of dress, speech, education and place of education. It can also be viewed as a form of cultural identity and its possession a form of cultural capital (Yosso, 2005). By wearing particular clothing, speaking with a particular accent and even tone, signals to the hegemonic group that you are educated in their ways and to be accepted as part of their group. To do so could be considered a form of collusion but also one for survival.

Lipsitz (2006) states, Whiteness is *'a social fact, an identity created and continued with all-too-real consequences for the distribution of wealth, prestige and opportunity'* (Lipsitz, 2006, p.viii). Whiteness as property was exemplified a century prior to Lipsitz by the Plessy v Ferguson case (1896) in which Homer Plessy, a one-eighth African-American argued for his right to ride in the train cars assigned to White people (Hobbs, 2014). Plessy's lawyer argued that being designated White had *' an actual pecuniary value…the most valuable sort of property, being the master-key that unlocks the golden door of opportunity'* (Hobbs, 2014, p.12). It could be argued that today, that *'pecuniary value'* would be synonymous with cultural capital exemplified in the form of adherence to codes of acceptable dress and speech. Yet, skin colour would still appear to have greater weight (Vincent *et al.,* 2012).

During their school placement, the negative effects of Whiteness on the perceptions and actions of the White staff can lead to the unconscious and sometimes overt pigeon-holing of Black students. Whiteness could be argued to be a force of *human* nature, not unlike the natural force of gravity, that can pull you in unless you are strong enough to withstand its effects.

John makes reference to the conflict experienced if not overtly expressed by the children he taught and their perception of him. He has positioned himself as a role model and recognises that this is the perception close family members have of him.

> *'...well, I'm a role model in my family in the sense that I'm the first person in my family, both sides of my family, mum and dad, to go to university and then be kind of more studious than the rest of my family'.* (John)

It is not a position he takes lightly realizing the impact it will have on his younger cousins when he says *'even my younger cousins thought, okay, we can do it, if John can do it, we can do it.'* However, a tension arose between this position of being whom he outwardly presents i.e. a tall, physically-strong looking Black male, who is a family role model (Maylor, 2009c) and the identity he felt he had to acquire when outside of this familial space and in the classroom where explicit and covert elements of Whiteness are played out. John talks about how he perceives himself reflected back to his cousins and little brother as someone who has kept their identity and cultural integrity:

> *'They realized, okay, you can have that kind of banter but when it comes to work we can sit down and work because we've got someone who's just like us, but also has made it to university. He's* [John] *not had to change.'* (John)

When asked to elaborate on what he meant by not having to change, John questioned whether he could respond *'in blunt terms?'* He went on to say that not changing would mean adopting *'White traits'.* The adoption of these traits is a distinct reference to the act of assimilation that some of the students felt that they had to undergo in order to succeed during their placement. What is also important in John's response is that he demonstrated some reticence (*'in blunt terms?'*) in naming the act of adopting the tools of Whiteness in order to succeed; taking on White traits or signifiers of belonging, in terms of clothing, speech and even how he walked into a room. Leonardo and Porter (2010) re-frame this restraint in terms of the *'the myth of safety in race dialogue for people of color'* (Leonardo and Porter, 2010, p.147), the myth that Black people together would feel more comfortable and safe discussing questions and issues surrounding race. John's hesitation would appear to support what Leonardo and Porter then go on to say in that although:

> *'...race dialogue is almost never safe for people of color in mixed racial company...before we romanticize its opposite, or same-race dialogues, the idea that*

homogenous spaces are automatically safe for people of color is a mystification for they result precisely from a violent condition: racial segregation' (Leonardo and Porter, 2010, p.147)

John's hesitation continued to trouble any complacency I may have held that talking with me would be considered 'safe'. When reflecting on this, I realized that my notion of his presumed comfort and safety was based on my believing that we shared a racial or ethnic alliance because we were of the same ethnicity and had expressed similar thoughts.

The fluidity inherent in identity construction as mentioned by Hall is evident when John moves from the familial space to the school setting. The significance attached to clothing, an outer representation of clanship and belonging, was best exemplified by John. Clothing is recognised not just as a fashion statement but also as an aspect of identity (Ali, 2008). John's adherence to maintaining a view of himself that he recognised via his clothing was exhibited in the way he dressed:

'...as a TA, I went in still wearing my Nike…I was wearing a hoodie, wearing jeans like the baggy jeans, sometimes a bit too low for this…I needed to get myself a belt [after someone told him to pull his pants up]' (John)

John recognised that he had to *'have an element of professionalism'* but he:

'made a conscious effort to still wear my baggy jeans…there was a rebel in me not to conform. But also for the kids, kind of, a sign or message that you don't have to change, you can still be yourself and stuff.' (John).

John's use of the word *'professionalism'* here would seem to denote a concept that cannot be met when wearing a 'street' uniform (Ali, 2008) although they are the kind of clothes that most people would wear when relaxing, regardless of ethnicity. However, in this setting, to wear them in school would suggest to the powers that be that John was not aware of the correct codes of representation; an understanding he came to quite quickly. Yet, by addressing the situation, he saw this as conforming, adopting a White mask, an acknowledgement of Fanon (2008), by having to appropriate a tool of Whiteness i.e. by adopting the 'correct' clothing. It could be argued that in trying to maintain some essence of his outside clothing/identity as *'a comfort'* (John) and being true to himself, John was covertly signalling to the children he worked with, who were reflections of him in terms of background and ethnicity that being *'a Black man in a White world'* (Kiwanuka, 2016) did

not automatically mean conforming was always necessary. In the light of Hall's discussion on cultural identity and positions of enunciation, it could also be argued that he was trying to narrow the gap between his identity self-perception and how the children saw him.

John was acutely aware of the racial stereotyping Black boys were subject to, the gravitational pressure of Whiteness to fit in, but felt that treading this fine line between accepted, therefore valid and invalid codes of dress was a way for him to demonstrate to the boys he taught that they would not have to completely experience an identity dissonance if they chose to follow his path:

> *'...if you like a certain form of music, you dress a certain way, it's not seen as studious, it's not seen as education, it's seen as something dumb or degenerate or something like that. But I'm thinking, I can still be smart and I can still do well in life but still like hip-hop music, still dress in a certain way.'* (John)

Survival strategies: Fictive Kinship and Withstanding the gravity of Whiteness

The strategies used by the students to navigate their way through these hostile White spaces was just as important as their narratives surrounding their experiences. In conversation, some of the students realised that they had expected there to be a 'natural' bond between themselves and other Black members of staff. This bond would have been demonstrated in the form of alliances and help when needed. Yet, when a student was placed with Black teachers (as seen with Tunde), an assumption perhaps of fictive kinship having been made by the school, this was viewed ambivalently by the students and concerns around racial stereotyping and microaggressions were raised.

Schools and the HEI policy are explicit in outlining their commitment to upholding equality as outlined in the Equality Act of 2010. Ahmed (2012) highlights the conceptual sleight of hand that is embedded in diversity policies and the non-performativity of such documents. Having the written policy, saying the words of diversity and equality can become what she terms as *'speech acts'* which can make the school body feel that they are being effective in addressing equality and diversity. Yet how effective can the policy be if the students feel they need to develop methods to protect themselves from the slow, corrosive actions of what they experience whilst in those White spaces? Withstanding the gravity of Whiteness

involved the students drawing on personal and familial emotional resources to maintain some sort of equilibrium whilst they were placed in school.

One strategy used was that of forging and maintaining close ties with fellow Black students; camaraderie in a hostile environment. The notion of a supposed racial solidarity came across strongly in some of the students' feedback and was referred to when reflecting on my assumed 'kinship' with John. Keisha recounts what she considered to be her class teacher's dismay at *'having two Black girls'* as her students. Both Keisha and Erolet expressed similar views. Keisha went on to say:

> *'It's probably completely not politically correct what I'm about to say but it's how I feel, to get two Black students like she couldn't relate to us…when you have similarities, it bonds you together…It could be that you're from the same religion, the same ethnicity, not always but you've got something in common.'* (Keisha)

> *'…there's another lady there that, she's also Black which makes a difference as well. She's really supportive to all of us as students.* (VP: Why does it make a difference her being Black?) *I think it makes a difference because, well, I don't know, it's probably her personality. She's just generally a helpful person but I feel like there is a greater chance that if she wasn't then we wouldn't get on so well and I wouldn't have the supportive relationship that I do have with her…'* (Erolet)

Keisha's partial reticence, when she voices some concern about whether someone might be offended by what she says i.e. her comments are not *'politically correct',* chimes with that expressed by John and his query of whether he could speak in *'blunt terms'*. This can be related back to the discourse surrounding *'the myth of safety in race dialogue for people of color'* (Leonard and Porter, 2010, p.147) and the assumption that there is safety in discussing race with someone of apparently the same ethnicity as yourself. If Keisha felt she was in a safe space to express her comments, then perhaps she may not have been concerned with political correctness. Keisha also expresses a notion of *non*-shared cultural identity with the class teacher by saying what *would* constitute a shared cultural identity, common standpoint and racial collegiality:

> *'Standpoint theory argues that group location in hierarchical power relations produces share challenges for individuals in those groups…group standpoints are situated in unjust power relations…'* (Hill Collins, 1998, p. 201)

Hill Collins makes reference to the research carried out by Anthias and Yuval Davis (1992, cited in Hill Collins, 1998) around the pitfalls of assuming a shared identity and having it

'constructed around essentialist definitions' (Hill Collins, 1998, p. 206). This idea ties in with Hall's categorisation of understanding cultural identity to be one of shared values, codes and experiences and seeing oneself as belonging to a homogenous group, even of *'racial solidarity'* (Hill Collins, 1998, p. 201). Especially during the time of the Black nationalist movements in the U.S, racial solidarity meant that African-Americans had *'to stick together at all costs'* (ibid).

