The Perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their Educational Achievement.

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December 2011

Abstract

Aim: This study aims to investigate <u>The Perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their Educational Achievement.</u> The study wants to investigate the factors that might affect the perceptions, which this cohort has of their educational achievement. The study will look at factors such as family background and the cultural identity of African-Caribbean boys within secondary education and will also look at factors such as racism in British society, school curriculum and potential teacher racism as factors that could affect the perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their educational achievement.

Sample: Twenty African-Caribbean males within secondary education. This sample is aged 15-16 years old and is about to sit their GCSE examinations. African-Caribbean means black boys of African heritage, Caribbean heritage and mixed African and Caribbean heritage.

Method: Participants engaged in semi-structured interviews of around one hour mainly about their family backgrounds, experiences at school and experiences in wider society. I was also able to get background information on all of my participants from the deputy headmaster of the sample school.

Results: My sample's perceptions varied in terms of their educational achievement. This was mainly dependent upon their family background and consequent cultural identity. These factors affected how this sample perceived racism in and outside of school and how they responded to the level of black history and culture taught at their school.

Conclusion: This study looks at a black ethnically diverse sample that includes black boys of African heritage, Caribbean heritage and mixed African and Caribbean heritage, which is a rare cohort in terms of the current literature that exists on black male achievement. This study concluded that Family dynamic and cultural identity are the main factors in terms of those black boys who have identities that are conducive to the formal structure of secondary education and those black boys whose identity is not conducive to this academic environment. Black boys who have a negative learner identity are much more affected by racism and a lack of black historical-cultural knowledge within the school curriculum. Therefore both cultural identity and racism were major factors in terms of the perceptions this cohort had about their educational achievement.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank first and foremost my mother who died after a life of exhaustion spent loving and serving her family and who should have been loved, respected and cared for much more than she was, to my everlasting shame. Without my mother I would not have been in a position to start my studies. She was a towering light of humanity that acted as an example to us all of the diamond standard required in order to be truly human, an exemplary soldier of the light and my best friend.

I would like to thank my dad who helped to give me the tools necessary to keep my head above the water at a crucial time when all could have been lost.

I would like to thank my loving partner Claire who has been my guardian angel assigned by god. Without her my life would have been hell. I cannot write about all that Claire has done for me because such an endeavor would equate to another lengthy thesis but needless to say I would not have been able to finish my studies without her. I truly owe her my life.

I would like to thank my Supervisor Professor Ian Davies and The Education Department at York University for their Knowledge, patience and support.

I would like to thank Kay Mitchell formally from registry services at the university of York as well as the registry services staff in general without whom it would have been impossible for me to complete my studies; these staff has been a beacon of humanity for me in my darkest of hours.

I would like to thank the special cases committee at the University of York for the depth of their understanding, their patience and their humanity.

I would like to thank Mike Sullivan the deputy headmaster of the secondary school that I used to collect my data, for opening his doors to me and giving me an opportunity where others had declined.

Finally I would like to thank my friends for their continued support throughout this Study.

Authors Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that I have not previously submitted this thesis for any award either at the University of York or any other institution.

All Sources are acknowledged as References.

Introduction

The research question guiding this study is: What are the perceptions of a sample of African-Caribbean boys about their educational achievement?

The main aim of this study is to try and find out what perceptions my sample has of their educational achievement and what has helped to shape these perceptions. To elaborate further the main aim of this research study is to try and find out what contributes to members of my sample having a positive perception of their academic achievement and what contributes to other members of my sample having a negative perception of their academic achievement. The study is also interested in looking at the difference between the perceptions of academic achievement between the black Caribbean males in my sample and the black African males in my sample because statistics show that black African boys consistently outperform black Caribbean boys when it comes to 5 A*-C GCSE attainment and are less likely to be excluded than black Caribbean boys.

The origin of the main aim of this research project comes from my own personal interest in the academic achievement of black Caribbean boys. I have this interest because I myself am of black Caribbean heritage as both my parents were born in Jamaica and migrated to Britain. I also have an interest in this topic because my secondary education as a black Caribbean male was poor mainly because I was not interested in the majority of the subjects taught at school and mainly because of peer pressure and discovering my identity through my peers. My identity was very unsecure because I did not understand my black masculine role and had no knowledge of self and so searched for these things through my peers at school, which took up most of my concentration. Needless to say I failed my GCSE's where my highest grade was a 'D'. So this research project is to a certain extent a biographical venture where I hope to discover a little more about my failings at school.

The research strategy for this study has been a qualitative small-scale study because of the importance of collecting quality in-depth data. The research techniques for the study included a semi-structured interview technique and involved one to one in-depth interviews with boys of black African and black Caribbean heritage.

The thesis makes a substantial and original contribution to knowledge and understanding of black male achievement because it controversially reveals the fact that one member of my sample although a British citizen and over four hundred years on from the transatlantic slave trade, expresses that he has an organic black or African consciousness and that he needs to connect with a historic black or African vernacular that can help him to make sense of his experiences. Literature suggesting that black children should be orientated around an African centered education agenda suggest that black children could benefit from this as cultural outsiders but do not look at the possibility that some black British children could have an organic African component to their consciousness, which needs to be nurtured with African history and culture to stop the feeling of 'disorientated autonomy' that is cultural disorientation and isolated autonomy as a black British individual as opposed to part of a black African-Caribbean community.

Based on data from the majority of my sample the high levels of discipline within the black home was a very dominant theme and a lot of my sample felt that the reason why some black boys fail at school and become members of a gang is because they do not come from a disciplined home environment. With this in mind there are no studies about trying to emulate this level of discipline that exists in some black families, within the school itself especially the discipline that exists in the Jamaican schooling system and within the African schooling system where teachers have complete respect and obedience from their pupils according to members of my sample.

Literature Review

This research question is meant to focus on the perceptions my sample have of their academic achievement and what has helped to shape these perceptions. For example my samples perception of racism in Britain or their parent's perception of racism in Britain could impact on my sample by helping them to perceive their educational achievement as even more important in order to overcome or transcend racism. It is also possible that members of my sample may perceive such racism as insurmountable, which could affect their perceptions of their academic achievement negatively. It is for this reason that I discuss the socio-political infrastructure of Britain in relation to perceived racism, as well as other dimensions of racism, which could either be perceived as a motivational force or

as an insurmountable barrier thus impacting on perceptions of educational achievement either positively or negatively. After discussing wider societal racism, I discuss literature on pedagogy because my samples perception of their teachers as either positive or negative forces influencing their education could be integral to how they perceive their educational achievement. I then discuss literature on good multicultural practice in schools specifically in relation to black achievement. This literature is important because my sample may feel that the school itself is not an institution, which pushes a diverse education agenda, which includes them, and this could affect the way in which they perceive their educational achievement either positively or negatively.

Finally I take a look at literature on parental discipline because the level of discipline that is enforced and the importance of education that parents communicate to the members of my sample could be crucial in how the members of my sample perceive the importance of their educational achievement.

Methodology

The research question guiding this study is one that is exploratory, in addition, my sample for this study are an unpredictable highly complex phenomenon whose voice can only hope to be heard through in-depth qualitative enquiry as opposed to a controlled positivist experiment, which would be worthless within the context of this study. My research instrument for this study then, was a semi-structured interview schedule because I wanted to provide some sort of structure for the interviews based on previous data from a pilot study as well as key themes that appear in the research literature. However, as well as having this structure I also wanted to allow my participants to have the freedom necessary to answer my questions in their own way as well as perhaps adding another dimension to the question or maybe rejecting the question altogether as non-applicable. My sample for this study was twenty African-Caribbean males aged 15-16 who was about to take their GCSE examinations. This cohort is made up of a heterogeneous black ethnic mix, so there are boys who are of African parentage, Caribbean heritage and mixed African and Caribbean parentage. The reason for choosing a cohort of twenty boys was based on the maximum number of boys that I could interview based on the schedule of the sample school and my own research schedule. The reason for choosing a heterogeneous ethnic mix of black boys was to try and explore

any nuances that might exist amongst this group in terms of their perceptions of their academic achievement based on family dynamic, identity and racism. I expected that there might be nuances amongst this cohort based on the fact that Caribbean heritage males tend to underachieve more so than their African heritage male peers.

Data Chapters

Macro Subjective Structure

Within this chapter I explore my samples perceptions and experiences of racism within British society, these perceptions and experiences fall within several different genres of racism that make up the sub- sections of this chapter. I discuss the sample data in relation to two aims; the first aim is to discuss the perceptions and experiences of my sample in relation to the type of racism that they perceive exists in Britain and my second aim is to look at how my sample are affected by this racism as with regards to their learner identity status, to explore whether there is a link between racism and learner identity status. In all of the sub-sections of this chapter I divide the respondent statements, generally, into respondents who perceive racism as a surmountable barrier, respondents who perceive racism as a barrier and respondents who are just generally aware of racism. I have divided the respondent statements across these three categories because these are the categories that the respondent statements naturally fall into; it is also a system that is helpful in linking these statements to a respondent's learner identity status. The meaning of learner identity within this thesis means the extent to which my samples identities are conducive to the formal structure of secondary education success, which is measured by the attainment of five GCSE grades or more ranging from A*-C.

Mezzo Objective Structure

I argue within this chapter that a black historical-cultural intervention may be helpful in terms of helping to construct a stable black identity by providing a historical vernacular of black experience, which may help to answer certain crucial ontological and epistemological questions regarding existence. I argue that perhaps history provision within the national curriculum quota may be a little narrow in terms of its black historical content and that white supremacy could be guilty of editing the black historical narrative so that it fits within the world created by euro-centric hegemony, thus omitting the story

of how white hegemonic power came into being and the organic histories that existed before its entrance onto the world stage. All of these issues or themes are all linked to the main theme, which is the need for a black historical-cultural intervention for those respondents who are not as culturally rooted, as they would like to be. They are issues that in my view lose their meaning if quantified individually, though I do attempt to discuss the issues, in the above order, as much as possible. I also argue that the majority of the respondents who either do not want a Black historical-cultural curriculum intervention or who did not comment on the issue at all have positive learner identities and a strong cultural rooting, which supports the argument of those respondents with negative learner identities wanting to be taught more black history and even those with positive learner identities who want to enhance their black historical knowledge because they are not as culturally rooted as some of the other positive learners, something which I have explained above.

Mezzo Subjective Structure

This chapter is called the Mezzo subjective structure because it focuses on the subjective elements of the sample school as a middle structure between the state and the individual. I have divided this chapter into two main sections, which are 'teacher racism' and 'school intervention'. Within the teacher racism section I discuss both those respondents who perceive teacher racism and those respondents who do not perceive teacher racism. Within the school intervention section of the chapter there are two subsections, the first subsection is Black History Month, where I discuss data in relation to respondent views on the sample schools investment in Black History Month. The second sub-section is orientated around the ACE & ASPIRE projects, where I discuss respondent views about these two school intervention programs. The data from this chapter shows that 42.5 % of my sample perceives teacher racism, and 17.5% do not perceive teacher racism and 40% of my sample did not provide data on teacher racism at all. My argument regarding perceived teacher racism is that it could be an issue especially for those pupils who have negative learner identities, the overall argument here is that teachers may have been institutionalized by white supremacy and thereby predisposed to prejudicial views of black students and their cultures. I also present the opposing argument based on the fact that only 42.5% of my sample perceived teacher racism, which is that teacher racism may not exist, it may be that teachers are rightfully disciplining black boys who are disruptive, rude and lazy (Foster, 1992; Sewell, 2010). My argument regarding those respondents

who did not perceive teacher racism is that the majority of this group 12.5% have stable strong cultural identities, a disciplined home environment and have a hunger for academic success and so their identities are conducive to the formal structure of secondary school education in the UK and so they get on with their teachers perfectly well without friction. This hypothesis supports the theories of Sewell (2010) and Foster (1992).

Micro Objective structure

This chapter is divided into two sections; the first section titled high discipline is where I discuss the 65% of respondents who have provided data about their perceptions of high levels of discipline within their family backgrounds. The second much smaller section is where I discuss the one respondent (5% of sample) who provides data about his perception of the poor level of discipline within his family background. I discuss the 30% of respondents who have not provided data at all in this section, in the conclusion.

The data in this chapter shows that there is a link between the high levels of discipline in the family background of the high achieving respondents and their academic performance and it shows that there is a link between the poor level of discipline in the family background of a respondent not doing well academically and his academic performance. The data also shows that some of the respondents who perceive high levels of discipline within their family background are not high achievers at school and I discuss these respondents within the conclusion because elements of their data are similar to the data, which I discuss in the main body of this chapter.

The main argument that I make in this chapter is that high levels of parental discipline coupled with a strong cultural grounding appears to equate to black boys with both an African heritage and a Caribbean heritage performing at a high level academically. I argue that the absence of strict parental discipline and a strong cultural rooting can lead to poor academic performance and potentially in relation to one respondent (MJ13) gang membership and violent crime. I also argue that there may be complex brands of discipline that provide a moral education but that do not secure academic excellence for a portion of my sample. Finally in relation to 30% of my sample who did not provide data in this chapter I argue that it's possible that these respondents may have assumed that all black people including myself should automatically know that black families equate to discipline and therefore felt it unnecessary to comment on discipline within their family backgrounds. There is data within this chapter that highlights this potential assumption.

Micro Subjective structure

Within this section of the discussion of data I discuss social motivations that could influence the perceptions that my sample have about their educational achievement. These social motivations include role models, religious affiliation, cane piece ideology, which is the socialization process within environments of poverty that motivate members of my sample to achieve high standards academically.

<u>Findings</u>

The findings from my study reveal the fact that strong African-centered cultural orientation in relation to black male achievement is perhaps the most key ingredient when it comes to black male academic success. This African centered cultural orientation seemed to resonate the strongest in black males who had been partially raised and schooled in the country (Africa/Jamaica) of their ethnic origin before entering the school system in the UK. Parentage was also a crucial part of orientating a child in an African-centered way based on discipline and traditional cultural exposure. It was also very important for members of my sample to of had been raised in a two-parent environment where the father played an active role in their development. Hence it was those members of my sample who were born in Britain and of Caribbean heritage (perhaps 2nd or third generation parents) in a single parent household headed by a female that tended to have a more negative perception of their academic achievement and who were actually underachieving in school.

A Review of Literature

Introduction

The research question guiding this study is "What are the perceptions of a sample of African-Caribbean boys about their educational achievement?" The term African-Caribbean refers to boys of black African heritage, boys of black Caribbean heritage and boys of black African and black Caribbean heritage. This research question is meant to focus on the perceptions my sample have of their academic achievement and what has helped to shape these perceptions. For example my samples perception of racism in Britain or their parent's perception of racism in Britain could impact on my sample by helping them to perceive their educational achievement as even more important in order to overcome or transcend racism. It is also possible that members of my sample may perceive such racism as insurmountable, which could affect their perceptions of their academic achievement negatively. It is for this reason that I discuss the socio-political infrastructure of Britain in relation to perceived racism, as well as other dimensions of racism, which could either be perceived as a motivational force or as an insurmountable barrier thus impacting on perceptions of educational achievement either positively or negatively. After discussing wider societal racism, I discuss literature on pedagogy because my samples perception of their teachers as either positive or negative forces influencing their education could be integral to how they perceive their educational achievement. I then discuss literature on good multicultural practice in schools specifically in relation to black achievement. This literature is important because my sample may feel that the school itself is not an institution, which pushes a diverse education agenda, which includes them, and this could affect the way in which they perceive their educational achievement either positively or negatively.

Finally I take a look at literature on parental discipline because the level of discipline that is enforced and the importance of education that parents communicate to the members of my sample could be crucial in how the members of my sample perceive the importance of their educational achievement.

The research question is all about African-Caribbean boy's perceptions of their educational achievement and what has helped to shape these perceptions about their educational achievement. In relation to this research agenda I have searched for

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literature that has been directly linked to black male achievement using search terms within the British Education Index database, the British Humanities Index database, the Education Resource Information Center electronic database and the Nexis UK database, such as: African-Caribbean achievement, black male achievement, Afro-Caribbean male achievement, high achieving black boys, good practice in schools for black achievement, multi-cultural education, racism and black achievement, racist schools, racism and black achievement, black academic failure, black academic success, racism and the curriculum, racist education policy, educational triage, Black history month, single parent families, black fatherhood, absent black fathers, African parental values, African values, African educational values. There are possibly some search terms that I have possibly forgotten and I have used other search techniques such as searching for papers by well-known authors by author name (Paul Gilroy, David Gillborn, Deborah Youdell, Heidi Safia Mizra, Tony Sewell, Nicola Rollock, Joyce E King, Henry Giroux and Paulo Freire) and looking at the reference pages of all of the articles that I found through the search terms. I also used my own knowledge of black cultural trends that affected me as a youth such as my search for literature on 'road culture', which I know influences a lot of black boys negatively giving them a negative perception of academic achievement. There have also been newspaper articles that I have read and articles that have been recommended to me by other academics at my home university and at conferences. I also know from experience that there is a lot of discipline in black households where there are strict rules and where educational achievement is a top priority, which in my experience has heavily influenced the perceptions, which my friends have had regarding their educational achievement. So there have been a plethora of ways in which I have identified the literature that I review below.

Socio Political Infrastructure

My research question focuses on the academic achievement of black boys and how this may be linked to their perceptions of society in general (especially racism, and the position of black people), their family background experiences and their experiences at school. Based on this research question I think it important to look firstly at the British response to the post-war black immigration and settlement that took place and the racial sensibilities that were formed by British society in response to this perceived social upheaval. This is important to my research because it highlights the precursor of British racialized thought in relation to black people on a mass scale in modern times,

something, which may well have shaped the perceptions my samples parents had of British society, opinions that may well have been passed on directly to members of my sample. There are other complexities that surround this period and predate it, that are not only integral in understanding this period of black immigration in its full context, but which also help us understand British racism generally (especially in relation to immigration) from the Windrush post war immigration era (and earlier) to our post-modern contemporary moment. I begin my review of literature then, with Gilroy and others (Paul, 1997; Rich, 1989) who explain that the imperial British pomp of empire, once lost, turned Britain into a psychologically depressed landscape. That this combined with a decline in industry and the waning prestige of British culture, a result of the glory days of ubiquitous great British exports and achievements, to some extent, declining against the levelling principle of the two world wars, has all coincided with immigration anxieties. The anguish of economic scarcity and the crisis of identity that resulted from these processes created the illusion of black immigrants as an invading force that would absorb the scarce resources of the poor working class and threaten the mundane minutiae of British domestic custom, the stronghold of British culture and identity (Solomos, 2003). This racist perspective captured in Enoch Powell's famous speech on immigration in Birmingham in 1968 regarding black immigration was not something novel, it was the re-birth of something very old just involving new actors (Panayi, 1994; Miles & Phizacklea, 1979; Solomos, 2003; Young, 2008). British nationalistic tendencies have always been a compensatory vehicle, to balance painful loss and to make sense of the cold reality of capitalism inflicted by the ruling classes (Robinson, 1983). These nationalistic tendencies provide stability, a point of consistency, a reservoir that British identity references as its primary resource in an ever-changing world, thus British identity is embedded within racial antagonism, it is the means by which, this identity affirms and re-affirms its mythological Anglo-Saxon purity (Horsman, 1981; Rich, 1989; Robinson, 1983; Young, 2008). So even though as Gilroy highlights Britain is dragging its heels towards 'racial conviviality', more visibly today in the form of interracial couples featuring prominently in television adverts as an accepted element of Britain's domestic landscape, the black halves of these couples are completely assimilated to British cultural norms. Dictated by the new racism these adverts similarly to the 1983 Conservative Party election poster highlighted by Gilroy (1987:64) act as signifiers of what is required, especially of Black males in order to be accepted as true British nationals, which transcends the legal definitions of the state and is observed through cultural identity.

This means that black cultural expression is not desirable and must be forfeit If British national belonging is the priority, as only dominant white cultural norms will suffice in this endeavor. Hence British politics is ambiguous about the black man, as to whether he can completely assimilate to British cultural norms or if there is an underlined allegiance to black cultural deviance.

The above literature then, is meant to illustrate the socio-political basis of racial consciousness in Britain in relation to black people in modern times. I have done this in the hope that it will help to contextualize the more recent period of British racism, which I now discuss below.

This cultural racism, which demarcates the parameters of cultural deviancy as a hierarchical ordering principle of race, is still in play today, however the conduit mechanism through which it is done has changed. Redclift (2014) suggests that racism has not disappeared but has transformed into something far more subtle and discreet, that amidst a more multi-racial Britain, underlined dominant white cultural norms and ambitions still power the structures of British society, which still resist Gilroy's 'racial conviviality' and thus the heart and soul of the racist problem in Britain still remains and has lost none of its potency despite the panoply of multi-racial bodies strewn across the British landscape creating the spectacular illusion of a post-racial liberal utopia. This position is similar to Alexander (2014) who argues that cultural racism is the independent variable of British racism, which rejected the multicultural society set out by the Swann report and which has named and shamed multiculturalism in recent times as the reason behind a separatist British society. Kundnani (2012) in conjunction with others (Redclift, 2014; Alexander, 2014; Gilroy, 2012; Weedon, 2011) suggests that neo-liberal British politics is trying to circumscribe multi-racial Britain within a homogenous 'we' community of shared modernist liberal values, which reject multi-cultures of religious homogeneity and unified cultural thinking that are rooted in tradition, which assign traditional roles to men, women and children of that culture. The author points out that modern day British racism comes in the liberal format of 'shared values' that demarcate the boundaries of citizenship. This then makes multiculturalism undesirable because of its separate value systems, which contradict British cultural ethics. Multiculturalism is thereby pronounced dead by the establishment though in reality it is still alive and therefore becomes a living dead zombie phenomenon (Gilroy, 2012). The fact that the establishment have declared

multiculturalism dead suggests that culture is now a category for hyper-vigilant screening for the virulent strain of zombie multiculturalism that lives on and threatens the state. This implies that ethnic minorities might still be exposed to white ambiguity, which Alexander (2014) highlights through statistics that reveal Black and Asian men today are still much more susceptible to prejudicial treatment within British society than the white ethnic majority.

The above literature on racism is meant to help contextualize my samples perceptions of British society in terms of racism to help provide an understanding of what it is that they may be encountering and the reasons behind this, especially if their views or perceptions have been influenced by their parents who have a particular view of British society in terms of racial prejudice. This literature can also be seen as integral to all of the specific racisms that I discuss, such as Black criminal stereotypes and racism and material well-being (employment prejudice for e.g.).

However there is tension between the literature I have highlighted above in relation to British racism and other literature that renounces British racism as a dominant force, for example Mirza (2010) and Sewell (2009, 2010) argue that racism has reached a level in Britain where it no longer acts as a barrier preventing ethnic minorities from getting ahead within British society if they have the will to succeed. Ultimately what this suggests is that the government has done enough to eradicate the problem of racism in all its forms and that there is no urgency for them to do anything further to curtail racism. Trevor Phillips (2000) in a guardian newspaper article adds to this argument by suggesting that black youth especially, only believe in one brand of black cultural authenticity, which comes in the form of a black youth subculture that glorifies ghetto life and embraces gang culture. So like Sewell (2009,2010), Phillips (2000) identifies this type of black culture as the only major obstacle preventing black youth from becoming successful within British society and ironically from embracing a more suitable mode of blackness, which for me presents another branding issue, which calls for a mode of blackness that assimilates dominant white cultural norms or white supremacy in a bid to avoid being stereotyped, thereby making it easier to elevate up through the structures of British society. However the main issue here is that this line of reasoning completely ignores historical disadvantage, which is the root of this negative brand of black culture (Akbar), it also ignores current super structural disadvantage.

This opposing literature to racism in Britain is interesting because it suggests that racism in Britain is no longer a real barrier to achievement, if one truly wants to get on, which provides a context for understanding why members of my sample may not perceive racism in British society as a barrier to their achievement and who may in fact find it a motivational force to work harder for their success. This oppositional literature also helps to provide a juxtaposed context for helping to explain why some members of my sample may perceive racism as a barrier based mainly on family background experiences (Sewell, 2009, 2010).

Material Well-being

This section of the literature review is meant to provide some context in relation to my samples perceptions about it being more difficult for them to achieve in society than the white ethnic majority. The three areas (education, employment and housing) that I discuss below that make up the core components of material well-being (as identified in the UK census) are meant to highlight the key areas that my sample could be referring to when they talk about it being more difficult for them to achieve in British society. I also discuss these three key areas of material well-being, to provide context for those members of my sample who may refer to any of these areas directly. The whole point of this section is to provide a context as to why my sample may perceive success as more difficult for them to achieve in society, a perception, which may infringe upon their academic achievement as a demotivating factor and why some of my sample may perceive this barrier to success as surmountable and maybe even as a motivational force.

Starting with education then, Black Caribbean pupils are currently the lowest achieving ethnic group when it comes to A*- C GCSE attainment (SFR 06, 2015) and Black Caribbean boys are still three times more likely to be permanently excluded than the school population as a whole and twice as likely to be excluded for a fixed term than their White male peers and their Black African peers (SFR 28, 2014; Richards, 2007). They are still subject to teacher racism, which could be the cause of exclusion, and are more likely to be categorised as having special education needs than other ethnic groups, with teachers more likely to underestimate this group of students by selecting lower examination tiers for them to sit, meaning that the highest grade they can achieve will be lower than that for the ethnic majority (Gillborn, 1990; king, 1991; Youdell, 2003, 2004, 2007; Rollock,

2007; Sleeter, 1993, 2012). This secondary education literature is meant to help contextualize why members of my sample may perceive the education system as something that is set up to disadvantage black boys. The tension in this literature comes in the form of Sewell (2009, 2010) who suggests that academic achievement is solely down to how well a child has been raised and their resistance to peer pressure. There is also Foster (1992) who argues that teachers only discipline Black children proportionately to the level of disobedience that they exert. Both Sewell (2009, 2010) and Foster (1992) are helpful in providing a context, which may help to explain why some members of my sample do not perceive a problem with the education system and that if they do perceive a problem with it why they may feel they can overcome this barrier if they apply themselves in a particular way.

Beyond the school institution, looking at racism in Britain in relation to access to higher education is important within this research study because it provides the context, which may help in understanding the perceptions that members of my sample may have about accessing these institutions or about the education system in general which incorporates these institutions. Perceived discrimination or prejudice in accessing higher education institutions could act as either demotivation or as a motivational force affecting my samples current academic pursuits.

Gorard (2008) argues that arriving at a conclusion regarding wider participation data analysis for higher education, which is assumed to be disproportionate across social groups such as lower socio-economic and ethnic minority groups, is fraught with a plethora of analytical conundrums that could yield completely different results for varying research analysts, thus not necessarily revealing a different statistical outcome but rather a different method of analysis. The problems linked to measuring ethnic minority social groups in the relevant population for higher education and those actually participating in higher education are firstly that classification for ethnic groups are unstable across varying data sets and across the temporal landscape, as Britain becomes more diverse so too does the list of ethnic groups, creating a situation where ethnic minority groups statistically are spread too thin across the array of new ethnic groupings over time (Gorard, 2008). The result of this according to Gorard (2008) is background interference surrounding the best available data for wider participation of ethnic minorities in higher education and thus the numbers are not robust enough to suggest underrepresentation

in higher education participation. What is interesting though is that the largest ethnic group apart from white recorded in these statistics is unknown, just like the situation with the largest socio-economic group being unknown and possibly the result of the lower socio-economic status group not wanting to declare their status, which could be the case with ethnic minority groups not wanting to declare their ethnic grouping, but as Gorard (2008) states, "we just do not know". Furthermore these statistics that pair up ethnic minority numbers in the higher education population with the higher education experience of this group does not highlight the potential prejudice of individual HE institutions or of selection processes for particular course subjects. So ultimately what Gorard (2008) is arguing is that there is no real proof that ethnic minority groups are underrepresented across HE institutions and that therefore there is not an explicit issue with wider participation of ethnic minorities when it comes to university admissions.

However there is tension between the above assertion and Modood (2002), who agrees with Gorard (2008) that general admission statistics for ethnic minorities into higher education reveal that ethnic minorities are not underrepresented in higher education institutions if we remain indiscriminate of institutional type. However when attention is focused upon individual institutions research evidence of subjectivity in the admissions procedure and how this can vary across departments within an institution, with no objective criterion for guidance, provides an alternate view of ethnic minority disadvantage at a micro level (Robinson et al, 1992: cited in Modood, 2002). The argument continues that ethnic monitoring data does reveal the fact that ethnic minorities are unevenly spread across old and new universities and that this bias remains even after taking into consideration the objective differences that exist between minority groups and the ethnic majority (Modood, 2002). Also highlighted was the fact that ethnic minorities, were less successful during the university application process than the ethnic majority and that as a result minority groups were up to two and a half times more likely to gain admission to a university through clearing, which further filters this group into new universities as opposed to old institutions. A further statistical breakdown of differential application success between old and new universities reveals the fact that older universities were clearly prejudice towards ethnic minority applications though to a lesser extent black Caribbean applications, this is thought to be because of the European colonial surnames that these candidates typically have (Modood, 2002). What Modood (2002) is bringing to our attention is that the white ethnic majority are both more

successful at each stage of the application process generally and also much more likely to be accepted into an old university than a member of a minority ethnic group and that in order for an ethnic minority to gain access to such an institution they would have to outperform their white peers in order to be in contention of earning a place. So ultimately the argument here is that this potentially hegemonic higher education system could result in a racist social hierarchy in that the elite workforces that make up the gatekeepers that control British society are sourced predominantly from Britain's old university institutions like Oxford and Cambridge, which ethnic minority candidates are filtered away from through the higher education applications process and the subjective power of institutional vetting processes for potential students for whom there may be ambiguity.

This literature on ethnic minority HE admissions then provides some context for understanding why members of my sample may perceive that they have to work twice as hard as their white peers in order to enjoy the same fruits such as joining a red brick institution and potentially having a better chance of gaining a prestigious job role after graduation (Modood, 2002).

The literature below on racism within the labour market looks at how it is connected to the general post-war immigration problem. It shows that even though black employment has improved in Britain Black people are still disadvantaged especially when it comes to top class bracket jobs (Virk, 2012). The tension in this literature comes from two opposing views about how black employment figures increased at the beginning of the 21st century, one view is that racism has declined and that there are much more qualified ethnic minorities applying for jobs (Modood, 1997). The other view is that of interest convergence, whereby the interests of Black anti-racist campaigners converged with the state during the 80's and opened up the non-manual jobs market predominantly for Black Caribbean's (Virdee, 2006). So one view suggests that racism is in retreat and the other view suggests that racism is alive and well and that the window of opportunity that opened up for black Caribbean people in the main was created by a specific political moment that coincided with the interests of the state at that time. This literature is useful then, in providing the context through which to understand why members of my sample may perceive that gaining employment may be more difficult for them than their white peers and because of the link with post-war immigration and employment racism this literature may also help to provide an understanding of why my samples parents may

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have suggested to their children that obtaining a job may be more difficult for them than for the white ethnic majority based on their own experiences. Again here, some members of my sample may perceive racism within the employment market as a barrier, which demotivates them in their current academic pursuits or others may perceive this racism as a surmountable barrier and as a motivational force depending on their outlook (Sewell, 2009, 2010).

In regard to the origin of the labour market and black youth problematic, this is intrinsically linked to the political stance, which I briefly outlined above with the help of Gilroy and others and has its origins in the inter war and post war period of black immigration in the UK (Solomos, 1988). The post-war period in particular was a period when the government were becoming increasingly anxious about black immigration from the British colonies, especially since there were no legal restrictions in place at this time to prevent it. The media coverage of black immigration also helped to frame immigration issues as exclusively linked to people of colour even though there were far larger groups of white immigrants entering the country at the same time (Solomos, 1988). Ultimately immigration became synonymous with race and Black migrants were framed as "undesirable immigrants" because they were seen as culturally distinct and therefore as an alien intrusion. It was this ideological posture that eventually brought about the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, which prevented blacks, mostly from the Caribbean from entering Britain freely. Also important to note is that the supposedly problematic nature of black immigration has always coincided with and been linked to wider socio-economic problems such as high unemployment and lack of housing in urban areas for example, which has the inevitable effect of sparking up British nationalist sentiment, a well-rehearsed scenario, which I have mentioned above. All of this can be seen as the groundwork for the politically constructed black youth problem in Britain, which emerged from the negative framing of black immigrants in general. Solomos (1988) highlights the fact that the 1958 riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill were instrumental in politicising the fact that black immigrants were an integral part of British society, thus shifting emphasis from immigration to integrative social policy regarding Britain's black citizens. This shift in consciousness led to a dominant focus on the futures of black school leavers, which was mainly inspired through the fear that black youth would become vengeful at being excluded from society and having to exist on its margins and consequently spark revolutionary riots for change. In any case several government bodies produced reports

on the issue of black school leavers and found overwhelming evidence across England that black children were being discriminated against by employers because of the perceived attributes of their race, particularly employers of white-collar jobs (Solomos, 1988: 73). The government response to these reports and parliamentary debates was of course to play down their significance as negligible but it seems as though there is evidence of this discrimination in Britain, even today.

Pilkington (2003) highlights the fact that black Caribbean males are particularly disadvantaged within the labour market that they are twice as likely to be unemployed and that even with similar qualifications as whites they are underrepresented in senior non manual positions and almost non-existent within the roles that make up Britain's elite workforce. Pilkington (2003) goes on to infer that an institutionally racist glass ceiling is in play, which prevents certain ethnic minorities from reaching the top offices in the country, or even just more senior management positions. This coincides with Virk (2012), who using the Annual Population Survey (2008) highlights the fact that Black Caribbean men are still considerably less likely to be employed in the top class bracket of employment than White British men where there is a 7% differential gap. Black Caribbean men are also almost three times more likely to be unemployed than White British men and when we look at the percentages for young men aged between 16-24 Caribbean men are almost twice as likely to be unemployed than their White British counterparts though the percentages for this younger group in general are a lot higher. Looking now at hourly pay scales, the average Black Caribbean gross hourly pay for men is roughly a pound or so less than the gross hourly rate for White British men. Virdee (2006) however, highlights the fact that the labour market position of certain ethnic minority groups significantly improved between the 1960's/70's and the beginning of the 21st century. Modood (1997) suggests that this is because racism has declined and consequently the non-manual labour market has opened up for non-whites who have increased human capital in the form of qualifications. Virdee (2006) disagrees with Modood (1997) and Heath (2003) arguing that there are still ethnic minority groups who suffer from racial exclusion and that Modood and Heath's suggestion is one that might encourage a neo-liberal conservative meritocratic argument that focuses attention on individual autonomy as opposed to structural inequality, which there is no evidence for. Instead Virdee (2006) suggests that the shift in fortunes for certain ethnic minority groups particularly Black Caribbean migrants was the political unrest of the 1980's that led to feverish anti-racist activity that

put immense political pressure on society and especially the labour market, which opened up non-manual positions predominantly for the Black Caribbean population. So it was a very specific political moment, which put racial equality center stage facilitating a shift in the non-manual labour market demographic as opposed to an absolute political shift towards racial conviviality, which is evident in the above statistics of Virk (2012) and the new/old institution dichotomy delineated by Modood (2002) in relation to ethnic minority university admissions. It is likely that this institutional racism within profitable organisations will continue until the government becomes vexed at homogenous workforces and threatens these organisations with sanctions circumscribed by profit thus making racial equality and workforce diversity profitable within a capitalist universe where advantage is the rationale as opposed to a socialist utopia of equality (Jonsen K, Tatli A, Ozbilgin M and Bell, M, 2013). However British politics itself is intertwined with racism, its hyper-vigilance around immigration issues, which demarcate the contours of the 'Other' sometimes in terms of colour or intra-white alienation in terms of culture like Polish migrant labour in modern times (Cole, 2009).

Whether the British racism we are discussing is older and linked to colour or newer and linked to culture or at times both interlinking within a symbiotic relationship, it is the flux of capitalism, which dictates whom the outsider is in order to protect the circuitry of power of the ruling class elite.

It is important to mention in relation to the housing literature below that I do not expect my sample to refer to housing themselves directly, however I cover this literature because it is a central component of material well-being and could well be in the minds of the parents of my sample when they express to their children that life in Britain could be harder for them in general especially if the parents have struggled themselves with housing. So the literature below on housing is meant to be read as context to help understand the housing dimension amongst the other dimensions of what my samples parents may be referring to when they say to their children that life in British society generally is harder for them as black people. I am making this clear so that the reader is not confused if this literature does not appear in my discussion of the data.

I start looking at the housing and immigrant issue from early to mid-1960's, as it is unlikely that the parents of my sample would have migrated to work in Britain any earlier than

this. The problems that Black Caribbean migrants were facing in relation to housing at this time were threefold; firstly, they faced incredible face-to-face discrimination and racial abuse from private landlords who would refuse to offer them any housing at all because they were racist and because they would have incurred the wrath of the local white indigenous residents who saw blacks as aliens threatening their way of life who would lower the tone of the neighborhood (Patterson, 1965). Secondly black migrants were faced with the indirect discrimination of the public sector council housing scenario where the migrants would have had to of been a resident within a council postcode for a year before being put on the housing waiting list and then would need to wait another year before the name on that list became live and thus functional, a bureaucratic process which in most cases would exclude public housing as an option for these migrants, forcing them into homelessness, undesirable private housing in run down inner city areas with poor amenities for extortionate rents, as it was common knowledge that these immigrants had no alternative (Patterson, 1965; Mullard, 1973). Thirdly there was the consideration of private purchase but yet again racism rears its head because banks and building societies would not lend to black migrants and if by some small miracle they did it would be a short term loan with extremely high interest rates, but this was rare because the houses that black migrants were able to afford on their meagre wages were run down inner city housing, which was the exact type of property that made banks and building societies nervous and very reluctant to lend as this type of investment was perceived as an unnecessary risk. What started happening then is that the vendor of a property would lend the migrant the money for the house but only as a short term loan and again for ridiculous rates of interest as this would be the only route out of the property crisis being faced by this group of migrants at this time (Daniel, 1968).

During this period there was also racial discrimination taking place at the hands of estate agents who would help to filter black migrants away from the White suburban areas as White residents felt that if any blacks moved into the area then the house prices would crumble and the area would be ruined, and so it was that these migrants were filtered into the inner city run down areas that were already saturated by blacks (Mullard, 1973). This practice was so notorious that the estate agents were actually functioning as, and having the effect of, social gatekeepers, helping to keep Britain divided along the lines of race (McKay, 1977). Cross (1978), confirms the fact that black migrants at this time were being re-routed to poor inner city slums through all three methods of housing in the private and public sector and that this cycle of deprivation was being sustained by low

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wages and the need for larger housing because of the larger Caribbean family unit, which inevitably led to overcrowding and as a result in some cases, to bizarre room utilisation techniques. Brown (1984) suggests that even though things have gotten better over the years that Blacks are still worse off than Whites in all spheres of housing. Blacks are still more likely to live in inferior housing to Whites especially when it comes too attached and detached housing. According to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) report (1984), on council housing in Hackney, Blacks were still much less likely to be granted a house as opposed to a flat even when homeless compared with White people. It was also the case that black people were much more likely to live in poorer conditions and have to share key amenities. It was also the case that housekeeping standards formed part of the council assessment for applicants and that this was mainly subjective and discriminatory towards black living standards. It was also found that applicant files used for housing allocation had enough information on them to allow them to be deciphered by housing staff who had a racist agenda, even though Hackney council had a policy, which meant they did not keep formal data in relation to racial ethnicity and who could therefore claim that a racist agenda was impossible. Ball & Solomos (1990) highlight the fact that the CRE have used race inequality legislation to put pressure on local government bodies such as Hackney council but to no avail because implementation of the legislation has proved difficult because from central government down this agenda has been seen either as too radical or as not a priority in relation to the rest of the population and has thereby fizzled out and the housing legislation that has been implemented by central government has been colour-blind, the result of a liberal worldview assuming a level playing field where meritocracy should reign (Ginsburg, 1992). Peach & Byron (1993) suggest it is Black Caribbean single parent females who suffer more so than the men when it comes to housing as they are the most vulnerable in society and are disproportionately given the worst housing in the worst areas, which explains why Black Caribbean boys are even more disadvantaged by this family dynamic.

Harrison (2003) suggests that in the 21st century racism in housing is not as it was, that there is much more heterogeneity amongst ethnic minorities in that their socio-economic status has improved considerably and that there needs to be further research done to look at all of the nuances such as current labour markets, academic pursuits, age, location, house types and tenure. However the author still maintains that there is still substantial evidence that there is still discrimination and disadvantage happening such as

the disproportionate homeless figures for black Caribbean men in particular and the historical problems mentioned above such as quality of property and area (Sommerville & Springings, 2005). Bloch & Solomos (2010) suggest that both the public and the private sector of housing has gotten a lot better especially as with regards to council housing as government legislation has become a lot tighter making sure that there are a given quota of ethnic minority representatives within public housing to ensure equality though these ethnic minority staff are not represented amongst the elite housing workforce. It is also being suggested that within the private sector prejudicial landlords and prejudicial finance institutions are now anachronistic and that this alongside the fact that ethnic minorities in general have improved their socio-economic status considerably since the days of first generation migration have all had a positive impact on housing in terms of racial equality throughout the market though there is still room for improvement as some of the old problems still exist though they have been much reduced. Finally as with regards to housing, even though things have gotten a lot better in relation to racial equality, the 21st century has thrown up some novel problems that again threaten to disadvantage Black minority ethnic groups as well as the ethnic majority to a lesser extent. The first problem is that the government budget for social housing has been cut in recent times, which is likely to effect Black minority ethnic groups the most in that poor accommodation and overcrowding, which is still a Black issue is likely to worsen. The second problem exists within both the public and the private sector in that the recent climate of mortgage companies, banks and building societies tightening their lending criteria has pushed a lot of Black minority ethnic groups into the shared ownership scheme, which is likely to become saturated as news of the scheme spreads and if the cost of housing continues to rise as it has been especially in London then the pressure on public housing could create an exodus for those who can no longer afford to live in the capital.

This concludes the brief look at literature covering the three salient dimensions of material well-being, I will now discuss these different areas firstly in relation to the statements immediately below on material well-being in general and then I will discuss respondent data that relates specifically to the genres of higher education and the labour market in separate paragraphs.

English Language as Imperialism

The literature below on the English language is meant to provide context to show why members of my sample may feel that they have to speak a certain level of English in order to be perceived as intelligent by their white peers or by white people generally or why they may feel that because they are black they are automatically perceived as not intelligent. In this way the English language can be seen as a powerful tool, which has been coded in terms of race, something that I elaborate on below. Members of my sample then, may find this form of discrimination a motivational force to prove those who have negative views of them wrong or such prejudice may cause others to feel overwhelmed.

Pennycook (1994) suggests that the English language as an international colonial export is hegemonic that it serves as a vehicle to convey specialist euro-centric high status knowledge that creates a global capitalist elite workforce empowered to maintain the structures of capitalist power and thereby the advantage of the first world countries or developed countries over the developing or third world countries. Pennycook (1994) highlights the very discourse behind constructs such as developed and developing countries or indeed modern and pre-modern parts of the world, suggesting that this discourse in itself is hegemonic and serves the purpose of privileging the western worldview and its epistemological systems over others, that is, presenting the western worldview as inevitable and therefore as the measure of global development. Ultimately this way of viewing the English language infers that it is a vehicle pervasively spreading dominant white cultural norms. Therefore the skillful use of this language to signify allegiance to or at least acknowledgement of the dominant ideology of whiteness is crucial for social acceptance especially for black boys from an African-Caribbean background such as the members of my sample whose heritage has been historically constructed as inherently inferior especially within the Philosophical sphere of reason, to those white peoples indigenous to so called historic nations, those nations that are seen as economically and technologically advanced and thus modern (McLaren, 2009). Therefore the language that belongs to these historic nations who have managed through a supposedly superior mode of rationality to construct such grand technologies is seen as the language of rationality and is juxtaposed, especially against black signifying languages, which stand in stark contrast to the white English vernacular (Carby, 1982: 187; Eze, 2008; Hamblet, 2008; McLaren, 2009).

The tension in the literature could come in the form of Mirza (2010) who suggests that Britain is a lot less racist now than it has been previously and that life for the younger generation of ethnic minority groups is a lot easier now than it was for their parents and maybe their grandparents. However though overt colour based racism has eased, cultural racism has endured and can be observed through the way that Britain has recently waged war on multiculturalism as the reason behind a separatist society with particular emphasis being placed on the Muslim community (Gilroy, 2012; Kundnani, 2012). Racism on the basis of culture or cultural expression that transcends euro-centric consciousness and as a result faces rejection and exclusion has gone nowhere and remains the independent variable of British racism (Alexander, 2014).

The Criminal Stereotype of the Black Youth and the Hoodie Icon

The literature below on the criminal stereotype of black youth and the hoodie icon provides a context for understanding why my sample may perceive that they are being stereotyped as young black youth as being involved with violent crime or gang activity in general by British society. It also provides a context to understand why some members of my sample may feel disaffected by this black male youth stereotype, which could make them feel that no matter what they do academically they will still be shunned and disadvantaged within society. This literature also provides the context through which to understand why some members of my sample may well be motivated by the racist stereotype to push even harder for success in order to help dismantle the stereotype. The argument as to whether society is racist enough to impede academic achievement is central here (Mirza, 2010; Sewell, 2009; 2010), however the literature below also highlights why some members of my sample may find it difficult to transcend the racist nature of British society today and to be motivated.

Solomos (1991) delineates the constructed link between black youth, the urban landscape and criminality by British governmental forces as well as ubiquitous media coverage. Firstly Solomos highlights the link between race and crime, the fact that British society has always perceived a link between immigration and criminality but it was the post 1945 black settlement within the inner city areas of Britain that really captured the imagination of British society as these areas became to be seen as crime hotspots and as areas of degeneration creating political anxieties from the late fifties as with regards to black migrant criminal involvement. So we have here the racial coding of Caribbean immigration

and then the racial coding of the inner city areas where these immigrants settled and then finally the racial coding of criminality in relation to that immigrant demographic. The black youth question, which I touched upon briefly above as with regards to a lack of employment opportunities and a lack of legislation to curb their worsening socio-economic circumstances was both a source of racial tension and anxiety feeding off of that tension, which helped to frame the black youth question as a serious problem within British society (Solomos, 1988). An incompatibility of worldview cultures between the African-Caribbean immigrant and the British native was certainly contributory to the racial tensions but ultimately it was the paradox of the alienation of black youth in British society as well as the older generation of West-Indian settlers that created an impossible socio-economic climate on top of domestic exclusion, which was met with the racist uncompromising punitive law of the land, that has led to racial conflict and the criminalisation of black youth through political rhetoric and a bombardment of negative media images (Solomos, 1991). This has led to a situation where Black youth have inherited the problematic coding of the older generations immigrant, racial and socio-economic status, but have also been trapped within a far more extreme hyper-reality of outlandish criminality that from the 1970's was encapsulated within the term mugging or street crime (Solomos, 1991).

Gunter (2008) argues that the black youth problem may not be, as it seems according to the 'macro theorised' equation that renders black youth subcultures as criminal absolute. He argues that the black youth subculture of 'road' is one which is highly complex and far from straight forward. Road is predominantly a social space, which is usually the roads of deprived areas usually with large high rise housing estates where impoverished kids will hang out as well as kids from middle class families who are susceptible to this culture and who just want to be 'down' or affiliated with what's cool and popular. This road culture does incorporate black popular cultures from other parts of the African Diaspora namely America and Jamaica and it is these cultures that heavily influence the structure of road culture from clothing such as baseball caps and hoodies from the States to language from the states such as the hip- hop or rap vernacular, It is also influenced heavily by notions of bad men, badness and the patois vernacular from Jamaican ghetto cultures (Gunter, 2008). Road more so than anything else is about identity, being part of a collective that helps you to make sense of yourself in an institutionally racist society and within a capitalist global economy that has scattered the black man stripped of his culture to

opposite ends of the earth to make sense of himself in darkness. Road is a social hub, where you meet up with friends and socialise, this is the heart of road culture but left of centre is hyper-masculine ritual annexed with badness or criminality, which Gunter explains people from the centre drift in and out of or can reject altogether, it is highly complex. Somebody may take a dislike to an individual who is on road and they may be forced into defending themselves in order to honor the street code and thus protect their reputation in order to prevent getting bullied by peers, this could then lead to a potential scenario where a violent crime is committed, the road and its code are complex and it is possible for good people to fall victim to it unintentionally (Briggs, 2009). You also get people who have ties to the road who move in and out of work (Gunter & Watt, 2009) and who have entered university level education (Briggs, 2009), so road culture is not just something which delinquents adopt it also acts as ministry, a vestige of blackness which black males who need it, can embrace when they are alienated by wider society. However British society tends to look at all of those who embrace road culture with its dress code and forms of cultural expression as criminal delinquents. This is not to deny the fact that a proportion of the black youths on road, are caught up in hyper-masculine acts of violence and drug dealing, which are both elements of the culture existing on its periphery. I use Charlotte Bell below to highlight how society has created a populist conception of black youth delinquency, which is orientated around the hoodie icon, which is a core staple of what is worn within road culture.

Charlotte Bell (2013) in reference to Baudrillard (1994) suggests that through capitalisms hegemonic bombardment of imagery on our society, icons have been conceived that have replaced the original referent of that icon, its unique micro components as well as its temporal and spatial significance. The icon then, provides a universal conception, which replaces the individual subject. This author looks critically at the British institutional construction of the "hoodie" as an icon embodying the image of youth delinquency. She goes on to explain how the 'hoodie' is constructed within an iconocracy, a discourse of power that frames the 'hoodie' icon as belonging to the other, the invisible universal phantasmagoria of youth delinquency, exclusive to the urban setting or ghetto areas. The hoodie is mostly associated with black males and criminality within the urban setting and so regardless of individual merit a black boy wearing a hoodie is going to be processed as a social deviant because of the hegemonic seizure of the hoodie icon by the government institution. This hegemonic seizure of the hoodie icon creates a situation where the face

of the child in the hoodie becomes invisible because the coding of the hoodie renders its proprietor a mindless affiliate of a deviant collective with no hope of redemption lost to savagery. This crisis of the hoodie icon is most pronounced when there is social unrest such as the 2011 riots that spread across the country, especially in London where the predominant icon of the riots were young black males in hoodies, which again stirs up British nationalist sentiment and legitimises 'white ambiguity' (which I have mentioned above), as they are framed as a black youth problem. The theme of street crime a hyper-real White construct of Black youth, now renders black youth the main icon of street crime or street culture (aka road culture), which includes black youth aesthetic taste across all genres but the main iconic genre is clothing and the hoodie.

The tension in the literature comes again from the likes of Trevor Phillips and Tony Sewell. Trevor Phillips (2000) suggests that road culture is the "latest test of authenticity for us" and that within this culture we are only genuinely black if we "speak Jamaican, wear expensive designer clothes and reject anything that resembles formal education or scholarship". This perception of road culture is problematic, though I accept that the quotations I am referencing are almost fifteen years old! However there is evidence in the literature above and in the data that follows, which contradicts this list of authentically black attributes that apparently belong to road culture. Education especially is something that is praised by those who embrace road culture and even by the bad men that operate on the edges of road culture who are involved in serious crimes, because getting money is central to road ethics, legally or illegally (Ilan, 2012). Road culture as I have mentioned above is highly complex and Phillips (2000) is stereotyping his own people who are trying to get jobs who are getting an education and who are still being excluded from society and who find cultural refuge within road culture where they try to assemble their black identities from the fragments of black culture that exist within the Diaspora because they are not being taught their histories at home or in school and are trying to become culturally orientated and for a lot of young black men, road is their only black cultural resource where films, music and literature from the culture are either made available or recommended. Sewell (2009, 2010) also suggests that road culture is the predominant issue at hand when it comes to black male academic failure, refusing to look at the national curriculum as central to taking the job of black cultural orientation out of the hands of road culture and the gangs it fosters. To conclude this discussion around the tension in the literature regarding the criminal stereotype of young black males, you have

a heterogeneous mix of black kids engaged in road culture for a plethora of reasons some of which reject criminality and other elements of the culture but embrace the aesthetic style as a form of black identity (Reynolds, 2013; Dedman, 2011), which is void of negativity and there are other kids which embrace it to fill the gap of black cultural knowledge and to become culturally orientated and of course there are those who embrace its darker extremities. So what people like Trevor Phillips need to register is that the whole road movement is not static it is constantly shifting embracing non-traditional vernaculars, observing the flux of global fashion trends and the minutely shifting terrain of our electronic global universe as well as evolving into new forms of resistance from the mainstream, whilst simultaneously trying to infiltrate it, as many grime artists such as Dizzy Rascal, Wiley, Bashy and most recently Stormzy, have managed to do.

This literature in highlighting the multifarious nature of those involved with road culture shows how innocent children could be labelled or stereotyped as troublemakers and how this could contribute to members of my sample perceiving racism as an insurmountable barrier, which could affect their application to their education, just as there will be those members of my sample who are motivated by prejudice to achieve academically.

Police Racism

This literature on police racism is meant to provide the context through which to understand why members of my sample may perceive that police racially profile them. This literature presents another dimension of British racism, which could aggregate in the minds of members of my sample creating disaffection, which could demotivate them in terms of their studies.

I would now like to briefly discuss police racism in relation to hypersensitive surveillance and disproportionate stop and search procedures carried out on black males. Bowling and Phillips (2007) discuss the possibility that police powers of stop and search procedures are disproportionately exhausted on the black community and on black males more specifically. They highlight the fact that there is a plethora of legislation that provide the police with stop and search powers but within certain objective evidential constraints in a bid to circumvent discrimination, however the authors delineate the fact that effectively a loop hole exists amongst some of the stop and search legislation which allows the police to stop and search without objective cause for example the stop and search of vehicles.

Furthermore even with the constraints existing in the legislation the authors suggest that there is no legislature to enforce or penalise police officers that contradict the law with subjective discriminatory practice, whilst those whom are victimised can in certain circumstances be arrested for any sign of protest. As with regards to actual stop and search statistics focused on ethnicity Bowling and Philips (2007) assert that the most stable and therefore best available data comes from residential population statistics, which show the number of stop and searches per one thousand, by ethnicity. However caution is sounded at some of the inaccuracies of this data and the statistical complexities related to stop and search that it fails to capture such as recording the ratio of crimes committed versus stop and search percentages by ethnicity in order to determine the legitimacy of stop and search powers. The numbers from these statistics show that black people from 2005-6 were six times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people. With reference to the British crime survey 39% of Black 16-29 year olds were stopped and searched compared with 25% of white people of the same age in the previous year.

Further, more black people were given no reason for being stopped than white and those that were, complained of not being given an adequate reason to be stopped more so than white and finally more black people were stopped multiple times than white.

The reason the authors give for this disproportionate use of stop and search powers on a victimised black British population is institutionalised racism, which is endemic and pervasive throughout wider British society that is then adopted by individual institutions like the police force and tailored within the unique culture of that institution. Ultimately this refers to false racist knowledge that has been socio- historically constructed as a corner stone of British social consciousness, as has been mentioned in part above mainly in relation to the work of Gilroy. This racist consciousness is also part of a wider euro- centric tradition dating back to the Roman Empire (Robinson, 1983). It is also intrinsic to the role that European Philosophical reason has played in constructing a racist vernacular and therefore a racist historical reference, for racist judgement, facilitating racist experiences, in this case for adoption by the Police force (Eze, 2008).

The tension in the literature on institutional racism within the police force and beyond comes from Sewell (1997, 2009, 2010) and Phillips (2000) who suggest that black boys are

their own worst enemy for engaging in road or street culture as authentic elements of black male identity, thus exonerating society as a liberal meritocratic level playing field of democracy. In addition the 'road' theorists whom I have listed above, expose the fact that criminality is a part of road culture, which means that there are young black men out there committing these crimes all be it a minority of those who are immersed in the culture as I have demonstrated above in relation to a member (HI8) of my sample. Based on this and playing devil's advocate there might also be the suggestion that police officers who are trying to focus on those who are committing knife and gun crime within road culture may confuse those who are sheep with the wolves, however there should be a wealth of intelligence beyond aesthetics that police professionals should have before a stop and search or an arrest is carried out.

Racism and Reason

My review of the literature here is in relation to the role that Philosophical reason could play in acts of racism, for example the reason behind why society may take a dislike to black cultural expression and expect black people to assimilate dominant white cultural norms. I suggest that this could be linked to the discipline of philosophical reason because culture in itself is rooted in a particular ontological angle, that is a peculiar angle of consciousness, which gives birth to a vernacular through which one can know the universe and create all of that, which is perceived as normal or that is traditional to this perspective. This is not to say that culture is static or that it is not fluid, however despite the continuous cycle of reinvention of culture, a certain level of 'remembering' of some of the traditional aspects of a culture remains a constant. Based on this understanding of culture and the inability of dominant European thought to understand and accept African-centered culture, it may well be that a large percentage of White British society may only understand black cultural expression through its negative coding by European hegemony (Robinson, 1983; Hamblet, 2008) and therefore find it distasteful and express as much on site. I go on to discuss reason in terms of racism in some more depth below explaining why racism is central to the discipline of reason. So the literature in this section is meant to help contextualize why members of my sample may perceive that they are not accepted by British society, why they may perceive that they are not allowed to be themselves within British society or why they may perceive that they are perceived as different within society. These perceptions could well contribute to feeling excluded from British society and feeling like there is little point in applying one's self academically, it

could also be the case that members of my sample are less concerned about school as a place which excludes them and are far more concerned with the discovery of themselves through other avenues.

Eze (2008) suggests that reason is not an object of truth that can be applied universally to the human condition, rather, to see reason, as an object of truth is the path to a pseudo-truth. Instead Eze (2008) suggests that reason should be looked at from the diverse spectrum of global consciousness that represents itself through language or the vernacular. The fact that reason cannot transcend the vernacular means that it is bound to social norms and therefore culture, the logical point of trajectory for judgement and experience, which is historically fated, meaning that reason is contingent. The author intensely focuses on the role of the vernacular in reason and theorises that there is a gap between thought and vernacular, a non-coincidental gap and therefore an ontological generative gap, which I choose to summarise as the conversion of the ontological (thought) into the epistemological (language). The author suggests that it is this ontologically generated chasm, this gap in consciousness or conscious gap that constitutes the rhizomorphic system of human freedom, that is freedom of thought, of mind, of language, of culture and ultimately the freedom of the world (Eze, 2008). It is this notion of freedom that the author highlights as diversity in reason.

In order to conceptualize the idea of oppression in reason it is helpful to juxtapose the above notion of freedom with deductive Calculative reason a euro-centric mode of rationality mostly associated with Thomas Hobbes and Francis Bacon, which proliferated during the period of modernity (Eze, 2008). The main idea behind calculative reason is that everything in the universe has a specific logical function linked to a specific mathematical calculation of addition or subtraction and that all reason should serve the purpose of revealing function through dispassionate observational calculation. A major clue as to the radically subjective nature of this mode of reasoning is Hobbes when he states that the "light of human minds is perspicuous words, but by exact definitions first snuffed, and purged from ambiguity." (Eze, 2008: 28). The clue then is in the term 'perspicuous words', who is it that qualifies a word as perspicuous, from what culture are they and what qualifies them to speak for the rest of the world whom may have a completely different conception of perspicuous words, for example within the Afro-centric vernacular, which places a premium on the signifying capacity of words, the

meanings of which may well appear ambiguous to those outside of the culture (Gates, 1988). The belief was that reason was a science and that science is technology, everything is reduced to obvious material function and is therefore naturally classifiable by this obvious material function as ordained by god. Hobbes assuming then that this mode of rationality was god given and thus naturally superior and meant for those with superior rationality to govern and look after those without rational minds. We begin to see then the limitations of calculative reason restricted to the materialistic realm of brute calculation unwilling to see the world from any other perspective and looking down upon those who do. For me, even though this form of rationality claims objective status, it is this claim in darkness that reveals its posture as radically subjective. The suggestion that there is an obvious natural function to things that can be reduced to a taxonomy through quantification without insight from the thing itself, the culture to which the thing belongs or from various other consciousness who view the thing differently equates to abstract reasoning because there is no insight, because there is the pre-tense that somehow if one experiences something in a dispassionate manner that this is an objective sensory perception through which one can measure accurately, however the world is not a dispassionate place and thus to view it as such exposes one to a gross distortion of the organic worldly object that exists independently of euro-centric consciousness. An example of this can be seen in the period of predatory European colonial imperialism in Africa, where multiple genres of euro-centric doctrinal discourse were used to construct the African as cultureless, ahistorical and ultimately as uncivilized savage. Of all these violent doctrinal discourses delineated by Hamblet (2008), including religious, medical, anthropological and Philosophical, it is the racist discourse inherent in western Philosophical thought and more specifically the discourse of rationality or indeed the rational mind, which has endured and is seen by western powers as a pre- requisite of historical nations whom have embraced capitalist enterprise and the spirit of boundless industrialism, which powers it (Robinson, 1983). Hamblet also highlights the fact that according to European colonial reason the equilibrium that the African people had established with their environment providing them with the insight for subsistence and environmental longevity were perceived as primitive, no doubt because they lacked the calculative exploitative technological instinct of industry. Ultimately what I am saying is that euro-centric abstract reasoning, that is reasoning without insight has created a violent world in every way imaginable, through a hugely distorted mode of hyper-coercion, the African of course featuring centrally in this violent world (Fanon 1963),

represented through European philosophical discourse in racist terms, this discourse circumscribing the black man within a racist conceptual vernacular, which can then be adopted by institutionally racist powers as the basis of their reasoning, which can manifest itself in the form of stereotypical assumptions about black men such as them being "incomprehensible, naturally excitable, aggressive, lacking brainpower, irrational, noisy, and responsible for the antipathy held towards them" (Bowling and Phillips, 2007: 954).

These stereotypical beliefs are an example of calculative reason coming up with all the wrong sums, because the assumed numbers entered for calculus are themselves erred, that is, the logic of formal reason has proceeded from an erred point of trajectory, blindly without insight, which a hermeneutical rendering with its historical element would have helped adjust accordingly (Eze, 2008).

The Curriculum

This section of the literature review focuses on the curriculum and how it works to exclude black culture and history and instead focuses on euro-centric high status knowledge and choice edits of British history. This section tries to show why this is the case and why this curriculum is resistant to change and inclusion. The point of discussing the curriculum in this way is to highlight why members of my sample may feel disaffected by such a curriculum, which excludes them and which tends to recycle the same sort of knowledge.

