

Developing the Culturally Competent Public Librarian

**An investigation of Diversity Training for Public
Libraries to support empathic service provision to
Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.**

Mostafa Shaheed Syed

**Thesis submitted to the University of Sheffield in fulfilment
of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**Information School,
University of Sheffield**

October 2014

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the people and organisations that provided assistance - large and small - to me in the research and writing of this thesis. Firstly, my thanks go to my supervisors Dr Briony Birdi and Professor Nigel Ford for their invaluable advice and consistent support. I am also indebted to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for providing the finance needed, and to the participating Library Authorities who allowed me to collect data both from their staff and users. Thanks are also due to the participating Diversity Training Providers for being available for interviews and allowing me to sit in on their training sessions.

Last, but not least, for their patience and unfailing support, I would like to thank my family: my parents, my brother and sister-in-law, and especially to my wife Runa and children Yusha and Mariyah.

Abstract

Public libraries in Britain serve a wide range of people in today's multicultural Britain, including those from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. In order to be able to do so in an effective and empathic manner, many library staff participate in training that comes under terms such as 'Diversity Training' or 'Cultural Awareness Courses.' At the same time, libraries have a unique role as a neutral meeting ground that can facilitate the bringing together of many diverse communities. This thesis seeks to establish whether such training does lead to empathic BME provision and whether the training allows for staff to fulfil the library's unique role. Further, it proposes recommendations and a training model that will facilitate this, allowing library staff to become culturally competent.

The literature review highlighted the multiple criticisms levelled against Diversity Training - its focus on prejudice reduction as opposed to cultural understanding; its short and infrequent nature, for example - and also provided insights from other disciplines into how empathy and true cultural understanding could take place.

A qualitative approach was adopted with observational data coupled multiple survey-based case studies with both library staff and library users. Individual data-sets were coded, and themes identified, both within each data-set and across the whole range of the data.

This led to the development of a Culturally Competency Training Model that is multi-tiered, aims to be cost-effective, and provides both skills-based and knowledge-based training, with repeated inter-cultural contact at its theoretical base. It can be used as a part of an induction programme and as part of ongoing training for current public library staff. In closing, the thesis looks at recommendations aimed at public library staff and fellow researchers.

Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
Contents	v
Chapter 1	15
Introduction.....	15
1.1. Background.....	15
1.1.1. Previous Research.....	15
1.1.2. Context and Elaboration.....	15
1.1.3. On Definitions.....	18
1.1.4. Aim	18
1.1.5. Research Questions and Objectives	19
1.3.1. Further Elaboration and Context.....	19
1.4. Summary	20
Chapter 2	21
Methodology	21
2.1. Introduction.....	21
2.1.1. Background.....	21
2.2. Research Paradigm.....	21
2.2.1. Social Constructivism	22
2.2.2. Other Paradigms: Transformative	23
2.3. Research Methods.....	24
2.3.1. Literature Review.....	26
2.3.2. Observation.....	28
2.3.2.1. Limitations of Observations.....	29
2.3.1.2. Observation Tool	29
2.3.2. Interviews.....	30
2.3.2.1. Limitations of Interviews	31
2.3.3. Questionnaires.....	32
2.3.3.1. Piloting	33
2.3.3.2. Sampling	34

2.3.3.3. Limitations of Questionnaires.....	36
2.3.4. Case Studies.....	37
2.3.5. Validity and Reliability.....	40
2.3.6. Triangulation.....	41
2.4. Data Analysis and Developing the Proposed Training Model.....	42
2.5. Researcher Ethnicity.....	44
2.6. Ethical Issues.....	46
2.7. Summary.....	47
Chapter 3.....	49
Literature Review.....	49
3.1. Introduction.....	49
3.2. Public Libraries, Community Cohesion and BME Services.....	49
3.2.1. British Government and Integration & Cohesion Policy.....	49
3.2.2. The Role of the Library.....	52
3.2.3. Historical Lack of Progress.....	56
3.2.4. Organisational Change.....	57
3.2.5. Cultural Competency.....	57
3.2.6. The Characteristics of the Culturally Competent Librarian.....	61
3.2.7. Public Libraries, Social Exclusion and Training.....	63
3.3. Empathy.....	65
3.3.1. Defining Empathy.....	65
3.3.2. Empathy and Positive Behaviour.....	67
3.3.4. Teaching Empathy.....	70
3.4. Diversity Training.....	71
3.4.1. Diversity: A Definition.....	71
3.4.2. Forms of Diversity Training.....	72
3.4.3. Motivations for Diversity Training.....	73
3.4.4. The Perceived Failure of Diversity Training.....	74
3.4.5. Diversity Training in the Public Sector.....	77
3.4.6. Attitudinal Change and Diversity Training - A Brief Note.....	78
3.4.7. Psychology and Diversity Training: Methods & Possible Solutions.....	78
3.4.8. The Contact Hypothesis In-Depth.....	80
3.5. Designing the Training.....	84

3.5.1. Theoretical Underpinnings.....	84
3.5.2. The Design Process.....	86
3.5.3. Training Methods.....	89
3.6. Evaluating the Training.....	90
3.6.1. Methodological Schools of Thought in Evaluation	90
3.6.2. Evaluation Models	92
3.6.3. Evaluation Tools	93
3.7. Gaps in the Literature & A Justification for this Study	94
3.7.1. A Summary of the Literature	94
3.7.2. Conclusion	96
3.7.3. Considerations for this Thesis: Defining Empathy, Adopting the Contact Hypothesis, and Cultural Competency.....	98
Chapter 4	101
Observing the Training	101
4.1. Introduction.....	101
4.2. Background.....	101
4.3. Aims.....	102
4.4. Identifying the Providers.....	102
4.5. First Observation.....	103
4.5.1. A Summary of the Methodology & The Observation Tool Used.....	103
4.5.2. An Introduction to the First Observation	105
4.5.3. The Observation Itself.....	105
4.5.4. Participant Interview	107
4.5.5. Discussion of the First Observation	109
4.6. The Second Observation & Forum Theatre	110
4.6.1. Discussion on the Second Observation.....	113
4.7. Other Observations	116
4.8. Telephone Interview	116
4.9. Conclusion	118
Chapter 5	121
Nationwide Survey of Public Library Staff	121
5.1. Introduction.....	121

5.2. Aim	121
5.2.1. Empathy	121
5.3. Design and Distribution	121
5.4. Response	123
5.5. Results & Discussion	123
5.6. Conclusion	135
Chapter 6	139
Case Study: Authority A	139
6.1. Introduction and Revision of the Survey Instrument	139
6.2. Aim	140
6.3.1. Case Studies	141
6.3.2. Modifying the Staff Surveys	143
6.4. Ethnic Profile of Authority A.....	145
6.5. Library Staff Survey Results.....	145
6.6. Library Users Survey Results	153
6.6.1. Methodology	153
6.6.2. Results.....	154
6.7. Analysis and Discussion	156
6.7.1. Introduction.....	156
6.7.2. On Empathy	157
6.7.3. Stock Issues & Preserving the Status Quo	160
6.7.4. Community Consultation & Cultural Competency.....	164
6.7.5. Budgetary Concerns.....	165
6.7.6. Training.....	166
6.7.7. Lack of Interest?	168
6.8. Conclusion	169
Chapter 7	173
Case Study: Authority B	173
7.1. Introduction.....	173
7.2. Aim	173
7.3. Methodology	174
7.4. Ethnic Profile of Authority B.....	175

7.5. Library Staff Survey Results.....	175
7.6. Library User Results	180
7.6.1. Introduction.....	180
7.6.2. Methodology	180
7.6.3. User Survey Results.....	181
7.7. Analysis & Discussion.....	183
7.7.1. Low Response.....	183
7.7.2. On Empathy	184
7.7.3. Stock & Language Issues.....	186
7.7.4. Stock Issues: A Different Approach	188
7.7.5. Training.....	189
7.8. Comparison with Authority A Staff.....	192
7.9. User Comparison With Authority C	193
7.9.1. Conclusion	198
Chapter 8	201
Case Study C: University Students and the Academic Library Sector.....	201
8.1. Introduction.....	201
8.2. Aim	201
8.3. Methodology	202
8.4. Results.....	202
8.5. Analysis & Discussion.....	208
8.5.1. Validation of the Sample.....	208
8.5.2. Empathy	209
8.5.3. Cultural Competency	212
8.5.4. Managerial Support & Organisational Culture	214
8.5.5. Public Library Criticism.....	214
8.5.6. Training.....	216
8.6. Conclusions.....	217
Chapter 9	219
The Proposed Training Model.....	219
9.1. Introduction.....	219
9.2. Aim	219

9.3. Methodological Background.....	220
9.3.1. Terminology and Context	220
9.3.2. Cultural Competency and Previous Research	221
9.3.3. Choosing the Communities	222
9.4. Evaluation Process for the Model	223
9.4.1. The CIRO Methodology in Evaluation for the Proposed Model	225
9.4.2 Evaluation and Consulting BME Communities	226
9.5. The Model in its Entirety	228
9.6. Discussion	231
9.6.1 Level 1	231
9.6.2. Level 2	232
9.6.3. Level 3	234
9.7. Summary	235
Chapter 10	237
Authority A and B Staff Survey to Validate the Proposed Model.....	237
10.1. Introduction.....	237
10.2. Aim	237
10.3. Objectives	237
10.4. Methodology	237
10.5. Results.....	238
10.6. Authority A Analysis and Discussion.....	245
10.7. Authority B Analysis and Discussion	250
10.8. Conclusion	256
Chapter 11	259
Concluding Discussion and Recommendations.....	259
11.1. Introduction.....	259
11.2. Re-iteration of the Aims and Objectives.....	259
11.4. Discussion	260
11.4.1. Key Issues - Empathy	260
11.4.2. Key Issues - Training	261
11.4.3. The Theoretical Contribution of this Thesis	265

11.4.3.1 Changing the Scope of the Contact Hypothesis and Adding to the Knowledge on Empathy.....	265
11.4.3.2 Addressing Criticisms of Diversity Training	266
11.4.3.3 The Literature Gap in the Context of Diversity Training and Public Libraries	267
11.4.3.4 General Issues Addressed	267
11.4.4. Limitations of the Research	268
11.5. Recommendations for Public Libraries.....	271
1) The library service needs to have a clearly defined strategy for empathy	271
2) The culture of the library service needs to go beyond language and stock issues	271
3) The library service needs to be aware of the broad nature of BME communities.....	272
4) The need for libraries to share best practice	272
5) The need to go beyond the superficial	272
6) To exploit available resources and work within the library's means	273
7) To take heed of current research.....	273
11.6. Recommendations for Further Research.....	274
1) Establish nationwide trends.	274
2) Modification of the proposed model.....	274
3) Changing the agenda of the research.	274
11.7. Concluding Remarks.....	276
References.....	277
Appendix 1.....	289
Telephone Interview Questions:	289
Appendix 2.....	291
Information Sheet.....	291
Appendix 3.....	293
Pilot Questionnaire.....	293
Appendix 4.....	295
Case Study Staff Survey (adapted into Toluna Quick Surveys online)	295
.....	295
Appendix 5.....	299

Case Study User Survey Questions..... 299

Appendix 6.....301

Staff Survey Questions on the Proposed Cultural Competency Training Model
(uploaded on Toluna Quick Surveys) 301

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 The Overall Paradigm	22
Figure 2.2 The Research Process	26
Figure 2.3 Literature Review Themes	27
Figure 2.4 Case Study Balance	39
Figure 6.1 Authority A Profile	145
Figure 6.2 Authority A Respondent Staff Roles	145
Figure 6.3 User Replies On Library's Role to BME Communities	154
Figure 7.1 Authority B Profile	175
Figure 7.2 Authority B Respondent Staff Roles	176
Figure 7.3 Authority C Profile	194
Figure 8.1 University Student Respondent Background	202
Figure 9.1 The Proposed Training Model	228

Potential Publications

Syed, M. "Diversity Training, Empathy & Culturally Competent Public Libraries: A Review of the Literature."

Syed, M. "The Culturally Competent Public Librarian: A Training Model."

The following was published during the course of the research, and is partly-based on the researcher's Masters dissertation from 2008:

Birdi, B., & Syed, M. (2011). "Exploring reader response to minority ethnic fiction." *Library Review*. **60** (9), 816-831.

The following is based on the literature review and case studies of this thesis:

Syed, M. (2013). "The Culturally Competent Public Librarian." Presentation delivered to students on the 2012/2013 MA Librarianship course (Public Libraries module).

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Previous Research

The present researcher had previously conducted Masters research into public library stock selection for the British-Asian community (Syed, 2008; Birdi & Syed, 2011). This concentrated on how libraries chose English language fiction that depicted Asian communities in Britain, and involved canvassing the opinions of both library staff and people from the British-Asian community.

The project found that there was a vast gulf in understanding between stock selectors and the British-Asian community. Stock selectors would include titles that they themselves identified as being representative of the community, whilst those from the community, when asked in the above research, stated that the books were grossly stereotypical and would nearly always focus on characters that were unable to reconcile their own Asian culture with the presumed superiority of the dominant Western one. There was a clear lack of cultural understanding, then, between stock selectors and the community, one that could cause unintended offence.

A key conclusion that emerged from the project was that library Diversity Training was inadequate: instead of producing library professionals that were empathic towards other communities, library staff merely did what their job asked of them without any genuine appreciation or understanding of the different cultures that they were dealing with. This conclusion differed from much of the research done previously which focussed more on issues related to foreign language stock as opposed to genuine cultural understanding (Elliot, 1999; Roach & Morrison, 1999), a point that will be further developed in this thesis.

1.1.2. Context and Elaboration

The understanding described here should ideally focus on a culture's specific worldview or views. This 'worldview' is the context by which a culture's views and actions can be understood. Gulshue (1993) defines culture as attitudes and behaviours of a particular group that are shaped by deeply-held beliefs and shared

norms and values. Falicov (1995) states that it is the set of shared worldviews by a particular group that defines their particular culture. The term *worldview* itself is defined by Sue & Sue (1990) as a concept that encompasses beliefs, values and lifestyles. It appears that, in the literature, culture and worldview are seen to be synonymous, with both focussing on a particular group's unique belief systems, values and norms. It is these aspects that the present researcher feels need to be grasped in order for someone outside of a particular cultural group to understand that group.

For example, the current researcher is from a Muslim background and knows that the underlying philosophy behind this community is a spiritual one. A Muslim woman, then, who wears the headscarf- the hijab - would do so only as an act of spiritual worship. This *reasoning* that informs a community's actions - the beliefs and values mentioned by Sue & Sue (1990) above - is what this thesis is referring to whenever *worldview* or *cultural worldview* is mentioned.

In the context of this example, the Muslim community then would find it bewildering that accusations of sexism and oppression are levelled at them, to the point that multiple occurrences of this in the media would lead them to feel 'under siege' (Syed, 2008), which in turn does not help in issues such as community cohesion. Once an outsider knows the cultural worldview of the Muslim woman, stereotypical depictions of oppression and inferiority would arguably ring hollow. This may help the outsider to interact with such a woman as a human equal and not an object of pity or scorn. It could also be argued that such interaction will allow the Muslim woman to also learn about the majority's cultural worldview and, through this mutual understanding and respect, the path toward community cohesion could begin.

Empathy could help this understanding come about, and this could be further facilitated by the library's potential role as a neutral meeting ground where different communities can come together and exchange ideas (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 1999; Library and Information Commission, 2000). However, recent research has reinforced the idea that public libraries, despite the fact that they are in constant contact with the people of multicultural Britain, have little empathy for their users (Wilson & Birdi, 2008). Many proposals, originating from as far back as the 1970s, have been made with regard to public libraries and

their BME users, yet evidence shows that few have been implemented with much efficacy (Elliott, 1999).

When recruiting library staff to participate in the aforementioned Masters project, the current researcher found that many librarians would simply pass the issue onto a member of staff who shared the same ethnicity of the subject in question instead of tackling it themselves.

This was a situation that was encountered quite frequently and it appeared that librarians lacked the confidence to deal with a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) query, or they felt uncomfortable, or genuinely felt someone else - perhaps from the BME community itself - could better answer queries from BME users.

This latter point is reinforced by Tso's (2007) Masters research on library staff's empathic engagement with a local Chinese community. Tso discovered that non-Chinese staff did not engage with the community's needs as there already was a Chinese member of staff for that role.

All this could be considered somewhat strange given the potential role, mentioned previously, of the library as the community's neutral meeting ground. In addition, the professional institute representing libraries also hails the potential for those in the profession to help celebrate cultural diversity (CILIP, 2013a). Moreover, recent British Government policy stresses the importance of shared public spaces for the purpose of community cohesion through inter-cultural activities (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007) and the public library stands as an ideal resource at helping implementing this policy.

These issues were the catalyst for investigating how effective Public Library Diversity Training (hereby abbreviated to PLDT) really is, how it fulfils the need public libraries may have in this area, and what steps it takes in helping public libraries fulfil their role in the community. The thesis will focus on a BME context as researcher empathy will be an important feature of the research design, though the researcher notes that the term 'diversity' is not merely limited to ethnicity, race and culture but extends to a much broader outlook.

It is hoped that an outcome of this research will be to provide a tool to help library staff to better interact with library users from an ethnically diverse background. According to Roach & Morrison (1999) libraries have the potential to be the hubs

of their communities, and so such an empathic skill should be considered essential to all staff.

1.1.3. On Definitions

As mentioned above, when the thesis refers to *worldview* or *cultural worldview* it is referring to the philosophy, reasoning or beliefs that inform a particular community's actions. This does not mean that all communities are monolithic and only have one such worldview, however, and so care has to be taken that all such views within a single community are properly represented (Clements & Jones, 2008).

The other key definition is that of Black and Minority Ethnic. The 2011 census (Office for National Statistics, 2012a) defines White as White British, Irish, Traveller and Other White, which includes Eastern European migrants such as the Polish community. Everyone else is defined as Black and Minority Ethnic.

For the purpose of this thesis, the present researcher will use a more inclusive definition. As cultural understanding and community cohesion are the main drivers of this research, the present researcher will include all cultural minorities under the umbrella of BME, including faith-based minority communities and White minorities, such as Eastern European communities, all of whom may have cultural worldviews different to the majority population. The emphasis in this definition is on the 'minority' aspect of BME.

1.1.4. Aim

The thesis aims to establish the validity of Diversity Training as a methodology via which public library staff can develop their cultural empathy and understanding when interacting with BME communities. The thesis will then aim to develop a best practice PLDT model coupled with recommendations that will equip library staff at all levels with a deeper understanding of the various cultures that they encounter as part of modern Britain.

1.1.5. Research Questions and Objectives

The research questions to be addressed are:

- 1) Do library staff need to be empathic toward BME communities?
- 2) If so, and to what extent, can such empathy be developed using PLDT?
- 3) How can such empathy, in tandem with PLDT, produce a library service that has cultural understanding, can promote cultural understanding, and can contribute to community cohesion?

This leads to the following objectives:

- a) To establish a definition of empathy that can then be used to underpin the entirety of the research.
- b) To establish what the current aims and methodology of PLDT are, as currently practiced and delivered to public library staff.
- c) To establish the perceived effectiveness of PLDT with different approaches to the development of empathy, and in the context of developing mutual cultural understanding and contributing to community cohesion.
- d) To build a model of empathy and its actual and potential role in PLDT programmes that are specifically designed to develop a workforce and service that can engage in mutual cultural understanding and community cohesion.
- e) To develop guidelines and offer suggestions in the aims, methodology and evaluation of PLDT based on the developed model.

1.3.1. Further Elaboration and Context

This proposed training model will, in turn, transcend the issue of diversity from simply being a rote part of the job to a genuinely empathic feature of public libraries, thus improving the quality of the public library service in a BME context, and giving public library staff the confidence to interact with BME communities in a natural, easy and welcoming manner. This leads to a better library service with staff that are confident and natural in the presence of people from the BME community.

The emphasis here is on a Diversity Training model that does not stop at discrimination alone but transcends mere stereotypes to also promote genuine cultural **empathy**, which would then lead to staff interacting and working with members of the BME community toward the shared goal of community cohesion. This empathy comes about from understanding what the underlying worldview behind a specific community is.

This understanding is designed to be a two-way process, so that library staff can help minority communities understand the majority whilst staff at the same time learn about the minority groups. This would ultimately lead to the main objective of this proposed training model: to have library staff and a public library service that can contribute to and encourage mutual cultural understanding and community cohesion.

1.4. Summary

Following on from this will be a discussion of the methodological underpinnings of the thesis which, in turn, is followed by Chapter 3, a multi-disciplinary literature review. Chapter 4 includes a discussion of two training sessions the researcher observed and a telephone interview conducted with a diversity trainer. Chapter 5 describes an initial survey distributed to public libraries nationwide, the conclusions of which lead onto two main case studies with two different library authorities as described in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 8 compares these two case studies with survey responses from University students from the Information School at the University of Sheffield, most of whom had a background working in academic libraries. This leads to Chapter 9 where the proposed training model is described based on the themes that emerged from the multiple data-sets, and Chapter 10 where staff from the two main case studies are asked to provide their views on this model Chapter 11 is the final discussion with the researcher offering his recommendations to public libraries and researchers so that progress can be made on this topic as a whole.

Chapter 2

Methodology

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will introduce and define the various methodological approaches utilised by the researcher, from the underlying paradigm itself - including a brief definition of the terms 'paradigm' and 'methodology' - leading to a discussion of Social Constructivism and its related methodological aspects. Following on from this will be a discussion of the methods used, such as observations, interviews, questionnaires and case studies.

2.1.1. Background

In determining the methodological approach for research, Creswell (2003) suggests that the research problem be first identified which would then lead to matching the specific approach to that particular problem. The research concern that is to be addressed for this thesis is to help public library staff, via the use of training, to be confident and competent in interacting with BME communities. This interaction is intended to lead to cultural understanding, and from there library staff could then organise activities that would transfer this understanding to the wider community.

2.2. Research Paradigm

Mackenzie & Knipe (2006) state that the first step in any methodological process for research is to set the paradigm through which subsequent methodological choices will naturally follow-on from. The paradigm is the underlying philosophy that guides all action in research and provides an interpretive context (Creswell, 2007). Methodology, in itself, is the research approach that is governed by the chosen paradigm and the *method* is the tools used to aid this approach (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

The social constructivism paradigm will be the main approach for this thesis. This will be informed by some of the philosophical aspects of the transformative paradigm, though it will not utilise this paradigm in its totality. The following showcases the methodological path used:

Figure 2.1 The Overall Paradigm

Paradigm	Approach	Tools
Social Constructivism	Qualitative	Literature Review Observation Interviews Questionnaires Case Studies Model

2.2.1. Social Constructivism

Constructivism research seeks "understanding of the world in which [people] live" (Creswell, 2007: 20) through reliance on "the participants' view of the situation" (ibid.). This is then developed into a framework of meaning - generally multiple meanings which are varied in nature. Mackenzie & Knipe (2006) state that constructivism can be interchanged/combined with the term interpretivism which emphasises "the meaningful nature of people's participation in social and cultural life" (Seale, 2012: 573). Bryman (2008) also uses interpretivism in this fashion and defines it as "an empathic understanding of human behaviour" (Bryman, 2008: 28).

The meaning that this thesis seeks to establish will be interpreted from participants' experience of Diversity Training, interactions with BME communities and the topic of ethnic diversity in general.

Constructivism leads naturally to a qualitative and inductive approach (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Bryman, 2008). Qualitative, because opinions and beliefs are a primary focus, and such issues are typically associated with such a methodology (Silverman, 2000); and inductive because such an approach is "interpretive, tending to begin with evidence and then building theory" (Gorman & Clayton,

1997: 29). The very lack of a starting theory is a hallmark of constructivism (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

An inductive approach allows the research to evolve and change as the researcher's understanding of a given subject grows. In the context of this thesis, this helps in building a training model as the step-by-step nature of how the researcher's knowledge expanded through the literature review and data collection ultimately led to the conclusions that were then incorporated into the development of the said model.

This aspect of the inductive process mirrors well one of the main characteristics of the qualitative approach as a whole as described by Davies (2007), whereby data is gathered to build theory. Contradistinctive to this is the deductive approach where the data is used to validate existing hypotheses. The present researcher does not totally rule out the use of a deductive approach, however. Conclusions reached at the end of the literature review, for example, set up a number of theoretical points about the nature of Diversity Training which were then tested through the process of observation.

2.2.2. Other Paradigms: Transformative

The transformative paradigm focuses on issues of social justice (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006) to the point where the ultimate end of the research *transforms* the lives of those involved, whether it be the participants, the institutions under scrutiny, or the researchers themselves (Creswell, 2003). Change is the focus here, and it is this *philosophical* aspect of the paradigm that fits best with the present thesis as the recommendations and training model outlined herein are intended to assist public libraries to improve their services for BME communities, allowing staff the opportunity to utilise the public library as an institute that pro-actively facilitates community cohesion and mutual understanding.

Mackenzie & Knipe (2006) state that the transformative paradigm lends itself to a mixed-methods approach, adopting a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. As this thesis only utilises the former, it cannot be stated that the present researcher is adopting the transformative paradigm wholesale. A quantitative aspect to this thesis would ideally involve introducing and testing the proposed training model, something that is beyond the scope of this project. Instead a constructivist paradigm will be used, along with qualitative research methods,

though the entirety will be informed by a philosophical aspect of the transformative paradigm.

2.2.3. Unused Paradigms

Positivism and post-positivism are paradigms with a primarily quantitative approach and have mainly - though not exclusively - a deductive aspect to them, using the research data to test fully-formed hypotheses (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Knowledge in this paradigm is that which is gathered via facts, is value-free and can be confirmed empirically by the five senses (Bryman, 2008), thus excluding subjective interpretations. It is an attempt to map a model of the natural sciences onto the social sciences, though Bryman (*ibid.*) notes that this does not mean it should be identified as identical to the scientific.

The paradigm is unsuited to this thesis, mainly due to its quantitative aspect and its emphasis on objective interpretation.