During her placement, Keisha felt that there was a strong power differential between her and her class teacher. Hill Collins (1998) states that group standpoints are founded in scenarios of power inequity. Keisha then goes on to say:

> *'I felt it was almost like a child and mother almost relationship that we had, it wasn't I respect you as someone, as a student, someone that's training to be a teacher, there was a power relationship...a power struggle or someone's clearly got more power over you and they use it'* (Keisha)

She talks about being undermined and excluded by the actions of her class teacher, for example, not being given the same access to resources as the White students/staff:

> *'...once she gave out handouts in the staffroom and I can't remember what the other students were doing and she was like 'oh, I've only got these for the teachers' and we thought that's a slap in the face! Are we not teachers?'* (Keisha)

Her comment *'Are we not teachers?'* reminds me of the oft-repeated refrain from Sojourner Truth's speech, *'Ain't I a woman?* resonating in the study by bell hooks (1981). It is a demand, by Keisha, to acknowledge who she is, what she does and what she is able to do i.e. to be as capable as the next (White) student. Keisha felt strongly that her colour had an impact on her placement and how her class teacher and the school identified her:

> *'I definitely felt my colour was a hindrance but whether that's how they identified me...I mean that it stunted my progression and the support I got* [in response to my query on what was meant by *'hindrance'*]. *I felt had I been a White student my experience would have been **so** [emphasis] much better just based on what the others experienced. I felt my teacher would have warmed to me better. I really feel that.'* (Keisha)

However, the interesting point is that Keisha did not consider her teacher racist because the majority of the children at the school, and taught by the class teacher, came from a BME background.

> *'I don't think she's racist or anything like that because the kids are majority Black and she loves them so I don't know what it was. I guess she was a people person but just not to us.'*

This would seem to suggest a level of naïvety on Keisha's part to think that a racist ideology could not co-exist in her class teacher or anyone (Kohli, 2014; Vaught and Castagno, 2008) *'because the kids are majority Black and she loves them'* (Keisha). Kohli (2014) looks at the work students from ethnic minority backgrounds had to do in unpacking their own internalised racism in order to see how that could be altering their perceptions of the Black children in their classroom. The participants in her study had experienced racism throughout their primary and secondary education (K-12), but had to do personal work on their own internalised racism. They also considered it imperative that conversations took place in ITE on how to prepare students to challenge racism (Bhopal, Harris and Rhamie, 2009). Like the White students in Vaught and Castagno's study (2008), Keisha's class teacher most probably would have echoed the same thoughts in having difficulty in accepting aspects of racism as part of their ideological make-up (King, 1991; Sue and Constantine, 2007; Picower, 2009; Lander 2011b; Pearce, 2012).

Where Keisha did feel a sense of belonging and empathy was in her second placement school where the majority of the staff were Black. This sentiment was echoed by Jennifer:

> *'This school has the most Black teachers I've seen anywhere. It's lovely. I feel so much more at home. I feel so much more supported. I love it here. My teacher is lovely. I think the difference here is the make-up in terms of ethnicity of the staff. I feel like I'm being racist in saying that I only get along with Black people and that's not true. I just think that is why my experience is a lot better, a lot better…I feel like I'm seen as a teacher or at least a trainee teacher. I don't feel that my colour is at all a block to that and therefore I am able to be seen as what I am here to do.'* (Keisha)

> *'I think in my second placement, the difference is that they had a Black head teacher in place, and I think that made a hell of a difference. Mixed staff, White teachers, but a lot of Black teachers, both men and women working there, but I think it all stemmed from the head, and she had turned the school around from failing to good.'* (Jennifer)

Keisha reiterated the importance she believed a shared ethnicity with her class teacher, and the majority of the staff, had in making her second school placement more successful. It was also important that she was *seen* or perceived as a trainee teacher, a respect of her position she considered lacking in her first placement. The respect shown to her was evident in this second setting but, more importantly, it was evident to everyone else. The sense of apology is also present in Keisha feeling the need to excuse herself of any accusations of racism by explaining *why* she held this standpoint; it was an expression of racial allegiance and comfort in being part of a majority group, something which, up until that point, had been unusual in her experience.

Keisha's experience of being undermined, and looked down upon, was echoed by Lucy who had also been in the same school. For Lucy, the idea of fictive kinship (Fordham and Ogbu, 1986) racial allegiance and adherence to it, was very strong. She noted the attitude of a Black female member of the administration staff. What is clear in Lucy's comments is her disappointment that the member of staff did not demonstrate any racial allegiance as she would have expected it (Dickar, 2008):

> *'There was a Black lady, she wasn't a teacher, she worked in the office, and it was that sort of thing where she didn't see herself as a Black woman, she was more in getting in with them* [white staff/teachers]*, and the influence that she had, funnily enough she was the office manager, but she had a very close relationship with the head teacher, and the influence that she had, the impact she could have had, had she been more supportive of Black students, it could have changed all that, because she was a very core person in that school.'* (Lucy)

The description of the office manager as someone who did not see herself as Black and was *'more in getting in with them'* brings to mind Bell's 4th rule of Racial Standing (Bell, 1993b) which states that:

> *'When a Black person or group makes a statement or takes an action that the White community or vocal components thereof deem "outrageous," the latter will actively recruit Blacks willing to refute the statement or condemn the action.* ***Blacks who respond to the call to condemnation will receive superstanding status****. The Blacks who refuse to be recruited will be interpreted as endorsing the statements and action and may suffer political or economic reprisals.'* (Bell, 1993b) My emphasis in bold.

Lucy's narrative about the office manager alluded to the idea of someone who has achieved *'superstanding status'* by aligning herself with *'them',* rather than her own ethnic group, as

Lucy sees it. A more controversial reading and extreme cinematic representation of this could be seen as being depicted by 'Stephen' (*Django Unchained,* 2012), a character who cleaved to his White master's side against those of his own ethnic background. The phrase *'Uncle Tom'* (Beecher Stowe, 1995) has been used as a derogatory appellation to anyone considered colluding in the oppression of his own ethnic group. This can be heard starkly in the speech given by Malcolm X (1963):

> *'...back during slavery. There was two kinds of slaves. There was the house Negro and the field Negro. The house Negroes – they lived in the house with master, they dressed pretty good, they ate good 'cause they ate his food — what he left. They lived in the attic or the basement, but still they lived near the master; and they loved their master more than the master loved himself. They would give their life to save the master's house quicker than the master would. The house Negro, if the master said, "We got a good house here," the house Negro would say, "Yeah, we got a good house here." Whenever the master said "we," he said "we." That's how you can tell a house Negro.'* (Malcolm X)

Having a role as the office manager would have involved having to work closely with the head teacher. I asked Lucy whether she had considered that this woman only had power, as seen by Lucy, because it was conferred upon her. There was also the deeper consideration that once a position of relative power had been achieved, it was a position not to be shared or easily given up. This resonates with observations made by Lucy and Ruth:

> *'You go into a school with Black teachers, then you've got this crazy issue of proving yourself more so, sometimes, to the other Black teachers. It's almost like, you're not good enough to be* [here]*...you can't take my spot, stay there.'* (Lucy)

> *'Divide and conquer is very much alive, I've seen it, I've heard about it first before I've seen it for myself, but I've seen where you can have a White leader actually whispering to one Black person, somehow against the other Black person, and then foolishly, the two Black people start attacking each other, I've witnessed that and it's a reality, and you think, why are they at war now, and you realise, it's something that happened, the leader said something to them, and it just set them against each other.* (Ruth)

Going back to Hall's definition of cultural identity as a concept that *'reflects*[s] *the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning'* (Hall, 1993, p.223), one can use that to frame and interrogate the experience of some of the other participants in this study. Their experiences bring to mind the question of whether it could be considered a reverse form of racist stereotyping when a Black person assumes an un-stated, yet to be

enacted, upon allegiance due to a presumed communality based on gender and ethnicity. Ruth talks about when she was in her school staffroom and experienced a feeling of estrangement that was evidently unexpected in a school where the majority of the staff were Black and female. Hill Collins (1998) talks about the *'outsider within'* which was a phrase she coined to *'describe the location of people who no longer belong to any one group.'* (Hill Collins, 2008, p.5)

Hill Collins makes reference to people losing identities when they occupy these liminal spaces. Imagining Hill Collins' concept as being in the form of a Venn diagram, you will have two circles that overlap and in the overlapping section of these circles is where you will find the communalities for these different groups.

A.

VENN DIAGRAM

Different   Same   Different

B.

TA   Teacher
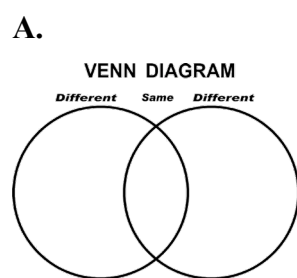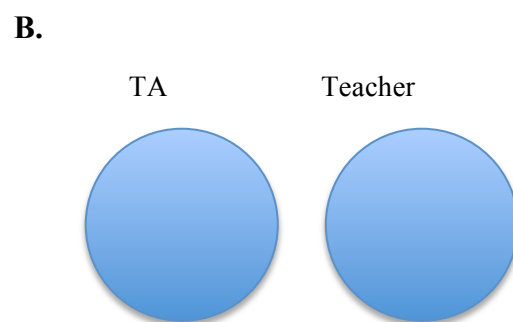
Ruth, a school direct student with many years of experience as a TA, described in effect a fluidity in her identity. She had been a TA, and therefore working in common with the other TAs in her school. When she went to her school placement, she had the view that because she had worked as a TA before, there would be a level of sisterhood, in effect a fictive kinship. Instead, she felt that she was being put, and kept, in her place as now someone different and now of the class teacher group. That suggests a binary position, that Ruth was *either* a TA *or* a class teacher as seen in figure B whereas Ruth perhaps saw her position as illustrated in A; being in the intersection of the two groups. Figure A also correlates with the idea put forward by Hill Collins of how *individuals…who occupy outsider-within locations appear to belong, because [they] possess both the credentials for admittance and the rights of formal membership'* (Hill Collins, 2008, p.5). The theme of fictive kinship and identity is reiterated when Ruth went on to say:

> *'...most of the teachers in the school are Black...in the staffroom there were a lot of Black teaching assistant* [sic]*, a lot of Black staff, and when I first came and I saw some Black people I thought, yes, there's a lot Black people, this is great. But when I went into the staffroom I felt that people weren't as friendly. In a sense initially I felt they were just looking at me, summing me up! I just felt that.'* (Ruth)

When I asked Ruth why she assumed the Black members of staff would automatically be welcoming, she said *'Because they were Black! I did, I actually did, I thought well I'm Black, we've got something in common because you're kind of aware of institution* [sic] *racism'*. The gap between expectation and experience could be argued as being due to a class difference the teaching assistants (TAs) may have felt between themselves and Ruth. She reflected on this and felt that class did have an impact as was evinced by the TAs always referring to her as *'Miss'*.