There is the suggestion that the national curriculum is a cultural script, which operates as cultural imperialism, with an agenda of unequal relations of power that serve the purpose of cultural reproduction or recycling in a bid to maintain the asymmetrical relations of power and therefore to dominate and oppress those whom do not identify with dominant white cultural norms (Giroux: cited in Palmer, 2001:282). This is further alluded to by Giroux (1992) who highlights a dialectical tension between 'traditionalists' and 'critical multiculturalists' within the field of education in America. The traditionalists believe in a euro-centric curriculum that has its roots in Greek scholarship and Christian dogma that reflect the principles embedded in the superstructure that enforce its reproduction and thus insure its longevity. The traditionalists believe that by homogenising the racially, ethnically and culturally diverse masses of the United States of

America into a euro-centric one size fits all education system, that this will create social unity through a sense of citizenship. The critical multiculturalists argue that this idea of unity is transgressed by the racially stratified nature of capitalist American society, those unequal relations of power that racially exclude are embedded within euro-centric thought systems that need to be challenged by alternative thought systems and a more in-depth critical analysis of western civilisation, how it came into being and its specific inspiration. I highlight Giroux (1992) here because even though his paper is about the US education system, it highlights the fact that similar racisms exist in England and thus across the Anglo-Saxon Diaspora. In fact Nick Tate who was appointed to the National curriculum Council under the conservative leadership in 1989 and who then went on to become the Chief Executive of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority and then finally the Chief Executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, was a radical traditionalist thinker in relation to what he felt was the true purpose of the English national curriculum (Ross, 2000). Tate believed that the National Curriculum should serve the purpose of focusing on dominant white cultural norms, that is, the common culture of Britain and on the roots of British civilisation, by which Tate meant the Greco-Roman civilisation and by extension the Christian religion. He believed that the curriculum should reinforce British cultural identity through the British literary canon, religion and British traditions. The imperative then was for the curriculum to help British society to maintain its cultural identity, to help prevent the dilution of British culture by globalisation and immigration trends. Ultimately then what Tate had in mind in relation to the education of ethnic minorities living in Britain was complete assimilation (Ross, 2000). What is interesting though in relation to Tate is that he appears to perceive British history as something which is glorious and which exists in isolation, he talks about the British nation as though it is homogenous with one common culture, which would be impossible considering all of the distinct regional cultures in Britain as well as the different class structures that exist as well as the gender differences in life experience that exist as well as the diverse ethnic compositions that exist. Tate also seems to have forgotten the fact that Britain became great through its violent administration of Empire across the globe and that as a result Britain's history is intertwined with the histories of other countries and cultures that were oppressed, however it is likely that Tate was only interested in the glorious edits of British history so that it can inspire, bring pride and provide a general feel good factor.

Brown and De Lissovoy (2011) who look at how racism is intrinsically linked with education policy outcomes that serve the purpose of sustaining a racially stratified society, honoring an implicit 'racial contract', a contract of dominant liberal normative whiteness that is at the heart of Anglo-Saxon democracy. The authors go on to argue that it is a white coded normative discourse, which is always historically contingent, that delineates the contours of the racial subject in contradistinction to a white model of normative behavior, which is observed by agents of whiteness who use it as a referent for exclusion, which has the effect of capitalist exploitation as those excluded from the English education system, mainly British African-Caribbean male students within secondary education, are likely to be among those whom are employed within menial jobs which only provide the minimum wage, or among those whom are part of a gang orientated 'road' subculture that trade in violence within a knife and gun economy (Gunter, 2008; Sewell, 2009). It is in this way that Brown and De Lissovoy (2011) argue that race, class and capital are fundamentally interlinked and that our white coded reality of capitalism is an economy of racism. Gillborn (2008) also suggests that government education policy in the Uk is sustenance for an agenda of whiteness in that its priority is not racism, it benefits mainly white students though some ethnic minorities benefit as well, and the outcome of this policy is that black male students especially, are set up to fail their secondary education through accumulative prejudice throughout their schooling, which results in a final act of pseudo-legitimate racial discrimination inherent in the selection process for a tiered examination system, leading to the exploitation of young black men. Youdell (2007) looks at educational inequality from the perspective of educational 'triage', that is macro bureaucratic triage through the government restructuring of education to create a competitive market of education orientated around high stakes examinations that are fundamentally based on hegemonic liberal individualism, an individualism that is understood as solely responsible for failure thus falsely assuming ahistorical status and thereby a fictional level playing field, which rejects historical, structural and pedagogical inequities. There is a meritocratic performative discourse used at the government macro level to explicate triage to schools, which is then adopted within the schools at the mezzo level, which constrains and constitutes particular learner identities that are disciplined by this discourse of success, potential and failure, this then filters down into the classroom and takes the form of both an implicit and explicit pedagogic discourse of student ability, which is exclusive across the race, class, and gender spectrum. The Beckmann & Cooper (2005) thesis supports the notion of

educational triage within the British education system, referring to the infection of the public policy debate with a political ideology of neo-liberalism that became dominant in the 1980's and which pushed the agenda of a globally competitive capitalist market that saw the emergence of the "New Public Management" regime (Beckmann & Cooper, 2005: 477) which sought to streamline secondary education for the purposes of recycling bodies with the skill set to fuel industrial production at the expense of socialist-democratic ambitions. The authors argue that this form of rationalized dogmatic domination transgresses the need for cultural and social ideologies of liberty, and is therefore violent and harmful. This imperialism causes cultural violence because alienated or fugitive cultures such as black culture are made sense of in their proximity to whiteness, which Nieto (1999:180) believes, dictates "the relative respect or disrespect accorded to particular cultures, languages, and dialects". According to Dei (2010) it is this disrespect of black history and culture that requires an afro-centric projection of African history revealing its humanity and its place within world history so that we might all become more human by being exposed to this important cultural resource. Equally as important is the fact that this afro-centric focus on African history and culture is something, which my sample may need to challenge their disaffection in class caused by an exclusive euro-centric narrative of the world, by connecting them to a precedent historical black vernacular of worldly experience that could maybe help them to find their way in this world by knowing it from their own unique perspectives.

The potential issue of the disaffection of black boys in the classroom created by an exclusive euro- centric narrative explaining the world, is an issue, which Freire (cited in Palmer, 2001: 129) seems to address when he suggests that we need to ask ourselves important questions about education such as "'what?', 'why?', 'how?', 'to what end?', 'for whom?'". These important questions seem to support the notion of a culturally relevant pedagogy for black boys, which I suggested above in terms of an afro- centric focus. Okrah (2003: 24) also believes that there are crucial components in any philosophical conception of education regardless of the social setting, which are "ontological (reality), epistemological (knowledge) and axiological (values) implications." These components directly call for knowledge of self in order to understand ones conscious reality and intrinsically ones mode of knowing and therefore the nature of knowledge, which is annexed with what is, valued thus revealing the secret of one's motivations, which are the basis of culture. Swartz (2013) also believes that a euro-

centric narrative that explains the world is corrosive because it acts as a master script of all existing knowledge, which serves the purpose of explaining the world in a way that sustains the myth of white supremacy, such as presenting capitalism and by extension the trans-Atlantic slave trade as an inevitable process in human development, which is significant of either natural selection or survival of the fittest theorems postulated by Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. Continuing along this line of inquiry slavery was rationalized through the understanding that Europeans came from a superior more advanced civilization and had a divine right to enslave Africans, who were perceived as beasts of burden. Based on this myth, it means that if there was ever to be widespread knowledge of the fact that Africans were not beasts of burden and came from a more advanced civilization (Robinson, 1983; James, 2001; Walker, 2005; Williams, 1987; Diop, 1989; Hamblet, 2008) this would rupture the white supremacist coding of Africa and Africans and simultaneously the coding of western civilization as superior and democratic, the true nature of western civilization would be laid bare and its power would be able to be legitimately challenged and so the job of the euro-centric narrative is to maintain the power of white supremacy, which is the basis of western civilization (Swartz, 2013).

Olneck (2006) argues that it is the threat that liberatory multiculturalism poses to euro-centric coding in the struggle for coding rights that makes it so undesirable to the establishment. It's potential to free diverse cultures from the coding of white supremacy thus re-coding the way that we perceive ourselves and the immediate world that we live in and most importantly the way that we see the custodians of power. Thus the fear of history being retold from an alternative worldview cultural stance is directly linked to the relations of power that exist today because today is coded by the grand narratives of the past. Swartz (2013) postulates that it is this 'master script' or euro-centric narrative that can infiltrate the curriculum and the schooling of black children who can be excluded from the curriculum, which could cause disaffection amongst my sample (The Commission on African and Asian Heritage, 2005; Home Office Cantle Report, 2001; DFES, 2007a; DFES, 2007b).

A small-scale study by Harris & Reynolds (2014) showed that both the ethnic minority and white ethnic majority members of the sample were in favour of a more diverse curriculum that incorporated global histories. There was also evidence within the study that ethnic minority students found history lessons that covered the Tudor and Victorian

periods repetitive. It also revealed that ethnic minority students were frustrated at the fact that they were not learning any history, which told them something about their ancestors, something about their heritage. Ultimately Harris & Reynolds (2014) whilst airing on the side of caution regarding the studies external validity, suggest that the focus of the history curriculum is far too narrow, concerned mainly with the national story, which is preserved pristinely within a vacuum, void of the context of global histories, which would help greatly in placing Britain within its true contemporary context. This would perhaps help all children to see the world in its true colors, through the race, class and gender struggles that transcend the white male ruling class historical narrative. Osler (2009) in line with the argument by Harris & Reynolds (2014) delineates the British Labour government's political discourse around multiculturalism, patriotism and citizenship since 1997 and links this discourse to the government's ideas around the teaching of history. Ultimately the link between the political discourses aforementioned and the government's idea of taught history is one, which finds a narrow national story of glorification desirable a grand narrative that is not put within the context of world histories that again is preserved within a vacuum. Gillborn (2014) presents a possible answer that explains the self-preservation ideology of the government regarding the history curriculum, which I discussed briefly above, he suggests that the current situation of the public war against multiculturalism and separate values is a moment of interest-divergence where the interests of the state diverge with the interests of racial equality, this debate has converged with the framing of white working class youth as the real victims of education inequality, which has led to multicultural education programs being widely abandoned in favour of special programs for poor white students (Gillborn, 2010). This political agenda of anti-multiculturalism has served to reject racial inequalities by creating a discourse of white victimhood, which takes black underachievement and by extension the need for more black history in the curriculum firmly off the agenda. Ultimately what Gillborn (2014) is arguing is that race equality policy is bound to white supremacist ambitions, which are achieved through interest divergence, which I have already discussed above, and interest convergence, which is when the interests of the state converge with those of ethnic minorities, where the government will conspicuously show support usually in the form of a lengthy report but will not implement real change, as was the case with the Rampton report (1981) and the Swann report (1985), which were entirely ignored. Ross (2000) highlights the struggle that took place between local and central government over the implementation of the national curriculum, that a right

leaning ideology rooted in Thatcherism sought to overpower the logic, experience and wisdom of teaching practitioners and members of the LEA who before the Education Reform Act were able to prescribe bespoke learning according to demographic requirements, which gave multi-cultural learning a high level of importance, which Thatcher thoroughly opposed and dismissed as nonsense. Parekh (2000) explains that in 1988 central government asked for guidance from the National Curriculum Council on how to represent the ethnic and cultural diversity in Britain within the national curriculum, guidelines that were eventually drawn up but that were never published because of the pressure that came from influential civil servants and members of parliament. This then could be seen as a moment of covert interest divergence, whilst the fact that the government only provided statutory guidance on inclusion within the national curriculum in 1999 after the McPherson report, fourteen years after the Swann report was published, is a clear example of government interests converging with those of anti-racism in the wake of the Stephen Lawrence Murder inquiry (DFES, 2007a).

So it is both interest convergence and interest divergence strategies that are used to prevent effective racial equality policy from being implemented, in order to preserve the coding of the white supremacist matrix in which we live, where in-depth black history lessons remain elusive. Harris (2013) highlights a tension in policy discourse around diversity in history within the national curriculum. On the one hand you have the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2007b: cited in Harris, 2013: 402) outlining a very broad quota regarding the nature of diversity that should be incorporated and taught within national curriculum history lessons and then you have a political discourse, which undermines this quota in favor of British history lessons that present a very narrow historical context in which Britain is to be viewed. Once again the political imperative of a British 'island story' is expressed as a government institutional custom. This narrow historical view, which presents liberty and democracy as an exclusive set of British values is meant to facilitate social cohesion in the wake of terrorist activity in Britain, to promote a homogenous British identity (Brown, 2004). However this idea of a unified harmony that is meant to emerge from social cohesion, through a homogenous British identity that suckles contently on neo- liberal mono-cultural British values that excludes the multifarious historical projects of the globe including Africa and the Caribbean outside of Europe's transgression, could prove a little too ambitious (Giroux, 1992) in relation to my sample who may well need to discover themselves before they feel they

can engage fully with a unified brand of British identity.

Gramsci (1971: cited in Ross, 2000) argues that schools are hegemonic and that through their statutory power to control the social milieu of children whilst they are at school the institution uses this power to objectify subjective knowledge so that this knowledge hegemonically shapes the objectives of the child so that he or she can find their pre-programmed place within the social hierarchy of wider society.

Gramsci also asserts that the education that children receive at school often tends to contradict their inherent social and cultural orientation that they have been given by their parents and that children are expected to leave their primary social knowledge and worldview at the door of the classroom so that the artificial knowledge of the school can take precedence, which seems to be exactly what Nick Tate wanted at the helm of the curriculum administration, for ethnic minority pupils to banish their organic identities and sensibilities in order to truly embrace what it means to be a British citizen even at the cost of losing one's self and becoming disorientated, such disorientation may well be evident within my sample, whom as I mentioned above may well need to discover themselves before they are able to fully commit to a model of British citizenship and values.

Pedagogy

Teacher Racism

In this section of the literature review I discuss theories on teacher racism to try and find out what causes teacher racism and how serious this problem is. I discuss teacher racism because it is likely that members of my sample may have experienced teacher racism and may perceive it as something, which is an insurmountable barrier, which inhibits their achievement levels. I also discuss the tension in this literature, which suggests that teachers who punish black boys do not do it because they are racially prejudice but because the behavior of the black boys warrants this level of punishment and that the anti-racist agenda has created a victim culture in black boys where any form of discipline from white teachers is seen as racist, which means that a lazy work ethic and bad behavior from black boys is allowed to go unchecked. This literature is important because members of my sample who achieve top grades may not get into trouble with teachers or perceive their discipline as a form of prejudice.

King (1991) introduces the concept of dysconscious racism, which relates to teachers

whose identities are embedded within normative white privilege, who themselves have been educated and molded by institutionally racist structures of white supremacy, who view the world uncritically through a master white narrative that has grafted a simulacrum of the past, the present and the future (Swartz, 2013; Eisenstein, 2004). This uncritical view of the world views race through a neo-liberal capitalist lens, capitalism being viewed through the Marxist canon as inevitable economic human development, which legitimizes white power and looks at racial inequality from a deficit perspective, which frames black boys in particular as problematic. Youdell, through her study (2003) highlights this issue within her notion of an 'identity trap', whereby the conspicuous elements of black youth subcultural identity such as signature types of behavior or language, are a form of resistance to white cultural hegemony, and are also forms of cultural capital, which place these black boys at the top of a discursively constructed student-centric hierarchy. This Hierarchal black male performance that is discursively constructed as privileged within the social universe of students, is simultaneously discursively framed as deviant and a challenge to white authority by the school institution. It is this black male subcultural performance that is historically associated with the Dark Continent and by extension the black savage that is the white man's burden in a civilizing mission of the uncivilized. It is this racial mythology that Youdell (2003) suggests has been institutionalized within the school structure and that is being referenced dysconsciously in the discursive framing of black youth subcultural performance as deviant and anti- learning. This tacit agreement between teachers and their black male pupils could be one of the reasons behind the disaffection of black males in relation to their education.

Sleeter (1993), similarly to King (1991) identified that white schoolteachers maintained the institutionally racist framework in schools reproducing unfair relations of power equating to racism. Sleeter (1993) argues that white teachers consciously seek to maintain the relations of power that are inherent in racism and seek to avoid situations where they are likely to be confronted with the reality of racism and unfair relations of power. Sleeter (1993) continues the argument that white teachers adopt the tool of colour blindness to defend their positions of power, the argument that everybody is the same and has the same opportunities, therefore they adopt the white dialectic of universality thus holding the view that whites are superior because they rest at the top of an equal system, which then changes the focus from historical and structural

hegemony to biological and cultural distinctions between races. This position is not dissimilar to King's "dysconscious" argument, that white teachers are uncritical of the white world of privilege and therefore sustain it as unwitting racists who's critique of racism avoids the power relations that constitute racist society. Vaught & Castagno (2008), in their research study on teacher attitudes and structural racism concur with the dysconscious theoretic of King (1991) and Sleeter (1993). They show in their research that White teachers use whiteness as property to demand freedom from the persecution of racism individually and to deny any notion of structural racism that is collectively invested in by whites whose property of whiteness allows them to change the meaning of racism so as to maintain the status quo. Whiteness as the property of white people who are the sons and daughters of the architects of the capitalist matrix, own the rights to ignorance of anything unfair about the universal norm, and have the White privilege of existing as people (individuals) within a democracy as opposed to black people (a racial group) within an institutionally racist society (Vaught & Castagno, 2008).

Rollock (2007a) argues, using three key Bourdieuian concepts, "field, habitus, and cultural capital", that Black Afro-Caribbean boys especially, are judged by teachers against white supremacist criteria, based on their ethnicity and cultural expression and as a result are perceived as negative learners whom are unable to achieve "exclusive success" (Rollock, 2007a). The first concept "field" or social space, in this case secondary school education, is identified as having a specific way of functioning, a certain social etiquette, which thus demarcates itself from other fields. The idea then, is that in order to be a member of a specific field one needs to conform to its social conventions, to acknowledge its implicit social contract, which is manifest in an agreed currency or capital that can be spent in exchange for sustained membership. This brings us to the second Bourdieuian concept highlighted by Rollock (2007a: 276) "cultural capital". Cultural capital is the amount of knowledge that one has and can put on display, relative to the social etiquette of a field or indeed the culture that informs it (wider social structures).

The crux of Rollock's (2007a) argument, is that Black Afro-Caribbean male pupils especially, are identified as non-members, of an exclusive membership within the same field, whom are invested in, and groomed, for the attainment of five GCSE grades A*-C. The status of non-membership is awarded based on the cultural expression of Black Afro-Caribbean male pupils, that is located by the teaching staff interviewed, within the

genre of "Black street culture" (2007a: 284). Thus this black Afro-Caribbean male habitus imposes an "identity trap" which "self-incarcerates" within a perceived negative learner identity (Youdell, 2003).

Gillborn (1990) in line with Rollock (2007a) suggests that teachers have their own idea of an 'ideal client', which is usually constructed based on the teachers culture and lifestyle choices and that this can be the source of racism and cultural prejudice especially regarding afro-Caribbean boys, which can be the origin of teacher-pupil conflict. Mac an Ghaill (1988) supports this view through his study, which revealed extreme teacher prejudice especially towards afro-Caribbean and Asian boys who the teachers would ascribe negative attributes to, which would tend to be in complete opposition to the culture and lifestyle of the teachers who were interviewed, which is congruent with Gillborn's (1990) 'ideal client' theoretic. Blair (2001) also highlights the fact that there is evidence building up, which suggests that teachers do not show respect to black boys and that they are much more likely to discipline black boys disproportionately to other pupils, even if other pupils are doing the exact same thing and are likely to falsely attribute blame to black boys for something, which they haven't done (Connolly, 1995; Gillborn, 1990; Mac an Ghail, 1988; Wright, 1986).

Picower (2009) based on a small study explores how the life experiences of white female pre-service teachers are central to the tools that they use to reinforce and sustain white hegemonic power. The study looks at the life experiences of the teacher sample, some of whom perceived African Americans as playing a naturally subordinate role to White Americans and others who expressed their fear of scary big black guys who they perceived as probably being involved with an element of criminality. The theme of big black guys continues when one of the student teachers in relation to her urban school placement explains that some of the big black children there are almost as big as her and are really tough and that this scares her because if a fight broke out she would not be physically capable of restoring order in this hypothetical scenario. Teachers in this study also felt that their caring nature would be enough for them to teach in a multicultural setting thereby rejecting the crucial strategic training necessary to address the needs of the black children they will be teaching. In this way racism is rejected as an institutional phenomenon and is thought of in terms of something that can be redressed through individual enterprise. The teachers were found to use other tools of deflection from

racism such as emotional responses to examples of racism that expressed the fact that they do not see why they should feel guilt just because they are white and because they were not personally involved in the process of slavery, thus ignoring or pleading innocent to the normative privilege and power that are part of their everyday worlds that they probably take for granted or as just simply the norm. Ultimately the pre-service teachers from this study were not open to or fully aware of the way in which their identities were rooted in whiteness and as such were complicit to the sustenance of white privilege and power that can disadvantage black pupils through ingrained stereotypes and dys-conscious or uncritical racism.

However, there is tension in the literature, Foster (1992) argues that the evidence from some authors (Connolly, 1995; Gillborn, 1990; Mac an Ghail, 1988; Wright, 1986) is unconvincing and that it is much more likely that teachers have negative views of afro-Caribbean boys because they are actually producing the type of behavior that warrants the negative view or appraisal of character. He also suggests a plethora of other variables, which may explain teacher's negative views of Afro-Caribbean boys outside of racist attitudes. Sewell (2009, 2010) would also agree that in our contemporary moment racism is not as powerful a force as it once was and that black boys only have themselves to blame for their academic shortcomings.

Trevor Phillips (2003) in a newspaper article in The Daily Telegraph and a transcript from the Australian TV show 'Lateline', which hosted Katherine Birbalsingh, a former advisor to Michael Gove, highlight the fact that she agrees with both Trevor Phillips and academic Tony Sewell (2009, 2010) that racist teachers and institutional racism are not the main reasons why black boys fail their secondary education that it is a lack of respect for teachers as the assumed racist antagonist that contributes to black boys failing their education because they have been empowered by anti-racists to disrespect their teachers and to get away with bad behavior and a lazy attitude towards their schooling. Even more controversially Birbalsingh (Ali Moore, 2011) suggests that black boys are more concerned with popular black cultural entertainment than their education and are so immersed in their delusions of grandeur of becoming premier league footballers or famous rappers that they convince themselves that they do not need to focus seriously on attaining 5 A*-C grades in their GCSE examinations. This is an interesting line of enquiry, however it doesn't take into consideration curriculum content that may exclude black boys and their

heritage and therefore cause boredom, disaffection and distraction with sources of blackness that they can relate to and identify with. It also doesn't seem to consider the possibility that these perceptually problematic black boys may perceive British society as racist and exclusionary especially in terms of employment and may feel that it is impossible for them to transcend this racist barrier thus betting all their chips on highly ambitious careers that they perceive are far more likely than white collar work because they see other successful black footballers and rappers coming from the very same place that they themselves are currently in. This then appears to have more to do with a lack of positive role models who can teach and inspire, which is a pedagogic opportunity, than an abstract essentialist racial trait that makes all black boys not want to take their education seriously. Fernandez (2005) highlights the fact that Trevor Phillips has stated that black male underachievement has nothing to do with racist teachers or racism plural because black girls are performing academically and because other ethnic minority groups like Indian and Chinese pupils achieve highly. Rollock (2007b) appears to disagree with Trevor Phillips in that black girls and especially black Caribbean girls are under performing in relation to their white female peers and are much more likely to be excluded than their white female peers. In the small study by Rollock (2007b) she found that black girls were not targeted as much as black boys in school because they were perceived as more manageable and therefore less of a physical threat. It was also the case that the gender of black girls was more privileged academically than boys as girls were seen to have more of the natural attributes associated with high academic performance such as maturity and good time management. It is for these reasons that Rollock (2007b) argues that black girls have become invisible when it comes to the black achievement debate, when in reality they shouldn't be invisible because there are issues that need to be addressed regarding this group. In relation to the academic performance of other ethnic groups such as Indian and Chinese pupils, these ethnic groups belong to different historical and cultural realities, which instantly make them incomparable, especially in terms of historical-racial violence, its impact and the present temporal and spatial landscape.

The Effect of Government Politics and Policy in Relation to Pedagogy

This section of the literature review is meant to provide context as to why teachers may be perceived as racist by my sample because of the teaching restraints enforced by government policy.

Sleeter (2012) highlights the fact that 'culturally responsive pedagogy' as part of multicultural education policy is being forced into retreat by global governmental forces and especially in the UK at the moment where there is a neo-liberal political war against multicultural values (Alexander, 2014; Gilroy, 2012; kundnani, 2012; Redclift, 2014; Weedon, 2011). Sleeter (2012) states that the neo-liberal marketization of education, which promotes educational triage creates a consequential pedagogical environment where teachers are tacitly coerced into a standardised template form of teaching, which limits their capability to engage in a culturally responsive pedagogy, which has the potential to shift the power relations of white hegemony by decoding the racist coding of capitalist society and teaching children to view the world critically from their own organic cultural perspectives.

This overarching government agenda in relation to education that Sleeter (2012) highlights could have an impact on the nature of initial teacher training. Bhopal and Rhamie (2013) based on their study, criticize initial teacher training courses for not providing student teachers with the knowledge they need in order to pragmatically tackle instances of racism within the classroom, an issue that was important to the sample within their study. The authors also explain that the new Teachers Standards, which were introduced in 2012, omit direct reference to racial equality, incorporating diversity and inclusion.

However in the new Teachers Standards, there is a reference to being aware of the prior knowledge of pupils and planning teaching to build on this prior knowledge (DfE, 2011: 10). This could be a reference to literature on inclusion within the curriculum where the child is seen as the basis for pedagogy that enters the classroom with an already established worldview and with a unique cultural knowledge base, which needs to be nourished and expanded upon (Ross, 2000). However I take the point that Bhopal and Rhamie (2013) are making, which is that if racial equality, diversity and inclusion are not referenced explicitly within the Teachers standards requirements then this could be understood as these key issues no longer being relevant to teacher practitioners and therefore do not need to be included within initial teacher training courses.

The Race on the Agenda (2012) inquiry into education in London is also revealing, it suggests that the issue of racial equality is in decline and that education policy and

funding for existing initiatives is in retreat because of the notion that we are now living in a post-racial society. The inquiry also reveals the fact that over half of newly qualified teachers feel that the level of their training is poor in relation to preparing them to teach pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. It is also reveals that over 65% of teachers trained in universities or college do not feel that they are able to construct and deliver a curriculum that confronts and challenges racism. There was also evidence in the inquiry that black boys in particular are negatively targeted by white teachers, which can lead to exclusions, it also found that teachers can automatically stereotype black children as underachievers and assign them to lower classroom sets of learning, which is intrinsically linked to examination tier decision making.

Good Pedagogic Practice

This section of my literature review is meant to outline what good pedagogy looks like in terms of a multicultural liberatory pedagogy, which is inclusive. This literature is important because members of my sample who find their teachers and what they are taught as inadequate may outline what it is that they feel they should be getting taught and how they feel they should be getting taught, which may well line up with the literature which I discuss in this section.

Giroux (1996) challenges pedagogic praxis to challenge negative stereotypes to challenge negative popular cultural forms saturated with black male violence and drug related activity and to ask from which cultural perspective has this narrative been written and why has it been written. He also calls for pedagogy to help embrace the interests of students and to pursue knowledge that will help them to make sense of themselves and their world, to pursue 'fugitive cultures' that exist beyond the norms of whiteness and that embrace an alternative worldview and cultural perspective.

Le Roux (2002) argues that effective educators must be good cultural communicators that are aware of their own cultural identity as well as the culture of others. Only in this way can a practitioner be engaged with reality, which is reflected in the different cultural perspectives that constitute planetary reality.

Therefore if pedagogy is not rooted in the reality of a multicultural classroom then it is rooted in unreality, which is the mono-cultural gap in consciousness, which is represented in all things that are normative to this culture but alien to the cultural

consciousness of others who exist beyond this gap in consciousness and its representation. So the necessity is for educators to acknowledge that they have a gap in consciousness and therefore be open to the consciousness or culture of others instead of teaching blindly from one's own cultural perspective, which is where conflict can occur (Le Roux, 2002). Grahame (cited in Majors, 2001) and Richards (2008) as well as others (Dei, 2010; Okrah, 2003) suggest that an African-centered approach to learning could benefit the education of black boys scattered across the Diaspora by helping to deconstruct the white master narrative and by connecting them to the worldview of their ancestors, which may help them to make sense of themselves outside of the capitalist matrix, coded through a pessimistic euro-centric worldview as inevitable.

Good Practice in Schools

Within this section of the literature review I shall be reviewing literature that takes a look at good practice in schools in relation to helping black boys to achieve academic success. This literature is important because members of my sample may feel that at their school that there is not a multi-cultural diverse education agenda, they may feel that teachers at the school do not care about teaching black history and culture and that perhaps at black history month black history is not really given priority or celebrated. These things reflect upon the school and its vision of a diverse education agenda.

The aiming high: African-Caribbean achievement project was launched by the then DFES in November 2003. This project was an attempt to develop a whole school strategy to tackle the problem of African- Caribbean male achievement. The staff hierarchy of the project was a consultant, an academic specializing in African-Caribbean male achievement whom would liaise and instruct a "lead professional" a senior member of teaching staff whom would have a depth of experience working with African- Caribbean males, then the headmaster of the school who is meant to form a close partnership with the lead professional making sure that the entire school pull together allowing the lead professional to direct the achievement project effectively. The Aiming high project (DfES, 2003) looked at ways of collecting data by ethnicity within schools in order to target areas where Afro-Caribbean males were failing and to address them. Also targeted was the curriculum in order to make it more relevant to Afro- Caribbean males, parents were also included within the project and were made much more central to their child's education. Mentors were also seen as very helpful and made a positive impact. However having said

that the Aiming high project was unable to make a serious dent in African-Caribbean male achievement nationally and this group still remain the lowest achieving group for GCSE examinations.

There were some signs of improved academic performance amongst the African-Caribbean males in some schools but this varied and was not enough to make it remarkable. Problems with the project began with their not being a sound race relation's structure in place at some of the schools to honor the legal requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000). This was the case at schools where focusing on race relations was secondary to cracking on with the status quo, tackling racism almost seen as a distraction from getting on with the proper business of mainstream education a one size fits all perspective. However there were also examples where structuring the school towards the achievement project was rewarding and in fact complimented a focus that was already in place regarding African- Caribbean male achievement. The structure I find, after reading the report, was heavily dependent on the leadership of the school so if the internal school hierarchy was not in favour of African –Caribbean achievement or it was just simply seen as a peripheral project likened more to something that was extra-curricular as opposed to an issue that should be integral to daily school operations, then attempts to making the Aiming high project work were blocked and the teaching infrastructure would just dismiss it as an alien intrusion. However to repeat again, where the leadership from the headmaster down was strong and African-Caribbean achievement was a central concern, then the Aiming high project took off and became very beneficial and transformative. The main reason given for staff resistance to the aiming high project is a colour blind philosophy that all children are the same and therefore should all have the same level of education administered to them. However the irony within this colour-blind perspective is that African-Caribbean males were over represented in exclusions, under represented in "gifted and talented" cohorts and over represented in sitting lower tier examination papers so there is obviously not a colour blind attitude when it comes to African-Caribbean achievement after all. The argument continues that this lack of academic inclusion within schools regarding African-Caribbean males is to some extent based on this group's perceived behavior as opposed to their academic ability based on evidence given by Aiming high consultants, pupils and their parents.

Demie (2005) explains that at the heart of a school where black Caribbean pupils are

academically successful is strong leadership from the school head. That the school head will have a clear vision and strategy for success, which he will integrate through the line of command, encouraging and supporting his staff to embrace multicultural policy. High expectations of all pupils was another significant factor, accepting only the very best effort from a child and therefore pushing all children to achieve their best. Also crucial was that teachers come up with new and innovative ways of delivering a multicultural curriculum that is representative of black Caribbean children and their heritage so that they have a sense of inclusion. Demie (2005) goes on to highlight that schools with high levels of black Caribbean achievement had very good links with parents, where academic performance and discipline issues could be discussed openly and a successful strategy formulated instead of letting standards dip or getting to the stage where exclusion becomes a consideration. Successful schools also carried out ethnic monitoring using the data from this monitoring to understand what is working and what is not working in the school in relation to black Caribbean achievement. Demie (2005: 499) also argues that a culturally diverse team of teaching staff has positive effects on black Caribbean pupils who can identify with teaching staff who are able to present an alternative view of Caribbean culture, it's more "traditional" aspects. It is further argued that by having both external mentors, professional mentors that are hired externally, and internal mentors that take the form of black Caribbean teachers and teaching assistants, an eco-system begins to form of a positive multicultural environment, a community headed by elders in a sort of rites of passage process. Good schools will also have a strong moral focus around racial prejudice and will be united in making sure that it has no place in the school. Ultimately what Demie (2005) is highlighting is that a head teacher who is totally committed to multicultural liberty leads the schools where black students achieve highly from the front where all of the teaching staff are also totally committed to this goal of liberty and success, which means that teachers firstly need to understand what is disadvantaging black students and then have the vision and passion to make things right. Demie and Mclean (2007) come across similar findings when they look at successful schools in relation to black African achievement.

The Ajegbo report (DfES, 2007) written at the time for the Department for Education and Skills also highlights the importance of leadership regarding diversity education from the school head and actually identifies this as the heart of a diverse education agenda. Both the headmaster and the leadership team are integral to the successful integration of

diversity education who can get the senior teaching staff on board and the other faculty members so that diversity education becomes part of the day to day fabric of school life. Leadership from the headmaster is also crucial as with regards to ensuring that all teaching staff have the relevant training necessary to feel confident in delivering a diverse education curriculum and feel confident in teaching and engaging with a diverse ethnic pupil population who will come with their own unique cultural challenges. Having a headmaster driving a diverse education agenda is also crucial in recruiting and retaining black teaching staff who can often feel frustrated at the lack of progression in this area and who also experience racism in terms of their career progression (DfES, 2007). The report also saw involvement with parents and the community as important having lines of communication with parents open and inviting community leaders to be involved with the school so that that the school and the community can work together to provide education for children both inside and outside of the school.

Tikly, Caballero, Haynes and Hill (2004) summarize quite nicely what they call the existing model of effective practice in relation to the whole school strategy delineated in the aiming high: Afro-Caribbean achievement project (DfES, 2003). These components appear to help provide the best conditions under which black Caribbean boys especially tend to thrive academically. The model is below:

· **Strong leadership**: The head teacher and senior teachers lead an effective strategy that is applied across the whole school

· **Effective teaching and learning:** Lessons are planned and delivered as effectively as possible, with support provided for bilingual pupils. And teachers are able to reflect the cultures and identities of the communities represented in the school in their lessons

· **High expectations:** Every pupil is expected and encouraged to achieve their potential by teachers and parents. These expectations are underpinned by the practical use of data and monitoring. Policies and exam results are monitored for their effect on particular groups of pupils to pinpoint and tackle underperformance

· **Ethos of respect with a clear approach to racism and bad behaviour:** There is a

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strong ethos and culture of mutual respect where pupils are able to have their voices heard. There are clear and consistent approaches to bad behaviour, bullying and tackling racism across the whole school with a focus on prevention

• **Parental involvement:** Parents and the wider community are positively encouraged to play a full part in the life and development of the school.

The above literature best outlines the key elements of importance in relation to whole school strategy and black male achievement, especially black Caribbean male achievement and will hopefully aid my research in helping to understand the role that schools should play in providing a good education for black boys.

Black Parental Discipline

High Black Parental Discipline

Within this section of the literature review I discuss literature that focuses on indigenous black African and black Caribbean cultures of parental discipline. I review this literature because it may well help to explain the cultures of parental discipline that exist within the family background of my sample. This is important to my research because I would like to see if there is any link between parental discipline and the motivation of my sample to achieve academically, which may well have to do with how much the parents of my sample value the importance of education themselves.

Research looking at Cameroonian parental values carried out by Nsamenang &Lamb (1995) highlights the fact that Nso parents:

(a) view pregnancy as God's approval of the ancestors' wish that representatives be sent to the community; (b) desire many children; (c) place a high socioeconomic and emotional value on children; and (d) value parental authority, seniority, and filial service.

Even though this research is limited to Cameroonian parents, the high value that these parents place upon parental authority, seniority and filial service is very interesting because these parents seem to share similar parental values, to the other black ethnic groups which are studied in the research literature that I review here. Adeyinka & Ndwapi (2010) discuss the moral education of the African child before the colonial intrusions into

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Africa and delineate the obligations of the child in moral education towards his family, which involved extensive chores within the home such as cooking, cleaning and looking after siblings as well as a plethora of other duties. The authors emphasize the fact that good morals were intrinsic and formed the basis of society as a means of ensuring societal longevity and prosperity and that these morals do live on. Adeyinka & Ndwapi (2010) go on to assert that under no circumstances should a child abuse or be rude to an adult or someone who is older than themselves and Nsamenang & Lamb (1995) assert that children must accept what they may perceive as negative behavior from their parents because parents have the authority to act as they see fit. Also Brown & Johnson (2009) and Smith & Mosby (2003) highlight the fact that Jamaican parents place a high premium on the obedience of their children, their children's manners and the child's respect for elders and their authority. It is possible that these parental values could be linked to the moral framework that is part of the African universe of interconnected hierarchical forces (Akbar, 2004).

West Indian parental norms and expectations of their child are illustrated here by Sykes & Waters (2009) where there is a fairly definitive quote from a 28-year-old West Indian male participant in their study, who states:

I'll set out what I think is the West Indian way. It's all about responsibility for the kids. Kids have work to do as soon as they can work. As long as you can push a broom one of your jobs can be sweeping up the floor or the yards. If you're old enough to run the vacuum cleaner, if you're tall enough to reach the shelves, you can dust the shelves. Once you can negotiate the sink and all that, you can wash the dishes you can clean the tub you can always make your own bed. So that's one thing. You start working very early. I don't know anybody, any West Indian who did not have chores as a child. So I that's a very… Teaching responsibility through work is very important.

It is interesting then that all three studies (Nsamenang & Lamb, 1995; Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2010; Sykes & Waters, 2009) mentioned in this section have ties that bind them together, which includes filial service, which is seen as a crucial element in the moral teaching of responsibility to children. There is also research, which suggests that children who are given household chores and responsibility from an early age grow up to be successful academically, in their careers and grow up to be well balanced responsible adults generally (Rossmann, 2002). Sewell (2009, 2010) would also agree that extensive chores

and general discipline is the perfect parenting formula for academic success. This research makes it clear to see the link between what African culture calls moral education and filial service as an intrinsic part of one's moral development. The fact that all Black people are of African origin could explain the commonality across the different parts of Africa and between Africa and the Caribbean in relation to morality and ones worldview (Williams, 1987).

Adeniji-Neill (2012) looks at Nigerian parents who themselves are voluntary immigrants in the US, and how their expectations influence their American born children's academic performance. The research reveals the high level of importance, the reverence, which these Nigerian parents have for education and the fact that they expect their children to work at the highest level possible leaving no stone unturned in their academic pursuit for excellence. It is made clear that the level of discipline in these Nigerian households is very high and unflinching. The Yenika-Agbaw (2009) study also highlights the importance of education to African parents and the high expectations that they have of their children both in terms of disciplined behavioral conduct and high levels of attainment.

The review of the above literature on black African and black Caribbean parental values has hopefully outlined the black African and black Caribbean parental moral framework, which operates within an age hierarchy. Education for parents researched from these black ethnic groups is of the highest level of importance and only equal to the concern that these parents have regarding the moral conduct of their child. These high expectations and concerns that these parents have regarding their children can sometimes be at odds with the child's integration within western society, creating tension and so it is important to see whether members of my sample encounter this tension and how they react to parental discipline in general and the affect of this on their academic achievement.

Low Black Parental Discipline

This section on low black parental discipline is important to this research because it highlights the conditions under which poor levels of discipline may be exercised within the family background of members of my sample. This is important because poor parental discipline at home could contribute to poor behavior at school and socially, which could impede the academic progress of some of my sample. This literature specifically looks at

the potential negative affects of single parent families headed by a female on black boys and the potential benefits of having a father figure present in black boy's lives.

Sewell (2009) argues that there comes a time when boys dis-identify with their mothers and assume their male status and that it is at this point that a responsible father figure is needed to orientate the male child within a safe masculinity and that this is done through male 'ritual' and male 'love', ritual is the masculine training and love is the full acceptance of the child. These processes help the male child to 'worship the female within' that is to accept the estrogen/testosterone chemical balance within and to be at peace with it thus accepting a balanced masculine identity. If there is no responsible father figure and there is not a disciplined culture within the home environment then the male child may destroy the female temple within and become hyper-masculine, it is at this point then that recruitment into gangs becomes most likely according to Sewell (2009). This hypothesis is interesting especially since black Caribbean pupils are the lowest achieving group in relation 5 GCSE A*-C attainment (DfE, 2015) and they are the group most likely to come from a single parent household headed by a female (Berthoud, 2005; Mann, 2009; Phoenix & Husain, 2007; Strand, 2007).

Cherian & Malehase (2000) in their study of black South African children found that parental control was a factor affecting academic achievement, the less parental control that there is the less well that the children perform and the higher level of parental control that exists that higher the level of academic attainment. Results of the study also found that children from single parent families tended to do less well and children from two parent families tended to achieve a higher academic standard. However this evidence should be viewed with caution because it relates to South African children and not black British Caribbean children where there are different cultural and socio-economic differences. However Ford, Wright, Grantham and Harris (1998) suggest that the demographic characteristics of black families, that is one parent or two parent families, the educational attainment level of parents or the socio-economic status of parents does not strictly by itself, in their study, determine whether a black child performs better academically or not. They attribute the academic success or failure of a child more so with the level of parental discipline and control that parents or a parent has over their child and with the amount of value that parents place upon education, how much their values are orientated around educational achievement for their child. However the study does

accept that there are factors such as peer pressure that could affect a black child's achievement level despite coming from a family background where education is valued and the child is pushed academically. This then could feed into what Sewell (2009) highlights regarding the need for black fathers as role models. However this study also fits in with the literature on black African and black Caribbean parental styles and the high level of importance that these parents place upon education, which has more to do with culture than it has to do with family structure. Coley (1998) in her study shows that for black boys living in single parent families, both biological fathers and non-biological father figures are important. The study found that warmth control and discipline from fathers and non-biological father figures had a positive affect on the behavior of black boys with teachers reporting less problematic behaviors. The conclusion of the study was that Fathers and non-biological father figures are crucial to the development of black boys especially in relation to their school behavior and their interaction with peers, which supports Sewell's (2009) thesis. Gordon, Nichter and Henriksen (2012) in their study looking at the perspectives of black fathers on how to raise black males, reveal some valuable insights. Black fathers were the participants of this study and provided data based on how they had been raised by their own fathers and the lessons they would take from this in raising their own children. The study showed that the sample saw their father'sinvolvement in their lives as role models as crucial to their upbringing especially in relation to discipline and helping them not to go down the wrong path in life. Also of importance to the sample was the level of importance, which their fathers placed upon education as a means to get a good job and to do well in life. There was also a lot of importance placed upon extra-curricular activities outside of school with their fathers playing sport and going on trips out of town, which they felt gave them a wider perspective of life outside of the areas where they lived. It was also seen as important to be exposed to the community and to the wider circle of family who would help to raise members of the sample providing them with alternative perspectives on things and enforcing important messages given by parents, the authors refer to this as "it takes a village". This is interesting because it seems to refer to the African child socialization process often referred to as the rites of passage (Black, 1997). So to conclude, this study (Gordon, Nichter and Henriksen, 2012) emphasizes the importance of the role that black fathers play in their children's lives and that having a father, as a role model appears to be a crucial component of black male development and academic achievement.

In the review of the above literature in this section, I have tried to look at the possible weaknesses in black parental discipline, which appears to be potentially within single parent households headed by a female. However there is literature that suggests that single parent families simply because they are run by a female does not mean that they are void of discipline or strong values orientated around education where black boys can perform well academically. However single parent families headed by a female can still make black boys vulnerable to peer pressure and undesirable behavior at school, which could interfere with levels of academic achievement (Ford, Wright, Grantham, Harris, 1998; Sewell, 2009; Black, 1997; Coley, 1998; Gordon, Nichter and Henriksen, 2012) and so it is this line of inquiry that the literature opens up in relation to research questions for this study.

Black Academic Achievement

Within this section I review literature that is specifically focused on the attributes of black males that help them to achieve academically and the processes that they have gone through in order to attain those attributes. The main attribute that is valued in this literature is having a strong and secure black male identity, which provides the individual with the inner resilience necessary to overcome racial barriers and peer pressure. This literature is important because it explores what the components are for black male academic success, which may help to make sense of how members of my sample perceive their academic achievement either positively if they have certain attributes or negatively if they don't or if this literature has weaknesses that the data exposes.

Warren (2005: 250) argues that the sociological concept of resistance theory lacks the tools to describe the "resilient" behaviour, which he explains is a term that is more appropriate in describing the context specific behaviour of the sample of his research in their resistance to pedagogic hegemony and consequent disrespect. The argument continues that resistance theory is usually seen in terms of absolute opposition to the dominant ideology of school and its discourse. In addition it is argued that black youth through the discourse of "British race and youth studies in the 1980's" (2005: 247) have been framed as essentially reactionary social radicals whilst white youth have been framed within the rationale of class struggle. Warren (2005) explains that the school based mentoring programs that he observed in his research worked on providing the black male pupils with alternative ways of dealing with conflicts at school and that this

was achieved through a radical pedagogy that involved exposing the children to black history, to important black figures that helped to outline alternative ways of being black and male. It is arguably through an enhanced black identity resulting in such radical pedagogy that the black male pupils are encouraged into acts of "refusal" that do not incarcerate them within racial stereotypes. The theory of resilience in Warrens (2005) study appears similar to what Codjoe (2006) finds in his study, which looks at the effect of an affirmed black cultural identity and heritage on the achievement of African-Canadian students. This piece of research reveals that every member of the sample had a secure, stable and caring home environment, which pushed the agenda of black identity by exposing the positive elements of black culture including the giants that had shaped this culture like W.E.B Du Bois for example. Codjoe (2006) argues that an African centered environment was created at home which helped to affirm the black cultural identities of the sample making them very secure and able to excel in the school environment by being above racial stereotypes and applying their African centered knowledge to their academic studies within the curriculum. Again within this study participation in black community groups was seen as beneficial in helping to affirm black cultural identity within a predominantly white environment.

Rhamie & Hallam (2002) was an investigation into African-Caribbean academic success in the UK. This piece of research revealed two models of success these were the "home-school" model and the "home- community" model. The "home-school" model of success was based on a unified vision of success between schools and home that parents groomed their child for success in school clueing them in on the appropriate etiquette for a seamless transition from compulsory schooling through to undergraduate study bypassing the dangers of racist stereotyping. In this way both the school and parents have high expectations of the child in question pushing them to fulfil their potential. The dominant characteristic here though was the high expectations of parents and a secure and caring environment that provided stability. In addition to this some parents acted as role models due to their academic and or professional success. The "home-community" model of success was focused much more on helping to affirm a positive black identity for the child through participation in predominantly black churches where large numbers of successful black people would come to worship and interact with the kids and also through trips to the Caribbean where children would become exposed to successful black role models in person or through Jamaica's positive black media. The route to

success here is based on the construction of a healthy positive black identity for the child that can with stand negative external influences such as racism that can raise its head from society in general and from the school environment. This means that these black kids have the confidence that has been built up in the home and the community to work hard and to rise above and "refuse" (Warren, 2005) low expectations and racist antagonism. The majority of the sample expressed that their success was based on the "home-community" model.

The second piece of research by Rhamie (2006) I believe to be intrinsically connected with the Rhamie & Hallam (2002) research because it concludes that the successful African-Caribbean pupils or "the eagles who soar" are integrated within an eco-system of home, school, and community each of which complement the child's progress. The 2006 research by Rhamie did differ from her 2002 research in that it was much more complex by looking at a wider range of academic groupings and thus a wider and more complex range of experiences across the home, school and community settings. The conclusive argument of the Rhamie (2006) research was that the home environment especially is crucial in grooming "eagles who soar" by giving children academic agency as well as emotional security thus allowing them to become resilient against the negative forces of racist critique and low expectations.

Byfield (2008) looks at how religious affiliation helps to give black boys agency, which then helps them to achieve a high level of academic attainment. Byfield (2008) explains that the church helps to provide and instill a strong sense of moral discipline within black boys that helps to guide them away from trouble and that it also provides role models and elders from which black boys can learn how to behave and how to live their lives in general. Byfield (2008) goes on to say that the church provides black boys with transferable skills that they can use within an academic setting such as time management and being on time to church service, having to iron and prepare clothes and having to revise the bible and practice for the church choir. Byfield suggests that all of these things that black boys gain from the church helps to structure them as responsible young men who need to conduct themselves properly and to work hard, which are things that benefit them greatly when it comes to their academic pursuits.

Sewell (2009) provides a theory behind black academic achievement, which he calls the

'cane piece' ideology. Sewell explains that in Jamaica there is the notorious sugar cane plantations that is a symbol of hardship, poverty and oppression and that as a result indigenous Jamaicans place an extremely high value on education especially for their children, pushing them to work extremely hard academically to try and transcend the third world economy of the island. Sewell goes on to state that because of this poverty when a Jamaican child comes to Britain for example to study this is seen as a golden opportunity which is then converted into an extremely high work rate that is able to transcend any racist barriers that may exist because the focus is simply attaining top grades in order to elevate their position. Sewell suggests that this attitude is not exclusive to Jamaicans but to all who come from impoverished beginnings, which certainly includes Africans.

Conclusion

So I will now summarize my research questions and justify them in relation to this literature review.

a) Macro-Subjective: Britain's socio-political infrastructure in relation to race.

When I searched the literature on black academic achievement racism was a salient feature, especially institutionalized racism within the public and private sector and within the state itself. This seemed to justify looking at the socio-political infrastructure of Britain in relation to racism as it is this socio- political stance that influences the structures of society and which could be perceived by my samples parents and my sample as a racist barrier to achievement, which could either motivate or create disaffection. I have used the term macro subjective here because it reflects the subjective nature of British society as a macro organizing structure.

b) Macro-subjective: British racism and material well-being.

Intrinsic to academic attainment is material well-being and especially employment and housing. This is also linked to the socio-political infrastructure of Britain and the legacy of British racism in relation to education, employment and on a lesser scale housing. How my samples parents perceive the education system and how they perceive the employment market in terms of racism based on their own personal experiences or observations is

extremely important in terms of the messages that they pass on to their children the sample of my research because this may well affect the way in which my sample perceive their education. If the parents of my sample have taught them that life in Britain is going to be harder for them in terms of academic and material success then this could work to motivate my sample to perceive their educational achievement as crucially important, it might be that this message from parents has the opposite affect on members of my sample in that they feel overwhelmed by this racism and perceive their educational achievement as something, which is not worthwhile because of societal prejudice. It is also possible that members of my sample may have their own perceptions of how society is and the value of academic attainment in relation to that.

c)   Macro-subjective: The English vernacular as imperialism.

The English vernacular as an imperial tool has been used historically and still today in British society to evaluate the civilized nature of immigrants or those who are perceived as exotic. It can therefore be used as a means to either uphold racist stereotypes or to dispel them, something, which is also intrinsically linked to the socio-political infrastructure of British society. It might be the case then, that members of my sample are aware of such prejudice and are motivated by it to perceive their educational achievement as crucial in dispelling any stereotypes that may exist in relation to their command of the English vernacular. It might also be the case that members of my sample may feel overwhelmed by their perception of racial stereotypes in relation to their use of English or African- centered vernaculars or accents and may perceive their educational achievement negatively in relation to their language use which is an integral part of who they are and therefore a crucial element of their identity, which they are reluctant to change.

d)   Macro-subjective: The criminal stereotype of black youth and the hoodie icon.

The criminal stereotype of black youth and the association of this group with hooded tops (hoodies) to the point that popular British politics in recent times has hegemonically

seized the hoodie icon as a symbol of youth crime is common knowledge and affects the way that black youth are perceived by society in relation to their propensity to commit crime. This black criminal stereotyping has even found its way into schools and influences the way that teachers perceive their black students or for that matter anyone wearing hoods, in fact at the sample school where I carried out my study hoodies were banned without exception because they were perceived as intimidating and anti-social. Therefore the criminal stereotype of black youth is central to my sample in relation to how they feel society perceives them and if they perceive that there is a place for them within such a society. Some members of my sample may feel that the racist stereotyping is an insurmountable barrier to success within society, which may then affect the way in which they perceive there academic achievement as they may feel that regardless of their academic achievement society is still going to stereotype them and prevent them from getting on with a career or it could be the case that members of my sample perceive this racist stereotype as a motivating factor helping them to perceive their academic achievement as crucial in order to transcend this racist barrier.

e)   Macro-subjective: Racism and policing.

The Macpherson report that was written in response to the Stephen Lawrence murder put police racism firmly on the political agenda even though the black community had been complaining about police racism long before the Macpherson report was published. Police racism obviously has close links to the black youth criminal stereotype, which is reflected in the disproportionate number of stop and search procedures carried out on young black men. Because of the salience of police racism within the black community especially in London where my all of my sample live, it is important to the research to see how my sample perceive the police based either on their experiences or just their observations and whether they perceive police racism as part of the everyday fabric of a racist British society, which they find overwhelming and part of an insurmountable racist barrier that limits their chances of having a successful career, which could negatively affect the way in which they perceive their academic achievement. It is also possible that members of my sample may feel that they want to do everything in their power to avoid police harassment and whom therefore perceive their educational achievement as something which is crucial in order to make sure that they are in a position where they can evade police surveillance or be in a position to challenge them legitimately through

knowledge of the law.

f) Macro-subjective: Racism and reason.

The enslavement and oppression of black people mainly by European forces has been justified by their inferior irrational nature in comparison to euro-centric rationality or reason. Today some of these stereotypes around the 'irrational nature' of black people persist especially in relation to black cultural expression. This can affect achievement if members of my sample are stereotyped by teachers because of the way in which they speak or behave; this is also a wider societal issue in relation to the acceptance of black cultural expression, which transcends euro-centric reason. Reason or rationality then, is the basis of cultural racism based on the inability to accept the reasoning behind cultural expression.

g) Mezzo objective: The curriculum.

I have called this mezzo objective because the curriculum is an enforced mandatory component of the school structure and therefore has objective status. The curriculum is central to this study because it is central to what black boys get taught at school. There has been a lot of struggle and resistance in relation to the content of the national curriculum between anti-racist campaigners and the government. Today the national curriculum still does not reflect the diverse nature of British society, particularly lacking in black historical content and much more focused on euro-centric high status knowledge, which could possibly create disaffection in members of my sample because they are not learning anything in relation to themselves, they are instead potentially being taught similar things over and over that do not really concern them. It is also possible that some members of my sample who may already be rooted within a strong black cultural orientation are indifferent to the predominantly euro-centric nature of the curriculum.

h) Mezzo subjective: Teacher racism.

I have called this mezzo subjective because racism is a non-mandatory subjective reality that exists within the school structure. Teacher racism a central to this study because it directly affects the education of black male pupils and can have the effect of excluding

them from their education by being removed from the classroom, or the school itself. Teacher racism can also affect the quality of learning and the confidence of black boys to achieve, it can also be responsible for black boys being put in lower academic ability classroom sets. All of these potential scenarios are important in relation to how members of my sample perceive their academic achievement. It is also possible that some members of my sample do not perceive any teacher racism because of their perception of their academic achievement, which transcends racist barriers.

i)   Mezzo subjective: Good school practice (Black History Month).

Black history month is a time when black children especially get to learn more about their history and their culture. Depending on the leadership of a school and its commitment to a diverse education agenda black history month can be different for different schools. Black history month is important to this study because it is linked to how black children feel about their school in general and whether or not black history is important to the school. It might cause extreme frustration if black students feel as though they do not really get taught much about black history all year round and then on top of that do not get taught much about black history during black history month. This frustration could cause disaffection for some members of my sample who feel that they need to be taught about their culture and heritage for their development as young black men. It is also possible that some members of my sample are not really bothered about black history month because they have a strong black cultural orientation already based on their family background.

j)   Micro Objective: Family background.

I have called this micro objective because the family background of my sample (micro individuals) is a mandatory and enforced socialization process. The family background of my sample is crucial to the perception, which my sample has of their academic achievement. This is likely to depend on the level of discipline that my sample receives and the importance, which their parents place, upon education and achievement.

k) Micro subjective: Black academic achievement.

I have called this micro subjective because academic achievement is a subjective choice. This part of the literature review is important because it explores the attributes of high achieving black males and how they attained these attributes. This is helpful because it might help in identifying why some of my sample perceives their academic achievement positively and why other members of my sample may not perceive their academic achievement positively.

This concludes the summary of my research questions and their justification in relation to the main research question.

Methodology

Introduction

The main aim of this research study is fundamentally concerned with the perceptions that 15-16 year old Black British males have of their achievement within secondary education. The title of this thesis, <u>The Perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their Educational Achievement</u> highlights the importance of gaining an understanding of the perceptions that these boys have in relation to their academic achievement. It is therefore crucial that the design of this research provide the scope for an in-depth contextual exploration of the sample's perceptions, within an uncontrolled environment where they can express themselves freely. The illumination of the sample's voice also requires that one's approach to the sample is not loaded with a preconceived agenda, which would create validity issues. The literature reviewed for this study suggested that black pupil idiosyncrasies such as hyper-masculinity or having a more balanced personality based on family dynamics is a pertinent issue, as well as teacher racism and institutional racism, especially black historical-cultural exclusion within the curriculum. It was therefore important for me to locate a school for my research, which had an appropriate balance of attributes to explore the issues raised by the literature. The school that I eventually selected for my research was a school that I knew fairly well because of my older brother's attendance there and the attendance of a lot of my childhood friends. I knew that my brother and a lot of my childhood friends did not do well at this school and that this school typically had a large population of black students. I also know the local area where the school is situated as I grew up there and know that gang activity operates in and around that area, which belongs to the Lewisham borough. So in relation to my background knowledge of this school I felt that it may have the right characteristics in that it may have a substantial and diverse black ethnic demographic population to explore in relation to heterogeneous family dynamics. I also felt that because my brother and others had failed at this school as well as it not having the best reputation for success more generally, it could be an appropriate research site for exploring whether teacher racism and institutional racism exist at this site. When I made contact with the school I spoke to the deputy headmaster who explained that the school was actively tackling the issue of black male underachievement. He explained that they had managed to reduce the disproportionate percentage of black male exclusions, through diligent statistical monitoring and teacher cooperation. He went on to explain

that the school still had a problem with black male achievement especially in terms of the attainment of 5 A*-C GCSE grades and that they had two program initiatives running at the school to try and tackle this issue of underachievement. He also confirmed that there was a wide and varied black ethnic student population at the school with varying levels of academic achievement. Finally the deputy headmaster explained that the school was committed to the issue of black male achievement and welcomed any research at the school, which could possibly help to shed further light on the issue of black male achievement. After my conversation with the deputy headmaster I knew that the school had, had some issues regarding disproportionate black exclusions, which pointed towards the possibility of teacher racism having existed at the school and maybe still existing to a certain extent. I knew that there was an initiative running at the school to help black boys attain knowledge of their heritage, suggesting that maybe the curriculum in place may not provide this opportunity, and I knew that there was a large heterogeneous black ethnic population of students of varying academic ability. All of these attributes as well as the open invitation to carry out my research made this school an appropriate research site.

Within the research site, the researcher was interested in speaking to twenty 15-16 year old black males ranging in ethnicity, academic success, socio-economic status and family dynamic. The researchers focus in relation to this sample was to try and interpret the perceptions that this group had about their academic achievement. The specific interests of the study in relation to this groups perceptions included trying to identify what exactly had helped to shape these perceptions of academic achievement and what these perceptions meant in terms of responsibility for one's own success and ones work ethic. The questions for this group were designed to identify perceived barriers to their educational achievement and to locate the origin of such perceptions. There are also questions that sought to highlight barriers that were perceived as surmountable by the sample and the origin of these perceptions. The researcher also sought information from the deputy headmaster as with regards to background information on the group of boys that I interviewed such as achievement levels and predicted GCSE grades.

Research Philosophy

An Introduction to Complexity Theory

The research perspective that I am going to approach my small scale qualitative research study from, is complexity theory, because complexity theory see's the individual as

fundamentally interconnected with the rest of the world, that is, that global trends can affect the perceptions of an individual. These events or occurrences also have the power to change the local political climate the individual belongs to and influence the perceptions of the individual's family and friends. It is also possible that historical events could have influenced the perceptions of an individual's family in relation to race relations in Britain, perhaps in terms of their schooling and any racism that they may have experienced. It is crucial to understand the interconnected nature of our world and how seemingly unconnected events or experiences and perceptions of others can affect the perceptions of an individual. Complexity theory also facilitates the affect that our biological systems can have on us and especially teenagers who experience confusion as they evolve physically and mentally. In short complexity theory posits that everything in the universe is interconnected and therefore influential. This philosophical perspective is crucial to my study because I am looking at the context behind the perceptions of my sample in relation to their educational achievement, individuals who are in an interconnected relationship with the rest of the world and its historical legacy. So complexity theory allows for an understanding of the infinity of complex and contextual relationships between human beings and society, seeking to uncover the meanings that govern such relationships (Cox, Geisen, and Green, 2008). I will now go through and explain in more depth all of the theoretical components that go to form my perspective and will begin with the central component, complexity theory.

Complexity Theory

Complexity theory is based on the principle of deterministic chaos, that is chaos that can occur at any time along a determined trajectory, and therefore not complete chaos, which would be without a trajectory altogether. Chaos theory and Complexity science differ in that chaos theory looks at chaos or the complex emerging from the simple whereas the latter is based on "order emerging from complex systems" (Cox, Geisen, and Green, 2008). Therefore it is important to understand the dynamics of complex systems and to this end I turn to what Cox identifies as complex adaptive systems (2008). Complex adaptive systems cannot be reduced to a singular component and are dependent on all of the elements that go to make up the system, to elaborate, the concept of complex adaptive systems can be applied to "cultural and social systems" such as a school, a family, society, or a more intimate group of micro proportions, in which understanding of the system becomes dependent on the "rich interaction" between all of

the elements that go to make up the complex adaptive system that is always operating on the border between order and chaos (Cox, 2008: 20). What is crucial in understanding complexity theory is that the individual is never isolated and is always part of a complex adaptive system, and is a complex adaptive system within themselves, as psychological and physical change happens to the mind, the body, and the spirit of the individual. The individual as part of a family unit, school, or society, can only be understood in relation to his interaction within a complex adaptive system, and as a complex adaptive system, giving meaning and signifying ones life world that is made up of an infinitum of interactions past and present that are constantly evolving, at times bringing about change in unexpected ways within the individual, affecting ones intentions through nonlinear actions that are part of the day to day life cycle of society that can unsuspectingly impact on the individual, giving rise to emotions and feelings that data collection methods should be designed to capture, meaning that data should be understood as unpredictable, time and space specific, and able to be affected by nonlinear chaotic episodes. An example of a nonlinear chaotic episode may be a change of cultural norms within society, a change in the political contours of race and racism, for example the changes that came about based on the Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry that revolutionized the public understanding of racism as something that can be "unwitting" and "institutional" (Macpherson, 1999). As Gilroy (1987) has argued there are class struggles happening continually throughout British society that include struggles, which transcend class discourse, producing new meanings of race and new cultural norms that affect the way Black British males for example, perceive themselves and their role within British society. This social knowledge may well effect data in that my Black British sample may want to be seen as an integral part of British society by expressing one's self within the parameters of its norms and thus through the dimensions of whiteness, within a school environment of authority that may discriminate through an uncritical pedagogy of whiteness. It becomes evident then, that one's intentions or linear pathway can be impacted by the demands of society within which one tries to keep up to date with the demands of whiteness expressed through the cultural conduits of fashion, language and other elements of social life lending to the "diversification of one's life world" (Cox, 2008:1).