Pragmatism is a paradigm that places the research question as its focus as opposed to any philosophy or method (Creswell, 2003). It posits that the best appropriate method be used - whether that be qualitative, quantitative, or a mixed approach - in order to answer the central research question, and that the idea that a particular approach be married to a particular paradigm should not be taken as sacrosanct (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

As mentioned above, the thesis's focus on beliefs and opinions of participants lends itself naturally to a constructivist and qualitative approach. As such, the pragmatist paradigm was not necessary as a methodological consideration. This is not to state that the paradigm chosen is superior to the others, but that it just reflects the present researcher's belief that the research question is best answered through the constructivist and qualitative approach. As Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) state, some research questions require only one particular method.

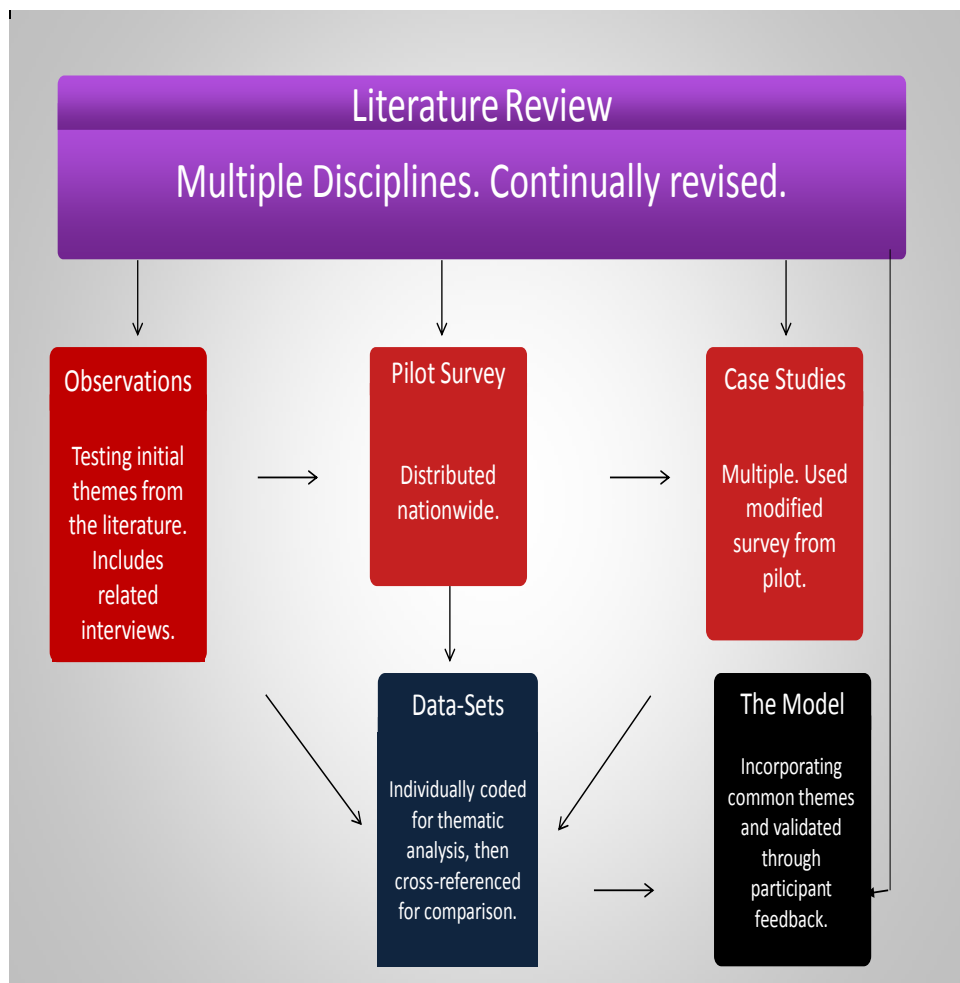
2.3. Research Methods

This thesis utilised the following research tools: a literature review, observation, interviews (both in-person and over the telephone), questionnaires, case studies, a model and validation.

An initial literature review yielded certain conclusions (see **3.7**) that were then tested in an observation of two Diversity Training sessions (**Chapter 4**). The results of these observations tended to support the literature review's conclusions and so interviews and questionnaires were undertaken in order to canvass library staff views on the topic. The pilot questionnaires were sent nationwide and yielded a low response. As such, it was decided to undertake two main case studies with library authorities; one authority that served a population with a low BME count and another that served a population with a high BME count. A modified survey was utilised in the case studies. The results of these surveys were then used to construct the proposed training model and additional recommendations.

While previous research did not utilise a threefold strand of Diversity Training, empathy and a proposed model as in this thesis, some of the methods adopted herein were logical due to their nature - observation for experiencing a training session first-hand, for example - while others, such as the use of surveys and case studies had been utilised before in research linking libraries and empathy (Wilson & Birdi, 2008). A single case-study was also used by Tso (2007) in a study on library staff and their empathic engagement with the local Chinese community. Similarly, Listwon & Sen (2009) made use of an interview-based case study in their study of library services for the Polish community in England. The research process is illustrated in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 The Research Process



2.3.1. Literature Review

The importance of a literature review in research is to establish the knowledge, methods and controversies on any given topic (Bryman, 2008). For this thesis, a multi-disciplinary literature review drawing on the subjects of library science, social psychology, government policy, ethnic and diversity issues, and Diversity Training was undertaken at the beginning and updated throughout the project's duration. The main themes discussed are illustrated here:

Figure 2.3 Literature Review Themes

Theme	Subjects (Examples)
Public Libraries, Community Cohesion and BME Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government Policy - The Role of the Library - The Culturally Competent Librarian
Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition - Teaching of Empathy
Diversity Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Criticisms - The Contact Hypothesis - Designing

A narrative review was utilised whereby a researcher gains "an initial impression of the topic area" (Bryman, 2008: 110) and is thus an "uncertain process of discovery" (ibid.). This suits the constructivist paradigm as understanding the topic is the focus, as opposed to seeing how one's own research project can add to the established knowledge-base (Bryman, 2008). Nonetheless, the literature review for this thesis does identify some gaps in the literature, and does provide a strong theoretical grounding that is tested by the empirical research. In the thesis's early stages, for example, numerous criticisms of Diversity Training were established (see 3.4.4.), and these were initially tested by the researcher by observing Diversity Training sessions in action.

The literature review was continually updated to ensure that developments in this subject area did not overtake the thesis. For example, Lazzaro *et al.* (2014) published as recent as June, 2014 shows that some of the themes of cultural

competency are being put into practice in a small section of academic libraries in the United States (see 3.2.5. in the literature review). Although this did not impact this thesis in any significant way, it does highlight that the wider research world - and, indeed, the literature review itself - did not remain static.

2.3.2. Observation

Seale (2012) describes observation as "any non-experimental study that involves the researcher observing...what occurs without directly influencing the study participants" (Seale, 2012: 581), either as a detached non-participating observer or one that is fully immersed "observing behaviour, listening to what is said in conversations both between others and the fieldworker, and asking questions" (Bryman, 2008: 714).

Mullings (1984) defines it as a qualitative approach examining behaviour in a participant's natural environment - thus linking it back to the constructivist paradigm framing the entirety of the methodology. This naturalistic approach requires the researcher to avoid interfering and manipulating the subjects being observed (Sanger, 2003).

The initial part of this study involved the researcher attending current Diversity Training sessions in order to record via written notes what occurred. At that particular point, the researcher was not looking for people's opinions of Diversity Training but instead simply wished to see how a training session was delivered. Two sessions were attended, the first delivered to library staff participants (n=10) and the second to staff attending from a local council (n=15).

The actual role of the researcher depends entirely on whether they are a participant or non-participant in what they are observing (Mullings, 1984). As a participant, they take part in the daily life and environment of their subjects whilst as a non-participant they are detached from the day-to-day lives of the subjects, observing from a distance. On a similar scale, Bryman (2008) notes that the level of participation can vary from complete immersion as a covert full member of the observed group (with the group unaware that the observer is a researcher) to a non-participating observer with minimal interaction with the observed.

In the context of wanting to know how Diversity Training is actually delivered, the advantages of observation is that the researcher does not have to rely on a participant's subjective opinion and can notice things that a participant, who may

be so familiar with the process that they take some things for granted, may not (Mullings, 1984).

2.3.2.1. Limitations of Observations

A single observer invites the possibility of observer bias and participants may not act naturally if they know they are being observed (ibid.). This latter point is especially true if the observer is in a non-participant role and the subjects are not comfortable with their presence.

For the two observations this researcher was present for, one was as a participant, the other as a non-participant. The participation in the first was by the request of the trainers. For the second, the researcher felt that his attendance did not affect the behaviour of the participants as they did not appear to notice his presence in any way.

As is clear from this, the researcher adopted an overt approach to both observations whereby both participant groups knew that the observer was there for the purpose of research. The observations were supplemented by informal interviews with, in the case of the first observation, with one of the and, in the second, participants the trainer delivering the session. Thus, the researcher adopted the role of a non-participating observer with interactions in the latter and a partially participating observer in the former. A non-participating observer with interactions does not take part in the participants' activities but does interact with the group, usually through interviews (Bryman, 2008). A partially participating observer "participates in [the observed] group's core activities but not as a full member" (Bryman, 2008: 442) whilst also using interviews to collect data.

2.3.1.2. Observation Tool

Observation can be either structured or unstructured. The latter is where the observer notes, in the form of a running narrative, anything of significance regardless of whether they knew they were looking for it beforehand (Mullings, 1984; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

A structured approach is where the observer identifies certain categories that they should specifically look out for when undertaking the observation "using instruments or protocols with a pre-specified, structured format including numeric scales" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009: 220). Sanger (2003) notes than an over-

structured approach can lead to the observer missing key implicit meanings in their subjects' language, culture and behaviour. Bryman (2008) also notes that structured observation can miss meanings as the observer has no way of establishing intentions behind participant behaviour and does not consider the context in which such behaviour is taking place.

The researcher undertook two observations in the early part of this thesis. As such, he did not have any reference through which to develop any structured categories. The observation tool used, then, was an open unstructured one whereby the researcher noted mostly everything that occurred in order to identify patterns or areas of significance which could then be used for data or future observations.

For the first observation, such areas of significance focussed on how the training was delivered and participant reaction to the training (see **4.5.5.**). For the second, conducted after some of the themes of the literature review had been identified, the researcher was keen to note if the training session concurred or diverged from those specific themes (see **4.6.1.**)

2.3.2. Interviews

The value of interviews in general is due to the fact that they allow people to speak freely on a topic and allow for probing and exploring by the interviewer. Moreover, they not only canvass experiences and opinions but also emotions as well (Schensun, Schensun & LeCompte, 1999). Nonetheless, as with questionnaires, the issue of participant honesty also applies.

This thesis involved informal, spontaneous interviews with a participant in the first of the observed training sessions (n=1; see **4.5.4.**) and with the trainer delivering the second observed training session (n=1; see **4.6.1.**). These informal interviews would be described by Bell (1993) as an unstructured open interview where there is a free discussion on a given topic. As a result of the spontaneity, the interviews were not piloted.

An alternative approach to this method would have been to structure interview questions beforehand and to pilot the method as a whole. This would arguably have limited the spontaneity, but Bryman(2008) would argue that it would ensure that the correct questions were being asked, and that all participants were being asked the same questions - as without this structure the answers received would "not reflect 'true' variation" (Bryman, 2008: 219).

A telephone interview was also undertaken with a diversity trainer, who was chosen both for his expertise in the field and due to the fact that he made himself available for interview (n=1; see 4.8.). Other trainers were contacted for the same purpose, however each person politely declined.

Telephone interviews, due to their nature, allow the researcher to safely undertake an interview over a large geographical distance without the need to travel (Phellas, Bloch & Seale, 2012).

For this telephone interview the questions were semi-structured, whereby the main themes were predetermined but answers were allowed to digress around a specific topic, which in this case was Diversity Training in general. This combines the two methods usually employed in interviews, namely that of the solely structured approach, which is a series of questions, and the unstructured which is a free discussion on a given issue (Bell, 1993). The unstructured aspect, according to Bell, needs to be controlled but can produce a larger amount of relevant data, and the structured approach ensures that all identified topics and issues are comprehensively covered. This combined method is also present in the focused approach to interviews (Davies, 2007) where the topic is still controlled by the interviewer whilst at the same time the interviewee is allowed maximum opportunity to express their views without being led by the researcher.

The telephone interview was chosen for practical purposes due to the geographical distance between the researcher and his subject. Responses were recorded in written notes taken during the interview process and analysed thematically afterward. The process of writing down the responses - as opposed to recording the whole interview - allowed for the researcher to clarify any points whilst the interviewee was still on the phone.

2.3.2.1. Limitations of Interviews

Irvine (2011) notes that with telephone interviews there is much debate as to their viability as a qualitative research tool. Criticisms include a lack of visual cues, the inability to build rapport with the participant, and the difficulty for the interviewer in maintaining concentration. On the opposing side, proponents of this method point to the savings in time and money, and find the whole process more ethical as the participant will be in their comfort zone and thus not exposed to too much intensity. Irvine (ibid.) states that the proponents, from practical experience, find

the experience of the telephone interview to be of comparable quality to a face-to-face one.

Irvine (2011) also states that there is little empirical research done to support either side of the debate; as such, she conducted her own comparative experiment that showed that telephone interviews tended to be shorter than face-to-face ones and that the interviewer tended to speak longer than the interviewee. This meant that the participant would elaborate less, thus undermining the qualitative aspect to the tool. The author recommends then that, as with a reticent participant in a face-to-face interview, vocal cues should be utilised by the interviewer in order to encourage fuller responses, and that a more conversational manner should be adopted. She does note that the shorter length of a telephone interview could also be due to the fact that there are less initial pleasantries involved than a face-to-face interview as both interviewer and interviewee are keen to start the interviewing process promptly.

The present researcher has undertaken face-to-face interviews for research purposes in the past (Syed, 2008). As such, he agrees with those proponents of the telephone interview that found no difference in quality between this form and the face-to-face form. He found that the participant was keen to provide his views, to the point that he would digress on a number of issues. The researcher also did not find that he was speaking more than the participant, nor were there any issues regarding concentration.

2.3.3. Questionnaires

A questionnaire is "a research tool or method given to research participants to complete by answering questions related to the research topic" (Seale, 2012: 587) and the majority of the data collected for the empirical research of this thesis was through this method in the form of a self-completed survey, meaning that they were answered without guidance from the researcher (Bryman, 2008). Two sample groups were identified - library staff members, and library users. Within the staff members, there were also sub-groups (see Sampling in **2.3.4.2.** below). The staff surveys were distributed online via email attachment, and the library user survey via hand with the researcher physically in the library.

The constructivism paradigm tends to follow a qualitative pattern and utilises qualitative methods such as questionnaires (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). The research value of questionnaires lies in the fact that participants can complete them at their own leisure and therefore have much more time to think about their answers to formulate a comprehensive response. This, in theory, leads to the generation of higher quality data (Schensun, Schensun & LeCompte, 1999). The anonymity of the process can also contribute to participants giving more thoughtful and in-depth responses. This is ideal to a topic such as Diversity Training as it will become clear in Chapter 3 that the literature on the subject mentions how diversity is a sensitive subject which can lead to many people experiencing negative emotions such as anger and guilt.

The surveys used in this thesis utilised mostly open questions which are designed to draw out thoughts and opinions, thus being ideal for the qualitative nature of the project (Bell, 1993). A criticism of this approach is the time needed to summarise results (Santos, Mitchell & Pope, 1999). However, general themes are easier to identify and this was the approach the present researcher took in his analysis.

Closed questions were also adopted through the use of multiple-choice answers, which thus varied the nature of the questions and so would not overwhelm participants who may find too many open questions both daunting and time-consuming as they require more effort which in turn could cause them to lose interest and thus generate low response rates (Bryman, 2008). The number of questions was also limited for the same purpose. The closed questions involved, for staff, to rate the empathic nature of their library service and their own personal cultural competency and, for users, to rate their public library on the service it offers to BME communities. The pilot survey consisted of ten questions (**Appendix 3**), the first staff survey for the case studies consisted of fifteen questions (**Appendix 4**) and the second staff survey consisted of eight questions (**Appendix 6**). The library user surveys consisted of only five questions (**Appendix 5**).

2.3.3.1. Piloting

Davies (2007) points to the need for piloting questionnaires and continually re-drafting them. The reasons for this, according to Bryman (2008), are to identify and rectify any consistent problems, such as poor phrasing of questions, poor organisation of questions and whether or not the survey holds the participants'

interest. This helps particularly in the case of the self-completion questionnaire as the researcher will not be "present to clear up any confusion" (Bryman, 2008: 263). This process, in turn, adds to the researcher's experience and confidence in the method as a whole.

For this thesis, an initial pilot survey was sent to public libraries nationwide, and from this the final survey as used in the case study was developed, with particular focus on relating the questions to the project's research questions. Phellas, Bloch & Seale (2012) recommend that the pilot be sent to the same strata of people the main study will address. From this pilot, modifications were made to the survey, as described in **6.3.2**.

The modified survey was sent to staff participants in the two main case studies. This was a general canvassing of their opinion on Diversity Training, empathy and cultural competency. A second survey, distributed after a period of six months, asked for their opinion on the proposed training model. They all received a description of the model via email along with the survey to study prior to answering the questionnaire. Further discussion on this, including distribution information, is provided in the relevant case study chapters.

The library user survey was sent to a small group of the researcher's friends and family - all keen library users, thus still in the same group as the intended target for the survey - with specific focus on whether the questions were all completed and understood. As a result, the user survey did not require any modification.

2.3.3.2. Sampling

For the initial nationwide survey, the sampling frame (Bloch, 2004) was chosen by identifying the central library in large population centres (such as a city or major town) nationwide and directing the survey there electronically (see **5.2.**) with a request for participation. 77 libraries were contacted and individual library staff who decided to take part formed part of the initial survey sample (n=7). The CILIP Diversity Group was also requested to distribute the survey to their members, and this resulted in another sample (n=4). The results collated both samples together to form the full sample for the pilot survey (n=11).

For subsequent surveys, two library authorities were chosen as samples primarily due to the respective sizes of their BME populations - one with a smaller population, and one larger (Authority A and B, respectively). Staff were sent a link

to the survey (hosted online) by the researcher's contact in senior management. This yielded a staff sample for Authority A (n=18) and Authority B (n=6).

A sample of University students studying an MA in Librarianship at the University of Sheffield (during the academic year of 2012/13) was also requested to participate. Many of those in this latter sample (n=15) also had experience working in academic libraries. These three groups were chosen in order to link the samples directly to the research questions, on the belief that the three groups would have differing experiences of interacting with and serving BME communities. Such an approach is termed purposive sampling by Bryman (2008) and by Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) whereby "the researcher selects cases that are information rich in regard to [the research] questions" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 173). However, this type of sampling can be expanded - according to Glaser & Strauss (1967) - into theoretical sampling whereby the emerging theoretical aspects in each stage of the data collection guides the researcher into where and what data is collected thereafter. This data then reinforces the theoretical aspects into, at best, a full theory.

An aspect of this governs the sampling in this thesis as a whole. Samples were chosen as themes emerged, first from the literature review, then the two training sessions chosen for observation, and so on (see Figure 2.2 above). The main point of departure with actual theoretical sampling is that, as opposed to generating a new theory, the samples generated themes that could be linked back to pre-existing theories and concepts such as the contact hypothesis (see **3.4.8.**) and cultural competency (see **3.2.5.**).

For surveys distributed to library users, a simple random sample (Bloch, 2004) was utilised. This involved the researcher attending the central library in both Authority A (n=10) and Authority B (n=12) and approaching users asking them to fill in a survey on the spot. A further sample was taken for comparison from Authority C (n=9) that had a very large BME population. This method is also termed opportunistic sampling, which is defined as collecting data from people where contact is "largely unforeseen but who may provide data relevant to the research question" (Bryman, 2008: 419). The sample gained via this method, especially in Authorities B and C, yielded a wide variety of ethnic diversity. This is an important point as Tso's (2007) previous study in staff empathy with regards to a local

Chinese community recommended that other BME communities be involved in any further research.

In total, there were 35 staff respondents (n=35), 15 University respondents (n=15) and 31 library user respondents (n=31). A further survey was sent to staff in both Authority A (n=12) and B (n=5) for the purpose of validating the model (2.3.5). This gave a total staff sample from the validation survey of 17 (n=17). As surveys were completed anonymously it was unknown whether the same members of staff replied to both surveys.

These provided the main survey samples, in addition to those who were participated in informal interviews (n=3), the participants of the first observation (n=10) and the participants of the second observation (n=15). This gives a total participant sample for this thesis as *at least* (due to the possibility of cross-participation) of 109 (n=109).

2.3.3.3. Limitations of Questionnaires

Participant honesty is an issue for questionnaires (Davies, 2007) as people can give replies that may not reflect hidden attitudes – such as, in the context of diversity, outright racism and prejudice - and may even give replies that they believe the questioner is looking for. Davies states that this can be counteracted by not relying on a single set of results, by reassuring participants of confidentiality and anonymity, and reassuring them of non-judgemental nature of the thesis, and to design the survey in "such a way that...respondents give sensitive information without worrying about the consequences" (Davies, 2007: 97).

For the questionnaires used in this thesis, an accompanying Information Sheet (**Appendix 2**) did guarantee confidentiality and the fact that the researcher did not ask for respondent names guaranteed anonymity. Questionnaires were initially sent nationwide, and then limited to two library authorities in two case studies. This meant that a single set of results was not relied upon. The Information Sheet and the questions asked in the surveys also made clear that this was a project related to empathy and Diversity Training; and that the thesis was a positive attempt to help library staff fulfil their role in community cohesion. This guaranteed that there would be no negative consequences regarding any answers given.

The Information Sheet was distributed to all participants which described how the information would be used (see 2.6. below). As well as anonymity being assured by not asking for names of the participants, the authorities involved were similarly not named. These steps should counteract any concerns of participant honesty to some degree.

Other limitations of using questionnaires are that response rates can be low as people prefer talking to an actual person or may find that the subject being queried holds no interest for them, especially if there are no incentives (Phellas, Bloch & Seale, 2012). One of the ways to overcome this is to use a shorter survey, and the fact that the staff survey had fifteen questions and the user survey only five highlights this. Another method is to facilitate a way to return the surveys. Since all the surveys were distributed electronically, this arguably made it easier for respondents to return completed questionnaires.

2.3.4. Case Studies

A case study is the "study of a single 'case'" (Seale, 2012: 557) where the definition of a case relies heavily on the research itself - the case could be, for example, a single person or a whole organisation. Bryman (2008) states that it need not be a single case, and that two or three can be used for comparison. Case studies are also described as the in-depth exploration of an activity, process or of people where detailed information is extracted via one or a variety of research methods over a set period of time (Creswell, 2003).

Davies (2007) provides a number of advantages to the use of a smaller sample via a case study. As qualitative projects such as this one do not rely heavily on statistics, a larger sample is not necessary. Also, recruiting and collating data for a smaller sample is far less of a difficult task than a larger one. Finally, the reflective approach of a qualitative project coupled with the overall research focus on respondents' thoughts, feelings and experiences are better utilised in the form of a small sample.

Silverman (2010) points out that smaller samples are preferable as intensive qualitative analysis is difficult with a large sample. However, he also points out that the problem of small samples in research is that there is no guarantee that the sample is representative of the whole population. He also describes three types of case study - the intrinsic, which is merely descriptive and offers little theory; the

instrumental, where the main focus is on providing an insight on a particular issue; and the collective case study where multiple cases are used to establish a general trend or, as Creswell (2007) describes it, a single issue illustrated by multiple cases.

Bryman (2008) also describes the case study that falls under the collective or comparative design, namely that, using the same methods in each, two or more "meaningfully contrasting cases" (Bryman, 2008: 72) are studied, though if more than two it becomes a multiple-case study. Using multiple cases allows the researcher to strengthen theory building as they can "establish the circumstances in which a theory will or will not hold" (Bryman, 2008: 74). This theory building lends itself to the inductive aspect of the constructivist paradigm.

Although further detail is provided in the relevant case study chapters, it is worthwhile to mention here that the method used for this thesis is the collective approach, and the issue being illustrated is Diversity Training and public library BME services.

It is also worth mentioning here that only surveys were used to gather data, so it is the "meaningfully contrasting cases" (Bryman, 2008: 72) aspect of case studies that is meant here and the fact that case itself holds importance (Bryman, 2008), due to the BME populations in each one (Bryman, 2008). As no quantifiable data is collated, no quantitative means used, and data collected at staggered times, the studies here would not fall under the rubric of cross-sectional design (ibid.). At the same time, case studies depend on intensive analysis utilising a number of detailed sources (Rutterford, 2012). Using only surveys, then, could be seen as problematic. However, observation as a tool was not suitable in cases under study - none of the participants were taking part in any form of Diversity Training at the time of the study - while interviews and focus groups would have yielded more data and was the present researcher's intention had enough been generated. However, as Chapters 6 and 7 will show, the survey resulted in a low response from Authorities A and B, despite the fact that senior management in both authorities made multiple requests for participants.

A comparative three-fold case study was utilised for this project with surveys being the main methodological tool. This involved two major sample groups - both public library authorities; one with a high BME population in their area, the other with a low BME population - and two smaller sample groups. Both library staff and library users were canvassed. The staff results of both authorities were

compared against the other and then compared against one of the smaller groups, which in this case were students from the Information School at the University of Sheffield, many of whom also had experience working in academic libraries. This comparison was undertaken to see if opinions in the public and academic sector overlapped.

The results of the library users from both authorities were also compared against the other and then further compared with the remaining smaller sample group, this being library users from an authority with a very high BME population. This was to see if users from such an area would have a different experience of the library service as opposed to the initial two authorities. To maintain the balance between the staff and user surveys, it was decided not to include the library staff from the third authority. Moreover, though the third authority initially allowed the present researcher access to distribute the user survey, subsequent emailed requests for information - on issues such as their BME service provision - went unanswered, despite repeated attempts. It did not appear that the third authority would be available for a staff survey if approached.