> *'I know why people do it, it's like I'm trying to make friends and connections and then you say, you call me Miss even when the children aren't there, that's putting me somewhere else isn't it?...They're keeping me in a place and keeping themselves in a place'.* (Ruth)

The idea of being kept in place is both an offensive and defensive move on the part of the TAs that Ruth acquiesces to when she acknowledges *'I think maybe it's for the best because everyone knows where they are.'* The precedence of class (note below Ruth's description of going to *'a more sophisticated* place') over gender and race, as far as Ruth is concerned, is further exemplified when she makes reference to differing expressions of cultural similarity and allegiance:

> *'...I know it's possible to have some kind of mingling, especially if they're* [TAs and teachers] *friends. Different culture, different habits. Different ways of socialising. They don't mind going to a wine bar and dancing to rave music whereas I would like to go to a more sophisticated place.'* (Ruth)

She recognised that she came in with a *'TA mentality, TA to TA'* and, being politically aware, assumed the same of the TAs; that their knowledge and experience of institutional racism, as she recognised it, would somehow bond them together. However, the question of who am I? Where do I fit in? became a prominent one. This is acknowledged by Ruth:

> *'…because I come from being a TA…I came in with a TA mentality to TA, TA to TA. But I'm not now, I'm a teacher, and potentially they saw teacher. Interesting to see that.'* (Ruth)

Ruth's comment highlights the fictive kinship gap experienced by some of the students that, to a wider extent, exemplifies the loneliness and isolation that was symptomatic of their school placements.

Conclusion

This chapter served to highlight the emotional and psychological forces that the students dealt with and psychic energy expended in trying to protect themselves from the systems of Whiteness they encountered whilst in school. The emotional work took its toll on the students but what is evident is the resilience they demonstrated, drawing on friends and family. Tellingly, neither the University nor the school are seen as able to defend or protect them, despite the institutional inclusion policies.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

> Morpheus to Neo: *'You take the blue pill, the story ends. You wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill, you stay in Wonderland, and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes.'* (*The Matrix, 1999,* The Wachowskis*)*

The idea for this piece of research flowered more than a decade ago and came about as a natural progression from my Institutional-Focussed Study (IFS). That study had uncovered the experiences of racism, generally unwitting and borne out of ignorance, that Black students had been subjected to by lecturers and other White students on the teacher training course. The IFS had laid down the groundwork for this later study. Common ground was covered by both pieces of research in that they dealt with the experiences of African and African-Caribbean students. One main difference lay in that the IFS was more introspective in terms of considering the impact of the institutional mechanisms on its Black students. Another distinction was that this thesis looked outside the institution to explore what happened to the students once they were *outside* the institution. The resultant experiences served to exclude and mark them as '*Other'*. Professor George Yancy referred to this marking out, of his being Black, as the *'racialized scarlet letter'[14]* (Yancy, 2016). He goes on to say:

> *'I am marked as "different" within that space not because I **am** different, but because the conference space is filled with Whiteness…As Frantz Fanon writes, "I am overdetermined from without"'.* (Yancy, 2016)

For Yancy's reference to the conference space, I can substitute that for the school setting. Being pigeon-holed and racially over-determined was felt by the students. This is evident in Erolet's narrative when she describes how the class teacher had responded to the fact that she had a child. Her bafflement at the class teacher's presumption that she – Erolet – was at a disadvantage, was palpable.

> *'…that she [the classteacher] thinks I'm not going to pass this placement because I have a child which I didn't really understand…I've never missed a day of my*

placement, I've never been late and as far as I'm concerned, I'm doing everything that everyone else is doing regardless of whether or not I have a child.'

I too had felt myself *'Othered'* in a workplace environment where I was the only Black lecturer. Towards the end of my tenure there, if I had ever been under any illusions of being measured against the same academic and scholastic merits as my White colleagues, I was painfully and, in the long-term, thankfully disabused of that. Why thankfully? That experience made me confront the notion of my being a *'space invader'* and a *'bod*[y] *out of place'* (Tate, 2014). It was an acceptance and an acknowledgement of my everyday reality in academia and in my role as a teacher educator. For this, I consider the allusion to the film *'The Matrix'* to be apt. The character Neo is given the choice to continue living in blissful ignorance of the real world by taking the blue pill or to take the red pill and *'see how deep the rabbit hole goes'* (The Wachowskis, 1999). By choosing to acknowledge, observe and knowingly interact with the world as a Black woman, no longer colour-blind, I had chosen the red pill.

Although this thesis ostensibly is looking at the experiences of Black teacher trainees in school, to make sense of that experience I consider it important to take a look at the wider picture i.e. society at large and see how that impacts us at a micro level. We are now said to be living in post-Brexit, post-truth times (Flood, 2016) where the truth is considered irrelevant as long the point is met. Government policy informs the school curricula and greatly influences teacher training as well as, to some extent what we see, read and are able to do in schools. Governmental politics and policy are, in their turn, influenced by external politics occurring on the global stage that, at this moment in time, should give us all pause for thought. *'May you live in interesting times'* is said to be an old Chinese curse and I would say that we are living in interesting times. As with *'The Emperor's New Clothes',* we are encouraged to disbelieve what we see via acts of verbal sleight of hand and linguist prestidigitation. In this post-truth era, we have been introduced to phrases such as *'fake news'*[15] and *'alternative facts'*[16], interesting linguistic tools to add validation to this new way of seeing and understanding the world. On a micro-level, this resonated with the experiences of the students who encountered racism in its more subtle guises yet were being told, sometimes by their own inner voice, that what they saw and experienced was not true. This internal voice, an unknowing traitor within, was a result of being embedded in a system of Whiteness that refracted what the inner eye could see. A long process led to this ability to

create distortion. Amongst the Ashanti from Ghana, West Africa, where the legacy of the griot is still strong, the word *'Sankofa[17],* is translated as to go backwards in order to go forwards so it is important to look back historically at what has led to where we are now.

Epilogue: Sankofa

It is important to note that this study is grounded in a long history of systemic racism in British schools (Mac an Ghail, 1988; Swann, 1985; Macdonald, 1989; Gill, Mayor and Blair, 1992; Troyna and Hatcher, 1992; Gillborn, 2002; Gillborn, 2003; Andrews, 2016). That children from ethnic minorities were subject to ingrained racism, found within their schools and teachers, was powerfully illustrated by The Burnage Report (Macdonald, 1989). This report looked into the school playground racially-motivated murder in 1986 of 13 year-old Ahmed Ullah. It is not just the murder of this child/teenager that is shocking but also that the Swann Report, which had highlighted racism in schools and the need to change attitudes, had only been published a year before his murder. Teachers at his school were reported as doing and saying:

> *'I don't like them, they smell'* (teacher commenting to the Headteacher)
>
> *'A member of staff was grabbed by colleagues and has his face Blacked with shoe polish at a party because he was known to support the multi-cultural an anti-racist policies'*
>
> *'The wearing of pig badges by a large group of staff, many of whom were members of middle management…'* (This, in a school were the children were predominately Muslim) (Macdonald, 1989, pp. 140 – 141)

Not to use Burnage as a blanket model of all schools in the mid-80s but it does lend itself to an understanding of how many schools did operate (Swann, 1985). Although more subtle in its presentation, racism is still a fact in schools today (Marley, 2009; Maddern, 2011; Talwar, 2012; Bloom, 2014; Morrison, 2014). These teachers were products of their time and environment. Their training may have included very little (if any) critical engagement or discourse around race and multiculturalism, a fundamental aspect which can be tackled in ITE.

In the near past, when New Labour came to power in 1997, education was very much at the forefront of the political vanguard. Alongside that, came the acknowledgement of the

endemic racism that had helped engender an educational system that allowed racial bias to flourish both wittingly and unwittingly (Scarman, 1981, cited in Macpherson, 1999). The murder of Stephen Lawrence had taken place 4 years previously in 1993 and there had been attempts, stymied by the police and prosecution services, to bring his murderers to some sort of justice (Macpherson, 1999).

The Macpherson Report (1999) into the catastrophic failure of the police to investigate, with any integrity, the culpability of the accused men put the phrase 'institutional racism' into the British public and political zeitgeist. The report listed 70 key recommendations that, if fully implemented, would go some way to show society's *'zero tolerance'* (BBC News, 1999) towards racial discrimination. The main focus was on a reformation of the police but schools were also included.

The report suggested:

- *That schools record all racist incidents; that all recorded incidents are reported to the pupils' parents/guardians, school governors and LEAs;*
- *That the numbers of racist incidents are published annually, on a school by school basis;*
- *That the numbers and self defined ethnic identity of "excluded" pupils are published annually on a school by school basis.*
- *And that Ofsted inspections include examination of the implementation of such strategies.* (BBC News, 1999)

There was a suggestion that more emphasis be placed in the National Curriculum on cultural diversity, a notion echoed later down the years, even forcefully as seen when the History section of the 2014 version was initially put out to consultation and pilloried for its lack of any acknowledgement of Black and ethnic figures important to the development of British history (DfE, 2013; Mansell, 2013). The latest significant policy review into teacher training (Carter, 2015) serves to highlight the increasingly liminal spaces questions and issues around race and diversity are continuing to occupy in the educational discourse and pedagogy. Understandably, the main foci of ITE curricula are on, for example, developing in-depth subject knowledge, continuing professional development, teacher trainees confidence with behaviour management and teaching children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Moreover, references that are made to the curricula are apparently more concerned with whether teacher training institutions have taken on board the new National Curriculum

and whether their courses reflect that. The level of criticality evident in growing movements such as *'Why is my curriculum White?[18]'* amongst the student body and academia has in no way impacted upon this review.

Why does ITE matter?

Examples such as Burnage and the deeply racist language that was openly espoused by teachers impresses the importance of looking at ITE and giving teacher trainees the opportunity to engage in discourse that allows them to confront their own biases, no matter their ethnicity, and the impact of White privilege.