Analytical plurality is a helpful theoretical perspective in trying to provide the best methodological chance of understanding my Black British male sample, the cultural

meanings that inform their life worlds and perceptions, and the human action that contributes to, and results in, such meaning. Arguably the complexity of the African conception of the universe helps in understanding the analytical plurality theoretic, in that within the African conception of the universe there is no such thing as a self-standing isolated individual who understands himself as autonomous who functions for his own sake, which is the assumption of analytical individualism based on an individualist worldview. Rather analytical pluralism like the African universe is based on the interconnection and rich interaction of individuals and the meanings that are generated from such interaction, meanings that are context specific and that may or may not achieve longevity or become a classic representation of the subject, thus achieving objective status. To put it simply, there are an infinity of complex contextual interactions that take place within society that generate meaning from a plurality of perspectives, meaning, that constantly changes as society, culture and the interconnected individual evolve.

In choosing to highlight the African worldview prism here in a bid to try and understand my sample and capture information rich data, I would like to stress the important point that this study does not assume that all black people, although we are all ultimately of African origins, are culturally homogenous or share exactly the same worldview (Gilroy, 1993). However from looking at the different cultures spread out across the African Continent and the Diaspora, there are strong themes that seem to emerge from these cultures, alongside fundamental principles that appear to be a requisite of any African conception of the universe (Robinson, 1983; Okolo: cited in Coetzee & Roux, 2003), and so I do argue that there is a Pan-African worldview philosophy. Though to what extent culturally this worldview is representative across the African Diaspora and representative of the sample of this study is questionable. Thus I employ the African worldview methodological perspective because as Richards (2008: 6) argues it can be referred to as a centrist position that allows the individual to adopt an African centered worldview perspective and become the African subject from a theoretical point of view as there may not be a personal "historical or social memory that is culturally African".

Research strategy

The research strategy that I have chosen has to capture in-depth data from a sample that is complex in many ways. Therefore I have chosen a qualitative research strategy

necessary for my empirical study. The epistemology of the experiential social world is interpretation, in a bid to uncover or to reveal unique human meaning, which is an ongoing constructivist ontological project, the independent variable of human societies. This notion supports the idea that humans construct meaning and therefore construct society's structures, which represent the dominant human consensus on meaning, which defines human action. However minorities in society also construct unique human meaning, which may well run counter to the dominant trend of thought and so it is possible for there to be a complex web of meaning within a society, which needs to be carefully interpreted so that one can truly capture the unique voice of the sample. Within this study where my sample are 15 and 16 year old black boys of African and Caribbean descent living in London, the situation is very complex indeed. The objective of this study, which is to understand the perceptions, which my sample have in relation to their education is not straight forward, not least for the fact that being black in itself is a complex thing based on the historical effects of the transatlantic slave trade and resultant African Diaspora, which created cultural contortion and hybridity amongst African peoples who largely became American, Caribbean and European citizens, geographically and culturally displaced (Gilroy, 1993; Robinson, 1983). This situation in itself poses a challenge in isolating the unique voice of the sample, which can only be done through interpretation, as popular black culture is constantly in flux and black identity because of this can be unstable, making my participants a complex sample. There is of course also the shifting political terrain in Britain especially in relation to race relations where cultural freedoms and the meaning of British citizenship are constantly being struggled over. Hence my view is that because of the extremely complex social phenomena being analyzed within this study, a positivist quantitative rationale would be unable to make sense of my sample in that this strategy could not capture the depth of meaning needed to understand the empirical universe of my sample, which does not remain static within a vacuum.

Research Design

The research design for this research is an exploratory theory testing and theory building case study inspired design with an inductive rationale. The main literature based theories that this study will be testing is whether teacher racism exists at the research site and if so how this affects my participants perceptions of their educational achievement, whether the national curriculum is perceived as euro-centric and how this might affect my

participants perceptions of their educational achievement, how the family dynamic of my sample may affect their perceptions of their educational achievement and how peer pressure may affect the perceptions my participants have about their educational achievement. I state a case study inspired research design because this study does not have multiple sources of data needed for triangulation. I am aware that the triangulation of data is a central component of the case study design and in fact one of its main strengths, especially in terms of the validity of an in-depth qualitative research project. One of the reasons for me choosing the case study model to inform my research design is because the "distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena" (Yin, 2003:2). This distinctive feature of the case study design is extremely compatible with both the research philosophy and the research strategy underpinning this study. Even more importantly the case study design facilitates the depth and breadth necessary to interrogate the empirical universe of each member of the sample that are complex social phenomena in themselves, who can only be understood through the depth of their contextual realities. This ties in with another perspective on the imperative of the case study design, that:

The essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result. (Schramm, 1971: cited in Yin, 2003: 12)

The fact that at the heart of the case study design is the capability to highlight decisions made by participants based on the decisions made by others is a crucial aspect of the case study design. It is important to understand the decisions made by my participants to maybe not mess around in the classroom and not be rude to teachers but to focus and study hard, the decisions by their friends in terms of peer pressure, decisions by their family to educate them in the country of their ethnic origin, decisions by their teachers to push them towards success, because these decisions will all contribute towards understanding the perceptions that my participants have of their educational achievement, which is crucial and lies at the heart of this research study. These 'decisions' are crucial to this research because they are important contextual factors without which one could not hope to understand the perceptions that my sample have about their educational achievement. These decisions highlight reason, that is the reason behind a decision, so perhaps the reason why a teacher makes the decision to push a student towards success is because that teacher can see that this student has a strong work ethic and really wants to succeed. This might be linked to the fact that the reason why this student has such a strong work ethic and is determined to succeed is because

they learnt this through the harsher environment of the country of their ethnic origin, which their parents decided they should be exposed to for their development. So in this way, decisions and the reasoning behind these decisions is important contextual information, which can help towards understanding the perceptions, which my sample has of their educational achievement and how friends, family, school and wider society have molded these perceptions through decision-making.

The case within this study is a group of twenty 15-16 year old black boys who attend the research site and who are in key stage 4 preparing for their GCSE examinations. I have chosen this group of boys as my case study because they are a group of black males from different ethnic backgrounds. They consist of black Boys with African heritage, Jamaican Heritage (which includes 1st 2nd and 3rd generation British born black boys) and mixed African and Caribbean heritage.

Theory development prior to any data collection considerations is something that is seen as central to a case study design in that it may help to provide a more in-depth understanding of the case being studied, which can be invaluable to the data collection procedure (Yin, 2003: 29). The theory development done prior to the investigation of the case in this study was crucial. It highlighted black boy's culture and family dynamic as extremely influential in terms of perceptions of academic achievement as well as institutional racism and individual teacher racism. There was also the influence of peer pressure and gang involvement, which was seen as contingent upon ones culture and family dynamic. So although all of these issues are important and are things which I wanted to test my sample against I also did not want to try and confine my sample to these theoretical issues I wanted to provide enough freedom in my data collection technique to allow for the possibility that my sample would produce data that would help to build upon the theoretical perspectives already prevalent by providing new insights and so it is in this way that I see this research design as both a theory testing and a theory building case study. I have chosen an inductive rationale for this case study design because my sample are complex social phenomena, constantly evolving and so one can only ever hope to capture an accurate picture or observation of a particular person within a particular time and space and such empiricism belongs to the inductive rationale, which cannot ever hope to achieve absolute status.

Sampling

For this small scale, in-depth, qualitative study I have selected a purposeful or judgment sampling strategy. In some ways the sample that I have purposefully selected is homogenous, because the members of the sample are a group of black boys from the same school who are about to take their GCSE examinations. However this cohort also vary in terms of their ethnicity, family dynamic, socio-economic status, academic success and their identities. So whilst there is a homogenous element to this sample there is also a heterogeneous element to it. This variation across my sample is important because of the variation in hypothesis within the literature regarding factors that influence the achievement of black males within secondary education. So ultimately I selected the purposive sampling strategy because it allowed me to purposefully select individuals that I believed would constitute an information rich case that I could study in-depth (Emmel, 2013).

In addition to the theoretical rationale for selecting this sampling strategy there are also pragmatic reasons such as time constraints and the fact that I lost communication with several other research sites. I also had background knowledge of the sample school because I lived in the same neighborhood and knew a lot of people that had attended this school over the years.

Ethical considerations in relation to carrying out research should take place within the philosophical atmosphere of moral reflection (Bloor & Wood, 2006). To be more exact, ethical considerations should be made in relation to how one would expect oneself to be treated by a researcher within a research study and how one would want their data to be handled and stored by that researcher.

The first ethical consideration to be made regarding my research study was in relation to gaining access to the respondents I intended to interview, who were a group of twenty 15-16 year old black boys of African heritage and of Caribbean heritage who attended an all-boys secondary school and who were about to sit their GCSE examinations. This small group of black male children are first and foremost children, which makes them a vulnerable group both in terms of the potential physical harm that could come to them and the potential psychological harm that could come to them at the hands of either myself as a researcher or at the hands of others within the school as a result of taking

part in my research study. This question of harm is not just an issue to be considered by the participants themselves but also by the head of the school and by the parents and guardians of the participants (Berg, 2007; Bloor & Wood, 2006; Denscombe, 2010). In trying to fulfill my ethical duty in relation to access to my participants, I agreed with the deputy headmaster that letters would be sent to the families of the boys whom I intended to interview explaining the nature of my research and the types of questions that I would most likely be asking their sons and that a consent form would be sent with the letters so that parents could sign these consent forms thus allowing me to legally have access to their children for the purpose of interviewing. Letters and consent forms were sent to over twenty boys, in case there were any problems with consent being given, giving me a better chance of having consent for the twenty respondents that I needed to interview. This turned out to be a good idea because some consent forms were signed and returned late and some were not returned at all, which meant that I could not interview those boys without authorized consent. Another important ethical consideration in relation to me having access to my participants was whether I was someone who was safe enough to have access to this group of children legally. In most cases a researcher having a background check done by the Criminal Records Bureau answers this ethical question or as it's more commonly known, having a CRB check done. Because of the time constraints related to my research, I was unable to have a CRB check done which meant that I could still have access to the school and the children but could not legally be left alone with children and had to be in an open environment where I could be viewed at all times from multiple angles, which meant me carrying out my interviews within the school library. My not being able to have a CRB check done meant that my plans to collect data through non-participant observation in classrooms and in and around the school had to be scrapped, which impinged directly on my plans to triangulate using multiple sources of data.

In terms of trying to make sure that the interests of my participants were protected I made sure that I explained to each participant before interviewing them that I was not part of the school faculty and that I was an independent researcher from a university who was interested in their views and perceptions. I explained that the interview data and the identity of all the participants would remain confidential and that the data provided would only be shared with a limited audience. In order to keep the identity of the participants confidential I created different code names for each participant. I also

explained to the participants that they could stop the interview at any time if they felt uncomfortable by any of the questions that I should ask.

So to conclude then, I considered the ethical interests of my participants by facilitating the opportunity for informed consent before the commencement of any interviews, which meant that the headmaster of the school, the child participants themselves and their parents and guardians were fully informed of the nature of the study, the questions that were likely to be asked and were informed about my status as a researcher and the institution that I belonged to. In addition to this I made clear before each interview that participants had the right to stop the interview at any time should they feel uncomfortable about any element of the interview process. I felt this necessary as an additional safeguard in relation to mainly any psychological harm that might be unwittingly befalling the participants by my hand. Another safeguard in place in relation to any potential psychological harm was the transparency of the interviewing process in that it was in close proximity to school faculty from all angles. However there was enough distance from faculty to allow my participants to feel comfortable about giving data, it did not appear during interviews that they were holding back on their answers in any way, which would raise another ethical issue in terms of any harm that could be caused to the participants by teachers or other faculty members. I also considered confidentiality in relation to the identity of my participants and data protection in that participant data would not be widely disseminated and would be kept in a secure location on a hard drive as opposed to being stored online in an electronic cloud facility.

Data Collection: The Development of the Interview Schedule

The First Phase of Interview Schedule Development
Because my sample are children who need as little disruption to their education as possible I had to arrange with the sample school to have two separate pilot studies with two different groups of boys on the same day in the same location with a small gap in between to review the results. These two pilot studies were exploratory in nature with some guidance from the research literature. The interviews at this stage were meant to help me have a better understanding of the interview process with all of its nuances so that I could also refine my interview technique as well as refining my questions so that they are appropriate to semi-structured interviewing and resonate with my sample. After my first

pilot study interviews with a sample of five I really got an idea of some dominant themes that resonated with the five boys. These were the following:

• Lack of knowledge (LOK): This was a central theme amongst the boys and referred to the lack of black historical and cultural knowledge being taught at the research site. A sub-theme, which also belongs here, was 'negative Africa', which referred to the constant negative portrayal of Africa in class, mainly the dominant focus on slavery.

• Positive role models (PRM): This was also a central theme amongst the boys and most of them referred to either family members or rappers as positive role models.

• Confirmatory Bias (CB): This refers to teacher racism, teachers searching for the negative aspects in black male student behavior to confirm their racial bias.

• Positive ambition (PA): To want to do well to try and transcend racial stereotypes.

• Identity ambiguity (IA): Not sure whether to become part of hyper-masculine black culture or not, because one doesn't want to become a victim.

• Macho conflict (MC): This refers to what the boys said was a negative type of black culture, feeling threatened by other hyper-masculine black boys who were part of badness or gangs.

• Strong Family dynamic (SFD): some boys referred to their strong family dynamic, which impacted positively with their application to studies.

• Black cultural expression (BCE): Some boys mentioned that black cultural expression generally in the UK is seen as negative and so they feel that they are under the microscope.

The above themes were useful in allowing me to put together a loose schedule to be used for further exploration.

The Second Phase of Interview Schedule Development
I used the themes from my first pilot study interviews, which are listed above, as a loose interview schedule in itself for my second pilot study interviews, meaning that I did not formulate a formal structure for questions at this stage, mainly because of the short gap between my first pilot study and my second pilot study. After an exploratory discussion with my second pilot study sample around the above themes, the response to these themes provided rich data, although some members of the sample were less chatty than others, which sometimes meant that I had to ask a question twice, the second time being much more specific, which is something that is of note for the final formulation of questions for the main study. The dominant themes to emerge from this second pilot study

session are below:

• Positive role model (PRM): With this sample role models were more so rappers.

• Lack of knowledge (LOK): The sample suggesting that lessons only cover negative aspects of black history and culture.

• Black cultural expression (BCE): The sample referred to black cultural expression being seen as a negative learner identity among teachers. Also mentioned was black identity being politically incorrect, the suggestion being that expression of a black identity has a poor socio-political status in Britain.

• Exclusion (EX): The sample talked about being excluded from class for using black slang vernacular in front of teachers or to address teachers.

• Black Pride (BP): This was a member of my sample talking about having black pride in relation to defending oneself against teachers.

• Seeks knowledge (SK): This quite simply related to members of the sample seeking knowledge of self and therefore knowledge about black culture and history.

• Culture clash (CC): this referred to members of the sample culturally clashing with teachers who they felt had a racist agenda.

• Black teachers (BT): this relates to members of the sample saying that there needs to be more black teachers working at the school because they feel that they could relate to them more so than white teachers.

This concludes the pilot study's that took place at the research site.

The third Phase of Interview Schedule Development

During this phase of the interview schedule development I converged the dominant themes that emerged from both pilot study one and pilot study two. I also kept in mind the intelligence that I had gained from the interview process, especially in regards to the structuring of questions so that they are open ended but also as coherent, succinct and jargon free as possible to avoid confusion and to allow for a free flow of conversation. This cumulative process ended up in the following interview schedule below:

1.   So what is being black to you, what does being black mean to you and are there any specific ways of being black according to you? (This question incorporates theme (BCE)).

2.   Do you feel that being black gets you into trouble with teachers at all? (This question incorporates themes (BCE, EX, CC, CB)).

3.   Do you think there is a lack of knowledge about what being black means? (This question incorporates themes (LOK, SK).

4.   Does being black distract you from your studies in any way? (This question incorporates themes (IA, MC)).

5.   Do you have any role models? (This question incorporates theme (PRM))

6.   Are you aware of the current knife and gun crime situation? (This question incorporates the theme (IA, MC)).

7.   What are your main sources of information on blackness and black culture? (This question incorporates themes (SK, LOK, SFD)).

8.   What are you currently taught about black culture here at school? (This question incorporates theme (LOK)).

9.   What is your family dynamic, do you live with mum and dad? (This question incorporates theme (SFD)).

10.   How secure do you feel within your identity and who you are? (This question incorporates themes (IA, MC, SFD)).

11.   Do your teachers have high expectations of you? (This question incorporates themes (CC, BT, BCE, CB)).

12.   Do your parents have high expectations of you? (This question incorporates theme (SFD)).

13.   What are your predicted GCSE's and plans for the future? (This question is meant to be an evaluation of all the previous questions).

14.   How would you describe your achievement level? (This question is also meant to be an evaluation of all the previous questions).

The fourth Phase of Interview Schedule Development

This final phase of the interview schedule development was focused on testing the interview schedule above to see how good the fourteen questions in the schedule were in terms of their resonance with the sample demographic and the ease or free flow of conversation based on these questions. It was also important to test the schedule in terms of timings for the interviews. Because I had limited access to the research site and to the boys that would make up my sample I had to look elsewhere in terms of someone who I could use to test the schedule so I ended up interviewing a friend of mine's nephew who fitted the sample characteristics for the study. All ethical considerations were made in relation to interviewing this child. The interview lasted around fifty

minutes, which gave me a fairly good idea of interview times and the fourteen questions worked well in terms of the coherence of the questions and the flow of conversation.

Data Collection: Validity and Reliability

The researcher decided to use the case study approach for his semi-structured interview method. The case study approach can be seen as having its roots within the constructivist paradigm (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The constructivist logic understands truth or reality to be subjective or relative to the phenomenal world of the individual. Therefore the constructivist paradigm places extreme importance on the human creation of meaning or subjective human realities. As a result one of the main advantages of using the case study approach is:

"The close collaboration between the researcher and the participant, while enabling participants to tell their stories" (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

The facilitation of storytelling opens the door to the phenomenal world of the individual or participant, allowing the individual to reveal their perceptions of reality and thus the reasoning or rationale behind their actions. In this way the researcher has the opportunity to understand the subjective realities of his or her participants.

There is an argument in the literature about the superior nature of quantitative structured questionnaires in gathering precise, pre-coded and generalizable data that can be used to apply a hypothesis to a large population (city or country) (Denscombe, 2010). However this quantitative approach to data collection is flawed in that it enforces a high level of control or coercion in terms of respondent answers to pre-determined closed questions, which cannot hope to capture the in-depth contextual realities of participant's void of control. In order to capture the subjective reality of an individual, the individual must be allowed to come to a conclusion, or to not come to a conclusion by himself or herself. It is the autonomous arrival or non-arrival at a particular juncture, by the participant, which defines validity of data within semi-structured interviews.

The core fourteen questions that formed my semi-structured interview schedule for my main study materialized from my pilot study, in that I recorded the questions, which seemed most important to my participants based on the volume of answers to these questions. The core fourteen questions for my main study also came from the dominant themes that emerged from my review of the literature. The eighty nine questions that I ended up asking my participants is an illustration of the semi-structured interview method

in that:

The name 'semi-structured' means that the interviewer sets up a general structure by deciding in advance what ground is to be covered and what main questions are to be asked. This leaves the detailed structure to be worked out during the interview. The person interviewed can answer at some length in his or her own words, and the interviewer responds using prompts, probes and follow up questions to get the interviewee to clarify or expand on answers (Drever, 1995).

The eighty-nine questions posed in the semi-structured interviews then, represent the unique voices of my sample in that certain things were more important to some members of my sample than to others. Some participants wanted to explore certain things in more depth, whilst other participants didn't want to talk about these things at all and so the eighty nine questions asked represent the strength of the semi-structured interview method in terms of its ability to allow the unique voices of a sample to be heard by allowing participants to autonomously arrive or not arrive at particular junctures, a measurement of validity in relation to semi-structured interviews (Drever, 1995).

In terms of validity another important thing that I focused on during the interviewing process was trying to build a rapport with my participants. Berg (2007:117), states that:

If the interviewer is able to establish some sense of common ground, then one avenue of rapport building could be opened.

King and Horrocks (2010) suggest that building a rapport can be the key to successful qualitative interviews and that self-presentation can play a big role in building a rapport, hence:

Self-presentation includes what you wear, your use of non-verbal communication, and the type of vocabulary you use (King & Horrocks, 2010:49).

These statements seem to support the fact that I consciously decided at times to expose a black youth subcultural slang vernacular to my participants for the purpose of allowing them to feel comfortable talking to me, in the hope that they would feel that I understood where they were coming from because I have literally come from the same place. I do think that this approach to rapport building worked to a certain extent because some of my participants felt comfortable enough to use black slang, which suggested that I was getting an authentic transmission of their inner voice, their true voice, which they might not have exposed to someone who they felt was pro-establishment or a servant of white

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supremacist norms. In this way I believe that my rapport building was successful and that as a result I managed to achieve validity in terms of the trustworthiness of my data.

In relation to the triangulation of data sources, as I mentioned in my ethics section, I was unable to get a CRB check done before entering my research site (secondary boy's school), therefore I had to abandon my plans to collect data through observation and participant observation, which would have helped me further in validating my qualitative interview data. However I was able to meet with the deputy headmaster of the secondary school who provided background information on all of the children whom I would be interviewing in terms of their achievement levels, their application to studies, their family structures and socio-economic status. Information, which I have used to create a colour coded table below. This information has been very helpful in its capacity to assist me with the triangulation of data sources, which is a classic feature of qualitative case study research. In that I was able to link what participants were saying with background information that helped me to work out the validity or trustworthiness of their data, mainly in relation to whether they had more of a positive learner identity (having an identity that is conducive to formal educational success) or more of a negative learner identity (having an identity that is not conducive to formal educational success), which I have also represented in a table below. Positive or negative learner identity status within this study is intrinsically linked to the perceptions that my participants have about their educational achievement, especially in terms of the barriers, which they do or do not perceive in relation to their education.

Achieving reliability within qualitative research is not straightforward, mainly because the term reliability is one that is predominantly used in relation to quantitative research (Bryman, 2008; Flick, Kardoff and Steinke, 2004; Noble & Smith, 2015). This is because qualitative research is very much exposed not only to the subjective reality of the researcher of a study but also to the subjectivity of a sample, which is time and space specific. So the ability of other researchers to replicate the findings of a qualitative study by following the same methods and decisions as the original researcher is somewhat less than a researcher trying to replicate the results of a quantitative study based on concrete variables and objective observation. However in an attempt to achieve reliability within my research study, the literature suggests that an audit trail making my decisions transparent throughout the research project is the best way to try and achieve reliability within qualitative research studies (Noble & Smith, 2015; Daymon & Holloway, 2001). So I present

my audit trail below:

Audit trail:

• I started my literature review by inserting the search term 'African-Caribbean achievement', which represented the area of research that I was interested in, into the university library database. I also used my PhD proposal document to search for literature using the names of key academics studying in the field of black educational achievement. From here on I used the references of the articles that I came across to search for further articles within this area. I also took part in a library course specifically focused on searching the library database for relevant literature, which also helped me in the literature review stage of my research.

• I knew that my research was going to be qualitative because it is in-depth contextual data that this study requires in relation to the main research question. Because this study is particularly interested in the contextual life experiences of a sample I decided that a case study inspired research approach would be appropriate.

• In deciding who my sample would be in my research, I knew from my literature review that I wanted to research black boys of African heritage and of Caribbean heritage within secondary education who were about to take their GCSE examinations. So based on this I knew that I was going to use a purposive or judgment sampling strategy. I did not have a lot of time to gain access to my sample so I selected a secondary school that I knew well from growing up in the same area and which I knew would have a selection of children that would be a good match with my research. When I was eventually given access to this school I explained to the deputy headmaster that I would like a selection of boys of mixed academic ability and mixed socio-economic status, for the sake of heterogeneity in terms of varying perceptions in relation to the same phenomena. I had a problem getting a CRB check before entering this school which meant that I had to be based in the school library at all times because it was highly visible by school faculty. This meant that I was unable to carry out participant and non-participant observation at the school because I had been grounded in respect of the CRB check. The school sent out letters to parents asking permission for their sons to be involved in my project. Some parents didn't give permission which meant that I could not interview those boys, in addition the deputy headmaster had to check the mock examination schedule to see which boys were free to take part in the

study so once all of this had been done I ended up with a sample of twenty boys to interview for the study.

• In formulating my semi-structured interview schedule of questions for my main study, I used dominant themes that emerged from my pilot study interviews at this school, as well as questions that seemed important to my pilot study sample. I also used theoretical concepts from the literature to help refine the questions that I was going to ask my main study sample. I decided on semi-structured interviews because it is my samples perceptions and contextual story telling that is crucial to this study.

• In carrying out the interviews for my main study I made sure that I was ethical giving all members of my sample the opportunity to opt out of the interview process if they did not feel happy to take part. During the Interviews I tried not to ask leading questions and tried as much as possible to make my sample feel relaxed in what they felt they could discuss, one technique for this was using a black slang vernacular so that my sample would not see me as pro-establishment.

• After the interview process I transcribed all of my data, and inserted it into a computer programme called NVivo for analyses. I used a grounded theory and a phenomenographic approach to analyzing my data, which I have outlined in my methodology chapter.

• In writing up my data findings chapters I used a technique for transparency, which my supervisor suggested, which was to make explicit statistically how many members of my sample said something and then how many times they said it, highlighting how important that subject was to them. In this way the data analysis and presentation of data would transparently reflect the voices of the sample I interviewed free from my own biases.

Reliability is also important in terms of consistency (Noble & Smith, 2015) and so I would say that not only are the interview questions in my interview schedule valid, in that they are questions that have been formed based on dominant themes that emerged from my pilot study, as well as from theoretical concepts from the literature, but that I have also been consistent in the way that I have asked these questions to my sample. The interviews were all carried out within a tight time frame, so that all information from the sample would share the same time and space context. The pilot study and the main study were both carried out at the same research site so that all information from my sample would again share the same time and space context. It is in these ways that I have tried to ensure consistency in relation to my study as well as transparency in relation to the audit trail

above.

Data Analysis

During the transcription of the interview data from my main study, I made some descriptive notes of data that I felt were relevant to the main research question, which is concerned with the perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their educational achievement. Starting the process of data analysis from the transcribing of interview data can be advantageous in that the data material is still very fresh in the mind of the researcher, which can facilitate more of an interplay between the inductive screening of interview material and the deployment of theoretical concepts in the creation of meaning of the data (Schmidt, C: cited in Flick, Kardoff and Steinke, 2004). This style of data analysis is more in line with the 'Strauss school' of grounded theory, which is more guided rather than being purely inductive (Kinnunen & Simon, 2012).

Once all of the interview data had been transcribed I decided to input all of the data into a computer program (NVivo) for analysis. I decided to use the NVivo software to help with my data analysis because of its ability to neatly store and organize my data. The NVivo software was crucial in the next phase of the data analysis, which was to systematically comb the transcribed interviews in an iterative process. NVivo is crucial here because the interview data from the main study is very large and needs to be organized in a way where one can manage it properly throughout the analytical process.

As I have already mentioned within this methodology chapter my sample of African-Caribbean boys are extremely complex. My sample contains boys who were born and raised for a time in either African countries or Jamaica in the Caribbean. It contains African-Caribbean boys who were born in the UK but who have parents who are indigenous to either Africa or the Caribbean. Some of these boys belong to single parent families and some belong to two parent families. There are also boys who were born in the UK and whose parents were also born in the UK although they are of Caribbean heritage. I have delineated the heterogeneous cultural factors associated with my sample here, to highlight the fact that their perceptions of their educational achievement are unlikely to be uniform. This is mainly to do with culture and the different levels of discipline that are linked to the heterogeneous cultural factors associated with my sample. However, whilst there is reason to expect different perceptions of phenomena amongst my sample, I also believe that

there are members of my sample who share certain attributes, who may share similar perceptions. There are also issues, such as racism, which transcend black ethnic particularity and operate at the level of race, which could affect all black boys or be an issue for all black boys. Therefore the Strauss-school (Kinnunen & Simon, 2012:206) approach to grounded theory that I am employing to analyze my data, will also be complemented with a phenomenographic approach to analyzing my data because phenomenography is concerned with capturing meaningful phenomena through the subjective consciousness of the individual, the way in which they see it and define it. The heterogeneous cultural factors in play, in relation to my sample make the phenomenographic approach to data analysis very attractive in that it can highlight the varying perceptions of phenomena, which the researcher was not predisposed to finding. Seeking out the perceptions of the sample and therefore giving the sample a voice. My grounded theory approach to analyzing the data is inductive but also guided by the researcher's prior knowledge of the research topic and theoretical concepts. This grounded theory approach is important because there is a lot of theory in relation to the achievement of African-Caribbean males within secondary school education (Dei, 2010; Gillborn, 1990, 2008, 2014; Giroux, 1996; Grahame & Robinson, 2004; Graham: cited in Majors, 2001; Rhamie & Hallam, 2002; Rhamie, 2006; Rollock, 2007; King, 1991; Youdell, 2004, 2004, 2007; Warren, 2005; Codjoe, 2006; Sewell, 1997, 2009 [...]) which through the grounded theory approach can be challenged, tested and built upon.

In the first phase of analyzing the main study data, a grounded theory approach guided by a phenomenographic focus on the meaningful perceptions of my sample in relation to their education led to a vast array of themes (categories) and sub-themes or variants of the main themes or categories, which inside of the NVivo computer software led to a vast array of initial nodes and references of those nodes. It was quite clear at this stage that these themes and sub themes were not helpful or particularly meaningful in terms of a whole data set. I realized at this stage that an extended period of iteration, in terms of reviewing the nodes and the references of these nodes was required in order to refine these nodes and their references. In truth this process of iteration and refining went on after I thought I was finished analyzing my data, and after I started writing up my data. I would realize whilst writing up my data that a piece of data did not really belong within the theme I had placed it. The mind went through several awakenings in terms of data analysis to arrive at a juncture where the data had truly been analyzed and coded. My supervisor was also instrumental in pointing out that my analysis was incomplete several times

throughout the process. In my second pass through the data I found it very useful to think theoretically, in terms of whether data challenged existing theory, fell in line with existing theory, built upon existing theory or existed outside of existing theory all together in an original space. It also helped me to analyse the data with the main research question in mind and the questions that I included in my interview schedule. This really helped me to refine my coded nodes and their references to the extent that my entire data set had interconnected meaning as a whole, which linked directly to the main research question.

Data Collection: Sample Characteristics

Source	Single Parent	Socio-economics mentioned	Achievement *	Ethnicity **	Born in the UK
SA1	Y	Low	H	A	N
KM2	Y	Low	L	C	Y
OWJ3	N	High	H	C	Y
JW4	N	Average	Av	C	Y
JSM5	Y	Low	Av	C	Y
NS6	Y	Low	H	C	N
LB7	N	Low	Av	C	Y
HI8	N	Average	H	AC	Y
LH9	Y	Low	H	A	N
RW10	N	Low	L	C	Y
AK11	Y	Low	Av	C	Y
AD12	Y	Low	L	C	Y
MJ13	Y	Low	L	C	Y
LLC14	Y	Low	L	CM	Y
TA15	Y	Average	Av	C	Y
KP16	Y	Average	H	A	N
TL17	N	Low	Av	C	Y
HO18	N	High	H	A	Y
MJG19	N	Average	Av	C	Y
RW20	Y	Low	Av	C	N

Key   * H – High achiever   ** C – Caribbean

Av – Average achiever   A – African

L – Low achiever   M – Mixed White British

Questions asked

1.   So what is being black to you, what does being black mean to you and are there any specific ways of being black according to you, how do you feel about that?

2.   So would you say that being black is simply the way your brain naturally works and how would you describe that?

3.   Do you feel that being black gets you into trouble with teachers at all?

4.   How important is being black to you, do you notice it; is it something that is important to you or not really?

5.   Do you have any special pride about being a black boy?

6.   Do you think there is a lack of knowledge about what being black means?

7.   Does being black distract you from your studies in any way?

8.   In proving people wrong and meeting the challenges, do you think any of that has to do with being a black boy?

9.   Would you say that the role models you have are from your family?

10.   Would you attribute your academic success to the way you have been raised and your family structure?

11.   What has helped you to achieve and focus on academia?

12.   Are your friends positive role models?

13.   Do you feel your education could be enhanced by there being more being taught about black heritage and black culture?

14.   How secure do you feel within your identity and who you are? How happy are you as a person?

15.   Is there any knowledge that you think would be important to help your identity?

16.   Would you say that religion is the main component for you in terms of your identity?

17.   Would you identify yourself within your religion rather than as a black boy?

18.   Would you say that you are culturally grounded?

19.   Do you think that if black culture was explained or taught to you in a classroom you would like to be taught/shown it?

20.   Do you feel peer pressure to behave in a certain way?

21.   What has given you strength to say no to peer pressure?

22. Would you say that positive black images and positive black people that have existed historically help with your black identity?

23. Are you aware of the current knife and gun crime situation?

24. What are your thoughts about knife and gun crime?

25. What helps or could help you with your study?

26. Does your identity help avoid antagonistic situations?

27. Was there a strong discipline within the African/Jamaican culture?

28. In Africa/Jamaica are you teachers seen in a similar light to your guardians?

29. With the children at your school, are they your brothers?

30. Is the culture to form peace? Morals? Equilibrium? Excellence?

31. Are you taught how to be a responsible boy/man?

32. Are there Deep-seated morals within your culture?

33. Do you see difference with boys born in the UK/not in UK?

34. Do you think if the boys born in the UK were taught with that culture it would make a difference with knife and gun crime?

35. What are the chances of you turning to knife and gun crime?

36. What are your main sources of information on blackness and black culture?

37. Is there something common in the culture that unifies Africans, what would you say that is?

38. Do you have a strong family?

39. Do your family teach you about your identity and black culture?

40. Would you say Africans talk in metaphors?

41. Do you think teachers could be more like the teachers in Africa?

42. Do your teachers have high expectations of you?

43. Does your Mum/Dad/Parents have high expectations for you?

44. Do you want to do well for your mum and teachers?

45. Do your mum/Dad/Parents and the teachers talk often?

46. Do the teachers and your Mum/Dad/Parents have a good strong relationship?

47. Do the teachers push you to do well in school?

48. Do you ever use slang?

49. Would you enjoy writing metaphorical poetry in class?

50. Do teachers stereotype you? And how does that make you feel?

51. What has influenced your identity?

52. Why do you think the boys turn to knife and gun crime?

53. Have you had friends on the "road"?

54. Do you think that religion has kept you away from knife and gun crime?

55. Is there discipline at home?

56. Is there anything that distracts from your academic study?

57. Is social road culture something you are a part of?

58. Do you feel being part of road distracted you from your studies?

59. What distracts you in class?

60. Who would you say your role models are?

61. What are your predicted GCSE's and plans for the future?

62. Have you ever been criticized for just being yourself?

63. How much knowledge do you have about black culture?

64. What would you say are some of the things that you have picked up in the household that is all black, what are some of the cultural things that are there what are some of the cultural things you experience growing up, and what has made you, you? And what are those black things?

65. Do you think teachers should learn black culture in teacher training to improve relationships with themselves and black students?

66. Who are your role models?

67. What distances you from knife and gun crime?

68. Is there anything competing with your studies for your attention?

69. What do you think about the negative aspects of black popular culture?

70. Are you at a crucial point in your identity formation?

71. How would you describe your achievement level?

72. What are you currently taught about black culture?

73. What are some of the key differences between where you were born and here?

74. Do you think that if other black boys could have the structure of church; community, Teacher, home, teaching them about their identity, who they are as young black men and the study and their lives that this could stop some of this knife and gun crime? And stop some of this chaos that's going on?

75. Are the teachers an extension of your family like they are in Africa?

76. Do you live with your mum and Dad?

77. How do you find your academic study? Do you study at home?

78. What part of black culture would you say influence you the most?

79. Has your dad/family helped you to explore your masculinity?

80.   Is being black hard work sometimes?

81.   Do you think the boys here need careers advice to help them to see the probability

of prospects?

82.   What does being a black male mean?

83.   Do you try to achieve excellence, and master the forms of the UK?

84.   Where do you get your positive thinking from?

85.   What are the most important things to you as a young black man?

86.   Do you get on well with teachers?

87.   Is there a difference between the UK schools and that of Jamaica/Africa?

88.   Do you do anything in the community?

89.   Does popular black culture rub off on you in anyway?

Source	Questions Asked	Time
SA1	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14, 15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24, 25,26,27,28,29,30,31,32,33,34, 35,36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43,44, 45,46,47,48,49.	55:53
KM2	1,50,65,6,13,36,52,67,20,14,50, 65,71,25,10,42,56,66,64,14,13, 72,1,15,36.	51:46
OWJ3	1,2,84,55,79,76,21,42,43,3,11,22, 4,18,24,52,67,7,13,19,36,14,44.	52:04
JW4	1,2,3,4,6,7,13,36,51,14,39,1,9,67, 43,45,14,68,50,52,67,50,63,66, 69, 70,50,20,13.	39:59
JSM5	1,30,2,3,4,6,13,19,22,15,30,36,39, 14,66, 67,19,65.	1:01:56
NS6	1,31,28,14,20,24,35,39,79,82,27, 33,21,34,64,60,74,67,52,83,50,43, 45,36,14.	31:40
LB7	1,60,78,64,79,80,7,39,6,52,67,14, 10,58,66.	1:02:29
HI8	1,8,2,39,64,55,3,49,65,4,13,63, 14,39,38,32,20,21,52,6,51,19, 65,46,61,50,60.	43:59
LH9	1,2,64,36,4,24,67,64,33,81,39,14, 52,69,56,50,47,42,61,66,38.	41:53
RW10	1,2,14,4,6,36,64,76,79,85,51,64, 14,24,52,67,20,56,86,50,55,13,	53:26

	14,62,61,47,43,55,59,19,49,57,42.	
AK11	1,2,3,50,47,4,8,7,36,6,51,23,24, 52,35,53,38,54,55,56,57,58,59, 60,36,13,43,42,61,49.	37:55
AD12	1,2,24,13,38,32,55,39,19,7,3,50, 62,63,26,55,56,36,43,42.	39:24
MJ13	1,2,3,4,6,13,7,50,36,24,64,55,20, 21,14,57,19,53,56,58,13,14,76, 61.	34:15
LLC14	1,2,3,50,4,56,20,56,24,52,20,21, 39,38,13,76,77,19,67,36,14,60,61.	50:29
TA15	1,89,4,11,56,59,13,19,3,65,15,13, 14,34,36,64,76,31,43,24,52,67,20, 50.	53:22
KP16	1,2,39,55,27,28,73,14,24,34,56,64, 74,75,76,55,43,42,50,60,26,52.	38:23
TL17	1,89,64,67,39,1,4,79,69,67,21,50, 6,13,34,56,19,61,14,42,43.	52:18
HO18	1,30,64,55,31,32,24,52,64,39, 32,6.	40:45
MJG19	1,39,30,55,79,69,20,52,67,22,3,65, 15,9,13,56,13,6,50,11,67,35,14,	38:52
RW20	1,2,3,39,64,27,28,16,30,87,76,79, 14,56,61,59,24,52,35,53,57,67,14, 20,88,50,10,55.	40:20

Learner Identity

Source	Teacher Predicted Grades /GCSE	Born inside/ outside of the UK	Single parent family yes/no	Ethnicity	Family/ teacher role models	Religious affiliation	Generation if born in the UK	Learner Identity Assigned
SA1	2 A*, 5 A's, 4 B's	Outside	Yes	African	Uncle	Yes	N/A	Positive Learner
KM2	5 C's, 4 D's, 2 E's	Inside	Yes	Caribbean	Cousin	None	1st	Negative Learner
OWJ3	1A*, 4A's, 4 B's, 2	Inside	No	Caribbean	Dad, Uncle,	None*	1st	Positive Learne

	C's							r
JW 4	1 A, 3 B's, 6 C's, 1 D	Inside	No	Carib bean	Dad	Yes	1st	Positive Learne r
JS M5	7C's 4 D's	Inside	Yes	Carib bean	No family Role Models	None	1st	Negati ve Learne r
NS 6	3 A's, 6 B's, 2 C's	Outside	Yes	Carib bean	Squadro n Leader at Cadets	None	N/A	Positiv e Learne r
LB7	2 B's 8 C's, 1 D's	Inside	No	Carib bean	Dad	None	2nd	Negati ve Learne r
HI8	3 A*s, 4 A's, 4 B's	Inside	No	Afric an/ Carib bean	Mum, Mrs. G (PSE Teacher)	None	1st	Positiv e Learne r
LH9	1 A*, 8 A's, 2 B's	Outside	Yes	Afric an	Mum. Uncle	None	N/A	Positiv e Learne r
RW 10	7 C's, 3 D's, 1 E	Inside	No	Carib bean	No family role models	None	1st	Negati ve Learne r
AK 11	4 B's, 5 C's, 2 D's	Inside	Yes	Carib bean	Uncle	Yes	2nd	Negati ve Learne r**
AD 12	8 C's, 3 D's	Inside	Yes	Carib bean	No family role models	Yes	2nd	Negati ve Learne r
MJ 13	4 C's, 6 D's, 1 E	Inside	Yes	Carib bean	No family role models	None	2nd	Negati ve Learne r
LLC 14	6 C's, 3 D's, 2 E's	Inside	Yes	Carib bean / Mixe d Whit e Britis h	No family role models	None	1st	Negati ve Learne r

TA15	3 B's, 7 C's, 1 D	Inside	Yes	Caribbean	None	None	1st	Negative Learner
KP16	1 A*, 5 A's, 5 B's	Outside	Yes	African	Mum/general family – people who succeed	Yes	N/A	Positive Learner
TL17	1 A*,4 B's, 6 C's	Inside	No	Caribbean	General Family	None	2nd	Positive Learner
HO18	1 A*, 5 A's, 5 B's	Inside	No	African	No Family Role Models	Yes	1st	Positive Learner
MJG19	4 B's, 7 C's	Inside	No	Caribbean	General Family	None	1st	Positive Learner
RW20	2 A's 3 B's, 6 C's	Outside	Yes	Caribbean	No Family Role Models	Yes	N/A	Positive Learner

Key

*	OWJ3 Mentions "Jamaicans are Usually Christians" however he mentions religion at no other point and has no personal reference to Christianity.
**	AK11 is a negative learner based on circumstances outside of the contributors in the table. AK11 has recently lost his brother due to a death related to gang culture, his brother's funeral is being held during one of his exams. He has also lost friends to the same gang related situations in the past this it appears has contributed significantly to his negative learner status.

NVIVO

NVivo Codes of Data
Data Section 1
Macro Subjective

Sub Code	Sub Code sources/sample individuals	Sub code references
Material Well-being – general	6	8
Material Well-being – Racism and Access to higher education	3	4
Material Well-being – Racism and Employment	3	5
Racism and Reason	3	3
The Relations between the state society and citizens regarding Racism - Socio Political Infrastructure	11	23
The Criminal Stereotype of Black Boys	13	21
The English Vernacular as imperialism	1	1

Data Section 2

Mezzo Objective

Sub Code	Sub Code sources/sample individuals	Sub code references
Anti-Curriculum Intervention	1	2
Curriculum Intervention	14	74
Simulacrum Theoretic (Baudrillard 1994) – Current Black culture has replaced ancient Black Culture	3	3

Teacher Intervention	2	2
Teacher Training	2	7

Data Section 3

Mezzo subjective

Sub Code	Sub Code sources/sample individuals	Sub code references
No Teacher Racism	4	5
No Teacher Racism – Has not experienced Teacher Racism	1	1
School Intervention – Black History Month Intervention	8	9
School Intervention – Sample school intervention programmes	7	15
Teacher Racism – General Teacher Racism	5	11
Teacher Racism and the Criminal stereotype	1	1
Teacher Racism and White Paranoia	5	7
Teacher Rationality and Racism	2	3
Teacher Racism – Race Associated expectations	1	1

Data Section 4

Micro Objective

Sub Code	Sub Code sources/sample individuals	Sub code references
Family Background – High Discipline	13	50
Family Background – Poor Discipline	3	7

Data Section 5

Micro Subjective

Sub Code	Sub Code sources/sample individuals	Sub code references
Learner Identity – Academic Focus – High Academic Focus	10	16
Learner Identity – Academic Focus – Low Academic Focus	10	21
Social Motivation – Cane Piece Ideology (Sewell 2009)	6	16
Social Motivation – Community Ties	6	10
Social Motivation – Negative Peer Pressure – Road Culture and Badness	17	49
Social Motivation – Negative Peer Pressure – Stability	14	51
Social Motivation – Religious Affiliation	7	16
Social Motivation - Role Models	11	21

Discussion of Data

Institutional Racism

Macro Subjective Structure

Introduction

This chapter, which I have called the macro subjective structure, represents the theoretical context within which I shall discuss the perceptions of my respondents in relation to racism in British society. Although the perceptions and the experiences of my sample cannot claim to make any judgements about the state structure as a whole or about wider society as a whole, the perceptions and experiences of my sample as with regards to racism are nevertheless linked theoretically to state politics, state policy and to wider society. I have used the term subjective because racism is a subjective reality or a subjective consciousness that is not mandatorily imposed; it remains an optional component of the state and of wider society. This section, because theoretically linked to the political infrastructure of the state and to wider society as an extension of the state, will act as the Rhizomorphic system, which will help to contextualize the later chapters that are theoretically linked to exclusion within the national curriculum, exclusive school practices, school intervention and normative teacher behaviour. All of these chapters are linked to the overarching theoretical theme of Institutional racism.

Within this chapter I explore my samples perceptions and experiences of racism within British society, these perceptions and experiences fall within several different genres of racism that make up the sub- sections of this chapter. I discuss the sample data in relation to two aims; the first aim is to discuss the perceptions and experiences of my sample in relation to the type of racism that they perceive exists in Britain and my second aim is to look at how my sample are affected by this racism as with regards to their learner identity status, to explore whether there is a link between racism and learner identity status. In all of the sub-sections of this chapter I divide the respondent statements, generally, into respondents who perceive racism as a surmountable barrier, respondents who perceive racism as a barrier and respondents who are just generally aware of racism. I have divided the respondent statements across these three categories because these are the categories that the respondent statements naturally fall into; it is also a system that is helpful in linking these statements to a respondent's learner identity status. The meaning of learner identity within this thesis means the extent to which my samples

identities are conducive to the formal structure of secondary education success, which is measured by the attainment of five GCSE grades or more ranging from A*-C.

In total including all of the sub-sections that make up this chapter 85% of my sample provide data on racism within the UK, with only 15% of my sample not commenting on racism at all in this chapter. Each sub-section within this chapter looks at a specific type of racism, however these sub-sections need to be viewed as part of a holistic experience of racism in Britain as not everyone will experience racism in the same way.

Britain's Socio Political Infrastructure in Relation to Race

Introduction

In this sub-section I discuss the perceptions and experiences of the secondary school African and Caribbean heritage black boys who refer to racism within British society generally. These perceptions and experiences of racism cannot really be understood outside of the historical socio-political context of British immigration issues (Gilroy, 1987; Miles & Phizacklea, 1979; Panayi, 1994; Paul, 1997; Rich, 1989; Solomos, 2003), that are linked to racial mythology (Horsman, 1981; Robinson, 1983; Young, 2008) and that are central to contemporary British cultural racisms (Alexander, 2014; Gilroy, 2012; kundnani, 2012; Redclift, 2014; Weedon, 2011). I also discuss the link between these perceptions and experiences of racism and the identities of the sample in relation to their learner identity statuses. The principle theme or argument here is that positive or negative perceptions of racism are linked to positive and negative learner identities. I define positive and negative learner identities as those identities that are and are not conducive to the formal structure of secondary school academic achievement. However I also discuss those respondent statements that are just general statements, statements that are not linked in any way to the respondent's learner identity status.

Racism as an integral part of British society generally was one of the key issues that my sample of Black boys talked about. My sample through their responses in this section can be divided into three main groups, firstly there are those who talk about racism as if it is something, which is either insignificant or something which can be overcome, secondly there are those who talk about racism in a way which suggests that it is an insurmountable barrier that they are resigned to and thirdly there are those who just comment on racism generally without aligning themselves to either of the aforementioned categories.

Discussion

Group 1: Respondents who Perceived Racism as a Surmountable Barrier

Two respondents from the 55% of my sample who shared their perceptions and experiences of racism in this section of the chapter, provided data, which states that there is racism within British society but that it is something that can be lived with and which can be overcome. The first of these respondent (RW20) statements says that:

There is racism everywhere you go, you're not going to go to a place where there is not racism, so you just have to learn to deal with it and get on with your life.

The profile of this student (RW20) is such that he has been born and partly schooled in Jamaica and could have what Sewell (2009) highlights as a cane piece mentality, which is a durable mentality that emerges from the poverty, hardship and discipline of these predominantly third world or underdeveloped environments, which the child upon entering the UK education system and society in general, is much more likely to have a stable identity that is more conducive to learning than a child born in this country without strong cultural roots and discipline. As a result of having this positive learner identity I think it's highly likely that this student (RW20) didn't really see racism as something big enough to warrant his attention or concern in relation to where he has come from. The strength of this data is good because this respondent mentions something similar in relation to having to succeed within a UK education system that is designed to fail black boys, in the material well-being sub-section of this chapter. He also talks a lot about his disciplined environment in Jamaica as with regards to striving for excellence and having to be disciplined in order to survive the Jamaican schooling system. The second of the respondents (HI8) who suggests that racism can be overcome, states the following:

I think it is very important, I mean being black is my identity for instance and also I think its something that I sort of thrive on, cause people see me and they think is he intelligent, well, but then I'll show them like for instance, I'm sure when people see me they don't think I'm good at English, but English is one of my stronger subjects, it's something that I get A* in.

I would like to cautiously suggest here, that the above statement on racism could be linked to the idea that the English vernacular is a tool of imperialism used to distinguish between barbarian and civilised cultures, especially when it comes to those who are perceived as belonging to African or black vernacular cultures, where there has been a history of British colonial rule in the motherland of these vernacular cultures. I would also

like to suggest that the historical socio-political context of British immigration issues only served to exacerbate this civilised/barbarian dichotomy in relation to ethnic minority immigrants and the indigenous white ethnic majority (Gilroy, 1987; Miles & Phizacklea, 1979; Panayi, 1994; Paul, 1997; Rich, 1989; Solomos, 2003). This pupil says that he actually thrives off of the challenge of being black and the barriers that this raises, he was born in this country but has a very disciplined two parent family background and has been passed on the cane piece mentality of his mother who is of Nigerian origin and who grew up in poverty. The strength of this data is good because this respondent mentions in a separate section of this chapter that he feels that he can overcome society's racist stereotypes of black people and talks a lot about the discipline of his home environment and about being a high achiever. This piece of data fits quite neatly into Sewell's (2009) thesis that black boys who have good parental discipline and who have a cane piece mentality perceive that they can overcome the barriers that a racist society presents.

Group 2: Respondents who Perceive Racism as a Barrier

15% of my sample made comments on racism within British society in a way that appeared to be resigned to it as a barrier. The first of these respondents (KM2) states that:

[...] But there's questions like I don't know why they stereotype us like we are not any different to them we're just a different colour innit we do the same things they're not better than us we're not better than them we're all the same thing we're all equal but they just see it in a different way innit the way they see us is different things innit its different things but it's cool.

The black male stereotype that this respondent (KM2) refers to above could again be linked with historical British immigration issues especially as with regards to the framing of the black youth problem (Solomos, 2003). This pupil appears to be resigned to the brand of racism in the UK because he recognises the racial prejudice that exists but then suggests that it's ok or cool, that it does not really matter, which of course contradicts the first part of the statement. Therefore the false statement "it's cool" suggests resignation to the problematic status quo. There is a second quote from the same respondent that I would also like to discuss here, he states:

Being black is getting prepared not to fail, got to achieve something, I'll elaborate, you've got to achieve something you've got to try and do your best and prove that we're all equal, that we're not different to white people, yeah that's about it.

This statement is interesting because it may appear at first glance to be a positive statement about challenging racism, which contradicts the first statement made by the same individual however on closer inspection this second statement appears to be more of a general observation about the nature of society rather than a reflection of the individual because the statement has no personal detail in it and more importantly there is no evidence of personal details of high achievement or of a cane piece mentality or of a disciplined family background that would suggest the transcendence of racism. So it suggests that this respondent has a negative learner identity, as there are no personal details of success and further evidence of statements of resignation to racism.

The second respondent (AK11) who appears to be resigned to racism, in a dialogue with me (R), states the following:

R) So do you think when people stereotype you or treat you as if you are part of this negative group does that make being black feel like hard work, like you're having to try too hard to show these people that you're alright?

AK11) Yeah I think that's actually true because when they have that like negativity against you, you're thinking what's the point and pushing it so much, and then there is no interest shown back so there's, like there is no point inside it, and then after you try to help and sometimes it feels like they try to put you on the spot so that's it.

This statement is explicitly resigned to racism as the respondent literally states "whats the point" in trying to push your agenda, to succeed, to get along with when "there is no interest shown back" from those who stereotype. Again here there are no personal details of success or of a disciplined home background or of a cane piece mentality or of anything that would provide evidence of a positive learner identity and so it appears as though this respondent has a negative learner identity.

The third respondent (AD12) who appears to be resigned to racism states the following:

[…] Black people do get stereotyped a lot, and its not only the teachers a lot of people out there… but if they learn about it more and they study it more I think they will understand it as more good than evil.

Again here I would link the perceived stereotypical prejudice to the historical Black Caribbean immigration issue in Britain and the consequent issues of black youth unemployment and criminality (Solomos, 2003). This statement though it seems to be

quite general, appears to me to be linked to the personal experiences of this respondent and one of many examples of his exasperation at racism. I say this because this respondent (AD12) is very much concerned with racism and talks about it frequently. He also openly accepts that he has a negative learner identity because he has not yet managed to unlock his skill set and therefore does not know how to revise or learn properly. The overarching theme of the interview with this respondent is that he lacks self-knowledge and is culturally disorientated, which he has tried to counter with religious knowledge.

This concludes the 15% of respondents who perceive racism as a barrier within this section of the chapter.

Group 3: Respondents who are aware of Racism

30% of my sample made comments on racism within British society in a more general way than those respondents who I have outlined in the previous two group categories. One of these respondents (JW4) states the following:

It just means that I have to conduct myself a bit better outside of school and outside of home to not be stereotyped by other people cause that's what most people tend to do now days.

I would also suggest here that the above statement about being stereotyped as a young black man has its origins in historical black immigration issues in Britain and the consequent framing of black youth as a problematic cohort within British society. I would say that the historical link between black youth and criminality created through the issues of black immigration is still in play and that it is now most conspicuously associated with the wearing of the 'hoodie' by black youth who are stereotyped predominantly as violent thugs who carry dangerous weapons (Bell, 2013). The above statement although an apparently general one is also linked to personal experience, as could all of the general statements made by the respondents that I should summarise in this section. The reason that I categorise the above statement as general is because this respondent does not focus very much on racism and at times renounces racism in terms of his teachers and his school, he also talks personally of wanting to achieve so that he can be an example to others and help to change the black stereotypes that exist. He also comes from a two-parent family background of discipline. All of this evidence suggests that this respondent has a positive learner identity, meaning that the above comment on racism appears to be just a general comment and is not an indication of his learner identity status and is

therefore what I call a neutral statement.

The other general statements of racism that fall into this category are similar to the above quote, just general statements that do not indicate a positive or negative relationship with racism. However I will summarise the rest of the respondents and their statements that fall into this category in order to provide context for the other sections of this chapter and for the following chapters. The second respondent (LB7) makes a comment about Britain not really being the home of black people and he says this in relation to the fact that his dad will acknowledge and engage with other black people that he encounters in areas where black people are sparsely populated as sort of an act of bonding or unification in a country where one is racially alienated. This respondent (LB7) refers a lot to his father's observation that Britain is hostile when it comes to black advancement and that he therefore needs to try harder to succeed. However this respondent doesn't talk very much about racism in respect of personal experiences its more so in relation to his father's observations and so racism doesn't really feature as a central theme in relation to this respondent even though he does have a negative learner identity but this is more related to peer pressure than anything else, which I shall discuss in more depth in the appropriate chapter. However the respondents (LB7) fathers observations of racism appear to be intrinsically linked to Historical British immigration issues especially the observation that Britain is not really the home of black people who continue to be seen as an alien wedge particularly when there are race riots or other conspicuous moments of cultural bifurcation such as the murder of the British Army soldier, Fusilier Lee Rigby by Black Islamic terrorists. The scenario of cultural bifurcation in Britain has reached fever pitch within the current contemporary moment and only heightened by the recent events in France regarding the Jihad against religious satire. The current neo-liberal movement has altered the dimensions of racism, it has renounced racism in terms of colour but has re-coded race through cultural 'values' in a war against multiculturalism which, further serves to highlight the boundaries of race in relation to British citizenship (Alexander, 2014; Gilroy, 2012; kundnani, 2012; Redclift, 2014; Weedon, 2011).

This respondent (TA15) states that stereotyping can affect a person in multiple ways such as college entry, progress at school and police surveillance on the street as he has had a prejudicial encounter with police. However this comment and the others made do not

really reflect any personal negative attitudes to racism that might affect this respondent's academic focus. What is also interesting is that this respondent doesn't mention any personal experiences of academic success in fact he states that his focus in classes is poor. He also mentions that he doesn't really listen to his mother's advice until he experiences something for himself, which doesn't seem to reflect a disciplined relationship. It may be that this respondent has a negative learner identity based on the evidence but there does not seem to be a link between this pupils perceptions and experiences of racism in British society generally and his learner identity status. The fourth respondent (TL17) makes a general comment about the fact that the media will be very difficult to change I can only assume in relation to the media's projection of negative black stereotypical images. This respondent does mention that his family especially his male elders tell him that racism can be overcome and that he can achieve anything that he wants to. This respondent does mention that he has a strict relationship with his mother and that he has been reared well by his dad and the other male elders of his family. So it seems as though this respondent is observant of racism but is not negatively affected by it as at the time of the interview he was an A* student in geography.

The final two respondents (HO18 & LH9) are both high achievers of African origin whose comments of racism were just general statements without any link to learner identity status.

The general trend within this sub-section is that general comments on racism whether positive or negative learner identity students make them are not really an indication of that learner identity status and so they can be regarded as neutral statements.

The Respondents who did not Comment on Racism in British Society Generally

45% of my sample did not provide any evidence in this sub-chapter, which focused on, perceptions of racism in British society in general.

The first respondent (SA1) I shall discuss here stated that he had not experienced any forms of racism and that he had gotten on with everybody in his school well. This respondent is a high achiever with a very stable positive learner identity and who may have a cane piece mentality. Regarding the second respondent (KP16) I did not really ask him any questions in relation to racism because the interview just didn't seem to go in that direction it was much more focused on the respondent's heritage and culture as he

was born and partly schooled in Nigeria and racism just didn't really seem to be a focus for him.

However he has made a general comment on racism in a separate chapter, which is unrelated to him personally. The third respondent (NS6) was born in Jamaica and partly schooled there and so his focus in our interviews was much more orientated around the disciplined environment of his Jamaican schooling and his motivation to succeed in the UK. The theme of Racism seemed to be a null point with this respondent and so I didn't get to ask him much questions about it. However he does comment on racism in a different section of this chapter as a motivation for him to do well. For the fourth respondent (OWJ3) racism was also not a central focus. The profile of this student is that he comes from a two parent high socio-economic family background, where both parents are successful professionals who provide a disciplined environment for the respondent and push an agenda of high achievement and so it doesn't appear as though this respondent views racism as something which is relevant to his life. The fifth respondent (MJ13) was asked a lot of questions on racism and gave many answers regarding his experiences and perceptions of racism but none of these answers were in relation to racism in society generally they were much more specific and belong to other sections of this chapter. The sixth respondent (LLC14) didn't have anything to say about racism even though I asked him four separate questions on racism it just didn't seem to be something that he identified with. Regarding the final three respondents (JSM5, MJG19, RW10), all three commented on racism but again in other specific areas that will feature later on in this chapter.

Three respondents from this 45% cohort (SA1, KP16, NS6) who did not provide data in this section of the chapter were all born in impoverished parts of the world, Africa and Jamaica respectively, all of who have stable positive learner identities and could have cane piece mentalities. Two of these respondents (KP16 & NS6) comment on racism elsewhere, both in a general way unrelated to self and in a positive transcendent way respectively. One (5%) of the respondents (OWJ3) who did not comment on racism came from a two parents, high socio-economic, disciplined, family background. Another (5%) of the respondents (LLC14) simply did not seem to identify with racism. The other four (20%) respondents (MJ13, JSM5, MJG19, RW10) commented on racism but just not in this section of the chapter suggesting that they have different experiences and perceptions of racism.

Conclusion

The data from the 55% of respondents who made statements in this section of the chapter contradicts the position of Mirza (2010) and to a certain extent Sewell (2009; 2010), who argue that Britain is now a post-racial society and that racism at best is a thing of the past and at worst is something, which can be overcome with the right mental application.

In critically analysing this sub-chapter, 10% of my sample (RW20 & HI8) that commented on racism within British society generally, suggested that this racism was something, which one could live with or overcome. The strength of data from these respondents was good and they both came from very disciplined environments and could have a cane piece mentality, which would fit into Sewell's (2009; 2010) thesis that if a black child has good parenting and comes from an impoverished third world or disciplined background then the durable mind-set that emerges from this scenario is enough to transcend the barriers of racism that exist in British society. 15% of my sample (KM2, AK11, AD12) commented on racism in this section of the chapter in a way that appeared to be resigned to racism as if it is something that is insurmountable. All three of these respondents who had negative learner identities were born in the UK and came from Caribbean heritage, single parent, low socio-economic households headed by a female. 30% of my sample made general comments that had no real link to their learner identity status 20% of which had positive learner identities and 10% of which had negative learner identities.

This leaves the remaining 45% of my sample that did not comment on racism in this sub-chapter, four respondents had a positive learner identity and five respondents had a negative learner identity.

It is too early to make concrete judgements at this stage, but it appears so far that the positive learner identity pupils either make positive statements about racism, general statements about racism or no comment about racism, meaning that no pupil with a positive learner identity has made a negative statement about racism in relation to himself personally. In addition all of the respondents with a positive learner identity have had supporting circumstances meaning that they have a disciplined family background or a determination to succeed or excellent grades or something, which personally links them to success or to having a positive learner identity. Those respondents with a negative

learner identity have made negative statements about racism, general statements of racism or no statement of racism so far, but have not made a positive statement about racism in relation to them and do not have the personal circumstances of the respondents with a positive learner identity.