The case study balance is illustrated below:

Figure 2.4 Case Study Balance

Staff Case Studies	User Case Studies
Authority A	Authority A
Authority B	Authority B
University Students	Authority C

The present researcher notes that, in the case of this thesis, many similar themes emerged from all the groups involved. Whether this would be representative of a national trend would require a larger study.

As with the observations and the interviews, main themes were identified as part of the analysis due to the frequency in which they were mentioned in the surveys, whether directly or indirectly, and the manner in which such themes were discussed (see 2.4 below on data analysis).

2.3.5. Validity and Reliability

Validity judges the integrity of a research project's conclusions while reliability is focussed on the ability to repeat the results of a project (Bryman, 2008).

Creswell (2007) describes validation as a way of assessing the accuracy of a researcher's findings. He states that, for qualitative research, there are multiple methods in which validation can occur and not all will apply to a particular project. Quantitative studies rely on measurement validity which uses a measure to represent the concepts under discussion (Bryman, 2008).

Eisner (1991) states that the importance of validation is to bring credibility and confidence to a researcher's interpretation of his or her data and the resultant conclusions that arise.

One method in achieving this is consensual validation where the opinion of others - when they are qualified to do so - is used, or respondent validation (Silverman, 2010) where results are modified in lieu of participant responses to them.

This method could come under the transactional approach (Cho & Trent, 2006) to validation where there is constant interaction between the research and its participants, described as "an interaction between the researcher, the researched, and the collected data that is aimed at achieving a higher level of accuracy and consensus..." (Cho & Trent, 2006: 321).

A similar method to consensual validation is member checking where the research data is fed back to any participants to gauge their opinion (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Seale, 2012). Corroborating the data thusly also adds to its reliability or, as Guba & Lincoln (1994, cited in Bryman, 2008) name it, its credibility.

Validation was important for this thesis so as to test the soundness of the proposed model, in terms of it being a realistic and viable option for public libraries to adopt. It was achieved by seeking the opinions of staff from both Authority A (n=12) and Authority B (n=5), asking them for their thoughts on the proposed model through a survey. This places the validation in this thesis under a transactional approach using consensual validation/member checking.

This survey (**Appendix 6**) consisted of eight questions asking for agreement with specific premises related to the model and asking whether respondents would like to take part in a potential training scheme based on the model. Validation was

achieved when the majority of respondents stated that they did agree and did wish to take part (see Chapter 10).

2.3.6. Triangulation

Validity of data can also be achieved using triangulation, specifically *methodological* triangulation (Denzin, 1978). This is where separate data-sets are recorded from multiple research methods and cross-referenced against each other (Bryman, 2008). The different research methods can all stem from a single approach, meaning they can all be qualitative methods and not a necessarily a mixture of qualitative and quantitative (Hussein, 2009). It is this single approach using correlative methods that is being discussed here for this thesis.

Triangulation such as this helps to nullify any weakness that may be present in any one method (Gorman & Clayton, 1997), and the cross-referencing allows for emergent themes to be corroborated by multiple sources (Creswell & Miller, 2000). It is suited to the constructivist paradigm as this philosophy accepts the possibility of interpreting a particular reality through a variety of ways (Golafshani, 2000).

Bryman (2008) gives the example of observation supplemented by participant interviews to illustrate triangulation using multiple qualitative methods. This has been utilised in this thesis - in the three interviews undertaken, one was with a participant in an observation, the second was the trainer in an observation, and the last, via telephone, was with someone who commissions Diversity Training in general and the training involved in the second observation in particular.

Triangulation in this thesis is evident via the use of different qualitative techniques, each with their own individual data-set from which complementary themes appeared. This is discussed next in the section on data analysis (2.4.).

Methodological triangulation using qualitative methods has been used previously in ethnicity-based research such as Johnson (2007) where individual data-sets from interviews and observations yielded common themes about the negative experiences of undergraduate science classes in the United States.

2.4. Data Analysis and Developing the Proposed Training Model

Creswell (2007) states that the general approach in qualitative data analysis is to organise the data, then identify themes via coding and then presenting the data in a discussion and figures. This can take a variety of approaches, such as the grounded theory of Glaser & Strauss (1967). This is where a theory is established by 'grounding' it in data beforehand, though it differs from being inductive as it follows a set procedure (Bryman, 2008): theoretical sampling (2.3.3.2.), a threefold coding process, and then building concepts, categories and ultimately, after theoretical saturation where no new insights are being drawn, a whole theory in itself.

On first glance it could be argued that this thesis does implement aspects of grounded theory. Theoretical sampling is involved and the model presented appears to be a 'theory' grounded in the data preceding it. However, echoing some of the criticisms of grounded theory described by Thomas & James (2006), the present researcher does not believe that the result of this thesis is a new theory or even a new concept, but instead relies on pre-existing concepts and theories. These are then presented in a fresh way that public libraries can easily grasp and adopt. Silverman (2010) states that a model is an "overall framework for looking at reality" (Silverman, 2010: 109) and it is this 'framework' that is the result of this thesis, not a new theory or concept.

Thematic analysis, according to Bryman (2008), has no such distinctive procedure in spite of its popularity amongst qualitative researchers. Nonetheless, Ryan & Bernard (2003), attempt to formulate a method by which themes can be identified. The authors define themes as abstract ideas that are *expressed* in data - for example, a hostile response to a question is an expression of the theme of anger. A theme can be identified, amongst other factors, by its repetitive use in data and by searching the data for any theory-related material, that is, seeing if previously existing social theory is being confirmed in the data.

Bryman (2008) cautions that not all repetitions are valid, only those relevant to the research question. With regard to theory-related material, Ryan & Bernard (2003) caution that researchers should not "find only what they are looking for" (Ryan & Bernard, 2003: 94).

In this thesis, thematic analysis is used. Separate data sets were created from the observations, interviews and surveys. The data was then coded into categories after identifying regular patterns related to the research questions - first patterns *within* each individual data-set and *across* all the data-sets. This was particularly useful when comparing the each case study against the other.

For example, the staff survey used in the case studies asked participants about any obstacles toward the implementation of a cultural competency skillset. Economic factors received the highest response and so this was the category identified for that question. This response featured highly in both library authorities of Case Studies A and B; *and* was a major issue in the telephone interview (4.8.). Data was thus triangulated by common themes occurring out of different data-sets obtained by different methods (Bryman, 2008).

The initial staff survey facilitated categorisation by having the initial questions focus on empathy, the middle questions on cultural competency and the final questions on Diversity Training. This allows the results to be presented via representative quotes in the relevant case study chapters via those self-same categorisations, though it is the sub-categories - such as the economic issues in the example above - that emerged from the data. This allowed the present researcher to identify the key themes which, as they appeared to have the most significance, were incorporated into the design of the proposed model, either by addressing repeated concerns found in the data - again, such as budgetary issues - or by promoting repeated concepts, such as library staff participants who wanted practical knowledge on cultural competency (see 7.7.5.).

In summary, by triangulating the data-sets using different methods, the present researcher felt confident that the emergent themes were validated enough to be included in the model. This meant that the design of the model was guided by both the themes identified in the collected data and theories identified in both the literature and reinforced in the data. More detail is given in Chapter 9, focussing entirely on the proposed model.

2.5. Researcher Ethnicity

The present researcher is British born, ethnically Bangladeshi and of the Muslim faith. As such, he belongs to at least *three* BME communities, one faith-based, one ethnic and one - comprising both of the first two - as a second-generation immigrant. Moreover, he has a number of years of experience working in a public library. This gives him a shared identity with many of the participants in this study.

This, of course, was part of the motivation to undertake the thesis and Davies (2007) notes that many researchers do choose a topic that they have a vested interest in. In such cases, Davies notes that the researcher should be aware that they are consciously keeping themselves open toward other interpretations and begin from the point of knowing nothing, even if feigned. Moreover, the author notes that having such a vested interest does not automatically qualify the researcher to pass judgement on the topic at hand. For example, the notion that "only women should research women's issues and only Sikhs can accurately analyse the dynamics of Sikh culture" (Davies, 2007: 156) is, for Davies, absurd.

The same vested interest can possibly leave a researcher open to the criticism of bias. Both Gorman & Clayton (1997) and Davies (2007) highlight the issue of researcher bias as being one of the potential weaknesses of a qualitative approach. Davies notes how critics cite that objective reality does not thus exist and that drawing conclusions from another's opinions or views is not reliable truth. The author rejects such criticisms, noting that a skilful researcher recognises the influence of the self but remains professional throughout the researching process. Davies also notes that the cautionary aspect of such criticisms should, nonetheless, be kept in mind.

When researching issues such as ethnic diversity, the researcher's own ethnicity can become an issue. Gunaratnam (2003) notes how some research participants would be willing to share information with a researcher of their own ethnicity as opposed to a perceived outsider. The advantage to this is clear - more relevant data is obtained - but the disadvantage is that the researcher identifies too much with those participants which then renders any findings unreliable.

Gunaratnam (2003) cites Song & Parker (1995) showing how such ideas as shared identities are not as concrete as first assumed, especially for those with a dual-heritage. Song & Parker's study of a Chinese community - where Parker had a dual

British-Chinese heritage - showed that the interviewer could "be positioned as either 'more' or 'less' Chinese or 'more' or 'less' English" (Gunaratnam, 2003: 99) depending on his own relation to the answers he was receiving from the research participants.

The present researcher would thus reject any claims of bias in this work as the term 'Black & Minority Ethnic' is quite broad, and being a member of one BME community does not mean that he can speak for other communities, such as the Polish community or the Traveller community. Moreover, the researcher can identify with a number of groups in this study, including public library staff. Whenever themes are established - whether it is about Diversity Training or the public library's service toward BME communities - those conclusions are then tested. The researcher also did not know the ethnicity of the library staff surveyed as they were not asked to identify such information. The researcher then could not be biased toward or against any particular ethnic group working in the libraries in this study.

Ethnicity was an identifier in the library user surveys. However, the sample chosen was a random one and Chapters 6 and 7 show the ethnic diversity of the respondents.

Another issue Gunaratnam (2003) identifies when the researcher's ethnicity is known is topic threat. This is when the sensitive nature of the topic makes participants give responses that they think the researcher wants to hear as opposed to their true opinions. They do this to avoid being labelled as prejudiced, either through being misunderstood or because they actually do hold such prejudices. In extreme cases this can manifest itself in outright hostility toward the researcher and the topic. The issue of topic threat can also contribute to a low response as people opposed to the topic could refuse to take part, though identifying this would be difficult unless participants outright say so.

The researcher attempted to avoid this by highlighting the anonymous nature of the surveys distributed - participants names were not requested, for example - and illustrating the importance of the topic via an Information Sheet for library staff and a verbal description of the same for library users (see 2.6. below). Moreover, the questions were phrased to be as neutral as possible: no ethnic or faith group were identified or singled out for any special treatment, and all questions, in both staff and user surveys, were related to libraries and BME communities and not the

participants' views of those communities. Nonetheless, the researcher did experience two clear-cut incidents of topic threat, both from library users (see **6.7.4.** and **7.6.2.**).

2.6. Ethical Issues

This thesis has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Sheffield. In order to obtain this, informed consent was provided to all participants, describing to them the process by which confidentiality would be assured (Gorman & Clayton, 1997). For the observation, this was in the form of an Information Sheet (**Appendix 2**) that was sent to the researcher's contact at the local authority undertaking the training. The contact would then provide the information to both the trainer and the participants.

In one particular situation for a proposed observation (see **4.7.**), the contact failed to notify the trainer and, as such, the researcher was asked to leave the training session. The researcher voluntarily destroyed all preliminary notes in the presence of the trainer and, after offering apologies, verbally restated what the ethical aspect of the thesis was and noted that such a situation should not have occurred. The trainer accepted all this in good grace.

For participants in the staff surveys, the Information Sheet was sent via email to the researcher's contact at the library service who then would forward the sheet, along with a link to the online survey, to all participants. The staff surveys were available via a link online and hosted by Toluna Quick Surveys. Only the researcher had access to the entirety of the results, as access was password protected.

For the library user survey, the researcher verbally described the process to all participants, and showed how the survey - which did not ask for participant names - would be completely anonymous. The verbal aspect was necessary as the surveys were delivered by hand and the researcher did not wish to impinge on people's time by asking them to read a lengthy Information Sheet.

The Information Sheet itself gave a brief outline of the thesis and its importance to the public library service. This latter point is significant as Silverman (2010) states that part of ethical practice is to describe the direct benefits of the research to the participants which, in turn, will allow for greater research access to said participants.

The sheet assured participants of confidentiality and anonymity, stating that no one but the researcher and his supervisors would have access to the data. It allowed participants to withdraw from the process at any point, and stated that initial participation was not mandatory. Finally, all participants were thanked for taking part.

None of the participants are identified in this thesis. For the pilot survey, respondents are each designated an alphanumeric identifier in the form of **Res 1**, etc. For the case studies, the first authority is designated by **A**, the second by **B**, the students and academic library staff by **U** and the third library user sample by **CU**. Staff are identified by the authority designation plus a number, for example '**A1**,' and users are identified by the authority designation, plus '**U**', plus a number as in '**BU2**.' For the second staff survey asking for opinions on the proposed training model, participants - and here only staff were canvassed - are identified by the authority designation, plus '**M**', plus a number, for example, '**AM10**.'

The observations are designated only as 'the first observation' and 'the second observation.' Local authorities, participants and training providers are not identified by name.

2.7. Summary

The underlying paradigm of this thesis is a social constructivism one framed by aspects of a transformative approach. It will be mainly qualitative and using methods such as surveys and case studies amongst others. Data will be analysed thematically, and validation with credibility is achieved through member checking/consensual validation. It has been explained how researcher bias has been taken into consideration as have any ethical issues. The first research method is the literature review, the findings of which will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

Drawing on multiple disciplinary strands, the review will cover three main issues:

a) Public libraries, community cohesion and BME services, b) Empathy and c) Diversity Training.

The review begins with a discussion of Government policy on community cohesion before describing the potential of the public library service with regards to this policy. The public library's current BME service provision will next be discussed, focussing on the lack of progress by the service with this issue and will also include a potential solution through the skill-set the literature describes as cultural competency.

Changing to social psychology, the review will elaborate on issues surrounding the topic of empathy, both its definition and application and the lack of consensus in the literature regarding both. This will then move on to the private and public sector views on Diversity Training and the general negativity toward the topic. The review will then discuss a potential research strand that arises from those views, mainly the use of social theory in the form of the contact hypothesis.

Finally, the review will discuss the process of designing and evaluating a Diversity Training programme. This will lead to the conclusion that pulls together all these strands to provide a cohesive summary of the main issues identified.

3.2. Public Libraries, Community Cohesion and BME Services

3.2.1. British Government and Integration & Cohesion Policy

Before exploring the literature related to public libraries and ethnic diversity, it is worth looking at British Government policy and recommendations in order to frame the discussion and give it suitable context. In response to racial disturbances in places such as Bradford in 2001 and the London bombings of 2005, the Commission on Integration and Cohesion was set up in June, 2006 by then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Ruth Kelly. This culminated in the report entitled *Our Shared Future* (Commission on Integration

and Cohesion, 2007). The report defines integration as the process which allows new and existing residents of a particular area to adapt to the other whilst cohesion is "principally the process that must happen in all communities to ensure different groups of people get on well together" (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007: 8). A cohesive community is thus defined as a community where "the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued" (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007: 39).

The vision for this report was a society where all communities worked together, bringing about positive change and working to resolve any potential conflicts, with differences appreciated and not considered divisive. Encouragingly the report finds that "86% of those surveyed recently disagreed with the idea that 'to be truly British you have to be white'" (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007: 15) and that "on average 79% think that people in their local area get on well" (ibid.). The report does point out that this latter statistic drops to as low as 38% in some areas, though only ten areas in total dropped below 60%. Some areas in the North of England proved to be quite problematic in this regard. Also, the present researcher notes that to 'get on well' is not quite the same as having mutual cultural understanding (though it could prove to be a catalyst toward it).

Another point the report notes is that though some forms of prejudice were now frowned upon in society - and thus hidden by those who hold those views - others were not "with people least concerned about expressing prejudice against Muslims and against gay men and lesbians, and most concerned about being seen to be prejudiced against older people or disabled people" (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007: 28). Diversity, in general, can also prove to be problematic, but only in areas where such issues are new. When a new minority joins a community there tends to be an initial state of tension, followed by adaptation and acceptance. There is also a belief by some that minorities are favoured to be getting special treatment.

The aims of the report include laudable goals such as social justice coupled with mutually shared rights and responsibilities. One aim in particular was the idea of developing mutual respect and civility, recognising that that is the bedstone of successful integration and cohesion. This mutual respect is "about recognising and respecting the different habits of different groups" (Commission on Integration and

Cohesion, 2007: 74) and to "understand that attitudes and behaviours from both settled and new communities have the capacity to cause offence" (ibid.).

Amongst the recommendations they suggest to bring this about is a shared national vision for cohesion where expectations on this issue are clearly set out for local authorities and other related organisations to adhere to. Without this clear vision, the report states that cohesion will repeatedly be mistaken for equal opportunities. This cohesion should not be limited to urban areas alone but - because of how a community demographic can quickly change - to rural areas that may have never experienced diversity in the past. However local considerations should be taken into account and a 'one size fits all' policy avoided. In terms of local recommendations, the report suggests the establishment of cross cultural activities, a national community week, and the use of shared public community spaces. An interesting point is the use of a 'welcome pack' or a 'cultural briefing' is advocated, along with free English language classes, to help new immigrants to adapt, and to avoid any potential breaches in social etiquette which can lead to local tensions. Though mention is made of cohesion being a two-way process with consultation a must, it is not quite clear if these cultural briefings run in the opposite direction in order to educate the majority about the new (and also previously established) minorities.

Obstacles toward cohesion came from individual's characteristics and attitudes coupled with the socio-economic status of the local area, with affluent areas proving to have more cohesive communities compared to more deprived ones. The report also states that when the majority have an issue with the minority, the response can be twofold: draconian, in which minority rights are curtailed; consultative, whereby grievances and concerns are mutually worked out or fears are shown to be unfounded and untrue. In order to avoid the first response, the report charges Local Authorities with the responsibility to inform and rebut myths, but to do so in a way that shows people that their concerns are being taken seriously. This, the report contends, could be done through the use of a 'rapid rebuttal unit' who will provide 'myth-busting' information packs and face-to-face dialogue with the communities in question. Other pre-emptive recommendations a local authority could undertake - before any tensions even arise - is the implementation of cross-cultural activities, a specially dedicated 'community week' and the use of shared public and community spaces to facilitate meaningful intercultural contact.

This meaningful contact appears to have taken its cue from the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954; see section 3.4.8. below for in-depth discussion) as the report states that such contact breaks down barriers when there is a common goal or interest and when it is of a sufficient depth to build long-term friendships, which are precisely some of the conditions for contact hypothesis success (Aberson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo, 2004; Shook & Fazio, 2008). The report ambitiously suggests that Local Authorities set aside funding for intercultural dialogue and activities, such as sponsoring the aforementioned 'Community Week'.

3.2.2. The Role of the Library

Absent from the discussion on cohesion and integration by the above Government report is the unique role of the public library. The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in the UK acknowledge, in a statement on diversity, the potential of library professions to help celebrate cultural diversity in society (CILIP, 2013a). However the statement itself does seem skewed toward prejudice reduction and challenging discrimination, with the concepts of equal opportunities and positive representation in the library work force a priority. This is reflected in the resultant CILIP Community, Diversity and Equality Group (CILIP, 2013b) who has as one of its aims, along with social justice and being a facilitator for social change, the need to embed diversity and equality issues over the whole organisation. On their webpage there is no further discussion of how this would be achieved.

With regard to CILIP's focus on equality, this could be understandable given that, in 2006 at least, 96% of its members were White (Norman, 2006). Nonetheless, as society has slowly become more diverse, public libraries have adapted to respond to this. Roach & Morrison (1999) state that the early approach in British libraries was to select more stock in community languages but this, according to the authors, is not enough to embrace the whole spectrum of diversity. Library professionals should ask themselves what a truly multicultural service is and should see themselves as a hub that encourages BME communities to engage in civic participation.

The authors argue that public libraries have a role to play in reflecting modern Britain's multicultural make up. As a British institution and a public service, public libraries should be supporting and encouraging this new Britain. This, they argue, needs to go beyond simply providing materials in BME community languages.

Libraries should be impacting on people's lives in a positive manner and should be allowing BME communities to influence them in an equally positive manner.

Though over a decade ago, their conclusions are still worthy of consideration. Namely, that there needs to be more of a framework in place to guide local provision for BME communities, and that training needs to be more effective. They acknowledge that many libraries, as an organisation, do not know what to do and that those libraries that have done something positive need to share best practice. The authors note that many library professionals as individuals also did not know what to do with regard to responding to Britain's ethnically diverse population, a point illustrated by Listwon & Sen (2009) in a case study of Sheffield libraries and the local Polish community, where librarians felt they lacked the managerial support, self-confidence and resources to properly assist that particular community.

Roach & Morrison (1999) also note that there were other library staff the two authors canvassed who felt nothing needed to be done regarding BME services as future generations of BME communities would become culturally British, or they felt that enough had been done already. The last two points are telling as it indicates a lack of empathy toward those communities.

A more recent study by Wilson & Birdi (2008) also highlights the fact that public library staff have little empathy for those they serve. On the other hand Tso (2007) notes, through the results of a case study on library staff and empathic interaction with a local Chinese community, that library staff *do* understand the need for empathy, though the staff under scrutiny could not provide any examples from their working practice to illustrate this.

Roach & Morrison (1999) state that these attitudes are actually symptomatic of an organisational culture in public libraries that needs to be addressed. They also criticise the notion whereby public libraries feel nothing needs to be done as they have an ethnically low BME population, thereby focussing on the "problem of counting numbers rather than focussing on need" (Roach & Morrison, 1999: 116) which then "stunted the development of the public library's response to ethnic diversity" (ibid.). Nonetheless, the authors concede that the issue is complex. For example, the problem of diminishing resources, a major issue today, was also keenly felt even back in 1999, and needs adequate solutions - indeed, the authors suggest working in partnership with other community bodies as an alternative. Due

to the funding problem, the issue of choosing what activities need to be prioritised is another concern - should only certain BME needs be prioritised, for example?

Finally, the authors assert that public libraries need to question some of their assumptions. For example, Listwon & Sen (2009) show that the Polish community in Sheffield are generally quite pleased about their local library service. This is mostly due to internet access and, to a slightly lesser degree, the Polish language stock available - though this latter service only came about after the community had pushed for it.

However, for Roach & Morrison (1999), getting a positive response from BME communities does not actually mean that the status-quo is acceptable as such communities may "value the library services [but] in very different ways, which may impact on the choices they make when using the service" (Roach & Morrison, 1999: 117). To be truly responsive to BME needs, both professional skill-sets and staff attitudes will need to change. They ask the pertinent question: "Can libraries make a difference in the creation of a more equal, tolerant and pluralistic society...?" (Roach & Morrison, 1999: 113)

The idea that the library is a neutral meeting place whereby people from diverse backgrounds can come and interact to exchange ideas and help bring about cultural cohesion is a key point of the 'Libraries for All' initiative (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 1999; Library and Information Commission, 2000). Tso (2007) also recommends that the library be promoted as a social hub in order to facilitate cross-community interaction, and Listwon & Sen (2009) note that some of the librarians canvassed in their case study were aware of the library's role as a community hub to celebrate diversity.

Söderholm & Nolin (2014) argue that the acceptance of this role is no longer as widely-held as it once was. They see a two-fold split in the profession: between the proponents of digital libraries and those that see the library as a physical place concerned with pro-active social activity. The former believe that libraries should empower, enable and facilitate the spread of knowledge whilst the latter feel that libraries should not neglect to contribute to the social and community good.

Though the authors themselves lean toward the second view, their argument is that libraries are distinguished from other similar physical places by the fact of their on-site collection.

Another proponent of the library as a neutral, physical place is Buschman (2003) who feels that the educational aspect of the library in general is in decline. Instead, an economic capitalist model has replaced it where “we have transformed library users into ‘customers’ [and measure] ‘quality’ as defined by ‘customer service’” (Buschman, 2003: 169-170). This goes against what he believes is the library’s democratic role – as a space free from the biases of the dominant culture that offers something positive to the public good.

Usherwood (2007) also expands on this idea of a neutral meeting space and educational hub. He feels that this is part of the public library’s traditional role and allows the general public to improve themselves through education and information. Like Buschman (2003), he rallies against what he feels is the modern emphasis on a customer-focussed retail model where the number of patrons entering the library is more important than how people can improve culturally using the library. His idea of cultural improvement leans toward the view of partaking in a higher standard of literature, as opposed to the populist, anti-intellectual emphasis Usherwood feels modern libraries have adopted, a view challenged by Black (1996) who believes that libraries are very much a product of their time, influenced by the economic and cultural trends of the day. Black highlights this by showing how public libraries in 19th century Britain were very much shaped by the society they were in, especially in the desire to produce economically viable utilitarian institutes. With such varied influences, this could be argued to go against the idea of the public library being neutral.

Nonetheless, the potential for this neutrality is arguably still within the library service's grasp, and the fact that authors such as Buschman (2003) and Usherwood (2007) feel so strongly about it shows how such an idea can resonate. Usherwood states that libraries can be a place for immigrants to learn about the culture of their host country. This learning is not one-way either as he states that “a good public library is one that provides opportunities for people to hear, read and learn about a diverse range of cultures. The removal of ignorance is one of the greatest contributions the public library can make...” (Usherwood, 2007: 36).

This all ties in well with the shared community space recommendation from the Commission on Integration and Cohesion above where the other recommendation of cross-cultural activities could take place (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007). Moreover, the same report's recommendations on providing

welcoming packs for new communities or myth-busting packs to assuage the majority community's fears all point to the same need - for information. Despite this being the library's currency, so to speak, it is surprising that there is no mention of the public library in the commission's findings.