One aspect of being a teacher is that you have to be able to, along with their parents and family, equip your children with the tools to make sense of the world they inhabit, both on a local and global level. As Lander (2011b) states:

> *'There is no doubt that ITE plays its part in the cycle of on-going passive and institutional racism through the inertia of Whiteness as a discourse which pervades the thinking, action and inaction of ITE tutors...'* (Lander, 2011b, p.113)

This describes the setting that teachers and teacher trainees would have found themselves in prior to the 2010 change in government and subsequent policy; a previous setting that was ostensibly sensitive to and challenging of the educational and societal prejudices that had stymied the progress of so many African and African-Caribbean children.

However, this attempt to scratch the surface of the institutional racism embedded within schools noted as far back as Coard (1971) in his ground-breaking treatise on the way schools were effectively set up to view the White child and being White as normative so by definition the Black child as alien, as a *'bod*[y] *out of place'* (Tate, 2014), was undermined by the Liberal Democrat/Conservative Coalition government (2010 – 2015). With a 'one step forward, two steps back' manoeuvre, schools were informed that they no longer needed to inform the local authorities of any racist incidents and that teachers were better placed to deal with any incidents that did occur. In his address to the Liberal Democrat Race Equality Task Force, Professor Gus John (2012) stated:

> *'What is more, it rather suggests that White teachers and managers need not provide evidence of equipping themselves and White students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to recognise and confront racism, including that of the culture in which they, too, were socialised, and to be at ease with and respect and value themselves so that they can respect others, especially people who are different from themselves.'*

Picower (2009) had highlighted that very same point that John was making to an arm of the government in 2012. Pearce's work (2012) also demonstrated how the level of self-reflection and analysis needed to confront her Whiteness and inherent privilege was not a natural process but one that involved considerable thought, reflection and ownership of her benefit from the system.

The fundamental flaw with the Coalition government's rationale was the presupposition that the teacher or school would recognise racial bias and racism in their most subtle and most insidious forms. Yet, if they had never been subjected to racism, as White teachers embedded in a school setting that upheld Whiteness and its privileges, would they have the requisite tools to name and express what they had witnessed and were intending to deal with? Who would be charged with that responsibility?

Having the desire to challenge the supremacy of Whiteness, and accepting the training that can go with it, might not always be enough. This was recently illustrated for me when watching broadcaster and football fan, Adrian Chiles, recall an unusual football match that took place in 1979. The match was considered momentous and progressive at the time due to it being comprised of a team made up solely of Black players playing against a team of White players, some of whom were their club team-mates. What struck me was that when one of the players was asked to articulate some of the racist language and systematic abuse that he and the other Black players had been subjected to, Chiles urged him on with '*What was he [abusive football fan] saying? Don't be afraid to use the words.'* To me, this exhibits a level of benevolent ignorance. It did not appear to be considered that perhaps, for the Black player (George Berry), any reticence to repeat those words would bring back the hurt and anger that he and his team mates had experienced (which it did) and not necessarily because they wanted to protect the feelings of Chiles and the viewing public. By his comment, Chiles has put himself at the centre of the recount, an unconscious function of the privilege associated with Whiteness. This episode tellingly echoes the work of hooks (1990, cited in Lawler, 2014, p. 36) mentioned in chapter 3 where she writes '*...Only tell me about your*

pain. I want to know your story.' But it could be argued that here, Chiles, was not listening to the story. If he had, how could he ask someone to repeat the action of hurling abuse like stones but this time by their own hand and not by another's? The same thoughts and feelings were prevalent in Abigail's narrative where she expressed that she did not have to explain, re-visit the pain because she felt that I understood. This does go to the heart of the notion of insider-bias which will be referred to later on but it does highlight the fact that it was not felt that I had put myself at the centre by Abigail. Abigail's message was still her own and not diluted by having to explain to me what was meant or to be careful of my sensibilities:

> *'...this might sound bad but I think in the majority most people, like in* [name of an institution] *a lot of the lecturers aren't Black. And it might sound like a strange thing, not to you obviously but it's hard when it's like you can only really understand how it feels.'*

This brings me back to the speech made by John (2012) in the Houses of Parliament and my questioning of the government's rationale that White school staff would be best placed to determine what a racist act was and then know how to deal with it especially if, like Chiles, they had never been subject to it.

This train of thought also takes into account the ethnic make-up of the teaching force and also goes to the heart of this thesis. It is into a school environment that is fundamentally White that the teacher trainees go. The last school workforce census (DfE, 2014) stated that the teaching workforce was largely ethnically White British at 87.5% along with 86.6% of teaching assistants being listed as ethnically White British. This is in overwhelmingly stark contrast to the 1% recorded for Black Caribbean teaching staff. Just to note, there are no statistics given for the number of Black African teachers in the DfE report. This leads me to draw two conclusions: either the percentage is so small as to not be recorded or there has been a conflation of Black African and Black Caribbean. No explanation is given in the report for this omission for there *are* teachers of Black African ethnicity in the profession. Neither conclusion gives comfort. The first relates very much to this thesis and the conditions that Black students have encountered whilst on their degree course and on school placement. The second would be considered a typical, tiring to encounter and sad erasure borne out of either ignorance or just plain indifference to different Black ethnic groupings, something that should be unbelievable in the 21st century.

CRT has allowed me to interrogate the phenomena that students narrated to me as well as challenge the dominant discourse and everyday reality of Whiteness. Using CRT as a theoretical framework has served as a tool to decode, translate and illuminate the 'hidden in plain sight' meaning of the daily microaggressions the students sustained when they were teacher trainees in school, as Kiara illustrates:

> *'I don't really know, in a way, I kind of don't care. I just do what I need to do, but the point is… I don't know, being late is just seen as, okay, well, you know, you're Black, or…It's hard to say, because sometimes you can't really say people are thinking that because you don't know what people are thinking, but just from people's actions, or by the way someone looks at you, or sometimes when you say something and just by people's body language or response, you can kind of gather, yes, what they're underlying thoughts are.'* (Kiara)

The notion of *'ignorance'* and *'unwitting prejudice'* in relation to racist incidents in schools brings me back to the disquiet I have with the definition of institutional racism, as laid out by the Macpherson Report (1999) and its inclusion of the above terms. Perhaps harshly, I have considered the use of those words as taking with one hand what appears to be freely given with the other i.e. on the one hand, a strong outline and guidance in law as to how to perceive, in effect, Whiteness in action. Yet, on the other hand, if the institution rather than the individual in this case, is ignorant, thoughtless and/or unwitting, how can it, in any way, be able to perceive when it is re-enacting the same scenarios? A bruising and dispiriting Groundhog Day for those who have to witness it or bear it whilst operating in a system with the institutional memory of a goldfish.

Re-encountering the Research Questions

1. How does racism manifest itself for the students whilst they are on teaching practice?
2. What do they 'see' or perceive as racism enacted in schools?
3. How does what they experience affect their teaching experience? Do the students think that there are consequences for their careers following on from what they have experienced?
4. Do the training institutions i.e. the school and the University, hinder or facilitate the experiences of perceived racism? If so, how is this demonstrated?

These questions that were asked at the beginning of this journey need to be brought back into the frame and deliberated upon in relation to the data that was gathered. The theoretical framework has acted as a Rosetta stone, enabling a translation and decryption of the students' experiences. The purpose of this thesis was to explore the unspoken and silenced narratives of Black teacher trainees when placed in, ostensibly, multi-racial schools for whom diversity and ethnic equality is displayed as a central keystone to their school's ethos. RQ1 and RQ2 drew on the discourses surrounding experiences of covert racism, *'Othering'* and unconscious bias; all being symptoms of a school system where Whiteness prevails, where the Black body is abnormal because the White body is the norm.

During the pilot study, I had been struck by how one incident could be viewed differently, in terms of racism and *'Othering'*. This was initially highlighted by the view Yvonne took in relation to the responses of her White peers towards her. For instance, she was not seemingly unnerved by them leaving the table she came to sit at when other (White) colleagues arrived, leaving her on her own but Kiara, looking on, interpreted it as an unconsciously racist act. In discussion with Yvonne, there was the strong suggestion that having social and cultural links with that group denoted a sense of belonging, so there could be no act of *'Othering'*. This was a view diametrically opposed to Kiara's who saw the colour of Yvonne's skin, and the preconceptions attached to it in terms of having shared cultural and social touchstones, as the subconscious motivation for the White students distancing themselves. As has been noted within this thesis, I have used CRT as a theoretical lens to view and make meaning of these personal narratives. The lens informs what you see and how you interpret what you see. Dependent on the 'lens' these student-participants were using, they would have perceived (or not) racism being enacted during their school placement. What was perceived would also have an effect on how they experienced their placement (RQ3).

Finally, I wanted to interrogate the roles of the training institutions i.e. the University and the school, as seen from the students' points of view. How effective were the institutions in dealing with racism if it was brought to their attention? I was also concerned that not dealing with issues resulting from detrimental treatment, borne out of unconscious bias or covert racism, would have had a deleterious effect on both the students' educational and professional trajectories. This concern has been further highlighted by them:

> *'It's the retention though, isn't it, you can probably get Black students in the door, but if you are being treated like this out in the schools, it's difficult to stay the course. We're all women of a certain age, we're not young 22 or 23 year olds are we, so we're older, we're more mature, we've seen a bit of the world, we know what it's like out there'* (Lucy)

This point has also been noted in recent reports that highlight the high drop out rate for teachers within the first 5 years of qualification (Weale, 2015; Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2016). Moreover, Black students are twice as likely to leave Higher Education than White students (Equality Challenge Unit, 2015). If perceived acts of racism towards the students were not brought to the attention of the institutions, was this because the lines of communication were not there despite the research and data about Black students in HEIs? If the latter were so, could it be said that the HEIs were culpable of maintaining the structures (of Whiteness) that allowed those acts to flourish?