British Racism and Material Well Being

Introduction

Within this material well-being sub-section of the chapter I will be discussing the 50% of my sample who gave statements below in regard to it being more difficult for them as Black boys to succeed within British society than the ethnic majority. I have used the UK census as a guide to help me define success within British society, which the census identifies as material well-being and suggests that material well-being is comprised of three components, which are education, employment and housing. However my sample only refer explicitly to racism linked to education, racism linked to employment and it generally being harder for black males to succeed within British society, which could include the issue of housing. I will divide this 50% cohort into three groups, those who appear to see racism as a surmountable barrier, those who appear to see racism as an insurmountable barrier and those who appear to make general comments about racism that do not appear to fall into either of the aforementioned groups. These groups will be mixed in terms of the genre of material well-being, being discussed in relation to racism.

Discussion

Group 1: Respondents who Perceived Racism as a Surmountable Barrier

20% of my sample made positive statements about their perceptions of the effect of racism on material well-being in a way that suggested that they see racism as a barrier that can be transcended.

This respondent (TL17) in relation to knowledge passed on by his male elders, states the following:

Yeah cos they told me that it's like it's kinda harder for a male to succeed just as a black male to succeed in life than it is if say a white male or just women, but even though they were there they still showed me that you can succeed and that even though prejudice is there you can still do it and that you see they showed like icons of like the history of black people who have stood up for their rights and it shows that even though you're a black male you can still go there and being a male it shows that you can always succeed […]

The above statement in regard to the perception that life will be harder in Britain for young black men is intrinsically linked to historical British immigration issues and especially the focus on the black school leaver, who faced almost certain unemployment within a hostile racist labour market predominantly in the 60's and 70's (Solomos, 1988). The statement could also be linked to the disproportionate exclusion of black boys within secondary education and to teacher racism, which help to prevent a full education (Richards, 2007; King, 2004). This respondent (TL17) refers to the fact that his family have always said that it is harder for a black man to succeed in this society but that it is possible to achieve and do well and have referenced successful black icons to make their point. This respondent seems to be motivated to do well and overcome racism, though he is part of a single parent family he has explained that his mother is very strict and enforces good behaviour and hard work and equally as important is the fact that he has several older male family role models who push him in the right direction so although he is not a top achiever in all subjects he is an A* student in Geography and seems dedicated to the rest of his studies. This supports Sewell's thesis that love, ritual and schooling is the key to black success that is male love male ritual such as routine bonding activities will orientate and balance the male child who will then be ready for schooling and not as exposed to hyper masculinity which exacerbated by racism can have disastrous outcomes for the future. However there is the question of the mother who is very strict and demands good conduct and hard work from her child. This maternal factor certainly asks questions of Sewell's paternally orientated thesis as described above, however there seems to be a gap in the literature as with regards to the positive contribution of maternal child rearing when it comes to Black African and Black Caribbean boys.

This respondent (HO18) as regards his parent's teachings states:

[…] An argument is that a black person has to work harder than somebody who has been born in this country; their bloodline goes through this country and I think that also helps because it gives me, I'm not saying it gives everybody a higher work rate just for me particularly as a black person it gives me a higher work rate that I need to work hard so that I can have the same opportunities that people who have been born in this country raised by English parents I'll have the same opportunities as they do.

This respondent (HO18) does acknowledge the argument that it is harder for a black person to succeed in British society, which is linked to the British immigration issues that I have mention directly above, but then goes straight on to state that this racist scenario

forces him to have a higher work rate so that he can have the same opportunities as the children whose bloodline runs through this country. So racism in this instance is not perceived as a barrier to success instead it acts as a motivational force pushing this respondent to work harder in a bid to give society no choice but to reward top grades. This respondent is rooted in a strong African culture of discipline, is part of a two parent family who have a good socio- economic status and he has been given Sewell's love and ritual from his father, the data suggesting that he has a well-balanced masculine identity and that he is achieving excellence in his schooling. The other thing that may be positively affecting this child is the fact that both of his parents were born in Africa and may have given him a sense of their cane piece ideology, where they have come from and the big opportunity that the respondent has to achieve in this country. In relation to the literature this respondent data both supports and contradicts Sewell's thesis in that receiving the love and ritual from his father has definitely helped him with his schooling but so has his rooting in the rich African cultures of his ethnic origin, Nigeria and Ghana respectively, which have equally contributing to his stable positive learner identity according to him, in addition he has mentioned the fact that his father has a top job in his native country of Ghana, which the respondent looks up to and may well be trying to emulate and so the high socio-economic status of his family background may be a contributing factor to his positive learner identity. Hence this respondent's perception of racism is such that it is not perceived as a barrier to a successful secondary education and perhaps beyond.

This respondent (NS6) in relation to his parent's teachings states:

I just got told its going to be like from the start its going to be tough growing up in the UK and different countries and especially getting a job and starting off as an adult so you've just got to take it all in and prepare yourself so and just strive to win.

This respondent (NS6) states that he has been told that it is going to be tough growing up in the UK and especially getting a job, which is linked to historical black immigration issues and a racist labour market (Solomos, 1988; Pilkington, 2003), but he then goes on to say that this means that you have to prepare yourself and strive to win to apply yourself to the task at hand, which demonstrates that this respondent is taking full responsibility for his success and doesn't see failure as an option. This pupil was born and partly schooled in Jamaica and from his statement seems to have a cane piece mentality to take full

advantage of his UK education no matter what, suggesting that he does not see racial discrimination as a barrier to his success and is going to work hard to make sure that he does succeed and was achieving top grades at the time of this interview. The majority of data from this respondent is mainly about his hard work ethic and his hunger to be a respected member of society in a top job role, he also mentions that there is no excuse for not achieving your best and that he has no sympathy for those people who end up living a life of negativity involved with gangs and crime. In short this respondent expressed a radically meritocratic ideology throughout his interview, which suggests that the strength of the data given here is good.

Finally this (RW22) participant states that:

I know there's certain things that, obviously you don't do because you're targeted as, as ok the system is set up like… you… I've been told that black boys are least likely to get a full education so you know that you have to set your sights on what you need to do and try to beat that system.

This respondent (RW22) explains that black boys are targeted and that the education system is set up in such a way that black boys are least likely to get a full education, which is linked to black male school exclusions (Richards, 2007), teacher racism (King, 2004) and peer pressure (Gunter, 2008). However he goes on to say that because the education system is this way one needs to set their sights on what to do in order to beat that system. This comes back to Sewell's cane piece mentality of having to achieve despite the odds set against you as one is coming from a place, in this case Jamaica, where things are much worse economically and where there are much less opportunities to experience a satisfactory living standard and so ultimately the scenario is one where the individual is in an impoverished environment where the competition to succeed is fierce. The respondent (RW22) does discuss this scenario in further detail in a separate chapter, he also talks extensively about the disciplined nature of the Jamaican schooling system and the imperative of success. The statement made here about the English education system operating in such a way that black boys are less likely to get a full education than their white peers challenges Sewell's (2010) thesis in that the suggestion is that there is something wrong with the system and not the black boy, whereas Sewell thinks that this is no longer the case and that black boys fail their education because they will not take responsibility for it and play the helpless victim. The cane piece mentality of this respondent I suppose is one where he acknowledges that there are racist barriers that he

may face but that they are ones that he can overcome, which is the principle difference between success and failure that Sewell (2009, 2010) is highlighting but too radically for my liking as there are still issues of systemic or structural racism at the heart of the British education system as highlighted by this respondent and by Modood (2002) so I believe there are some oversights that accompany Sewell's thesis, which I shall discuss in further depth in a separate chapter.

Group 2: Respondents who Perceived Racism as an Insurmountable Barrier

The data on general material well-being begins here with a dialogue, which ensues between the respondent (KM2) and myself (R) thus:

R) What is being black, what does being black mean to you and are there specific ways of being black?

KM2) Being black yeah you gotta work more yeah a bit more work and try and achieve more, it's more of a struggle being black than being white that's about it really.

R) Why do you think that struggle is there?

KM2) Cause we're black white people look over us they don't look over us in a way that we're equal there's still that little banter between us.

R) What do you think that's down to what part of being black do you think that's down to why does that happen?

KM2) They're trying to undermine us it happens because they don't really trust us they don't really believe in us like they believe in a white person so we've just got to put in more work innit.

The data given above by (KM2) seems to be a statement that is resigned to the fact that racism is prevalent in society and even though he mentions that as black people we need to put more work in, this part of the statement seems quite general similarly to other statements made by this respondent in relation to black people needing to work harder and so this theme seems to be repetitive as if perhaps it is something that has been rehearsed, a sort of default setting. This ties in with the data this respondent gave on racism generally in society, above, as if he couldn't do anything about it, which is building up a case that he doesn't have a positive learner identity. In addition this respondent does not make any personal references to success, working harder or personally achieving good grades as those boys with positive learner identities have done. The data from this respondent aligns with the literature that Black Caribbean males are the lowest achieving

group and that they are more likely to be unemployed than their white counterparts and that they are less likely to be in the top class bracket of employment than their white counterparts. It suggests that this could be a combination of racism and identity issues that yield poor academic results and as a result poorer labour and housing opportunities.

Group 3: Respondents who are Aware of Racism

This respondent (TA15) as with regards to the values his mum has instilled in him, states

the following:

She has always just explained to me that it is going to be more difficult for me, because I am black and I have accepted that, and I actually understood what she is saying through experience and just got on with it.

This respondent (TA15) refers to his mother explaining to him that life is going to be harder for him because he is black and so we have to take into consideration her experiences that have brought her to that conclusion and if we look at the literature we know that first and second generation black immigrants in the UK faced a very hostile society where colour coded racism was the norm in all spheres of social endeavor. However the respondent states that he has experienced what his mum has warned him about so it means that whatever his mum was referring to is current and applies to him, which could mean the orthodoxy of White ambiguity around the cultural demeanor of black boys, as practiced by 'dys-conscious' teachers, police and other members of authority (King, 1991), cultural racism being the independent variable of British racism from its beginnings to the present time (Alexander, 2014). This data in itself is quite general and just outlines his mother's perceptions and his experience, he doesn't make explicit whether he has a positive or negative relationship with racism, his family background is a single parent family headed by a female, he also mentions that no one listens to their parents until they experience a situation for themselves, which suggests that there is not a huge amount of discipline governing this respondents behaviour. He does not make any personal references that associate him with being a positive learner identity but he also talks about racism in an indifferent way though he acknowledges that it is present in the classroom and from his above statement that it is present in wider society. This respondents statements position him as neutral because one cannot align him with either a positive or negative learner identity, which further highlights the above statement as a general one.

He also (TA15) asserts:

Stereotyping can affect a person in every way shape and form, whether it is getting into a college, what we do in a college what we do in school, how we get on […]

This respondent (TA15) mentions that stereotyping can affect someone in every way and then specifically references getting into college as well as other sites of discrimination. It appears in this statement that the respondent is also referring to himself as he repeatedly uses the term 'we', which I suggest means 'us black people'. However the statement appears to be a general one after taking into consideration the wider data provided in his interview, the main elements of which I have highlighted directly above in relation to his learner identity status. In relation to the literature on racial equality within the university admissions process, there is no evidence to suggest that racist stereotypes effect university admissions for ethnic minority candidates indiscriminate of institutional type (Gorard, 2008), however there is evidence to suggest that racial stereotyping may affect the admission of ethnic minority candidates into older university institutions like Oxford and Cambridge (Modood, 2002).

This respondent (JW4) also states:

Well um being black it's not really any different from being any other type of race but then there are things that come with it obviously for young black men of my age to succeed is a bit harder than other cultures […]

He (JW4) concludes that:

It just means that I have to conduct myself a bit better outside of school and outside of home to not be stereotyped by other people cause that's what most people tend to do now days. And it does mean that we have to try that little bit harder to succeed better in life.

This respondent (JW4) mentions the fact that "we have to try harder" twice in two different statements, which clearly shows that it is a central theme in his mind perhaps embedded within him by parents, others or personal experience. He also mentions this theme generally with no reference to how it impacts upon him in a positive or negative way, however he comes from a two parent family which is relatively strict and has the guidance and experience of his two brothers to push him in the right direction so maybe it is a statement that helps him to push forward as I don't think it's something he is resigned to but this would be conjecture. However in his interview he

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does renounce teacher racism in relation to himself personally and he also renounces racism generally as having no part to play in his life thus far. He also makes a personal reference to staying on at school, working hard and getting good GCSE grades. This coupled with his positive family background of discipline and religion suggests that he has a positive learner identity and so I would say that the two above statements are both just general statements as they read. What he does say fits in with the literature that argues that Black Caribbean males are more disadvantaged and discriminated against in British society than their white peers.

This respondent (JW4) states the following:

I do notice a considerable difference between a white boy and myself, for instance they, their culture they might have a bit more leeway than me in certain things and they may act in a different way around certain people than me and they might, like applying for colleges might be a bit easier for them also but I don't really look for aspects like that when I'm talking to other people.

This respondent (JW4) suggests that his white peers may find applying to colleges easier than he himself would because he is black, which coincides with Modood (2002) but only if there were to be a distinction being made between applications to new and old university institutions, which there is not. However there is the possibility that the respondent's perception of university's is that they are all the same when it comes to discrimination, which of course there is no evidence for. As for what this statement says about the respondent it is difficult because he makes no reference as to how this discrimination may affect him as with regards to motivation or otherwise, however he applies himself academically and is not resigned to racism so the statement is likely to be a general observation.

Here I will discuss the data below, which references the labour market specifically, in relation to the literature on racial equality within the labour market written above.

This respondent (LB7) states:

Well basically my dad showed me that em obviously because we are living within the western culture that it's going to be harder for black people to get jobs to em become like productive. What my dad usually tells me is em like when you're going out there for jobs and stuff that it's going to be harder because em not that white people are more racist but that they will prefer to choose someone of their own race because they can relate to them much better but em he says that em like when I go to school to make sure that I work twice as hard as a white

guy just to show that I'm up there because he says if a white guy has a grade B and I have a grade A the white guy is still more likely to get the job over me and he just says I will have to work as hard as possible and try to make something useful of my life.

He (LB7) further elaborates:

It's kind of hard because obviously I know like um we do get treated a bit differently from like white guys like obviously if I go out my dad… Cause my dad works in like the law firms up London and he says when he looks around him he don't see no black guys like he says he be walking up, I don't know say he works up London like up in the city so he say he will look around and he hardly see's any black guys and he says if he sees a black guy he will go and approach him and then they will start a conversation because obviously it is very hard for a black guy to get a job in the city like greater London so my dad says he walks around he's in his work place and he says there's like about twenty white guys, one Asian guy and one black guy and that's him so what I'm saying is it's very hard for black guys to um achieve something very productive and yeah I would say it is kind of hard.

The data given by this respondent (LB7) in his first statement refers to the fact that his dad has explained to him that getting a job is going to be harder for him to achieve because in British society it is far more likely that a white applicant will get the job because they are much more likely to have more in common with the recruiter and so in order to get a job he will have to achieve top grades to stand any chance of getting a job over a white applicant. This is just a general statement and doesn't refer to how the respondent himself is going to approach this situation, if he is motivated or not, though this applicant has expressed elsewhere that he is being torn between his dads influence of getting a good education and succumbing to his friends and road culture (Gunter, 2008), so it may be that in reciting his father's advice he is showing that he knows the right path to take, which is attaining top grades but that actually engaging in the process necessary to achieve these grades presents more of a challenge as I shall discuss in a separate chapter. This data does suggest that racism is alive and well in the contemporary labour market and so ties in with the literature (Pilkington, 2003; Virk, 2012) that argues that the labour market is still circumscribed by racism. The second statement by this respondent (LB7) still asserts that there is racism in the labour market but draws specific attention to non-manual white collar labour, which the respondent in reciting his father says that there are hardly any black people working in the offices of central London as witnessed by the father who works for an IT firm in that location, the point being that getting a top job for a good company in central London is very difficult for black people to achieve. This again fits in with the literature that I have referenced immediately above, which asserts

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that there is a glass ceiling preventing ethnic minorities from becoming the gatekeepers of British society. In the second statement of this respondent (LB7) again there was no reference to how the advice from his father had affected him and so appears as a general statement with perhaps a similar meaning as his first statement, which I outlined above. This respondent does not make any positive or negative personal statements about racism suggesting that it is not a central theme in his mind, he is far more concerned with the influence that road culture is having on him despite his father's paternal influence over him, a discussion which belongs elsewhere.

A dialogue with respondent (MJG19) ensues:

R) And what would you say is some of the things that is mainly positive like some of the main positive things that you've been taught like as you've been growing up, by mum or dad or whoever?

MJG20) How I conduct myself how its gonna, in the job industry and stuff its gonna be harder for me getting a job being black but em but the way I conduct myself and not kind of giving people the negative reaction they're looking for as a stereotype.

R) Of course yeah, it's only natural, so you've got quite a pro education attitude then really is what I am getting from you, you value your education and you really want to do well?

MJG20) Yeah, I do want to do well, I don't take everything too seriously yeah I think cos um when you take things too seriously you end up in like stressing yourself out and things like that, I'm going to have to, I need to do well because for me I had to have a kind of I could have better qualifications than a white guy, and when we both go for the same interview and he could get it, so I need the kind of, I need A*'s and he needs B's for us to be on level ground like that so I know that, it's not going to be easy, I'm going to be doing research and things so I've got a bit of extra work to do.

This respondent (MJG19) asserts that his parents have told him that getting a job is going to be harder for him because he is black and so he needs to be careful about how he conducts himself as it will be easy for him to be negatively stigmatised. This assertion is also linked to historical black immigration issues in Britain and more specifically to racism within the labour market as I have discussed above. He goes on to state that he needs to get top grades so that he can have an equal chance of getting a job as a white applicant. He also mentions in his interview that he is currently a B grade student but wants to increase his work rate so that he can become an A grade student like his sister before him who is now reading at university so there is some sibling rivalry, which may contribute to

this respondent having a positive learner identity, he also mentions that he has strong will power and that academic success comes down to the individual and has nothing to do with race so I do not think that the above statement suggests that this respondent is resigned to racism, in light of all the data provided by this respondent as context for the above statement, the statement appears to be a general one. However this data does suggest that racism is still a factor when it comes to the labour market.

A dialogue between the researcher and this participant (KP16) ensues:

R) But what I'm saying is there are boys living their blackness out but through chaos?

KP16) I see but, I think the reason why they are really doing that is cause a lot of inequality is really going on around and it might get to them too much and then they probably don't know how to succeed in life cause for example if, let's say if a White person for example it has happened my parents have said it many times if a white person does get a (B) grade and you're going for the same course as a black person and they are racist racism in it lets say and if you get an (A*) grade they are likely to choose their own kind basically so…

R) (A), (B), even though you got an (A*)?

KP16) Yep, so it's like the pressure is on you and you just need to know your place you going to cause some places they can be a bit racism there.

R) So you are aware of racism in this country?

KP16) Yeah.

This respondent (KP16) in response to me suggesting that black boys may be living out their blackness through chaos, goes on to say that he thinks that, that could be the case because there is a lot of inequality around and that the black boys living out their blackness through chaos may not know how to succeed in life because white applicants for a college course for example are much more likely to be accepted over a black applicant, which is something that the respondent says his parents have told him many times. So the implication here then is that the black boys that are living a life of chaos are doing so because of a structurally racist society that excludes black male youth, which fits into the literature by Solomos (1988). The respondent goes on to say that the pressure is on you and you need to know which place you are going because some places have racism in them. I will suggest here that the respondents use of the term 'place' and 'places' refers to university institutions and if we accept that then the statement has a direct link with Modood (2002) because there is emphasis on the 'place' you choose because some

'places' have racist practices within them, which could infer the new/old university institution dichotomy in relation to ethnic minority admissions. As with regards to what this statement says about the respondent, this is not straightforward because he is not referring to himself in the statement, however he does say in his statement that "the pressure is on you", which could be seen as the need to be motivated and not to let racist practices get the better of you, so for instance the pressure is on you to do well and succeed as failure is not an option. This again suggests the presence of a cane piece mentality of achievement, the respondent born and partially schooled in Nigeria before moving to the UK. This respondent was also a high achiever at the time of the interview. The interesting part of this respondent data is that a high achiever with a cane piece mentality of achievement perceived racism in the UK to be so bad that it could be the reason why some young black boys turn to a life of gangs and crime as their only route to success, but perhaps he sees this as something which would specifically affect black boys born in this country but this is just conjecture. The fact that the respondent, even though not in relation to himself, which is highly significant, perceives racism as bigger than individual motivation departs from Sewell's (2010) thesis that racism is no longer an insurmountable barrier to black success. However the respondent himself confirms Sewell's cane piece theoretic.

The Respondents who did not Comment on Material Well-Being in Relation to Racism

Regarding the 50% of my sample who did not provide any data on racism within the genres that constitute material well-being the first of which (SA1) has renounced racism in that he has not encountered it and therefore has no experience or opinion on it. This pupil is concretely rooted in his African culture and has a cane piece mentality where his only focus is academic achievement and where racism is an abstract phenomenon, which he doesn't concern himself with. The second respondent (OWJ3) has a high socio-economic status where both of his parents are successful professionals who provide strict discipline and have high expectations of him academically, which could mean that his parents have not presented racism to him as a barrier and have instead pushed an agenda of hard work and focus, which the respondent does go on to explain in a separate chapter. The third respondent (JSM5) does provide data on racism but in a different section of the chapter so racism is on his radar it's just that he has experienced it more prominently otherwise. The fourth respondent (HI8) has also mentioned racism but in a different section of this chapter, which is interesting considering he has a positive learner

identity but I shall discuss this in the section of the chapter that it concerns. The fifth respondent (LH9) also mentions racism in a different section of this chapter and has a positive learner identity, which I discuss in the relevant section. The sixth respondent (RW10) also mentions racism in a different section of the chapter but does not have a positive learner identity. The seventh (AK11), eighth (AD12) and ninth (MJ13) respondent all mention racism in other sections of this chapter. The tenth respondent (LLC14) does not mention racism anywhere in this chapter even though I did ask him several questions on racism it just did not seem to be a focus for him, which is unusual because he was born in this country is of Caribbean heritage, is part of a single parent family headed by his mother, is a poor achiever and is from a poor socio-economic background but yet racism is not central to his experience or perceptions of society, which is interesting seeing that according to Sewell (2009, 2010) this respondent would be a prime candidate for a victimhood mentality, which uses racism as an excuse for academic failure.

Conclusion

So to conclude this racism and material well-being sub-chapter, 50% of my sample provided data on the different dimensions of material well-being in relation to racism. Some provided data on material well-being in general, which usually referred to a respondent stating that they had either been told, or independently thought, that to succeed in Britain would be harder for them as black boys. I defined this general statement of success in terms of material well-being as defined by the UK census, which states that the core components of material well-being are education, employment and housing. The rest of this 50% cohort provided data that referred specifically to higher education and the employment market. I divided this group into three smaller groups, those who appeared to perceive racism as something that could be transcended, those who appeared to perceive racism as insurmountable and those who appeared to make general statements about racism that were not indicative of their learner identity status. 20% of this 50% cohort perceived racism as something that could be overcome. 10% of the respondents from this 20% had been born and partly schooled in Jamaica (NS6 & RW22), both of these children exhibited what Sewell (2009) has theorised as a cane piece mentality or ideology, which I have described and discussed above. The other 10% of this 20% group is made up of two children, the first is a child (HO18) who was born in this country but who has indigenous African parents born in Ghana and Nigeria respectively and who has also displayed a cane piece mentality, which I would

suggest has been ingrained in him by his parents, which he alludes to elsewhere. The second child (TL17) that makes up the final quarter of this 20% positive learner group has achieved a positive learner identity through a less conventional route, that is his mother has a strict influence on him though she was born in this country and is a single parent, he also has regular access to his dad and his uncles who play a central role in his life and who have provided him with what Sewell (2009) calls 'love and ritual' that is a loving relationship with regular rituals of bonding that balance the child providing him with a safe masculine identity. This child may not be as high achieving as the others but is balanced, an A grade student in geography and dedicated to the rest of his studies. Only one child (KM) (5%) from the overall 50% cohort that gave data in this section of the chapter, perceived racism as something that is insurmountable. The strength of data from this respondent is good because he makes several negative statements about racism and makes no personal references to academic success at all. He is of Black Caribbean ethnicity and comes from a single parent family headed by a female. The other 25% of the respondents (TA15, JW4, LB7, MJG, KP17) gave general statements about racism that were not indicative of their learner identity status.

Again in this chapter there is a link between positive and negative statements about racism in that those pupils who make positive statements about racism in this section, who feel they can transcend racism are those who come from a disciplined background, who have a cane piece ideology, are immersed in a rich cultural grounding or who through their own unique agency are achieving good grades. Whatever the stimulus may be there is always a personal reference to success or a determination to succeed for those who have a positive learner identity and who make positive statements about racism, where as those who appear to see racism as insurmountable appear to lack the personal evidence, do not explain the nature of the personal stimulus of their success or determination to succeed.

The English Vernacular as Imperialism

Introduction

I discuss the data used in this section in terms of Black stereotypes and the use of English discourse by members of my sample to rupture the coding of themselves as black deviant by transgressing the boundaries of the white subject of English language. This data is

linked theoretically to the fact that the English language has been constructed as a colonial tool to distinguish between barbarian or savage cultures and civilised or modern democratic cultures, especially when it comes to the African or Black vernacular genres where there is a history of British colonial rule (McLaren, 2009).

Within this small section I have decided not to divide my sample into groups according to the different types of statements they make about racism because organisationally I believe it is unnecessary as in this case there is only one general statement and one positive statement about racism respectively, which I think reads better without the divide.

Discussion

The data below, which highlights the use of English language as cultural capital that is used to appease white ambiguity, which circumscribes the black man as potentially deviant, begins with this respondent (JW4) statement:

> **If say I'm speaking to say a white person in particular I would have to show that I am intelligent and so they don't stereotype me so that I am the same as you.**

The first respondent (JW4) made reference to the situation where he feels that when he speaks to a white person he has to show that he is intelligent so that they do not stereotype him. He does not discuss how this form of societal racism affects him whether motivationally or negatively. However he does have a positive learner identity so perhaps it is just an observation of the status quo as opposed to a resignation to racism. His statement does support the hypothesis that cultural racism is an independent variable of English racism that remains ubiquitous. It also supports Pennycook's (1994) thesis that the English language is an imperial tool of hegemony, which creates a civilised/uncivilised dichotomy, not only for those who can and cannot speak English but also for those with varying levels of competency in the execution of this White coded vernacular. This racist dichotomy also has its roots in historical British immigration issues regarding black migrants and challenges the post-racial utopian hypothesis of Mirza (2010).

This respondent (HI8) states that:

> **I think it is very important, I mean being black is my identity for instance and also I think it's something that I sort of thrive on, cause people see me and they think, is he intelligent, well, but then I'll show them like for instance, I'm sure when people see me they don't think I'm good at English, but English is one of my stronger subjects, its something that I get A* in.**

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The second respondent (HI8) firstly affirms his black identity and says that it is something that he thrives on because society on first impressions doubts his level of intelligence based on his racial status and that they would not associate him with being good at English a white genre that they perceive is beyond his grasp (Pennycook, 1994). He goes on to say that English is one of his stronger subjects where he gets an A*, which suggests that he likes the challenge of being underestimated because of his racial ethnicity, so that he can introduce himself (the grade A student) to society thus transcending the stereotype that society assigns to him. He therefore uses this racist society as motivation to achieve excellence and in fact it is something that he thrives off, something which he enjoys because he is confident in his abilities and is rooted in his positive learner identity, which manages to incorporate the non-dangerous elements of black popular culture such as the music and the dress code, which is very interesting and which challenges Trevor Phillips (2000) who believes that black youth street cultures are divorced from achieving academic excellence and getting on in society. This respondent (HI8) statement also challenges the post-race utopian hypothesis (Mirza, 2010) and supports the thesis that cultural racism is alive and well in British society (Alexander, 2014).

Conclusion

Only 10% of my sample gave data on this section of the chapter. The reason why it was just 10% of my sample who provided data on racism apart from the three members of my sample (SA1, OWJ, LLC14) who do not provide data on racism at all in any section of this chapter, is because racist experience is so vast that not everyone will experience racism in the same way so this section of the chapter simply represents an area of racist experience that was not as common as other forms of racism experienced by my sample. I felt that even though this genre of racist experience was not common amongst my sample it was still an important area of racist experience that I wanted to highlight.

The Criminal Stereotype of the Black Youth and the Hoodie Icon
Introduction

In this section of the chapter I discuss the problem of the black youth stereotype and criminality as an extension of the framed black youth problem in Britain generally and how in recent times the hoodie icon has become the central icon of black youth delinquency. An important articulation in this section of the chapter is that black youth and the hoody icon exist in a symbiotic relationship both feeding off of one another each

one lending to the coding of the other. The other thing that is absolutely crucial to mention here is the role of the media in bombarding British society with stereotypical black youth imagery of criminality especially in relation to knife and gun crime in recent times as well as riots, the most recent of which was the Tottenham riots in response to the murder of the black male Mark Duggan, which spread nationally. The data highlights the association of black youth with criminality and the association of black youth and the hoody, which I discuss in relation to the aforementioned issues.

Discussion

Group 1: Respondents who Perceived Racism as a Surmountable Barrier

This respondent (LH9) also expresses what it means to be a black man in British society,

thus:

> **[…] Because my colour says I am a black man, yeah I have to be successful as a black man; instead of being judged about knife crimes and things like that I want to be seen as a successful person.**

This respondent (LH9) states that because society has coded him as a young black man he has to be successful instead of being stereotyped as being involved with knife and gun crime, this comment is linked with Bell's (2013) thesis that the hoodie icon codes black youth as deviant and that black youth code the hoodie as deviant so much so that a black boy doesn't even need to wearing a hoodie in order to considered a 'hood' involved with violent weapons. This racist stereotype is also linked to the black subcultural phenomenon road culture, where predominantly black youth literally socialise at particular sites on the road or on the street, some of whom are just kids hanging out and some of whom who are actually involved with badness (Gunter, 2008). This respondent uses the fact that society is racist as a motivating factor to prove society wrong, he has also said elsewhere that he would like to be successful so that he can help the people in his indigenous country of Malawi who live with limited resources. This respondent does have a positive learner identity, he has a cane piece mentality from being born in the poverty of Malawi and has been raised with strict discipline, he also seems to have a very rooted black identity, which seems to be intrinsic to his Malawi upbringing. This supports Sewell's thesis that racism is not an insurmountable barrier especially for those who have a cane piece mentality of hard work. This suggests that identity is central to achievement, academically and beyond.

Respondent (HI8) in relation to the British schema of logic states:

Being black means to me means to be honest is something I'm proud of I mean obviously it will be a challenge cause people, the way for instance I dress or the way I, the people I associate with people see me on the street and probably think that I'm automatically a hood rat or something like that but I believe that stereotypes such as that I don't think, I think people need to get to know the black community more.

He (HI8) goes on to state:

Yeah I think um, I think there are like for instance the way we dress we all probably dress different from another race for instance like em… hoods but we don't wear hooded tops to be hood like, we wear hooded tops because we believe they are stylish sort of thing.

He (HI8) further states:

I think I can overcome the stereotypes that are labelled of us because um I like to think of myself as, I like to think of myself as someone who is out going someone you can communicate with almost everyone and I think maybe, maybe just looking at me maybe that doesn't really come across but I think um, yeah I think I can overcome the stereotypes about black people being bad news black people always being in trouble I think yeah I think I can overcome that and perhaps help try and change that stereotype.

He (HI8) finally concludes:

[…] I mean being black is my identity for instance and also I think it's something that I sort of thrive on, cos people see me and they think, is he intelligent, well, but then I'll show them like for instance, I'm sure when people see me they don't think I'm good at English, but English is one of my stronger subjects, it's something I get an A* in […]

This respondent (HI8) in his first two statements explains that being black is a challenge because of the way he dresses which incorporates wearing hoodies and the friends that he socialises with, that people will look at him and automatically assume that he is a "hood rat", which suggests people will look at him and think that he is part of road culture up to no good. He also explains in his second statement that wearing a hoodie is a cultural expression of identity and style (Reynolds, 2013; Dedman, 2011) and not an intended inference of criminality, which this respondent (JSM5) also stated. What is interesting here is that he (HI8) has adopted the American apparel of road culture and hung out with friends that have done the same but whom were 100% positive and who have aligned this element of road culture with academic excellence and exemplary behavioral conduct, which fits more so into Ilans (2012) thesis of road culture than Trevor

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Phillips (2000) anachronistic hypothesis over a decade ago. In his (HI8) third statement he expresses that he can overcome the black youth stereotype, that he can overcome the stereotype of black people always being bad news and causing trouble and that ultimately he can try and change that stereotype in society. He goes on in the final statement of this section to explain that when people look at him they are ambiguous about whether he is intelligent or not and that this is something that he thrives off because he then disrupts the coding of black youth (himself) as deviant by introducing the fact that he has transgressed the boundary of the coded White subject, which in this case is English where his grades are top of the class. This respondent (HI8) as well as the two other African heritage respondents (HO18 & LH9) not only feel that they can challenge racist society but are motivated by this racist society to do so because society is challenging their abilities to perform academically and beyond. This respondent (HI8) not only stated that he felt he could challenge the negative stereotypes that society has of young black men but shows his intent through his academic grades in English where he usually achieves an A*. So here we have a clear correlation between identity, academic achievement, and future goals. This respondent has a positive learner identity and has a very disciplined two parent family background and a rooted identity in his African and Caribbean cultural heritage and although he was born here his mother has provided him with a cane piece mentality through stories of her Nigerian upbringing, which I discuss in a separate chapter. What is also interesting is the fact that the three respondents who were motivated by a racist society to succeed and challenge the status quo were all of African heritage and those African heritage family backgrounds were all very disciplined and had rich African cultural resources, which rooted these respondents within a secure identity and provided them with a cane piece mentality of hard work and success despite the barriers that may exist.

Group 2: Respondents who Perceive Racism as an Insurmountable Barrier

Below there is respondent data on how members of my sample felt about black boys being criminally stereotyped by society, which begin with this respondent (AD12) thus:

[…] Like media when you talk about black people it's mostly knife crime they don't think of really talk about the good things the only one good thing I've really heard on the news is one black president Barack Obama and that's it so most people just think ok if that's how black people are meant to be then um follow the path of the bad side.

This respondent (AD12) states that the media only seem to project negative criminal

imagery of black people engaged in knife crime, which as I mentioned above is only one dimension of road culture, which exists on its fringes. More importantly this respondent states that most people think that the negative media portrayal of black people is actually how black people are meant to be and so adopt this negative hypothesis. The respondent could also be inferring that the racially coded ubiquitous media representations of knife crime as inherent to black male youth identity, could very well have the impact of coding the way that black male youth perceive themselves, who they are, what they are capable of doing and what the future holds for them. This is a white circumscription of black male youth through the media, an ontological simulation of these black youths reason for being/living, or of their rational selves. Needless to say this simulated rationale for living excludes white coded subjects such as academic achievement thus impacting negatively on black male youth identity. The respondent (AD12) himself has not got a positive learner identity and at the time of our interview was still searching for the elements that would construct his holistic black identity and so I think he may be a little bit more susceptible to negative media imagery than others, however his parents although separated are both quite strict and have provided him with discipline and values. I think his statement was coming from a place of frustration both at the media and at the fact that he is still searching for his identity and hasn't found his perfect way to learn yet, a statement which I shall highlight and discuss in a separate chapter. Ultimately this respondent has a negative learner identity and so I think that the above statement is a negative statement about a racist media, which contributes to this respondent's self-proclaimed incomplete identity by censoring its projection of positive black role models the only one of which, in recent times, highlighted by the respondent, being the US President Barack Obama.

This respondent (JSM5) makes two interesting interrelated statements in respect to Bell (IBID); the first is in relation to wearing a hoodie, thus:

[…] Like people would expect me to wear a hoodie if you know what I mean but I don't do it cause people expect me to, I do it cause I feel comfortable in it and its like kind of the style now […]

The second comment from this respondent (JSM5) is in relation to the social stereotype of him committing violent crime, which I would suggest is linked to the wearing of the hoodie, he states:

Yeah like I wouldn't class myself as the rest as everyone else like going on with crime and

weapons and stuff, but obviously you get put in positions because of who you are, like you are getting put in positions like your stereotyped to do it as a black youth, so like it wouldn't make a difference to most people whether you do it or not because to them your just the same as anyone else, if you know what I mean.

This respondent (JSM5) in his first statement within this section explains that society expects him to wear a hoodie, for the only plausible reason in my mind, because he is a young black male. He goes on to say that he does wear hoodies but he does not do it because people expect him to wear it, he wears it because it is fashionable apparel and because he feels comfortable in it. So to explain what's going on here in reference to Bell (2013), society has been coded in such a way through ubiquitous media that the hoodie is seen as intrinsic to black youth even if they are not wearing a hoodie because they have the deviant potential to wear one and so in this instance they are seen as wolves in sheep's clothing.

This deviant potential is associated with the assumption that all black male youth are associated with the negative aspects of road culture, such as violent crime and drug dealing. As I have mentioned before there are multiple aspects to road culture including the pure aesthetics of the culture, which incorporates American apparel and the hoodie specifically, which is the element that this respondent has adopted. The second statement from this respondent (JSM5) explicitly states that he does not associate himself with those people who are committing violent crimes with weapons but that society stereotypes him as being part of that deviant collective. Even more profound, the respondent goes on to state that it doesn't really matter within this society as a young black male whether you are part of the knife and gun crime or not because young black males are seen as one and the same regardless of the reality. This statement also fits into Bells (2013) thesis of the hoodie icon circumscribing black male youth, even when it is absent. This respondent (JSM5) does not have a positive learner identity, comes from a single parent family is of Caribbean heritage and was born here. His statement seemed to be one of frustration at how society is, as something, which he seemed more resigned to rather than motivated by to challenge the status quo and so it may be something which could cause disaffection especially since he did not seem to have a very stable rooted identity.

This respondent (RW10) also states:

[…] Most people just think oh cause your black and you live in a rough area that you're automatically bad; you're in trouble involved with drugs and police.

This respondent (RW10) in his statement echoes the racist prejudicial stereotype thesis regarding young black men in society as has been mentioned by other respondents in this section of the chapter, which has been theoretically rehearsed. He does not mention anything in relation to how this prejudice affects him either positively or negatively so it could just be a general statement or it could be that he is resigned to the status quo. He does not have a positive learner identity, but comes from a two parent family background of Caribbean heritage and was born in the UK. It doesn't seem as though this child has a particularly disciplined structure at home and confesses that he is lazy at school, so he doesn't seem to be very motivated in his studies and doesn't have any personal statements of success or ambition to change the status quo so I would suggest that this respondent seems more resigned to racism than anything else.

Group 3: Respondents who made general Comments on Racism

This respondent (HO18) in relation to being black states that:

of being black, there are good ways and there are bad ways, like good ways portraying a different image that is held towards stereotypical black person, and obviously the bad ways of a stereotypical black person, crime violence and all of that so yeah that's what being black generally means to me.

This respondent (HO18) explains that there are different ways of being black, that there is the route of confirming the negative stereotypes that society assigns to you or there is the route of challenging these stereotypes by presenting a different image, which may help to change the way that society see's black people and young black men in particular. This respondent in data used in a separate chapter, states that he is someone who follows the positive route and that there is no way that he would ever consider the negative stereotypical route. This suggests that he wants to challenge society's stereotypes of young black men and be successful; this also fits into Sewell's thesis that racism is a surmountable barrier for those whose identity incorporates discipline and hard work. This respondent has a positive learner identity and is top of his classes, he also has a sense of the cane piece mentality through his parents, both of which are indigenous Africans whom provide a very strict disciplined family background, he also has a very rooted black African identity that is orientated around the cultures of his parents respective African countries. Again in this case it seems as though identity

trumps racism and actually uses racism as a motivational factor to achieve excellence.

This respondent (TL17) states:

> [...] **Some people have the wrong perception of young black males in groups, and they could just be friends but some people automatically have the wrong concept of doing, or being around you and there, you automatically feel a bit awkward sometimes, and I never really feel awkward going to other places but sometimes you just see some slight looks sometimes, you don't feel out of place but it doesn't feel very comfortable. The media is just, like you can change it but you need a lot of work to change it, and it is not very easy, it won't be very easy to change, unless people are more co-operative in the communities, and don't just believe that everyone is all the same branded everyone the same labels and that so yeah**

This respondent (TL17) states that society stereotypes groups of young black men as deviant, when the group could just be a bunch of friends innocently hanging out. He goes onto say that sometimes as a young black male he gets slight looks that make him feel uncomfortable as if he is being stereotyped as a negative element of society and that the media are a part of this with their projection of negative images of young black men. He says that one could change the media and society but that this would not be easy unless the communities became more co-operative. The section of this statement (TL17) that highlights the topic of societies inherent prejudice of young black men has been theoretically rehearsed in relation to Bell (2003), Gilroy (1987) Solomos (1988, 1991) and the road culture theorists (Briggs, 2009; Dedman, 2011; Gunter, 2008; Gunter & Watt, 2009; Ilan, 2012; Reynolds, 2013). The respondent (TL17) goes on to say that the status quo could be changed but that this would be a hard thing to do, which doesn't make explicit whether he might be resigned to the status quo or whether he sees it as an opportunity to do well. His family, especially the male elders in his family have encouraged him to achieve regardless of the racist barriers in society, he also seems to have a balanced identity and he applies himself to his studies though he is not top of his classes. It would be conjecture for me to suggest what this piece of data indicates in terms of the link between this respondent's identity and his achievement levels in school. There is however more evidence here of the racist nature of British society in relation to young black men.

Respondents who did not Comment on Racism

65% of respondents did not provide data in this section of the chapter; ten respondents from this 65% have provided data in other sections of this racism chapter relative to their

heterogeneous social experience and their parent's social experiences. Three respondents from this 65% who did not provide data in this section of the chapter are actually a group who have not provided data anywhere in this chapter. The first of these respondents (SA1) doesn't focus on racism at all and in fact renounces it, this respondent (OWJ3) comes from an affluent middle class family background where both parents are successful professionals and where racism is not an important part of his or his parents experience and the final respondent (LLC14) just doesn't seem to identify with racism at all even though he does not have a positive learner identity, is from a Caribbean heritage single parent background and has poor socio-economic status, this is as well as me asking him several questions on racism, so this respondent is an anomaly, which I cannot immediately make sense of.

Conclusion

So to conclude 35% of my sample provided data on the criminal stereotyping of young black men within British society. 10% provided data that perceived racism as something that could be transcended; both of these respondents were of African heritage, had cane piece mentalities and were high achievers. 15% of respondent's provided data that appeared to be resigned to racism, all three of these respondents had negative learner identities are British born and have Caribbean heritage. Finally 10% of respondents made general statements about racism, which were not linked to their respective learner identities.

So in concluding this section of the chapter the trend of positive learner identities being linked with positive statements about racism and general statements about racism and negative learner identity respondents being linked with negative statements about racism and general statements about racism continues here.

Racism and Policing

Introduction

This section of the chapter focuses on data that states that police racially profile young black men disproportionately to other racial groups. I discuss this data in relation to statistical evidence. This section of the chapter is yet again very small and so organisationally I have decided again not to divide my respondent statements into different genres because in this case there are only two negative statements about racism, which obviously belong to the same genre, which is racism as an insurmountable

barrier.

Respondent Data

The data below talks about experiences and perceptions of police prejudice and begins with this respondent (TA15) thus:

[…] A black person, if there was some type of trouble on the street say involving white people and the black people was there, they would most probably be approached by the police first.

A conversation between this respondent (TA15) and myself closely ensues:

TA15) Yeah like stuff such as like your parents will tell you certain things, but your not exactly going to follow it straight away until you learn it for yourself, like I was stopped and searched because a firework was let off but you were surrounded by, there was a few black people but the rest of them was Latin but straight away we was the first persons they spoke to and the first people searched and put in the back of the van to be searched and stuff.

TA15) But at the same time the actual people that did have the fireworks, were the South American people but…

R) They came to you first because your black and they thought you must be the source of the trouble?

     TA15) Yep.

The first respondent (TA15) explains how he and his friends were stopped and searched by police because a firework had gone off in a crowd that was made up of people predominantly of South American/Latin descent and that despite there only being a handful of black people there, the police chose to stop and search the respondent and his friends when it was someone out of the south American crowd that had set off the firework. So the issue here is with police automatically assigning blame to the small group of black male youth that were present as opposed to the larger more plausible group of Latin Americans, this issue can also be linked back to the black criminal stereotype that was pervasive in Britain after post-war black immigration and was linked directly to the street crime phenomenon of 'mugging' (Solomos, 1988). In this case perhaps road culture aesthetics played a part in the stereotypical actions of the police or perhaps it was enough for my respondent and his friends to simply be young black men in order for deviance to be implied, either way racial prejudice appears to be central here, which fits in with Bowling and Phillips (2007) thesis that stop and search procedures carried out by the police are disproportionately targeted at young black men especially and that

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government legislation governing police powers are not powerful enough to stop illegitimate stop and search procedures carried out by the police on young black men where the stimulus is likely to be racial prejudice. Bowling and Phillips also highlight the fact that black people are statistically much more likely to be stopped and searched by police than white people and are more likely not to be given a reason for being stopped and searched than white people. The opposing argument here is that there is a road or street culture of gang membership and socialisation that is prominent in the UK and although there is a big difference between the trend of road or street socialisation and gang membership the two can sometimes fuse and then diffuse intermittently though there is usually a difference between hard-core road or street gangsters and those who socialise in a road or street environment which can sometimes be unavoidable depending on one's socio-economic circumstances. The point is that it could be argued that perhaps police have a right to be cautious of black youths that they suspect may be a part of this black subcultural group, which does have links to violence and petty crime (Briggs, 2009; Dedman, 2011; Gunter, 2008; Gunter & Watt, 2009; Ilan, 2012; Reynolds, 2013). Sewell (2009) also argues that a lot of young black men are recruited into gang membership and then you have Mirza (2010) who suggests that we live in a post racial Britain of equality and who rejects the thesis of racial inequality. However the data clearly states that my respondent and his friends were not deviants on the night in question when police stopped and searched them and that there were much more suspicious suspects at the scene, which should have been observed, which suggests prejudice.

This respondent in relation to his above statement and others that he has made in other sections of this chapter appears to be neutral regarding the status quo of British racism, that is his statements appear to be general statements in that he doesn't appear to be either resigned to this racism or motivated positively by it, in short his learner identity doesn't seem to be linked to racism in any way. His family background, which is a single parent, low socio-economic, Caribbean heritage family background headed by a female, places the odds on this child having a negative learner identity but there is no qualitative evidence for this.

This respondent (MJ13) also states that:

[…] Police stop me for no reason, because I'm black and I'm wearing a hoodie and that yeah.

A conversation between this respondent (MJ13) and myself now ensues:

R) Ok, do you think being black gets you into trouble with teachers?

MJ14) Um cos I go to a multi-racial school I wouldn't say it gets me into trouble with teachers, but I'd say outside of school then, if I am with a group of black boys and we saw another group of a different race, we would say yeah if police was going past us they would rather discriminate us black boys than the other group.

R) Ok, do you think that being black is hard work sometimes in society do you think it's a hard job being a black boy in society?

MJ14) It can get a bit tough at times, walking down the road, and then yeah you get people watching you, like you get the police watching you, they in the car, they staring at you, watching your every move yeah.

R) There is a lot of surveillance for black boys then?

MJ14) Yeah there is a lot.

The second respondent (MJ13) suggests that there is disproportionate surveillance targeted at black boys and himself in particular and suggests that if there is a group of young black men on the street together that they will be discriminated against by the police. However, though this may be the case as we saw in relation to the previous respondent (TA15), this respondent as will be discussed in length in a separate chapter is deeply embedded within the negative aspects of road culture and associates with friends who carry weapons and look for violent conflict with other gangs and so in this case the police surveillance on this respondent may well be justified. This pupil does not have a positive learner identity and is without parental discipline as his mother cannot contain him, his identity is unstable and he is susceptible to hyper-masculinity. He (MJ13) also mentions elsewhere that he gets distracted by what's going on, on the road and that sometimes by the time he gets to school he has lost his focus. This respondent is a classic case of what Sewell (1997, 2009, 2010) highlights as the central issue at the heart of black male underachievement, a lack of parental discipline and the susceptibility to gang membership. Here we can clearly see the link between identity and achievement, the preoccupation of this respondent with road culture and the perceived racism of police surveillance, which perhaps at times there is, but the focus is on a system that has fundamentally failed him and which he does not have the tools to challenge, which is where I again highlight the national curriculum as a means by which to educate and root the dispossessed and disorientated within a more stable identity of black cultural orientation.

Conclusion

So to conclude only 10% of my sample gave data on police prejudice, of this 10% one respondent (TA15) provided data that was a general statement of racism and the other respondent (MJ13) provided data that was a negative statement of racism, this respondent (MJ13) also seemed resigned to the racist status quo and his data suggests that perhaps the police surveillance in his case was maybe warranted as this respondent is engaged in gang activity. The 90% of my sample who did not provide data in this section of the chapter simply had not had any experience of perceived racism and police interaction.

Three respondents (SA1, OWJ3, LLC14) out of this 90% cohort have not provided data on racism in any section of this chapter, the profiles of which I have outlined above.

Racism and Reason

Introduction

In this section of the chapter I will be discussing three respondent's data. The reason that it is only three respondent's data is highly significant in that these respondents were the only ones who were able to identify racism in reason, which is arguably an extremely complex and advanced concept for a child to grasp especially since blackness is a fragmented and ambiguous concept in itself, especially in post- modern times. This ability to conceptualize and articulate blackness in terms of ontological sensibility is elusive even amongst adults and so what I am trying to articulate here in terms of these respondent's data is that it appears as if they are unique in their ability to articulate racism in terms of reason.

Discussion

My respondent (AD12) in describing his ontological nature as a black person states the

following:

AD12) If I describe it, its like is being black is like there is a power inside of me that I have to unlock in order to achieve, if you know what I'm saying.

The discussion between the respondent (AD12) and myself (R) in respect of the rejection of the African or Black ontological self by society ensues:

R) […] Do you find that society in a way, do you find that society in a way is scared of that inner power, is there like a knowledge that this inner power, you know we don't understand

it, you know we don't understand what it is, its not the way we feel so therefore if we sense any of that blackness then we are shutting up shop?

AD12) Yeah, yeah.

R) So then is that the new form of racism then, that they are experiencing, its no longer skin colour?

AD12) Yeah

R) But its rejection of that inner feeling?

AD12) Yeah

R) Right, ok so really an end to racism would be acceptance of that?

AD12) Yeah who we are.

R) And exploring what that means and teaching black kids what that means and accepting that in society?

AD12) Yep definitely.

I discuss the above data in terms of racism in reason because rejection of the articulation of the African ontological subject or the rejection of the conversion of the African ontological into the African epistemological is a rejection of black or African-centered reason by racist powers that seek the displacement of the black vernacular so that it can be replaced by the prevailing dominant white narrative. This then, could be linked to the argument that I present below in relation to the tension that exists between the Kantian Philosophical theory of reason and the diverse Philosophical theory of reason championed by Eze (2008). This rejection of the black ontological and epistemological universe then, signals the death of Black cultural freedom of expression, which transcends euro-centric reason, euro-centric reason serving an agenda of white supremacy. This rejection of the individual's constitution or as the respondent (AD12) stated of "who we are" is a rejection of the individual's reason for living.

This respondent (AD12) is interesting because he is able to describe his Black ontological self, also in data used elsewhere he acknowledges that he is culturally disorientated and needs to be orientated through black history, he identifies this elusive knowledge as his primary concern in relation to his identity which I will properly touch upon when I discuss issues around the national curriculum in a separate chapter. He also highlights racism as an exclusionary force, which is highly problematic especially in school. This respondent is clearly susceptible to racism and there appears to be a link here between a culturally

disorientated unstable identity and the effects of racism. The disorientation that I mention in regard to this respondent is despite him having strict parents and appearing to be socially disciplined as far as he would not do anything to upset either of his parents, which suggests that even with a fairly disciplined family background one can still be left exposed to cultural disorientation if the cultural resources of the family background are not rich enough to provide a holistic black identity, which does not seem to be an issue when it comes to the African members of my sample, especially those born and partly schooled in the countries of their ethnic origins. This respondent for the reasons I have discussed above does not have a positive learner identity, which he attributes directly to racism.

Respondents who made General statements About Racism

This respondent (HO18) in relation to the racist perception of black people in terms of the reasoning behind their cultural expressions, states the following:

> **Yeah I do think there is something unique there because like going back to the culture its sort of like, how do I put this, the fact that it is very, very different and abstract to the rest of society and I think it gives it a very unique kind of original flavour and obviously black people generally, are perceived as having a lot of rhythm and stuff like that, I think it comes from, the rest of society looking at black people in a different way generally anyway, so I would say that, cos we are seen very differently to the rest of society.**

This respondent makes the point that Black people are seen very differently from White people within British society and refers to the perception of this society that black people have a lot of rhythm, which refers directly to a dominant theme regarding the ontological nature of black people, their consciousness, their worldview and ultimately the reason or rationale behind the rhythmic cultural expression. The respondent makes clear that black people are seen as very different within British society, which suggests that the rhythmic cultural expression in question is beyond or transcends the consciousness or reasoning of the Anglo-Saxon indigenous population of Britain. This perceived Afro- centric/ Euro-centric divide in consciousness is a potential source of racism represented by cultural difference. This racism could be theoretically rooted in the deductive transcendentalist Philosophical discipline of reason championed by Kantian theory. Kant theorised in his seminal work, 'The critique of pure reason', that the purist form of reason comes from dispassionate deductive logic, a deductive logic that was claimed could map the reality of the external world, that is the world that exists externally of the mind. The inference here

then, is that only a particular brand of deductive logic is capable of knowing reality. This assumption precludes the possibility of alternative ontological realities and thus of legitimate epistemological cultures that are rooted in these different ontological realities, such as the dominant rhythmic theme that belongs to the African worldview and African-centered cultures that exist across the African continent and across the African Diaspora. So when the respondent (HO18) states that black people are seen very differently within British society the suggestion appears to be one of exclusion that black people are a mysterious and culturally inferior racial group who lack reason altogether because the Philosophical genre of reason has been monopolised by euro-centric minds who refuse to accept the human principle of error in reason. The fact that we cannot transcend the vernacular, the vernacular that we choose to represent our ontological selves, our consciousness, our souls, is significant of a gap in consciousness or a conscious gap, which constitutes the diverse spectrum of vernacular cultures that make up the planet, which also represent the diverse planetary spectrum of reason (Eze, 2008). I would go on to cautiously suggest that it is perhaps this tension between a transcendentalist philosophy of reason and a diverse Philosophy of reason that my respondent could be highlighting in the above statement when he refers implicitly to the black and white dichotomy of race relations within British society.

In relation to the actual respondent statement here I would suggest that it is a general statement of racism because it is not indicative of a learner identity status. This respondent has a positive learner identity and is a high achiever and so it seems as though the above statement is a general observation.

This respondent (MJG19) also states:

Yeah because it's just like how, like a lot of black people do a lot of gestures while their speaking and things and I think it comes back to like, like my sister she studies anthropology so where it all comes back to how you perceive different things, like things that, that some black people would say metaphors and things would make White people think that they're a bit mad but they're not it's just the way that, cause that isn't something that a White person would say so it's just what, it's just all the way its perceived I think yeah.

This respondent statement also appears to be linked to the theoretical tension that exists between the transcendentalist and diverse Philosophical theories of reason as I have discussed at some length directly above in relation to Kant (cited in Gava, 2011) and Eze (2008). This statement on racism is intrinsically linked to reason, because it highlights

polarised reasons for doing things such as the frequent use of metaphors that exist in black vernacular cultures and gesticulation, which is a dominant part of black cultural expression, all of which, according to my respondent could be seen as 'mad' by white people, that is, these black cultural forms of expression transcend the limitations of euro-centric consciousness, consciousness being the reservoir of reason. The actual statement made by this respondent is a general one, as with regards to racism being embroiled within Philosophical disciplines of reason, because it doesn't implicate learner identity status. This respondent also has a positive learner identity and doesn't appear to be resigned to racism in any way.

Conclusion

In summing up this section of the chapter then, only 15% of my sample provided data for this section of the chapter this is because the subject of philosophy and specifically the nature of 'being' or the ontological question, is not an easy one to answer in relation to yourself, especially in terms of the 'black self' because of the fragmentation of black culture and its hybrid nature, which is an inherent characteristic of the African Diaspora. Going on then, to juxtapose this 'Black self' against a racist, predominantly White society like Britain, I would suggest takes a high level of bravery to do because of the 'double game' that is in play, which is that racism has defined the characteristics of the African or Black man through its essentialist racist vernacular and so in rejecting racism black people also have to renounce the essential characteristics of themselves and their culture in order to avoid being trapped within an essentialist racist white vernacular that has coded the black temporal and spatial landscape. In addition, especially amongst the African members of my sample who have positive learner identities and who are rooted within their cultural identities, race tends not to be of central importance as it may be to others who are still searching for their identities and who seek black historical and cultural facts to complete the jigsaw puzzle of self. So I would suggest that both of these issues help to explain why only 15% of my sample provided data in this section of the chapter, though there is one respondent of African origin who provides data here who is very rooted in his identity and who is a top achiever, however perhaps the fact that he was born in this country helps in terms of him having a grasp of race relations in Britain.

Again there are three members of my sample (SA1, OWJ3, LLC14) who have not provided data in this section who have not provided data anywhere in this chapter in relation to racism, the reasons for which I have discussed above.

Although this section of the chapter, which I have called racism and reason is not a dominant theme amongst my twenty respondents I still felt that it was a minor theme worth discussing because of its presence not only in the literature but also in the media at the moment in relation to the recent jihadist attack in France, which has opened up a huge racially charged debate around human reason, human culture and religion.

The trend of negative learner identity respondent's not making positive statements about racism has been maintained here and so has the trend of positive learner identity respondents not making negative statements about racism.

Finally my suggestion that the three above respondent statements (AD12, HO20, MJG19) are linked with the tension between two Philosophical disciplines of reason is a tentative one, a possibility, which should be read critically and with caution, the ultimate point I try to make is that until the freedom of worldly reason is humbly embraced in a convivial spirit, racist oppression will linger on because of those who cannot accept the human principle of error in reason and insist on cloaking the world in the darkness of their perceived objective vocation.

Conclusion of chapter

In concluding this chapter then, I have tried to construct an argument for the existence of British racism at a super-structural level and in so doing have tried to highlight some of its constituent parts. All of these constituent parts of racism can be seen as being coded through the white vernacular, which feeds our conception of the past, present and future in order to keep us from thinking organically, that is outside of the constraints of a white narrative that has architected a global simulation of reality, a white fantasy world where reality through diverse reason is void so as to prevent the rupturing of the white coded matrix (Eisenstein, 2004).

85% of my sample has given evidence supporting the fact that there is racism within the super-structure of British society. The evidence given by the sample has been in support of the existence of racism in the different structures that make up British society, this evidence reflects their personal experiences and parental upbringing, namely in education, the police force, the employment market and wider domestic social life. The point here has been for all of the data used for all of the individual points made, to be seen as one piece of evidence, supporting the existence of racism within British society as

a whole and how this has been perceived by my black male participants, the significance of which, is directly linked to how my sample apply themselves to their studies whilst living within a racist society, the ultimate question which this chapter poses, is do the sample sink or swim whilst burdened with British racism and what black cultural identities are more likely to lean toward either direction of success or failure.

This will become much clearer in the final chapter, which will discuss the different learner identities among my sample shedding more light on the significance racism has in relation to these learner identities.

Mezzo Objective: The Objective Structure of Secondary School

The Curriculum

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the exploration of whether there is exclusion by white hegemonic forces of black student cultures from their schooling, which could potentially be linked to national curriculum policy. The focus of this chapter is issues around the need for black history intervention within the history classes of my sample, issues that could potentially be linked to the national curriculum quota for black history provision. This chapter is divided into three respondent groups, the first group are respondents who want a potential curriculum intervention, the second group are respondents who do not want a potential curriculum intervention and the third group are respondents who impartially can see a need for a potential curriculum intervention. The data shows that 65% of my sample either want a black historical-cultural curriculum intervention personally or can objectively see a need for such an intervention. If I combine this percentage with those respondents who want to be taught more black history during Black History Month then the percentage of my sample who think in one way or another that there should be more black history taught at the sample school stands at 70%, which of course is the majority of my sample. Within this 70% cohort there are both respondents with negative learner identities and positive learner identities, those with positive learner identities, the majority of which were born in the UK, may well need to be taught more black history to root themselves culturally as their positive learner identity status appears to be based on other factors such as, male family role models, two parent family background and strong matriarchal discipline. This leaves 30% of my sample that either does not want more black history taught at the sample school or who did not provide any data in relation to this issue. The majority of this 30% cohort have positive learner identities and have a strong cultural rooting, several of who were born outside the UK in the countries of their ethnic origin.

I argue within this chapter that a black historical-cultural intervention may be helpful in terms of helping to construct a stable black identity by providing a historical vernacular of black experience, which may help to answer certain crucial ontological and epistemological questions regarding existence. I argue that perhaps history provision within the national curriculum quota may be a little narrow in terms of its black historical content and that white supremacy could be guilty of editing the black historical narrative

so that it fits within the world created by euro-centric hegemony, thus omitting the story of how white hegemonic power came into being and the organic histories that existed before its entrance onto the world stage. All of these issues or themes are all linked to the main theme, which is the need for a black historical-cultural intervention for those respondents who are not as culturally rooted, as they would like to be. They are issues that in my view lose their meaning if quantified individually, though I do attempt to discuss the issues, in the above order, as much as possible. I also argue that the majority of the respondents who either do not want a Black historical-cultural curriculum intervention or who did not comment on the issue at all have positive learner identities and a strong cultural rooting, which supports the argument of those respondents with negative learner identities wanting to be taught more black history and even those with positive learner identities who want to enhance their black historical knowledge because they are not as culturally rooted as some of the other positive learners, something which I have explained above.

Discussion

Group 1: Respondents who want a Black Historical-Cultural Curriculum Intervention

This respondent (AD12) in describing what he feels being black is states the following:

[…] Being black is like there is a power inside of me that I have to unlock in order to achieve […]

The respondent (AD12) and I (R) now engage in a small dialogue:

R) Because knowing who you are, that blackness that you describe inside, surely that's equally as important as your academic study, or what do you think, do you think there's…?

AD12) Its equally important cause like going on a computer you gotta learn how to use it before you can do it properly if you can understand what I'm saying so if you don't know who you are properly you don't know how to use it if you understand what I'm saying.