3.2.3. Historical Lack of Progress

With regard to present services to BME communities, Vincent (2009a) gives a brief overview of how BME provision has developed from 1969 to 2009. Most of the initiatives he identified focussed on stock selection issues, however he does point out that in the 1980s there was a push for specific community librarians that would provide resources for identified minority communities. These librarians, though effective, were considered to be separate from mainstream librarians so when interest and funding dwindled, many of these posts were deleted.

Vincent states that by 1986 it could be argued that library services for BME communities for the previous twenty years had been delivered on a minimal level. This, he argues, could be because of staff's lack of skill in this issue, or because they targeted only areas with large BME populations and thus did not reflect the idea that the whole of Britain is multi-cultural, or because they had not identified the needs of BME communities and so restricted themselves to just providing BME related stock and little else.

Vincent's final conclusion is that little has changed in BME provision in the four decades since 1969. He criticises libraries for not taking the initiative in issues such as diversity and race relations by which they could have taken an important and forward-thinking role in consultation with other groups to show the value of multi-cultural Britain.

Elliott (1999) also provides a good overview of the trends encompassing research in this field from the 1970s to the end of the century. She identifies major themes that run through all such studies such as the need for consultation and co-operation between libraries and minority groups and training library professionals to acquire the skills required to work with diverse ethnic needs, both of which were amongst recommendations that Roach & Morrison had suggested in their seminal, more in-depth study from 1998 (Roach & Morrison, cited in Elliott, 1999).

3.2.4. Organisational Change

Many of the recommendations involve the library making a cultural change, specifically the idea, mentioned previously, of the library being viewed as a neutral meeting place to bring about cultural cohesion. Matthews & Roper (1994) discuss this cultural change in the context of funding and ethnic minority provision, with specific reference to Section 11 of the 1966 Local Government Act which was intended as a temporary initiative to meet the needs of new immigrants. They stress the importance of libraries being sensitive to minority needs, because if minorities feel they have no place in the library – in other words, if they feel socially excluded - then the library will lose a large number of its users. They refer to research initiatives by various local authorities that came to the conclusion that, with regards to minority policies and meeting minority needs, the whole organisation of the library would require a slow cultural change.

This cultural change mirrors the conclusions made by the aforementioned Roach & Morrison (1999). This implies that very little has changed from the research Elliot looked at from the 1960s and 70s, to the Roach & Morrison's study in 1999 and finally to Vincent's findings in 2009.

Winston (2008), though speaking in the context of US libraries, also bemoans the lack of progress on diversity issues. He believes that the research is limited and what there is tends to be too focussed on academic libraries or increasing minority representation in the workforce. Much like this current thesis, the author has had to look at private sector efforts in order to find the research necessary for libraries to utilise. From this he states that a change in organisational culture is necessary to facilitate diversity initiatives. Though, like many others before him, his discussion drifts toward diversity and discrimination-reduction - and at this he notes that the latter has overshadowed helpful discussion of the former - he does, due to the change in society as whole in this issue, make the key point of the necessity for more diversity research for the library profession as a whole.

3.2.5. Cultural Competency

Most of the above lead to the belief that much research and work would have been done in the intervening time between Elliot's research of the 1960s to Winston and Vincent in 2008 and 2009, respectively, and that any such results would be quite

weighty. However, with regards to the library profession and actual Diversity Training, the literature is surprisingly sparse.

Equally sparse, as noted by Montiel-Overall (2009), is the literature gap on the issue of cultural competency. She initially describes this concept as "the ability of...understanding the needs of diverse populations" (Montiel-Overall, 2009: 176) and argues that the term not be a mere slogan but it should be a concept with some weight to it. Drawing on work in the fields of psychology and education, she gives a definition of cultural competency in a library context as:

Cultural competence is the ability to recognize the significance of culture in one's own life and in the lives of others; and to come to know and respect diverse cultural backgrounds and characteristics through interaction with individuals from diverse linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic groups; and to fully integrate the culture of diverse groups into services, work, and institutions in order to enhance the lives of both those being served by the library profession and those engaged in service (Montiel-Overall, 2009: 189-190).

She proposes a framework to achieve this, including amongst other the points, the need for cultural interaction to find cultural appreciation along with the acquisition of cultural knowledge, which again can come via interpersonal interaction. It should be noted that Montiel-Overall's desire for cultural competency does not stem from a desire to help initiate community cohesion but instead to facilitate the use of the library service for more users from a minority background.

Though not quite empathy, Montiel-Overall does recognise the need for a "caring ethic" (Montiel-Overall, 2009: 195) whereby interacting and understanding others becomes natural to the library practitioner and not merely a duty.

This appears to be a long way off from the current status quo. Indeed, Wilson & Birdi (2008) find that cultural awareness programmes for British public library staff are often outdated and focussed heavily on superficial issues such as a BME community's cuisine or dress. The actual needs of the community are not addressed and neither are the subsequent challenges for library authorities in meeting these needs. Factors blamed for this are a lack of time, a lack of specialised resources and a general policy that was too localised and reactive.

Elturk (2003) also speaks on the issue of libraries and cultural competency, albeit from an American context. Librarians should make minorities feel welcome in the library, as this may be one of the few safe havens where they will not be mistreated

or subject to fear and prejudice for being different. These communities should not be seen as something exotic that always need to be celebrated, but instead should be seen as a body of people with a history, cultural narrative and viewpoint as authentic and valid as anyone else's, something Clements & Jones (2008), speaking from a broader outlook than just libraries, agrees with.

Elturk (2003) states that library staff should keep themselves from making assumptions about others, and should instead be willing to ask questions and learn in order to prepare themselves to help these communities. Librarians need to "check our own stereotypes and recognize that this community has its own stereotypes as well" (Elturk, 2003: 5) and should "think of people as equals and not as charity cases" (ibid.). By utilising minority communities as a resource by which library staff can supplement their own knowledge of other cultures, librarians can become culturally competent and so will be able to "value stories and points of view whether we agree with them or not" (Elturk, 2003: 6) and so will "not see differences as dangerous, mysterious, or 'out-of-the-ordinary'" (ibid.).

As noted above, the literature is sparse; however Mestre (2010) conducted a recent survey on the difficulties and obstacles faced by multicultural librarians in America. Whilst American Universities have had success with the relatively recently created role of Chief Diversity Officer (Gose, 2006; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2006) whereby one person leads a team in order to tackle diversity issues and training on campus, the multicultural librarian has not had a similar positive impact due to such staff having a lack of confidence in what they were doing, coupled with a lack of resources and, as participants in Mestre's (2010), a lack of training, especially a lack of focus on multicultural issues in academic library courses at American Universities.

Mestre argues that cultural competency transcends merely having awareness of different cultures, and involves more the skill that individuals should possess in tailoring their communication styles in order to adapt best to a person from a different background. Without this skill, misunderstanding, misinterpretation and unintended offence may occur. Indeed, Montiel-Overall (2009) notes an example of the latter where library catalogues in the United States used inaccurate and insensitive cultural language.

The multicultural librarians that Mestre (2010) surveyed did not feel that they had this skill of cultural competency, nor did they feel that short on-the-job training courses would help. They thus argued instead that cultural competency skills should be already ingrained into those newly entering the library profession whilst undertaking their library courses at university. Tso (2007), after the previously mentioned case study on staff empathy and a local Chinese community, recommends that cultural empathy training should at least be part of an induction course for new starters.

There have been small recent advances, however. In the USA, the Association of College and Research Libraries (2012) released a cultural competency standard for academic libraries. One of those standards echo Montiel-Overall (2009) above and Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005) below, and are focussed on cultural self-awareness and awareness of other cultures. The full set of standards are:

- Cultural awareness of self and others
- Cross-cultural knowledge and skills
- Organisational and professional values
- Development of collections
- Service delivery
- Language diversity
- Workforce diversity
- Organisational dynamics
- Cross-cultural leadership
- Professional education and continuous learning
- Research

(Association of College and Research Libraries, 2012).

The first standard was put into practice by a Campus Library Diversity Team at the University of Washington-Bothell and Cascadia Community College (Lazzaro *et al.*, 2014). This involved knowledge-based staff workshops that used reflective

discussion to try and achieve cultural competency. Attendance was voluntary. There were two sessions, held four months apart. The first involved an exercise where similarities and differences were discussed in cultural issues of "family, food, fun, and heritage" (Lazzaro *et al.*, 2014: 333). The second was a discussion on ethnic identity and positions of power. There was also an outreach element where members of the Diversity Team contacted multicultural groups for the purpose of potential collaboration.

This is clearly a step in the right direction, at least for academic libraries. One issue, however, is that recent studies under the umbrella terms of 'diversity' and 'multiculturalism' in American academic libraries tend to focus on diversifying the workplace (Al-Qallaf & Mika, 2013), and the standards themselves are no different: the aim is to reduce workplace discrimination and increase minority presence in the academic library workforce, though they do point out the need for professionals to value and respect the diverse populations that they serve (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2012).

With regard to the study by Lazzaro *et al.* (2014), although the concept of cultural competency is understood and embraced, much of the training utilised was focussed on self-reflective discussion with cultural awareness only going as deep as issues of food and entertainment, something criticised as superficial by participants in the study by Wilson & Birdi (2008).

3.2.6. The Characteristics of the Culturally Competent Librarian

The thinness of the literature on this topic makes a comprehensive look at public libraries and cultural competency stand out even further. This is the case for Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005) who, though speaking primarily from the background of health librarians, list the characteristics a culturally competent librarian should have, noting that, "Many fields have codified cultural competence. It may be time for librarianship to adopt a similar code" (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005: 407). Indeed, the attributes that they describe are universal enough that they could easily be adapted for other sectors such as public libraries.

The first characteristic is that of attitude. Here, the culturally competent librarian "is aware and sensitive of their own heritage as well as the heritage of others" (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005: 407). This is not someone who is exclusively given over to the 'other' but is well-grounded in their own culture and so recognises the

value others have in theirs. This makes them comfortable with the differences that exist between themselves and the library users they encounter. Here, it is not merely about finding things in common, though important, but to also appreciate the differences as well.

The culturally competent librarian can also internally audit themselves in order to assess their own biases, attitudes and values, with the awareness of how these could affect those that they serve, a point that Montiel-Overall (2009) also makes in the form of cultural self-awareness.

The second characteristic (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005) is one of values. They not only appreciate the universal identity that includes the common aspects that binds all people together, but they also value group identity - that which makes a particular group unique - and individual identity; that is, what makes a specific person unique.

The third characteristic is knowledge. The culturally competent librarian is always seeking to "possess the information and knowledge that they need about the particular group or groups they are working with" (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005: 408). This would be an ongoing process as, according to the authors, the first step for a culturally competent librarian is to acknowledge their own ignorance about others. The authors state the way forward out of this state is to simply ask relevant questions. Such a librarian, once they have a good grasp of understanding their local communities, also has knowledge of the factors - either institutional or social - that has shaped the treatment of minorities and the barriers they may face.

On a tangent, it should be noted that such knowledge need not remain solely the preservation of the librarian - new digital technologies offer local communities to store and network information (Chowdhury, Poulter & McMenemy, 2006), and local BME communities, in tandem with the culturally competent library could create a repository solely related to inter-cultural matters. Involving the BME community, primarily as their knowledge of their own culture adds authenticity, and because in the digital age "public library users are no longer only the consumers but are creators of information as well" (Chowdhury, Poulter & McMenemy, 2006: 457).

The final characteristic from Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005) is one of practical skills. On this level, the culturally competent librarian shows aptitude toward the use of verbal and non-verbal skills in cultural interaction. They can consult and collaborate with community groups in order to initiate and develop organisational strategies that aid in providing an effective service for minorities. They can also play a number of roles: going beyond the library service they can prove to be a consultant and resource for professionals from other sectors - here again, a digital repository as suggested by Chowdhury, Poulter & McMenemy (2006) would help - and they can lead the way for community outreach projects by "moving out of libraries and into patrons' communities" (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005: 408).

3.2.7. Public Libraries, Social Exclusion and Training

Open to all? (Muddiman *et al.*, 2000) is an in-depth report about the issue of how public libraries deal with social exclusion. Though the premise of this current thesis is more on how public libraries can play a role in mutual cultural understanding and not specifically on the exclusion of particular groups, there is some overlap between the two subjects. For example, the authors state how though the library service has a potential role in tackling social exclusion, it can only do so if it takes the initiative through a transformation of their policies and priorities.

The report also recommends that the identity of the library has to undergo radical change so that it is seen as being intimately connected to excluded groups. This would come about through partnership and consultation with local communities. The role of library staff also needs to change, going beyond merely being information providers to actual educators.

The authors make a key point that, at the time of the report, public libraries responded to social exclusion by making their services available to all, with no input from disenfranchised groups on how such services should be designed and developed to meet their needs. They also make the point of how some staff could actually actively oppose any inclusion initiatives. This may be due to a fear of change, namely a change in their roles, especially if they are being asked to go beyond being merely a provider of information. Others may have a cynical attitude toward such initiatives, having seen similar schemes try and fail in the past. And, of course, some may just do so out of prejudice.

The authors recommend that the aims and policy for any initiative is clearly defined - presumably so that potential critics from amongst the staff can see the potential benefit of a successful programme - and that management take responsibility for dealing with such attitudes.

Vincent (2009b) argues that social exclusion is limited by some to dwell solely on those disenfranchised due to poverty or other economic factors and should instead be broader, encompassing other groups including those from an ethnic background (Percy-Smith, 2000 cited in Vincent, 2009b).

Following one of the recommendations made by the *Open for All?* report for high-quality training, Vincent also outlines some training initiatives delivered - specifically by The People's Network, an organisation dedicated to such training - to public library staff with regard to tackling social exclusion. Again, there is possible overlap with any potential training model developed in the present thesis.

The author mentions that recent development strategy outlines certain training needs for public libraries, namely the need for the organisational change, for role change for staff to move beyond, merely providing information, to be able to take on board new skill-sets and to allow for user consultation (MLA, 2004, cited in Vincent, 2009b). The author then outlines the aims he specifically has devised for social exclusion training, such as creating awareness of the issue, exploring strategies for inclusion and the development and execution of an action plan. He cites research on how the training cannot be a 'one size fits all' policy, instead needing to be flexible and adaptable to participant needs (Resource, 2003, cited in Vincent, 2009b).

Training methodology is brought to the fore next, and in particular The People's Network strategy in delivering social exclusion training involves the use of small group discussions, handouts and case studies.

A salient point made is that library staff often do not see the importance of social exclusion initiatives. The author thus argues that the training should include an educational aspect to it, so that staff, particularly front-line staff who may consider themselves too 'small' to be of any significance, can see the library's potential role in tackling this issue and how their everyday work does have an impact, thereby both inspiring and empowering them. Another point which the author only briefly touches upon is the issue of prejudice and those staff who do not wish to make an

attitudinal change. Here, Vincent simply makes the point that trainers need to be aware of this and though the training itself can contribute to changing some people's perceptions, it is neither guaranteed to do so nor easy, though other authors, such as Clements & Jones (2008) are quite adamant that such people are 'untrainable' as prejudicial attitudes are too deeply imbedded, and that the short and infrequent nature of Diversity Training in particular will do little to inspire such participants to make the mental *choice* needed to make that change.

3.3. Empathy

3.3.1. Defining Empathy

Empathy itself has recently become more prominent in public discourse. Politicians such as Barack Obama, celebrities such as Meryl Streep and entrepreneurs such as Mark Zuckerberg have all spoken about the positive role of empathy and how society is in need of more (Coplan, 2011).

Despite this, there is no consensus in the field of psychology and psychotherapy, on what empathy exactly is (Barrett-Lennard, 1981; Coplan, 2011; Elliot *et al*, 2011) and relatively little research done on the subject, especially in the period between the 1970s to the late 1990s (Elliot *et al.*, 2011). Even in the present day the controversy over a definition still exists (Eisenberg *et al.*, 2014; Reed, 2014).

Barrett-Lennard (1981) describes the Greek and Latin roots of the word 'empathy', with the former relating to connecting to another on a passionate level, and the latter focusing on perceiving feeling in general. In modern parlance, Barrett-Lennard mentions Theodor Lipps use of the term *Einfuhlung* in 1897 as the earliest use of the concept; *Einfuhlung* describing how a person can become absorbed totally in an object such as a painting, though not necessarily relating to other people.

Other early definitions of empathy include Buchheimer's (1963) division of empathy into the ethical and the aesthetic. The ethical is where the observer manages to imagine him or herself in the place of the observed, whilst the aesthetic is where the observed, by describing their current situation and feelings, is allowed to project into the observer.

A more commonly known division is that of the cognitive and the reactive (Gladstein, 1983). Cognitive empathy is where the observer understands the other on a purely intellectual level, and reactive (also known as emotional and affective) empathy is where the observer is immersed in the other, being sensitive to the emotions and meanings experienced by the other. Pelligra (2011) describes the latter as simply understanding the other's feelings by either observation or imagination of the affective state of the observed.

Stephan & Finlay (1999) argue that these two categories of empathy are the most referred to by social scientists, though each may go under different names. They define cognitive empathy as the ability to see from the perspective of the other, whilst for emotional empathy they further divide into another two categories, namely parallel empathy, where the observer experiences the same emotions as the observed and the aforementioned reactive empathy whereas the observer's emotions are a reaction to another's - for example, feeling a sense of indignation when seeing another being treated unjustly.

Clark (1980) offers a definition by which empathy is a trait unique to human beings and is the means by which one person can experience every aspect – emotional, psychological and physical – of another. He also places the root of every interpersonal and social tension at the door of society lacking in empathy as a whole.

Clark also divides empathy into three levels. The lowest is where a person only empathises with himself and his immediate family. The second level is where a person has empathy with those that are similar to himself – the danger here, according to the author, is that this can become chauvinism that leads to social egocentrism. The final and highest level is where one has empathy for all, this being the type of empathy specified by religion.

A version of the second level is also discussed by Madera, Neal & Dawson (2011). Using social identity theory, the authors state that people identify more with people who are similar to them in culture and nationality and by identifying with this group (and comparing with other groups) their positive self-esteem grows. This group then becomes the in-group, whilst all others are the out-group and can be subject to negative bias.

3.3.2. Empathy and Positive Behaviour

One of the major debates within the literature on empathy is whether empathy actually leads to altruistic behaviour. Toi & Batson (1982) disagreed with the prevalent sentiment of the 1980s that claimed that altruistic behaviour always had an egoistic aspect to it. For example, a person will see another in distress and this would cause emotional distress in the observer. Thus, the observer is only motivated to help to remove their own sense of emotional discomfort.

The authors tested this by introducing two groups of observers to a subject who had lost both her legs. One group of observers were asked to imagine what it would be like to be the subject, thus trying to induce emotional or affective empathy within them.

The second group simply received information about her, so their empathy was limited to the intellectual level. The second group felt distress at her condition and were willing to help her in order to relieve that distress. However, the first group wanted to help simply because she needed help and nothing more. The authors thus conclude that empathy can lead to altruistic behaviour.

Gladstein (1983) disagrees, pointing out that the above is only true in the case of emotional/affective empathy, as the experiment proved. He adds that the weight of evidence at the time shows that the dominant position – that altruism is egotistic in nature – is far stronger.

Gladstein adds that though there are many scales that are designed to measure empathy, there is no way of knowing if they are accurate. He suggests that the myriad scales are actually measuring some aspects of empathy but not empathy as a whole. He also adds that it is questionable as to whether empathy can be scientifically measured given that it is a state of being.

The author labels emotional/affective empathy as emotional contagion as it is the state of one person experiencing what another is feeling. As stated above, he does concede that this may lead to altruistic behaviour and believes this may happen when the observer takes the role of the observed and can thus perceive the world as the latter does. Gladstein cites Rushton (1980) who states that helping others occurs in tandem with empathy when a person has internalised social norms of social responsibility, equity and reciprocity.

Recent literature appears to have made very little progress in building on these early categories of empathy; the term is still currently divided into cognitive and affective/emotional (Coplan, 2011; Pelligra, 2011). Coplan (2011), speaking from a philosophical viewpoint as opposed to the psychological ones above, describes emotional contagion as low level empathy and stands in distinction to real empathy which is an emotional process of great complexity. Emotional contagion, she argues, is still subject to an egocentric bias, whilst real empathy should – ideally – be free from any of this.

3.3.3. Empathy, Sympathy and Inter-cultural Interactions

Bennett (1979) notes that the 'Golden Rule' of treating others as one would like to be treated is actually flawed as it makes the assumption that other people *want* to be treated in the same way we do. He states that true inter-cultural harmony cannot happen based on this rule as it disregards the other's ethnic and cultural context. He thus rejects the assumption of similarity that inter-cultural trainers are convinced of, stating that such people look at differences as superficial believing that all are the same once the surface is scratched.

He then postulates that the empathy such trainers advocate is not empathy at all, but sympathy. This he describes as one person putting themselves in a second person's place but then imagining how the first person would act if they were in the circumstances of the second. This means that they do not empathise - they do not feel or think as the second person would - but instead sympathise, wondering instead how *they* themselves would think and feel in another person's situation. In short, it is a form of "generalising the thoughts and feelings [of others] from our own point of reference" (Bennett, 1979: 415). This is similar to the definition Goleman (1996 cited in: Wilson & Birdi (2008) uses some fifteen years later.

Empathy, then, is the ability to disregard the self in the other while sympathy is seeing one's self in the other. Even in the present day, Eisenburg *et al.*, (2014) states that empathy has minimal sense of the self while sympathy does not, though sympathy does lead the sympathiser to have concern toward the sympathised and try to alleviate the latter's distress.

This altruism that may result because of sympathy is not something Bennett (1979) criticises, however he does note that such altruism is not actually attending to the needs of the sympathised but instead is the sympathiser projecting their own needs

onto the sympathised as that it was they assume *they* would need if they were in the latter's situation.

Sympathy is easier than empathy, Bennett argues, and is often more accurate, but only when one is surrounded by like-minded people of a similar background. When faced with those of a different background - such as those of another culture - sympathy can cause defensiveness and this can hinder inter-cultural communication. Empathy, the author states, is essential in such communication as it can "solve many misunderstandings that derive exclusively from a misplaced assumption of similarity" (Bennett, 1979: 418).

As for the actual role of empathy in intergroup relations, Stephan & Finlay (1999) offer a detailed explanation, though they view the subject primarily through the prism of reducing prejudice and not necessarily cultural understanding. They cite the example of the 'jigsaw classroom' where children of different backgrounds are brought together in order to work on a common academic goal. This interdependence allows the children to learn to view the world from another's perspective (Bridgeman, 1981 cited in Stephan & Finlay, 1999). Intergroup relations are reportedly improved during such classrooms, with empathy cited as the motivating force.

They also cite the example of conflict resolution workshops where "the conflict is presented as a problem to be solved, not a conflict to be won" (Stephan & Finlay, 1999: 733) which are then used to "foster mutual understanding between members of opposing groups" (ibid.). The methodology used here is to have participants take on the role of someone from the other group, through which perspectives and perceptions are changed about the other. The authors do note that the evidence in support of such workshops is lacking, but do state that in most cases some form of understanding about the other is increased (Ross, 1993 cited in Stephan & Finlay, 1999).

The authors mention too the use of cognitive empathy in American multicultural education programmes, where students learn about the values and cultures of other groups through the medium of role-playing and viewing films. However, they do make the point that the cognitive empathy that occurs through simply reading and learning about another group is more suited to those people whose personality has a high disposition toward empathy in the first place. They also make the caveat the inter-cultural harmony is a two-way process - those from the outgroup should be

encouraged to empathise with the majority group so that understanding is mutual, and both the majority and minority groups are aware of one another's worldviews.

3.3.4. Teaching Empathy

Whilst authors such as Clark (1980) boldly make the claim that empathy can be taught, there is very little in the literature that provides any practical methods in doing so. Nordgren, Banas & MacDonald (2011) state that simply being told about another's social pain is not enough as this leads people to underestimate that pain – they need to be able to experience it themselves somewhat in order to fully understand it.

Madera, Neal & Dawson (2011) do offer the suggestion of perspective taking. Speaking in the context of diversity training and using emotional empathy as its basis (which the authors term as state empathy), the authors conducted an experiment within the hospitality industry where participants had to complete a recipe written in an abstract, non-English language. They had to imagine how non-English speakers would feel in a similar situation (working in a kitchen in an unfamiliar language).

Post-experiment, the participants reported feeling more empathy toward those non-English speakers and felt more positive toward them to the level that they hoped that those speakers would receive more equal treatment in the future. The authors are confident that perspective taking in this manner can reduce prejudice and increase positive attitudes toward minorities. The conflict resolution workshops mentioned by Stephan & Finlay (1999) previously are also a similar example of perspective taking whereby one participant takes on the role of someone from the opposing group "so they can learn to view the conflict from the perspective of people on the other side" (Stephan & Finlay, 1999: 733).

Pittinsky, Rosenthal & Montoya (2011) favour a diversity training methodology that is more focussed on increasing positive attitudes toward minorities as opposed to simply reducing prejudices. They argue that having positive attitudes leads more to positive behaviour whilst reducing negative attitudes does not necessarily lead to a reduction in negative behaviour.

Coplan (2011), however, describes this perspective taking as pseudo-empathy, as real empathy is far more complex given the fact that one individual's reaction to the exact same circumstances will be different to another's; in other words, they

will never be able to exactly share one another's perspectives. This again highlights that debates still rage over the nature of empathy even to this present day.

Stephan & Finlay (1999) cite a number of experiments that they claim show that training can increase empathy. One experiment had two groups of social workers, one who tried to understand their clients on a cognitive level, the other on an emotional level, asking them to imagine being in their clients' shoes. The latter group showed a marked increase in empathy toward their clients (Erera, 1997 cited in Stephan & Finlay, 1999).