Key finding 1:

Unconscious Bias and Emotional Work (RQs 1, 2 and 3)

By the end of this study, there was a certain recognition that the impact of Whiteness on the students' experiences was and is profound. It affected them in the ways that they encountered the world of work and interacted with it. The impact of Whiteness also influenced them on a psychic level, in the ways they related to themselves and others around them. Self-blame and paranoia were, at times, the results of what they had experienced as Sewa said:

> *'I kind of get the feeling, I don't know, maybe it's just in my head…I kind of sometimes feels that she* [a teacher] *has something towards me. Maybe I'm thinking it…Maybe I'm feeling it as well.'*

What was clear through all the students' narratives was that racism and acts of racism were not overt and easy to pinpoint but were for the most part intangible and best described by the way they made the students feel. For the students, racism was felt in the microaggressions that they dealt with. It was seen in the small things, some covert and others not so, as well as in the emotional energy they exerted in order to protect themselves as highlighted by Abigail:

'You see now I think it's very kind of slight. It's microaggression. That's what I think the shape is and it's become the norm and it's really annoying because you just kind of...[VP: What do you mean it's become the norm?] *I think people just kind of go... That's what people say, isn't it? That's what you hear in the news report... No, you need to think for yourself. And I think a lot of people just, they don't think...I always think your gut instinct, your immediate reaction or feeling is that's what you should focus on, not how you try and perhaps rationalise it. It's how you immediately feel, you know if it's racism or not.'*

The emotion was palpable when some of the students were narrating their experiences. Yet there was the sense that letting that emotion show in schools and at University would somehow dilute and undermine their experiences in the retelling to school staff. The notion of showing emotion being akin to being irrational was pointed out by Keisha:

'I didn't want to seem like I was being irrational, quick to bring that [idea that her class teacher might be acting differently due to Keisha's colour] *into it and she was White and I just didn't feel that I could have done that, unless she'd said "you're a nigger" or said something blatantly racist. It was just a feeling that we all had, not just me.'*

The usually pejorative term 'hysterical' finds it etymological roots in the Greek word for womb, further indication of the negative linking between emoting and women. It is not an uncommon cliché to hear talk of the over emotional female or the 'angry Black woman' (hooks, 1992; Lorde 2007; Mirza, 2016) a lazy racial stereotype, used because she has been considered too forthright in putting her message forward. The first African-American First Lady of the U.S, Michelle Obama had this accusation levelled at her many times during her tenure in the White House (CNN, 2012; Capretto, 2016). It could be argued that using such labels were attempts to keep her 'in her place', reticent and ashamed to speak out for fear of embarrassing herself or her husband (Hill Collins, 2000; Lorde, 2007). Salem (2013) refers to this as the *'tool to silence'* and it is redolent of the imbalance in power relations that these student-participants sometimes felt themselves labouring under, an emotional labour. Katy, a pilot group participant told me of her frustration and anger when she felt others contorting themselves psychically and emotionally to fit in.

'You know, I get angry that people have to do this because it's almost like hiding themselves. And I suppose maybe I've made myself a target through my life because I've not been [silent] *and maybe I should shut up.'*

This echoes what Lorde (2007) wrote:

> *'My anger is a response to racist attitudes and to the actions and presumptions that arise out of those attitudes…I have used learning to express anger for my growth.'* (Lorde, 2007, p.124)

Feeling anger can be positive in that it can be a step to re-dressing the power imbalance because one can have an emotion to feed off that is not fear of failing the school placement or worry about how the school community perceives you. Yancy (2016) wrote '[h]*owever, it is the anger that I feel that functions as a saving grace, a place of being.'*

Being kept in place or knowing one's place, and allowing oneself to be subject to the power dynamic, was a recurrent theme in terms of how Whiteness operated through both the University and school staff, school system and extended school community to keep the students psychically bound within parameters that were not always constant.

> *'They're keeping me in a place and keeping themselves in a place'* (Ruth)

> *'I am new to the environment and there are those that have been there for 12 years, 15 years…I know people who have been in the school for years and who assume to know everything there is to know there and they kind of want you to give them, do you know what I mean? I give them that kind of respect, that's okay, we've been here longer than you and we know what happens here so you kind of sort of pay homage to them in a sense.'* (Sewa)

The experiences of hypersurveillance (Ruth: *'Yes, all the time, they were watching me, everything. Spelling, handwriting, I just felt I was totally being watched'*) added to the feelings of stress and emotional burden. This resulted in what Yancy (2016) refers to as Bentham's panoptican *'a theoretical prison designed to create a form of self-censorship among those imprisoned'* (Yancy, 2016) and this is evinced by the students being silenced for fear of being seen as too subversive or too complaining.

> *'You'd get an almighty backlash, I think, it will come somehow, by saying it that's what I feel…In my experience it's happened, I've witnessed it for myself, I said it maybe a year before and the backlash came later, because I'm labelled.'* (Lucy)

When the students were placed in these schools, it was not done with any recognition of previous problems Black students had had at some of those schools as illustrated by Tolu:

'I met an old student, she goes to the same church with me...she asked me the school where I was posted and I told her [name of the school]. *She didn't say anything to me, she just said well good luck....when I really started having the* [bad] *experience*[s] *I used to go to her. She said she didn't want to tell me because she didn't want to discourage me that she had it rough there with them as well...she said I don't know why they keep sending Black students to that school in her opinion she would suggest that they only send White students there because, like, they don't want Black students and we could tell because most of their teachers there said to us oh, I'm from* [name of University]*...half of their students are* [name of University] *students and there was no Black students amongst them.'*

Racism was generally seen as systemic by the students i.e. not down to the action of any person in particular (Ahmed, 2007). Some had felt lulled into a sense of security by the fact that there was staff of non-White ethnicity in their schools although, for the most part, the staff in charge were White and the auxiliary staff were of a BME background. There is a saying that a fish rots from the head downwards. As strong a statement that appears to be, the influence of the management on the ethos that pervades the school, sanctioned by the senior leadership team and governors, has to be taken into consideration. They lead by example and enact the policies. Yet, casual racism is evident in what Erolet and Sarah narrated:

'...there was once a comment about a Black child that basically she was living with her grandma and she'd gone back to her country, I'm not sure which country it was in Africa. But the headteacher just said something like 'yeah, she's been shipped back to where she comes from' and, I was sat there and I thought maybe I'm just being really sensitive but no-one batted an eyelid to that comment...' (Erolet)

'...there was one occasion where, something that the head teacher said and I thought, mmm, yeah, see this, she's the type of person that still has those kind of ingrained ideas about being multicultural. For example, there was one morning where one of the children called in ill...And she's like, oh, I can't remember the name, as well...she goes, oh, it begins with like A or like an E. I said, what, Emily? Eleanor? She was like, oh no, it's something a bit more argy bargy...She [the headteacher] *didn't see that as being racist, but me as a Black person I see that as being racist. And even the* [class] *teacher kind of ...just froze because she knew it wasn't right what she'd said.'* (Sarah)

Perhaps messages such as these, give subliminal, if not overt, permission for other comments and actions to form part of the school's unwritten ethos towards people of Black ethnicity. This finding serves to illuminate the emotional load the students struggled under. The effects of this will be discussed in key finding 3 when the coping strategies of the students are further examined.

Key finding 2:

Minstrelsy[19], wearing of masks and de-centering (RQs 1 and 3)

As previously noted, the feeling of oppression and constriction experienced by the students when on school placement, was evident in the way they had to manage themselves in order to navigate what was sometimes a hostile space. Abigail, in effect, makes reference to the psychological burden of mask-wearing:

> *'I felt like I had to be very friendly, which I find quite tiring sometimes. But for me the reason why I do it is I feel like I'm going to be the best version of me and then if you're still going to be a bit of a dick to me then I know it's because you've got a problem.'*

Abigail's words echo those of Fanon (2008) and those in the prologue to his work (Sardar, 2008, cited in Fanon, 2008, p.xiii):

> *'When the Black man comes into contact with the White world he goes through an experience of sensitization. His ego collapses. His self-esteem evaporates…The entire purpose of his behaviour is to emulate the White man, to become like him, and thus hope to be accepted as a man.'* (Sardar, 2008)

Putting aside the gender emphasis of Sardar's quotation, he highlights the mind-colonizing, mental slavery effect of coming into contact with a system of Whiteness, as was experienced by the students whilst on school placement. The experiences of having to portray a distorted caricature of oneself, 'minstrelising' one's identity so as to operate and exist in a world of Whiteness, were highlighted by Ruth. She was told to *'use* [her] *womanly wiles'* in order to be able to operate without affecting, and to protect herself from being affected by, the critical gaze of those around her:

> *'So I felt what she wanted me to do was laugh and be Rustie Lee[20]. You know Rustie Lee (heh, heh, heh) she wanted me to be like that, you know, just be the typical caricature Black woman'.* (Ruth)

Having the enforced role of minstrel; a Blackface non-threatening, happy-go-lucky potential figure of ridicule, along with the wearing of masks was a common thread to be found in a

majority of the narratives. This was bound to the emotional burden brought on by enacting (Fineman, 2003), or being viewed as these stereotypes. There is a sense of students labouring hard to maintain a level of emotional equilibrium when they enter those White spaces and fit in without being too distorted by the gravitational pull of Whiteness. They find that they are not at the centre of their own narrative, in terms of demonstrating their abilities as a trainee teacher and in terms of who they are. Whiteness is central and the question is, if they decide to stay how do they fit in *around* it. There is a feeling of having to prove their right to be there:

> '...I still had to prove myself, that is what I [know]...now, reflecting on things that happened at the beginning, I think they want me to prove myself sort of.' (Sewa)

> 'And I had a couple of children in my class who were staff children and one of the TAs has a child, the mentor has a child in my class and her face looked a bit sour to me. I sense a bit icy, the mother, because she's the mentor. And she would come in and the looks she was giving me I felt that she was probably worried about me teaching her child, if I was good enough, a proper teacher. But I think people's doubts were allayed when I did the parent conference because of my experience, because I've got kids myself and I've got the experience and I know what I'm talking about. I know how to talk to parents because I was a parent myself, all of those things. I felt that people relaxed and I felt I built some bonds.' (Ruth)

Key finding 3:

Places of sanctuary, safe spaces and coping strategies (RQ 4)

In a moment of controversy, it could be argued that the pervasive influence of Whiteness was not only corrosive but compelled the collusion in silence of the students if they were to survive their placement. The students were put in the psychologically uncomfortable position of being the oppressed, in effect, protecting the oppressor. In order to protect themselves, one strategy was to remain silenced. However, an unlooked-for result of this act was to also to shield the institutions that had operated under varying degrees of ignorance.