The respondent (AD12) and I (R) engage in another small dialogue here:

R) Ok, so even though you were raised in a well-structured house, your mum gave you discipline, you still needed the knowledge to sort of keep you, is it that you need the discipline and the knowledge?

AD12) Yeah you need both

R) You need the discipline structure and you need the knowledge of who you are and where you have come from?

AD12) Yeah

This respondent (AD12) as with regards to the importance of history goes on to state the following:

Yeah I do, as I said about black history, it's like it's not really important in this school but it is important to me as a black person, like we need to express it because I don't talk to a lot of um, Caucasian kids and they think that black history is not important to them and they shouldn't learn, but I think that you should learn it so we can understand more about who we are, and who we are in side.

This respondent (AD12) starts his interview by describing the nature of his 'being', which he describes as "a power inside me" and explains that he needs to unlock it in order to achieve, which I would suggest means that the respondent needs to first understand this ontological 'power' and then learn how to apply it pragmatically. He (AD12) then asserts that understanding self is equally as important as academic study and then reiterates that without this self-knowledge he cannot apply himself properly to what I would suggest is his academic pursuits. He then in a dialogue with myself suggests that as well as having a disciplined home environment it is also crucial for a black boy to be rooted in the knowledge of his culture in order to stay on the right track. He (AD12) then discusses the fact that Black history is absent from his secondary school education and interprets this as black history not being important at the sample school. He then states that despite the resistance from Caucasian children he has spoken to, black history needs to be taught so that black children ("plural") can understand themselves better and ultimately achieve an ontological knowledge of self. This statement and all the others from this respondent (AD12) that precede it in this section appear to be theoretically linked with what Okrah (2003: 24) believes are the crucial components in any philosophical conception of education regardless of the social setting, which are "ontological (reality), epistemological (knowledge) and axiological (values) implications." These components directly call for knowledge of self in order to understand ones conscious reality and intrinsically ones mode of knowing and therefore the nature of knowledge, which is annexed with what is, valued thus revealing the secret of one's motivations, which are the basis of culture. Also Bryan (2012) argues that if Caucasian children were to be exposed to the inner workings

of racism and how they may be implicated in it then this could help in challenging racist stereotypes. The possibility that black history is not being taught in any real depth at the sample school, 'history' described by Dei (2010:2) as:

"The totality of a peoples lived experience, encompassing issues of culture, economics, politics, development, and spirituality, which provide the cornerstones for discussing a people's struggles, challenges, failures, achievements, successes, and triumphs".

Suggests that black ontological and epistemological orientated knowledge might not be supported by the national curriculum and that as a result the basis of education in relation to the above respondent (AD12) and others is not being observed. Also in relation to Bryan (2012) the benefits of embracing a truly multicultural national curriculum, which incorporates an in-depth black historical component, especially for the white ethnic majority in the UK who may well be ignorant about their multi-racial and multi-cultural neighbors, could assist race-relations in this country, which is what I believe the respondent (AD12) was insinuating within his statement. This respondents (AD12) statement is good strength because it is consistent with the rest of the data that he has given in his interview, which is that racism negatively impacts on him because it works in a way that keeps him severed from a positive black cultural orientation that is consistent with his ontological and epistemological sensibilities. This respondent has a negative learner identity, which means that he does not have an identity that is conducive to the formal structure of secondary school educational achievement, which is why he needs a curriculum intervention that will provide the relevant knowledge to enable him to develop a stable identity, something, which some of the other respondents already have.

This respondent (TA15) also in relation to the importance of being taught black history, states the following:

TA15) I think it was Malcolm X that said if you don't know where you have come from then you won't know where you are going, something like that, but I don't think your past will exactly effect your future, especially something that you personally haven't even done, but at the same time it is good to know what you've gone through or your people have gone through, right so then you can relate that to the present day situations, such as let's say you're a lawyer, and you're in court they will relate what happened in the past like past case , to the present case, and they will pick out certain attributes that made the case go in certain way, or take out, or re-do the mistake, yeah re-do the mistake and learn from the mistake with their

history.

This statement by the respondent (TA15) also highlights the importance of the definition of history given by Dei (2010: 2), which I have quoted above. The legal protocol analogy by the respondent provides further clarity on the importance of history, he suggests that in the same way that a courtroom judge in the process of sentencing will rely heavily on the legal guidelines delineated by previous legal cases, in order to sentence fairly and within the constraints of the law, so too as humans we require the historical precedent vernacular in order to make sense of our culturally diverse experiences.

He goes on to state:

TA15) Yeah basically it's just as simple as, for instance what we learn in class, might be the present but then a moment on it would become the past, so we have to because stuff lives so quick like that, as if, the past knowledge that we have learnt, we have to then put it into play with what happens in the present, or what we are going to do in the future, and just use it as a tool I guess.

This statement is important because the respondent talks about history as a tool through which to understand the present and through which to plot our future trajectory. This suggests that without this historical precedent vernacular as a tool of orientation, we remain in a state of unstable disorientation; such is the phenomenon of badness within road culture (Gunter, 2008), which has psychological ties to the nihilistic politics, which circumscribed the slave plantations (Thompson, 1987). This above respondent (TA15) data shows that the respondent is aware of the need for a curriculum intervention. I have left this data in this section of the chapter because in data below from this respondent he clearly outlines the fact that he would like to have more black studies taught. This respondent data is weak because there is no consistent link between this data and the rest of the data given in his interview. The data provided by this respondent in the previous chapter on racism, did not highlight learner identity status and this data creates even further ambiguity around learner identity status.

The euro-centric nature of the mandatory school curriculum is alluded to by this respondent (AD12) who highlights Shakespeare as a core component of this curriculum and the fact that he cannot relate to it and would rather learn more about himself through African-centered studies, our dialogue follows:

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R) Yeah, so because you've got people like Shakespeare and you've got people, you know the top Aristotle one of the top European philosophers who can explain through their way of interacting with the world, what makes sense for them and they've produced art that makes sense of European consciousness, so then, if there was something in school which, African philosophy which explained the way and created art in the way our brains work, and what's inside?

AD12) Yeah

R) Then that would help you to know about who you are?

AD12) Yeah

R) Ok, so yeah there needs to be more of that in the curriculum, and that would hold your attention a lot more, and help you academically?

AD12) Yeah, we would more want to learn than, instead of oh forget this again Shakespeare again.

This respondent (AD12) in our dialogue expresses that he would like to learn more about black or African Philosophy in a bid to know himself better and that this would capture his attention a lot more than the continuous recycling of Shakespeare, which appears to contribute to this respondents disaffection. Graham (cited in Majors, 2001) in relation to African-centered learning, suggests that connecting the black child to the worldview, the consciousness of his ancestry can help to extend the latitude of consciousness and stem the tide of disaffection that appears to come from a euro-centric miseducation, which in relation to this respondent, seems to function in a way that maintains the separation of the black child from 'his culture', I say 'his culture' because I mean the culture that most connects with the ontological and epistemological sensibilities of the black child in question, allowing him to view the world critically from his own perspective, and It has been made quite clear that Shakespeare is not helpful toward this end (Swartz, 2013). This suggests that perhaps government education policy in relation to the national curriculum and, or, those interpreting the curriculum may have a particular vested interest in Shakespeare. This could be because of the marketization of the education system through school league tables based on high stakes exams and therefore educational triage to ensure high examination scores (Youdell, 2007). Sonia Nieto (cited in

Ladson-Billings & Gillborn, 2004: 182) also highlights the fact that there is often an incompatibility between the cultures of students and the content of the core curriculum. Ultimately the idea here then, is a pupil-centric education with the student as the point of trajectory for all curriculum subjects and pedagogic instruction, and not the potential enforcement of abstract euro-centric high status knowledge posturing as the universal diamond standard of education for all.

The strength of this (AD12) respondent's statement is strong because of its consistency with the rest of the data given by this respondent, which I have discussed above within this chapter.

This respondent (KM2) also comments on the rigid euro-centric nature of the curriculum and the fact that he is being taught knowledge that does not relate to him in any way and that does not interest him at all, our dialogue ensues:

R) And would you be less distracted if you were taught more about blackness

KM2) Yep, yeah, Id like to know more about black history but we don't have that source no more we just talk about world war one and world war two and all that.

R) And that doesn't interest you at all?

KM2) No not interesting at all, that's not my heritage that's not, that's not me that's someone else.

This respondent (KM2) data is very interesting because he continues the theme of disinterest in a mal- aligned curriculum, in this case taking the form of world war one and two history, however he goes on to say that, "that's not my heritage" and more significantly that "that's not me that's someone else". I find these statements profound because the respondent is directly equating his African-Caribbean heritage with himself as opposed to British heritage, he is identifying with African-centered sensibilities, which to some extent asks questions of Gilroy's (1993) notion that to be black is to be hybrid, to have a double-consciousness, a result of the European predatory enslavement period that created the African Diaspora as we know it in modern times. This issue is relevant because it is at the center of the debate as to whether an African-centered portion of the

curriculum would be relevant to Black British children (Graham, cited in Majors, 2001) who are well over four hundred years on since the beginning of the Atlantic slave trade where Europeans set about to destroy African culture and succeeded in many respects though not completely (Robinson, 1983).

The strength of this data is good because it is consistent with the rest of the data provided by this respondent (KM2). The data from this respondent (KM2) in the previous chapter showed that he perceived racism as a barrier to his academic success and therefore does not have a learner identity that is conducive to the formal structure of secondary school educational achievement. The fact that this respondent seems disaffected by the lack of studies connecting him with his heritage suggests that he is not culturally grounded in his heritage and therefore requires more knowledge, which is not the case for some of the other respondents, mainly those of African heritage and those born outside of the UK.

This respondent also complains about the rigidity of the euro-centric curriculum and its propensity to be repetitive. He states:

TL17) I've learnt about history in this country numerous of times could be the same things over and over again like for example the Tudors I've learnt in so many different years about the same thing and it gets drilled into your head about that but then they, its like you learn less about black history even though there was such a huge vast area of it.

A small-scale study by Harris & Reynolds (2014) showed that both the ethnic minority and white ethnic majority members of the sample were in favour of a more diverse curriculum that incorporated global histories. There was also evidence within the study, ironically, that ethnic minority students found history lessons that covered the Tudor and Victorian periods repetitive, similarly to this (TL17) respondent in my sample who I quote directly above. Within this study data was revealed that showed that ethnic minority students were frustrated at the fact that they were not learning any history, which told them something about their ancestors, something about their heritage, which could well be the same frustration that this (TL17) respondent is expressing when he refers to the lack of black history being taught even though there is such a vast area of it to be learnt. Ultimately Harris & Reynolds (2014) whilst airing on the side of caution regarding the studies external validity, suggest that the focus of the history curriculum is far too narrow,

concerned mainly with the national story, which is preserved pristinely within a vacuum, void of the context of global histories, which would help greatly in placing Britain within its true contemporary context. This would perhaps help all children to see the world in its true colors, through the race, class and gender struggles that transcend the white male ruling class historical narrative.

The strength of this data is good because even though this respondent has a positive learner identity, does not see racism as an insurmountable barrier, this positive learner identity comes from being raised with male family role models such as his father and uncle's in addition to being part of a single parent family headed by his mother who has a disciplined approach to parenting. This child was born in the UK and does not appear to have a strong cultural grounding, his positive learner identity seems to be the result of good parenting and so the fact that this respondent is bored by repetitious elements of the curriculum and is frustrated at the lack of black history being taught is not entirely inconsistent as this child's knowledge of self could still need development. This notion is confirmed by a very lengthy statement made by this respondent in relation to a lack of black history being taught in classes, within this section below.

The dialogue between this respondent (MJG19) and myself is also relevant, thus:

R) Ok, do you think there could be more knowledge, do you think there could be more taught about black knowledge do you think that there is a lack of black culture generally in this country, do you think there is a lack of knowledge do you think there needs to be much more knowledge on black culture and black history?

MJG19) I think yes 'cos there's, we cover a lot of things 'cos I do history at GCSE and we cover a lot of history but I don't understand how black history can't be covered 'cos that is such a significant part of history and like um, I think it is as signify cant if not more significant than the amount of time we spend on wars and talking about wars which we need to learn about but I think black history is very important especially for kids that haven't been taught it, they would want to know about their history and it was a big thing, 'cos we don't get taught anything about it.

This respondent (MJG19) comments that he cannot understand why black history cannot be covered as it is such a significant part of history. In answer to this in part, Osler (2009) in line with the argument by Harris & Reynolds (2014) delineates the British Labour government's political discourse around multiculturalism, patriotism and citizenship since

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1997 and links this discourse to the government's ideas around the teaching of history. Ultimately the link between the political discourses aforementioned and the government's idea of taught history is one, which finds a narrow national story of glorification desirable a grand narrative that is not put within the context of world histories that again is preserved within a vacuum. Gillborn (2014) highlights the current situation of the public war against multiculturalism and separate values as a moment of interest-divergence where the interests of the state diverge with the interests of racism, this debate has converged with the framing of white working class youth as the real victims of education inequality, which has led to multicultural education programs being widely abandoned in favour of special programs for poor white students (Gillborn, 2010). This political agenda of anti-multiculturalism has served to reject racial inequalities by creating a discourse of white victimhood, which takes black underachievement and by extension the need for more black history in the curriculum firmly off the agenda. Ultimately what Gillborn (2014) is arguing is that race equality policy is bound to white supremacist ambitions, which are achieved through interest divergence, which I have already discussed above, and interest convergence, which is when the interests of the state converge with those of ethnic minorities, where the government will conspicuously show support usually in the form of a lengthy report but will not implement real change, as was the case with the Rampton report (1981) and the Swann report (1985), which were entirely ignored. So it is both interest convergence and interest divergence strategies that are used to prevent effective racial equality policy from being implemented, in order to preserve the coding of the white supremacist matrix in which we live, where in-depth black history lessons remain elusive.

The strength of this data is good because this respondent also provides data about the need for more black history to be taught during Black History Month and voices a concern that the period for Black History seems to get hijacked by other agendas. This respondent (MJG19) was born in this country and is of Caribbean heritage, which suggests that he may want to know more about his culture as the Caribbean generation gap in the UK is much larger than other black ethnicities like black African for example where the culture is less dilute. So this respondent wanting to be taught more about black history is not inconsistent with the data collected.

This respondent (TA15) in relation to black history not being taught, states the following:

TA15) Yeah basically, how can I say this, we study pretty much about every civilization from every part of the world, but the one thing we don't really touch on is, stuff about Africa and stuff about the Caribbean and stuff about black people, and that, I think that is missing like a big part of history.

This respondent (TA15) also appears frustrated and confused at what he perceives as a lack of black history being taught within the classroom of the sample school. This can be linked with Harris (2013) who highlights a tension in policy discourse around diversity in history within the national curriculum. On the one hand you have the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2007b: cited in Harris, 2013:
402) outlining a very broad quota regarding the nature of diversity that should be incorporated and taught within national curriculum history lessons and then you have a political discourse, which undermines this quota in favor of British history lessons that present a very narrow historical context in which Britain is to be viewed. Once again the political imperative of a British 'island story' is expressed as a government institutional custom. This narrow historical view, which presents liberty and democracy as an exclusive set of British values is meant to facilitate social cohesion in the wake of terrorist activity in Britain, to promote a homogenous British identity. However as we can see from the above quote by my respondent (TA15) and others in this chapter, this idea of a unified harmony that is meant to emerge from social cohesion, through a homogenous British identity that suckles contently on neo-liberal mono- cultural British values that excludes the multifarious historical projects of the globe including Africa and the Caribbean outside of Europe's hyper-active perversion, appears to be a little too ambitious (Giroux, 1992). So we can see from Harris (2013) that there is a policy discourse paradox in play, which ultimately is at odds with black history having a central role within the national curriculum, which fits in with Gillborn's (2014) theory of white supremacy in relation to race equality policy. This helps to explain why this respondent (TA15) may not be getting taught about black history at the sample school. Also, to reiterate, the data from this respondent (TA15) and others in this chapter suggest that the idea of social cohesion through an exclusive British 'island story' which only incorporates other parts of the globe in relation to imperial ties through empire, may well be a little too ambitious as the data here suggests the need for a mutual respect of historical cultures, which is reflected in the history curriculum through an ideology of inclusion.

The strength of this data is good because it is consistent with the other statement that this respondent makes in relation to Black History Month in the next chapter, where he

talks personally about feeling cheated by the fact Black History Month was used to talk about the Holocaust instead of Black historical events. Therefore this respondent has expressed that he should be getting taught Black history in both the curriculum and during Black History Month, which indicates that he may not be culturally grounded and therefore may have a negative learner identity.

This respondent (TL17) in relation to whether there could be more taught about black history and culture at the sample school, states the following:

R) […] Do you think there is a lack of knowledge about what being black means in general, I mean do you think you could know a bit more, do you think knowing a bit more about black culture would help you, and do you think that there is, do you think that knowledge about black culture, do you think there is enough knowledge about black culture in general, in school and generally do you think there could be a lot more knowledge around about black culture and black heritage and where black people have come from and black philosophy and black you know kind of cultural things, do you think that could be much more implemented within school and that could make a bigger difference and do you think that there is a lack generally of knowledge about what black culture is?

TL17) […] It's like you learn less about black history even though there was such a huge vast area of it and they could be from slavery we didn't really learn much from that and we've learnt about the basic the main people like Martin Luther King and all those other big name people but that's just in recent history and we aint learnt about things from the 20th, or 19th century and the 18th and going back and we don't really understand why a lot of things were done we were just taught how it happened and how things have changed how we are now, and how they could have been if all that didn't happen. We learn about European explanations of different countries going to say, going to Australia and taking over but we don't learn about how it was before they got there and we don't learn about what was it like, how the people were, cause obviously there are still Aborigines there but their just a very small population of Australia and you don't get to see how they are and even now you don't really get to see how they are because it's just it's a lot of white culture there and there are a lot of Asian culture there but you don't see the original people there and the same could be said for South Africa and say I don't know like Jamaica like we were taught about people who were moved from Africa to Jamaica but we weren't told what was there before cause I really do not know what was there before the Africans were moved there so I would like to know about that and before Europeans got to Africa what was there and how the life was and how different was it from Europe and the Americas there are huge differences but we really only learn about European history like before the Spanish and Portuguese got to south America I don't know what was

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there before we just know that there was Indians there but not about what the life was there so I think the education could be better but I don't know if the teachers themselves know what was there before so that's what I would really like to know really so that's how it can be improved.

This respondent (TL17) who I have already quoted previously in this chapter in relation to a repetitive euro-centric curriculum and a lack of black history, goes on here to express himself in more depth in terms of what is missing from his taught history classes. He explains that only recent black history such as the civil rights struggle of Martin Luther King get taught as well as the period of black African enslavement, which he didn't learn very much from. He further expresses that he doesn't seem to learn any history outside of Europe's involvement that is before Europe's colonial encroachment on the rest of the world, he mentions learning about the European colonization of Australia but asserts that he wants to know about Australia before its colonization, he mentions the same thing in relation to South Africa, the Caribbean and the African continent as a whole. These sentiments are linked to Leonardo's (2002) thesis on whiteness and globalization, in that whiteness or a white supremacist ideology has partitioned the world through capitalist exploitation, which has been rationalized by racist mythology (Robinson, 1983). The rhizomorphic basis of capitalism then, is hyper-individualism and antagonism/racism, which an in-depth critical view of global history would expose, laying bare the "rickety premise upon which a false world of whiteness" (Leonardo, 2002: 119) has been built. It is also highlighted that whiteness chooses to view racial groups through their current ethnic moment and therefore as a historically fragmented phenomenon. This amnesia is necessary in order to prevent the need to look at the true historical formation of these racial groups, which would simultaneously reveal how white privilege came to be and therefore in opposition to that whiteness places a premium on a neo-liberal meritocratic ideology of a level playing field rooted in the present moment. Thus whiteness as Leonardo (2002: 126) states is both "fragmentary and fleeting", fragmentary because white supremacy has divided racial groups into discreet ethnic entities of individual significance, whose identities are linked to modern territorial borders in a world that has been divided and conquered. It is also fleeting because it must flee from its origin of racial violence. Ultimately, whiteness, according to Leonardo (2002: 127) "can only be concerned with how things are and not how they got to be that way". This view of white supremacy then, could explain why this respondent (TL17) may not be getting taught

about black history before Europe's entrance into Africa, Australasia and the Americas, because this history would exist outside of the master white narrative in an organic space, which may challenge this narrative thus unsettling the coding of white supremacy (Eisenstein, 2004; Swartz, 2013).

The strength of this data is good. I have discussed the reasons behind the strength of this data in relation to this respondent (TL17) above.

This respondent (TA15) in relation to knowledge of the contribution made by black civilization to the world, states the following:

TA15) I'm proud to be black, but I just don't think people recognize what black people have done for the world, what's actually been their role in certain developments that we just see as an everyday thing now, and yeah how we also shaped the world it wasn't just White people or Asian people or just other people, or south American people doing it and we actually played a role in making the world to be as it is today.

This respondent appears to be stating that knowledge of the black contribution to the world is missing. There are a couple of problems regarding this issue of black civilization and its place in world history.

The first is that even as a researcher I find this historical material difficult to come by, perhaps because as Robinson (1983) and Williams (1994) illustrate, Europe exerted huge energies in trying to destroy and erase African Civilization from world history, which included trying to claim Egyptian civilization for its own (Diop, 1989; James, 2002). However there is some material such as the Africana encyclopedia of the African and African American experience (Appiah & Gates, 1999) which has been designed with young readers in mind, as well as more advanced material (Walker, 2005) which is also excellent, however some of this material is not readily available and even if it was there is still the problem of it finding its way into the history classroom (Gillborn, 2014; Harris, 2013; Harris & Reynolds, 2014; Leonardo, 2002; Osler, 2009).

The strength of this data is good because this respondent (TA15) talks about the need for more black history to be a taught during black history month and voices a concern about Black History Month being used to promote other agendas. It appears as though this respondent who is UK born and of Caribbean heritage may not be rooted culturally and therefore desires more black knowledge.

Group 2: Respondents who do not want a Curriculum Intervention

SA1) Well at first I had come yeah I thought people are not going to like me because I am black, but when I came I changed my mind totally because given people like white, Asian they all accept it. So I think it's alright, and that does not actually affect me though 'bout being black or anything, I'm just alright like. I think there's a conducive environment for me to just concentrate on what I want to do, yeah, so I don't think but there could be like, but no matter how like no one is perfect and nothing is I would say, not because something might be good, you can do something to make it better yeah, but to me it's alright.

R) Your education is just ok as it is?

SA1) Yeah.

This strength of this respondent's statement is strong because it is consistent with the rest of the data given by this respondent in his interview. This respondent made no comments on racism in the previous chapter, which was indicative of the fact that racism was not an issue for him, that his positive learner identity is such that he does not encounter any hostilities from teaching staff and has not experienced any racism in wider society either. He does not see racism as relevant to him in any way and is extremely confident in his ability to achieve highly as he was doing at the time of our interview. This fits in with this statement, which clearly states that the respondent does not see the need for any additional lessons focusing on black history or black culture, the respondent's agency is the status quo.

This respondent (LLC14) as with regards to more being taught in classes about black history and black culture, states the following:

I'm not sure, yes and no because considering that not all black boys are from the same back ground like different countries I mean like nationalities, I think that eventually there would be, it wouldn't work good because of now that there are loads of black boys that are racist towards each other but not as a serious racist just like jokes like your African your Jamaican your Ghanaian whatever, but I think that eventually that will just get out of hand and become a big problem, I'm not sure if teaching that type of thing in schools would be a good idea.

This respondent (LLC14) suggests that there is a situation of inter-ethnic consciousness, especially amongst African heritage and Caribbean heritage boys, which leads to playful racial banter. This respondent feels that if there was more taught about black history and black culture that this could exacerbate the situation of playful inter-ethnic banter and turn it into something more serious. Perhaps details of the African slaves that were sold by their countrymen in cahoots with Europeans, who went on to become black Caribbean slaves or other such details, which I can only guess at through conjecture.

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The strength of this data is weak at this point because it is the first piece of data from this respondent that has been used in this thesis. It is also weak because the statement in itself doesn't really tell a story about this respondent's learner identity status.

Group 3: Respondents who see a need for Black Historical-Cultural Curriculum Intervention in Relation to Others

This respondent (RW10) in relation to what being black is states the following:

> **[…] It just determines who I am like it lets you know your background basically, because without your background you don't know your history, if you don't know your history then you don't know much about yourself.**

The above statement by this respondent (RW10) about history being integral to knowledge of self, links directly with the definition of history by Dei (2010:2), which suggests that without the historical vernacular of a culture, which encapsulates the totality of a peoples lived experience, future generations cannot truly know themselves in relation to their lived experiences because the historical vernacular that plots the ontological and epistemological graph of experience is missing.

The strength of this respondent (RW10) data is weak because it does not clearly link with the rest of the data from this respondent's interview. The data given by this respondent in the previous chapter in relation to racism was a statement that acknowledged racism but which did not indicate how this racism affected the respondent. The data given here is similar to other data given in that there is awareness by the respondent that there is a need for additional black historical-cultural material within the curriculum, but no indication as to how he feels about such an intervention. In other words this statement by the respondent is not linked to his learner identity status.

This respondent (HI8) in relation to whether organic black historical knowledge could curb the allure of 'badness' and road culture generally, states:

> **I think it would definitely help people choose a different path, but I don't think it will make us more knowledgeable in school or completely eradicate that way of thinking, 'cos I believe no matter how well you have been brought up, no matter how much knowledge you have, I believe you are susceptible to people who influence you, I believe it can help definitely, 'cos me myself growing up in a household where I been taught my rights my wrongs and not to interact with**

people who may lead me down a bad path, that's helped me so I believe, it's helped me but it hasn't helped me not be influenced but it's helped me to be myself sort of thing and to be strong minded, so I think yeah of course it can help, but maybe not completely eradicate.

This respondent suggests that black historical knowledge could help people to choose an alternate path away from road culture, to make a more informed choice, I can only imagine through a better knowledge of self-due to knowledge of the black historical experience (Dei, 2010). However the respondent goes on to say that he doesn't think that such knowledge would make children more knowledgeable in school, which I assume means more knowledgeable in terms of the national curriculum and consequent exams. This is important because it indicates that black history is not central to the national curriculum and also that this respondent is focused on what is going to bring him success as opposed to black historical-cultural sympathies, which is indicative of the fact that this respondent is already culturally grounded within a fairly secure identity that is conducive to the formal structure of secondary educational achievement. However this respondent accepts that being knowledgeable will not entirely safeguard an individual from negative peer pressure and accepts that even he can be influenced but that his upbringing has helped him to be himself and to be strong-minded, which has kept him from harm. The strength of this data is good because it is consistent with the fact that this respondent is an A* pupil, comes from a very disciplined African and Caribbean heritage family background and has been given a sense of third world poverty and privilege in the UK by his Nigerian mother.

A dialogue between this respondent (LH9) and I, in relation to what role the school could play in helping to provide black children who have not been raised into a stable identity, with a stable positive learner identity begins here:

R) What would be the best way of getting some armor for these chaps that um… or ok because you know you did say at this age, the identity is semi set, so for those children who don't have that parental structure at home from a young age, do you think there is something we could give them in schools that would help those kids who don't have the family back ground at home to get what they need regarding their identity and knowledge of their identity in schools, could that help to set the structure if the parental structure is not there?

LH9) You can start of like discipline or teaching them about like culture, there cultural discipline or like again like, respect or given them like I think there most important thing is like, to give you a goal of life, like something in which is a goal in life which is the most important thing which when you've got a goal you won't let with your child hood like set like,

with the morals you've had as a child, with your goals it's, I think you need that, like give them a bit of goals and a bit of discipline that would be good.

This respondent (LH9) from his vantage point of a stable positive learner identity, which provides him with the necessary armor to resist negative peer pressure, suggests that teaching children with unstable identities about their culture is important as well as discipline and setting goals. I am discussing this data within this section of the chapter because the respondent suggests that being taught about ones culture is important, which is perhaps something that would be helpful if it was put in the national curriculum for those children who do not come from very disciplined or culturally rich family backgrounds and lack knowledge of self. The strength of this data is good because it is consistent with the rest of the data given by this respondent, as with regards to his family background and his positive learner identity.

Chapter Conclusion

So to conclude this chapter 75% of my sample provided data that fits within this chapter and 25% of my sample hasn't provided any data, which fits within this chapter. I divided this chapter into three different respondent groups; the first group consists of 50% of my sample that want an intervention in their history classes in the way of a more in-depth coverage of black history and culture, which could potentially be linked to an issue with the national curriculum guidelines on history provision. The second group consists of 10% of my sample that do not want a potential curriculum intervention and the third group consists of 15% of my sample who are only aware of a need for a potential curriculum intervention, without any personal preference.

I will now discuss the strength of the data of all the respondents whose data I did not highlight in the main chapter because of its similarity with the statements that I did highlight. The first of these respondents (AK11) out of the first group of 50% has good strength data because he expresses that he would be very interested in being taught black history and that he would be more motivated in such classes. This statement is consistent with the rest of this respondent's data, in that he seemed resigned to racism and saw it as a barrier, which impeded his studies, which suggests that he has a negative learner identity, which could be due to his disaffection in certain classes. It is also possible that this respondent (AK11) does not come from a culturally rich family background. The second respondent (JW4) provides good strength data because he talks about more black history being taught in school as a good thing predominantly for other black boys who are

maybe suffering from disaffection rather than in relation to him as he has a positive learner identity. He also makes another statement in his interview that more black history being taught at school would not really improve his level of achievement and that it would be far more beneficial to others. The majority of data from this respondent (JW4) is positive he renounces racism and says that he gets on well with teachers and explains that he is not influenced by peer pressure. This respondent (JW4) comes from a two-parent Caribbean heritage background and has a strong religious affiliation. However the fact that he thinks he can benefit from more black history and culture being taught within the classroom suggests that perhaps his home background is not as culturally rich as some of the other respondents and that perhaps its his two parent family of discipline and his religious affiliation that provide him with a positive learner identity rather than a strong cultural orientation. The third respondent's (MJ13) data has good strength because this child has expressed that he comes from an undisciplined family background and that he is involved with road culture and 'badness', which suggests that he is culturally disorientated and he actually states that black boys would calm down if they were taught more black history and that he himself would benefit from being taught more black history and would be more motivated in such classes. The Fourth respondent's (RW20) data was weak in strength because he stated that a potential curriculum intervention could help him to perhaps learn a little more about black history but this respondent was born and partly schooled in Jamaica and appears to have a very strong cultural rooting of discipline and states that it is almost impossible for negative peer pressure to affect him as he has a very stable positive learner identity. The fifth respondent's (JSM5) data is good strength because it links in with the fact that he thinks that society could benefit from learning more about black history and culture to help stop black stereotyping, he has also expressed in the previous chapter that he feels that black boys are stereotyped regardless of what they wear or who they are with or whether they have committed a crime, which suggests that he is resigned to racism in a way. His data in this chapter also states that he would like to be taught more about where he is coming from and his culture, which suggests that his not culturally rooted. He was born in the UK and comes from a single parent family background of Caribbean heritage, which may be linked to his lack of cultural rooting.

The 25% of respondents who did not provide data within this chapter all have positive learner identities except for one respondent (LB7) who has a negative learner identity, which is linked to his involvement in road culture more so than anything else and so black

history being taught in classes may not be as much of an issue as negative peer pressure. Three of these respondents (NS6, KP16, HO18) come from very culturally rich family backgrounds and have a strong cultural rooting and the other respondent (OWJ3) comes from a two parent high socio-economic background of discipline and has a liberal meritocratic ideology of achievement and so more black history in his classes may not be a priority for him.

Within this chapter there appears to be a link between having a negative learner identity and a desire to have more black history being taught in classes (AD12, AK11, KM2, MJ13, JSM5), however there are respondents who have positive learner identities who also want there to be more black history being taught in classes but these respondents (JW4, TL17, MJG19) are not necessarily culturally rooted, there appears to be other factors that have contributed to their positive learner identities, such as strong matriarchal discipline (TL17), a disciplined two parent family background (JW4, MJG19) and male family role models (TL17). There are also respondent's (TA15, RW20, LLC14, RW10) whose data in this chapter is ambiguous or weak in strength. There is a link between one respondent (SA1) who did not want a potential curriculum intervention and a positive learner identity, as this respondent was born and partially schooled in Africa and is very strongly rooted in his culture so much so that the status quo at the school is his agency he is not concerned with black culture or black history at all. Finally two of the three respondents (HI8, LH9) who were aware of a need for a potential curriculum intervention both have positive learner identities and both come from culturally rich family backgrounds and are culturally rooted, which is expressed through the data highlighted in this chapter.

Mezzo Subjective Structure

The School

Introduction

This chapter is called the Mezzo subjective structure because it focuses on the subjective elements of the sample school as a middle structure between the state and the individual. I have divided this chapter into two main sections, which are 'teacher racism' and 'school intervention'. Within the teacher racism section I discuss both those respondents who perceive teacher racism and those respondents who do not perceive teacher racism. Within the school intervention section of the chapter there are two subsections, the first subsection is Black History Month, where I discuss data in relation to respondent views on the sample schools investment in Black History Month. The second sub-section is orientated around the ACE & ASPIRE projects, where I discuss respondent views about these two school intervention programs. The data from this chapter shows that 42.5 % of my sample perceives teacher racism, and 17.5% do not perceive teacher racism and 40% of my sample did not provide data on teacher racism at all. My argument regarding perceived teacher racism is that it could be an issue especially for those pupils who have negative learner identities, the overall argument here is that teachers may have been institutionalised by white supremacy and thereby predisposed to prejudicial views of black students and their cultures. I also present the opposing argument based on the fact that only 42.5% of my sample perceived teacher racism, which is that teacher racism may not exist, it may be that teachers are rightfully disciplining black boys who are disruptive, rude and lazy (Foster, 1992; Sewell, 2010). My argument regarding those respondents who did not perceive teacher racism is that the majority of this group 12.5% have stable strong cultural identities, a disciplined home environment and have a hunger for academic success and so their identities are conducive to the formal structure of secondary school education in the UK and so they get on with their teachers perfectly well without friction. This hypothesis supports the theories of Sewell (2010) and Foster (1992).

The percentages for the Black History Month subsection are that 40% of my sample perceived the sample school as not investing as much as it should in Black History Month and 60% of my sample did not comment on Black History month at all. However this Black History Month subsection needs to be read as part of a wider need for black history to be taught at the sample school so if I combine the number of respondents who want more Black history in the curriculum with the percentage I have here for those who want

more black culture taught for Black History Month it means that 70% of my sample feel that there is not enough black history being taught at the sample school in one way or another. This I would suggest provides a more holistic view of what this data means. My argument regarding Black History Month is that it is possible that this unique month of the year is being hijacked by white supremacy, in that it is being divided up to incorporate other agenda's such the Holocaust, which denies Black History Month the independent urgency and attention it deserves. This notion is supported by the data, which suggests that the sample school in general lacks a black historical focus in its curriculum and during Black History Month. However I go on to argue that because the sample school has two Black intervention programmes in operation it may be felt that these programmes are all that is necessary to tackle Black male underachievement at the school and that as a result of this the curriculum is left untouched and Black History Month goes unnoticed. The percentages for the ACE & ASPIRE intervention programmes subsection are that 35% of my sample mentioned either one or the other of these programmes in relation to their education at the sample school and 65% of my sample made no reference to either of these programmes. My argument regarding these programmes is that they appear helpful to those respondents that attend them, however on their own, based on the combined data from the Black History Month subsection and the curriculum intervention section of the curriculum chapter, are not the entire solution though they do fulfil some of the key elements that are outlined in the good practice for black achievement literature (Demie, 2005, 2007; Demie & McLean, 2007; Rhamie & Hallam, 2002; Rhamie, 2006).

Teacher Racism

Discussion

Group 1: Respondents who Perceive Teacher Racism

A dialogue between this respondent (AK11) and myself in relation to perceived teacher racism, begins here:

R) Ok, would you say that um, does being black get you into trouble with teachers, and if it does get you into trouble with teachers, why do you think that might be?

AK11) Well I don't think being black will get you into trouble with teachers, but there is a lot of black kids that keep getting into trouble, and teachers think and aim at us thinking that oh we're the bad ones all the time and then after, we get the bad reports, then after it

seems like when they come to us, they don't really bother because, they just seem like we are just wasting their time. But when it's the other kids now they will go to them and they start thinking oh alright then they are going to listen, we should spend more time with them and then yeah.

R) So you think that really teachers can identify black pupils as being a waste of their time?

AK11) Yeah, I think that's true because when… I could do something bad, and then after that one teacher will have that impression of me with all the other black kids, and then it's just their attitude against them like and how they treat them.

R) So teachers can stereotype from one black person or black boys in this school black boy's behavior, teachers can use that one black boy's behavior and stereotype all black boys?

AK11) Yeah, I think that is how it is really from my opinion.

R) And how does that stereotyping and the way, that the teachers treat you, how does that make you feel towards your education, does that make you feel that, in those classes you can get ahead or does that distract you from your learning in that class?

AK11) Well it may do sometimes 'cos then I think what is the point of us bothering, because you try to put work in, you try to get help and there is like we don't get… no interest shown back so sometimes I wonder if there is no point to be honest.

R) So that makes you feel what's the point in trying if the teachers aren't going to support you?

AK11) Yeah, that's really it to be honest.

The concept of dysconscious racism (King, 1991) may be applicable here as it relates to teachers whose identities are embedded within normative white privilege, who themselves have been educated and molded by institutionally racist structures of white supremacy, who view the world uncritically through a master white narrative that has grafted a simulacrum of the past, the present and the future (Swartz, 2013; Eisenstein, 2004). This uncritical view of the world views race through a neo-liberal capitalist lens, capitalism being viewed through the Marxist canon as inevitable economic human development, which legitimizes white power and looks at racial inequality from a deficit perspective, which frames black boys in particular as problematic. Youdell, through her study (2003) highlights this issue within her notion of an 'identity trap', whereby the conspicuous elements of black youth subcultural identity such as signature types of behavior or slang, are a form of resistance to white cultural hegemony, and are also forms of cultural capital, which place these black boys at the top of a discursively constructed

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student- centric hierarchy. This Hierarchal black male performance that is discursively constructed as privileged within the social universe of students, is simultaneously discursively framed as deviant and a challenge to white authority by the school institution. It is this black male subcultural performance that is historically associated with the Dark Continent and by extension the black savage that is the white man's burden in a civilizing mission of the uncivilized. It is this racial mythology that Youdell (2003) suggests has been institutionalized within the school structure and that is being referenced dysconsciously in the discursive framing of black youth subcultural performance as deviant and anti-learning. This tacit agreement between teachers and their black male pupils could be the reason behind my respondents (AK11) perception of conflict between himself and his teachers, the perception that they stereotype him and other black boys and the perception that these teachers do not really seem bothered about his education. The opposing view of this respondent's data is that perhaps this respondent is not trying hard enough in class and is using his teacher as an excuse to underachieve, which is Sewell's (2010) thesis. It could also be the case that this respondent (AK11) and other black boys who are getting into trouble with teachers are being treated fairly by teachers based on their negative behavior, which is Foster's (1992) thesis. Based on the fact that only 32.5% of respondents perceived teacher racism the theoretic of Sewell (2010) and Foster (1992) is a possibility. The strength of this data is good because the majority of data from this respondent is about his resignation to teacher racism, racism within wider society and his need for black history to be taught in the curriculum, which supports his negative learner identity status.

A dialogue between this respondent (KM2) and myself in relation to the effect of negative teacher behavior on his academic achievement, begins here:

R) So you think your academic achievement is in some way, is affected by negative teacher behavior?

KM2) Yeah you could say that like sometimes, I'll have my hand up but they wouldn't want me to talk, like to say the answer, they will pick someone else, they'll pick a white boy or summit like that, summit silly like that, like it just puts your confidence down init like.

This respondent (KM2) states that he will have his hand up ready to answer a question and that the teacher will deliberately ignore him and ask a white boy to answer the question posed. It is possible here that the teacher in question may have dysconsciously categorized my respondent as having a negative learner identity because of his black

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posture (Youdell, 2003), which fits in with Youdell's (2004) theory and Rollock's (2007) findings that perhaps the teacher is excluding my respondent through the practice of educational triage, in that there may be some unique attributes that are perceived by the teacher as belonging to my respondent, which help to demarcate him as external to the realm of academic success and therefore not worthy of serious academic attention.

This respondent (KM2) in reply to whether being black gets him into trouble with teachers, states the following:

> **Yeah it does it does get you into trouble and because like for instance you could be wearing a hoodie in school and they probably think you're in a gang and all that and they just stereotype you and then when you tell them something they don't want to listen to you they think they're in the right and yeah.**

This statement by the respondent fits in with what Rollock (2007) documents regarding the association teachers make regarding black boys and sports apparel with hoods. The fact that teachers stereotype these black boys wearing this type of clothing as not 'ideal clients' (Gillborn, 1990) for exclusive triage regarding GCSE 5 A*-C achievement.

The dialogue recommences here in relation to a feeling of injustice at perceived teacher prejudice:

> **R) So do you have a strong sense of justice?**

> **KM2) Yep, yeah I'm forever talking.**

> **R) So you talk quite a bit?**

KM2) Yeah I talk to be heard like on occasions when people telling something, I'll just tell them, like no it's not and use my mouth as a little weapon init.

> **R) To defend?**

KM2) Yeah it's a defensive thing, if they're telling me something, and I know I aint dunnit, and I know that I'm right, and like I know I know I'm not guilty or summit like that, I'm just going to use my mouth and tell them straight. I aint gunna be quiet and like yeah I dunnit, I dint do nothing so I'm going to tell you I dint do nothing like yeah.

> **R) So you feel that teachers are basically trying to disrespect you?**

KM2) Yeah it's a disrespect thing, and like they don't believe in us they don't believe in us at all certain teachers.

He (KM2) goes on to state that:

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[…] everything what is distracting me from academics is the lack of co-operation from certain teachers, it's like as they say I'm mouthy init, but I'm only mouthy when I know I'm in the right, and like they're telling me im in the wrong, and I know that I'm right, so I'm going to put up a little fight like just to be heard, them ones there.

He (KM2) finally concludes:

[…] The way we talk is cause we got brought up behind a culture innit so we talk differently compared to them like for example we could say the same thing and get in trouble but the white boy would probably get let off and like the black boy will probably get in trouble cause probably say your rude you're doing this your talking in a bad manner your talking loud but we're not we just talking to project our voice for them to hear us not to feel undermined and all that. Yeah about that.

This respondent (KM2) states that he is 'forever talking' in defence of his liberties against teachers who wrongly pinpoint him for causing trouble. He goes on to suggest that these teachers simply do not have any respect for him and that these teachers provide the main distraction for him regarding his studies. Gillborn (1990) suggests that teachers have their own idea of an 'ideal client', which is usually constructed based on the teachers culture and lifestyle choices and that this can be the source of racism and cultural prejudice especially regarding afro-Caribbean boys, which can be the origin of teacher-pupil conflict. Mac an Ghaill (1988) supports this view through his study, which revealed extreme teacher prejudice especially towards afro-Caribbean and Asian boys who the teachers would ascribe negative attributes to, which would tend to be in complete opposition to the culture and lifestyle of the teachers who were interviewed, which is congruent with Gillborn's (1990) 'ideal client' theoretic. Blair (2001) also highlights the fact that there is evidence building up, which suggests that teachers do not show respect to black boys and that they are much more likely to discipline black boys disproportionately to other pupils, even if other pupils are doing the exact same thing and are likely to falsely attribute blame to black boys for something, which they haven't done (Connolly, 1995; Gillborn, 1990; Mac an Ghail, 1988; Wright, 1986). However, contradictory to this view, is Foster (1992) who suggests that the evidence from the aforementioned authors is unconvincing and that it is much more likely that teachers have negative views of afro-Caribbean boys because they are actually producing the type of behavior that warrants the negative view or appraisal of character. He also suggests a plethora of other variables, which may explain teacher's negative views of Afro-Caribbean boys outside of racist attitudes. Sewell (2010) would also agree that in our contemporary

moment racism is not as powerful a force as it once was and that black boys only have themselves to blame for their academic shortcomings. The strength of this respondent (KM2) data then appears to be good, because the respondent perceives teacher racism as an insurmountable barrier, which is distracting him from his academic pursuits, which is in line with the rest of this respondents data in relation to his negative perception of wider societal racism and his expressed disaffection in classes where there is the perception of a recycled euro-centric curriculum being taught.

This respondent (MJ13) in relation to being wrongly stereotyped and disciplined, states the following:

> **I think inside school with education like black boys find it harder to expand their knowledge and like find it harder to ask teachers for help and that but say you were a different race like they can put their hands up they be like sir can you help us but if one of us black boys was to do it they think ah straight he aint listening so we get disciplined more like so we get treated unfairly unequally and that.**

This respondent (MJ13) statement about racist teacher stereotypes of black boys not listening when they put their hands up to answer a question, fits in with Blair (2001) who highlights the fact that teachers tend to discipline black boys disproportionately and sometimes wrongly because they hold prejudicial views of them as troublesome. However the opposing view of Sewell (2010) and Foster (1992) could also apply here.

A dialogue between this respondent (MJG19) and myself in relation to being perceived as aggressive by his teacher, begins here:

> **R) Yeah. Ok, so do you find that you express yourself, do you find that um, you know teachers have a negative response to you sometimes if you express yourself in a black way, or you know you express your culture in any way? Do you find that teachers pick up on that, and have a problem with that do you find that teachers are very sensitive to black expression or black culture, in any way?**

> **MJG19) Um not really that much, there's not really a lot of teachers, yeah 'cos there is a lot multi-cultural teachers now as well but then there is the occasional teacher's that em, that kind of, almost if I said something and then a white boy also said the same thing they would take it as I'm being aggressive towards them like they take a lot, there's been examples where they've it's been like I've said things and they've taken it like I've been very aggressive to them and taken it further where as it hasn't happened to another boy that's said it as well, so simply I think it's due to stereotypes as well.**

This respondent (MJG19) highlights the fact that he could say the same thing as a white

boy to a teacher and be perceived as being aggressive, whereas the white boy would not. This fits in with the research that documents racist teacher attitudes towards black boys in particular where the racial stereotypes that the teachers have of black boys is often of them having a large physical presence and having an aggressive attitude especially Afro-Caribbean boys (Connolly, 1995; Gillborn, 1990; Mac an Ghail, 1988; Wright, 1986). There is also the possibility here that the teacher's perception of aggression is correct (Foster, 1992). The strength of this data is relatively weak because the majority of data from this respondent does not suggest that he is resigned to racism and even this statement does not suggest that he is resigned to teacher racism it appears more as an observation of teacher racism, which may give the statement more credibility as this respondent does not have a negative learner identity.

A short dialogue between myself and this respondent (AD12) regarding him getting into trouble with teachers for his behavior, begins here:

R) Has a teacher said you know, maybe when your speaking like, you know your speaking to… or you know like, I don't like that behavior or why did you kiss your teeth or…?

AD12) Yeah all the time, it happened last week as well to be honest like it happens all the time.

This respondent statement is linked with the literature on teacher- pupil conflict, where there is a clash of cultures and where teachers may not understand fully the cultures of black boys and are in turn threatened or paranoid about this alien cultural expression, feeling compelled to confront it in a negative way such as a display of disproportionate discipline or exclusion from the site of the incident (Gillborn, 1990; Mac an Ghail, 1988; Wright, 1986).

A dialogue between this respondent (AD12) and myself, regarding his cultural expression of blackness, ensues:

R) So when you're expressing your blackness, do you think that its when you express your blackness this inner thing inside that, do you find that you get criticized a lot when you express that?

AD12) Yeah, because I think like most of the teachers think that everyone should be one way instead of, I there's two ways there's the other way and there's the black way if you understand what I'm saying so everyone should be the one way instead of the way that we should be as black people.

This articulation of teachers limitations, in reasoning, regarding black cultural expression is interesting and points to the ethno-centric habits of teachers when confronted with something that is culturally alien (Gillborn, 1990, Mac an Ghail, 1988; Wright, 1986). Blair (2001) highlights this area of concern and states that British schools have not done much in the way of creating environments that make black students feel relaxed in a place that accepts them for who they are and that they need to change the culture of these schools to make them student-centered and therefore rooted in a true philosophy of ethnic diversity and racial equality. Sleeter (2012) highlights the fact that 'culturally responsive pedagogy' as part of multicultural education policy is being forced into retreat by global governmental forces and especially in the UK at the moment where there is a neo-liberal political war against multicultural values (Alexander, 2014; Gilroy, 2012; kundnani, 2012; Redclift, 2014; Weedon, 2011).

Culturally responsive pedagogy mainly has its agenda in the United States and is based on a student- centric pedagogy, which is rooted in the cultural sensibilities of the student, which builds upon the child's existing ways of 'being' and 'knowing' and is therefore a form of pedagogy which has its origins in a respect for the child, which means a respect for who they are organically. Sleeter (2012) states that the neo-liberal marketization of education, which promotes educational triage creates a consequential pedagogical environment where teachers are tacitly coerced into a standardised template form of teaching, which limits their capability to engage in a culturally responsive pedagogy, which has the potential to shift the power relations of white hegemony by decoding the racist coding of capitalist society and teaching children to view the world critically from their own organic cultural perspectives. This relates to the respondent (AD12) statement immediately above because it addresses the problem, which the respondent has about not being able to be himself at school and the fact that the teachers think that everyone should be "the one way instead of the way that we should be as black people", which I interpret as meaning, black people should assimilate dominant white cultural norms and reject the organic basis of themselves. However it may be the case that some black identities incorporate a level of rudeness towards the teacher, which is Sewell's (2010) thesis. The strength of this respondent data is good because the majority of the data from this respondent talks about his negative perceptions of teacher racism and racism in wider society and more importantly about the lack of black history that he gets taught in classes and his general disaffection with education because he does not have knowledge of self and does not know the proper way for him to learn yet. Within the racism and reason

section of the first chapter he talks about 'being black' as something which is like a power inside of him that he needs to unlock in order to reach his potential. This appears as a clear statement that expresses the need to be understood and respected culturally, as a statement from someone whose organic ways of 'being' and 'knowing' need to be developed and trained in relation to academic success.

This respondent (HI8) in relation to getting into trouble with teachers because he is black, states the following:

> **No I don't believe teachers would cause me problems because I'm black but I believe maybe the way I act because I'm black like for instance defending yourself, so for example if I'm having a joke with my friend because we're black we will have a lot of banter like teachers may see that as being us being rude to each other us being disruptive and may send us out I don't think they will get us into trouble just because we're black but maybe the way we act ourselves sort of may get us into trouble like the way we are.**

This respondent (HI8) suggests that teachers would not consciously cause him trouble at school simply because of his black skin but that they may well exclude him and his friends for behavior, which is perceived by the teacher as a black genre of behavior that is derogatory and disruptive. This could be as Foster (1992) suggests that the teacher is acting in earnest at what they believe to be unacceptable behavior, which has no place within the classroom or it might be that the teacher is particularly sensitive towards black cultural expression and may have pinpointed members of the respondents group as a particular threat to the teaching of the lesson because of their race (Majors, Gillborn and Sewell, 2001). The strength of this data by the respondent is weak because he also mentions in this section that he does not experience teacher racism, and mentions elsewhere that he is an A grade student who is top of all his classes and actually has a friendly relationship with most teachers and so the above data, which suggests the potential for exclusion from class does not fit in with this respondents profile. Also if this respondent (HI8) is being excluded from class on occasion, which is doubtful, then this aligns itself more so with Foster (1992) who suggests that teachers who exclude do so because of genuinely disruptive behavior as opposed to racial stereotyping. I suggest this because of the profile of this respondent (HI8) and the fact that he seems to be well known to teachers as a top student who is friendly and approachable and also because of the fact that the respondent himself renounces teacher racism in relation to himself. This data is a little ambiguous but I think it points to the fact that teachers are vigilant when it comes to black cultural expression even if they have good relationships with black boys

individually, because this relationship may be based upon the silent agreement that these boys assimilate dominant white cultural norms.

A dialogue between this respondent (TA15) and myself in relation to performance based stereotypes of black people, begins here:

TA15) Stuff like based on talent, not really academic stuff, like music acting and art and stuff like that, even performing arts, is usually associated with black people, because we have got quite a few people that actually excel in that, and even sports but academic stuff, we don't really get recognition for the people who actually are doing academic stuff.

R) Why do you think that is, it is quite an important thing that you've just touched upon isn't it the fact that you know kind of where black people excel, and black culture is more associated around music performing arts, and you know these things, and not really in an academic domain, really. Why do you think that is, what do you think it is about kind of, black culture that kind of is more, at the moment represented within those arena's as opposed to the academic arena?

TA15) Um academically majority don't really get like, do something big, the majority don't do something big but when it comes to stuff like sports or music, they are usually at the top of that, and it is just about what the majority is doing really.

> **R) What the majority of people are doing?**
> **TA15) Yeah.**

R) So do you think then that, it's really do you think if there could be, do you think if kind of, it could be, do you think if there was more popularity within academia then that more people, more black people would kind of go that route of academics?

TA15) Yeah like if pressure is put on you and you're expected to perform in a certain way, you're likely to perform in that, such as black people are stereotyped to be good at sports so they are going to push themselves to perform in that, and that is where their interests will lie.

This respondent (TA15) brings attention to the fact that black people are stereotyped to do well in sports, music, performing arts and essentially the things that are outside of academic rigor. He comments that there isn't really social recognition of black people as academics in the UK and globally for that matter. He goes on to say that black people don't really do anything big when it comes to academia that black people only seem to do something big when it comes to sports or music.

Interestingly he points to the notion of social conditioning and that if pressure is put on you and you are expected to perform in a certain discipline then you will perform in that

discipline. This line of reasoning links directly with what Rollock (2007) suggests, which is that teachers in her study through the discourses they used seemed to align a certain appearance and certain behavior with either academic success. These discourses tended to construct black boys as not 'ideal clients' for academic success focusing more on their ability to play sport really well and on the fact that some of these black boys were talented rappers, thus legitimizing black academic failure. Just as my respondent (TA15) alludes to, black boys within this setting were not seen as potential academic successes, they were being constructed through a racist historical vernacular as academic failures, an inherited discourse which is not being critically engaged. The teachers within this study then, are perpetuating a cycle of black academic failure through black stereotypes of academic ability. Sewell (2010) would argue here that it is Black boys laziness that is the problem here, their lack of drive or academic hunger. The strength of this data is relatively strong in that this respondent makes other general statements about racism and teachers, however the majority of this data is not indictable, it is general and not linked to learner identity status.

Group 2: Respondents who do not Perceive Teacher Racism

A short dialogue between this respondent (HI8) and myself in relation to teacher racism ensues:

R) Ok, your focus now and everything is ok, alright ok well I think probably now, really I think we have pretty much got that up, and you wouldn't really say that there is any teacher racism would you that exists at all do you think there is any racist teachers?

HI8) No, I haven't experienced it.

This respondent (HI8) interestingly has provided data that I have located within my discussion of group one directly above, which delineates those who perceive teacher racism. The above data as I have already stated is a little ambiguous in that the respondent (HI8) highlights the fact that a teacher may exclude him and his friends from a class because of their unique behavior as black boys, which the teacher through ignorance identifies as derogatory and perhaps rightly disruptive because of the volume. However the data being discussed here categorically states that this respondent (HI8) has never experienced teacher racism. So it might be that this respondent does not perceive that potentially being excluded from a classroom for his and his friends uniquely black behavior as racist, he may see this as just, because of its genuinely disruptive qualities, which is in line with Foster's (1992) thesis, or it might be that this respondent (HI8) was

talking hypothetically and has himself never been excluded from a classroom or treated in any way which would suggest to him that teachers are being racist. The strength of this data is good because the majority of data from this respondent shows that he is a top achiever, has a positive learner identity and has a good relationship with his teachers. This respondent then supports Sewell's (2010) thesis that racism is no longer a powerful force that has the capability to destroy black boys educations and that academic success for black boys is dependent on their parenting, their peer group relations and their hunger for achievement. It also supports Codjoe's thesis (2006) that a child who comes from a culturally rich and stable home background is more likely to have a positive learner identity.

A dialogue between this respondent (NS6) and myself, regarding his relationship with teachers, ensues:

R) Ok so it's to be more like him really isn't it, and um now how do you find that teachers react to you? Do you find that teachers in any way stereo type you as a young black man in class? Or do you find that they you know get on very well and that teachers push you and are fighting in your corner, or do you feel that there's any conflict at all?

NS6) Umm I don't think so um, most of the black people that I know that I generally share a classroom with if they have the potential and they want it that much the teacher will push you, to show the best side of you, the best you can do and get you on the right path to success and excellence so I would say yeah.

R) So you believe that achievement comes from within that you are the controller of your destiny?

> **NS6) Yes, yeah it's your choices you make that define you.**

This respondent (NS6) states that the majority of black people that he shares a classroom with, if they are academically ambitious and they have the drive to succeed then the teacher will help to push them towards their potential to achieve excellence. This statement suggests that academic success is in the hands of black children, which is what Tony Sewell (2010) states in his thesis. I then ask the respondent (NS6) if he believes that achievement comes from within self, if he feels that he is the sole controller of his destiny, he then states that yes it is the choices you make that define you. This is textbook Sewell (2010) because this respondent takes complete responsibility for his education, he doesn't experience any conflict with teachers and in fact has their support to do well and fulfill his potential. The strength of this data is good because this respondent was born and partly schooled in Jamaica, which may well provide him with a

cane piece mentality of hunger for success, he also has a disciplined family background and has a strong link to the community through his membership of the Cadets, which provides him with a further disciplined and structured regime. The profile of this respondent fits in with the home, school and community theoretic of Rhamie & Hallam (2002) and Rhamie (2006) and it also fits in with the culturally rich identity thesis of Codjoe(2006).

A dialogue between this respondent (RW10) and myself regarding his relationship with teachers ensues:

RW10) Yeah I get on well with teachers yeah we have an understanding even we're doing the work like, and there is like boundaries like when I can walk around with teachers and we can have a laugh and jokes, and then there is times where we get serious and do the work, even though we are still doing the work, we still find time to like make jokes, so it's not all just work, work, work and play, play, play it's like mixed up together so you can enjoy it.

R) Ok and do you find that any of the teachers give you a particularly hard time?

RW10) Um no not really, I don't find, mainly when they are saying catch up with the course work and stuff, that's about it really.

R) So there is no body who really singles you out for your behavior, like singles you and says I don't really like that behavior or be more quiet or your disrupting the class nothing like that?

RW10) Nah I don't really get the teachers to say that 'cos normally when, if I am like disrupting the class it's not just like, I'm not doing it to actually disrupt, I'm talking about the work, but it's I'm just like making it kind of turning it in to a joke or something.

This respondent (RW10) explains that he has a good fun relationship with his teachers and that he doesn't really get a hard time from them accept when they are rightly pushing him to catch up with overdue work. He goes on to state those teachers do not single him out and that if he is being disruptive its not intentional and he can diffuse the situation by turning it into a joke or something. The strength of this data is good in that the rest of his data does not appear to be resigned to racism even though he is a poor achiever but he puts this down to not being focused and to not liking theoretical work. So even though this respondent is a poor achiever this doesn't seem to be linked in any way with his perception of racism either in school or wider society though he is aware of racism in wider society. This data on teacher racism then, does not seem to be linked in any way to this respondent's learner identity status.

A dialogue between this respondent (SA1) and myself regarding his relationship with teachers, begins here:

R) And um really the teachers you, it's a situation where you, the teachers really push you to do well?

SA1) Well I like the teachers who are here because they are always there to provide the help if I need yeah, sometimes after school or something I go to the teacher oh, I wasn't here during the time you were teaching but could you help me yeah, they're always ready to help me all of the teachers that's one thing I like about the teachers.

R) And do you think that's because of the way that you are they know that you are, they see that you're a positive chap?

SA1) I don't really know but I think that would be a factor though yeah.

R) So they want to help you?

SA1) Yeah.

This respondent (SA1) explains that he likes the teachers at the sample school because if he approaches them for help to catch back up with material he has missed in class, they are always very happy to help him. He then agrees that he probably gets on so well with his teachers because he has a positive attitude towards his studies and then reconfirms that his teachers want to help him. This statement ties in very much with the statement by the respondent (NS6) who asserted that teachers are always willing to help black boys if they show a strong drive towards their studies. The strength of the data from this respondent (SA1) is good because most of his data is about his will to succeed academically and to be the best that he can be. He also renounces the need for black studies within the curriculum and asserts that the status quo of the sample school is his agency. This respondent was born in Africa and partly schooled there, he appears to have a cane piece mentality, which affords him a hunger for achievement, and he also has a disciplined family background and family role models who are academically high achieving. This respondent (SA1) data fits in with Sewell (2009, 2010) whose argument has been theoretically rehearsed in this section of the chapter regarding black boys who have the right family background and hunger for success being able to transcend racism and achieve highly. Codjoe's (2006) thesis of black academic success being linked to a strong cultural orientation from home is also relevant here.

School Intervention

Black History Month

This respondent (AD12) in relation to black history month states the following:

Yeah, We need more history we need to know more about black people cause in this school I've stressed it a lot to the teachers like when black history month, yeah we just hear ok its black history month there's nothing to celebrate it nothing to say yeah its here some people forget sometimes I forget like October's the black history month cause I don't know enough about it so I think there needs to be more black history in this school definitely.

This respondent (AD12) explains that at the sample school black history and black culture does not really get taught during black history month to the point that the respondent sometimes forgets the fact that its black history month. He goes on to state that a lot more black history needs to be incorporated within the school. This comment about black history month at the sample school is interesting because it runs two intervention programs specifically targeted at raising black achievement. One of the intervention programs the 'ACE' project focuses on providing black boys with a more stable black identity through teaching black history and promoting positive black role models who helped to push black culture in a positive direction. So it might be that teachers at the school think that because there are specific black intervention programs running at the school, one of which incorporates black history, that when it comes to black history month there is no real need to focus on black history because of the ACE project, which runs all year round. However it is well documented that good school practice regarding the schooling of ethnic minority pupils must embrace a diverse multi-cultural view to teaching the curriculum and actively seek out opportunities to incorporate black history for example throughout the year and especially during black history month. That multicultural education must be part of the mission statement of the school, which is embraced through the leadership of the headmaster who diffuses this innovative vision, which is then adopted by all teaching staff sharing that vision (Demie, 2005; Demie, 2007; Demie & McLean, 2007; DfES, 2007; Tikly, Caballero, Haynes and Hill, 2004). The strength of the data from this respondent (AD12) is good because a large proportion of the data from this respondent expresses his negative view of racism both in school and in wider society and the need for more black history to be taught in the curriculum and for more black history to be taught for black history month, he also talks about needing to know himself better so that he can achieve academically and openly admits that he has a negatively learner identity because of this fact.

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A dialogue between this respondent (HI8) and myself in relation to being taught more black history at school, begins here:

R) Okay what do you think about the idea, I mean it touched on it briefly as with regards to language but what do you think, what do you think about, if there was more taught about black ness, black history and black culture and black heritage? I mean are you already quite knowledgeable on you know kind of black culture and you know the history and, do you know a lot about that at the moment or is that something that you would like to have more of in class?