Emotional contagion for training purposes, then, is still the preferred method within the literature in order to induce empathy. Since viewing another in distress can lead to empathy, it could be inferred that this could take place through the medium of role-play and drama (Krebs, 1975; Perry, 1975; Barrett-Lennard, 1981). Stephan & Finlay (1999) also encourage the use of role-play to bring about emotional empathy and argue that this type of empathy can bring about attitudinal and behavioural changes so long as the intensity of the emotions created are strong enough.

What the literature does not address, however, is the long-term impact of induced emotional contagion for training purposes. In other words, how long does the altruistic desire to help last the further away in time participants move away from the training session? And does repeat exposure to induced emotional contagion lessen the desired effect? Moreover, would emotional contagion be the ideal empathic tool in order to inspire cultural understanding?

3.4. Diversity Training

3.4.1. Diversity: A Definition

There is little disagreement amongst those studying, researching or involved in the topic of diversity as to what the term means. "Appreciation" is the description most likely to appear, and this in reference to the appreciating and valuing of human differences (Clements & Jones, 2008)

Celebrating diversity, according to Clements & Jones, is an exploration and appreciation of the richness of culture that a multicultural, diverse society brings. Diversity Training, then, equips people with this appreciation along with the ability to "treat all people fairly with dignity and respect; to become more well-rounded,

less insular people; something to live, not merely discuss” (Clements & Jones, 2008: 2-3). As such, appreciating diversity thus becomes a way of life and not merely policy, and the appreciation is not a mere abstraction but has a practical application as well.

The authors state that the differences that are to be appreciated are not merely localised to the attributes of age, race and gender, but can also apply to differences in background, values, professional status and social class amongst others. However, the focus of the present study will be on ethnic and cultural differences.

There is an argument, as presented by Winston (2008), that the term diversity has now been stripped of its rich meaning of valuing difference and has instead become a negative term and a euphemism for '-isms' such as sexism and racism, and for policy such as affirmative action. The reasons for this negative stigma will be discussed below in section **3.4.4**.

3.4.2. Forms of Diversity Training

The literature on Diversity Training generally follows an American corporate slant. It is from this angle that Paluck (2006) charts the history of the initiative, beginning with affirmative action programmes in the 1970s, followed by a large spike in demand in the 80s due to the higher influx of minorities and women into the workplace, and finally leading to another surge in popularity due to 9/11 and the focus on community cohesion in its wake.

Paluck (2006) further differentiates between instructional training – using methods such as lectures, role-play, videos and group discussions – to experiential training where, for example, participants would visit an area with a high ethnic population in order to understand better their lives and culture.

Other experts describe Diversity Training as a mixture of both a skills based approach, coupled with awareness raising exercises. For example, Lai & Kleiner (2001) state that the ideal training programme should equip participants with tools and a skill-set that can be transferred from the programme and into the workplace.

Magdaleno & Kleiner (1996) develop this further by explaining that the awareness raising exercises would educate participants about other cultures in order to identify and challenge cultural stereotypes. The skills that participants would be expected to take are cross-cultural understanding, intercultural communication,

facilitation and adaptability. Cross cultural understanding would instil in employees the knowledge that people behave and react because of their cultural background. Knowing this makes it easier, then, for employees to engage in intercultural communication – meaning the ability to adjust their own communication style – which would then allow them to facilitate ways in which misunderstanding and tension can be defused. By adopting these skills, employees will have then adapted to various different cultural styles by changing the way they communicate when dealing with any particular group.

Gillert & Chuzischvili (2004) details a practical example of this in The Netherlands with Rabobank's diversity initiative. The bank hired an external consultancy to pilot a new Diversity Training module. In the initial feedback they received, the consultancy identified the fact that many of the bank's employees held beliefs that would make it difficult for them to communicate with different cultures in an effective way. For example, many believed that migrants in general should learn Dutch, whilst female staff believed that customers should not make any distinction between them and their male colleagues. It did not matter if these notions were right or wrong, what mattered was that there would be an issue, for example, if a non-Dutch speaking migrant entered the bank or if a client, because of cultural background, wished to deal only with a male employee.

These notions were tied into each employee's personal identity in what it meant to be a good professional. The solution then was to develop a diversity programme that instilled a culture in the bank that being a good professional was about helping the customer and letting them leave the building feeling happy.

3.4.3. Motivations for Diversity Training

Much of the literature on Diversity Training centres on the advantage of this training to the workplace, to organisations, and to an individual's career trajectory. One example of the latter is from Loo (1999) who argues that globalisation and the fact that many workplaces are now so diverse necessitates training that sensitises staff to these changes, and those that do not take part are "closing the door on many career opportunities" (Loo, 1999: 323).

Lai & Kleiner (2001) emphasise the role of legal issues in the motivation behind a Diversity Training that seeks to build and maintain a harmonious work environment. Pendry, Driscoll & Field (2007) also state the fact that a driving goal

of Diversity Training is one of integration, effectively making it easier for organisations to employ and retain minority staff. The workplace should use Diversity Training to foster a culture of tolerance. Phomphakdy & Kleiner (1999) are also convinced that the primary purpose of any such training is to eliminate workplace discrimination.

Schmidt (2004) is even more blatant in revealing the intention behind Diversity Training. There are no social or moral motivations for the training, he argues, only a business goal that reflects the diverse nature of the modern workplace and the need to engage with a wider customer base. Paluck (2006) shares this assessment, stating that the training was born from a market imperative as opposed to any social good. According to Krietz (2008), this same modern workplace requires a competitive advantage that only Diversity Training can bring.

3.4.4. The Perceived Failure of Diversity Training

Despite all these efforts in promoting a harmonious and productive workplace through Diversity Training, much of the literature focuses on how such initiatives have failed with the present researcher currently unable to find any literature that provides a positive outlook on the results of the training. Magdaleno & Kleiner (1996), for example, point out that Diversity Training highlights the differences between people, and that people in general “tend to dislike those different from themselves” (Magdaleno & Kleiner, 1996: 34). With these differences now brought to the fore, inter-group hostility and resentment grows.

Phomphakdy & Kleiner (1999) cite a survey conducted by Hemphill & Haines (1997) with 500 members of corporate management and 100 people associated with the Diversity Training sector found that many training participants found the issue upsetting and counter-productive and believed that it bred reverse stereotyping and discrimination, particularly focusing on castigating white males. For example, the reverse stereotyping in this case comes about when teaching white males about stereotyping actually results in the same white males being stereotyped as culturally insensitive and borderline racist. Since sensitive and personal issues were raised during training sessions, there was a high factor of negative emotional arousal, such as anger and anxiety.

Paluck (2006) agrees with this assessment, adding to the above criticisms that many academics believe that the training itself relies on “pseudo-scientific theories with no supporting evidence” (Paluck, 2006: 578) and is left to professional consultants with no academic grounding as there is simply little academic literature to provide that support.

Swanson (2002) in a focus group study of diversity personnel and interviews with mid-level managers reinforced the feeling that Diversity Training was nothing more than an excuse to attack white males and put the blame of racial and gender disharmony squarely on their doorstep. The study also pointed out that a typical Diversity Training programme was too short, with sessions lasting at minimum half-a-day and at most one full day. Neither is enough to really tackle the broad issues that surround diversity.

Ferdman & Brody (1996) concur, stating that companies view Diversity Training as little more than a tick-box exercise in order to fulfil legal requirements, and this results in short courses with little long-term impact. Gillert & Chuzischvili (2004) add that deep-rooted beliefs related to diversity will not change “based on a four-hour training module on Wednesday morning” (Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004: 169).

Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) argue that diversity training can result in unintended negative results. They first state that diversity management as they describe it is essential, but only from the aspect of reducing discrimination and creating a positive work force. However, the provision of diversity training has become a very profitable sector with many experts, mostly self-appointed and without accreditation, offering a service. Since the entire sector of diversity provision is, in their opinion, mostly unregulated, this can lead to a varying degree of quality in the services provided.

It must be stated that the authors are speaking from a wholly American background which, in terms of regulation and accreditation, may differ from elsewhere. However, their list of potential mishaps is still relevant. This includes:

- Trainers pursuing their own agendas, whether it be their own values or their promotion of one particular minority group.
- Training being too brief.

- The inability to distinguish between issues of cross-cultural management and affirmative action.
- The training is unbalanced - either too shallow or too deep - and does not reflect the needs of the participants.
- Trainers are chosen, not because of their expertise in the subject, but because they belong to a specific minority group.

One outcome of all this is that employees from a minority are then devalued in the eyes of the workforce as there is now a perception, as a result of the training received, that those people had only received jobs out of a desire for tokenism or to fill a quota. This then leads to white males feeling they cannot compete as they feel they will be passed over for employment or promotion for less qualified people from a minority, thereby inevitably increasing resentment.

The authors, though, do point out how a successful diversity programme should be conducted: namely, to be non-aggressive, and focussing on civil behaviour. Organisations should have a diversity consultant who has in-depth knowledge of the subject and can tailor any potential training to the needs of the organisation. Finally, any diversity initiative needs to have consistent and strong support from top-level management.

Indeed, a view widely represented in the literature is that Diversity Training simply does not work unless there is strong and continuous support from high-level management. Lai & Kleiner (2001) argue that there should be people in management who champion the cause of diversity and are seen being involved in it at every level. Riesch & Kleiner (2005) go further, stating that the CEO of a company should be its diversity zealot.

Pendry, Driscoll & Field (2007) state that institutional support is essential, or else Diversity Training will simply fail or even make the situation worse. The entire culture of the organisation needs to be pro-diversity.

Schmidt (2004) asserts that Diversity Training must have “the 100 percent support from top management” (Schmidt, 2004: 148) to succeed. Krietz (2008) concurs, adding that such support has to be long-term and strategic. Swanson (2002) describes the top-level support required as essential and sees these high-level

executives as being those who, like those described above, can champion the initiative.

3.4.5. Diversity Training in the Public Sector

The literature on this subject frequently focuses primarily on private sector efforts in managing diversity. Perhaps the reason for this is that when the public sector is mentioned in relation to this issue, it merely mirrors findings from the public sector. Soni (2000) sums this up well, stating that diversity initiatives in the workplace are aimed at improving intra-workplace relations and on reducing prejudice and discrimination. Using the example of a case study from one public sector organisation, the author found that the diversity initiatives used were short, infrequent and had little support from participants. Indeed, the author found that 60% of employees from this organisation felt that cultural differences were a source of conflict, and 45% of white men there felt that diversity should not be emphasised. Women and those from a minority background reported more positive attitudes toward the scheme.

Again mirroring the private sector findings but this time coming from a UK perspective, Foster & Harris (2005) state the public sector managers consider diversity training to be the least important of all the training initiatives available. They also use a case study to reinforce their findings, and conclude that diversity is only considered as a barrier against potential lawsuits on discrimination, and that diversity is not very well-defined, often being used as a synonym for equal opportunities. They also make the point the present researcher does in saying that the literature on diversity training is heavily skewed toward the private sector. One issue they do bring up is that UK employers are not in favour of training that utilises 'fictionalised' methodology - such as role-play or drama - as it is felt to be unrealistic and does not reflect actual practice.

Riccucci (1997) states that both public and private sector diversity initiatives suffer from the same issues: namely that they focus on workplace discrimination and affirmative action, are not motivated for a genuine concern or desire for diversity and cultural harmony, and are resented by the white male majority. The author does note, however, that diversity initiatives that focus exclusively on gender issues tend to be more successful than those that focus on ethnicity and race.

3.4.6. Attitudinal Change and Diversity Training - A Brief Note

Clements & Jones (2008) states that Diversity Training because of its short-term nature is not likely to lead to attitudinal change. Increasing awareness, understanding and knowledge are the goals of such training; however the authors are speaking in the context of reducing prejudice and discrimination not cultural understanding. Nonetheless, regardless of the aim of the training, it is not presumptuous to assume that some people who will attend the training will hold deeply-set prejudices toward BME communities.

The authors state that such attitudes can change as societal norms change. As the Commission for Integration & Cohesion (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007) found, prejudices that were frowned upon by society generally tended to be unexpressed compared to those that are not. In terms of attitude change in small groups, Clements & Jones (2008) state that this can happen in three ways: a coercive approach whereby behaviour, displayed by a role model, is changed and this then leads to attitude change; second, an empirical or rational approach whereby attitude is changed through the use of logic based information; and third, a re-education whereby people, in a non-judgemental and supportive fashion, are helped by peers and leaders to assess their own attitudes, then confront and change them (NPT, 2001 cited in Clements & Jones, 2008). This, state the authors, require the use of a long-term educational programme quite different to the shorter form commonly used by current diversity training initiatives.

3.4.7. Psychology and Diversity Training: Methods & Possible Solutions

Pendry, Driscoll & Field (2007) summarise well the psychological theory that underpins much of the methodology utilised in recent Diversity Training. Three key methods are highlighted: an enlightening approach, a guilt-inducing approach and a social identity approach. The first approach simply informs participants of how minority groups are mistreated. This can misfire if the dominant group feels that they are made to feel responsible for the situation. The second approach utilises exercises that highlight to the dominant group just how privileged they are. Again, this can lead to anger, not just from the dominant group who feel their integrity is under attack, but also from minority groups who are reminded of the prejudices they have to endure. The social identity approach highlights to participants the fact that they belong to many different social groups, not just their

gender and ethnicity, and so may actually have more in common with other people than they realise.

The main point that psychologists are focused on in this topic is the possible anger induced by Diversity Training and the methods that could be taken to defuse this anger. They point out that participants who cannot overcome their initial anger may then stay fixed in that anger response unless the trainers are skilled enough to give people the skills needed to move forward.

An example that Pendry, Driscoll & Field (2007) use is the Implicit Attitude Test (IAT). This is an online tool which, through various questions, reveals to participants their hidden prejudices. The authors believe that this is a competent method in Diversity Training but warn that just being informed of these prejudices will not be enough for people to be inspired to overcome them. Instead, participants may take it as a personal attack and thus will become angry. A solution, according to the authors, would be a pre-test preparation that makes it clear to participants that there is nothing personal involved, followed by a debriefing for those undergoing negative reactions. Pendry, Driscoll & Field (2007) do state that the IAT can promote tolerance by highlighting the power of people's unconscious stereotypes.

Another Diversity Training methodology that the authors recommend is the contact hypothesis that is dealt with in more detail by Paluck (2006). This is an established method over fifty years old and is where prejudice is reduced when different groups come together with a common goal and with equal status, such as a team working on a single project within a corporate framework. Again, with all such initiatives, it requires high-level management support to succeed.

This 'contact' does not necessarily need to be face-to-face. Prejudice can be reduced simply by the knowledge that one's peers are friendly with a certain group, or even via reading books that project a positive impression of that group.

A key point that Pendry, Driscoll & Field (2007) highlight is the fact that there is currently very little evaluation of many Diversity Training programmes. Without this evaluation, they argue, there cannot be enough systematic research from which a successful programme may grow. This is a view shared by other authors (McCauley, Wright & Harris, 2000; Paluck, 2006) leading the present researcher to

come to the conclusion that evidence for the failure of Diversity Training – as detailed in the sections above – must be largely anecdotal.

3.4.8. The Contact Hypothesis In-Depth

The contact hypothesis is Allport's (1954) assertion that prejudice occurs because one group erroneously believes another group holds certain negative characteristics.

Allport stated that prejudice has a five-step process beginning at the bottom with what he termed 'antilocution' - whereby other groups are spoken of negatively but not directly, 'behind their backs' as it were - which leads to avoidance of that group, then actual discrimination, then physical attack and finally extermination. Modern examples of this would be the Nazi persecution of the Jews in World War Two and the ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims in the mid-1990s (Clements & Jones, 2008). Victims will, according to Allport (1954), respond to this in a number of ways: such as withdrawing and remaining passive, self-hate and laughing along with their attackers. This only applies if they blame themselves; should they blame others, then Allport states that they will be suspicious, strengthen their ties in-group and engage in revolutionary aggression.

He thus believed that if the groups were to have some form of contact with another the similarities they share would become apparent and would undermine such stereotypes and so reduce prejudice, and as such the contact hypothesis was formed.

Bramel (2004) charts the history of this hypothesis, noting that early social theory believed as a scientific given that black people were inferior to whites, a notion also reiterated by Allport's older brother - himself a social psychologist- who believed that white lynch mobs only occurred because of an intrinsic and desirable trait in black people and not because of any flaw of those taking part in those mobs.

Early social theory also posited that differences between groups were a fiction , that the differences themselves were the cause of conflict and that all such differences would eventually vanish through assimilation of the out-group with the in.

Pettigrew & Tropp (2005) also provides some historical notice by stating that other early social psychologists believed that *any* inter-group contact would inevitably result in conflict. This was because all groups considered themselves superior to others. Such ideas were still to be found in social theory even up to the 1980s.

Both Pettigrew & Tropp (2005) and Bramel (2004) point to the Second World War and the rise of Nazism as providing some change to this attitude. Now social psychologists, having seen what happened to the Jewish population, opined that inter-group conflict occurred not because of differences but because a build-up of frustration, primarily economic in nature, led to the displacement of aggression onto innocent groups.

Whilst Pettigrew & Tropp (2005) note that in this period some social theorists were of the opinion that prejudice occurs because of a lack of contact, Bramel (2004) points out that academics in this field were keen to avoid the issue of differences as the idea that everyone was the same had become prevalent in order to avoid supporting any potential racist agenda. Against this backdrop came Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis that showed that contact was necessary in order to show different groups their intrinsic similarities and so overcome prejudice.

Bramel feels that while the basic premise of inter-group contact is agreeable, the idea of reducing prejudice through finding things in common is now outdated as modern multi-cultural society should value and appreciate the differences between myriad groups.

What the contact hypothesis can also do is reduce intergroup anxiety. Pettigrew & Tropp (2006) describe this as a form of contact avoidance that occurs due to three factors: there has been little previous contact, there has been contact but of a negative nature, or there is an avoidance of contact due to a fear of causing offence. Thus, according to Halperin *et al.* (2012), the contact hypothesis can only work if there is a motivation to make contact in the first place.

Fazio (1990) concurs and states that real attitude change can occur if both motivation and opportunity exist, a framework the author describes as MODE - Motivation and Opportunity as Determinants.

Abersson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo (2004) and Shook & Fazio (2008) state that intergroup harmony comes not just from mere contact but from the appreciation that results from intergroup friendship. Shook & Fazio (2008) note that Allport

stated that for the hypothesis to have optimum results, then at the time of contact both groups need to be of an equal status, need to work toward some common goal and need to have the support of the authorities. The authors add intimacy and friendship to this list, and Aberson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo (2004) show how people from a different background on a language course became friends over the time of the course.

Shook & Fazio (2008) also describe a test case in America whereby one white freshman was paired up with one black to dorm together. They state that whilst intergroup anxiety was reduced as a result the freshman involved would report that they were less satisfied with these roommates than they would have had they had same-race roommates. Intergroup success, then, the authors argue, needs to have as its basis, friendship and intimacy.

Pettigrew (1998) describes the process through which the contact hypothesis works. The first is that by having contact, groups then learn about one another and so new information about the other can improve attitude. The second process is that positive behavioural change occurs when there is repeated contact between groups. The final process, again tying into the need for inter-group friendship, is that effective ties are created through the contact through the arousal of positive emotions. Interestingly, the author values the role of empathy in creating these ties and notes that friendship will reinforce them. Another point mentioned is that if it becomes a societal norm for the majority group to be more positive to the minority group, then many individuals will follow.

Amichai-Hamburger & McKenna (2006) also make the point of the importance of friendship for the contact hypothesis to succeed but also mention potential barriers. The aforementioned intergroup anxiety is one, but the sheer logistics of having to organise how different groups can meet one another is another. The authors argue that merely having knowledge and information about another group is not enough and here they make the point of the need for intergroup friendship. They also mention the point of generalisation, stating that merely meeting a few members of the outgroup is not enough to change an individual's attitude toward the whole group no matter how positive the contact.

Stephan & Finlay (1999) manage to link the contact hypothesis with both empathy and inter-ethnic relations. They cite the use of controlled intergroup dialogue to do so, usually in a university setting, where two opposing groups participate in role-

play and then further discussion, querying one another and sharing experiences about issues such as stereotyping and discrimination. Again, it is primarily a prejudice reduction exercise. They argue that cognitive empathy is in play here, as groups in dialogue finally learn exactly how similar to the other they actually are, though they make the point that this only comes about through understanding how the other views the world.

This is reinforced by a recent study by Pettigrew *et al.* (2011) who, whilst assessing recent developments with relation to the contact hypothesis, assert that positive contact arising from intergroup friendship results in reduced intergroup anxiety and an enhanced sense of empathy that allows one person to understand how the other feels about and views the world. Whilst the authors are keen to point out the overwhelming positive success of the hypothesis, they note that negative results can occur, often in workplace situations where competition is a factor. This may then explain the negative feelings towards diversity issues in general that come from the white male majority - due to the perceived threat of losing their place on the career ladder to those from a minority even if the latter does not merit it - whenever workplace diversity training occurs. Negative results also occur when participants are forced into the contact as opposed to those who take part voluntarily.

The authors also outline the criticisms toward the theory: namely that it can help reduce individual prejudice but does little for group conflict (Forbes, 1997, 2004 cited in Pettigrew *et al.*, 2011). Critics also point toward a problem of motivation in bringing hostile groups together to initiate the contact in the first place. However, these critics are often referring to extremely volatile situations such as the Arab-Israeli conflict or the troubles in Northern Ireland. The critics' solution is often to implement contact avoidance, something the authors strongly disagree with as it can open up the way for racial and ethnic segregation.

Other critics have apparently misunderstood the theory, assuming that positive results will always occur. The authors maintain that the conditions of the hypothesis - organisational support, an equal footing, a common goal and friendship - need to be in place before successful contact can result.

In general, the authors assert that the contact hypothesis is a success and often benefits the majority than the minority as the attitudes in the advantaged group tend to grow positive due to the contact. As such the hypothesis' longevity in having

begun in the 1950s and still being relevant today as the primary theory for prejudice reduction only reinforces its own credibility and success.

Whilst the basic premise of the contact hypothesis is to reduce prejudice, the present researcher cannot see why the same methodology cannot be used in order to develop cultural understanding. This is not to say that prejudice reduction is an inherently negative thing or that it is not a step toward community cohesion but to state that diversity efforts should not stop there and should go beyond in order to achieve mutual cultural understanding. As Stephan & Finlay (1999) above state, part of the success of the contact hypothesis is due to being able to see and understand another's worldview. The same intergroup contact would occur, but with the intention of providing this understanding through having the opportunity to ask about one another and to develop friendships. Repeated contact would then reinforce this which would - in a library context- make staff feel both more comfortable and confident in not only interacting with BME communities but helping others to overcome any intergroup anxiety and come to understand them, too.

3.5. Designing the Training

3.5.1. Theoretical Underpinnings

In the actual designing of the training, Clements & Jones (2008), two former diversity trainers who have written a comprehensive diversity training handbook, have provided an in-depth analysis. They first outline a number of possible theoretical models that could provide adequate context before the actual designing process begins. The first is Tuckman's Model (Tuckman, 1965 cited in Clements & Jones, 2008) which is a methodology useful when trying to monitor a group (of training participants) and their development, especially if the group contains resistant members. This model follows five steps: forming, storming, norming, performing and mourning.

The forming stage is when the training group initially comes together under the guidance of the trainer, where they comply with all tasks set, are polite and topics are safe and non-controversial. In modern methodology, the 'ice-breaker' exercises at the beginning of a training session best complies with this.

The storming stage is where cliques are formed within the larger group, hidden agendas are a motivating factor and certain personalities will lobby to be the group leader or spokesperson. The authors assert that this can be the most challenging stage as the trainer themselves may be challenged and their authority and knowledge questioned.

Norming is where group members become more independent, the team as a whole may develop their own identity and be more inclusive with workload shared and individual roles accepted. In the performing stage, productivity is increased, members are supportive and criticism sounded out so long as there is a rational basis to it. Finally the mourning stage is where the training session ends and the group part from one another. The authors state that this stage is a positive one as 'mourning' could only occur if the group has been a success. They also state other variables that could cause the group to revert to an earlier stage: a turnover in group members - either with people leaving or someone new joining - a change in the group leader, and the group being placed in front of a more difficult task.

As to what should be discussed in Diversity Training, the authors suggest that the topic of integration can be approached using the model developed by the British Police Force (National Police Force, 2001 cited in Clements & Jones, 2008). This shows the different stages of group interaction. The first is isolation where two groups have no contact with one another. The second is interrelation when the two groups do have contact and this leads to incorporation where the groups merge, losing individual identity and instead have a new, singular fused identity.

The above only applies when the two groups are equal. In the case of a majority and minority group this can lead to exclusion of the latter by the former, such as in the case of ethnic cleansing. The motivation here is for the majority to maintain their dominance of the minority. The other outcome is assimilation, whereby the minority takes on the dominant culture, either voluntarily or out of social pressure. Understandably, issues can emerge when the latter occurs. The trainers cite this as a good talking point, using as an example Norman Tebbit's 'cricket test' whereby one should, if one is born in England, support the England cricket team in an international event, regardless of one's ethnic background.

A model the authors believe is useful for discussion is Allport's (1954) five stages of prejudice (see **3.4.8.**). Another model is Betari's Box (described by Clements & Jones, 2008, though the actual origin of the model is unknown) which shows how

attitudes and behaviours can become locked in a vicious circle. For example, one person has prejudiced attitude's which then causes them to behave inappropriately towards someone from a minority group who then themselves develops a prejudiced attitude toward the majority group which in-turn influences their behaviour and so on and so forth. In the context of Diversity Training, the authors point out that trainers need to be role models and 'walk the walk' in terms of what they are teaching.

For a self-awareness exercise, the authors suggest the use of Johari's Window (Boshear & Albrecht, 1997 cited in Clements & Jones, 2008). The model was the work of Joe Luft and Harry Ingram with the actual term coming from a portmanteau of their first names.