> '...my CBT, really he didn't have time to listen to anything I had to say. If I did come to, to give him a problem, I don't think he would ever have thought 'well, I'll spend an extra hour and come and see Erolet and see how she feels and even when we had our final grading.' (Erolet)

> 'I actually did speak to my visiting tutor about my teacher not really talking to me during PPA time; because it's 2-form[21], her and the other year 3 teacher would just talk and I'd be sitting there, not getting a look-in, not getting involved…it was very

hard to approach her [the classteacher] so I did mention it to my tutor and my tutor said 'should I talk to her?' I said 'no, it's early days.' I just wanted to tell you that because you're asking me how I am but I don't need to take it any further. But then she told the deputy head. He came to talk to me. 'Are you o.k?' So I think he must have told the Headteacher. She was furious because she was saying you're making our school look bad, you know, you don't need to be here, we're doing you a favour. So the word got out to my classteacher, I hadn't even spoken to her about it and I just thought it's wrong that they needed to do that and blow it up...I said all I was doing was expressing my feelings to my personal tutor. I spoke to her again and I said everything's fine now because our [classteacher and Larissa] *relationship did develop, I don't really need to tell her* [CBT] *because I don't really want to start things up again...a lot of drama there.'* (Larissa)

The above excerpt from Larissa's narrative highlights how the pressure to remain silenced was both implicit, through experiencing levels of covert racism and explicit when wanting to avoid anger and negativity from the institutions. In Larissa's case, the institution to placate was the school. Her experience also highlights the question of who could they trust? The CBTs were, in some way, already compromised because they were overwhelmingly White which did raise questions around affinity and sensitivity to particular situations. Along with this, the CBTs were representative of a system (University) that had already shown itself to be operating with a level of unconscious bias.

'...this might sound bad but I think in the majority most people, like in [University] *a lot of the lecturers aren't Black. And it might sound like a strange thing, not to you* [VP] *obviously but it's hard when it's like you* [VP] *can only really understand how it feels...So they're just thinking, oh, we can place you an hour and a half away, that's reasonable distance. Yes, but where are you placing me? I think that you have to be sensitive to it. Not over sensitive but I think you* [University] *have to be sensitive to it because you could end up in, Lord knows, middle of the BNP, National Front, yes!'* (Abigail)

The students could recognise the non-performativity of the policies in terms of protecting them from being discriminated against (Abigail: *'No, I don't think I'd go for paperwork, I think I'd, I don't know, I'd probably go to my mum first to be honest'*). The weakness in the institutional policies was that they dealt with overt examples of racism. Students talked about needing *'concrete evidence...I had no proof'* (Keisha). The policies were in no way fit for the purpose of detecting the subtle forms of racism the students talked about. Veering away from mentioning the racism (Keisha: *'I didn't bring colour into it...I just said I'm really happy...I didn't think that would have been appropriate'*) and not feeling free to discuss the possibility of it with their tutors, added to the emotional labour.

'I wouldn't have mentioned it to my CBT or anyone in the school because I think you have to be really careful when you start mentioning things like anything to do with race or anything because there's always an issue that you might be misunderstood or they might, you might be making excuses for something' (Erolet)

They did not wish to appear as if they were making excuses by reporting issues around discrimination. There was also the question mark over how far they felt they could trust even sympathetic White tutors. There was an element of racial connection and empathy that would have made them more comfortable if the ethnic link had been there.

'I think it would be different say if you [VP] *were my tutor because I would feel like you would be able to understand. But this isn't anything to do with* [name of a University tutor] *and whatnot but if it was her I wouldn't say anything because my immediate thought is well she would either be...try and comfort me too much and be too sensitive about it, and I'd just feel like you've got no idea what it's like so what's the point?'* (Abigail)

For the students to go to and seek emotional support and psychic sanctuary, the notion of a safe space (Patton, 2006; Trawalter and Richeson, 2008; Leonardo and Porter, 2010) was a problematic one. The institutions of school and University were both compromised. Yet, the safe spaces they found were not necessarily physical places but were, for the most part, found in each other and/or members of their family.

[VP: As students, what do you do when things get rather difficult? What strategy do you use personally?] *'Talk to my husband and that's about it [laughs] and then listen to what he says about it and what ideas he may have about how I can go about whatever is wrong in school.'* (Sewa)

'We go to the same church... We used to make fun of each other and say ah, because I'm an African woman I'm strong you know, I will not cry, I've seen worse, so it doesn't bother me, you know, but we would sneak into the toilets and cry and things like that then we'd come together and talk.' (Tolu)

'How we got through it? I don't know. We enjoy teaching our class and learning, just had to focus on that. We knew we weren't going to be there forever. It's just something you have to do.' (Larissa)

They demonstrated a remarkable level of resilience in completing both their placements and their PGCE considering the obstacles that they had to overcome. There is a touch of irony in this in that one aspect of the latest review into teaching training asks that *'explicit content on*

resilience' (Carter, 2015, p.15) be placed high up on the list of personal characteristics of successful applicants to any teacher training course. During interviews of potential candidates at my University, we offer them scenarios designed to interrogate their level of resilience. So here we have students who have successfully acquired a place at University and who are demonstrating this exact same quality of resilience and yet the system would seem determined to squeeze them out.

In terms of what could be implemented to help ensure Black students can stay the course, their narratives indicate that they draw on social and emotional resources that cannot be taught as part of University curriculum content. The urge to be strong and continue, despite the distressing scenarios they found themselves in, was intrinsic to whom they were and their personal make-up.

Chapter 6: Final Thoughts: More things change, more things stay the same

'Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.' (Karr, 1849 cited in 'goodreads', 2017)

FIFTH RULE
'True awareness requires an understanding of the Rules of Racial Standing. As an individual's understanding of these rules increases, there will be more and more instances where one can discern their workings. Using this knowledge, one gains the gift of prophesy about racism, its essence, its goals, even its remedies. The price of this knowledge is the frustration that follows recognition that no amount of public prophesy, no matter its accuracy, can (n)either repeal the Rules of Racial Standing nor prevent their operation.' (Bell, 1993b)

The content of the narratives that have been laid out in this study are not unusual or unique. The same narrative paths have been trod over many decades regarding the Black experience in education and, latterly, in higher education and teacher training. The two quotations above go some way to express the paradox arrived at in proposing the uniqueness as well as contribution of this work. There have been numerous studies written about the Black students' experience in H.E along with the difficulties of a successful passage through the H.E system (Tomlinson, 1983; Siraj-Blatchford, 1991; Mirza *et al.* 1995; Showunmi and Constantine-Simms, 1995; Gillborn, 1997; Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2010). So, to have found myself, three decades later, engaging in the same discourse surrounding the travails of Black students in H.E has been a bitter-sweet experience. To think that despite the many policies, finance and goodwill directed at leavening the educational, academic and vocational workplace for Black students (Davies and Crozier, 2005), progress has taken the form of a spiral; there is movement forward, some advances larger than the ones before but the sensation remains of, at times, re-treading the same ground. This engenders a feeling, paraphrasing Karr (1849), of there being change but ideas, experiences are similar and repeated.

The research questions in this study took, as a starting point, that racism existed within the school setting and the notion was to find out how the students had experienced this. The aim was to test the hypothesis that racism was present in schools, under whatever guise. The use of CRT was the theoretical lens that allowed the aim and research questions to be met i.e. to demonstrate racism's pervasiveness and invisibility as part of the systemic structures of schools.

A uniqueness of this study lies in its use of NI combined with CRT to recount the stories of the student-participants. CRT gave access to a toolkit of language (*'microaggressions'*), concepts (*'Whiteness'*), an allowance for the foregrounding of race and racism to enable the researcher to **realise** their stories and for the audience to **hear** them. My findings show that the chronicles of these students are, at their heart, the same, with themes of isolation, the attendant emotional distress, misrecognition, challenged identities and encountering of microaggressions. In addition, Bell's (1993) Fifth Rule of Racial Standing is apposite in how it expresses that one may see the workings of racism, a double-edged sword in itself, but the ability to prevent it is a perpetual struggle. This provides the backdrop to the following section where I consider future implications for practice and recommendations.

Contribution to professional practice and implications

> *'We are the Borg….We will add your biological and technological distinctiveness to our own. Your culture will adapt to service us. Resistance is futile.'* (Star Trek: First Contact) Khor, 2009

The most basic recommendation that this research will put forward is that tutors and schools will need to continually engage in training and continuing professional development (CPD) on aspects of diversity and inclusion in order to try and ensure a levelling of the field for Black students; both in school as teacher trainees and whilst training to be teachers. However, this conclusion alone would be facile in its statement and mask the complexity of the task at hand. Lander (2014) stated the importance of ITE implementing training and holding seminars that would allow staff and students to challenge stereotypes and help uncover their unconscious biases. I recently facilitated such a session by a visiting lecturer that looked at the unconscious biases we all hold and how they might affect the teacher in the classroom. The stories that the students came out with, both Black and White, all female were shocking in the sense that they were subjected to racist and sexually derogatory language whilst still secondary school children. Their teachers had abused their positions of power:

> *'I felt it was almost like a child and mother relationship that we had, it wasn't I respect you as someone, as a student, someone that's training to be a teacher, there was a power relationship…it was stressful…a power struggle or someone clearly got more power over you and they use it'* (Keisha)

In addition, being professionals teaching in 90s and 2000s, they were teachers that would have had ample access to CPD on race and gender awareness. Nevertheless, what stood out most powerfully from this session was the overwhelming need for a safe space to open up about experiences and help support the students' mental health.

I felt the need to apologise to the visiting lecturer when, in response to his asking for questions, only one response came back inquiring about his reading list. However, once the group were within the safe space of their seminar room and the safety of a group they were comfortable with, their testimonies came flooding out. It would be a useful innovation for the University to implement the notion of a safe space, whether that be physical as in a room you would go to and speak to someone, not unlike the sanctuary of a confessional. Or, the safe space could be found within a person, such as a mentor. The latter choice would have to be given careful thought. What might be the criteria to determine whether someone could act as a safe space? Would ethnicity, gender or age have to be considered? And who would be charged with determining that? The complexity around this was illustrated by John when he asked me whether he could speak *'in blunt terms'*. He was asking whether it was safe to talk to me (Leonard and Porter, 2010), his Black tutor yet also a representative of an establishment steeped in Whiteness and White privilege.