HI8) It's definitely something I'd like to know more of I mean, I would say I know a lot, but I would say for me personally I don't know as much as I would like to, I don't know in my opinion I don't know enough, I mean I know a lot but I think it is important for black people to know where they originated from where they came from, so yeah I definitely think in this school I think definitely is something that should be touched on more, 'cos um I remember I think it was February there was a bisexual gays and Lesbian month, remember they had an assembly about that and it allowed erm, people who were of that kind to step forward but in black history month, we didn't really do anything which I think erm, I think that's something that could be changed to improve yeah.

This respondent (HI8) states that he could learn some more about black history and black culture and that the school should do more to teach it. He then goes on to explain that he can remember an assembly at the sample school, which celebrated Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender month (LGBT), but then when it came to black history month the school didn't really celebrate or do anything special for it and that this is something that could be changed at the school. This statement is very similar to the previous respondent (AD12) statement in this section, which suggested that not much gets done at the sample school to celebrate black history month, however there is an additional point of discussion to be had and this is regarding the fact that the school made sure that it celebrated LGBT month. There is an article in the teacher network section of the Guardian newspaper website written by Emily Drabble (2011) titled "How to teach Black History Month", which asserts that Black History Month has become a month "to look at wider political black issues of equality, for example LGBT and travellers rights". What is interesting is that the author categorizes LGBT and travellers rights as "wider political black issues of equality". It is not immediately apparent to me how the black historical struggle is linked to these other issues of equality, how the nihilistic politics that circumscribed the slave plantations affects LGBT equality issues that are fairly modern, though of course LGBT issues may have been around since the beginning of time. It appears that a possibility

here could be that the agenda of black history month is being infiltrated by white supremacists that are fragmenting Black History Month into other areas of equality and thereby recoding Black History Month as a colorblind moment of equality for all, thus removing the individual urgency and depth that Black History Month needs independently to tackle the unique historical circumstances that have brought black people globally to their current moment of Diaspora. It is possible that this colorblind ideology may be operating at some level at the sample school based on the respondent (HI8) statement. The strength of this data is weak, because the majority of the data from this respondent is about him being an A grade student in all his classes, coming from a disciplined home environment where his mother has given him a sense of the cane piece mentality and about him having a good relationship with his teachers this statement does not appear in any way to be linked to his learner identity status.

This respondent (KM2) in relation to black history month states the following:

Yeah it would be a better classroom. Like in year 9 we done history and that, but didn't learn nothing about black history month until miss took us out in to little groups, she talked about Kunta Kinte, talked about Shaka Zulu, all black history. Like a lot of thing init from what I never knew before yeah.

This respondent (KM2) explains that he didn't learn any black history during black history month but that his female teacher took little groups of black boys out for a lesson in African history. This teacher is the architect behind the ACE programme that runs at the sample school and at several other schools in London. There is a clue in this statement, which may explain why the sample school does not engage as much as it should for black history month, which I hinted at above, which is that the school may feel that because they are running the ACE project, which engages black children with black history that further intervention is either unnecessary or not of the greatest of importance. The strength of the data from this respondent is good because a large proportion of his data is about his resignation to racism within school and within wider society and the fact that not enough black history is being taught at school, which again seems to be something that he is resigned to, so this data supports the fact that this respondent has a negative learner identity.

A dialogue between this respondent (RW10) and myself in relation to a lack of knowledge about black culture, ensues:

R) Ok, and do you think that the knowledge that you've um, do you think that there is a lack

of knowledge about what black culture means, about what it is and what is involved in black culture? Do you think that there is a lack of knowledge about what actual black culture is?

RW10) Um I think so yeah 'cos when I was year 7 and we done like black history month we didn't really learn much about it we just learnt basics like just the simple stuff slavery in history terms and that was it, there wasn't much going behind the scene's and how it came about or why it started or hearing views from both sides you just kind of heard views from one side really.

This respondent (RW10) states that when he was in year 7 the school did black history month, which may insinuate that it doesn't now. He goes on to say that he learnt all the simple stuff, stuff about slavery and that there wasn't much going behind the scenes of slavery, like how it started and that it seemed as if he was just hearing about black history from one particular viewpoint, from one side, which I would interpret as a master white narrative of black history (Swartz, 2013). Thrasher (2015) in a guardian newspaper article about the notion of Black History Month not unraveling white supremacy is important because he points out that the main role of Black History Month is Black exceptionalism, which focuses on those exceptional black people, who have been allowed to transcend the glass ceiling in their limited numbers and ignores the deeper economic structural relations of power that maintains a white supremacist ideology even if it is camouflaged in dark skin. Thrasher (2015) explains that the white coded capitalist matrix in which we all currently live requires Black exceptional individuals to validate the status quo or in other words the need for a multi-racial façade that obscures the internal white ideological mechanism of power. I relate this newspaper article to the respondent statement because the European capitalist system and its white ideological origins that formed the basis of the black Atlantic slave trade, seem to be circumvented for black history month where the focus appears to be more centered around abolitionist narratives and so the 'behind the scenes' stuff of slavery as my respondent (RW10) put it, seems to always be left out because it would reveal the crude machinery of white supremacy, taking away its gloss. The strength of this data is weak because this respondent (RW10) doesn't really talk about the lack of black history being taught in the curriculum or about teacher racism in fact he renounces teacher racism and doesn't talk much about racism in wider society and so it doesn't appear as though this statement by the respondent is linked in any way to his learner identity status.

This respondent (TA15) in relation to black history month states the following:

[…] At this school really we don't really focus on black history at all and the majority of us are black. Like for instance a few years ago what was it, it was black history month and then we had someone come in to talk to us about the holocaust, it wasn't so much like say we hate Jews or whatever but we all felt offended, because the one month that we actually get to learn about our race or our history like that was kind of like taken away from us when there's eleven other months for them to talk about the holocaust.

This respondent (TA15) states that at a black history month event the sample school arranged for someone to come in and talk to the children about the holocaust, which for the respondent was hurtful because he felt as though black history month had been transgressed by someone else's agenda. This data fits into the color blind theoretic that I espoused earlier as with regards to the LGBT agenda being incorporated within Black History Month and how this fragmented the black history month focus. This data has some strength to it because this respondent has expressed his frustration at the lack of black history being taught within the curriculum, however apart from this he doesn't seem to be resigned to racism and there isn't really any data that points towards his leaner identity status.

Ace and Aspire Projects

This respondent (AD12) in relation to the ACE project at the sample school, states the

following:

Actually there is one teacher she does, she tries to show us the black achievement so that we can find our own achievement. She's the one teacher cause she does ACE with us so she shows us most of the black achievements and she knows quite a lot so that help me really a lot.

This respondent (AD12) highlights the ACE project at the sample school as a helpful resource that helps to show him black achievements and how he can achieve and states that the project has helped him a lot. I have mentioned the ACE project briefly in the Black History Month section of this chapter, it is a project which helps to teach boys how to be positive and black by teaching them about the positive elements of black history and about positive black role models, the programme essentially is trying to connect black boys to an authentic black culture that contradicts the popular black cultures that exist across the African Diaspora that have been shaped by the trauma of enslavement. This project runs alongside another programme called ASPIRE, which is an event programme that creates strong communication ties with black parents to properly manage issues such as discipline and exam revision so that the black children in question are being monitored and guided to do their best academically without any gaps in communication

about progress. In this way the sample school appears to be fulfilling at least some of the requirements for good practice regarding black achievement as has been highlighted in the literature (Demie, 2005, 2007; Demie & McLean, 2007; Rhamie & Hallam, 2002; Rhamie, 2006). However the whole school approach necessary especially regarding the incorporation of black history into the curriculum, based on the data, is in some doubt. The strength of this data is good because this respondent has spoken a lot about the fact that there needs to be a lot more black history being taught at the sample school he has also said that he needs to establish his best way to learn so this data about the ACE project being helpful to him is consistent with the rest of his data and with his negative learner identity status.

A short dialogue between this respondent (HI8) and myself in relation to the ACE project, ensues:

HI8) I think yeah I do I think we do something in our school called ACE project I don't know if you've heard of it?

> **R) I've heard about it briefly…**

HI8) Where we have a black teacher she gathers all the black or ethnic people all in one class and she puts questions to us which enables us to think about ourselves and would we behave in a certain way if we were put in a certain situation and that's helped us think outside of the box and helped us think about ourselves and its helped me its helped me stay, its been a major factor in me being able to be comfortable within myself and be comfortable as the person I am and not be led astray. So I think definitely that can help definitely but I think, I think maybe the teachers have to be a certain race to be able to interact I think for instance if you wanted to connect properly with white people I think you'd have to have a white teacher, if you wanted to connect properly with Turkish people Turkish teacher, black people a black teacher otherwise I don't think, the ideas great but I don't think it will get the message across.

This respondent (HI8) highlights the fact that the ACE project has been a key factor in helping him not to be led astray and in making him feel comfortable in himself. He explains that the project helps black boys to think about their actions and about how they would react in particular situations, which I believe is designed to tackle acts of hyper-masculine bravado. It is very interesting that this respondent (HI8) has stated that the ACE project has helped him to not be led astray and to feel comfortable within himself, considering the fact that he is a academic high flyer and the fact that he comes from a disciplined home background and has been given a sense of the cane piece ideology by his Nigerian mother. However he does mention within the curriculum chapter that

knowledge and the way that he has been brought up will help him not to be influenced by negative peer pressure and to be strong- minded but that there is still a level of susceptibility. There is also the fact that this respondent (HI8) has been born in the UK and as such may be more exposed culturally to popular black culture in the UK, which he alludes to in the criminal stereotype section of the macro subjective chapter, where he states that he wears hooded tops and could be perceived as being a 'hood rat' or gang affiliate. So perhaps the ACE project helps to reinforce the strong identity that he already has. I would still have to say that the strength this data is weak because the majority of the data highlights this respondent's positive learner identity.

A dialogue between this respondent (KM2) and myself in relation to the ASPIRE project, begins here:

R) So do your parents communicate a lot with the school, or is there a lot of communication with your mum and the school? Does your mum get involved a lot with your school, does she communicate?

KM2) Yeah she does, like there's a aspire thing init basically for black people that has got the potential to achieve and do well, and since then it's just shown up her vision and tactics and all that, yeah just trying to succeed init just pushing you on.

R) So whats the main thing that aspire teaches you?

KM2) Succeed respect and achieve that's it.

R) So succeed respect and achieve?

KM2) Yeah those three words.

R) That's the main, does that help you to be respectful?

KM2) Nah I already had respect so that didn't really help me, it's just the revision and the learning tactics and that yeah.

R) What are the learning tactics?

KM2) Revising and not talking in lesson listening to teacher, I know that init, simple things like that.

R) So there's nothing special in the, is there any black knowledge in aspire then?

KM2) Nah not really, it's just something to help black boys succeed init, it's not no nothing

there's no history and that.

    R) So it just focuses on your techniques for learning?

    KM2) Yeah.

    R) And do you think that's helping, do you think that's helping black boys here?

KM2) it's helping, yeah it's helping, if you wanna take it in, if you wanna listen and take it in. Like for me now it's helping still, like I've changed my ways I've started revising and doing coursework at home yeah.

This respondent (KM2) in regard to ASPIRE, states that it has helped him to change his ways to start revising and complete coursework. This could mean that the ASPIRE project has helped to rejuvenate his academic enthusiasm helping him to overcome his disaffection in classes or it could mean that the teachers in his classes were never really the problem, which would tie in with Sewell (2010). The strength of this data is good because it is consistent with the majority of data from this respondent, which is that he is resigned to racism, especially teacher racism and needs more black history to be taught to motivate him in classes and for knowledge of self. All of this confirms his negative learner identity status and so his need for this project is obvious.

Chapter Conclusion

To conclude this chapter I will first discuss the respondents whose data I did not include when I discussed the cohort who perceived teacher racism, because of its similarity to the data that I did include. The first respondent (JSM5) gave data that was very similar to data from another respondent (KM2), which talked about the fact that racist teacher stereotypes and the conflict between him and the teachers that results is one of the things that distracts him from his academic pursuits. The strength of this data is good because the respondent does talk about racism within school and within wider society and appears to be resigned to this racism, he also expresses a need for black history to be taught in classes so that he can better understand who he is, where he has come from and his culture, which suggests that perhaps his identity is not as rooted as it could be and is therefore susceptible to teacher stereotypes, which distract him from his academic pursuits. This is all in line with the fact that this respondent has a negative learner identity. The final respondent (LLC14) gave data that was similar to the data given by another respondent (MJG19), which talked about the fact that black boys are stereotyped by teachers as being aggressive especially in regard to expressive speech. The strength of

this data is weak because this respondent (LLC14) doesn't mention anything related to racism anywhere else in the data chapters and doesn't provide any data at all which is indicative of his learner identity status.

Out of the 40% of my sample who did not comment on teacher racism only one respondent (LB7) has a negative learner identity, however this is linked more so to negative peer pressure than racism, which this respondent does not talk much about. The rest of these 40% cohort all have positive learner identities, three of them (KP16, HO18, LH9) are of African origin, with strong cultural roots and a disciplined family background, three of them were born in either Africa (KP16, LH9) or Jamaica (RW20) and have cane piece mentalities as well as strong cultural roots and disciplined family backgrounds. One of the respondents (OWJ3) from this 40% cohort has a high socio-economic status where both of his parents are very successful professionals and provide a disciplined family background and push this respondent to do well. This respondent (OWJ3) has also not given any data about racism in any of the data chapters. The last two respondents (TL17, JW4) that make up this group both come from relatively disciplined family backgrounds and have male family role models to guide them.

The findings here then are that the majority of respondents who perceived teacher racism have negative learner identities and the majority of respondents who either did not perceive teacher racism or did not provide data on teacher racism have positive learner identities.

I will now discuss the respondents whose data I did not include when I discussed Black History Month, because of the similarity of this data with the data that I did include in my discussion. The first of these respondents (OWJ3) gave data similar to another respondent (TA15), which discussed the fact that Black History Month is for Black history because of what Black people have been through historically, which stands alone. The strength of this data is relatively weak because this respondent does not comment elsewhere on wanting more black history in school or that he is deprived of black history in the classroom, and even the data given in this section appears to be a general statement without the implication of learner identity status. The second respondent (MJG19) gave data that is also similar to the respondent (TA15) who talked about Black History Month being divided up into other agendas such as the Holocaust, however this respondent (MJG19) directly states that he feels Black History Month is being sabotaged and that he feels as if the sample school is trying to abolish it completely. The strength of

this data is fairly strong because this respondent does mention quite a bit about Black history not being taught in classes, so it appears as though this respondent may require more knowledge of self.

The final respondent (JSM5) in this section gives data about his perception that at Black History Month nothing black gets taught at the sample school, which is similar data to another respondent (AD12) who also expresses that no black studies get taught for Black History Month at the sample school. 60% of my sample did not discuss Black History Month, however as I highlighted in the introduction to this chapter, some of the respondents from this 60% cohort do provide data within the curriculum chapter, which asserts that there should be more black history being taught in classes and so whether the concern for more black history being taught at the sample school is expressed in terms of the curriculum or Black History Month it is still being expressed and so this 60% cohort who do not provide data for Black History Month should be viewed with caution regarding its significance. To help the reader I shall delineate the 30% of my sample (SA1, NS6, KP16, HO18, LB7, LLC14) who do not express a need for black history to be taught either in the curriculum chapter or in the black history Month section of this chapter. Four of these respondent's (SA1, NS6, KP16, HO18) have positive learner identities and two of these respondents (LB7, LLC14) have negative leaner identities, three of the respondents (SA1, KP16, HO18) are of African origin and three of the respondents (SA1, NS6, KP16) were born outside of the UK in third world countries that have given them a cane piece mentality.

I will discuss here the respondents whose data I did not include in my discussion of the ACE intervention programme, because they were so similar to the data already included. The first respondent (OWJ3) simply stated that the teacher of the ACE programme was very knowledgeable and knew what she was talking about, which was helpful, this statement is similar to the respondent (HI8) who also praised the same teacher for her knowledge and professionalism in running the programme successfully. The rest of the respondents (RW10, MJ13, TL17) simply stated that the ACE programme was helpful, which is similar to the statement made by the respondent (AD12) who also stated that the ACE programme was helpful. 65% of my sample did not comment on the ACE programme. Eight respondents from this cohort have positive leaner identities and five respondents from this cohort have a negative learner identity. It is possible that in relation to the eight respondents with positive learner identities that some of them may not have needed the

programme because of their stable cultural identity or those who did attend the programme didn't feel as though it contributed much to their development. It may also be the case that the ACE intervention programme did not come to mind during the interviews, that there were more important things that the students wanted to talk about, however this would also suggest these programmes are not very important to the sample. The five respondents from the 65% cohort who have negative learner identities may also not have found these programmes as a significant part of their development. This notion is supported by the fact that 70% of my entire sample commented on the need for more black history to be taught at the sample school in one way or another and so black history is obviously an important issue for the majority of my sample and so one would think that if the ACE project met this need for black history that the ACE project would have been mentioned in much more detail and by much more respondents. As with regards to the ASPIRE intervention programme only 5% or one respondent (KM2) mentioned ASPIRE. This intervention programme, which is about good communication links between parents and teachers, pupil revision techniques and pupil behavior may not be an important part of students learning for a couple of reasons, the parents of pupils with positive learner identities may already have good communication links with teachers at the sample school and so these pupils may not see the ASPIRE programme as anything new. It may also be the case that the students with positive learner identities do not need help with their behavior towards teachers or with their learning and revision techniques. The respondents who have negative learner identities may not find the programme as something that is helpful in their learning development because the other core issues behind having a negative learner identity remain unresolved. This notion is supported by the data, which highlights racism and a lack of black historical-cultural studies at the sample school as central to the quality of this cohorts learning experience (Codjoe, 2006).

So to finally conclude, in relation to teacher racism, the majority of my sample who perceived teacher racism had negative learner identities and the majority of my sample who either did not perceive teacher racism or did not comment on teacher racism at all, had positive learner identities. This lends to Sewell's (2009, 2010) view that those boys who have been raised with discipline and who have a hunger for success will do well irrespective of racism if any racism exists at all. It also lends to Foster's notion that only badly behaved black boys receive proportionate discipline and or disdain. Regarding the data on Black History Month, which I am combining with those respondents who want more black history within the curriculum, it means 70% of my sample want more black

history to be taught at the school either within the curriculum or during Black History Month. Half of this 70% cohort have negative learner identities and the other half of this cohort have positive learner identities, this suggests that those with a positive learner identity may still need to be taught more about black history for their development (more so British born) to further strengthen their identities (a gap in literature), or that they can see the importance of more black history being taught in relation to others. Also important is that out of the 30% of my sample who did not comment on the need for black history at all, four of these respondents have positive learner identities, three of them are of African origin and three of them were born outside of the UK in third world environments. This data points towards the possibility that pupils who have positive learner identities may still need or want further cultural grounding or may just want to learn more about their history out of pure interest though they are stable. However the majority of respondents who were born in the country of their ethnic origin do not seem to express a personal need for more black history to be taught at the sample school, this may be because they were born and partly raised within the rich culture of their origin and therefore have a firsthand grasp of themselves and their culture. Finally in relation to the school intervention programmes ACE and ASPIRE, the majority of my sample who gave data had negative learner identities. I have already discussed the possible reasons for this above.

Micro Objective Structure

Family Background

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections; the first section titled high discipline is where I discuss the 65% of respondents who have provided data about their perceptions of high levels of discipline within their family backgrounds. The second much smaller section is where I discuss the one respondent (5% of sample) who provides data about his perception of the poor level of discipline within his family background. I discuss the 30% of respondents who have not provided data at all in this section, in the conclusion.

The data in this chapter shows that there is a link between the high levels of discipline in the family background of the high achieving respondents and their academic performance and it shows that there is a link between the poor level of discipline in the family background of a respondent not doing well academically and his academic performance. The data also shows that some of the respondents who perceive high levels of discipline within their family background are not high achievers at school and I discuss these respondents within the conclusion because elements of their data are similar to the data, which I discuss in the main body of this chapter.

The main argument that I make in this chapter is that high levels of parental discipline coupled with a strong cultural grounding appears to equate to black boys with both an African heritage and a Caribbean heritage performing at a high level academically. I argue that the absence of strict parental discipline and a strong cultural rooting can lead to poor academic performance and potentially in relation to one respondent (MJ13) gang membership and violent crime. I also argue that there may be complex brands of discipline that provide a moral education but that do not secure academic excellence for a portion of my sample. Finally in relation to 30% of my sample who did not provide data in this chapter I argue that its possible that these respondents may have assumed that all black people including myself should automatically know that black families equate to discipline and therefore felt it unnecessary to comment on discipline within their family backgrounds. There is data within this chapter that highlights this potential assumption.

High Discipline

This respondent (HI8) in a dialogue with myself, elaborates on the nature of his

disciplined home environment, the discussion begins here:

HI8) I think, things such as from an early stage being given responsibility by parents to do things such as wash dishes for instance I started washing dishes, people may think its young like other races they may think its young but for black people, I started washing dishes in primary school for instance, and erm I may say that to someone else and they make think wow I know my kids my kids are teenagers and they don't wash dishes, but yeah I started erm things such as washing dishes doing chores around the house like not every weekend but like cleaning my own room maybe mopping the kitchen floor for instance and erm yeah so I think, yeah there's a lot of things in my household such, and being able to cook from an early age as well, so yeah I think we're given a lot of responsibility as erm youths as young black people so yeah.

R) Would you describe that as discipline?

HI8) Yeah definitely because um I think, being given responsibility at such a young age sort of enables us to mature quicker sort of thing and it also helps us in later life, when we have our own places and need to mop floors do chores and clean dishes and stuff so yeah and cook food.

R) And has that come from your parents, has that come from the way that you have been raised as a person, um do you think they have instilled that in you do you think they have drummed that into you to be a responsible young man who doesn't get yourself into trouble, Is there a you know is there things that you just wouldn't dare do because you could never go home and reveal that to your parents?

HI8) Definitely and I also think, it's also part of maturing as well I've matured from how I was say two years ago and I now know that something which may seem cool to black people or to people my age really could be detrimental to your health and detrimental to your career, when your older if you want to be something successful and you have a criminal record for instance or you smoke and you have black lungs for instance then um yeah that's going to affect you long term, so I believe yeah, me maturing I think that's probably been a bigger thing my parents have influenced and my parents influence has been strong so yeah.

This data appears to connect on a certain level with research on Cameroonian parental values carried out by Nsamenang &Lamb (1995) who highlight the fact that Nso parents:

(a)   **view pregnancy as God's approval of the ancestors' wish that representatives be sent to the community;**

(b)   **Desire many children; (c) place a high socioeconomic and emotional value on children; and (d) value parental authority, seniority, and filial service.**

Even though the research I have cited here is limited to Cameroonian parents, the high value that these parents place upon parental authority, seniority and filial service is very

interesting because it appears as though my respondents (HI8) parents although Nigerian and West Indian, seem to share similar parental values based on the data, which delineates the labor intensive filial service that is required of the respondent in the family home. Adeyinka & Ndwapi (2010) discuss the moral education of the African child before the colonial intrusions into Africa and delineate the obligations of the child in moral education towards his family, which involved extensive chores within the home such as cooking, cleaning and looking after siblings as well as a plethora of other duties. The authors emphasize the fact that good morals were intrinsic and formed the basis of society as a means of ensuring societal longevity and prosperity and that these morals do live on. There also appears to be a link here with West Indian parental norms and expectations of their child as illustrated by Sykes & Waters (2009) where there is a fairly definitive quote from a 28-year-old West Indian male participant in their study, who states:

I'll set out what I think is the West Indian way. It's all about responsibility for the kids. Kids have work to do as soon as they can work. As long as you can push a broom one of your jobs can be sweeping up the floor or the yards. If you're old enough to run the vacuum cleaner, if you're tall enough to reach the shelves, you can dust the shelves. Once you can negotiate the sink and all that, you can wash the dishes you can clean the tub you can always make your own bed. So that's one thing. You start working very early. I don't know anybody, any West Indian who did not have chores as a child. So I that's a very… Teaching responsibility through work is very important.

It is interesting then that all three studies (Nsamenang &Lamb, 1995; Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2010; Sykes & Waters, 2009) mentioned in this section have ties that bind them altogether, which includes filial service, which is seen as a crucial element in the moral teaching of responsibility to children. There is also research, which suggests that children who are given household chores and responsibility from an early age grow up to be successful academically, in their careers and grow up to be well balanced responsible adults generally (Rossmann, 2002) This research makes it clear to see the link between what African culture calls moral education and filial service as an intrinsic part of one's moral development.

The fact that all Black people are of African origin could explain the commonality across the different parts of Africa and between Africa and the Caribbean in relation to morality and ones worldview (Williams, 1987). This would make sense in relation to my respondent (HI8) who has parents from Africa and the Caribbean respectively. In addition the link

between extensive chores, academic success and being well rounded is supported by the respondent (HI8) data, as he is an A* student, gets on well with teachers and has a positive peer group. Sewell (2009, 2010) would also agree that extensive chores and general discipline is the perfect parenting formula for academic success.

This respondent (HI8) in relation to his parents teachings, states the following:

They taught me a lot about black culture and a lot about how far black people have come and for instance my mum is Nigerian and she's taught me a lot about her time in Nigeria, and I think that's also allowed me as a person who's grown up in England to sort of appreciate what I have cause a lot of the time I take it for granted, the bed I sleep in at night the food I eat, I probably take for granted I know its bad but I probably take it for granted but then, when my mum tells me how she used to have to walk for miles just for water how she used to, how she never used to know what she'd be sleeping on that night I think it enables me as a person to appreciate what I have more and maybe, maybe just to try and help people, less fortunate people in our society when I'm older so yeah

This statement shows how the respondents parents have disciplined him with a sense of Sewell's (2009) cane piece mentality an immigrant third world mentality of acknowledgement of what poverty means and a hunger to succeed and do well in life.

This respondent (LH9) in response to what being black is, states the following:

LH9) Um I don't think there is specific ways of being black, but people like see it like a certain way of how you live like your parents are supposed to be strict […]
LH9) I think when people say being black is how you were raised up is… example is like again as I said like, your parents being strict some people say that maybe if your not black your parents are not strict […]

This respondent (LH9) data supports the notion I articulated above that perhaps there are common threads of parental discipline that run through different black ethnic cultures as splintered or scattered parts of a Pan-African whole (Williams, 1987). This respondent (LH9) identifies being black with strict parenting and further elaborates that "some people may say that if you're not black then your parents are not strict". This statement appears to explicitly associate strict parenting with black parents regardless of ethnic specificity.

A dialogue between this respondent (LH9) and myself regarding the nature of discipline in Black families, commences here:

R) Ok and so would you say that discipline is part of being black then, discipline plays a part in black families and the way that kind of your raised and you know that strong sense of discipline really?

LH9) Yeah I think so because; if I didn't have my parents I don't think I would be achieving what I am achieving now.

R) Ok so let's get in to that then, let's delve a little deeper into that, 'cos that sounds interesting, so how would you describe really the way that you have been raised and kind of the values that have been imparted to you and that whole process, describe that for me?

LH9) For example I have got a big family, so you learn to respect people you learn to, like to share things you learn to respect your parents also, or whatever they say, as you get older you start questioning it, but you question it in a respectful way, so yeah.

In the first half of this dialogue I ask the respondent (LH9) whether he thinks that discipline plays a part in black families and in the way that he himself has been raised and he responds that yes, because without his parents he would not be achieving at the same level that he is now. This statement might be able to be explained through the context of a research study by Adeniji-Neill (2012) on the expectations of Nigerian parents who are immigrants living in the US. This paper looks at Nigerian parents who themselves are voluntary immigrants in the US, and how their expectations influence their American born children's academic performance. The research reveals the high level of importance, the reverence, which these Nigerian parents have for education and the fact that they expect their children to work at the highest level possible leaving no stone unturned in their academic pursuit for excellence. It is made clear that the level of discipline in these Nigerian households is very high and unflinching, which supports the Yenika-Agbaw (2009) study. I advise a level of caution in viewing the above data within the context of the literature that I have cited simply because the respondent in question (LH9) is Malawian and not Nigerian and he is also a resident in the UK and not the US, however there are some similarities between the US and the UK as Anglo-Saxon cousins and there is research which suggests that education is highly revered across the African continent as is moral familial obedience (Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2010). In the second half of the dialogue the respondent (LH9) emphasizes the fact that he has a big family and as he grows up he learns to respect people and more specifically his parents whatever they may say and that even as he grows older he must show respect. This statement fits in with the moral education in Africa as delineated by Adeyinka & Ndwapi (2010) who assert that under no circumstances should a child abuse or be rude to an adult or someone who is older than

themselves and Nsamenang & Lamb (1995) assert that children must accept what they may perceive as negative behavior from their parents because parents have the authority to act as they see fit. This is intrinsically linked to the moral framework that is part of the African universe of interconnected hierarchical forces (Akbar, 2004).

A final dialogue between this respondent (LH9) and myself in relation to discipline and respect within the respondent's family, ensues:

LH9) Uh, Like I said before like respecting the elders is a thing, which is actually imprinted into me like whatever my mum says goes… mostly its respect, I think is the thing, the culture thing which is my mum actually tells me of, respect yourself and the other's round you.

R) Ok, anything specific in the actual structure the discipline or the ways that you are expected to…?

LH9) The discipline is there, that's when you start learning that the discipline from home as well that I told you about respect and again that you are, that you don't talk back its still there you're not treated like a baby your supposed to be respecting still.

Again here in this dialogue the respondent is reiterating the disciplined order of things in relation to respect for elders and his parents as in anything his mother says to him goes without question, something which I have already theoretically rehearsed above. What is interesting here is that this respondent (LH9) directly links his parent's discipline to his high level of academic achievement, he does not perceive his disciplined family background as something that is abusive or negative in any way, as children born in western civilization may do (Adeniji-Neill, 2012; Sykes & Waters, 2009; Yenika-Agbaw, 2009).

This respondent (SA1) in relation to his family background in Africa, states the following:

R) […] One thing I have to say is, I've not been in this country for quite a long time. I came here in 2009. So I would say obviously most of my education background is from Africa, not here, and like how we are being taught at schools like the discipline I received 'cos obviously I went to a catholic school. So like it's very disciplined. So when I came here that shouldn't have changed my mind because I see people, although I see people being rude to teachers and stuff that, it shouldn't give me an excuse to also be rude. Yeah ok so I just go about doing my own thing and that's now, what's the point in being rude to your teachers. These are people who are imparting knowledge to you, to help you with your future. Why should you be rude to them, so that's my mentality, I don't have to be rude to my teachers […]

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He (SA1) continues to state:

I'd say one, in Africa like, basically in this country like we don't use canes and like don't beat students when they do something wrong, but in Africa they do. If you do something wrong the teacher is gunna cane you, use the cane on you, yeah and even if you don't do your homework or something yeah they do that. So if you don't want to be caned then, obviously, you have to do your homework and you have to be disciplined, like getting to school on time and you can never, you can't even dare think about like, standing in front of the teacher and exchanging words with him or her you can't even do that. One thing I realize in this country, like oh some students are being rude to teachers but you can't even think about doing it in Africa, because obviously how you've been brought up from your childhood. Like they bring you up in a way where you have to respect not only your parents but everyone who is older than you, even if the person is two years older than you, you have to give him that respect because who knows probably he's going to help you one day in the future, yeah and your teachers like they are basically your role models as well, so why should you be rude to your role models, yeah that kind of mentality. And also like one thing about going to a catholic school you're being trained in a religious way, ok so that also helps yeah.

He (SA1) concludes:

Well now I talk about the morals because, basically um, from the movies I've seen, like back in Africa like, in different like countries in Africa and like um what I've read about them, still that moral culture still exists. I see like the respect for elderly people, every part of Africa that I know, I know that, that thing exists. Yeah like their respect for elderly people and also religiously like, although it's not necessarily that all African countries are Christian countries, but still they have this religious background, like at least they have a deity to worship yeah.

These respondent (SA1) statements link in with the literature on the moral education of Africans in Africa, especially respect for elders, religious instruction as part of moral education and the strict level of discipline and punishment to correct behavior that does not meet the high moral standards (Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2010; Yenika-Agbaw, 2009). The statements from this respondent (SA1) also highlight the wider circle of discipline and moral education that exists within the schooling institutions and the wider community as well as the discipline that this respondent will receive within the home.

A dialogue between this respondent (SA1) and myself in relation to African teachings, wise sayings or Philosophies of life that his mother uses to guide him, commences here:

R) […] do you also get education from home? Do you, is there certain books or certain bit's of literature that your mum has, or dad has, or other family members have kind of got you to read, or wanted you to do or private studies or you know, or do they talk a lot about culture and who you are? And have they talked a lot about kind of identity and what it means? Have they educated you in anything at home? Have they kind of educated you at all or in a particular way?

SA1) Not really, but indirectly, like how they um act and like sometimes, what they might say but like type of like cultures, not necessarily what like um talking to me like um, as in like teaching the students like teaching but what they do and how they behave. First thing sometimes they might say something, that if you sit down to think about right you might think that it might be really from a cultural background or something, like they might say, sometimes my mum wouldn't talk to me directly, she'll just say something that I have to think about before I get what she's trying to say, and it's something that most times Africans adhere to because they like using wise sayings.

> **R) Right wise sayings, um ok so philosophy?**

> **SA1) Yeah.**

> **R) So it's philosophy about life?**

> **SA1) Yeah.**

R) Ok do you find that helps you to have, is that philosophy in a way kind of linked to the religious aspect or?

SA1) Everything It's just about like. You see back in the day like how the ancestors perceived things. So like probably they might have said something. So like the younger generation's also like pick up from them and they also like, it's kind of like from generation to generation, like what someone might say, how do I perceive other things. Yeah but it's not everything that is true though, but that's helped like my mum might say something but that might not necessarily mean it's going to happen or it's good too, but it's just keeps you on guard or she might say something to prove its case but that doesn't necessarily mean it's going to happen, but she is just trying to put you on the same side.

I include the above dialogue about wise sayings within this section because it appears to be another method of moral education, a form of moral guidance from the ancestral tree of knowledge to help guide the community. Its specific relevance here is its possible connection with Sewell (2009) who suggests "**any civil society should have a grasp of the old**

legends and stories which talk of man's struggle with the gods and his own hubris". Sewell (2009) argues that these stories help to teach boys how to manage their masculinity safely and morally. If this is a function of the wise African sayings it could combine with the rest of the African communities moral education framework to explain the high levels of discipline that exist in this respondent's (SA1) one parent African heritage family headed by a female. It would highlight African culture as a potential variable in raising black boys.

A dialogue between this respondent (SA1) and myself, in relation to his mother's involvement with his schooling, commences here:

> **R) Ok so your mum keeps quite close eyes on you?**
>
> **SA1) Yeah she does (chuckles).**
>
> **R) (Chuckles) ok so almost your home life and school is you know one it's kind of…**

SA1) She gets mad with me, she like, if I'm not revising she gets very, really mad, yeah she gets really mad! If I'm about to write an exam yeah she makes me get a photocopy of my timetable so that she makes sure I'm doing what I'm supposed to do yeah!

This respondent (SA1) statement could be contextualized through the literature on African parents high expectations of their children to perform to the best of their ability academically and the strict level of discipline that is exercised by these parents to that end (Adeniji-Neil, 2012; Yenika-Agbaw, 2009). This respondent statement is important because it could be seen as an insight into the empirical method of African discipline regarding the education of children.

A dialogue between this respondent (NS6) and myself commences here in relation to his family background:

NS6) Um, My parents grew me up to be like well respected, respect my elders and to have manners, especially my grandma growing up with her taught me a lot when mum wasn't there, ummm… as along with lots of other stuff, its great!

> **R) So you would say it has given you discipline?**
>
> **NS6) Yeah lot's.**

R) And does being a black male mean for you in the way that you carry yourself in the way that you walk, you talk you carry yourself, what does being a black male mean you know what does that mean to be a black male in the way you express yourself in the way you carry yourself In the way you, in the way you are as a person?

NS6) Um it means being a bigger man and also being more mature, some well in Jamaica most Jamaicans or kids you hear will say that they were brought up with discipline and not many people in the UK have that opportunity to be brought up like that so, I would say you have to raise the standards and be the bigger man and show that you are who you are.

R) So really you've got a strong sense of Jamaican culture within you?

NS6) Yeah.

R) And that culture is really would you say really discipline and striving for excellence?

NS6) Yes most families yes.

This respondent (NS6) who was born and partially raised in Jamaica explains how he was brought up to be respectful and to respect his elders with good manners. Brown & Johnson (2009) highlight the fact that Jamaican parents place a high premium on the obedience of their children, their children's manners and the child's respect for elders and their authority. The respondent (NS6) goes on to state that he has been given a lot of discipline and that this means that he must be mature and be the bigger man because he has been brought up with discipline and asserts that not many people in the UK have the opportunity to be brought up in this way. This statement again is linked to Brown & Johnson (2009) as well as others (Smith & Mosby, 2003; Waters & Sykes, 2009) who delineate the extreme levels of discipline within Jamaican culture, which can involve harsh physical punishment more commonly referred to as 'beatings'. Finally this respondent (NS6) in response to me asking whether Jamaican culture equates to discipline and striving for excellence, states that in most families yes this is the case, which corresponds with the literature already cited in this area which asserts that Jamaican parents view education very seriously and are prepared to sacrifice everything so that their child can get the best education possible and that there is a high level of discipline which surrounds this child's academic performance. This data supports Sewell's (2009, 2010) argument that with the right parenting and cultural grounding black boys can achieve regardless of obstacles, especially racism in its current format.

A dialogue between this respondent (OWJ) and myself in relation to being black being something positive, commences here:

R) Ok um it's very interesting because being black to you is something very positive, and something very inspirational?

OWJ3) Yeah it's very inspirational. I don't think err, if I was like from another race I would be doing so well in school, cause like I just see it as like from the stuff that your parents have rules and stuff, like I couldn't like… I wouldn't be allowed to like go out all night and like have a party at mine, just cause like at the end of the day its just massive consequences, like people's houses get wrecked from having a party, but like my parents would never even like dare have anybody in the house that they don't know and like loads of people in the house, cause they know, they think of the consequences already and so that's why its kind of made me, as a person, that's integrated to my color of my skin cause like its just like from little things like rules and regulations and stuff that's what err, keeps err, that's what makes you black really.

R) And do you think that that discipline, that structure and discipline is uniquely black?

OWJ3) Uh yeah I actually do believe that, 'cos like for instance some of my friends they don't exactly get the discipline and stuff and that's why they gone into like rebelling against the school and stuff like that, so you just see it as like, what can you do really.

This respondent (OWJ3) like another respondent (LH9) directly associates his academic success with his race and the parental discipline that comes with that ethnic culture. This respondent is of Caribbean ethnic origin and so I have already theoretically rehearsed the parental discipline culture and the reverence for education that exists both in the Jamaican culture and traditional African culture, which I believe helps to contextualize the above data in respect of this respondent (OWJ3).

A dialogue between this respondent (KP16) and myself, in relation to the respondent's family background, commences here:

R) What is the country of your origin?

KP16) Nigeria, in Yoruba, that's my tribe.
R) Nigeria Yoruba?

KP16) Yeah.

R) And what was the education you had there, was it your primary education, that you had there, or did you have some of your secondary education there too?

KP16) Primary education.

R) And you explained the structure there was extremely disciplined?

KP16) Yeah yeah definitely, It's very disciplined the teachers are straightforward with you they'll tell you straight about your life from the very beginning […]

R) Right, so the fact that you have that discipline, and I would imagine that mum, do you live

with your mum and dad?

KP16) I live with just my mum.

R) Just your mum ok, and your mum has very high, at home is very disciplined for you?

KP16) She was really, she was more disciplined than me much more discipline because in her time in her time her parents used to lets say if she does something wrong like too extreme or maybe going to parties comes out late and stuff like that the parents might discipline her might even like in a way beat her basically but I don't think that's totally right but I don't think its wrong either cause the parents should have control over their own child.

R) Right, so does your mum discipline you, if you do things that are wrong, she gives you a bit of a clip round the ear?

KP16) Well yeah she used to do that.

R) But you're a bit of a big boy now, so?

KP16) Yeah.

R) But still disciplined and structure and the discipline thing is there?

KP16) Yeah.

R) And she has high academic expectations for you academic standards?

KP16) Yeah.

This respondent (KP16) really emphasizes the discipline of his Nigerian Yoruba family background and school environment and goes on to explain how his mother is very disciplined because when she was young her parents would administer strict physical discipline in the form of beatings and that his mother used to administer physical discipline to him also and so I would tentatively suggest that it is possible that when this respondent is talking about strict discipline he is referring either to actual physical discipline or the threat of physical discipline in the form of beatings, which is a widely accepted method of discipline across the African continent and the African Diaspora (Adeniji-Neil, 2012; Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2010; Brown & Johnson 2009; Nsamenang &Lamb, 1995; Smith & Mosby, 2003; Yenika-Agbaw, 2009; Waters & Sykes, 2009). There are those who would argue that this brand of strict discipline has a negative impact on children's development and academic performance (Smith & Mosby, 2003) and there are those who associate this level of discipline with excellent child development and high academic performance (Adeniji-Neil, 2012; Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2010; Sewell, 2009,

2010). This respondent (KP16) and others in this chapter appear to benefit very well from high levels of strict discipline.

A short dialogue between this respondent (TL17) and myself, in relation to his parent's expectations of him, commences here:

R) Do you find that teachers have got high expectations of you, and that your parents have got high expectations of you?

TL17) My parent's definitely do have high and because they wouldn't really except me being stupid at school and like at parents meeting when teachers said I was polite my mum said immediately that I have to, because really she doesn't want me to go off the rails and be stupid, because that is how to learn and I think that education you should always be there and try your best.

This respondents (TL17) highlights the fact that his mother at parents evening expressed that the respondent has to be polite to his teachers because she does not want him going off the rails at school. The respondent's mother is Jamaican and appears to expect her child to show manners and respect to his elders and their authority and to do well at school. All of this supports Brown & Johnson (2009) who delineate the values that are important to Jamaican parents in relation to disciplining their children.

This respondent (HO18) in relation to how he has been raised by his parents, states the following:

R) You were born here ok, and in the way that you were raised, what sort of culture was dominant in the home, you know your parents, you know the country of origin of your parents, did that play a part in the culture, you know you were exposed to, in you being raised and were certain strong cultural things embedded within you as you were being raised and certain cultural things made aware to you, certain, a particular moral orientation and a particular form of discipline and a particular structure was there, is there any of that, that was quite unique for you, and that you would say was really coming from the culture of your mum and dad?

HO18) I would certainly think so because, obviously to where society the way and African, African parents would raise their children is very different, and I think that played a part in how I am today because like I've learnt um everything about this kind of culture (the UK) like western culture but I've also found out about a different type of culture from my African heritage, and obviously it has taught me different things, in fact more things because I'm seeing it from both perspectives not just one.

This respondent (HO18) highlights an African civilization/Western civilization dichotomy

regarding the way that his African parents have raised him versus his absorption of western culture. This dichotomy is rehearsed by Adeniji-Neill (2012) and Yenika-Agbaw, (2009).

A dialogue between this respondent (HO18) and myself in relation to his disciplined family background, commences here:

HO18) I think like discipline, like the discipline that my mum and dad gave me from a young age, I think that em, I think that certainly helped because like obviously because their coming from a different country and coming over here where discipline is very different, obviously its brought me up in a certain way and also the fact that an argument is that a black person has to work harder than somebody who has been born in this country their bloodline goes through this country and I think that also helps because it gives me, I'm not saying it gives everybody a higher work rate just for me particularly as a black person it gives me a higher work rate that I need to work hard so that I can have the same opportunities that people who have been born in this country raised by English parents I'll have the same opportunities as they do.

R) Ok, and do you think that there, do you think that the values, some of the values, you know that you have been raised with, you know some of the values, you know what's right and what's wrong? Do you think that there has been a strong orientation towards achievement, you know achieving excellence that really, you know you're doing your education and that really that there is a strong very strong sense of discipline that really failure is not an option?

HO18) I think I can speak for all black people I think it's embedded in us from a young age that striving for excellence, trying to be the best you can be is very important and obviously education is very important because obviously our parents are coming from where education isn't free it's not as accessible. I would say that they understand its value a lot more than we as young black people do so they clearly want to embed it in us so that we can prosper in life more than they did.

This respondent outlines the high level of discipline that his parents have exerted upon him to push him to work hard and to the best of his ability in his schooling so that he can transcend the racial barriers that exist and have the same opportunities in the UK that his white peers have. I then go on to ask the respondent (HO18) if he has a strong sense of discipline from his parents to the extent that he feels that 'failure is not an option', which ironically forms part of the title of the study by Adeniji-Neil, (2012) who looks at the parental expectations of Nigerian parents who are voluntary immigrants in the US. In response the respondent (HO18) asserts that he thinks he can speak for all black people in that striving for excellence is embedded in black children from a young age, that you have

to be the best that you can be and that black parents are coming from countries where education isn't free like the Caribbean and Africa and so understand the value of education a lot more than their children who are born within western civilization. This statement from the respondent (HO18) is interesting because he feels that he can talk for all black people regarding parental discipline and the extreme level of importance that these black parents place on education, which is supported to a very small extent by the literature that I have cited throughout this chapter in relation to African and Jamaican parenting styles. This data (HO18) also supports Sewell's notion that black people who have a sense of the cane piece, a third world sense of poverty and hardship have a stronger drive for education that transcends any racist barriers that may exist. This respondent (HO18) appears to have a good sense of the cane piece mentality of his parents who are Nigerian and Ghanaian respectively. This respondent (HO18) is also an A grade student and appears based on his data to have benefited greatly from his parents brand of strict discipline, which also appears to keep him out of trouble socially.

A short dialogue between this respondent (HO18) and myself, in relation to teachings and legends that help to construct his identity, ensues:

R) And the kind of civilized way of living within that society and the real moral, has all of that been you know you've got a strong sense of that, and does that inform what black ness means to you, those things, that kind of culture, Ghanaian Nigerian culture that's been put, is that's what has formed your sensibility of blackness of what it is to be black?

HO18) Yeah I think pretty much almost all of that, all of those teachings and like as you say legends and stuff I think all of that has played a part in my own definition of black because at the end of the day that's what I know best, that's what I know best, that's what I know first-hand about Ghanaian and Nigerian culture and that's what I can, I can derive things from it that help me and also give me a stronger more secure identity of black.

This respondent (HO18) states that his Ghanaian and Nigerian teachings through legends story telling are a resource that he can draw upon to help him in life to provide him with security in relation to his identity. This is the second respondent (SA1, HO18) to mention being taught African legends or stories that help to provide him with a secure identity. Again here I would draw parallels with Sewell's (2009) notion of myths and legends that can help black boys to manage their masculinity safely.

A short dialogue between this respondent (RW20) and myself in relation to his home

environment, begins here:

R) Ok, and now we move onto the home environment so the way that your growing up is structured within the family environment, so kind of the structure that was there, did mum and dad raise you, you know the kind of values and culture that you were raised with, describe kind of the home structure to you been growing up and the main things that you have learnt and the main kind of environment that you are coming out of?

RW20) First of all its discipline! It's like your family, when, in the black culture I'm not saying all black parents are like that but in the black culture there's a lot of discipline there and that's why, I mean there's obviously bad things that happen to the youth now days but there's normally a lot of discipline at home and they teach you to behave in a certain way and speak in a certain way as like when you go out on street and treat adults in a certain manner of respect.

This respondent (RW20) reiterates the notion that a core component of black culture is parental discipline, however he expresses this instinctively and with a lot of passion and so I thought it was worth highlighting this within the discussion rather than in the conclusion of this chapter. The theoretical context for this data has been exhausted.

Poor Discipline

A dialogue between this respondent (MJ13) and myself in relation to his home environment, begins here:

R) So why do you think that is, is it because you feel you've got nothing to do at that time, because how old are you now 15?

MJ13) 15.

R) 15 ok, 10 o'clock at night that's uh, 10:30 at night isn't that quite late?

MJ13) Yeah I would say it is late but…

R) To be actually leaving the house at 10:30?

MJ13) Yeah I would say it is a bit late, yeah to be leaving the house it is late but…

R) Cos even to be arriving that is quite late, to be arriving home at 10:30?

MJ13) Yeah, it's just motives for me to do just to hang out with my friends

R) What does mum think about it, what does mum say?

MJ13) Mum she doesn't like me coming out of the house that much anymore, 'cos there is a lot of black on black crime, a lot of killings a lot of trouble out on the road now, she does

mostly try and keep me in the house more like, make sure… she doesn't want me going out no more events that are going on, and that.

R) So she doesn't like you going out…?

MJ13) Na she doesn't like me going out because, cause of like my height and how I dress, I'd say how I dress yeah people always think people out on the road assume ahh look at him look at him he's rich we might as well go and rob him and cause my mum knows that I'm not one to back down then she knows I'll end up fighting them then I'll cause she's scared that I'll get hurt in the worst way then she like…

R) Has dad had much of an influence in your life or is it just you and mum?

MJ13) It's just me and mum.

R) Do you think um if you had, had a father figure there to show you kind of more about what being a young black man was more about? Do you think that would have helped?

MJ13) I think if he was there more than he actually could have helped me more, but I don't think him to come now tomorrow next week, next year I don't think it will help.

R) It won't help at all? He needed to have been there from the beginning?

MJ13) Yeah.

R) Ok, so with mum just being there you haven't got as much discipline as you could have?

MJ13) Yeah

R) Ok, 'cos you're a big boy now mum might struggle to keep you in?

MJ13) Yeah she will struggle to do that she will find it hard to, find it harder to keep me under control, contain me and that, yeah.

R) A bit harder?

MJ13) Yeah.

Sewell (2009) would suggest that this respondent (MJ13) has been devoid of male ritual and male love from a responsible father figure. Sewell (2009) argues that there comes a time when boys dis-identify with their mothers and assume their male status and that it is at this point that a responsible father figure is needed to orientate the male child within a safe masculinity and that this is done through male 'ritual' and male 'love', ritual is the masculine training and love is the full acceptance of the child. These processes help the male child to 'worship the female within' that is to accept the estrogen/testosterone

chemical dichotomy within and to incorporate this within ones masculinity as a balanced individual. If there is no responsible father figure and there is not a disciplined culture within the home environment then the male child may destroy the female temple within and become hyper-masculine, it is at this point then that recruitment into gangs becomes most likely according to Sewell (2009). This theoretic seems to explain the respondents (MJ13) home environment and why this respondent is engaged in 'badness' (Gunter, 2008). There is also the possibility here that this respondents (MJ13) Jamaican culture has been diluted through the generations and lacks the strict moral discipline that exists within indigenous Jamaican culture (Brown & Johnson 2009; Smith & Mosby, 2003; Waters & Sykes, 2009).

Chapter Conclusion

To conclude this chapter then, 65% of my sample provided data on the perceived high level of discipline within their family backgrounds. I will start by discussing those respondents whose data on 'high discipline' I did not include in the main body of the chapter because of its similarity to the data that I did include and discuss. The first of these respondents (AD12) simply stated that his mother had disciplined him and that his dad is very disciplined in his style of parenting even though he does not live with the respondent. This respondent has a negative learner identity by his own admission and explains that this is a result of not understanding himself culturally, thus not knowing how to unlock his potential and thereby not knowing how to learn properly. So in relation to this respondents (AD12) family background perhaps there is a brand of discipline in the home in terms of manners and respect for parental authority but maybe not in terms of academic excellence and making sure that the child is achieving to his optimal level. Because the respondents (AD12) parents are separated the influence of the father maybe minimal and the mother may have to work long shifts and therefore cannot monitor and govern the respondent's academic performance. Whatever is going on here it does not appear that this respondents (AD12) family are providing the same levels of cultural discipline as the families of the respondents who I have discussed in the high discipline section of this chapter. Ultimately then it appears as though a precedent black historical cultural vernacular of academic success is absent meaning that there is nothing informing this respondents academic experience. So I would suggest caution in interpreting the data from this respondent (AD12) who claims to have a disciplined family background as I believe the meaning of the term 'disciplined' within the context of

this respondent, could be complex based on his negative learner identity status. The second respondent (AK11) simply states that he has been brought up with a lot of discipline and if he does something bad there will be consequences. Again it may be that this respondent (AK11) has a certain level of strict discipline operating in his home environment in relation to moral conduct and respecting the authority of elders, however this respondent does not seem to have a strong academic drive or a hunger for success, and so the brand of discipline here may well be complex especially since this respondent (AK11) is from a single parent headed by female, Caribbean heritage family background, where the culture may have become diluted across generations as this respondent is British born. It is just very evident that there is a big difference in the data provided by the top achievers in terms of discipline and the data from this respondent (AK11) and others (AD12). However this is not to suggest that the data given by this respondent is inaccurate. This respondent (RW10) reiterates the fact that discipline in his household meant that he had to do a lot of chores around the house, which is something which I discuss in some depth within the main body of the chapter. This respondent (RW10) by his own admission is a poor achiever at school so perhaps even though there is strict discipline within his home environment, it may be that his parents are not educated themselves, work long shifts or could be that the style of parental governance in relation to academic motivation may be too harsh and therefore lead to a conspicuous pseudo-motivational posture in the children who still lack genuine motivation to do well (CEP, 2012). It may also be that a culture of academic excellence has waned across the generations especially regarding the British born Caribbean heritage 2nd and 3rd generations. This respondent (MJG19) simply states that he has been raised with discipline and knows what is right from wrong. This respondent does have a positive learner identity, however the levels of cultural discipline in relation to academic achievement appear to be lacking in the data in relation to this respondent and so it's likely that this respondent has been raised with discipline but to what extent this effects his academic performance remains unclear similarly to the rest of the respondents that I have discussed in this conclusion above. 45% of my sample that provided data on the high level of discipline in their family backgrounds are all A grade students at least in one class and from this data there appears to be a connection between being born and partially raised in the country of one's ethnic origin and high levels of discipline and academic achievement (LH9, SA1, NS6, RW20, KP16) and indigenous African parents for example and high levels of discipline and academic achievement in British born

respondents (HI8, HO18). There also appears to be a link between high levels of discipline coupled with high socio-economic status and high levels of discipline and achievement in a British born respondent (OWJ3) of Caribbean heritage. Finally there appears to be a link between having responsible male role models coupled with a high level of matriarchal discipline and a disciplined and high achieving British born respondent (TL17) of Caribbean heritage.

Only 5% of my sample, one respondent (MJ13), provided data about the poor level of discipline in his family background, which is a female headed family of Caribbean heritage. This British born respondent (MJ13) does not appear to have any form of rich cultural resource provided by his mother or other relatives and does not appear to have a high level of discipline at home because he is able to wonder the street in a dangerous part of London late at night and his mother is unable to control this behavior so it seems as though any form of indigenous Caribbean discipline that may have once existed in earlier generations has been diluted to a significant extent and the fact that there is not father figure in place at the home just makes the situation a lot worse if we are persuaded by Sewell's (2009) thesis. This respondent is a poor achiever at school and admits that he focuses a lot on what's going on outside of school than school itself.

30% of my sample did not comment on discipline in respect of their family backgrounds at all. The majority of this group has negative learner identities. This group may not have provided data on levels of discipline as it might be a sensitive topic for some of the respondents or it might just be that they did not comment because discipline is not something, which is central to their story either way. It might also be because the sample assumes that because they are black it should be obvious to fellow blacks that they come from disciplined family backgrounds, an assumption which has been illustrated in the data above.

Micro Subjective Structure

Social Motivation

Introduction

Negative Peer Pressure: Road Culture and Badness

A dialogue between this respondent (AD12) and myself in relation to the motivation behind road or street culture and by extension violent crime such as stabbings, ensues:

R) Does it help you to have a completely different picture of black culture, than other people have, do you feel that the negative side of what's going on, these people on the road and doing the stabbings and these things that they're convinced that what they are doing when they are stabbing one another and being on the road, do you find that they are convinced that is what black culture is?

AD12) Yeah I think they are convinced that it is that but they need to learn the right way, I think everyone can change but if you learn the right ways it's just more easier to picture in your mind than the wrong way.

R) So is the right way the truth then that has been..?

AD12) Yeah the right ways the truth yeah.

R) Ok, so really knowledge is the key?

AD12) Yeah.

R) Ok, so even though you were raised in a well-structured house, your mum gave you discipline, you still needed the knowledge to sort of keep you, is that you need the discipline and the knowledge?

AD12) Yeah you need both.

R) You need the discipline structure and you need the knowledge of who you are and where you have come from?

AD12) Yeah.

This respondent (AD12) suggests that the people who are committing knife crime are convinced that this is an authentic thread of black culture, he goes on to say that these people need to learn the right way, the true nature of black culture through knowledge. I

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then ask the respondent (AD12) if knowledge of black culture is necessary for him to have seeing as he has been brought up in a disciplined household and he says, "yeah you need both". Sewell (2009) does not openly admit that what Black boys need is to be taught black history and culture, he does suggest that black boys need to be raised with discipline and rituals of masculinity where the youthful fire of masculinity can be safely managed ideally by a respectable father figure who can affirm the child's balanced masculinity as ok. Sewell (2009) then goes on to suggest that there are a plethora of ancient myths, legends and stories that can be told to black boys to help them manage their masculinities in ways that are sanctioned by older and wiser minds.

However he just seems to mention old Greek myths or legends as useful tools to manage black youthful masculinities when there are just as many African myths, legends and stories that would provide a black historical vernacular of black masculine experience that would help to manage this dangerous brand of black masculinity. Further this sort of historical vernacular is intrinsic to pre-colonial African historical- cultural studies (Black, 1997). So according to Sewell (2009) 'male ritual' is what equates to disciplined parenting and the historical vernacular of masculine experience, is what equates to knowledge. This respondent (AD12) may remain susceptible to negative peer pressure because even though he has been raised within a disciplined household he lacks self-knowledge. However beyond this individual (AD12), this is just one view among many as to the causes behind violent crime among black youth and so this data should be viewed bearing that in mind.

A dialogue between this respondent (SA1) and myself in relation to why black boys are engaged with knife and gun crime, commences here:

R) So that helps really that helps with that quite a bit. Um so what do you think about the boys? Why do you think it is with boys that, with the whole knife and gun crime situation? Um, are you aware of the current knife and gun crime situation that exists amongst black boys in the uk? And what are your thoughts about that? What are your thoughts about the knife and gun crime? And why do you think that the knife and gun crime exists amongst black boys? What do you think the reason for that is?

SA1) That's something that I've been thinking about over a period of time and over and over again. The first thing that comes to my mind is peer pressure, and before someone could be pressurized into a group of gangs or something lets look about. Lets look at his home background. Like because, like if you have your mum around always to advise you and like

motivate you, to take your education seriously, then I don't think you will say your gunna join any gang or something. And more over I think they maybe like, em, are there to using knives and guns because of how they have been treated by some other people of different races, I think that could also be a contributing factor. But their home background and their previous experience, I think that is the reason, but that actually shouldn't give them the reason to use guns and knives yeah.

This respondent(SA1) states that knife and gun crime comes down to negative peer pressure and being pressurized into joining a gang. He goes on to suggest that in order to understand why someone would be pressured into joining a gang we need to first take a look at their home background. He then comments that if you have your mother around to make sure you take your education seriously then it is unlikely that one would join a gang. This statement is interesting because black Caribbean pupils are the lowest achieving group in relation 5 GCSE A*-C attainment (DfE, 2015) and they are the group most likely to come from a single parent household headed by a female (Berthoud, 2005; Mann, 2009; Phoenix & Husain, 2007; Strand, 2007). However it is likely that this respondent (SA1) in relation to the above statement has not seen his mother, his African cultural heritage or his wider communal upbringing in Africa as separate entities because all of this comes together in his mother's guidance and discipline. The family background of this respondent (SA1) has some clues as to why a single parent family headed by a female works for him. His communal upbringing in Africa and the strict moral education in schools and the community may have helped to mold him especially his respect for elders and teachers who he sees as role models. It is possible that this African community provided a safe environment for the respondent to embrace his masculinity within a moral framework informed by religion. There are also the wise sayings or philosophies of life that belong to this African community that reflect the wisdom of the past elders or ancestors, which may also help to discipline the boundless masculine energy of youth (Sewell, 2009). The point being made here is that it is possible that African culture plays a significant role in the discipline of African boys who may have a historical ancestral vernacular of masculine experience to lean on and which the mother can impart to her child, in addition being raised in Africa in an environment of moral education by teachers and the wider community may also help to balance out youthful masculinity. It appears then as though there is a large part of the discipline process, which comes from culture rather than the exclusive relationship between mother and child. This in part contradicts Sewell (2009) who argues that black culture and history within the national curriculum is

not the main issue.

A dialogue between this respondent (LH9) and myself in relation to knife and gun crime, commences here:

R) Ok what do you think about the current knife and gun crime that's going on out there, you know this wild west thing that is happening out there, I mean how do you see it, how do you make sense of it all, what's the cause, why are these black boys murdering one another?

LH9) Because I think it's basically nothing to do, so they find something to do, they find that as entertainment, if they had something to do, if they had a structure or if they had discipline like parents, which I had, I don't think they would be walking the streets at 10 o'clock or 11 o'clock or anything like that.

R) So really they lack structure?

LH9) And discipline from their parents which, for a young age right now to tell someone who has already lost structure and discipline to be coming home by 9 or 8 o'clock, wouldn't work because, at a young age they have been failed to be taught that, respect and listen to your parents structure where you would do what your told, but now it is too late.

R) So do you think that some of these guys that are running out there, eager to show their friends, that they can stab somebody viciously or that they are able to shoot somebody and kill them, do you think some of these things are a desperate act to in some way affirm there black ness or to explore their blackness?

LH9) No it's got nothing to do with blackness.

R) No?

LH9 No.

R) Ok.

LH9) It's got nothing to do with blackness it's the, again it's the black teenagers who are, with the culture which that they are in, hip-hop world things like that is influencing them just not to be listening to the music but to the culture as well the hip-hop life being a gangster and things like that.

This respondent (LH9) states that those black boys who commit knife and gun crime lack the discipline and structure from their parents that he had. Again this respondent (LH9)

was born in Malawi within a moral educational framework where respect for elders was essential as well as respect for others and respect for yourself regarding your actions. So this respondent (LH9) also comes from a strong African culture of morality, which potentially makes him less likely to join a gang or commit violent crime. He goes on to suggest that it is the negative influences of black popular culture that motivate black boys to go out and try and be a gangster, which is reflected in the literature (Densley, 2011; Gunter, 2008). So it appears here that there are two brands of black culture, a negative one that is a legacy of slavery and the consequent diaspora and a positive one that is rooted in indigenous African cultural traditions. This black cultural dichotomy is interesting as yet again it raises the issue of whether a stronger black historical-cultural focus within the curriculum might be helpful.