The model separates the human self into four areas, the public self, the private self, the blind area and the unknown. The public self is what is known to the person and what is known about that person to others. The blind area is what is known to others alone. The private self is what is known only to the individual and thus may not surface - such as prejudice. And the unknown area are aspects of the self, unknown both to the person themselves and others around them. The authors do not clarify how exactly to use this model within the actual training, except its aforementioned use as a self-awareness exercise.

The present researcher also notes that all these models are driven with one purpose - to reduce prejudice and discrimination. There is little or no emphasis on mutual cultural understanding, though the first model provides an interesting insight into group dynamics should the training developed by this thesis require it.

3.5.2. The Design Process

Staying with Clements & Jones (2008), they state that an organisation needs to identify its diversity needs before the design and delivery of the training. This would take the form of a needs analysis and whatever the result is would form the context of the whole programme from the outset. The needs would form the basis of the training objective - though the authors prefer the term 'learning intentions' - and these need to be clear as evaluation becomes easier as there is a benchmark and goal by which the training can be set against. Evaluation, the authors argue, is essential.

Minority communities need to be involved in each stage in order for the training to be a success. This maximises the impact of the training, and empowers it by giving it a sense of credibility. This is because "involving diverse groups...will bring to [the training] other world-views which could otherwise not be reflected" (Clements & Jones, 2008: 63). It also provides first-hand experience from a community member which can have a stronger impact than mere written reports and enriches learning through a shared experience. It also favours the groups themselves as they will feel included and can say their piece directly without having someone else - who, though may have good intentions, can still misinterpret their experiences - do so for them.

However, the authors warn that people can identify themselves with multiple communities (for example, someone with an ethnic identity and a religious identity that may not necessarily overlap, such as an English Buddhist) and that all voices should be thus represented, in as much as it is practical to do so.

The next step is to identify and assess the target population for the training, namely those who are going to participate in any diversity initiative. They need to be assessed as to their current level in relation to the organisational need driving the training, and if they have had any previous training on this issue and its impact. The organisation needs to decide whether managers are to be trained separately from other employees or altogether. The authors, without going into specifics, state that there are pros and cons to both approaches. The organisational culture also needs to be assessed - if the climate is one of hostility and cynicism toward issues of diversity, for example, then this needs to be taken into consideration. An assessment of the where the organisation as a whole is in relation to the training need also needs to be assessed and, overshadowing all this, there needs to be an awareness of budget constraints.

Another point the authors note is that the trainers themselves need to be well-trained. If it is known that those delivering the training are inexperienced, then the authors argue that this needs to be taken into consideration into the design process. The trainers should not be left vulnerable to any negative behaviour from participants – this could be achieved, the authors state, by having more than one trainer present during sessions. The authors have also found that many trainers surveyed felt that they lacked the authority to engage others in raising awareness on issues of diversity, values and prejudice. Some had reported 'trainer stress',

namely harassment, bullying and mental health issues resulting on a level that was higher than the national average. This also has to be taken into consideration when designing the training.

Stephan & Finlay (1999) offer some recommendations for intergroup training programmes that wish to utilise empathy. As with Clements & Jones (2008) above, they state that clear goals must be set. They argue that if only understanding of the other is sought, then the training should methodologically incorporate cognitive empathy alone. If social action is the goal, then the training should be based around parallel empathy where the observer experiences the same emotions as the observed.

Somewhat paradoxically, they warn against a type of empathy that may inadvertently lead to a negative reaction such as a reinforcement of negative stereotypes and damage to self-esteem. It is not quite clear how the authors believe empathy would result in this, but they do make the point of defensive avoidance, where the observer identifies with the observed to such a degree that they were made aware of their own vulnerability and this leads to them avoiding the other completely. Presumably this is because they will be made aware of all the negative experiences the other has had to go through.

As a result, the authors recommend that empathy is used to maximise their impact, particularly through the use of perspective and role-taking so that participants try to view the world from another's point of view. Though not mentioned by the authors, the present researcher believes that defensive avoidance could itself be overcome by focussing instead on the positive experiences of the other, and if these experiences are related to their own particular culture, then empathising with them may bring about more cultural understanding.

Wentling & Palma-Rivers (1999) canvassed twelve diversity experts to ascertain what the components of an effective Diversity Training programme actually are. These included having the involvement and support of top management (of which all twelve respondents were agreed on), having the training be a part of the organisation's strategic plan, tailoring the training to meet the needs of the organisation, and the use of qualified trainers. The respondents also pointed out that the initiative should be all-inclusive, neither marginalising nor favouring one particular group. This avoids alienating some people which leads to the criticisms offered by white males as mentioned previously. It is clear that there is some

accordance between the components mentioned here and the factors stated by Clements & Jones (2008) above.

3.5.3. Training Methods

Amongst the methods that Clements & Jones (2008) state are the most common methods used in diversity training is small group discussion, role-play and the use of forum theatre and psychodrama.

Group discussion is considered to be, by the authors, the most important methodological tactic. It allows for a variety of ideas and opinions to be expressed and analysed, from majority group opinions and, if there are participants that fit the profile, from minority ones. The disadvantages are, for the trainer, trying to keep the discussion under control and to try and make sure everyone is participating, particularly those who are naturally untalkative and find such situations threatening.

Mirroring Lai & Kleiner's (2001) views on the subject, the authors believe that role-play is cost-effective and engages with people's real-life experiences. It can lead the way to deeper group discussions and increase an individual's self-awareness, learning about their own assumptions and hidden prejudices. However, some participants may be reluctant finding the whole process uncomfortable and somewhat threatening.

Clements & Jones (2008) believe that this can be avoided by the use of forum theatre whereby professional actors engage in the dramatised scenarios, often using psychodrama where a protagonist has some prejudiced attitudes that the participants then help them to overcome in the follow-up conversation. If the script is well-written then it can have a sizeable impact, and if the actors are familiar enough with the subject, they can engage in and facilitate the follow-up conversation with the participants. Though not directly related to diversity training, Krebs (1975), Perry (1975) and Barrett-Lennard (1981) all praise the use of drama as a training tool to induce emotional contagion and thus empathy.

The disadvantages to the theatre and psychodrama approach are the cost involved in hiring such actors, and whether or not role-play - where individuals can bring out their own experiences - is a better method than participants simply watching another in a scripted scenario.

3.6. Evaluating the Training

Clements & Jones (2008) recognise that many organisations find evaluating a training programme both difficult and expensive. Some may even consider it unnecessary, to which the authors argue that without evaluation it cannot be known whether the training has met the organisational need for which it was developed, nor can a knowledge pool be instated through which good practice can emerge. This lack of good practice from adequate evaluation is a flaw associated with Diversity Training in particular and also identified by Pendry, Driscoll & Field (2007)

3.6.1. Methodological Schools of Thought in Evaluation

Clements & Jones (2008) state that evaluation historically emerged in the 1950s to assess the impact of government policy and initiatives, and only in recent times has it been focussed upon training. Among the purposes of evaluating training is to prove whether the training had any effect and to improve the process if it had not. Citing Easterby-Smith (1994 in Clements & Jones, 2008), there are a number of schools of thought that encompass evaluation. The first is experimental research which sought to find if the cause and effect between training and staff improvement were actually connected to the training itself. This used quantitative questionnaires and training measurements, both pre- and post- training, as evaluation tools.

Clements & Jones (2008) state that the strength of this approach is the flexibility of the questionnaire design, the relative ease in how feedback data can be collected, and the presumed 'scientific' nature of the process. The weakness is that there is no way of knowing if positive changes in the trainees actually came from the training itself.

Modified from this is the systems model which seeks to find, through participant feedback, the direct link between training outcomes with their objectives. This is said to validate the training, though the authors point out that, like in the case of experimental research above, it does not totally establish whether other factors, outside of the training, that may have allowed for workplace improvement. They also state that this approach is more concerned with establishing processes - the cause and effect - than with improving training. However, the strength is that it is believed to be relatively cost-effective and systematic.

In contrast to this is goal-free evaluation where objectives are ignored and, through the use of in-depth participant interviews and workplace post-training observation, the training is assessed through its actual learning value. This established by surveying all stakeholders to ascertain what the *perceived* objectives are, and then to focus on the training process itself to see if there are any unexpected outcomes (as opposed to establishing whether the perceived objectives were met). The strength of this approach, according to the authors, is that it is comprehensive and uncovers data that other approaches may not. However, the weaknesses are that it is very expensive and quite difficult, being labour intensive.

Another model is illuminative research which uses a neutral observer to identify key issues which are then expanded upon through in-depth interviews with training participants. This is less concerned with providing recommendations by which the training could be improved and more to identify general principles which are then placed into a wider social context. The neutrality leads to the approach's credibility, and the authors consider this a strength so long as that neutrality is not compromised. However, the main weakness is that it is a very time-consuming process.

Like the goal-free evaluation which focuses on training process rather than goals, another school of thought is described by responsive evaluation. Stakeholders collate their concerns and issues over the training which are then given equal value, with no single concern promoted as the absolute truth. These concerns are then addressed during the process of evaluation. This school also believes that establishing a process of cause and effect between the training and workplace effects needs to be identified by many different observers and not confined to one single approach. The stakeholders could use any number of different evaluation tools in order to establish their initial concerns and issues.

Related to this is a revised form of this approach by Patton (1978, cited in Clements & Jones, 2008), where it is recognised that multiple stakeholder concerns actually translates to multiple needs which may sometimes be in conflict with the others. Evaluation should then take place through both qualitative and quantitative methods, and the resultant data should then allow the stakeholders to take action as to whether the training is addressing their concerns or not.

Clements & Jones (2008) state that the strength of this approach is that it is flexible and attempts to meet the needs of all parties concerned with the training. However, this can also be its weakness as, with so many needs, sometimes conflicting, the approach becomes "neither one thing nor the other" (Clements & Jones, 2008: 165) and final reports can therefore be weak and inconclusive.

3.6.2. Evaluation Models

These schools of thought then lead to a number of evaluation models. Clements & Jones (2008) state that the most widely used model is Kirkpatrick's Four Levels (Kirkpatrick, 1976, cited in Clements & Jones, 2008). The first level is that of reaction, namely how the participants react to the training, whose reactions are measured in terms of the training's content, methodology and if all training needs have been met. Level 2 is entitled 'Learning' and this measures if participants have improved in terms of their knowledge, understanding and skill as a result of the training. The next level attempts to see if the training has improved workplace behaviour, and the final stage, entitled 'Results,' seeks to find a link between the training and improvements in the organisation as a whole.

Hamblin (1974, cited in Clements & Jones, 2008) has a similar model to Kirkpatrick's but includes one extra level. His levels are Reaction - the participants immediate reaction to the training as observed by participant feedback; Learning Behaviour - measuring any new knowledge and skills gained by the participants as a result of the training; Job Behaviour - measuring the training's impact on workplace behaviour; Functioning - any improvements in the organisation as a whole due to the training and Ultimate Value which tries to find links between the training and the organisations overall success and profitability.

Warr, Bird & Rackman (1970, cited in Clements & Jones, 2008) has a four-stage model entitled CIRO - Context, Input, Reaction and Outcome. The context stage attempts to determine the objectives of the training. This is further split into three sub-categories:

- 1) **Ultimate Objectives:** This identifies the skill or knowledge deficit which the training event is intended to overcome.
- 2) **Intermediate Objectives:** This quantifies the changes in workplace performance which will be necessary to overcome the deficit identified in 1) above.

3) **Immediate Objectives:** This identifies the new knowledge, skills or behaviour which are necessary if the trainee is to achieve the intermediate objectives. (Clements & Jones, 2008: 166).

The Input Stage then assesses whether the training methodology does indeed match with the training needs and, if not, what alternatives could be utilised within the given resources. The Reaction Stage is similar to both Kirkpatrick and Hamblin, whilst the Outcome stage defines the objectives, selects and uses the appropriate evaluation tools, then assesses the results.

The final model the authors look at is Phillips (1995, 1996, 1997 cited in Clements & Jones, 2008) five-level Return of Investment (ROI) approach that is basically Kirkpatrick's model with an added stage entitled 'return of investment' that assesses the cost-effectiveness of the training through which the data regarding the benefits of the training is converted into a monetary value which is then divided by the costs of the training to find a cost-benefit ratio.

Without offering an answer themselves, Clements & Jones (2008) ask their readers whether a cost-benefit approach is an appropriate response for an organisation dealing in diversity issues. Presumably, though they do not explicitly mention it, the implication is that if it is not cost-effective to do so, organisations may do away with Diversity Training as a whole, despite the general importance of the issue.

3.6.3. Evaluation Tools

Clements & Jones (2008), based on the above discussions, state that neither evaluation nor assessments are as clearly scientific as portrayed and suggests the use of a number of different evaluation and assessment tools to validate the training process. The authors suggest the use of, in possible combination: questionnaires, structured interviews, observation - either of the training or consequent workplace impact, or both - or individual interviews with a line manager.

With regard to questionnaires, interviews and observation, the present researcher believes that the pros and cons of such tools as an evaluation tool would match the pros and cons mentioned in the methodology section of this thesis, namely, with regard to advantages, being able to generate high quality data in questionnaires which, because of its anonymity should be in-depth and thoughtful (Schensun, Schensun & LeCompte, 1999) and for the disadvantages, the lack of certainty on participant honesty for questionnaires and interviews (Davies, 2007).

Clements & Jones (2008) concur, especially in the issue of observation where the danger is, they state, of the neutrality of the observer becoming compromised as they become more involved in the event they are observing. However, if this is not taking place, then the independency and neutrality of the observer are considered positives.

They also state that the positives in using questionnaires are that data collation and analysis become a lot easier. However, the authors believe that meaningful conclusions cannot be deduced unless the sample size is very large.

3.7. Gaps in the Literature & A Justification for this Study

3.7.1. A Summary of the Literature

- The British Government does have recommendations in place to help assist with community cohesion. These involve inter-cultural activities, meaningful cultural contact, and the use of shared public space (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007).
- The public library service could easily assist in this and their professional body even acknowledges the potential for library professionals to assist in the celebration of cultural diversity (CILIP, 2013a). However, very little progress has been made regarding this over the last few decades, and stock and language issues are still prevalent (Roach & Morrison, 1999; Vincent, 2009a) as opposed to realising the library's potential as a neutral meeting place where people of diverse backgrounds can meet and learn from one another (Buschman, 2003; Usherwood, 2007). What is envisioned instead is a new skill-set: cultural competency (Elturk, 2003; Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005; Montiel-Overall, 2009; Mestre, 2010) - but even amongst those that champion this skill, such as Montiel-Overall (2009), the focus is not on assisting community cohesion but instead to help bring more users into the library from a minority background.
- Research into Diversity Training in the context of libraries leans heavily towards the academic library sector with other sectors such as health libraries also represented (Montiel-Overall, 2009; Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005). Public libraries therefore appear to be underrepresented (Winston, 2008), with even the most recent cultural competency initiatives being implemented by the academic library sector (Lazzaro, *et.al.*, 2014).

- There is still much debate on what defines empathy, and as yet no clear theory on how empathy can be taught to others. The process of emotional contagion, however, can be induced through the medium of drama and perspective taking, though its long-term effects in maintaining empathy are unknown (Krebs, 1975; Perry, 1975; Barrett-Lennard, 1981).
- The contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), although primarily a prejudice reducing tool, can help toward improve inter-cultural interactions provided that certain conditions are met such as a shared goal and the opportunity for inter-cultural friendship (Aberson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo, 2004; Shook & Fazio, 2008). Intercultural interaction is a theoretical recommendation offered by Montiel-Overall (2009) for libraries to bring about cultural competency.
- Diversity Training needs strong support from management and needs trainers who believe with conviction in what they are doing and teaching. In short, organisations in general need diversity champions (Lai & Kleiner, 2001; Swanson, 2002; Schmidt, 2004; Riesch & Kleiner, 2005).
- Diversity Training is geared toward reducing workplace conflict in order to avoid both legal and productivity issues (Phomphakdy & Kleiner, 1999; Loo, 1999; Lai & Kleiner, 2001). There is very little focus on cultural awareness or cultural empathy.
- Diversity Training often involves only half-day sessions that have little long-term impact. They are seen as mainly ‘tick box’ exercises in order to satisfy legal requirements (Ferdman & Brody, 1996; Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004).
- Resentment towards Diversity Training due to negative emotional arousal. People – especially white males - feel they are being attacked or are made to feel guilty (Hemphill & Hayes, 1997 cited in Phomphakdy & Kleiner, 1999; Swanson, 2002).
- There is very little genuine feedback provided by which Diversity Training could be measured for how effective it is (McCauley, Wright & Harris, 2000; Paluck, 2006).

- Designing the training needs to account for the organisation's training need and requires the involvement of minority groups at every step of the process. Evaluation is essential and there are a number of models that could be utilised to this end (Clements & Jones, 2008).

3.7.2. Conclusion

The present researcher believes that there are many gaps in the literature that could be addressed through this current thesis. There is a disharmony between what the British Government seeks for community cohesion, what the public library service can offer, and what the service is actually providing.

The Commission for Cohesion and Integration's 2007 report offers a number of recommendations that the public library service could easily facilitate, but crucially, neither the commission nor public libraries have addressed this. The commission recommend the use of information packs, either of a welcoming nature for new immigrants or of a 'myth-busting' nature to correct misconceptions about established minorities, the implementation of cross-cultural activities and the use of shared community spaces for meaningful cultural contact (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007). The public library is perfectly placed to offer all this, both as an information provider and a neutral meeting space, and yet there appears to be little in the literature connecting the library service to community cohesion policy. This is further compounded by the fact that both the library's professional body acknowledges the potential role in celebrating cultural diversity (CILIP, 2013) and the Government, in a separate report, acknowledges the library's role as a neutral meeting space to bring people and communities together (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 1999). It is thus hoped that this thesis will go some way to marrying all this together in order to rectify this.

There is also the sparseness of the literature with regards to public libraries and Diversity Training (Winston, 2008), with recent initiatives being spearheaded by the academic library sector (Lazzaro, *et al.*, 2014). What this presents to the current researcher is a lack of precedent by which this thesis could hold as a standard. In practice, the model that the thesis presents may need a longer period of trial and error in order to *become* a standard by which subsequent research can measure itself against.

Whilst Mestre's (2010) conclusions above about how the training should be part of a university library course are interesting, they are by no means definitive. What Mestre's study did highlight, though, was the fact that library staff do need to be aware of the different communication styles used by different cultures and to be able to adapt to them. Whilst this is not the same as being aware of the underlying philosophies of other cultures, it is something that could be built upon in this thesis.

Despite the lack of literature in this regard, it must be stated that Press & Diggs-Hobson's (2005) characteristics of the culturally competent librarian provides a well-thought out and easily understandable framework from which further research could easily grow. Both Mestre and Press & Diggs-Hobson raise an interesting, if implicit, question: should the term diversity be ignored, especially due to its negative connotations, and be replaced with 'cultural competency' that not only appears to be more neutral but also carries with it the implication of an actual skill-set which may make it more attractive for employees who see no value in Diversity Training itself.

Montiel-Overall (2009) would certainly argue the case for cultural competency, and even provides a theoretical framework that includes a caring aspect - so that such a skill-set comes naturally to staff, instead of feeling like an obligation - and a suggestion that inter-personal contact with other cultures can help towards appreciation and understanding

With regards to Diversity Training itself, there is a focus on corporate and legal motivations for the training, with Diversity Training seen as merely an anti-discriminatory tool (Phomphakdy & Kleiner, 1999; Loo, 1999; Lai & Kleiner, 2001). What is missing is the ethical and social motivation for the training, especially with an emphasis on developing empathy for mutual cultural understanding and community cohesion. This study, then, can take a step toward filling this gap.

The literature also makes the contradictory claim that Diversity Training has failed whilst at the same time noting that there is very little evaluation of current training programs (Paluck, 2006). It would appear, then, that much of the criticism comes from anecdotal evidence. This study may then be able to provide something more concrete in that regard.

As stated above briefly, the main gap in the literature that renders this research necessary is that there is currently no marriage between empathic theory and Diversity Training practice. Indeed, many training programmes have a heavy emphasis on anti-discrimination (Ferdman & Brody, 1996 and Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004) – for obvious corporate reasons – but not on cultural empathy.

The empathic theory itself has no consensus on the very definition of empathy, nor does it offer clear suggestions on how to bring about empathy in other people. Whilst emotional contagion and perspective taking are issues that are touched upon, it is not clear whether these can be the foundation for a sustainable Diversity Training programme that would have long-term effect.

3.7.3. Considerations for this Thesis: Defining Empathy, Adopting the Contact Hypothesis, and Cultural Competency

Despite this lack of consensus on defining empathy, there are still strands that can be identified: namely, the idea of seeing from another's point of view, either emotionally or intellectually, or both. Also, the idea that empathy, as opposed to sympathy, does not presuppose that the observer transposes their own perceived judgements and needs onto the observed, assuming that the observed would have the same needs as the observer if both were in the same situation (Bennett, 1979). As *understanding* is key to this thesis, a definition of empathy whereby one sees from another's worldview without adding one's own personal judgement and assumptions would probably be the ideal model to follow.

This thesis is interested in establishing underlying cultural worldviews as a tool for effective Diversity Training; however, the present researcher has yet to find literature that expands and develops this view, either in a positive or negative manner. Nonetheless, there are grounds for encouragement. The contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), though envisioned as a prejudice reducing tool, could be easily used to develop mutual cultural understanding through community contact by creating the opportunity for and inculcating inter-group friendships (Aberson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo, 2004; Shook & Fazio, 2008). Librarians could also take on the characteristics of the culturally competent librarian as described by Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005). By marrying this to the contact hypothesis - it taking the methodological base by which Montial-Overall's (2009) inter-personal cultural contact recommendation for libraries could occur - public library staff could begin to make in-roads in addressing the issue of cultural empathy. The current thesis,

through the use of a training model, will provide recommendations on how to do so. The terminology of cultural competency could also distance the model from the negative stigma perceived to be attached to the word 'diversity' and its training (Winston, 2008; Swanson, 2002; Magdaleno & Kleiner, 1996).

Added to this, the empirical evidence that this thesis will bring in the form of canvassing the opinions of library staff and library users in the issue of training and cultural empathy, followed by the researcher's own recommendations, will add to and remedy many of the gaps in the literature.

Chapter 4

Observing the Training

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will provide some empirical evidence to either support or refute the conclusions reached in the literature review regarding the current state of Diversity Training. This evidence will come through the observation of two different training sessions, both of which had diversity issues as a theme. Thoughts will also be provided via the findings of a telephone interview with a practitioner in the Diversity Training field.

4.2. Background

The literature review (3.4.4. above) shows that Diversity Training as an issue is both highly contentious and deeply criticised. Indeed, with some minor exceptions, it appears that the tide is mostly negative, with criticisms (3.7.1. above) focussed on the short duration of the training, the focus on workplace discrimination issues over cultural understanding, possible negative emotional arousal, and the lack of any long-term evaluation of such initiatives This is just taking the training on its own, completely divorcing it from any public library context.

The literature proclaims the failure of Diversity Training, whilst at the same time stating that evaluation of said training is poor and unreliable. This would naturally lead a researcher to ask that if evaluation is poor then how can it be reliably concluded that the training has failed? Is anecdotal evidence taken from previous participants being used or is a systematic approach possible?

Empirical evidence could help to answer such questions, and thus it was decided that observing a number of Diversity Training sessions could provide such evidence. The sessions attended were provided by private sector organisations to public sector trainees. Choosing the private sector seemed prudent as a high number of research articles are focussed in that direction. Moreover, literature on public sector training initiatives concentrated on the same issues that the private sector did (see 3.4.5.).

Though library staff were involved in one of the observations attended, what was being tested here through observation were the conclusions that were reached by the literature on Diversity Training alone as stated in **3.7.1.** above.

4.3. Aims

The overall aim is to observe the process of Diversity Training in its 'natural' environment, meaning as it is being delivered live. Whilst observing, the following objectives will be important:

- To use the methodological process of observation to test the conclusions of the literature on the positive or negative effects of Diversity Training.
- To identify methodological approaches used in the training sessions observed.
- To analyse whether these methodological approaches as it currently stands can be utilised by public libraries for the purpose of mutual cultural understanding and community cohesion.

4.4. Identifying the Providers

In order to identify Diversity Training providers, a two-fold process was utilised: a basic Google web search, filtered to identify training providers nationwide, using initially the search term 'Diversity Training' and then 'Diversity Training providers', and a request via contacts in both the Diversity Training field and the library profession for any potential opportunities for observation.

The providers do have a significant web presence, and their websites reveal that the vast majority of them offer training that deals more with issues related to discrimination and the legal aspect of managing diversity than with cultural empathy and understanding. There was a focus on terms such as 'Equality and Diversity Training' and 'Equality Act Training,' where it was clear that the training was to prepare participants in how to handle workplace discrimination and the legal consequences thereof.

In total, 38 providers were contacted nationwide via e-mail. Included in the initial request was a brief summary of the thesis and why the researcher wished to undertake an observatory role. The only criteria in choosing these 38 were that they

should offer a Diversity Training course that was not conducted online. Of this number, only one responded with a direct invitation. Unfortunately, this programme was later cancelled and so the researcher was unable to attend.

Slightly better results emerged from the contacts, and an invitation to attend two training sessions was received. The first was a one day programme in a Northern city on welcoming non-English speakers to public libraries, and the second was a general half-day Diversity Training programme on behalf of a local borough council in the South of England. The first programme is concerned with helping staff in better serving a particular subset of their customers - namely, non-English speaking library users - whilst the second is focussed on workplace discrimination and staff relations.

Another significant, if negative, response involved a lengthy email response to the researcher's request which questioned whether public libraries would place any significant importance on Diversity Training, mainly due to funding issues. This response also felt that an observation of private sector training sessions would not be welcome as the researcher could then potentially use that information to set up a 'rival' training programme and would thus encroach on their customer base.