To halt and then perhaps reverse the tide, there has to be a willingness on the part of the policy makers, who inform teacher training institutions and schools, in their creation of the rubric teachers have to adhere to. The Teacher Standards (2007)[22] had particular provision for inclusion and diversity within the classroom. Q18 stated that, as part of their professional knowledge and understanding, teachers had to demonstrate knowledge of how children's *'progress and well-being are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic influences'* (Birmingham City University, 2007). This was further substantiated by Q19 that outlined the *'promoting* [of] *equality and inclusion in their teaching'* and Q25a that stipulated that teachers had to:

> *'Use a range of teaching strategies and resources including e-learning, taking practical account of diversity and promoting equality and inclusion.'* (Birmingham City University, 2007)

With the advent of the Coalition government (2010), new teacher standards were introduced (DfE, 2011) to replace the ones from 2007. Whereas it can be argued that there was some emphasis on equality and inclusion in the 2007 version, the stand-out aspect of the 2011 version is its focus on fundamental British values (Lander, 2016) and the implementation of the Prevent strategy[23]; a facet which has been argued as being divisive in conception and counter to the spirit of inclusion (Kahleeli, 2015; Sian 2015). Lander (2016) refers to the:

> *'stratification of citizenship into those who really belong, namely the indigenous majority, those who can belong, namely those of minority ethnic heritage who have assimilated or integrated and those who really do not quite belong, or those we tolerate up to a point, namely the Muslim 'other'.* (Lander, 2016, p.275)

This can then engender the uncomfortable scenario where Black students (and lecturers) are placed in the situation of having to engage in a discourse where their right to be, let alone be here and in the role of educators, is put under question. Combine this with:

- The continuingly poor retention of Black teacher trainees (Basit et *al.* 2006; Evans and Leonard, 2014),

- Ofsted no longer focussing on race equality provision and so aiding in the presentation of a non-racialised system (Wilkins, 2014).

- Along with significant evidence that White students still perceive their Black colleagues as *'Other',* (Picower, 2009; Lander, 2011b; Pearce, 2012; Wilkins, 2014). This leads one to question the training and educational environment that is being created and sustained.

This is further substantiated by the introduction of School Direct as the government's preferred training route for teachers. This was a significant change to the Teacher Training landscape. First proposed in 2011, one of its main aims was *'to give schools the ability to influence the way in which ITT is delivered'* (Teaching Agency, 2011, p.2). Ruth and Sewa were School Direct salaried students. One of the potential problems in the School Direct scenario is what to do if a student feels that they are being discriminated against within that setting? They are both student **and** employee of the school with a financial need and occupational obligation to their school/employer. This might then make it challenging for them to, in effect, question and oppose the school system; a system, embedded in Whiteness and White privilege, that is also supposed to police itself in terms of fair treatment.

The notion of the school self-policing is troubling to me in the same way the definition of institutional racism in the Macpherson Report (1999) was when it referred to the *'unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people'* (op.cit). If an action is carried out unwittingly and in ignorance, it would be difficult for the person or institution, to make conscious changes to avoid an issue they are unable to 'see'. So a willingness and ability to engage may be impaired.

As previously mentioned in chapters 1 and 3, the notion that schools should be seen as paragons of non-bias and impartiality is naïve and unrealistic. CRT recognises that racism is endemic to society and teachers are people who function and are part of society. They then create and execute the school ethos and, as since 2010 (Talwar, 2012), schools are no longer under any legal obligation to report incidents of racism to the Local Authorities, it is questionable whether incidents of racism will be recognised let alone dealt with when the incidents are seen, but ***not*** seen, due to being viewed through the lens of Whiteness and White privilege. So, it could be argued that the need for training, discussion and reflection by students, teachers and tutors is as important as it ever was.

When training is carried out at my institution, both with staff and students, there is an assumption by so-called liberal-minded academics, myself amongst them, that the lens that all students will finally view the matter through, is the one that we/I am looking through, the one that we/I am projecting, one that is informed by a CRT-influenced epistemological stance. However, I have no influence over how sustainable the concepts I put in place are or if they have even been interpreted or accepted in the way that I would have wished them to be. The inclusion of the quotation from *'Star Trek'* highlights the paradox I believe to be inherent within the discourse of what needs to take place in ITE in terms of CPD, the training of students and staff so as to level the playing field for Black students. As with the Borg, I think it can be argued that once you become part of a system, you take on board the mores and processes of that system i.e. you become assimilated. Or, you leave before you are painfully (r)ejected because you do not fit in with the prevailing ethos of homogeneity, whether that be in terms of culture, ethnicity or gender.

To take a rather pessimistic view would be to subscribe to Hobbes's (2008) view of human nature as quite venal, that humans are not naturally egalitarian and are always in pursuit of

power above another human or group of humans. Brooks (2007) encapsulates this by suggesting that *'We're tribal and divide the world into in-groups and out-groups'* (Brooks, 2007). In the testimonies gathered from the students, it is evident that, for the most part, they formed the *'out-groups'*.

Yet is resistance of this status quo a futile and Sisyphean task? Having to re-tread the same experiential ground would seem to suggest that what is being engaged in is a permanent and unrelenting battle for fair treatment that is essentially imbalanced from the outset. Referring back to the canon and the fifth and final rule of Racial Standing (1993), it would seem to suggest that resistance is, if not futile, is needed to confront the implacability and inexorable nature of the workings of racism.

So what is the role of the University in this? Equality policies that the University and schools have in place are designed to deal with overt examples of racism but are not imbued, linguistically or otherwise, to deal with the subtle acts of racism the students have had to deal with. The notion of non-performativity (Ahmed, 2004), if not in a speech act but in the written word of policy documentation (Kimura 2014), also undermines the credibility of these documents and lends them an air of Fool's Gold.

Trying to pre-empt potential difficulties could be done by gathering the students together before they go into school to discuss the kind of situations they might encounter. Or, introducing sessions around the issues of race so as to prepare students to deal with issues around racism (Bhopal, Harris and Rhamie, 2009). Forewarned is forearmed but how would this not be another example of *'Othering'*? An isolating discourse around alterity and non-inclusivity would immediately have been entered into and one led by the tutors, representatives of a system that can be seen as being symbolic of Whiteness present in education. Plus, there is no simple binary of 'White-majority schools = bad/Black-majority schools = good'. That is too simplistic a view and assumes a lack of complexity in world-view and intersectionality of experience of the staff involved, as illustrated by Clarisse:

> *'The first thing that I wanted to say is I was talking to Kiara earlier about identity and how you feel and everything like that. And we were saying how ironic it was that in my first placement I was in a school in Peckham, and obviously there's a lot of Black people in that area, most of the school was Black...there was a lot of Black staff but all of them, bar one, were TAs and stuff like that. For the teaching staff*

there was only one Black teacher, who happened to be a teacher that was in the class that I was in. So I definitely felt that I was a Black teacher when I was at that school…[VP: Black first then teacher?] Yes, definitely…I kind of felt isolated and I really felt that my race played a part in it. And it was quite weird because obviously the pupil population was Black but it seemed like there wasn't that expectation that you would progress to teacher status, for some reason. But the placement I'm in now…it's predominantly White, but I don't feel like a Black teacher; I feel like a teacher…you're intelligent, that's [the] *expectation, you're a brilliant teacher, great, that's what you should be doing…when I walked in to the school the first time I thought it was going to be a nightmare. But it completely changed my way of thinking, yeah, my perception.'*

Reflections and Adaptations

Engaging in this thesis has been rewarding on a number of levels. Students were given the forum to discuss their experiences of being Black in a predominantly White university and being trainee teachers in mainly White schools. This experience took place for them with me who, purely from a phenotypical point of view, was ostensibly like them, had experienced similar scenarios to them along my educational and professional journey. The influence of insider-bias was always there and I would suggest engendered a short-hand in understanding and interpreting what the students wanted to say. This short-hand derived from my having experienced similar situations to theirs. Critics might suggest that there may have been an element of over-interpretation in my data analysis and that it was based on an unacknowledged insider-researcher bias on my part. I would argue that my subjectivity offered me a level of insight that I might not otherwise have had if I had not also been subjected to the forces of Whiteness. In retrospect, I think that the central thesis would have been heightened by the inclusion of a more pointed Black feminist discourse. The essence of the responses to the RQs would have had a different slant but, like a needle on a compass springing back to magnetic North, the needle would have sprung unerringly back to the lived reality of racism in the professional lives of these students.

It was evident when the students were on placement that the majority of the teaching staff and senior leadership were White whereas the auxiliary staff (including teaching assistants, lunchtime monitors and cleaners) were usually Black or Asian, depending on the majority ethnic minority. I think that the notion of the colonial construct within the educational system deserves further research. What effects does that have on the children, their families and students such as my participants? Keisha, Larissa and Sarah pointedly asked me where

were all the Black teachers? I would argue that their lack of presence in the school and classroom was a symptom of the endemic racism experienced by the students in this study.

Quo Vadis?[24]

So, where do we go from here? I embrace my responsibility as a teacher educator to act on what I have learnt and help to create actions from their words. This will involve energy, steadfastness and commitment on the part of everyone involved. In thinking about this, I am reminded of the ancient Greek myth of the Hydra[25], a snake-like monster. Defeating it was one of the Labours of Herakles[26]. However, each time he cut off one head, another two would grow in its place until he realised that he had to cauterise the stump with fire. Using this as an analogy, the participants whilst in school, encountered the Hydra in the form of covert racism, and sometimes the cauterising effect was created by their own acts of self-preservation. I do not know what will be the equivalent effect in terms of policy to prevent future students experiencing what my participants did. The school system is just one of the many heads of the Hydra or the tip of an iceberg. To effect a change, would involve going to the root of the problem which sits somewhere in the way we treat and deal with each other. Confronting this would be the equivalent of taking the red pill from Morpheus and would prove a good starting point to tackling the roots of racism[27].

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Appendix 1

Dear students

As part of my thesis, I am carrying out research into the experiences of Black (of African and African-Caribbean origin) students whilst they are on school placement. It will investigate:

- Your experiences of being a trainee teacher during SE2.
- What support you get and how it is manifested.
- Any issues you may have come across and how they might have been resolved.

I would be really grateful for your participation in what I believe to be an important field of research. Please know that you are under no obligation to take part. **<u>Whether you agree to participate or not your response(s) will remain anonymous and strictly confidential.</u>**

As part of the process, each participant will be asked to take part in **2** interviews.