A dialogue between this respondent (HI8) and myself in relation to gangs and knife and gun crime, commences here:

R) Are they trying to black do you think, are they trying to be black when they kill one another when they are on the street are they actually trying to be black or as black as they can be?

HI8) Nah I wouldn't say they are trying to be black, I think they are trying to sort of stamp their authority and I think is maybe something that has been influenced by black people for instance maybe American gangsters for instance people may see that and think ok I like what they are doing, that seems cool to me so if someone violates me then I may imitate what I have seen someone in America do, or what I have seen my older brother do for instance so yeah I'm yeah.

This respondent (HI8) comment that negative black popular cultural media like the film 'American Gangster' may inspire black boys to go out into the street and try to imitate what they have just watched. Densley (2011) illustrates this point by delineating the names of London gang members within his study, which have literally been taken from popular gangster films usually from America. This also raises the issue of how to counter this negative reaction that violent media are having on black boys.

HI8) I don't think this particular thing has something to do with parents 'cos I believe your parent can raise you as well as they can, but you can come to school and you can be influenced by any one, and think that is right, I think what has changed me is the people I have grown up with, like my friends have changed me all of my friends are the same as me, we don't look around, go round looking for a confrontation we just do ourselves sort of thing we just stay

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true to ourselves, we just want to like live life, live life like, live life happily sort of thing, and I think people who are in gangs have probably been influenced by older people, and all these people do XYZ and they think ok that's cool, I want that protection so I'm going to go and join them and do XYZ as well, whereas me I don't think it's cool, I mean I think yes it may be cool now yes you may get status from it but 10 20 years along the line your going to think ok what have id one with my life, I've stabbed a couple of people, I've sold drugs what am I doing now, I can't get a job now I'm struggling to find a employment for instance. I think that, that in itself, that's what scares me, that would scare me away from doing any form of stupid-ness.

Very interestingly this respondent (HI8) states that he doesn't think that gangs and knife and gun crime has anything to do with parents because he believes that no matter how well you are raised you can still be influenced at school by negative peer pressure. He goes on to state that it is his friends the people who he has grown up with that have helped to change him for the better that all of his friends are the same as him in that they do not look for confrontation and are at peace with who they are. However this respondent mentions within the chapter on the curriculum that while he doesn't think that good parenting and black cultural knowledge can completely eradicate gangs or negative peer pressure he does say that being raised within a disciplined household has definitely helped in giving him a strong mindset to avoid negativity. He also mentions in his interview that his choice of friends may be down to how his parents raised him. The above statement by the respondent (HI8) is very controversial especially coming from someone who is an A grade student who lives within a very disciplined home environment. There is the question as to what extent this British born respondent has absorbed the African culture from his mother and the Caribbean culture from his dad and if this is as strong a moral educational framework as that which exists within the indigenous African and Caribbean communities from which other respondents (SA1, LH9, KP16, NS6, RW20) have emerged. It is at this point that the importance of culture appears to be juxtaposed against the importance of family structure. It is also possible that this culture appears to be juxtaposed against the importance of family structure. It is also possible that this respondent has been raised with the same level of culture as the other respondents but still felt the force of negative peer pressure, which would be a fascinating area for new research, however this is the only respondent (HI8) in my sample to make this suggestion.

This respondent (LB7) in relation to the conflict between road culture and his father's influence, states the following:

Well what I'm saying is I think it's something to do with your friends like obviously I've had a good child hood in it, and what I'm saying is that I know I can respect my dad for that I take into consideration what my dad tells me I try to um make my dad proud and do things obviously my day knows where I'm heading in life but, there's just little things like I don't know I do something little and my dad will get vexed over it I don't know, 'cos I don't wanna I'm not a street rat and I'm not one of them people that always in the house if you know what I'm saying, I'm more of a mixture like I see people hanging on road and just doing nothing but I've got a motive like if I'm on the road, I'm going somewhere, I'm going drama class I'm going football training, I'm going English class I'm doing whatever I'm not on the road for nothing if you know what I'm saying obviously once or twice on a Saturday I might just say let me hang around with these two girls but   only once in a while but obviously I know where I'm heading in life and my Dad knows I'm heading somewhere in life but it's just tings where I'm at that age where I'm starting to make my own decisions and it's kind of I don't know…

He (LB7) further asserts:

Well my Dad has always told me to be leader not a follower like he say's always lead don't follow and it's a thing where, I'm at the age where like I'm making my own options like obviously I want to do, it's my life if you know what I'm saying now like, but obviously I'm going to take on board whatever my Dad says I know that I'm going to get somewhere in life in it, I know I'm going to make my Dad proud but I'm just at that age where there's a lot of controversy between me and my dad like, obviously I'm at that age where it's kind of difficult, like I don't want to end up as a like no street rat or nothing, but um I know I'll be productive in whatever I do like I'm motivated but I'm a bit tempted to be like on the road sometimes because I wanna be with my friends you get me.

He (LB7) concludes:

Well I see more than today, people just look at today, people that like my age 15/16 they just look at today they just think oh yeah if I stab this person today yeah, I'm going to get ratings today, but what they don't realize is when a police man comes down there house arrest them puts them in a car or van and says they go court and get 5 years they not thinking about that, I think to myself I get the angel and devil technique, the angels near my head saying no, LB don't go and stab the guys because if you get caught you're going to have 10 years in prison and the Devil is like LB if you stab the guy you'll get known, more girls will want to come to you, but I follow the angel 'cos obviously the angel is trying to show you no don't do that if

you go and shoot that guy you are going to get 15 years in prison, and they angel is like don't shoot that guy go and get your GCSE's so you can become something in life like you know what I'm saying yeah.

The three statements above from this respondent (LB7) highlight what I would suggest is cognitive dissonance, that is the conflict between two opposing beliefs held by the respondent (LB7), which in this case is the belief in his father's teachings and guidance to stay away from street or road life and to do well at school so that he can make something good of himself when he grows older. There is then the opposing belief in the instant gratification of fun, excitement and the potential glory awaiting the respondent (LB7) if he engages with the social aspects of road culture and gets involved with badness or gang related violent crime (Gunter, 2008; Densley, 2011). This internal conflict that the respondent (LB7) is having is very interesting as he has been raised with both his mother and his father and has had guidance and discipline from his father since he was born which ticks Sewell's (2009) boxes in terms of male ritual and male love, which the respondents father has given him through football and other activities, yet this respondent is still very much tempted to engage with negative street level influences. This appears to contradict Sewell's (2009) thesis to a certain extent because the child still thirsts for hyper-masculine kudos, however the child has not given into it yet because of the respect he has for his father. However there are other respondents (SA1, LH9, KP16, HO18, RW20, NS6) who appear to be rooted in safe masculinities who condemn road culture and assert that it is nigh on impossible for them to be influenced by negative peer pressure. The majority of these respondents (SA1, LH9, KP16, RW20, NS6) were born in either Africa or Jamaica where there is a strong moral education culture that appears to completely pacify the youthful masculine spirit leaving it balanced. There is also this respondent (HO18) who although born in the UK has been raised with a very rich African heritage as both parents are African and embraces the ancestral legends and stories from his heritage, which helps to root him firmly within a positive African identity, which makes temptation into road culture impossible. So strong cultures of discipline seem to be important regarding all of these respondents that have either been born outside the UK or who have parents that were born outside the UK. The fact that this respondents (LB7) father was born in the UK although of Jamaican parentage may provide a clue as to the level of the discipline culture that he can provide based on the possibility that he would have assimilated English cultural norms to a certain extent.

A dialogue between this respondent (LB7) and myself, in relation to the allure of road

culture, commences here:

R) So you don't think there is any negative forces of the road and friends and you know the road culture the popularity all of that side of things, is that what is kind of keeping you in a way from achieving more are you kind of being distracted by that side of things?

LB7) Yeah I am, I'm not going to lie because where I live there is a lot people, like the people that live round my area most of them don't go school, most of them like, they don't go school most of them like their parents had them young in it, like their parents had them when they was like 16/17 like most of them they have no motive in life, like I have a motive in life I want to achieve my goal, but some of them they don't have a goal some of them all they do is shot weed and I don't know they just like 'cos they want ratings from people so they shot weed, they sell drugs they do all of this stuff, to get ratings, it's all about ratings if you know what I'm saying and obviously I live in an area, where there's a lot of people that, they don't really care they just look up to today, I look round at like I don't know 10 o'clock I'll be revising doing whatever I'll look out of my window and I'll just see bare people my age just on the road Bunning splifs not doing nothing, and I don't know it's your up-bringing in it.

This dialogue with the respondent (LB7) highlights the fact that he lives in a bad neighborhood where road or street culture is prevalent and that this in itself may provide a temptation to get involved with the wrong group of peers though he does comment that he has been brought up differently from the majority of people that live in this area and that being part of road culture is down to the upbringing of a child, which to a certain extent contradicts the internal conflict that is going on inside the respondent (LB7) even though he has been raised well by both parents. However this could mean that the respondent (LB7) may well be tempted to engage in road culture but when it comes down to the crunch knows which direction he is going to go in based on his upbringing.

This respondent (LB7) in relation to the inspiration for gang culture, states the following:

I think people like, what's it, I think the English youth look up to the American youth. When you look at that erm, like, when you look at films like erm (kiss of teeth) what's it called, Boys in Da Hood, and you look at films like that I think a lot of black people actually want to be like that, like obviously in America they got Bloods and Crips and then a lot of people round here it's called S&G (shanks & guns) and Black Mafia and ting and all these guys yeah their just trying to follow that way of life if you know what I'm saying. And what I'm saying is I don't think that's the right way to go in life obviously get an education become productive in a sport,

I think that is a good way to be known more than just um… like have a like a goal in life like ahh yeah in five years time I want to do this I want to become this, I want to do this I want to go there I want to, like you must have lots of options I think only people, people that usually live in like erm, like in the hood and they only get brought up by like their mum or whatever, they're not really erm, they only see today they only like ahh yeah…They've only got one mind but obviously my dad says yeah I could be an actor, I could be a footballer, I could set up my own business I could do this I've got different options in my head they've only got one option ahh let me go and shot, let me go and sell some drugs so I can get some money that's their life like obviously I see more than today I see my life in five years time I think oh year in five years time I wanna do this cause its gonna benefit me in the future if you know what I'm saying and then obviously the more… if I'm doing good in the future then obviously if I have kids and that they'll look up to me in a different way, if you know what I'm saying yeah.

This respondent explains that a lot of the gangs in London are heavily influenced and inspired by popular black culture from the States and especially the black gang culture over there and the gangster films from over there (Densley, 2011). He goes on to note his father's positive influence on him and asserts that most kids caught up in road culture or gang culture only see life in terms of instant gratification instead of deferred gratification that will provide a stable future. Again here we see that the negative aspects of popular black culture from America may have a powerful effect on black youth in the UK, which could maybe be counteracted by a more positive black cultural project like the moral education framework that exists in Africa and Jamaica.

This respondent (JW4) in relation to the reason behind violent gang crime, states the following:

I don't think it represents black people… well it does represent black boys and that's why most of us do get stereotyped but I don't think it represents black culture, them stabbing each other does not mean that they're representing being black, it just represents ignorance and a lack of knowledge and understanding. They don't know that killing one another doesn't get any where it just leads to jail and shattered lives and families really, that doesn't show that you are black it doesn't show the particular culture of being black it just shows ignorance.

This respondent (JW4) also suggests that the reason behind gang related violent crime is ignorance and a lack of knowledge, which could point yet again to a moral educational framework as a solution to such ignorance. This respondent (JW4) comes from a two-parent Caribbean heritage religious family background and has two older brothers as

further guidance to stay on the right path in life as they have taken the wrong path in the past. This suggests the possibility that this respondent (JW4) has been brought up in a moral educational framework headed by elders and guided by religious instruction (Byfield, 2008)

This respondent (KM2) in relation to the reasons behind gang related behaviors, states the following:

It's a jealous thing, it's a jealous and respect ting. If they see you with something their obviously gonna want it, they like it and they want it so… and they probably ain't got enough money to buy it, so they probably go out robbing. The respect ting, now that's something different, like if you say something about them in the wrong way or something like that then they just go nuts, just go mad, it's stupid though.

He goes on to state that:

No it's the way you've been brought up actually, it's the person who brought you up, like if they didn't tell you or discipline you or teach you respect, them simplicities there, or anything, then that's why I think there's this gun crime and knife crime and all that. It's the way they we're brought up, they probably never had a dad or a mum, or something bad happened, something like that, and then they just had a little madness and they have been going through their life with rage, and pain init and they just feel too bad yeah summit like that.

This respondent (KM2) explains that he thinks poverty and consequent jealousy are factors behind being robbed by gangs and also that there is a deep hunger for respect that gangsters want to literally consume their black brothers to assert their male dominance by feminizing them through extreme violence and humiliation (Sewell, 2009). The respondent (KM2) goes on to suggest that the issue of joining gangs is directly linked to the way that black boys are raised whether they have had a mother and father raise them and if they have grown up within a disciplined structure. This could support the idea that a strict moral education culture is important when raising black boys. This respondent however has been born in the UK is of Caribbean heritage and lives in a single parent household headed by a female, however this respondent is resolute that he does not engage in road culture and actually states that "trouble doesn't follow me". He says that he has been raised by his mother and his nan and that have raised in him a disciplined environment, though within the interview the respondent does confess that he has not always listened to his mother and nan, which suggests that the levels of discipline may

not be as high as some of the other respondents. It is very interesting that this respondent is not involved or tempted by road culture based on his family background, however it might just be his personality and some of the discipline from home that contribute to this fact but again this would be an interesting area of research to try and discover some of the other variables that might contribute towards a balanced masculinity outside of culture and family background, like personality for example.

This respondent (OWJ3) in relation to the reasons behind road culture and gang culture, states the following:

[…] The thing is it's the lifestyle that you live in. I couldn't imagine to live in an estate, like where they're kind of pressured into like fighting and stuff and like gangs and stuff, 'cos if like you don't go in them your practically like an enemy of your estate, an like I live in Dulwich so it's kind of like a nice peaceful area which like, yeah its very peaceful, like but uh and like the upbringing, the opportunities, I think money plays like quite a big hole in like every bodies lives, like the money that you have effects the whole lifestyle like, um like when I was younger I used to never be able to like be allowed out to roam the streets and like, 'cos my parents saw it as a bad thing and like you need to just like stop, learn and like, do your activities that's when you can go outside because that's what you have to do. Some people don't have those opportunities, so tend do go on the streets and then they start going round and killing each other, and like it's mostly to do with like kind of like, they see people as weak and they target the weak whereas you get targeted if your quite weak.

This respondent (OWJ3) highlights lifestyle as an issue regarding gangs and violence the fact that a lot of gangs hang out in housing estates or in impoverished urban spaces where there is poverty. The respondent goes on to explain that he lives in a nice quiet peaceful area in Dulwich South East London and that the opportunities that he has had to go and do activities is based on money so even though his parents would not let him roam outside he had positive activities that he would go to and so this highlights socio-economic status in relation to gangs, which links in with the literature on gangs and road culture, which suggests that a lot of London based gangs and road centered social activity are orientated around high density impoverished urban enclaves (Briggs, 2009; Dedman, 2011; Densley, 2011; Gunter, 2008; Gunter & Watt, 2009; Ilan, 2012; Reynolds, 2013). This respondent (OWJ3) is from a high socio- economic background and has been raised with what appears to be a high level of discipline, however it seems that the dominant factor in relation to this respondent (OWJ3) doing well at school and not feeling tempted

to engage with street culture is the fact that he has other social resources open to him and has his successful parents as role models. This respondent (OWJ3) does contradict some of the statistics that assert that socio-economic status is not a major factor when looking at black academic achievement (Gillborn & Mizra, 2000; Bhattacharyaa, Ison and Blair, 2003).

A dialogue between this respondent (MJ13) and myself in relation to the influence of road culture and gang culture on him, commences here:

R) Do you think that your persuaded in any way, or seduced in any way by road culture and the culture that is out there are you seduced in any way, is it something that you need to really think you know what that's something I really need to leave alone, is it something that sometimes seduces you in any way, is it something that is tempting in any way?

MJ13) No I wouldn't say it's tempting but if someone was like, cause I still got a little bit of anger in me like if someone was to try and start like a little row with me, I'm not that type of one to back down, like I most probably just try and stand up for my human rights as I have a will to do, I stand up for my human rights then most probably like I see its getting a bit too rough and that I most probably say na I aint got time for it lets leave it and walk away.

R) Ok, so there is a strong sense of justice that lives within you then?

MJ13) Yeah.

R) A strong sense of justice?

MJ13) Yeah.

R) Ok, so the problem is, is really that if someone was going to come and do you wrong, you would really feel aggrieved and want to stand your ground?

MJ13) Yeah I'd stand my ground I'd feel more a point like stand my ground not do anything

R) Even if that was to lead to death?

MJ13) I wouldn't say if it were to lead to death, like if a weapon was to get involved like if someone was to pull out a gun or anything like that, then I would obviously like back down then leave it for another day then yeah.

R) Ok, and how formed would you say your identity is, do you think your identity is near

complete, that you know who you are as a person, your quite solid in how you are as a person or do you think, your still susceptible to some influences, do you think your identity is still developing?

MJ13) I think I'm still seduced in some of it but most of it I would turn down.

R) So do you think that you're caught in between, you sometimes can be… you know you're in between your half in half out?

MJ13) Yeah I would say I'm half in half out yeah kind of ish yeah.

R) Ok, so does that mean that sometimes you can be persuaded by friends to maybe hang out on the road and be on the road?

MJ13) Yeah, like sometimes I would be at home, around 10pm then I will mostly get a phone call like more than 5 phone calls saying come out MJ come out, so I would just say you know what, since they have called me I will come out and I won't have any like motivations I will just be walking around the road, just walking around mostly looking for trouble something like that.

R) Could it lead to your friends saying oh, you know what I'm just, I might just roll out with a one shank tonight, you know I might roll out with that this evening, or I might just, I feel like you know kind of you know smoking something or doing something, does any of that stuff occur, does it draw you into that?

MJ13) Na 'cos I know like, 'cos I make dispatches of what friends I know like to come out of my house with them, not to like… say I've got two sets of friends, I've got ones that I know that are… that won't go out there and go out with those lot, but I know they'll end up rolling out with a knife coming out with a gun but then I've got other friends that are like oh yeah let's go out and have a good time try this off, but if we do end up getting moved to then we will proper fight but if they pull out a weapon then just leave it so if I ever notice.

This respondent (MJ13) explains that he still has a little anger in him, which could be interpreted as meaning that his raw youthful masculinity has not been disciplined in a satisfactory way and retains its hyper-masculine status (Sewell, 2009). This respondent goes on to explain that he is half in and half out of road culture that he is called by his friends late at night to meet on the street and go around looking for trouble, which I assume involves violent crime. He also reveals that he has two types of friends, one set of friends call upon him socially to go to parties and have fun and the other set of friends

who call upon him will usually carry a knife or gun. This suggests that this respondent (MJ13) is fully engaged with road culture and 'badness' or gang related activity, which involves violent crime and potentially homicidal weapons. Looking back at this respondent's family background he lives in Peckham South East London, which is a gang hotspot with lots of poverty and council estate properties, he is from a one- parent family headed by a female and is of Caribbean heritage. Within this respondents (MJ13) family background data he explains that his mother can no longer manage him and prevent him from socializing in dangerous company late at night. He goes on to say that perhaps having his father around could have helped but that if his father was to turn up today or tomorrow that that would be too late to affect his behavior. This respondent (MJ13) then lacks a disciplined family structure and lacks a moral education culture, which might have managed to bring his masculine fire or anger under control.

A dialogue between this respondent (HO18) and myself in relation to the reason behind violent gang crime, commences here:

R) Ok, and if we explore that then, and then we explore, what is going on out there, these kids that are murdering one another, do you think there is a lack of that structured black identity of them knowing what black culture is, the heritage and what it is about, do you think there is a lack of that? Do you think they are lost, they become lost, their identities are unstable and they've entered into what they have entered into because they are lost, because they don't have that structure, because their dads didn't show them that moral sense of boundary, because they didn't grow up with those strong African moral values, or the values of their country of origins, and do you think that they are really just lost kids are they just lost kids?

HO18) I would say so yeah because obviously these kids keep murdering, murdering one another in gang violence they find 'cos they are not secure themselves, they find security in groups, so that is why they do what they do, I think maybe if they had a stronger identity they would be able to act on their own not just act on so many influences and clearly negative influences around them.

R) Right, ok, very important there, so almost the group is their family?

HO18) Yeah definitely.

R) Ok, and they derive their sensibilities from that group from their 'family'?

HO18) Not totally, I would say that maybe on the fault of the parent, evidently they didn't do

enough, otherwise if they did enough, if they catered for their child the way they should, they wouldn't have been going down such a bad road of life and obviously that has made them, maybe the part in the right way and on this new path they've met, 'cos they had no guidance, they've met people that, they might not know it but who negatively influence them to such a degree that they do horrid horrible crimes and what not.

This respondent (HO18) suggests that the reason why these kids are killing one another is because they are not secure in themselves and so they go to find security in groups, he goes on to say that if these boys had a stronger identity then they would be able to act on their own to be independent of negative peer pressure. He also lays the blame of this scenario with the parents of these children for not guiding and catering for their child allowing them to go wayward. It is interesting that this respondent (HO18) has been raised in a two-parent family of African heritage and that his father has had a big influence upon him and that there has been a rich African culture of ancestral African legends and stories that have been passed on to the respondent from his parents and that these legends help him in having a strongly rooted identity that appears to be completely immune to negative peer pressure.

Negative Peer Pressure: Stability

A dialogue between this respondent (HI8) and myself in relation to his identity and peer pressure, states the following:

R) Ok and how do you feel, do you feel as if your against, you have a stable identity or do you find that your persuaded by peers, or to hang out to have fun or to be part of another form of black culture?

HI8) I think everyone has been influenced at some time or another by peers or older people but I believe me as myself, I perhaps have succumbed to pressure before but I think me now, I am confident in myself, I'm comfortable with myself to make my own decisions so if my friends are doing something which I don't approve of then I won't do it, like I'll try to help them also but like won't… if I don't believe something is right then I won't do it the way I am now.

R) And how would you describe your age now and you identity now, do you think that now your more stable, you know that you're going to be approaching your work and just getting on with that or do you think, that you have still got some temptation from people who are on the road and trying to pull you in that direction?

Hi8) Nah there is definitely no temptation from the road or, yeah to go down the wrong path, none what so ever, there's I would say minimal temptation from lessons maybe to talk, well I'll be getting straight on to work, I won't lie I'm not the perfect student, I don't just knuckle down but going on road no that's definitely not something that will happen.

This respondent (HI8) states that there is no chance of him being tempted by road culture, that he is confident in himself and comfortable in himself to make his own independent decisions regardless of what his friends might be doing. This is interesting because this respondent (HI8) did say earlier on in this chapter that regardless of self-knowledge or parental upbringing it is still possible to be influenced by friends, he also said however that his parental upbringing has had an influence in giving him a strong moral mentality, which based on this data could have influenced him a lot more than he estimates, though he did say that his friends have also played a part in directing him along the right path. The fact that this respondent (HI8) has said that he is comfortable enough in himself not to follow friends suggests that his identity independent of friends is stable enough to resist negative forces, which may well have its foundations in his upbringing after all.

This respondent (HI8) in relation to a possible confrontational scenario with somebody, states the following:

If I had a confrontation with someone then I will try to sort it out verbally and if I don't like someone then I just won't talk to someone I won't interact with someone, if someone in a gang doesn't like someone, then they'll probably try to beat them up, stab them, rob them for instance and me I think, I think I'm probably a polar opposite, I like to interact with everyone, regardless of age, race, sex, whereas people in gangs may only interact within a tight circle, for fear of maybe someone telling info on them for instance, I think I'm different, I'm glad I'm different, I'm glad I haven't grown up thinking, ok if this person steps on my shoes then I have to fight them for instance.

This statement by the respondent (HI8) further suggests that he has a very stable masculine identity that is able to reject confrontation or to work it out peacefully, which implies a good moral foundation, which supports the fact that he has had a good upbringing.

A dialogue between this respondent (JW4) and myself in relation to what differentiates him from those who are in gangs carrying out violent crime, commences here:

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R) And what do you think is the difference between the black on black, between the kids that are your age that are engaged with the black on black crime, with knives and guns, the difference between them and the difference between you and the way that you see your fellow black boys, and the way that you see yourself and the way that you interact in your world. What do you think is the difference between the way you are as a person and those boys out there that are committing this knife and gun crime?

JW4) Well I think it's because I've grown up with a family that's really tightly packed together, and because of my religion also being a Christian I think that has helped me as well, and knowing that I have my parents there and my older brothers I know that I can't make certain mistakes, I can learn off them instead of having to do it myself, whereas there other people that might be doing the gun crime and the killing may not have had that type of um, they might not have people like that to learn by so they might have to do it themselves which is not an excuse, but that is the way in which it might happen.

This respondent (JW4) explains that what he believes differentiates him from those who get involved with gangs and commit violent crimes is his tightly packed together family, which consists of both his parents and his two older brothers who are of Caribbean heritage, he also explains that his Christian faith is key. H goes on to explain that his brothers have gotten into trouble in the past and provide him with an example of the consequences linked with negative involvements, which help him to avoid similar temptations. The respondents (JW4) religion may also help him in terms of providing a moral educational framework (Byfield, 2008; Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2010).

This respondent (JW4) in relation to his identity and peer pressure, states the following:

Yeah I think um my identity has come mainly from my background and from my parents teachings I feel that they have brought me up to be a mature young black man.

He goes on to state:

Yeah peer pressure doesn't really have a big effect on me, I know what is wrong from right basically.

These two statements from this respondent (JW4) appear to confirm that he has been raised within a moral education culture that has been provided by his parent's discipline, the discipline from his Christian faith and his two older brothers who have demonstrated the folly of hyper-masculine ambitions.

A dialogue between this respondent (LH9) and myself in relation to his identity and the influence of negative peer pressure, commences here:

R) When do you think that (discipline) really needs to begin?

LH9) At a young age, again like I was taught in reception nursery, I was taught that, to respect the elders and respect everyone around me and to listen to what the elders told me.

R) So would you say that it is quite near to impossible that you could um go in that direction? In that negative direction, in the direction of violence and gangs and that sort of thing, would you say that at the age you are now and with the head that you have got your shoulders, it's impossible?

LH9) Unless something happens, nothing is impossible because you've got friends with influence, but I've managed to stay away from it for this long, so I don't see how anyone can influence me from now to thing, 'cos in year 11 it's like I've really put my mind set on to something I want to do.

R) So then would you say the type of black culture that you have been raised in almost your armor against these negative forces, like if they tried to penetrate you would have on armor which would make it exceedingly difficult for that negativity to penetrate you?

LH9) Yeah and plus see in my culture and plus the person I am yeah I think that's my armor which would be very difficult for someone to penetrate.

This respondent (LH9) explains that from a young age in reception class at nursery in Malawi, he was taught to respect the elders and to respect everyone around him and to listen to what the elders told him, which is a very strong moral education culture that has been embedded in his mind from very young, which appears to be typical across the African continent (Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2010). This respondents family background of Malawi and the very strong moral discipline that has been imparted to him within the Malawi community as well as the strict discipline within his immediate home environment is what this respondent attributes to being his protective armor against the negative forces of gangs and violence, which he goes on to state would be very difficult for anyone to penetrate.

A dialogue between this respondent (NS6) and myself in relation to his identity and negative peer pressure, commences here:

NS6) Umm I think it's kind of pointless really because it's just some boys getting angry about

feuds, stupid feuds and getting kicked out of schools for no reason and as I said do good things and you'll get good things in return… it's kind of like when you get a taste of it you want to keep doing it again but sometimes it just gets a hold of you growing up as a teenager as well so you gotta not take it all in at the end of it is worth it.

R) Do you think it would ever be possible for you to be turned to the dark side for you to be turned to the darker dimensions of black culture?
NS6) Never, no, I would never allow it.

R) Would you go as far as saying it is impossible?

NS6) Yes.

R) And what makes it impossible, what is that strong fire that's burning in you that makes it impossible?

NS6) Umm family and mostly my ambition to what I want to be when I grow up and that involves staying ahead on the right path so that's strong fire.

R) And does being a black male mean for you in the way that you carry yourself in the way that you walk, you talk you carry yourself, what does being a black male mean you know what does that mean to be a black male in the way you express yourself in the way you carry yourself In the way you, in the way you are as a person?

NS6) Um it means being a bigger man and also being more mature, some well in Jamaica most Jamaicans or kids you hear will say that they were brought up with discipline and not many people in the UK have that opportunity to be brought up like that so, I would say you have to raise the standards and be the bigger man and show that you are who you are.

This respondent (NS6) gives the most passionate response yet when I ask him if the darker dimensions of black culture could influence him, he is unwavering and resolute in declaring that it is impossible for him to be influenced by negative peer pressure. He attributes this rooted identity to his family upbringing in Jamaica and his ambition to do well and succeed, which he calls a strong fire. This respondent (NS6) has been raised partially in Jamaica where he has been exposed to a very strong moral culture of discipline where being the "bigger man" to him means being mature, which I assume means avoiding confrontation in order to showcase ones moral values.

This respondent (OWJ3) in relation to peer pressure states the following:

I don't really give in to peer pressure that much, like if I don't want to do something I won't

do it, if I want to do something the I'll do it, like that's something that's kind of bring me out more opportunities, like leadership courses that I've done and my bronze crest award that I won for engineering, so it's kind of like helped, kind of, 'cos you can speak your own mind, 'cos people like when you speak your own mind like say somebody answered a question you could just go and say what they would want to say, but like if you say what you really wanna say you get heard more and get more opportunities.

This respondent (OWJ3) states that he does not really give into peer pressure that much and explains that if he does not want to do something then he won't do it and if he does want to do something then he will do it. He goes on to say that a lot more opportunities open up when you do what you want to do and then highlights some of his achievements based on that mentality. The fact that his parents have had the means to structure his (OWJ3) time with activities may be a factor here as well as the discipline from both his parents and the fact that they are both successful in their respective fields and therefore act as role models. It is possible that this respondent (OWJ3) is surrounded by positivity and has the means to get the extra push academically with extra-curricular activities funded by his parents and therefore cannot see the point in hanging around in the streets being idle when he has the means to be doing something positive.

A dialogue between this respondent(SA1) and myself in relation to negative peer pressure, begins here:

SA1) I would say one, my Christian background is helping me 'cos I got to understand that, well the fact that someone is say something about you doesn't mean it's gunna affect you. Like is like what about right someone says to you yeah, for it to affect you, it's based upon you to accept it. So maybe someone curses you, if you think oh yeah he's cursing me and it's hurting me, then if someone curses you and you don't care about it then so it's basically based upon your mind and how you program your mind to think, how to taking things. So like if someone curses you, fair enough, or you just laugh about it, then you just ok, yeah for me I've made up my mind.

R) So your Christian background has helped you? Has there been anything else that has helped you to be so strong in who you are and to reject the nonsense that people throw at you? What has given you such a firm rooting that you can't be moved? That your able to reject that. Is there anything else apart from Christianity that has given you that solid base?

SA1) Well one, I would say my mum, like sometimes she tells me I don't have to care about what people say about me, and then even if people say things about me, I just have to ignore

them and go ahead, and do what I wanna do […]

This respondent (SA1) explains that his Christian background is a big help when it comes to ignoring negative confrontations because something can only hurt you if you let it and he has made up his mind not to let negative words affect him. I would imagine that there are a plethora of moral lessons within the bible that would help this respondent to maintain a balanced masculine identity (Byfield, 2008). In addition this respondent was raised in Africa within a large community where there was a strong moral education structure. The respondent goes on to assert that his mother is also helpful in teaching him to avoid negativity.

Finally in relation to his identity this respondent (SA1) states the following:

I was ummm, raised in Africa so obviously I've got the primary resources, yeah the prime knowledge of what being African and black is yeah. Also sometimes reading books and other stuff also give you some sort of knowledge so yeah some resources, so nothing to prove.

This respondent (SA1) states that he has the primary resources from Africa and therefore the primary knowledge of what being black is and so he has no need to try and prove his blackness. This suggests that he has a balanced black identity from his African upbringing and a firm grasp of indigenous black culture, which I assume contradicts hyper-masculine black cultural narratives.

A dialogue between this respondent (TA15) and myself in relation to the temptation of gang culture, begins here:

R) But what keeps you from going that road though, what allows you and gives you the mind to keep you from wanting to go the easy route of going on the road and you know if somebody disrespects you, you know stabbing them or shooting them, what stops you from being part of that whole grouping, that whole black grouping and it's quite a popular grouping, you know it's quite popular that, so what separates you from them, what keeps you going down your road, and not getting into trouble, or joining those gangs?

TA15) Yeah 'cos I know it is not easy, I know it's more difficult, I know from other people that got involved in stuff like that, it's harder on them, they might put on the act to say, or make raps or songs and act like they're swimming in money but it's really not like that, like yeah they might have a car, but it's a rental, yeah they might have £10000 in cash but their bank account is £0 like all what they do doesn't really bring a significance and yeah I just know people that have taken that route in it, just it doesn't work how they think it would

work.

Finally this respondent (TA15) goes on to state that:

Really no-one really listens to what their parents say, until they either here it from someone on their level either being the same age or they see it for them self and that's yeah taking into account some of the stuff my mum has said, and taking that on board but really unless I see it for myself, or hear it from someone that's involved in it, I'm not really going to take her word for it.

This respondent (TA15) has developed a resistance against gang culture because of the knowledge, which he has obtained from people involved in gangs that have educated him about the real nature of gang culture away from its glamorous image of wealth. He goes on to state that no one really listens to their parents unless someone of the same age of the respondent (TA15) confirms what he has heard from parents. This is interesting because it suggests that this respondent does not really come from a very disciplined background where he respects and listens to elders based on the fact that he has to discover everything for himself in order to be satisfied with the knowledge that he has obtained. This strategy sounds risky and doesn't really reflect stability in the same sense as some of the other respondents that I have discussed within this chapter.

A dialogue between this respondent (KP16) and myself in relation to

R) Ok, I think we may have, do you find that it is hard for people to make you angry, do you find that it is very difficult?

KP16) Yeah it's very, actually no-one has made me they could make me angry but I have never retaliated in a bad way cause to be honest, I have never had a fight in this school actually I've never had a fight in my life to be honest yeah.

R) And is that just because, because you know who you are and your quite secure, you don't mind avoiding it, it's like ok you do that I'm here your there?

KP16) Yeah, For example someone could like come to you like when its snowing someone could come to you like throw a snowball in your eye for no apparent reason maybe they think that you were the one that threw a snowball at them they throw it in your eye thinking just ignore them your better than that. Don't get involved then they'll want their own fight you back it just becomes endless and everyone just fighting yeah, there's no point to get involved in

that cause that way the person that probably do that thing will be thinking well this person is not acting bad so he might be thinking about their own self as well, like maybe they need to change a bit if you show them an example.

R) So do you think that your stability has helped you to ignore trouble?

KP16) Yep.

R) So it's made you quite resilient hasn't it, so is that the secret to a good life and to success, or it's at least a good start?

KP16) It's a good start.

R) Ok.

KP16) It's also a good way to do that and go on with your life really, and yeah have respect, have respect for people and that, have respect for other people and that, not only about your own self.

This respondent asserts that he has never had a fight in his life and explains that if somebody even throws a snowball in your eye that you should still not retaliate so that the person who throws the snowball can reflect upon his or her actions. He goes on to say that he thinks his stable identity has made him resilient to negative energy and then goes on to state that one should have respect for people and not only about yourself. This statement about respect is reflected in this respondent's family background and upbringing in Nigeria where there is a very strong moral education background that teaches respect for others. This respondent has a very stable identity that appears to be rooted within a very strong moral culture of respect that allows this respondent to avoid confrontation and distraction.

A short dialogue between this respondent (HO18) and myself in relation to being influenced by the darker dimensions of black masculinity, begins here:

R) And so with your structure and the way that your mind is organized and all of these things, really is that side of things that kind of darker dimension of black masculinity and the darker dimension of black humanity, is that really something that is, is that something your would describe in your terms of seeing it as abstract, to personally your way of life?

HO18) Yeah it's abstract to me because, obviously I know people like who do stuff like that but, if that is the way you want to go abstract as it is and obviously I will never approve of it,

if you are so totally convinced and I can't do much to help then, then I can't do much to help you, it's as simple as that, if you want to do it that way, if you want to live your life that way then, there comes an age where you need to account for your own actions, and I just have to account for mine, and I've got to make sure that in my head I'm doing the right thing, even though your doing the wrong thing yeah simple as that.

This respondent (HO18) states that the negative brand of black masculinity is abstract to him though he knows people who engage in this form of masculinity, he goes on to state that he will never approve of negative behavior and if he cannot convince his friends to do the right thing then that is up to them because he needs to make sure that he is doing the right thing regardless. This reflects a strong and stable identity, which when we refer back to this respondents family background he had been raised within a strict African moral education culture and with a lot of influence from his father, which suggests that he has a balanced masculine identity.

A short dialogue between this respondent (RW20) and myself in relation to the influence of gang culture on him, commences here:

R) Ok, so where do you, do you think any of your distraction, ok I'll lead to that, but where do you think your head is in comparison to some of the black kids that are out there, in this knife and gun crime business and taking part in gangs and you know hanging out on the road side, and you know just, being noisy on the back of the bus, just spitting rhymes at the back of the bus and you know just all of this behaviors, what do you think about it? Why does it happen? What's in the brains of those boys that are doing it? How have they got to this thing there and what is going on with it, and how, where are you, in relation to that side of things?

RW20) Well I think I have got a stable mind because I know, and I make my own decisions and if I don't want to do something, I don't want to do it and I'm not going to be forced into doing something that I don't want to do, and plus I've seen things that has happened to other people, where there is stabbings, and things like that, where I have heard about and I'm thinking ok, if that is happening to them, if I get involved then that is going to happen to me, and I do not want to go to prison.

This respondent (RW20) states that he is not influenced by gang culture because he has a stable mind and is not going to be forced into doing something negative. He also asserts that he knows about the negative aspects of gang culture and does not want to end up in prison. The stable mind of this respondent could be linked to his upbringing in Jamaica

where he was exposed to a strong moral education culture and strict discipline. He also has a cane piece mentality and wants to do well in school.

Role Models

A dialogue between this respondent (AD12) and myself in relation to who inspires him as a role model, begins here:

AD12) Nas like he's really inspired me as well listening to his songs, I don't know if you know much about him?

R) Yeah of course.

AD12) But Nas it's like he doesn't talk about gang violence he talks about his life and how his life wasn't perfect, most black peoples life are not perfect and if sometimes we feel like to give, and that's why most people go down the wrong path, so like listening to other people, that helps as well and 'cos he has unlocked his one, he's unlocked it but he's not perfect guy, but you know he is teaching other people, if you understand what I am saying.

This respondent (AD12) mentions the African-American rapper Nas as someone who inspires him because his lyrics are not predominantly about gangs and violence, they are about his life and reveal the fact that he was not perfect and had to struggle, which it appears the respondent (AD12) can relate to. It is possible that the respondent (AD12) has chosen Nas as a role model because he is widely regarded as the king of hip-hop and therefore is a prominent figure in black popular culture that the respondent (AD12) wants to emulate (Abrams, Leader and Rutland, 2009). What is interesting is the fact that this respondent has not chosen a member of his own family as a role model, which may suggest that he hasn't been through the process of Sewell's (2009) love and ritual. This point is supported by the fact that this respondent is still searching for self-knowledge and as a result does not have a stable masculine identity.

This respondent (AK11) in relation to his role model, states the following:

I think my role models my uncle to be honest because he's a lawyer and then its got to do with money in a way to me I think but then again as we've seen and then your known as that person and everybody wants to look up to you and say ahh I want to be like that person and then why because he's got that money he's the chief of that, he's come down from that background and he achieved what he worked to achieve for stuff like that.

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This respondent (AK11) states that his role model is his uncle because his uncle is a lawyer and makes lots of money, material well-being topping the list of attributes associated with black boys role models (Abrams, Leader and Rutland, 2009). It is not clear the role, which the respondents Uncle play in his life, as he is not really mentioned in the data, which suggests that his role might be minimal. This may still mean then that this respondent does not have a positive role model in his life whose teachings he can emulate. This point is supported by the fact that the respondent (AK11) used to be involved in road culture before friends of his died and before the death of his brother, which may or may not be gang related.

This respondent (HI8) in relation to his role models, states the following:

Definitely look up to my um parents my mum in particular who like I say came from a Nigerian back ground struggled, I look up to people, black people who overcome obstacles such as Usain bolt, um people who are generally took the positive road even people who took the negative road but have bettered themselves and changed, yeah so they are the people I look up to, I look up to Mrs. G in the school who is trying to make black people a better race and rid the stereotypes sort of thing yeah those are the people yeah positive yeah.

This respondent (HI8) states that he looks up to his parents and especially his mother who came from Nigeria and had to struggle and that he also looks up to one of his teachers Mrs G who runs the ACE project at the sample school, which helps black boys with their identities. These role model choices are interesting because they show respect and a high regard for his elders who have raised him, imparted knowledge and guided him within a moral education culture at home and framework at school regarding the ACE project. Therefore these role models have actually helped to develop this respondent into a mature and balance young man based on his interview data. He (HI8) also looks up to Usain Bolt as a role model however this role model choice appears to be more superficial (Abrams, Leader & Rutland, 2009).

This respondent (JW4) in relation to his role models, states the following:

Main role models I would have to say are my father, because he's come from a place where it was a bit hard for him to grow up but he's made it through and he's now got a family and a good job. So I think I can look up to him and say I wanna be like him when im older, so yeah I think my father would be my main role model.

This respondent (JW4) asserts that his father is his main role model because his father has

come from a place where it was a struggle to do well and so the respondent wants to be like him when he grows older. Based on this respondents family background including his religious affiliation it appears as though the respondents father has raised him within a moral education culture and has provided Sewell's (2009) love and ritual. This line of reasoning is supported by the fact that this respondent's identity is rooted and resilient against negative peer pressure.

This respondent (LH9) in relation to his role models, states the following:

My mum and my uncle, my mum because she raised me and my sister by herself my uncle because I see him as a man who never does anything wrong and I want to be that kind of person. Like he's not academically bright he's a bus driver but his life he lives he doesn't smoke he doesn't drink he treats his wife and children well so that's the person I want to be.

This respondent (LH9) asserts that his mother and his uncle are his role models, his mother because she raised him and his sister by herself and his uncle because he is a pillar of morality. These choices of role model appear to highlight the love and strong moral education culture, which this respondent has been raised in and reflects the high value that this respondent places upon moral living, which his uncle exemplifies. This suggests that the respondent in himself has a very balanced masculinity and moral outlook, which he values dearly.

A dialogue between this respondent (NS6) and myself in relation to his role models, commences here:

R) And who would you say are your main role models now?

NS6) Um I haven't really got really a role model it is just people who like really helped me to show that they care like helped me to benefit what I want to be like give that extra effort like even in their own time to help me.

R) And who are those people?

NS6) Um from like my cadets like my squadron leader KM he is a good role model um some of my teachers here MR M and that's mostly it.

This respondent (NS6) asserts that his cadet's squadron leader and one of his male teachers at the sample school are his role models, these are yet again male elders who have imparted knowledge and provided guidance to help develop this respondent into a successful member of society. This could reflect an inherent respect for an elder that has

been embedded within the respondent (NS6) during his morally disciplined upbringing in Jamaica. It is also possible that the respondent's squadron leader has provided him with male love and ritual through the structure of the cadets, where boys are developed into responsible members of society (Sewell, 2009).

Religious Affiliation

This respondent (AD12) in relation to how religion has helped him, states the following:

Yeah Religion is a good way of, cause erm recently I've only just started to think of religious terms like the start of this year I didn't really know about it until my friend spoke to me about it cause before he used to have like anger problems and stuff like this, and he went to church he learnt why he had these anger problems and it's the bad forces are pulling him down but he's got to fight them and get closer to god if you understand what I'm saying. Which will help it to… religion is the easiest way to explain it.

He (AD12) further asserts that:

I'm getting to know more, I'm learning everyday um about myself, or find about how others, but mostly about myself I'm learning I'm able to do certain stuff, that I didn't think I could do, 'cos I'm saying with my mind like before I didn't think before I spoke, and once I spoke to my friend about it, it's very easy now, the way he explained it to me, he said that it's like there is a bad side of you, like god has out there to see, if your power full enough to break through it, and they will keep coming back at you until you truly believe he said that, we are so powerful, that once we unlock it we can tell a seed to come out of the ground and grow fly, we could do anything basically because we are built in the same way as god we are not any different to him, so we are the same as him.

This respondent (AD12) who is still searching for knowledge of self, explains how he has been helped by his friend who has introduced him to religion and to thinking about himself and his relationship with god in religious terms such as good and bad forces. These religious terms of good and bad forces seem to provide the respondent with a moral framework within which to perceive, himself, others and god as the governor of positive and negative forces. However it doesn't appear that this respondent regularly goes to church or is even affiliated with a church it just seems as though he is testing out religion as a potential theory that can help him to discover more about himself. This could help the respondent to perhaps resist peer pressure and stop him going down the wrong path; however at this stage I am not sure how much this engagement with religion will

help him in his academic pursuits (Byfield, 2008).

This respondent (KP16) in relation to his religious affiliation, states the following:

I think because of the religion it kind of help you discipline your own self, My religion is about discipline as well if you're a Christian in classes in Christian church like there's classes for like children they will tell you all about discipline they tell you many things about what you should be and being the right person not doing the wrong thing.

This respondent (KP16) explains that his Christian religion is about discipline that there are Christian classes at his church where they teach the little children about discipline, he goes on to stress that within the classes one is taught many things about how to be the right type of person. This highlights religion as something, which provides a very strong disciplined moral education, culture for this respondent (KP16) who is immune to negative provocative forces and who as an A grade student (Byfield, 2008).

A dialogue between this respondent (HO18) and myself in relation to his religious affiliation, commences here:

R) Is there any religious focus in your life, any community religious focus, is there a religious focus in your life?

HO18) Oh yeah I'm a devote Christian, so that also like gives me a sense of maybe even a higher sense of right and wrong, and there is certain ways to do stuff and there is certain things you shouldn't do, yeah there is a focus there.

R) So, you've got the church home and school?

HO18) Yeah.

R) And you find that they are all pushing you in the same direction?

HO18) Yeah I would say so.

R) You've got that community grounding, the church?

HO18) Yeah.

This respondent (HO18) explains that he is a devote Christian and that his religion gives him an even higher sense of morality, which gives him an added moral focus. This religious orientation appears to further root this respondent within a strong moral education culture on top of his parental discipline, which may well help to give a stronger

focus academically (Byfield, 2008).

Community Ties

A dialogue between this respondent (NS6) and myself in relation to his community ties, states the following:

NS6) I am sure yes cause even if I didn't join cadets time ago, I used to be a bit laid back just enjoying the time while I had and not getting most of my education up most about it ever since my mum put me in cadets I've really like structured my timing like ironing the uniform getting my boots polished getting my work on time so…

R) So that really does help to keep you out of trouble then doesn't it?

NS6) Yeah. A lot

R) Yeah. And do you think that more black boy's could benefit from that kind of structure?

NS6) I would say yes 'cos in cadets there's lot's of opportunities they can do, you go trips, um flying like I've flown my first plane like at the age of 16 that's big achievement…

R) Wow.

NS6) You get to go rifle shooting and badges marksman lots of stuff, competitions…

R) Wow so would you say then… very interesting so would you say then that the flying the planes, the shooting the rifles the you know the whole all of those things would you say that those are things which help you to explore your masculinity?

NS6) I would say yes because there's a lot of ways explore that but in my personal view cadets is for me is the best way, discipline shooting, playing, driving, athletics, football classic um so yeah.

He (NS6) goes on to state that:

When I first joined cadets and there were people seeing me in my uniform, when I get to the next level of uniform they want to see I tell them what I do as a cadet and they actually some of them join up, so it's kind of like a role model as well as achieving excellence because even say as a Jamaican who earns his pay cheque at the end of the week and then he comes out of the store with a nice suit, other people who are like him before see's that they wanna be just like him, it's like a big push and role model to become like him.

This respondent (NS6) explains how joining the cadets has helped him to structure and be disciplined with his timing of things such as ironing his cadets uniform, getting his boots polished and getting academic work finished on time so there are some very useful transferrable skills being demonstrated here, which appear to have helped to boost his academic focus (Rhamie, 2012). He goes on to mention a plethora of activities and opportunities that he has embraced at the cadets including even flying a plane, which is bound to of increased his confidence (Rhamie, 2012) and provide him with male ritual especially since he has identified his squadron leader as one of his role models (Sewell, 2009). The respondent also mentions the fact that the cadets provides him with an opportunity to be a role model himself especially as a Jamaican in a uniform, which will only boost his confidence and ambition further (Rhamie, 2012). Rhamie (2012) states that the Black Caribbean academic high fliers in her research study had community ties mainly with black churches that provided them with a range of transferable skills that helped to boost their academic achievement.

A dialogue between this respondent (RW20) and myself in relation to his ties with the community, commences here:

R) Ok, is there anything in the community that you do, is there any community things that you get involved with, church or?

RW20) Yeah I go to church and I go football and that just keeps me away from everything.

R) Ok, so that also the environment, you've got church and you've got football and that keeps you off of …?

RW20) Yeah it does.

R) Ok, and what ok so the church and the football, do they give you a strong sense of direction, the church and the football, is there discipline there, is there focus there?

RW20) Yeah because in the football aspects of it, you know that you have to turn up on time and you have to be playing good or else you are not going to start the match, and obviously everyone wants to start the match, when your competing with other people to start the match, on the church side they just give you guidance and I think it just strengthens your faith in god.

This respondent (RW20) explains that he belongs to a church and he plays for a football team, he goes on to say that playing football gives him a sense of discipline because he

has to turn up on time and he has to play well in training or he won't start when it comes to match play so he has to put in 100% effort. In relation to the church he explains that the church provides him with guidance and strengthens his faith in god. The football sounds as though it could provide transferrable skills such as good time keeping and discipline and the church has a plethora of skills that it can teach young black males (Rhamie, 2012). This respondent has already been raised within a strong moral education culture in Jamaica where he attended a school with a strong religious orientation and so the football and the church going in this country may help him to maintain his discipline and to keep his academic focus.

Cane Piece Mentality

This respondent (KP16) in relation to different attitudes towards education and different parts of the world, states the following:

Its like there are two parts of the world basically, like em there's the western part and yeah… I think the poorer parts of the world they are like more disciplined not necessarily but I think they're more disciplined cause they're taking their education seriously where in this place everyone, people tend to take things for granted sometimes yeah I do that many times too but when I look at things when I look back at the world that I came from I start to think like wow I need to change cause people are suffering like, people are suffering and I'm taking things for granted like this and it has to change in a way so it does help me see things better and yeah it helps me see things generally a bit better.

This respondent (KP16) states that there are two parts of the world, the western part of the world and the poor parts of the world and that within the poorer parts of the world people are much more disciplined when it comes to education they value it a lot more and do not take it for granted, where as in this country people take things for granted sometimes. He goes on to say that when he looks back at the world he came from and thinks of all of the suffering it allows him to put things into perspective and see the reality of his situation a lot clearer. This is interesting because it means that since this respondent has been in the UK he has also at times taken his education for granted, which is very interesting because Sewell (2009) suggests that those that come from poverty have a real hunger for education in the UK, but he does not elaborate on how long this academic hunger lasts for or if it varies depending on the age of the person and if so which ages and there could be differences based on class and gender also, so there is a lot of scope for research in this area.

A dialogue between this respondent (RW20) and myself in relation to the different economic realities of Jamaica and the UK, commences here:

R) Ok, now how does that differ from school here, what do you think are the main differences between that education system and the education system that you find your self in today?

RW20) Well it's different because over there if you don't pass your exams or anything like that your basically stuck, whereas over here if you pass your exam you can just go on benefits or things like that which I think is a factor of how hard it is out there, so you have to be on top of your game.

This respondent (RW20) explains that if you do not pass your exams in Jamaica your stuck with very limited options for survival, however if you do not pass your exams in the UK then you can simply join the benefits social security system and survive off of that. He then goes on to emphasize that because of this dichotomy Jamaicans have to be on top of their game academically because of the fierce competition to succeed. This supports Sewell's (2009) cane piece theoretic especially since he references Jamaica as his prime example.

A small dialogue between this respondent (NS6) and myself in relation to his value of education in the UK as a Jamaican, commences here:

And so do you feel that really um being Jamaican and being brought up in Jamaica has really taught you to value education a lot more than the kids that are raised out here?

Um yes 'cos like It's like given the opportunity of a lifetime to study like in the UK one of the top countries and like not many people in Jamaica or poor countries like this get this opportunity so you got to make the most of it.

This respondent (NS6) asserts that for him as a Jamaican to be able to study in the UK is like the opportunity of a lifetime, which means he has to make the most of it, which highlights the academic hunger that Sewell (2009) is talking about.

Learner Identity

Introduction

In this section of the chapter I discuss those respondents who provided data that suggests that they have a high academic focus. All of these respondents, which make 50% of my sample are high achievers and appear to identities that are conducive to the

formal structure of academic achievement at the sample school, which I have based upon their teacher predicted grades and on the content of their personal interview data.

I also discuss those respondents who provided data that suggests that they have a poor academic focus. All of these respondents, which make up 20% of my sample, are either low or average achievers. I have based have based this criteria of achievement level in the same way that I have for the high achievers.

There are six respondents (MJG19, KM2, LB7, RW10, MJ13, LLC14) who do not provide any data on academic focus. One of these respondents (MJG19) is a fairly high achiever and the rest of this group is low to average achievers, all of whom did not provide enough clarity around their academic focus.

The argument that I make in this section is that there appears to be a link between the members of my sample who have a high academic focus and those who are high achievers.

Conversely I argue that those members of my sample who have a poor academic focus are either low or average achievers.

Those members of my sample who have not provided any data within this section simply have not provided enough clarity around their academic focus and this is not indicative of level of achievement.

I have not included a conclusion within this section simply because it would be too similar to this introduction in summarizing the data.

High Academic Focus

This respondent (HI8) in relation to people's perception of him, states the following:

I mean being black is my identity for instance and also I think it's something that I sort of thrive on, cos people see me and they think, is he intelligent, well, but then I'll show them like for instance, I'm sure when people see me they don't think I'm good at English, but I English

is one of my stronger subjects, it's something that I get A* in.

This respondent (HI8) has a very strong academic focus and is an "A" grade student as has been made clear in the above statement and within the learner identity table. This respondent does not perceive racism as a barrier though he acknowledges it and is quite happy with his schooling the way it is, he doesn't express a need to be taught about black history or black culture and gets a long well with teachers. This respondent also has a strong family background where he has been raised within a strong moral education culture of discipline by both his parents and has been given a sense of his mothers cane piece mentality. This respondent was born in the UK and has both a Caribbean and African heritage.

This respondent (JW4) in relation to his academic focus, states the following:

I try to have a good relationship with my teachers because then it does make learning much fun, much more fun, and it does make it much more easier and it makes me more relaxed so I can do the work. Obviously when I was a bit younger from round about year 7 to 9 I would just be like messing about and just being like pressured by like other people, then as I got older I got more mature and now I think that messing about there is no time for that, so I'd like to just get down and do my work even if I don't have that kind of relationship with my teacher, he still teaching and she still teaching and I'm still learning so I'm just doing what I can to learn.

He goes on to state that:

[…] We're going to do our education and we're going to get our exam results and we're going to get into good colleges and so on, and we're going to get good jobs […]

This respondent (JW4) makes personal reference to his academic focus and wanting to go on and be a success. This is supported by the fact that this respondent does not see racism as a barrier though he acknowledges it, he has a good relationship with his teachers and does not express a need to be taught more about black history or black culture though he does acknowledge that these subjects could be helpful to others. This respondent comes from a two parent family of Caribbean heritage and has two older brothers that have helped to guide him along the right path, he also has a religious affiliation and attends church, which may be beneficial (Byfield, 2008), he see's his father as a role model and appears to have a balanced masculine identity (Sewell, 2009).

A dialogue between this respondent (LH9) and myself in relation to his academic focus, commences here:

R) Ok and your able to now, just focus 100% on your academic study?
LH9) Yeah focus but I don't say a 100% 'cos there is always going to be distractions somewhere.

R) Ok nearer 99% then?

LH9) Yeah about there.

This respondent (LH9) asserts that he has a 99% focus on his academic study; this is supported by his positive family background and his cane piece mentality to achieve. This respondent is also an A grade student.

This respondent (NS6) in relation to his academic focus, states the following:

Most teachers tell me, even my parents if you want to really do your best you have to selfish with your education your own learning take time off school, take time off everything just to get that extra push.

This respondent (NS6) states that his parents and his teachers tell him to be selfish with his education, which is what he appears to be he is an A grade student and has a cane piece mentality drive to achieve academically and see's the opportunity to study in the UK as the opportunity of a lifetime, which he has stated elsewhere. This respondent also has community ties, which appear to further strengthen his academic focus (Rhamie, 2012).

This respondent (OWJ3) in relation to his academic focus, states the following:

In year 7 I kind of saw it, kind of like, 'cos some of the teachers would give the white children more opportunities, like they would help them more, but then I just thought you know what it's up to them if they want to do that, I can learn on my own, and like I was like failing math's because like my teacher wouldn't like me or thing, but like I just studied constantly and I just got an A* in my exam, so in my math's exam like, and like I didn't have to like thank the teacher for it 'cos I did it myself and like it's just stuff like, um some people do like see it as that, like you just have to look at it in a different way really, yeah and right just get on with it 'cos at the end of the day it's not really her, she's got her stuff already she can choose, 'cos at the end of the day it's me I want that opportunity I've got to take it so yeah.

This respondent (OWJ3) states that against the odds he put intense focus on studying for his math's exam and achieved an A*, which demonstrates that he does not perceive racism as a barrier although he did not get on with his teacher, he also renounces racism elsewhere also. This respondent appears to benefit greatly from his socio-economic status and from the fact that his parents instill strict discipline and act as his role models based on their senior job roles.

This respondent (SA1) in relation to his academic focus, states the following:

You get some black people who are not as so motivated as me it's just because of like well my family like, all of them are quite smart like, yeah, so like even my mum will tell me oh you see like my uncle he did that, he did that, he did that, so I should be able to bring that so that's the point from which I come from not like because I want people to see that I am black or anything yeah.

This respondent (SA1) states that he is motivated to succeed because of his family role models who are academic high achievers and who he uses as a yardstick for his own achievement. This respondent is an A grade student and has come from an African environment, which has helped him to see his teachers as role models and to really value his education.

This respondent (TL17) in relation to his mock GCSE grades, states the following:

Well yeah I've got an A* in geography which I am really happy about, and I've got other's I've got C's and B's so I would say I'm pretty average, but yeah.

This respondent (TL17) states that he has achieved an A* in geography and C's and B's in other mock subjects. This respondent seems to of really benefitted from the male family role models in his life as well as his strict matriarchal parenting.

A short dialogue between this respondent (HO18) and myself in relation to his academic focus, commences here:

R) And how would you describe your achievement now, let's get into your achievement how would you describe your achievement, and do you find that you can study a lot more with a clear head because your secure in your identity, your not having to muck about as much, your not having to explore your identity as much, your not as insecure, do you find that, that allows you a much better focus with your academic studies, do you find that your able to really get on with it?

HO18) Yeah obviously that provides more space for you to be like driven and motivated because, you don't have the distraction of kind of learning more about your identity because I'm already secure in it, so I can afford to focus on things that are more, like apparent and more important, at this moment in time.

This respondent (HO18) states that he is more driven and motivated because he has a secure identity, which affords him a greater academic focus. This respondent has really benefitted from his family background especially his close relationship with his father and his religious affiliation.

This respondent (RW20) in relation to his academic focus states the following:

> **Seeing as my focus is good, I should be getting good grades.**

This respondent simply states that his focus is good so he should be getting good grades. This is supported by his cane piece ideology. This respondent may also benefit from his community ties (Rhamie, 2012).

A dialogue between this respondent (KP16) and myself in relation to his academic focus, commences here:

R) So do you think then that your secure identity, which stops you from searching for who you are allows you the time to just get on with the study, there are very few distractions?

KP16) Yeah there are very few distractions.

R) Very few?

KP16) Very few, you sometimes turn your eye away from what distracts you so.

He (KP16) goes on to state that:

I never have problems with teachers get into trouble with teachers, but it just has to do with my education, face my education.

This respondent (KP16) does say that because of his secure identity he faces very few distractions. He goes on to say that he doesn't have any problems with teachers because he faces his education, which I assume means he focuses on his education. This respondent is an A grade student and benefits greatly from his cane piece mentality, his religious affiliation and his disciplined family background.

Poor Academic Focus

A dialogue between this respondent (TA15) and myself in relation to his academic focus, commences here:

R) Yeah, so when you're in the classroom when you're actually in the classroom, then would you say that your concentration is 100%?

TA15) No

R) No?

TA15) No, not all the time.

R) So what sorts of things would distract you when you are in the classroom learning?

TA15) Stuff like, socializing, yeah my social life, sometimes spills over into my school life, yeah mainly just talking really, mainly just chitter chatter that's not designed for that time or place.

This respondent states that he gets distracted in class due to socializing with friends. This in itself may not really be a sign that he does not focus enough to get good grades as arguably most children will socialize in class to a certain extent so any interpretation of this data must bear that in mind. However he is an average achiever and does not make any personal references in relation to either strong academic focus or towards academic success. He does not mention much related to his family background accept that he is from a single parent family headed by his mother. He also states that he doesn't tend to listen to his mother and prefers to discover things for himself, which may be indicative of parental levels of discipline.

This respondent (JSM5) in relation to his academic focus, states the following:

Yeah that could be one of the stuff that distracts me from my academic pursuits or whatever, like if your getting stereotyped by a teacher, that is the person you are learning from so that definitely distracts your learning, no matter how much you try to avoid it, so like having a teacher stereotype you for something bad or you know what I mean.

This respondent (JSM5) explains that teachers who stereotype him distract him. This is interesting because none of the respondents who have a strong academic focus mention being stereotyped by their teacher as something, which is able to distract them. The fact that potential teacher racism is a barrier to learning for this respondent suggests that he may lack academic drive or that his behavior warrants teacher discipline (Sewell, 2009;

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Foster, 1992). Or it might be that he is a genuine victim of teacher racism (Youdell, 2003; King, 2004). However there is at least one other respondent (OWJ3) who managed to overcome teacher prejudice to achieve an A* in his maths exam. This respondent (JSM5) is a low achiever, who does not mention any personal experience of high academic focus or high achievement and doesn't really talk much about his family background, which is headed by his mother who is of Caribbean heritage.

A dialogue between this respondent (AK11) and myself in relation to his academic focus, states the following:

R) So the only thing you would say have distracted you really from your studies is obviously the very sad circumstances, and the teachers that sometimes don't handle you in the way you should be handled?