4.5. First Observation

4.5.1. A Summary of the Methodology & The Observation Tool Used

The purpose in observing Diversity Training sessions was to discover and record key patterns in training methodology which could then be applied to a possible training model for public libraries. DeWalt & DeWalt (2002) note the importance of observation in deducing the context of a particular phenomenon, thus proving better understanding about it. In the parameters of this particular study, the phenomena under scrutiny will obviously be Diversity Training itself.

As such, the observation methodology that the researcher decided to initially adopt was a semi-participant unstructured one which is "exploratory in nature and is used to generate hypotheses and develop theories rather than test them" (Mullings, 1984: 2) which is particularly suited to the inductive approach that the initial part of this thesis attempts to approach.

There are disadvantages to this method, such as the possibility of observer bias. This in itself could be allayed by collecting data on people's attitudes and opinions, but observation does not lend itself to such an undertaking (Mullings, 1984). However, at this stage of the research, attitudes and opinions were not that important, only the exploratory nature of seeing Diversity Training in action, and, as such, this form of observation seemed suitable.

The observation was done in an overt manner, meaning that all the participants knew that the researcher was present and what the researcher was doing. Mullings asserts that such a form of observation could lead to the subjects behaving differently as they are aware of being watched. However, as mentioned in the methodology section beforehand (2.3.2. above), the researcher felt that in both the observations undertaken, the participants paid little attention to his presence and appeared to be acting quite naturally.

Gold (1958) and DeWalt & DeWalt (2002) describes this method as the 'observer as participant.' This is where the group know of the observer being present and his purpose whilst the observer himself is primarily concerned with collecting data. As all parties are aware of the other, this method is believed to be the most ethical. The present researcher adopted the role of a partially participating observer in the first observation (the participation was by request of the organisers) and as a non-participating observer with interactions in the second (Bryman, 2008).

In terms of recording the data, the present researcher, noting that this was the first observation on this particular topic and so had no previous context, used descriptive observation whereby each and every thing is recorded in an unstructured approach (Werner & Schoepfle, 1987, cited in Angrosino & Mays dePerez, 2000; Mullings, 1984; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Merriam (1998) feels that the observer has to be aware of both the micro and macro facts on an observation - for example, focussing on a specific activity before referring back to the overall context. Again, the researcher feels that this was accomplished, by describing both individual activities and also speaking to one of the participants as well.

4.5.2. An Introduction to the First Observation

The training programme observed focused on welcoming non-English speakers to the library and was conducted by a training organisation whose primary aim is to improve library services through co-operation and training. The participants were from the public library service of the local metropolitan borough. There were 10 in number (n=10) with 7 female and 3 male. All were White. They were from various levels of the library, including front-line staff and middle-management, and represented a number of different branches from the service. The observation took place in September, 2010.

None of the two trainers present were from the library service itself. Both were female, and one was Asian whilst the other was White. The organisers insisted that the researcher observed the training as a full participant. Mullings (1984) states that such an observation is time consuming and requires a lot of focus and energy. The present researcher felt the experience helped in giving the data collected more context, something DeWalt & DeWalt (2002) consider to be integral to the process of observation. In addition, the researcher did not feel that this experience was detrimental in the long term as he felt that he managed to record everything that was suitably important.

The organisers' insistence on participation was prefaced by asking the researcher if he was fluent in Urdu when he first arrived at the venue. This was because the organisers felt that the training would not work and the 'surprise' (see **4.5.3.** below) would be spoilt if he was. Fortunately, this was not the case, and the researcher was permitted to observe. This does indicate, however, that this particular piece of training was squarely aimed at those whose first language was English.

4.5.3. The Observation Itself

Only key points of the observation will be recorded here. The session itself was split into two. The first a series of exercises conducted by the female trainer from an Asian background, and the second session a general discussion regarding the participants' experience of that first session. This second session was overseen by the White female trainer.

Without any prior warning, the Asian trainer delivered the entire first session in Urdu, from the introductions, to the instructions regarding each exercise, to even asking individual attendees specific questions. This, then, was the 'surprise' the organisers wished to preserve.

For example, she began by holding a ball and introducing herself in Urdu in the form of 'My name is...'. She would then throw the ball to a random participant whilst asking them in Urdu what their name was. They would also have to reply in Urdu, again using the form 'My name is...'. She gave no instructions in English beforehand, and so participants had to deduce her meaning merely from her actions and body language. She would repeat the 'My name is' form in Urdu until people realised that that was what she wanted them to say, too, when introducing themselves. Many of the participants caught the gist of it very quickly.

Various exercises followed in a similar fashion: greetings in Urdu, numbers in Urdu, asking people to say their full name, town and postcode - with a mixture of English letters and Urdu numbers - and then their telephone numbers. When people understood, she would praise them. This was clear from her tone of voice, even if no one could understand her precise words.

This whole session lasted around 35 minutes and the trainer deliberately did not speak English once. The second trainer – a white female - then took over for the second session and canvassed the participants for their thoughts and feelings regarding the first session. This second session lasted about an hour.

In this small group discussion that followed the first session, the second trainer asked the participants about what sort of feelings they underwent when they realised the first session would not be in English. This was done to make them aware of similar feelings a non-English user of the library would feel upon entering the library environment.

The participants generally reported an initial feeling of frustration and helplessness that subsided as time passed and grew in confidence. This was due to the fact that they could pick up on the Asian trainer's non-verbal gestures and the tone of her voice. They also felt that it was helpful that the trainer spoke slowly and clearly, and that she was very patient.

The first session itself was an exercise in developing empathy as now the library staff attending had some idea of how a non-English speaker might feel when coming to the library. They also had received a lesson in how to deal with that situation. As the Asian trainer later explained in English, positive body language and eye contact were essential, as was speaking slowly and clearly and being patient, as all this would make non-English speakers feel welcome and help them grow in confidence.

4.5.4. Participant Interview

One of the library assistants attending participated in an informal interview with the researcher after the event. Despite the informality of the interview, informed consent was still taken and permission granted to record his responses for the purpose of the thesis. From a methodological viewpoint, the conversation would fall under an unstructured open interview where there is a free discussion on a given topic (Bell, 1993).

Three main themes were covered:

- The importance of cultural understanding.
- The motivation for coming to the day's training session.
- The importance of this type of training.

The library assistant personally believed that cultural differences can be an issue when people who come to the UK do so from harsh regimes and so will have a negative preconception of officialdom. He believed that library staff here could then defuse this situation by giving a positive representation of British government through being welcoming and providing polite and helpful customer interaction.

However, he was quick to add that one should not generalise in this way and assume that every non-native speaker had this negative preconception. Every patron should be taken case by case. He also pointed out that many native English users of the library have misunderstood instructions that he has given (in the context of using the computers) and so “people are people,” i.e. they have different levels of understanding and can misunderstand even if one shares the same language and culture.

When quizzed on his motivations for attending this session, he stated that he asked to join this training session and was not compelled to come. This was due to the frustration he felt because he felt unable to help the many non-English speakers that come to use the library. He also felt that library staff needed cultural awareness training. For example, he knew from experience that some cultures can be quite curt in their manner of speaking, but they are not actually intending any offence. Library staff should be aware of this.

The participant here spoke solely from the context of his own library experiences and not from the broader role of the library as a whole. As such, he did not hint at the library's potential in community cohesion issues but instead focuses on his day-to-day interactions with BME communities, which is all perfectly understandable. The encouraging aspect of his replies are that he is genuinely motivated by a concern to help the BME users he engages with, and shows a level of empathy by recognising that such users will have specific needs and to take every user 'case by case' as he puts it which would mean not to generalise those needs onto anyone from a BME community.

He felt that cultural awareness training would be of benefit, though the context for him would be a training initiative that would incorporate practical skills which would allow staff to avoid causing unintended offence - and so the 'awareness' he is looking at is not a deeper mutual cultural understanding but instead a skillset that would allow staff to know what individual cultures consider offensive. Again, this is understandable as he is speaking from his day-to-day work experiences. Such a skill-set is reflected in cultural competency as described by Elturk (2003) and Mestre (2010) where the knowledge of other cultures, both in verbal and non-verbal interaction, is considered important. Whilst it is certainly a positive and encouraging aspect, the model proposed for this project would also have an aspect of a deeper understanding of other cultures and their worldviews - more in line with the framework outlined by Montiel-Overall (2009) - not just to avoid causing offence but also to help the library take active steps to facilitate community cohesion.

4.5.5. Discussion of the First Observation

Although the training programme as a whole was not geared toward cultural awareness, the exercise at the beginning of the session was a unique and practical way in creating empathy towards library patrons that do not speak any English. By putting the participants into the shoes of those who have problems understanding someone else with a different language, the participants were able to keenly feel the same sort of helplessness and frustration that those users would feel. At the same time, the participants learned that being patient and using encouraging non-verbal cues could help those self-same library users.

This methodology does reflect the perspective taking that is mentioned by Madera, Neal & Dawson (2011), where the authors exposed staff in the hospitality industry to a non-English speaking environment so that they would empathise better with colleagues who came to their workplace and did not speak the native language of the company. However, it should be noted that those from a BME background may have a more diverse range of needs that are not merely concentrated around language issues. This training programme does not address that aspect at all, though the participant in the semi-structured interview had some awareness of those other needs due to his experience of the issue at his workplace. In fairness to the organisers, the training programme is clearly billed as 'Welcoming Non-Native Speakers to the Library' so they have made it clear from the outset that they are not dealing with BME communities in their entirety, but instead are focussing on a sub-set of those communities who have one particular need.

Although both Madera, Neal & Dawson (2011) and the library staff involved in the training reported that such an exercise did raise their level of empathy, there is still a question as to how this level can be maintained long-term. With regards to the small group discussion conducted by the White trainer in the follow-up session, authors such as Lai & Kleiner (2001) and Clements & Jones (2008) do view such activities as a positive tool for reflection and to stimulate insights.

A noteworthy aspect of this training was the issue of who delivered it. Two females, one from a BME community and one White British, divided the training into two sessions. This shows, then, that it is possible for someone outside of a community to confidently deliver training related to that community or, as in the case of this programme, a subset of that community. At the same time, authenticity is not questioned as a representative from the community was also there to share in

that training (Clements & Jones, 2008). Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) criticises the use of choosing diversity trainers simply because they belonged to a certain ethnic group, especially if they are ill-suited to deliver such training. However, the BME trainer here appeared both confident and professional in her delivery so that criticism would not apply here. Indeed, it actually provides an ideal response to that criticism, namely that two or more trainers - some from outside of the BME community and some from within - could work in tandem so long as they are all qualified to do so.

In the context of this study, it would be useful to see if the same techniques could be used to foster empathy for other cultures. This could be used in addition to a straight seminar/discussion type of training where participants would learn the underlying philosophy behind each culture. As mentioned before, knowing this philosophy could help library staff better understand the actions of others from different cultures. These aspects will be discussed further when the model is presented in Chapter 9.

4.6. The Second Observation & Forum Theatre

The second Diversity Training session the researcher attended was one delivered by a provider using forum theatre on behalf of a local council in the London area. Forum theatre is where drama is used to enact scenes involving sensitive issues and participants are then told to direct the scene in order to resolve the key conflict therein; this is intended to remove the possibility of any awkward and personal feelings coming to the fore, according to McDougall (2005). It is a tool believed by Dawson (2004) to have been used effectively by some UK hospitals. Clements & Jones (2008) praise the use of high-impact scripts, and the use of actors who can facilitate follow-up discussion.

Here, the researcher observed as a non-participant in an overt manner, having being introduced by the trainer and sitting with the participants, though the subjects paid little notice to his presence. The mixed gender group consisted of 15 participants (n=15) who had been drawn from multiple council departments, as explained to the researcher by the trainer. The aim was to have all members of the council eventually take part, though this would take part in multiple sessions, hence the reason for the small group size and the fact that they were from divergent departments. None were from the local library service. All the participants were White. The observation took place in January, 2011.

There was one main trainer who was the focal point of the entire session and was a White British male. There was also an actor and actress present - one Black male and one White female, respectively - but they were out of sight in an adjacent room until it was time for the 'theatre' sections of the session. The session lasted 3.5 hours for one whole morning and was a mixture of informal lectures comprising mostly of legal matters related to diversity - such as the new Equality Act - and two scripted scenes. These scripted scenes and their related discussions lasted around half an hour each and broke up the lecture aspect to the session which comprised the majority of the training session.

As both scripted scenes had similar methods and aims, only the first will be described in detail, and a summary of the second below. The scenario was one depicting a person in power expressing outright prejudice to a member of staff that was from a minority. The protagonist was a character named 'Sasha', a library manager, and the other person in the scene was recently promoted library supervisor named 'Tim'. The library manager character was portrayed as being rude, obnoxious and borderline racist in her dealings with the supervisor, who was depicted, in both body language and speech, to be quite timid and defeated.

Outright prejudice is portrayed when the library manager character, noticing the supervisor character's persistent tardiness, mentions that "we don't work according to Caribbean time here." The manager is seen undermining the supervisor by making an implied threat against his job and also described the food he eats as having an unpleasant odour, telling him not to bring that "Caribbean food [he] eats, rice and bananas," but to bring sandwiches instead.

Once this scene ended, the actor portraying the supervisor was brought back, alone and in character, so that the participants could ask him some questions. It is worth noting that at this point the participants were quite gentle in their questioning. In reference to the 'Sasha' character, they did not mention the word 'racist' or 'racism.' At the end, they offered practical solutions - such as speaking to the union or Area Manager - that might help him in his situation.

After the supervisor character left, the manager character was brought in to face the participants. The character was still portrayed as being arrogant in her assumptions and was quite dismissive in her answers. The way the participants reacted to this was quite different to how they reacted to the supervisor. In terms of body language, they leant forward in their seats, and rolled their eyes whenever 'Sasha'

said something dismissive. Their tone of voice was quite angry and aggressive, to the point that participants sometimes cut the actress off to point something out to her - such as "that's not what I asked" or "you're not answering the question." They appeared to be so absorbed into the theatrics that they had forgotten that they were talking to an actress playing a character. This is notable as it matches what the literature says on teaching empathy through emotional contagion, particularly through the use of drama (Krebs, 1975; Perry, 1975; Barrett-Lennard, 1981) whereby viewing someone in distress - through a fictionalised scenario such as drama and film - can induce empathic feelings in observers due to them being so involved in the drama.

This scripted scene is also congruent with how McDougall (2005) describes the whole method of forum theatre. By using an enactment, participants are not put on the spot, nor are they made to feel embarrassed. Emotive issues are then dealt with in a relatively light-hearted manner. It also concurs with Clements & Jones' (2008) analysis on the use of psychodrama whereby a protagonist with prejudice issues - in this case, the library manager - is helped through those issues by the training participants. Although this particular piece of theatre allows the participants to talk and offer advice to the victim as well.

This scene was followed by a short talk of around half an hour on prejudice and discrimination by the main trainer. The trainer also mentioned how communication was important, noting how aggressive the participants were in their questioning of the Sasha character as opposed to the gentleness they used with Tim. Within his talks, the trainer mentioned many personal anecdotes related to diversity. For example, he spoke of a gay friend of his that unsuccessfully tried to commit suicide whilst in the police force due to the discrimination he encountered. Interestingly, the trainer also utilised Allport's five stages of prejudice (Allport, 1954) and Johari's Window, though only in discussion. Both are suggested models for Diversity Training in the literature (Clements & Jones, 2008; see **3.5.1.** previously).

A second scripted scene followed, describing a situation of sexual harassment with the male actor who played the victim in the first scene now playing the role of the harasser and the female protagonist of the first scene now being the victim. The difference between this scene and the first is that it was replayed a second time after the victim in the scene is coached by the participants on what she should say and how she should act. In the repeat scene, thanks to the advice from the

participants, the actress playing the victim is able to ward off the unwanted advances of the harasser. This was a stop-start process, whereby, as the scene was being replayed, the participants could call a halt if they thought things were going awry to offer new advice to the victim character.

4.6.1. Discussion on the Second Observation

From the literature, the first issue surrounding Diversity Training is that it does not work if there is no support from management and if the trainer is not seen to be championing diversity him or herself (Lai & Kleiner, 2001; Swanson, 2002; Schmidt, 2004; Riesch & Kleiner, 2005).

It was not clear how much support there is from this particular local council regarding this training event as the researcher did not have the opportunity to speak to anyone from the council from the day, but the fact that they spent from their budget to bring in an outside company implies that there is some level of support there. When the present researcher contacted the council afterward to ask if there was a follow-up to the training, he was told that there was not, but they did have a separate module delivered by the same trainer aimed at management staff.

As for the trainer himself, he clearly did believe in the merit of what he was doing: he was enthusiastic, keen and energetic. He made frequent anecdotes about his gay & trans-gender friends and his attending Asian *melas* which implies that he does, indeed, 'walk the walk.'

The second issue is that it is only geared toward reducing workplace conflict and to avoid legal issues (Phomphakdy & Kleiner, 1999; Loo, 1999; Lai & Kleiner, 2001). This was very much the case here: the attendees were informed about the Equality Act and about discrimination, and both the scenes were workplace related. The council's literature that accompanied the session stated that the council values diversity because it encourages a better understanding of their customers and their individual needs. This was not reflected at all in the training, however, as customer care was not mentioned at all.

The third issue is that Diversity Training only consists of half-day sessions with little long-term impact (Ferdman & Brody, 1996 and Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004). This particular session falls into this, being only 3.5 hours long, and no follow-up training session. As mentioned above, there is a 'module 2' component to the

training, but the researcher was informed that this was essentially the same session but with management staff as participants.

The fourth point about Diversity Training is the issue of negative emotional arousal and resentment (Hemphill & Hayes, 1997 and Swanson, 2002). By using forum theatre there were no personal issues brought up and everything was non-threatening. This local council appears to be aware of this issue as, on the feedback section of the provider's website, they state: "[Their approach] is interactive and challenging without being threatening."

The only negative emotion was the anger felt towards the Sasha character, and this was, obviously, directed toward that character herself. Whilst, as McDougall (2005) has pointed out, forum theatre is an excellent method in being able to diffuse potentially emotive situations with scripted scenes where the actors are the focus and not the participants, it does not - in the form it appeared in this observation - appear to be a tool where cultural empathy or awareness is fostered and developed. However, early research into empathy does infer the use of drama as an empathy inducing tool (Krebs, 1975; Perry, 1975; Barrett-Lennard, 1981), so perhaps it can be honed in order to bring about a situation of emotional contagion without any negative consequences.

Role-play in itself is described by Lai & Kleiner (2001) as one of the best methods of Diversity Training, due to the ability to see and feel through another's eyes – in short, due to its empathic nature. However, the role-play the authors envisage is one where the participants are acting out and not trained actors. As such, it may not apply to the forum theatre method used above, and it may not be able to avoid any negative emotional arousal.

The final point from the literature is that the feedback mechanism for Diversity Training is thought to be poor and inconclusive (McCauley, Wright & Harris, 2000; Paluck, 2006). For this session, participants filled in an evaluation form straight away, and the researcher was permitted to read a sample. The comments were, on the whole, very positive, though lacking in detail: "Course was absorbing," "Brilliant – better than expected," "Learnt new knowledge." There was nothing about attitude or behavioural change, though the format of the questions asked on the feedback form precluded such answers from being elicited. In an informal interview with the trainer directly after the session, the present researcher asked mainly about the effectiveness of the training and the type of evaluation

used. He mentioned that issues such as attitude change are usually evaluated by the hiring organisations themselves with very little of that information being given to the provider.

The training itself was not about celebrating the rich diversity of people that build up modern British society, but was instead about anti-discrimination. In short, there are people who are ‘different’ and staff should not treat them negatively because of it. There was no appreciation for or understanding of that difference, though.

Allport (1954) proposes a solution to this in the form of the contact hypothesis. This is where prejudice is reduced simply by having people from different groups come together in an environment where they are all equal and have a common goal (Paluck 2006). This does not have to be face-to-face, as simply knowing that others from one’s own peer group are friendly with other groups is enough to reduce prejudice towards those groups (ibid.)

Whether he intended to or not, the trainer in this session did demonstrate this latter point through his myriad anecdotes about other groups, although for the description to fit entirely, the attendees would have to consider him a peer. He himself clearly has friends from diverse backgrounds, all of which have led him to be positive toward those groups. This validates the point in the literature about friendship being a necessary condition for contact hypothesis success (Aberson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo, 2004; Shook & Fazio, 2008).

The trainer also conceded in the informal interview that the discrimination depicted in the acted scenes was very covert and blatant – in real life it would be a lot more subtle. This may make it a lot easier for people caught up in the scenes to sympathise with the victim. Showing participants exactly how subtle discrimination can be may have been a lot more educational. This blatant representation of prejudice and discrimination through the use of scripted scenes is actually criticised by public sector managers as being unrealistic and unrepresentative of real life issues (Foster & Harris, 2005).

In summary, as a tool for anti-discrimination, the session appeared from the observation to be a success. As a tool to raise cultural awareness and appreciate diversity, the present researcher believes it clearly was not. As such, this thesis does then seek to fill a gap in which a training model could be developed that does focus on cultural awareness and empathy.

4.7. Other Observations

The researcher was invited to a third observation by a public library service with a very high BME population. This was arranged by the researcher and his management contact at the library. The training was to be delivered by a private sector diversity training organisation. This organisation was not aware of this arrangement, and when the researcher arrived at the venue, the organisation asked the researcher to leave, citing that his research was a possible means of competition to their work.

Other requests for observations at other library authorities were met with the reply that this would only be possible if training participants agreed to it and, in one particular case, if permission was granted from the authority's legal department. In all such situations, the researcher received no follow-up replies and so must assume that permission was not granted.

This highlights the difficulty in arranging observations in general. It also implies that those involved in diversity training have a highly cautious nature, mirroring the findings of the present researcher's Masters research (Syed, 2008), wherein individuals who were highly regarded in the field of library BME issues turned down any approach to be interviewed. This view is also reflected in Davies (2007) who found that the relationship between researchers and practitioners under observation or potential observation can be fraught with tension, with suspicion and conflict coming from the latter.

4.8. Telephone Interview

Following the above observations, a semi-structured telephone interview was also conducted with a further Diversity Trainer, who was not directly involved in either of the observed sessions as a trainer, but did commission the second training on behalf of a local authority. This individual has delivered training to both public and private sector organisations, and was felt to be a suitable person to interview in order to obtain a more general view of diversity training as a whole. The interview was semi-structured, and asked the trainer to describe the training he delivers, its effectiveness, and the feedback it receives (see **Appendix 1** for a full list of questions). This was to place the answers in context with the literature on the training. The interview took place in November, 2010.

The interviewee spoke about his previous work arranging Diversity Training for barristers and the negative feedback he would receive, with accusations of brainwashing and political correctness. This is reflected in the literature in how Diversity Training is perceived by some (Swanson, 2002 and Magdaleno & Kleiner, 1996), to the point that the very word 'diversity' has become watered-down from being a term used to value difference to instead becoming a euphemism for race, equality and discriminatory issues (Winston, 2008).

The interviewee felt that because local councils are publicly funded and represents different communities within its scope, they – and by extension, public libraries- have a duty to meet the needs of these communities. As such, local authorities are more open to the idea of Diversity Training. They also have a statutory duty to provide equality.

In his opinion, effective Diversity Training involves both skills based and awareness raising programmes, something that Lai & Kleiner (2001) also mentioned. However, he does not personally believe that awareness-raising has much impact as a half-day training session is unlikely to erase people's prejudices. Again, the shortness of the training sessions and its resultant ineffectiveness is reflected in authors such as Ferdman & Brody (1996). It is also clear that the 'awareness' he mentioned was about prejudice and discrimination and not cultural understanding awareness, reflecting the findings of Gillert & Chuzischvili (2004) amongst others.

In a digression, he believes that it would be far more cost-effective if Diversity Training was woven into other training programmes – such as customer care- and was not strand specific, meaning that the training does not just focus on a BME context or a gender context, unless it is necessary for those staff that deal exclusively with special-needs clients. As such, the interviewee did not agree with the researcher's approach of focussing only on ethnicity. The cost-effectiveness of the training is a significant factor as local authorities have a limited budget assigned to training programmes.

With regard to the strand-specific criticism levelled by the interviewee toward this thesis, the present researcher feels that this would only be relevant if Diversity Training does not evolve beyond prejudice reduction and anti-discrimination. If that were the case, then it is understandable if a general anti-prejudice training initiative could be utilised and examples used from multiple diversity strands.

Perhaps this is what the interviewee is most familiar with when speaking of diversity - again reflecting Gillert & Chuzischvili (2004) - but is not the remit of this thesis where mutual cultural understanding on a deeper level is the goal leading to community cohesion.

4.9. Conclusion

The findings of both the sessions observed and the interview with the diversity trainer are similar to those within the literature. For example, provider websites show that, like the literature implies (Phomphakdy & Kleiner, 1999; Loo, 1999; Lai & Kleiner, 2001), a lot of the training programmes available are aimed at reducing discrimination and to avoid legal issues. The sessions observed – particularly the second – focussed on anti-discrimination. There was very little in developing cultural awareness and empathy, or trying to educate people about the underlying worldview and philosophy behind each and every culture. This was reinforced by the interview with the diversity trainer who did not appear to be able to see beyond the prejudice reduction aspect and so questioned the thesis's focus on ethnicity.

There appears to be little, if any, continual observation to see if the training programmes currently delivered are having long-term and permanent results. The current researcher contacted the council that organised the second training session and they confirmed that that particular training was all that was offered with regard to Diversity Training, save for a 'second module' intended only for senior management.

A new issue that emerged from this stage of the research is the question of cost-effectiveness. Both the telephone conversation with a trainer and the email response from one of the providers mentioned how local councils who provide training for public libraries have limited budgets and may not wish to spend that on Diversity Training. These councils also provide training for the whole of their organisation and not specifically to libraries. This is briefly touched upon in the literature by Clements & Jones (2008) who cite the ROI evaluation model specifically to note how cost-effectiveness is important to organisations who commission training of any sort (Phillips, 1995, 1996, 1997 cited in Clements & Jones, 2008).