- One will take place during SE2 and the other will be post SE2.
- The times and dates can be arranged to suit us both as well as the place where the interviews take place.
- They do **not**, as a rule, take place on the school site, unless you specifically suggest this.
- Each interview will last between 35 – 45 minutes.

The interviews, for those who wish to participate, will be of a semi-structured format. This means that there will be some set questions that all participants will be asked with the opportunity for further elaboration.

To summarize:

- **Your participation is entirely voluntary.**
- **You are free to refuse to answer any question.**
- **You are free to withdraw at any time.**
- **The discussion will be recorded but all participants will be anonymised and strictly confidential.**

Please email me (v.poku@xxxxx) to let me know if you are interested in taking part.

Excerpts from individual interviews may be used as part of the thesis but under no circumstances will your name or overtly identifying characteristics be included.

Please either print a copy of this email and bring it with you to your interview **OR** be prepared to sign a copy before we start the interview. This is to show that you have understood and read its contents and understand the purpose of the research. I will give you a copy of your signed form.

---------------------------------------(signature)

---------------------------------------(name printed)

Appendix 2

Individual interviews Schedule

Pre-interview:

- *Thanks for coming and again purpose of interviews.*
- *Take copies of the consent form and give one to participant.*
- *Inform again that the interview will be recorded.*
- *Can be sent summary of findings as long as we still have their details*

1. **What did you think when you found out which school you were going to?**

2. **Tell me about your experiences in school as a Black female student? Do you consider that an overt part of your identity in school?**
   a. Prompts about the community
   b. Make-up of the children that they teach
   c. Responses from the children? Parents? Staff – auxiliary as well – leads to questions of power and authority (Ahlquist, 1991)

3. **How well were you welcomed into the school community and by whom?**

4. **Tell me about the make-up of the staff of the schools that you have been in**. (If need be, can prompt to find out about - 'othering') **[structures of Whiteness – colonial construct]**
   a. ethnic mix
   b. position of those staff
   c. numbers of BME
   d. gender

5. **Have you at any time felt, directly or indirectly, that you were being treated differently due to race, class or gender**?

6. **How did you deal with it? How was it dealt with by the school?**

7. **By the University? Did you mention any issues to your CBT? If not, why not?**

8. **Are you aware of the University/schools equality policies?**

End of interview:

- Thank participant for taking part. Will organize date for interview 2.
- Likely to happen during the week of XXX and tutorials after SE2.
- Questions from their own may be followed up once I have had the chance to look at the transcripts.

Appendix 3

Table 1: Final Thesis participants

Name	*Gender*	*Age range*	*Previous experience relating to training route*	*Training Route (specializing in the teaching of children within this age range)*	*Ethnicity*	*Focus group (F) and / or individual interviews (I)*
Ruth	F	40 - 49	School Direct. Previous experience as a teaching assistant. Various roles of responsibility prior to course.	5 - 11	African-Caribbean	F/I
Lucy	F	30 - 39	Learning support assistant.	3 - 7	African-Caribbean	F
Keisha	F	30 - 39	Saturday school volunteer. Administration.	5 - 11	African-Caribbean	I
Tolu	F	30 - 39	Business manager in Nigeria, House mistress and teaching assistant in the U.K	3 - 7	African	F
Tunde	F	30 - 39	French language translator. Previous experience teaching in Portugal.	7 - 11	African	I
Erolet	F	20 - 29	Teaching assistant and play worker.	5 - 11	African-Caribbean	I
Larissa	F	20 - 29	Play worker	5 -11	Mixed (African/White European)	I
Sarah	F	20 - 29	Office administrator	5 - 11	African-Caribbean	I
Abigail	F	20 -29	Project manager dealing in quantitative research	7 -11	African	I
Jennifer	F	40 - 49	English as an additional language teaching assistant. Administrator.	3 - 7	African-Caribbean	F
Sewa	F	40 - 49	School Direct. Previous experience as a teaching assistant. Various roles of responsibility prior to course.	5 - 11	African	F/I

Appendix 4:

Table 2: Pilot study participants

Name	Gender	Age	Previous experience relating to training route	Training Route (specializing in the teaching of children within this age range)	Ethnicity
John	M	20 - 29	Mentor to Black boys	7 - 11	African-Caribbean
Yvonne	F	30 - 39	Business manager	5 - 11	African-Caribbean
Kiara	F	20 - 29	Student. Mentor.	5 - 11	African-Caribbean
Clarisse	F	20 - 29	Student	7 - 11	African-Caribbean

Table 3: IFS participants

Name	Gender	Age	Previous experience relating to training route	Training Route (specializing in the teaching of children within this age range)	Ethnicity
Liz	F	20 - 29	Student	5 - 11	African-Caribbean
Angela	F	20 - 29	Student	5 - 11	African-Caribbean
Sandra	F	20 - 29	Student	5 - 11	African-Caribbean
Betty	F	20 - 29	Student	5 - 11	African

(Please note that all the students listed in Appendices 3 and 4 took part in the thesis study at different times during this process. Students in Table 1 took part in the final stages. Their participation built on the work from the IFS and the Pilot study).

Appendix 5

<u>Focus group schedule</u>

- *Say thanks to participants – this focus group meeting will last for 1 hour*
- *Protocol is just that you speak clearly so that the microphone can pick up what is said*
- *Remind them of the need for confidentiality involved and not to discuss what has been said by attributing names to comments made*
- *Their participation is entirely voluntary and they can withdraw at any point*
- *Transcriptions are being drawn up so you will have the opportunity to look over what is written. All will be anonymised and pseudonyms used.*

<u>Questions:</u>

1. Quality of support from the University/CBT has been patchy. Any views on this? What can be done to make it better?
2. Quality of support from the schools has been on a spectrum? Any additional views on this? What should be done with schools where you believe the experience is not wholly positive?
3. The use of the term 'Black', what does it mean to you when you use it to perhaps identify yourself or it is used to identify you?
4. Number of Black teachers in school – your thoughts on why there might be not that many in areas that are very ethnically diverse.
5. Would you recognise racism if you saw it in school? What does it look like?
6. Can any of this change?
7. How did you deal with your day-to-day experience when you were in school or were outside of that environment?

Footnotes

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[1] *'Leader of the Free World' was a term used to denote the U.S or the President of the U.S. during the time of*

[2] *This document has not been referenced because to do so will nullify the anonymity of the Institution.*

[3] *Stephen Lawrence (1974 – 1993) was a young Black British man, murdered by racists whilst waiting at a bus stop in Eltham, South-East London.*

[4] *Dubbed the 'Terrorist Fist bump' cartoon, Michelle Obama is pictured with an afro and an automatic rifle slung across her back whilst Barack Obama is dressed as a Muslim.*

[5] *'Dysconsciousness'*, a term coined by Professor Joyce. E. King, referred to *'an uncritical habit of mind…that justifies inequity and accepts the existing order of things as given'* (King, 2015).

[6] The phrase *'Groundhog Day'*, the title of a 1993 film, is now used to describe any unpleasant situation that is, or appears to be, repeating itself.

[7] Abigail, 20 – 29, African ethnicity, born and bred in North London. She participated in the pilot study.

[8] VP – my initials for 'Veronica Poku' when acting as the interviewer.

[9] Betty, young Black African student, second generation, brought up in Ghana before she came back to England. Education was very important to her, her siblings and her mother. She very much believed in personal agency. A large factor in this was due to her being spoken to by an Asian female teacher at secondary school who spoke to her, in effect, about racism and White privilege.

[10] Ruth, 40 – 49, AC, had had extensive experience working in schools as a Teaching Assistant and Higher Level Teaching Assistant, a position which can involve looking after (not necessarily teaching) the class in the teacher's absence.

[11] Erolet, 20 – 29, AC, former teaching assistant and play worker.

[12] *College-based tutor whose role would be to come in and observe the students teach, act as a support, confidant(e) and 'critical friend'*

[13] *Classic Outcome II is a part of the session when the student is able to demonstrate that a learning objective has been met.*

[14] *'The Scarlet Letter' by Nathanial Hawthorne, has Hester Prynne as its heroine and main protagonist. She is forced, lifelong, to wear the scarlet letter (A), having been accused of adultery. This immediately marks her as a pariah and an object of shame.*

[15] *Term popularised by Donald Trump, President of the United States (POTUS), in response to comments and press releases he disapproved of.*

[16] *Orwellian-type phrase used by Kellyanne Conway, senior U.S consultant to the POTUS, to describe the reality gap in reference to the number of people who turned out for Trump's inauguration crowd when compared to Obama's.*

[17] *'Sankofa' is from Twi, a language spoken in Ghana. The Sankofa bird is an Adinkra symbol. It is usually symbolized as a bird with its head turned backward, taking an egg off its back or sometimes as a heart shape. These symbols are used in Ghana/West African tradition to translate meanings. The Sankofa bird represents the importance of learning from the past.*

[18] *'Why is my curriculum White?' is a campaign started by students at UCL. It was in response to the lack of racial diversity amongst the canon being taught to them. Their further aim was to provoke conversation about how this lack permeates the whole educational system.*

[19] *Minstrelsy was initially an American entertainment-form. White people would perform in Blackface make-up, usually to satirise Black people. It involved certain stock characters including the 'mammy' as portrayed in 'Gone with the Wind' and Hattie McDaniel's character who was called Mammy. Part of the mammy's role was to take care of the White children of the people she served.*

[20] *Rustie Lee – T.V personality and cook along with being a former political candidate for the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) in 2004. Known for being very jovial.*

[21] *Two-form entry means that there are 2 classes in one year group*

[22] *In 2007, the Teacher Standards consisted of 33 requirements. They were called Q standards. Teacher trainees had to provide evidence against these Q standards at the end of their training to demonstrate that they could be recommended for QTS.*

[23] *Prevent is part of the Government's anti-terrorist strategy. Primary school practitioners, child care providers and providers in 16-19 academies have a legal obligation to prevent radicalization.*

[24] *Quo Vadis? A Latin phrase meaning 'Which way are you going?'*

[25] *The Hydra was, according to myth, a many-headed snake-like monster.*

[26] *Herakles is the Greek name. Even though the Roman name of Hercules is more widely known, it came after the Greek version.*

[27] *See the book written by Bhavani, R., Mirza, H.S. and Meetoo, V. (2005) Tackling the Roots of Racism. Bristol: Policy Press*