AK11) Yeah I think that's true and I have my times when I'm like distracted in class just like playing about in class, but I try to avoid it sometimes, but sometimes I'm influenced into it, then I think to myself, when I think about it I think to myself how could I be influenced into it, how can I avoid it next time and then why did I listen to that person and so on.

R) What kind of playing is it, is it more like kind of chatting, is it more oral like calling one another names or just ramping or just brushing one another, just kind of just, is It just brushing on another just calling on another just names and just brushing?

AK11) It's just like little joking brushing things like, playing about in class just laughing cracking jokes and stuff like that to be honest.

This respondent (AK11) has some rather unique circumstances in relation to his poor academic focus at the time of the interview, in that his brother had recently passed away, which may be having an unimaginable affect upon the respondent and makes it very difficult to assess his academic focus on its own merit. However this respondent is an average achiever from a one-parent family headed by his mother. He also has a male family role model but what appears to be within a limited capacity. He also states that he used to hang about and socialize with road or street culture but changed his ways as a result of deaths in the family and amongst friends, which raises a question in relation to levels of parental discipline.

A short dialogue between this respondent (AD12) and myself in relation to his academic focus, commences here:

R) ok so how focused would you say that you are in your academic work then, based on this knowledge that you have, and everything, does that allow you to focus 100%?

AD12) No As I said I don't really know my right way to learn so I'm not focused on my work really.

This respondent (AD12) asserts that he does not know his right way to learn yet, which means that he is not really focused on his academic studies. Throughout this respondents interview he constantly talks about a lack of knowledge of self and needing to unlock his potential which he seemed to link to gaining knowledge of self. This may be linked to the fact that this respondent was very keen for more black history and black culture to be taught at the sample school. This data aligns with Okrah (2003) who suggests that the basis of education is firstly ontological, that is to be orientated around ones 'reality of self' or way of 'being', and secondly epistemological, to be orientated around ones way of 'knowing' the universe, or knowledge.

Discussion of Data Findings in Relation to Empirical Research Findings

Macro Subjective Structure

Chapter one of my data chapters, which I have called 'macro subjective structure', understands 'macro' as the large structure of societal governance and the many sub-structures that are part of this larger structure governed by state politics. Subjective, refers to the unenforced nature of state politics, with emphasis on its cultural dynamics in relation to race relations in Britain.

Within this chapter I begin by discussing data that refers to racism in British society generally, I then go on to discuss data that refers to racism in terms of material well-being, it generally being harder for black people to advance in British society, to get jobs and a decent education. There are several other sub-sections that make up this chapter that refer to specific racisms within British society and how my sample perceive these racisms. In discussing the data in this chapter I was interested in the possible link between respondents who perceived racism as either a surmountable or insurmountable barrier or those respondents who didn't comment on racism at all, and positive or negative learner identities (identities that are either conducive or not conducive to the formal structure of secondary education success). The main idea here is that if one is disaffected by a racist society, believing that one cannot advance within such a society then one could be disaffected by formal education also.

Within this chapter 85% of my sample made a statement in relation to the existence of racism within British society, which suggests that this is a pertinent issue in relation to my sample, even amongst those whom do not perceive racism as a barrier to their success. What I found within this chapter was that the respondents with a positive learner identity, either made general statements about racism void of any personal reference, made positive statements about racism suggesting that racism is a barrier that can be overcome, or made no comment on racism at all. What these respondents with a positive learner identity did not do was to make negative statements about racism suggesting that racism in some way was a barrier to their success. Respondents with a negative learner identity also made general statements about racism, but also made negative statements about racism. There was no member of this group, taking into account the entire chapter, who

did not comment on racism in some way.

Taking this data into account, it appears as though there could be a relationship between having a positive or negative learner identity and one's attitude towards racism, which fits into Sewell's (2009) cane piece hypothesis. Sewell (2009) alongside Professor Ronald Young, the Pro Vive Chancellor for graduate studies at the University of the West Indies directed a charity called 'Generating Genius', which started off as a summer school in Jamaica at the University of West Indies Mona campus. The pilot programme recruited twenty boys from Jamaica and ten African Caribbean boys from the UK. The selection criteria for UK applicants were African Caribbean boys aged 12 and 13 who were talented academically but who came from a single parent disadvantaged family background. When the Generating Genius summer school programme launched in the UK in 2006, it was launched at Imperial College London and selected 25 boys aged 12-13 from London and the South East. These boys would spend three weeks at the college getting first-hand experience of working at degree level in science and engineering. As well as this academic experience the boys in the summer school programme would also be exposed to what one could consider to be male rites of passage activities to help guide them to being responsible balanced young men, resilient to racism and peer pressure. After four years of the Generating genius programme running 90% of the boys who have been on the programme are on target to achieving ten top GCSE grades (not specified), which position them in the top ten percentile for their age (Sewell, 2009).

So based on the level of success of the Generating Genius programme, it suggests that the cohort of boys who have been exposed to this programme have achieved top GCSE grades irrespective of their exposure to racism. However there are some differences between the Generating Genius programme and my research. One of the key differences is that this empirical programme recruits boys aged 12-13 who already have a proclivity or talent for academia. Members of my research cohort are aged 15-16 and are of mixed academic ability. Those members of my sample who have a negative view of racism also have a negative learner identity, which translates into the fact that they have not been raised within a culture that breed's academic success. It is also important to note that at age 15-16 the identities of these boys are almost at a stage where they become hermetically sealed. The opportunity for 'Love, ritual and schooling', the holy trinity of Sewell's (2009) programme, at age 15-16 could therefore have passed. So the gap in Sewell's hypothesis is that racism becomes very significant to black boys, especially African-Caribbean boys, who

have not been exposed or raised in a culture that provides a resilient, positive learner identity. Something that has been revealed in my research by boys who have no knowledge of self, who have not had their masculinities carefully managed and who have been raised in a culture void of the hunger for academic achievement. It is crucial to look at black boys who are not talented academically and to find out the reason behind their academic failure, a question, which my research has asked. Also the fact that Sewell's (2009) programme only recruits boys who are interested in a career in either science or engineering is exclusive to those who have an interest in something else. My research revealed the fact that members of my sample were interested in learning more about black history and black culture than anything else, though there were also boys who were top of their class in subjects like English and geography.

Though I have mentioned the Generating Genius programme here in relation to its success in creating resilient boys who achieve academically in spite of societal racism, this empirical research programme is also relevant to the data I discuss in relation to teacher racism, the curriculum and peer pressure, which belong to different data chapters within this thesis.

Empirical research by Codjoe (2006) discovered that African-Canadian students both male and female, who were in post-high school education, attributed their academic success to having an affirmed black cultural identity. That is that their affirmed black cultural identity provided these students with the resilience to not perceive racism as a barrier either in wider society or in school. It provided this cohort with positive learner identities, which facilitated success within the formal structure of high school education. Codjoe (2006) selected 12 students, an equal mix of male and female men and women, who were academically successful, have affirmed black cultural identities, come from single parent and two parent families, though more so from two parent families and who have been born in either Africa, the Caribbean or Canada itself. Codjoe (2006) carried out semi-structured/open interviews, focus group interviews, and informal conversations.

Some of the key differences with Codjoe's (2006) empirical research and mine are that his sample are African-Canadian and belong to the Canadian education system, which although it clearly has an Anglo-Saxon dimension to it, in terms of its racism and euro-centric curriculum, is still a unique cultural entity. Also African-Canadian citizens may be exposed to a much more pro-black culture based on the proximity of Canada to the United States, where there have been black communities for over five hundred years and much

more progress in terms of race relations than the United Kingdom. Other key differences are that the sample of Codjoe's (2006) research is made up mainly of university undergraduates, though there are also some post-graduate individuals that make up this sample. This sample could be a lot more helpful in being able to articulate exactly what it is that helped them to achieve academically because of their level of education and knowledge, which could be a factor in this group knowing themselves a lot better than teenage children who may be experiencing flux in terms of their identities. It may also be that my sample of 15-16 year olds are better positioned to be able to describe their perceptions of, education, racism and peer pressure and what that means in terms of their GCSE hopes. Also in the Codjoe (2006) study his sample were made up of both male and female participants, which takes the focus off of the specifics of black male academic agency. In retrospect however I do believe that my study could have benefitted from focus group interviews and informal discussions or conversations, which would have helped me in terms of triangulation and obtaining more authentic data.

The findings of the Codjoe (2006) study do share some similarities with my findings in that those members of my sample who had a positive learner identity and were succeeding academically tended to have an affirmed black cultural identity, which provided them with the resilience necessary to overcome any racist barriers within school and wider society. It also meant that this group was not particularly eager to have a black historical-cultural component within the curriculum.

Mezzo Objective structure

Chapter two of my data chapters, which I have called 'mezzo objective structure', understands 'mezzo' as the median or middle structure, that is schooling, which exists between the government structure and the family structure affecting the members of my sample. 'Objective' refers to the enforced, independent variable of secondary education, which takes the form of the national curriculum.

Within this chapter I discuss data that supports the notion that there should be a black historical-cultural intervention within the national curriculum. I also discuss data that suggests that a black historical-cultural intervention within the national curriculum is unnecessary. In terms of the members of my sample that support the idea of a black or African historical cultural intervention within the curriculum, I have divided this group into

two separate groups, those who are personally invested, implicated and affected by the issue of the aforementioned intervention within the curriculum and those who more impartially or objectively can see a benefit in having such an intervention within the curriculum. I also discuss the significance of those members of my sample who did not comment on this issue at all.

I highlight the fact that the majority of my respondents, who are personally invested, implicated and affected by the issue of the aforementioned curriculum intervention, have a negative learner identity, have been born in the UK and am of Caribbean heritage, suggesting that this cohort may not be as culturally rooted as other members of my sample. Of the two respondents who did not think a curriculum intervention was necessary, one of these respondents made a personal statement suggesting that the status quo worked well for him. This respondent was partially raised in Africa within the African schooling system and has a strong African cultural rooting as well as a positive learner identity. The second respondent made a general comment void of personal inference and therefore not indicative of learner identity status. From the group of three participants who more impartially saw the benefit of a curriculum intervention, two of these participants have positive learner identities and are of African parentage, with one of them having been born and partially raised in Africa, which suggests that even though they can see the benefits of a black curriculum intervention, the academic success of these two respondents is not dependent upon such an intervention. Interestingly, out of the 25% of my sample who did not provide any data within this chapter, four out of five of them have positive learner identities, which suggest that their identities are conducive to the formal structure of secondary education success. Members of this quartet have been born and partially raised in Africa and Jamaica respectively and have also been born in the UK. Three members of this cohort have strong black cultural identities and the fourth member also has a stable black identity but benefits much more from his high socio-economic two-parent family.

It appears then that there could be a link here between those members of my sample who have a positive learner identity, which is mainly based on the fact that these individuals have strongly rooted black identities allowing them to excel in the status quo of formal secondary education and the fact that a black historical cultural intervention in the national curriculum is not necessary for this cohort to succeed. It also appears that there could be a link between the need for more black history and culture to be taught in the curriculum

and the academic success of those members of my sample who have a negative learner identity.

Empirical research by Tomlin and Olusola (2006) looks at the factors and conditions that affect the achievement levels of high attaining black students in both primary and secondary education. My interest here of course is the secondary education research carried out. Structured face-to-face interviews were conducted in a secondary school in London and a secondary school in Birmingham with the respective head teachers, heads of year 10 and the gifted and talented coordinators. Four focus group interviews were conducted in the Birmingham and London secondary schools, two focus groups conducted in each secondary school comprising a focus group of three girls and a focus group of three boys. The predicted GCSE grades of year 10 high ability pupils were analyzed and the level of achievement of the pupils under study was compared to the national norm. Also OFSTED reports and other documents were inspected. This research found that there were several factors that contributed to the high attainment of black students. Among them was an inclusive policy of education where black history and culture were made part of the curriculum as well as being included in extracurricular activities. It is difficult to say how important this inclusive education strategy is to black academic attainment in relation to the other components of good schools where there is high black academic attainment. Some of these factors include high teacher expectations, good leadership by the headmaster of a school who pushes an inclusion and equality agenda, a good relationship and partnership between the school and the parents of a child. However an inclusive education strategy that incorporates black history and black culture is certainly seen as a key component of a whole school strategy where high black academic attainment can thrive.

The Tomlin & Olusola (2006) research looked at black attainment generally amongst boys and girls and amongst black Caribbean heritage boys and black African heritage boys. Although my research is not concerned with black female attainment, it is interesting that black African pupils generally out performed their black Caribbean peers, which could suggest that the extended family network, which is a feature of African families could be an advantage in terms of black role models and discipline. It may also help to provide a more culturally rich environment. This would tie in with my research findings. My research could perhaps of benefited from a face-to-face interview with the head teacher in order to get a good idea of the schools commitment to black attainment, which would also of helped to

contextualize the data that I got from my respondents. The structured interview method used in this research would certainly of not worked in my research which I think is far more of an exploratory study. This research was specifically looking at black pupils that were high achievers as opposed to a mixed ability group selected in order to explore broader issues in relation to black attainment. The findings from the Tomlin & Olusola (2006) study in relation to black male and female attainment does not focus specifically on black male achievement issues but never the less manages to highlight factors that positively affect black attainment, factors that are also central to the discussion of findings in my research.

An empirical study by Demie (2004) looked specifically at successful primary and secondary schools within the London borough of Lambeth, which has one of the largest concentrations of black pupils in its schools in the UK. The study looked at 10 successful primary schools and 3 successful secondary schools. Interviews were conducted with staff, parents, pupils and governors, as well as observation. There was also detailed analysis of school and LEA data and documentation. The main reasons for the success of the case study schools researched in this study are very similar to the Tomlin & Olusola (2006) that I have discussed above, which of course includes an inclusive curriculum that incorporates black history and culture within it. This inclusive curriculum, as in my research, was seen as crucial to the affirmation of the black identities of the black Caribbean pupils that were part of this study. This study did focus on black Caribbean heritage pupils but without any gender distinction, which does not allow true insight into black Caribbean male achievement within the successful Lambeth schools. The focus of this study on Lambeth schools is interesting in that the numbers of black pupils in general is very high, which is perhaps helpful in looking at what works in terms of a predominantly black demographic population. The type of interviews and observation carried out in this study was not specified, however I do believe that observational data collection is an asset and would have benefitted my research as would a more detailed analysis of school data and documentation in a bid for rigorous triangulation.

Mezzo Subjective Structure

Chapter three of my data chapters, which I have called 'mezzo subjective structure', understands 'mezzo' as defined in the previous section-discussing chapter two. The term 'subjective' in relation to this chapter is understood as the subjective or non-mandatory nature of the school structure, which includes things such as teacher attitudes towards black pupils, the investment of the school in black history month and any initiatives or

programmes that the school runs in relation to improving black academic achievement.

The findings from this chapter were that the majority of my sample who perceived teacher racism had negative learner identities and the majority of my sample who either did not perceive teacher racism or who did not provide any data on this issue had positive learner identities. Based on my research this suggests that teacher racism is something that mainly affects black Caribbean male pupils whose identity is less than secure, coming from a single parent family setup. Research carried out by Crozier (2005) interviews twenty-five parents of black Caribbean heritage children and mixed race children (black Caribbean and white) attending primary and secondary schools. This research is not gender specific and also looks at the education of mixed race pupils, which diverts from my research, which looks at black males specifically. The fact that this research looks specifically at Caribbean heritage children, specifically in relation to teacher prejudice and exclusion, suggests that this group is vulnerable, which supports the findings from my research. However the Crozier (2005) research data from parents of pupils supports the thesis that teachers at the schools of these children are prejudice either consciously or unwittingly towards Caribbean heritage students who are being excluded or otherwise punished making them feel demotivated and disaffected with their education. Because this research has interviewed the parents of these children, the parent's experience of school could be a contributing factor to how they perceive their children's school experience. Parents could also be biased in favor of their children because of their emotional attachment to them. However parents could also be better positioned to comment on what is going on with their child from their experienced vantage point. I think that my research adds knowledge to this study in that it exposes cultural factors that could disadvantage black Caribbean heritage children making them more of a target for teacher racism and prejudice. Teacher racism and prejudice and the cultural identity of black children based on my research should be seen as fundamentally interconnected. I would say however that in the current post-colonial fragmented world of discreet racial ethnicities, where historical disadvantage is pronounced, especially in the posturing of the black Caribbean male, teachers should be able to see the challenge that this situation presents.

A two-year ethnographic study by Cecile Wright (2010) between 1998-2000, focused on secondary school processes that led to black exclusions. Within the city where the ethnographic study took place almost half of the African Caribbean men in this city were unemployed, which could indicate wider societal racism within this city. The majority of

this ethnographic research was carried out in five schools with different demographic characteristics and children with varying socio-economic status. The schools also had different black population sizes, in order to measure black exclusion rates against black population sizes. 62 second and third generation black children were interviewed as well as 52 members of teaching staff across the five schools. The children interviewed were between 13-15 years old, differed in terms of academic ability and socio-economic status, ranging from lower middle class to working class. The findings from this research found that teachers used a white hegemony that is raced, classed and gendered to categorize black working class males who are part of a black youth subculture as deviant they are diametrically opposite to whiteness in terms of perceived size (being large) and aggressive or loud behavior, which is also gendered as having male attributes. This group is also seen as being non-middle class in terms of the adoption of a black youth subculture, which is anti-establishment based on this groups structural exclusion and struggle to transcend societies racial barriers. Wright (2010) ultimately concludes from the data that white middle class teachers or those teachers who choose to assimilate a white middle class teaching ideology, construct an ideal, raced, classed and gendered client in their imagining, a romanticized white fantasy that is erected in the minds of white supremacists as a requisite for academic achievement and wider societal integration.

This study is perhaps a more rigorous piece of research than my own in that it was a two year ethnographic study across five different schools, incorporating non-participant observation as well as interviews with pupils, teachers and parents. The number of pupils interviewed was also much larger than my own sample. It looked at both male and female black Caribbean pupils and how they were excluded by white hegemonic practices in terms of race, class and gender, which is interesting because it shows how black Caribbean girls are discriminated against for certain similar criteria as black Caribbean boys, which highlights the fact that black girls can also be perceived as aggressive. This research showed how black Caribbean pupils managed to make up a large percentage of exclusions in schools, despite making up the lowest percentage of the school population, a completely disproportionate ratio. However this research did not manage to look at a sample of mixed black ethnic groups, who were born in and outside the UK, with varying levels of academic application and success to be able to test the hypothesis by Sewell (2009) in terms of culture being the dominant variable in terms of black academic success. It would be interesting for example if there was a study where a mixed black ethnic group of secondary education pupils born both inside and outside of the UK, with varying levels of academic

application and success were to be researched within a UK secondary school and for the data to reveal racial discrimination across the entire sample, even effecting the examination tiers that this cohort are selected to sit in relation to their GCSE's, because this would directly challenge Sewell's thesis.

A study by Rollock (2007) looked at the construction of academic success by teachers and how academic success is operationalized within school. Rollock (2007) found that teachers constructed two models of success, the first model was an inclusive model of success that incorporated all students and that was not based on achieving 5 A*-C GCSE grades. The second model of success was an exclusive model of success, which similarly to the Wright (2010) study, is based on the imagining of an ideal client, which excludes on the basis of race, class and gender, specifically black working class males who wear hooded apparel associated with black popular street culture. It is perceived by the teachers in the Rollock (2007) study that these black males are anti-education and therefore are incapable of achieving the exclusive success of 5 A*-C GCSE grades, which means that there are low teacher expectations of this group, which could effect the tier of the GCSE examination paper that this group are entered in to sit. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 21 school staff and 25 pupils within an inner city school. The school staff was male and female and black and white, the pupils were male and female and have mixed ethnicity. The pupil sample was made up of year 9, 10 and 11 students. Secondary data in the form of pupil exclusions, school policies and inspection reports were also analyzed. In the published paper of this study the data from the pupil's interviewed was not presented only the data from teachers, which is a shame because it would have been interesting to see how students from different ethnic backgrounds experienced teacher expectations and potential prejudice. I mention this because the teacher prejudice presented in this study seems to be specifically about black Caribbean boys who have the same sort of cultural identity, which is perceived as anti-school. This study similarly to the Wright (2010) study suggests that black students with a particular cultural identity are excluded in multiple ways from achieving 5 A*-C GCSE grades.

Archer (2008) in this paper has chosen to combine data from four separate studies in order to present her argument that ethnic minority students of different racial ethnicities are not and can not be perceived as ideal clients achieving untainted academic success by an establishment rooted in a white male middle class worldview, which has a particular way of

viewing the human Kaleidoscopic spectrum of race, class and gender when it comes to the academic propensity of other ethnic groups. This paper like the other studies looking into teacher racism highlighted the fact that black boys in particular are seen as anti-education and as not having the ability to do well academically. The two studies (The Dropping out and drifting away study and the Under-performance study) carried out by Archer and referenced in this (2008) paper, looking at the black experience of learning, were studies looking at those pupils who were under achieving or at risk of dropping out of education all together. The paper does not specify how many black students were interviewed in either study, though the samples consisted of 89/90 working class urban youth respectively. Teachers and parents were also interviewed in both studies.

This research is very helpful in that it scrutinizes the way in which white hegemony constructs exclusive academic success in proximity to imagined racial others. This research is interesting in that it reveals the fact that whiteness circumscribes the academic achievement of ethnic groups other than black African or Black Caribbean pupils. However the way in which Chinese pupils for example are perceived through a white supremacist worldview is not detrimental enough to disturb their GCSE attainment in the same way that black Caribbean male GCSE achievement could be disturbed. This study focuses on black students that are already failing in the school system and could maybe benefit from looking at a more diverse group of black students.

Sewell (1997) reports on an empirical pilot study and main study at secondary schools in the UK that focused on teacher attitudes towards black Caribbean males and black Caribbean male views of teacher racism, their education and peer relations. The study found that teacher's black and white had racist views of black Caribbean males, especially those who were perceived as belonging to a popular black youth subculture that was viewed by teachers and some students as anti-school. Teachers within these two studies were extremely vigilant when it came to the appearance of black children who were often stereotyped by teachers because of their haircuts or apparel. In this way, this study is very similar to the other studies I have mentioned within this section of my data discussion. However Sewell (1997) through collecting data from black Caribbean pupils found that these children had different types of learner identity that ranged from a pro-school identity to an anti-school identity. This range of learner identities seemed to be distinguished by the proximity of an individual to an anti-school black youth subculture and accompanying peer pressure. The findings in this study do point towards racist stereotyping by teachers

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who are black and white, however it also points towards the notion that some black children have an identity that is not conducive to the formal structure of secondary education success. The findings from my research study also show that teacher racism exists but that this is not a real barrier for those with particular learner identities. However even those children with positive learner identities in my study, state that teacher racism is real and that it creates a real barrier for children who are not lucky enough to have an identity that is conducive to achieving academic excellence. This suggests that black achievement is not just in the hands of black children who exist in an education system that postulates meritocracy. Sewell (1997) mainly carried out semi-structured interviews as well as observations in and around the schools. I think that my research study could have benefitted from participant and non-participant observation as well as interviews with teachers.

The data collected on the need for more black history to be taught for black history month, also falls within this section of my data discussion because it is a non-mandatory component of school praxis. However this data is intrinsically linked to the data collected on the need for more black history to be taught in the curriculum because the results from both of these genres of data are the same in that those members of my sample who made general comments about the need for more black history, without personal implication, felt that there was no need for more black history to be taught or who did not comment at all, are all predominantly those with positive learner identities. Those members of my sample, who expressed the need for more black history to be taught for their own good, were all participants with negative learner identities. I could not find any empirical studies that specifically researched the perceptions that black males have of black history month, or the implications of black history month on black male achievement or any study focusing on black history month that was appropriate in terms of my study. However the empirical studies on good school practice in terms of black achievement (Tomlin and Olusola, 2006; Demie, 2004), which I have already discussed above, have found that schools where black students do well tend to incorporate an inclusive curriculum and take every opportunity to include black history in school praxis, which would include black history month.

Regarding the data collected in relation to the intervention programmes (ACE & Aspire) running at the research site, not a lot of data was collected. The ACE and Aspire programmes that run at the research site are designed to provide black students with the

mindset to avoid confrontational conflicts through the introduction of an alternative non-populist mode of black culture. To invite parents to have a key role in their child's education, opening up communication links between the school and the parent so that the school, the child and the parent are all on the same page in relation to the child's academic achievement. The majority of my participants that provided data related to the intervention programmes had a negative learner identity, which could suggest that it is mainly those pupils with a negative learner identity that need the intervention programmes. Yet again here I could not find any empirical research that specifically looked at black intervention programmes in schools for the purposes of black male achievement or black achievement in general, however as I mentioned above in terms of empirical studies on black history month, studies on general good school practice in terms of black achievement, state that some the schools with good praxis, ran black intervention programmes to try and boost black achievement.

Micro Objective Structure

Chapter four of my data chapters is called 'micro objective structure', micro is significant of the individual structure or to be more specific the family structure to which the individual belongs. The term 'objective' refers to the fact that the family structure is mandatorily imposed upon the individual child legally.

The data that I collected in relation to family structure is divided into 'high discipline' and 'poor discipline', which refers to the levels of discipline that my sample are exposed to within their respective family structures. The majority of my sample that provided data on the high levels of discipline within their family structures had a positive learner identity. There was only one respondent who gave data about the poor level of discipline that he receives at home and this respondent had a negative learner identity. The majority of my sample who did not provide data about the levels of discipline within their family dynamic, had negative learner identities, which could mean that members of this cohort either felt it was a given that there was high levels of discipline in their family structure or felt ashamed that there was poor discipline within their family structure, which would be more in line with the rest of the data collected from those with a negative learner identity.

An empirical study by Rhamie and Hallam (2002) looking mainly at Black Caribbean adults,

male and female, aged between 23-40 years old who were pursuing or had completed postgraduate study, is interesting. The semi-structured interviews carried out with this cohort revealed that parental discipline is a factor in black academic success as well as parents having high expectations of their children and embedding the importance of education into the minds of their children. It was also important that the parents of this sample invested economically in their child's education, whether in terms of a private education, a private tutor or an investment in encyclopedias for the home. As well as having a disciplined, supportive, pro-education environment at home, it was also important that the participants from this study had the right qualities to succeed such as motivation and perseverance. The authors of this report also highlight desirable qualities that the school environment should have as well as key characteristics of community support for black children that can help to provide a positive learner identity that is resilient against racist barriers. Some of the participants from this study had also been partly schooled in Jamaica or had lived in Jamaica for a time with extended relatives, which was also seen as a positive component of academic success in terms of having the discipline to succeed and a higher level of academic ability than ones English peers. The findings from this research are very similar to the findings in my research. Perhaps interviewing a sample who are academically successful adults is beneficial in that this cohort are possibly able to articulate themselves better than a youth cohort who are not as evolved in terms of success. However collecting data from a sample that are about to sit their GCSE examinations is also beneficial in that you being given insight into the minds of those at the very moment that matters. The data from this research suggests that the home environment and parental involvement is the most important factor in terms of black attainment, especially black Caribbean achievement.

The empirical study by Rhamie (2012) builds on the research study immediately above. This research report is based on 43 questionnaires and 18 follow up interviews with an African-Caribbean mixed gender sample aged between 16-40+. The author splits this sample into two cohorts, "high fliers" and the "underachievers", both groups have been identified by their qualifications, school experiences and their current occupations. The data collected from the 'high fliers' similarly to the Rhamie and Hallam (2002) study immediately above identified their family dynamic and parental involvement as key to their academic success for the same reasons as the Rhamie and Hallam (2002) study. The high fliers also attributed their success to community involvement like the church and sports clubs because these

community organizations helped to provide further discipline and transferable skills, which the high fliers could utilize in their academic studies. An interesting finding from this study is that this high flying cohort reported negative experiences at school, even teacher racism that they managed to overcome in order to succeed, perhaps because this group did not place too much emphasis on this negativity because they had gained the necessary resilience from home and from community activities to be able to transcend any barriers that presented themselves. This finding is different to the findings in my study, because all of the 'high fliers' or high achieving participants in my study did not report any personal experiences of teacher racism or negative school experiences that affected their academic achievement. The Rhamie (2012) study then, suggests that there may be a problem with racist teachers who prejudice black pupils regardless of their academic ability because of deeply held prejudicial beliefs. This finding asks a question of Sewell (2009) who suggests that black male underachievement has more to do with family background and peer pressure and less to do with teachers that are inherently racist. The Rhamie (2012) study in relation to my research means that I could have looked at a wider sample across different secondary school research sites to get a more rounded picture of school factors versus home and community factors in relation to black male achievement.

The underachieving cohort from the Rhamie (2012) study had much more of an unstable family dynamic, where there was conflict with parents who were not as involved with their children's education as the parents of the high fliers. This suggested that there was a completely different parental culture between both of these high and low attaining groups. The low attaining cohort also seemed not to get as much out of their community activities as the high attaining group. As a result of these factors the low attaining group seemed to invest a lot more into the affects of teacher racism on their academic performance than the high attaining group. These findings are in line with the findings from my study.

The only other two empirical research studies that is relevant here are firstly Codjoe (2006) who finds that black cultural affirmation in the homes of black students helps to develop a black affirmed identity in these students, which is resilient enough to succeed academically. I have already discussed this empirical study in depth above. Secondly Sewell (2009) who finds that a highly disciplined family background inclusive of a strong male father figure who is invested in his child's development, is crucial to black male academic success. I have also discussed this empirical study in depth above. The findings from both of these studies on family background are in line with the findings from my

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study.

Micro Subjective Structure

Chapter five of my data chapters is called 'micro subjective structure', 'micro' is significant of the individual, 'subjective' means how the individual is structured or has been structured in terms of the free will choices that he makes that are not mandatorily enforced.

Within this chapter of my data discussion, there are several different themes that I shall discuss thematically. The first two themes that I shall discuss together are firstly 'negative peer pressure, road culture and badness' and 'negative peer pressure and stability'. The first theme relates to negative black male peer pressure, which is intrinsically linked to road culture or street culture and badness or criminality. The main findings from my studies here are that the majority of my sample apart from two participants provided data on this topic without any personal implication. They expressed that road culture and criminality especially black on black male violence was negative and that they are strong enough to avoid this negative peer pressure. Most of my participants suggested that the reason why black males get caught up in road culture and badness is because they have not been raised properly by their parents and that they do not have a strong enough identity to be able to withstand the peer pressure that would push them in the wrong direction. This type of data was given by those with positive and negative learner identities, which could mean that my sample are socially conscious of the negative stigma that black street culture has in the UK and did not therefore want to provide data that they felt could reflect badly on them. Or it could just be that my participants are generally aware of the consequences of getting involved with things like knife and gun crime, especially since the research site for my study was located in an area where gang activity and gang related murders are not uncommon. This would be another interesting area to research that could challenge the research of Sewell (1997, 2009) who suggests that susceptibility to negative peer pressure is mainly the province of black male underachievers. The theme 'negative peer pressure and stability' just refers to data that provides strong reasons why members of my sample could not be seduced by negative peer pressure. The majority of this data was given by those who have positive learner identities as well as coming from a very disciplined pro-education home environment both inside and outside of the UK. The two main empirical studies that relate to this data are the studies by Sewell (1997, 2009), which I have already discussed in depth elsewhere. However it is important to mention here in

relation to Sewell's (1997, 2009) findings and the findings from my study that a member of my sample had been raised by both his parents including his father who has provided him with fatherly love and male ritual in terms of masculine orientated activities like football where they have been able to bond. The data from this respondent (LB7) cannot praise the efforts of his father enough in terms of his involvement. However this respondent (LB7) is still experiencing cognitive dissonance conflict between the guidance and discipline of his father and the negative peer pressure that he is experiencing from friends simultaneously. He mentions that where he lives (council area) there is a lot of negative peer pressure that is tempting him. This scenario seems to majorly conflict with Sewell who refers to the lack of male love and ritual as a central issue in the lives of black male underachievers. Based on the data from members of my sample who have positive learner identities, I think that the reason for this tension or paradox may have something to do with culture, the fact that this respondents (LB7) father was born and raised in the UK, that perhaps this father's Jamaican culture in terms of discipline has maybe been diluted and that he is unable to provide the respondent (LB7) with the black cultural identity that has been given to other members of my sample who were either born outside of the UK or who are first generation Africans or Jamaicans themselves as opposed to second generation which the respondent (LB7) in question is. This tension in findings is certainly fertile soil for further empirical inquiry.

The next theme I shall discuss in relation to this data chapter is 'role models'. The majority of my sample who provided data on role models stated that their role models were members of their family, mainly mum and dad but also an uncle. One of my respondents stated that his cadet squadron leader was his role model, which shows a very strong community tie there. The majority of my sample who provided data on role models was those who had positive learner identities. The empirical study findings by Rhamie and Hallam (2002) and Rhamie (2012) showed that the high academic achievers were those with positive and supportive family backgrounds and that the high academic achievers saw their parents as role models. These findings support the findings in my study. A report of an empirical study by Warren (2005) doesn't present findings as such; the paper just provides statements by participants in the study. The sample of the study was 15 African-Caribbean young men from three inner London secondary schools. The study was based on a mentoring programme that was introduced in schools to help those students perceived to be at risk of exclusion from school. The mentors helped these African-Caribbean male

pupils to try and look at alternative ways of dealing with confrontational situations that could lead to exclusion. Looking at black historical figures that managed to deal with racism, which was far more radical in that time, without resorting to physical confrontation that would probably of had an adverse affect, did this. So through this technique of getting boys to identify with positive black historical figures who have achieved great things, this helped these children to try and choose a method of refusal of antagonism to transcend confrontation and to get an education and succeed. The mentors then, helped these at risk black males to identify with positive black historical figures as role models whose behavior they could try and assimilate. Refusal in this Warren (2005) study appears to provide resilience to racist barriers perhaps in the same way that Rhamie's (2012) high fliers were resilient to negative or racist school experiences. These findings are similar to the findings in my study, which found that those members of my sample who had positive learner identities tended to see racism as a surmountable barrier. Sewell (2009) also states that teaching black boys how to manage and control their masculinity so that it is balanced is key to the refusal of confrontation. That black boys need positive black male role models to provide "love, ritual and schooling" a concept I have explained in full elsewhere (Sewell, 2009).

The next theme I shall discuss is 'religious affiliation'. Some of the data in this section overlaps with the data in the next theme 'community ties', however 'religious affiliation' includes data that refers purely to the power of religious faith rather than the community church aspect of religion. The first respondent (AD12) to provide data in this section has a negative learner identity and talks about the power of religion in terms of the insight that it provides him in terms of himself and the pathway that he should take in life. Fundamentally religion helps to provide this respondent with knowledge of self. This respondent did not mention attending church or any benefits associated with attending church. The second respondent (KP16) to provide data here talks about the discipline inherent in the Christian faith to guide oneself and also the discipline that exists within classes at the Christian church where children are taught about who to be and what is the right and wrong path to follow. The final respondent (HO18) to provide data here explains that he is a devote Christian and that Christianity gives him a higher sense of what is right and what is wrong, he does not mention attending church or any benefits associated with attending church. Empirical research carried out by Byfield (2008) on the impact of religion on the educational achievement of black boys both in the US and the UK found that both belief in god and attendance to church were powerful motivators in terms of academic

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achievement. Belief in god and prayer helped participants to stay on the right path and to try and reach their potential by utilizing the gifts that god has given them, which it would be a sin to waste by being idle. Attending church was also very powerful in that it provided a disciplined environment where children could learn, read the bible, have positive role models to follow and take part in various other activities. Attending church provided the participants of the study with transferable skills that could be used in class. Religious affiliation then, based on this study, was seen as something that pragmatically helped black males to achieve academically. The sample was made up of 40 black males 25 years and under who attended old and new universities in both the US and UK, who had varying socio-economic status, and belonged to both single parent and two parent families. One respondent (AD12) in my sample who has a negative learner identity also found religion helpful but more so in terms of finding or establishing identity rather than religion affirming his identity. Also this respondent (AD12) did not mention prayer or attending church, he seemed to view the Christian religion as more of a theoretical framework for self-knowledge. This finding from my research raises the question as to how black male UK underachievers can use religion outside of the church to help construct a positive learner identity (an identity conducive to formal education success). The Byfield (2008) study although focusing on black male UK and US university students, shares similar findings with my research. That religion can have a positive affect on black male academic achievement.

The next theme I shall discuss is 'community ties'. The two respondents that provided data here are pupils who both have positive learner identities. The data here, which refers to the army cadets and football training respectively, talks a lot about the discipline that these respective environments provide. The army Cadets provides discipline in terms of having to wear a uniform and being presentable at all times, as well as having to take part in army training, learn how to shoot rifles and other activities which require skill and discipline. The respondent who plays football explains that football training requires one to be punctual and arrive to training on time, as well as having to perform well in training to have a chance of being selected for the team. Both respondents reflect on the fact that these community ties provide structure, guidance and discipline, which it appears helps them to achieve academically. These findings are in line with the findings of empirical studies that researched the affect of community ties on black achievement (Rhamie and Hallam, 2002; Rhamie, 2012; Byfield, 2008), which I have already discussed in full elsewhere.

The final theme I shall discuss is 'cane piece mentality'. Cane piece mentality is a

theoretical concept presented by Sewell (2009), which I have already discussed in full elsewhere. This theory suggests that black males in particular benefit from having a sense of the 'cane piece', the term cane piece refers to the slave plantations that concentrated on the refinement of sugar cane. The idea is that those who have had to suffer in an extremely tough environment, usually somewhere considered to be third world or underdeveloped, tend to have a hunger or drive for success, especially in environments where there is an abundance of opportunity that they have not been exposed to before. In terms of my research study, the cane piece mentality refers to those members of my sample who have either been raised in underdeveloped countries outside of the UK or whose parents have been born in an underdeveloped country outside of the UK who has been able to instill a sense of the cane piece into them. Those members of my sample, who gave data on the cane piece mentality, were all born and partially raised in Africa and Jamaica respectively. All of these respondents have a positive learner identity, which provides them with a hunger for academic success. These findings are in line with the findings of Sewell (2009).

Learner Identity

The final section to this chapter (chapter 5) is a sort of sub-chapter, which I have called learner identity. It has two components to it, high academic focus and poor academic focus. This section is more of a summary than anything else in terms of the data provided in each section. The participants in my sample who have a positive learner identity, which correlates straightforwardly with the rest of the data I have collected, provide the data in the high academic focus section of this sub-chapter. The majority of the participants in my sample who have a negative learner identity, which also correlates straightforwardly with the rest of the data I have collected, provide the data in the poor academic focus section of this sub-chapter. So to conclude, the majority of my sample who has provided data on having a high academic focus also has a positive learner identity. The majority of my sample who have provided data on having a poor academic focus, also have a negative learner identity.

Conclusion

This research study has been concerned with looking at <u>The Perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their Educational Achievement</u>. From my reading of the literature on black male secondary school achievement, I realised that the main participants for my study were going to be black boys who were African-Caribbean, which means black boys who are of African heritage, black boys who are of Caribbean heritage and black boys that have mixed black African and black Caribbean heritage. Because I wanted my main sample of black boys to be made up of different black ethnicities across the African-Caribbean spectrum, have varying socio-economic status, be from different family structures and to have different levels of academic ability and focus, I really needed to make sure that my research site had a large black male population that would be likely to contain this wide criteria of attributes within it, in order for me to be able to obtain the best possible data. Once I had collated all of my data, this data was able to help me towards a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their educational achievement. This heterogeneity amongst my sample was crucial in helping me to understand different levels of academic success amongst black boys and the different things that might affect this success such as family structure, racism, culture and socio-economic status. Imperative to the findings were the key concepts that the researcher used to make sense of the data. These came from literature on societal racism, literature on black male achievement, literature on black criminality, literature on racist pedagogy, literature on black parental cultures and literature on black masculinity. Some Key concepts that were used to frame the data were: teacher racism, exclusive curriculum, institutional racism, road culture, knife and gun crime, cane piece mentality, societal racism, positive learner identity, negative learner identity and discipline.

The structure of my data that was framed within some of the key concepts mentioned above fell into what I called 'Macro subjective structure', which is the non-mandatory, unimposed nature of Britain's socio-political landscape, 'Mezzo objective structure', which is the mandatorily imposed curriculum structure of the school (as the middle structure between the individual structure and the governmental structure), 'Mezzo subjective structure', which is the unimposed nature of the school structure (interpretation of curriculum, black history month and assemblies), 'Micro objective structure', which is the legally imposed family structure of the individual participant, and then finally 'Micro subjective structure', which is the non-legally imposed nature of the individual participant

(how they are structured in terms of peer pressure and academic focus). This organisation of the data seemed to emerge naturally from the coding of the data and seemed highly logical because of how the different structures representing the data interconnect and coexist within a sort of ecosystem that based on the data appears to be definitive in terms of black male secondary school achievement.

In summarising my data findings in the next section of this conclusion, I shall use the main research questions that formed the above structuring of the data these main research questions emerged from my review of the literature and from my pilot study.

Summary of Data Findings

I will now summarise my data findings by categorising them into the main research questions from my study.

Racism

Racism formed one of the main areas for questioning in my research study because of its importance in the literature and because if its centrality in my pilot study findings. The questions that I asked the participants in my research study were orientated around participant's perceptions of racism within wider society and around participant's perceptions of teacher racism or teacher prejudice.

85% of my sample provided data on the existence of wider societal racism within Britain, which is an interesting statistic, however even more interesting and also more relevant in terms of this research study, was the heterogeneous perception of this racism from amongst my sample. There were members of my sample who perceived this racism as a barrier that had the power to stop them from achieving and there were members of my sample who perceived this racism as a barrier that could be transcended. The majority of the members of my sample that perceived this racism as a barrier to success had a negative learner identity profile and the majority of my sample that perceived this racism as a barrier that could be transcended had a positive learner identity profile. 40.5% of my sample perceived teacher racism, which is less than half of my sample and the majority of my sample that did perceive teacher racism as a barrier to their achievement had the profile of a negative learner identity (an identity that is not conducive to formal secondary education success). The majority of my sample that did not perceive teacher

racism and that did not provide data on teacher racism had profiles of positive learner identities. These findings are in line with the findings from Sewell (1997, 2009) who states that racism in the 21st century is not powerful enough to prevent those students who want to achieve from achieving and that the real issue with black male achievement is the family structure, how that child has been raised, their consequent hunger for achievement and their susceptibility to peer pressure. Ultimately what Sewell is arguing is that those black boys with the right black cultural identity will not see the racism that they encounter as a barrier to their success, whilst those black boys with the wrong black cultural identity are much more likely to perceive the racism that they encounter as a barrier to their achievement or success. Those members of my sample who have positive learner identities also appear to have affirmed black cultural identities; secure in who they are as black boys. They also come from disciplined pro-education family backgrounds and some of these participants have been raised and partially schooled outside of the UK and have a cane piece mentality that affords them a hunger for academic success.

Black Historical Cultural Intervention

Black historical-cultural intervention refers to questions and data about the need for more black history and culture to be taught in class as part of the curriculum and for more black history and culture to be taught during black history month.

70% of my sample provided data on the need for there to be more black history and black culture taught both in terms of the classroom generally and in terms of black history month. The majority of those members of my sample who did not provide any data on this issue had a positive learner identity. The majority of my sample who provided data stating that they personally would like to have more black history and culture taught, were mainly those with a negative learner identity. Of the participants that gave data stating that they did not want to be taught more black history and culture, or did not think that this would be a good idea, one participant (SA1) who had a positive learner identity stated that he did not really need to be taught any more about black culture and black history because the status quo suited him perfectly, he felt that the status quo provided him with a conducive environment for him to be able achieve. This participant was born and partially schooled in Africa and has an affirmed black identity as well as a hunger for academic achievement. The other participant (LLC14) felt that having more black history and culture taught at

school would be a bad idea because it could help to create more racism amongst black boys who ridicule one another in terms of their Caribbean or African heritage. This respondent therefore did not have a personal reason for not wanting more black history and culture taught at school. The majority of my sample that provided data about seeing a need for more black history and culture to be taught at school in relation to others had a positive learner identity.

The majority of my sample that had a personal invested interest in having more black history and culture taught at school had negative learner identities and those members of my sample that saw a need for such a black intervention in terms of others or who either did not see a need for such an intervention personally or did not provide data at all on this issue had positive learner identities. These findings suggest that those members of my sample who already have an affirmed black identity that is pro-education are not so bothered about having more black history and culture taught at school and that those members of my sample who do not have an affirmed black identity that is pro-education are more interested in being taught more black history and culture in school because they have unstable black male identities that seek affirmation. These findings are in line with Sewell (2009) and Codjoe (2006) who suggest that black males need a positive affirmed black male identity in order to have the resilience necessary to achieve academically.

Family Dynamic and Role Models

I divided the data on family dynamic into two sections, high discipline and poor discipline. The majority of my sample that provided data on having a highly disciplined family dynamic is those members of my sample who have positive learner identities. A lot of these participants have provided data with a lot of personal detail in it, providing examples of their disciplined family environment. Only one member of my sample provided data on having a poorly disciplined family dynamic. This participant belongs to a one-parent family where his mother cannot control him; he lives in a poor socio-economic environment and is involved in gang activity. This participant has a negative learner identity. The majority of my sample that did not provide any data on this topic of family dynamic had a negative learner identity. This group may not have provided any data in this section because they may have felt embarrassed by their home circumstances. These findings support the

empirical findings of Sewell (2009), Codjoe (2006), Rhamie and Hallam (2002) and Rhamie (2012). All of these empirical studies have found that black children who come from disciplined pro-education family environments of support and involvement tend to be high achievers.

Also the majority of my sample who provided data on their role models, stated that their role models were members of their family who they looked up to, which is in line with the findings from Rhamie and Hallam (2002) and Rhamie (2012), which suggested that black children who came from positive family backgrounds also saw their parents as positive role models who they try to emulate. The majority of participants who provided data on role models had a positive learner identity.

Peer Pressure

The data provided here by my participants mainly suggests that being susceptible to negative peer pressure and engaging in road or street culture, which can involve criminality at its extremities, is predominantly down to bad parenting and a lack of discipline at home. Participants mainly from very disciplined family background's, who were born outside of the UK, could not fathom how somebody could have a mother or father around who invests in that child and for that child to still be susceptible to negative peer pressure. One participant felt that peer pressure could be still be influential even if a child has been raised in highly disciplined and supportive home environment. Even though this participant had a positive learner identity, the fact that he was born in the UK and has been raised to a certain extent within a UK culture may have some bearing on his viewpoint. The two members of my sample who provided data on their susceptibility to negative peer pressure both have negative learner identities, the first of which (MJ13) has also provided data on his poorly disciplined home environment but the second participant (LB7) has been raised by both of his parents but particularly by his father who has invested a lot of time and effort into his development. It is interesting that this participant (LB7) has been raised with the male 'love and ritual' that Sewell (2009) explains is essential to raising a black male with a stable black masculine identity that is not susceptible to negative peer pressure. So my finding here confounds the Sewell (2009) thesis and is definitely an area for further research. However the majority of my sample who provided data stating personal reasons why they were not susceptible to negative peer pressure, had positive learner identities, which is in line with

the findings from Sewell (2009).

Community Ties and Religious Affiliation

The majority of my sample that provided data about their religious affiliation or belief and their community ties to the church and other community organisations had a positive learner identity. The participants that provided data here explained that religious affiliation and community activities really helped to give them a sense of discipline in terms of needing to be organised, focused and motivated in order to succeed. These findings are in line with the empirical studies carried out by Rhamie and Hallam (2002) Rhamie (2012) and Cheron Byfield (2008). All of these empirical studies highlight the benefits of having community ties and having a religious belief and religious affiliation with the community church. It is seen that within these community environments black children develop certain qualities and transferable skills that can be applied to academic study.

Cane Piece Mentality

Cane piece mentality refers to a theoretical concept postulated by Sewell (2009) who suggests that those peoples who are born or socialised in mainly third world or underdeveloped parts of the world with limited chances for a decent education and prospects for a decent job and comfortable lifestyle, once exposed to an environment like the UK where there is the opportunity to have an education and to have the chance of employment and to have a comfortable lifestyle, that these people tend to have a mentality of hunger to succeed, which is resilient against barriers such as racism. The majority of my sample who provided data in this section were born and partially raised in Africa and Jamaica respectively and have this cane piece mentality this hunger to succeed and do well in the UK. These findings support the cane piece thesis purported by Sewell (2009).

Summary of Data Conclusion

The research study was focused on The Perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their Educational Achievement. The data that I have collected has highlighted some key factors in relation to what can affect the perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their educational achievement. One of these key factors appears to be family dynamic in

terms of single parent and two parent families and the involvement of extended family members as well as the level of cultural discipline and pro-educational support that a child has from home. Also very important is whether black males have been raised and partially schooled in underdeveloped environments outside of the UK where there tends to be a very strong brand of discipline as well as black cultural enrichment where there is an interconnected social eco-system of elders, which includes teachers and parents who guide the child safely into maturity (Sewell, 2009; Graham, 2004). It appears from the data then that both parental discipline and black cultural enrichment are a powerful pair in terms of black male achievement based on the members of my sample who were high academic achievers and who perceived negative peer pressure as something alien. There was a member (TL17) of my sample who had a positive learner identity but who also felt that they could benefit from being taught more black history, perhaps because this participant although having a strict single parent home environment with an involved male extended family to guide him may have lacked a black culturally rich environment. This participant however has a positive learner identity and is not seduced by negative peer pressure, this finding is interesting because there is another member (LB7) of my sample who has been raised by his father, who also lacks a black culturally rich environment who is high susceptible to negative peer pressure. So it would be interesting to look closer at the role of family versus culture in terms of negative peer pressure and having a positive learner identity. The fact that the majority of my sample who have affirmed black identities and who have positive learner identities are of African origin is also interesting in terms of the potential benefits of orientating black children within an African-centered environment (Graham, 2004; Dei, 2010). In support of this African centered environment is the fact that the majority of my sample who have negative learner identities are of black Caribbean heritage, which might suggest that apart from the Jamaican members (RW20, NS6) of my sample who were born and partially raised in Jamaica, the British born boys of Caribbean heritage may have experienced a diluted Caribbean culture that lacks the discipline inherent within indigenous Jamaican society itself.

It was also mainly members of my sample from disciplined family backgrounds that tended to have a religious belief or affiliation and community ties, with a church, football club or army cadets. These participants were also born outside of the UK. Religion and having community ties reinforced the positive learner identities of this cohort. Family dynamic then in terms of discipline and cultural orientation was definitive amongst my sample in

terms of perceived barriers to academic success. The members of my sample that perceived teacher racism and racism within wider society as barriers were those who had a negative learner identity, were British born of Caribbean heritage and from single parent families. This cohort was also the group who appeared most affected by the lack of black history and culture being taught at their school.

The Perceptions of African-Caribbean boys about their Educational Achievement then, based on this small scale research study that is not generalizable, is heavily determined by family background, which has a direct effect on the feeling of disaffection at the school curriculum in terms of its quota of black history and culture and the feeling of disaffection at wider societal racism and racism in school. So Tony Sewell is right in that a child, who has a stable, affirmed black masculine identity, has the potential to achieve despite racist barriers. However racism is still a very powerful and relevant adversary when it comes to black male children who live in age of Diaspora and cultural flux that do not have the cultural resilience of their fortunate black peers and so the argument of David Gillborn in terms of the negative affect of racism on black male achievement is extremely valid and relevant. It would be very helpful for future research to be able to look at the possibilities in terms of government legislation for providing black male children with a school environment that can provide the knowledge necessary to help this cohort achieve affirmed black identities that are resilient to racism and to provide an eco-system including male elders who can help black males to establish safe and stable masculinities, because I believe that the secret to black male achievement lies not only in how one is socialised by elders but also in how ones black identity is affirmed by knowledge of self and the wider universe.

There has not been a single piece of research that has managed to see the importance of incorporating all of the elements that I have mentioned in terms of black male achievement. It seems perfectly simple that if a child has the attributes necessary for success then he will achieve and that if he doesn't have the attributes necessary for success then he will not achieve. In its simplest form this is the conclusion to my research.

Appendix

Transcripts

	Interview 1
CB	Ok Christopher Barnett starting the first interview with SA, just a general chat around identity issues. Question 1, ok SA so what is being black to you, what does being black mean to you, and are there any specific ways of being black? Are there certain ways of being black according to you? How do you feel about that?
SA	Well um I think being black is basically worse, it's not anything like, we are all humans but it's just because of where we come from and climatic things like we someone black and some people white, like yeah so it's not any big deal it's just that we all human beings and like so thing is right it's nothing.
CB	Ok say is, would you say that being black is the way that your brain naturally works, and how would you describe that?
SA	I don't think being black has got anything to do with how the way your brain works, 'cos um there could be a black person who is quite smart and there could be a white person who is quite smart, it's nothing about how your brain works or anything. The only thing I want to talk about like how your brain works might be based upon your culture, and that's even 'bout like your country or even in the same country or like a tribe or something, or maybe have some if I should say like um, I don't know how to put it but um

	like how you were raised up that's going to affect how you think or anything but it's not necessarily because your black.
CB	Ok um ok do you ever feel that um being black gets you into trouble with teachers at all?
SA	Personally I would say no.
CB	How important is being black to you, do you notice it; is it something that is important to you or not really?
SA	Well I don't see the importance of being black, or any other colour or anything, to me I just think it's alright it's just I'm not too sure about it.
CB	You don't have special pride about being a black boy?
SA	Well, how the pride just because I'm black or obviously if I was to be white, I would say I'm proud to be white or Asian or say im proud to be Asian it's the same thing.
CB	Ok um is there a, do you think there is a lack of knowledge about what being black means? Do you think there is a kind of a knowledge about what being black means, like um clear indicators of what black culture is and what it means to be black, the history, the culture, do you think that there's like a lot of knowledge about black culture, and being black and that sort of thing,

	do you think there's a lot of knowledge out there regarding that?
SA	Can you repeat the question?
CB	Um so are there clear marked out areas of what being black is? Is there knowledge about kind of where black culture comes from, and the essence of black culture and the countries which black culture comes from, perhaps Africa, and particular forms of dance or particular forms of language or particular forms of communication, or that is kind of explains what black culture means in current times, you know, like maybe different kinds of current music that can be linked up back to the creation of the drum beat, which originated in, and are there certain things? Is there kind of knowledge about black culture that lets you know what black culture means sort of now, is there kind of knowledge of where it's come from, is there knowledge about black culture do you think?
SA	Yeah I don't really know about 'cos I don't really know that much in depth about black culture, because sort of people like just free minded and I don't really care about those kinds of stuff, but if there should be well, if you were talking about drums and that stuff I don't really know about. I don't think there shouldn't be any circle of knowledge about being like black culture or anything.
CB	Ok that's interesting um, moving on then um, I think you've kind of I think you kind of you know answering questions in what your doing really but we'll move on to the next one any way umm, does being black distract you from your studies in anyway?

SA	Not at all.
CB	Not at all?
SA	Because im just focused and basically I don't really care about what people say though because I just set targets for myself, yeah, like by this time I have to get to this point so I just work on it, and I've got my parents that raise me and some times the challenges people put, yeah, kind of motivates me like if people told me oh you can't do this can't do that, because of what they saying like is kind of like your daring me so I just move ahead do it and prove you wrong.
CB	In proving people wrong and meeting the challenges that your talking about, um you know meeting the challenges and proving people wrong, do you think any of that has to do with being a black boy? You know you want to try extra hard to challenge an idea that maybe held about you because your black and you want to make sure that you excel, does that have any links with being a black boy?
SA	No because, you get some black people who are not as so motivated as me it's just because of like well my family like, all of them are quite smart like, yeah, so like even my mum will tell me oh you see like my uncle he did that, he did that, he did that, so I should be able to bring that so that's the point from which I come from not like because I want people to see that I am black or anything yeah.

CB	So would you say that you have a lot of, that a lot of the role models that you may have are from your family, you know that you have a lot of people that you look up too that are from your family that are within your family structure?
SA	Yeah.
CB	And um are you saying that the majority of those kind of pursued academia and been quite successful academically? Is that what motivates you, the main motivation?
SA	Yeah. And one thing, just sometimes, I just try to beat myself I think 'cos im not healthy im not very good in terms of field or football, those kind of sports, so looking from that side what else can I do. So I just focus my mind and because maybe like in a social group, yeah, if someone say I'm good at football, I'm good at that, what am I going to say I'm good at? So I just take advantage of what I've got yeah, and like I'm good at like just studying and just like yeah.
CB	So studying is where you excel?
SA	Yeah.
CB	And you would attribute the, that the main thing that you would attribute

	yourself to is the way you've been raised, your family structure?
SA	I'd say partly yes.
CB	What else do you think is there that has helped you to achieve and focus on academia?
SA	Sometimes one of the words I'd use, I see some people that, how you expect, and I think I could be like that or something, and sometimes um, even sometimes like just try to like challenge my mates so that I can beat them in academics or something, so that's also part of it, what motivates me yeah.
CB	Ok so you have kind of a kind of positive motivation, competitiveness within the peers that you associate with at school?
SA	Yeah.
CB	Ok so the people, the friends that you associate yourself with in school are also kind of, help you with the positive aspects of achievement in education?
SA	Yeah.
CB	Ok so, ok what are your, how could your education be, do you feel that the

	education that your getting now, do you feel that, that could be enhanced? Do you feel that it could be made better by there being um, more being taught about black heritage and black culture and where black people have come from, and the culture and the heritage and the world view, and the perhaps the philosophy about black culture, and more of the kind of staple of black culture? Do you think that your education could be enhanced by black studies in that particular way? Do you think that could make education better? Do you think that would add to your knowledge?
SA	Well at first I had come yeah I thought people are not going to like me because I am black, but when I came I changed my mind totally because given people like white, Asian they all accept it. So I think it's alright, and that does not actually affect me though 'bout being black or anything, im just alright like. I think there's a conducive environment for me to just concentrate on what I want to do, yeah, so I don't think but there could be like, but no matter how like no one is perfect and nothing is I would say, not because something might be good, you can do something to make it better yeah, but to me it's alright.
CB	Your education is just ok as it is?
SA	Yeah.
CB	Ok, yes very important question. How secure do you feel in your current identity, who you are? How secure do you feel? How happy are you as a person? Do you feel you know yourself, you know what your about? You know yourself very well? Would you say that your identity is complete or would you say that your still searching and building your identity are you still

	forming who you are? Are you still developing who you are or are you quite sure who you are? Are you quite rooted and stable in who you are and what you are about? How would you explain how would you?
SA	Basically I would say I don't know perfectly who I am but I am just searching to find my ground, 'cos sometimes I get this inferiority complex, like in a group of people sometimes, like I don't think perfectly, or that although it might be good what they are doing but I don't think im up to that standard or something, do you know what I mean? Like I all the time, I keep asking myself who am I too like what are my strengths and weaknesses and even in academics, I mean I'm obviously, I am ok in every subject yeah and I know a subject that I think I am very good at. Sometimes I think I am very good at math's but to me I think I need to say more about my sel,f but I think I need more knowledge and I think I will gain that through experience, like umm like future or something.
CB	Is there any particular knowledge that you think would be particularly important, that you would, that you think would be particularly important? Is there a type of knowledge that you would privilege over other forms of knowledge? Anything you would really like to know about?
SA	Yeah um I would say I'm a Christian and from like knowledge I have about the bible yeah its about, the most important thing to me is that I just have to, like know, because god created me, yeah, so he knows me more than I know myself. So just like getting a closer relationship with god will help me identify myself, yeah and I think, yeah it has helped some people that I know so I think it's gunna help me as well.

CB	So would you say that religion is the main cultural component for you? That's the main culture for you that's influenced you? Would you say that religion is the main cultural component for you?
SA	Yeah.
CB	Ok so you would more identify yourself as a Christian then a black boy? That Christianity would be more important than the fact that you're black?
SA	Yeah.
CB	Ok and would you say that you are culturally grounded? You know you are grounded in your identity culturally? Um you know your culture that your apart of? Um do you feel grounded in that? Do you feel your grounded in kind of African culture? Do you think there's a lot of African culture you've been involved in or do you feel the family you've been raised in? Have you been, you know, taught about your origin, where you come from and what that means and how that, and what that makes you as a person? Have you been grounded in that? Have you been taught about that and do you feel secure about that? Has that been something that's happened in you being raised? Have you been grounded in a particular cultural identity of your ethnic origin?
SA	Yeah I would say um, I'm the type of person that's sometimes skeptic and controversial at time. So sometimes I think that there's some cultures that I think it's ok so I just accept them, but there's some like, even though like it's related to family or something, or my ethnic city but I don't accept them

	because I don't really understand. That's one thing about me, if I don't really understand it and don't know where it came from and why even, so I just not accept it. Sometimes I'm even telling my mum why do they do this like that, so I'm not really grounded in a culture. I just have a free mind. If this were, I think is good for me, then I just go up and then do it, I don't really base on my culture.
CB	Ok, so something really has to make perfect sense in your mind before you accept it?
SA	Yeah.
CB	Do you think that if, for example African culture, and black culture. Do you think if that was explained or taught to you in a class room, in a way that made sense to the way you live your life at the moment, and what you like and what you don't like and just your natural life, the way that you live at the moment and the way that you, you know certain things. Do you think that if black culture and African culture was explained in a way that made sense of your life now. Do you think that would be something that you would like to be taught?
SA	Yeah I would like to be taught that but it's not, I'm not 100% sure that I would still accept it, because it's not just something that would still be a favor for me but you have to think about other people as well. It's something that might be good for me I know for another person, probably is gunna affect that other person than why do it? But it would be nice like if it's being taught to like um, to everyone, not to everyone but adequate knowledge is known, is taught about black culture, I think it would be good. But the fact

	that you taught me something, does not necessarily mean I'm going with it or I have to accept it, it's based upon me yeah.
CB	Sure, it's based on you and how you think as person. Ok so you don't feel that there is any peer pressure upon you to behave in a particularly black way? You don't feel there's any, you don't think there's any pressure within the school or with any of the other black boys in the school or in the area that you live in? Do you think there's any peer pressure to be black in a particular way? Do you feel there's any peer pressure from any where, even the media, you know the music that's on the media, or any of the news that you look at, um you know any of the black cultural forms, that you feel, that there's any peer pressure on you to behave in a particularly black way?
SA	I'd say sometimes but I just take it as a joke and laugh about it, but I just really like to be myself. Sometimes people might say something to me yeah, I just say I don't care about what your saying I'm just being me, there's nothing I can do about it, it's just me so.
CB	And what has given you the strength to be able to do that? Because a lot of black boys do fall under that peer pressure don't they and they can be persuaded in to gangs or persuaded into doing certain things and going to certain places and behaving a particular way. So what is it about you as a person and the way that you are, that gives you the strength to refuse that peer pressure?
SA	I would say one, my Christian background is helping me 'cos I got to understand that, well the fact that someone is say something about you doesn't mean it's gunna affect you. Like is like what about right someone

This is a Sample of Interview One. I have the completed Version of this interview

and all the interviews of the rest of my sample. I have chosen not to include them due to the sheer size they would create to this thesis. These will be available upon request.

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