A positive point that arose from the first observation in particular was addressing the question as to who would deliver the training. There are two viewpoints - that of Clements & Jones (2008) whereby representatives of the BME community are included in the process as their first-hand experiences are considerably more authentic, and the view of Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) where trainers are chosen not because of their expertise but because they are from a BME community. The first observation marries both views well, with both trainers delivering the training in a professional manner, though one was White and the other from an Urdu-speaking minority.

At this point in the thesis, with consideration of both the literature (such as Elturk, 2003; Mestre, 2010; Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005; Montiel-Overall, 2009) and the last mentioned point, and still utilising an inductive approach, the present researcher considered the idea of having a small team of diversity specialist librarians that dealt with a particular community. For these librarians, diversity would be their secondary job role and they would work with the communities in order to help deliver more effective training and increase efforts in meeting the needs of those communities. As mentioned, having input from the community is an essential part of developing good Diversity Training (Clements & Jones, 2008).

This small group of specialist librarians would then deliver the appropriate training for the rest of the staff, thus keeping all Diversity Training in-house and reducing costs. This could be delivered in tandem with representatives of the BME communities the training is focussing on at that particular point in time. Since this specialist group will consist of full time staff themselves, they will be able to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their training in an ongoing fashion. This could mirror the role of the Chief Diversity Officer that has successfully been implemented in American Universities (Gose, 2006; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2006), or the Diversity Team mentioned by Lazzaro, *et al.* (2014) whose primary focus was cultural competency. As the thesis further developed so did this particular idea, and would be discussed further in-depth in Chapter 9.

What is reflected in both the literature and the observations thus far is that Diversity Training programmes lack the theoretical context that would give such programmes an empathic grounding that would have a long-term and sustainable empathic effect. Again, as in the literature, perspective taking, emotional contagion and the contact hypothesis are tools that are utilised.

Emotional contagion, for example, could be induced through the effective use of forum theatre. A realistic dramatic portrayal may give observers insights into how people from other cultures feel when their lifestyle is misunderstood and stereotyped (Krebs, 1975; Perry, 1975; Barrett-Lennard, 1981). This may inspire observers to take part in training exercises where the contact hypothesis can be tested (Paluck, 2006).

Whether these tools can be honed into producing a more effective training that produces a deeper empathic effect, and whether or not these are really the appropriate empathic tools in order to inspire cultural understanding without any negative emotional arousal, are questions that the rest of this thesis hopes to address. At this point in the research it was decided to move on to the library service itself and seek out staff opinions on the issues of empathy, cultural competency and Diversity Training.

Chapter 5

Nationwide Survey of Public Library Staff

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of a survey delivered via e-mail to library staff nationwide plus members of a specialist librarian group on diversity. The survey served both to pilot the tool and to gauge library staff opinions on the topic. Issues related to a low response and the nature of some of the closed questions were identified.

5.2. Aim

There was a two-fold intention behind this survey. From a research value viewpoint, it was designed to gather a sample that would quickly canvass what the general feeling was amongst library staff on the topic of diversity, Diversity Training, and cultural competency. From a methodological viewpoint, the survey served as a pilot. It was hoped, if a detailed enough response was received, that the questions could be further modified and honed (Davies, 2007), so that a follow-up - either in the form of a new survey or with interviews - could be implemented with the same sample pool.

5.2.1. Empathy

As described in section 3.7.3. the definition of empathy the remainder of this thesis will subscribe to is where one sees from another's worldview without adding one's own personal judgement and assumptions. This would free the concept from the related issue of sympathy (Bennett, 1979) and, in the present researcher's views, would be easier to facilitate cultural understanding if no previous value judgements are included. As such, questions in this and subsequent surveys related to empathy will be following this particular definition.

5.3. Design and Distribution

The survey consisted of ten questions, four of which were closed, and the remaining six open. Questions 1-3 relate to the research questions on empathy, namely defining it and its importance to the public library service. Question 1 asked for a definition of empathy in the context of public library service to BME

communities. Questions 2 and 3 were closed multi-choice questions asking participants to rate the importance of empathy for the library service and how empathic they believed the service currently was. Taking a cue from the literature (Elturk, 2003 and Press and Diggs-Hobson, 1995), question 4 defined cultural competency then asked, in a closed question, participants to rate their own cultural competency. This was to open up a potential research path that would, at this point of the thesis if results proved to be successful, move away from diversity toward this newer skill-set.

Questions 5-9 related to the research questions on the training itself. These asked whether participants had had any training, how often they received training, if the training was empathic and if it had had any impact on their workplace performance. The final question was for those who had not received any training asking them what they would expect to gain from it if they did take part.

Many of these questions have precedent in the interviews conducted by Tso (2007) with library staff and their empathic interaction with a local Chinese community. This included questions about defining empathy, the importance of empathy in dealing with a BME community, and asking participants to rate their own level of empathy. Staff were also asked whether or not they had attended any cultural awareness training, what this training involved and if it helped deepen their cultural understanding.

The initial survey was distributed via email attachment to 77 individual libraries nationwide. Contact details were obtained from each library's homepage or their equivalent on their council's page. Libraries were chosen due to their being either in a large population centre, such as a major town or city, or in an area known to have a high BME population. An Information Sheet was provided as an attachment explaining the thesis in detail. Additionally, the supporting email enclosed the request for participation and further advised that the survey be distributed to all members of staff. Libraries were also politely requested to return all surveys within three weeks with a reminder sent after the second week. This approach was repeated for subsequent surveys as well in order to generate a higher response rate within the given time-frame (Bell, 1993).

The survey was also sent to UK's professional body, CILIP, in particular to members of the specialist Community, Diversity and Equality group which, at the time the survey was undertaken in April, 2012, was known simply as the Diversity

Group. The reasons for this were two-fold - the first was to expand the sample pool with more responses, and the second was to provide a comparison between 'regular' library staff with professionals who, in theory, would have a stronger interest in the topic of diversity as a whole. This was validated as the answers received from this group were of a more in-depth and detailed quality than those from the 'regular' staff.

The survey was in Microsoft Word format with expandable text-boxes for answers to open questions. The survey is included in **Appendix 3**.

5.4. Response

Only 7 completed surveys were returned from libraries (n=7). Despite the request to distribute the surveys to all members of staff one authority returned a single survey claiming that the answers therein collectively spoke for the entirety of their staff. The answers received were not very detailed, which could imply that people completed the survey very quickly or that they either lacked the knowledge or interest or both in the subject.

4 completed surveys were received from the CILIP Diversity Group (n=4). Respondents 1-4 are from this Diversity Group, whilst respondents 5-11 are responses directly from the library authorities. The total sample size for this survey was 11 (n=11).

5.5. Results & Discussion

The following includes themes and representative responses from the completed surveys (n=11). Spellings have been corrected, but the original grammar and syntax remain. Thematic headings (in bolded italics) map to the corresponding survey question (see **Appendix 3** for full list of questions).

Defining Empathy in a BME Context

All respondents answered (n=11). There was little consensus on the definition of empathy in a BME context:

Putting yourself in the shoes of the other person. **Res 5**

Being able to recognise that people from other cultures may not have a competent or confident grasp of English, and so altering my tone, language and sometimes behaviour accordingly to be able to find out

what the customer wants, and trying to find a solution that satisfies them. **Res 6**

This would be the ability to see the service and how it appears from the viewpoint of a person for whom English isn't their first language. **Res 10**

These last two replies would begin a theme that would be reflected in the staff responses from the case studies in Chapters 6 and 7, namely that empathy in a library context is defined quite narrowly focussing mainly on language issues. The assumption here is that 'BME' refers automatically to those for whom English is not their first language and so this becomes a barrier to their using the service. Making such an assumption betrays a very narrow understanding of BME, ignoring both the fact that many people from a BME community are second and third generation who speak English fluently and ignoring the rich cultural context within which such communities live. It is questionable as to whether 'empathy' is actually being defined here. **Res 10** does have an inkling of intellectual empathy, by which they understand the value of seeing from another's viewpoint, but at the same time hampers this by severely limiting such a viewpoint to merely language issues. As this theme will emerge again, a fuller discussion on what is actually being defined and why will take place in Chapter 6.

Another reply had a different definition:

Empathy is the ability of staff to react to the borrowers' diverse needs, which is successfully done in [our] Libraries. **Res 7**

Although the acknowledgement that their BME users would have diverse needs - and, presumably, not just language needs - their definition is still quite lacking, neither intellectually nor emotionally understanding a person with a different worldview. The notable aspect of this reply is their insistence that their library service is able to empathise successfully, something that was outside of the question being asked, and so appears to come across as quite defensive.

This defensiveness was evident in the rest of their answers, particularly Question 10 on what they expected from such training, something they were not obligated to answer as the question was only for those who had never received such training, whereas this respondent, on Question 5, had replied that they had:

After having answered the questions above, I think this question is superfluous. **Res 7**

It is difficult to ascertain the actual nature of this defensiveness. The Information Sheet (**Appendix 2**) would have both assured them of the benefit of the thesis and the anonymity of the replies, where neither their library authority nor the individual themselves would be identified. It appears then that despite this they felt they were being judged and this manifested itself in the hostility displayed above.

It could also be that the subject has little interest in the topic, or feels that their time would be better spent elsewhere rather than spending it in replying to questionnaires. It does come across as not wanting to be asked on the whole issue: perhaps they feel they do enough in this area and do not see the value of any sort of added depth or expansion, or perhaps this was a case of topic threat whereby the sensitive nature of the topic itself led to a hostile reaction (Gunaratnam, 2003).

Despite all of the above, there was one respondent who was able to identify the need to value cultural differences. This was from a library authority with a large BME population:

The valuing of cultural differences, with not one superior to another. Therefore, on delivering library services to BME customers, appreciating differences, and whilst not necessarily reaching full understanding of those differences, acting to deliver services in most effective and satisfactory manner. **Res 11**

Here *appreciation* and *understanding* are key terms and though they admit that the library service may completely grasp both as a whole, the service should still reflect this. It is a pragmatic approach and neatly ties into CILIP's belief that library professionals can celebrate diversity in society (CILIP, 2013a) and would also work in tandem with Government policy on community cohesion realising in mutual respect and civil behaviour (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007).

The above reply leads to two pertinent questions: has this understanding come about because the respondent is in an area with a high BME population and so has a more empirical understanding of the issue? And, could the 'full understanding' that the respondent feels is out of reach be fulfilled through adequate training?

From the Diversity Group respondents (n=4), there were a range of responses, such as:

Awareness that an individual I'm helping may have negative emotions and experiences that I am unaware of or do not, possibly cannot, fully understand so I may be unable to truly identify with their emotions -

which is the real meaning of empathy. My vocabulary, body language and attitude must therefore convey respect and a desire to understand.

Res 1

Here emotional empathy is clearly intended, though the respondent feels that they can only empathise on a certain level - intellectually - and so not as completely as they have not experienced what the other has. This actually shows a perceptive understanding of the question which is added further depth by the respondent linking empathy with their own practical skills. Without actually using the term, they have effectively described cultural competency which includes the correct use of verbal and non-verbal language (Elturk, 2003; Mestre, 2010) and the desire to understand the other (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005; Montiel-Overall, 2009).

This is a sharp contrast to the library staff above who relegated the issue to merely language matters. The fact that the Diversity Group member has a greater interest in the issue - and thus can be presumed to have given it a lot more thought - may be a factor here.

Other responses included:

Empathy is when one is able to put himself or herself in the shoes of the person one is serving. It means thinking about yourself at the receiving end and how you would like to be treated. It also remembering the reason the person in front of you is there and the importance of your service to that person. **Res 2**

Understanding that people have different cultural backgrounds and beliefs. Looking at language needs and treating people with respect.

Res 4

One respondent highlighted how an unintentional lack of empathy can cause problems with those library staff are seeking to help:

Understanding peoples thoughts, feelings and attitudes. When you're working with customers you have to be considerate of what they want and why they want it. For example I worked with a colleague who would ask international students what their Christian name or moniker was, this did not put people at ease and made them feel uncomfortable - not very empathetic [sic]. **Res 3**

Understanding and respectful treatment are the key themes to come out from these replies. The respondent group as a whole (n=11) managed to link empathy with practical aspects of the job, even if this were something like treating the customer with respect. The fact that the practical link is there shows that they have an understanding of how empathy impacts on their workplace duties. Language issues

were mentioned by one respondent but this was not a focus of their replies. Understanding was more important, with the feelings of their customers made paramount. This shows a good combination of emotional empathy, with the latter point, and intellectual empathy with the former. This then results in practical effects such as the 'Golden Rule' of treating others as they themselves would like to be treated as Bennett (1979).

However, even that author warns that the Golden Rule may not necessarily apply to inter-cultural relations. As Bennett states, putting one's self in another's place can lead to sympathy whereby one assumes what the other needs because those needs are what they themselves would have had in the same position. This can lead to the sympathiser completely missing what the actual needs of the sympathised are.

Nonetheless, even in this the respondents from the Diversity Group had some awareness of the issue. Some of them are keen to point out that they can never fully understand the other as they have not experienced what the other has. **Res 3**, in particular, showed how misunderstanding the needs of the other can lead to unintended offence and so staff, with their BME users, should "*be considerate of what they [the users] want and why they want it.*"

Rating the importance of empathy

Of the library staff (n=7), two rated it as a 5, three as a 4, and two as a 3.

From the Diversity Group (n=4), all four respondents rated it as a 5.

The mixed response from the library staff as compared to overwhelming consensus from the Diversity Group members seems to imply that the deeper a person is attached to the concept of diversity, the more important the issue of empathy becomes. This further implies then that there is a link between cultural diversity issues and empathy, with the latter needed for service to the former to be effective.

Rating the library's level of empathy toward BME communities

Of the library staff (n=7), one rated it as a 2, two rated it as a 3, two rated it as a 4 and one as a 5. One did not reply.

From the Diversity Group (n=4), one rated it as a 2, two as a 3 and one as a 4.

Again there were mixed results, though without further elaboration it is difficult to establish exactly why this was. Most of the Diversity Group respondents seemed to have little confidence in the library's empathic service, their low ratings a marked contrast to the high priority they gave to empathy in the previous question. This may imply that they hold the library service to some empathic standard which the service is failing to live up to.

Rating personal level of cultural competency

Out of the library staff (n=7), two respondents rated their cultural competency as a 3, four as a 4 and one as a 5.

Interestingly, the Diversity Group respondents (n=4) rated their own cultural competency as quite highly with three rating it as a 4 and one rating it as a 5.

This would imply that both groups are quite confident in their cultural competency ability. Unfortunately, as this was a closed question it is not quite clear how much in-depth they have grasped this concept. There is as much likelihood that they are speaking honestly as there is of them overrating their abilities. The Diversity Group respondents, whilst seemingly having a low opinion of the library service as a whole in this issue, did not extend this judgement to their own selves.

Receiving Diversity Training

From the entire sample (n=11), eight participants replied that they had had such training (n=8) whilst three stated that they had not (n=3).

From the library staff (n=7), five replied 'Yes' and two 'No'.

From the Diversity Group (n=4), three replied 'Yes' and one 'No'.

Diversity Training: Description

[We looked] at different Asian cultures, a knowledge of what belief systems they have. It was a long time ago. **Res 4**

[Received] 1/2 day courses on understanding the Moslem community. What you get is only going to be a broad brush stereotype. e.g. in a previous job I had one Moslem group objecting to a display from another which was seen as a heretical sect. **Res 5**

We have received some basic cultural diversity training - understanding different cultures etc. [It only took place] once. **Res 9**

Seminar (years ago); once. **Res 11**

Even though Question 8 (see **Appendix 3** for full list) specifically asks about the frequency of the training they received, it is interesting to note that many respondents mentioned this anyway in their reply to Question 6. They did not elaborate as to why they felt it necessary to mention this, however it could be deduced that the infrequent nature of the training was something that they had particularly noticed. This, of course, reflects one of the criticisms of Diversity Training as described in the literature, namely that they are short and usually one-off affairs (Ferdman & Brody, 1996; Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004).

Res 5 notes the drawback of having such a limited approach as cultural issues have to be compressed into what they term 'a broad brush stereotype.' This then leads into issues of representation with the example given how one group objected to another despite both belonging to the same faith minority. This would no doubt lead to confusion on the part of staff as, if the training is as short and presumably poor as described, they would not know what is truly representative of that particular culture nor would they know how to deal with the situation described where there is objections from one group toward another. Clements & Jones (2008) state the design process of any Diversity Training must involve the participation of the minority groups themselves with care taken that all aspects of a particular group are properly represented. It is clear that, in this particular case at least, this did not happen here. Could this be because there was little concern with the training itself and it was just delivered as quickly as possible to satisfy a requirement the organisation had toward cultural diversity issues, to 'tick a box' and move on as the literature claims (Ferdman & Brody, 1996; Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004)?

A respondent from the Diversity Group described the following:

Traveller Awareness day organised by local council. Trainers were Romany. Gave some understanding of Traveller cultures and the chasms between different types of traveller. Gave an understanding of some Traveller attitudes that helps when dealing with occasional problems that arise. **Res 4**

Three things are clear from this: one, again the training was short as implied by it being an 'awareness day'; two, the trainers were from the minority group itself; and three it included raising awareness of the culture itself and awareness of the different representations within that culture.

This, then, would seem to be a better organised approach than the training **Res 5** had received. Though Clements & Jones (2008) encourage the use of people from the minority group itself as their own depiction of their experiences adds authenticity, Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) warn that this should not be done merely for the sake of it but also because such people are qualified to deliver the training. It is not clear from **Res 4's** reply whether any such formal training was taking place or if there were other trainers outside of the community - as with the case of the first observation - that would have provided an ideal balance between the two viewpoints. Nonetheless, this still shows that consultation with the BME community had taken place, implying that there had been more thought and consideration put into this particular training initiative. The fact that two respondents had two quite different experiences of Diversity Training would imply that there is no unified national strategy for public libraries to deal with this issue and there is an apparent lack of shared good practice.

Diversity Training: Empathy

The respondents who had received training (n=8) were asked whether the training involved any empathic aspect to it. One stated:

The course was taken after reading a full document describing issues in E & Q in full. **Res 7**

The present researcher is not quite clear what E & Q refers to but assumes it may have been something related to Equal Opportunities policy. Even so, the answer given is still puzzling given the question asked, and so lends credence to the idea that the question was misunderstood.

A respondent from the Diversity Group stated:

Opportunity to talk to individuals and question them about attitudes, culture, etc. **Res 4**

Here empathy is linked by the participant to actual contact with the BME group through which relevant questions can be asked. This was the respondent who had had a training session delivered by those from the Traveller community. The point about involving the BME community in the process is thereby reinforced. In addition, this is also a good example of how the contact hypothesis can be utilised for understanding and empathy and not just prejudice reduction as the respondent clearly saw the contact with a representative of the community as an opportunity to

ask about their culture, presumably to reach some sort of understanding about that culture.

Diversity Training: Frequency and Length

As mentioned previously, respondents (n=8) were keen to point out the short, infrequent nature of the training:

It was 2 whole days on Coventry libraries staff induction course, I am not sure if it is done so comprehensively now. **Res 4**

Customer care was carried out in one of my employers every 3 years to refresh people's minds and every new employee had to do 3-day training. **Res 2**

These two replies are interesting in as much as they reveal that the Diversity Training they had received had actually fallen under the umbrella of a wider initiative, either an induction programme for new employees or a general customer care programme. This mirrors the views of the trainer interviewed by telephone in section 4.8. above who believes such an approach is more cost-effective.

Diversity Training: Effects

Whilst there were some positive responses to the training (n=4), others - particular those from the Diversity Group - were either mixed or less enthusiastic (n=4).

These respondents claimed that they learnt better to interact with BME communities by learning on the job and drawing on their own personal experiences and reading, such as:

I think my own cultural awareness, knowing people personally, reading, studying was more important...[The training is] ok as a grounding but you have to fill in the detail yourself. **Res 5**

I personally do not feel that I need such training, as I consider myself fairly capable at communicating with people from other cultures. **Res 6**

Res 6 is clearly quite confident in their ability, and this is reflected in how they rated their cultural competency as a 4. It is not apparent whether this is based in actual fact or is an overestimation of their own skills, but it should be pointed out that they are from a library authority with a very high BME population so, at the very least, they would have had the *experience* of interacting with many different BME users. A notable point about this particular respondent is that they answered 'NO' to the question 5 - it is impossible to know if this was out of choice or if the

opportunity for training had not been offered. The latter would be quite strange considering the high BME population in the area.

Res 5, who rated their own cultural competency as only a 3, clearly had no faith in the training they received. This is the same respondent who described the training as a 'broad stereotype' in their answer to Question 6, so their attitude could be somewhat understandable. The emphasis they place on 'knowing people personally' lends credence to the now oft-mentioned Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis whereby prejudice is reduced through personal contact or inter-cultural friendship (Aberson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo, 2004; Shook & Fazio, 2008), though in this context the goal is cultural understanding and not necessarily prejudice-reduction.

One of the mixed responses from the Diversity Group participants was as follows:

Those courses created better understanding of the community I was serving and what/why/where they were coming from. The training made it easier for me to take up and run activities with people from all cultures. It helped me to understand why the staff I worked with were reluctant to participate in events outside the cultures they were comfortable with.

What is obvious now is that library authorities do not attach much importance in cultural training, due to lack of resources, but they fail to see that inadequately trained staff deliver inadequate services. It is a case of 'garbage in garbage out' **Res 2**.

Though attributing *personal* positive results to the training they had received, the respondent makes some interesting points about other members of staff and their reluctance to engage out of their cultural comfort zone. Unfortunately, the respondent does not go into detail as to the reasoning for this reluctance, but it does reflect the same sort of reluctance staff displayed when faced with a BME query (Syed, 2008). This could be down to Intergroup Anxiety (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) whereby contact is actively avoided due to previous negative contact with people from a particular culture or due to the fear of causing offence.

What the respondent does mention is the method to deal with this, namely better training. Unfortunately they feel there is very little importance attached to the issue as a whole, which they pinpoint to a lack of resources. This could mirror **Res 5's** experience of such training which seemed wholly inadequate due to it being unrepresentative of the community it sought to highlight and thus came across as a possible tick-box exercise. It also mirrors the findings of Roach & Morrison (1999) and Vincent (2009a) who note the lack of progress done in this whole area, with

Vincent in particular noting how, as budgets shrank, it was the multicultural librarian posts that were most affected.

This all implies that the organisational culture of the library is not geared towards facilitation with regards to cultural BME matters. This is, of course, quite surprising considering the potential of the library to fulfil the Government's recommendations in community cohesion issues. Additional data collected for the case studies described in the upcoming Chapters 6 and 7 would lead to a fuller picture of this issue being developed and further discussion is continued therein.

Outside of the organisational culture issues, there is clearly a point to be made about staff confidence in BME user interaction. One of the aims of the proposed training model is to equip all staff with the skills they need to be able to have this confidence and so **Res 2's** reply is a further justification for the necessity of this present thesis.

Diversity Training: Expectations

Despite the fact that this question was intended only for those who had not received any training, many participants answered anyway (n=9). This perhaps indicates a general lack of confidence in the present state of the training and a desire to express what they would actually like instead. These responses did come from the Diversity Group sample, so the added prior interest they had may have contributed to this.

For optimum service delivery and survival of public library services in Britain cultural awareness training and understanding is very important. Existence of public library services depends to a great extent the relevance of the services to the communities libraries serve. It is therefore very important that the professional body, CILIP and library authorities are clear about the game we are all in. **Res 2**

This respondent had previously noted the lack of importance given to cultural training by the library service. Here they are able to explain why such training is important, espousing the type of attitude that the service should already have as part of its organisational culture. Whilst the insight is encouraging, the fact that the respondent is from the Diversity Group shows again that a deeper interest in the topic lends to a better overall understanding.

Practical skills were the focus for other participants (n=4):

I would like training as I think this is an important skill for library staff to have and you can always benefit from reviewing your own competency.

I think it would be good to hear from people from different backgrounds, people can stereotype different groups and it can help them to stop seeing people as labels...

... Covering language could help us to consider how confusing colloquiums etc. can be (an example from my own experience is that I had a habit of telling people 'thanks that's fine' when people paid library fines for when I wanted to say the fine was cleared off their account). **Res 3**

...Because there is no definite article in the languages library staff thought they were being rude when they put ID on the desk and said "Internet" rather abruptly. Relationships improved when I explained about the grammar and that most cultures don't say "please" as often as we do in England. It's very often the little things like this that are most important in training. **Res 1**

Intergroup anxiety theory (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) states how contact is avoided due to fear of causing offence. This may be the motivation behind why respondents would be keen to take on skills that could assist them in avoiding this. It is unclear whether this is due to an empathic desire to not hurt another or a more defensive desire to not appear foolish. If the participant interviews in the first observation (see 4.5.4.) is representative of the whole profession then the answer would be that the motivation is a genuinely empathic one, with a desire to help not hurt, and where staff are not being compelled to attend such training but instead are voluntarily doing so as they note the frustration that occurs from both staff and users from inter-cultural misunderstandings and wish to redress that.

Nonetheless, this practical aspect of any potential training would probably appeal more to current staff than ideas of bringing about community cohesion through empathic understanding; indeed **Res 1** believes it is the most important aspect. This is because, for front-line staff at least, this type of practical wisdom is what they would need to utilise on a daily basis. Such a skill-set does exist with the literature in the concept of cultural competency (Elturk, 2003; Mestre, 2010) with the subtle differences in verbal and non-verbal language considered paramount (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005).

Whilst the appeal is there, the potential role of the library as a neutral meeting place that could help Government policy on community cohesion should not be ignored. It would appear, though, that such an understanding of the library's

potential is only recognised by a few, namely members of the Diversity Group for which such issues would be important anyway. What then needs to be done is that the organisational culture of the library service nationwide needs to adopt this view of the library. A potential training model has to take this into consideration and also needs to combine this aspect with the practical skills that the respondents clearly desire.

Of the non-Diversity Group replies to this question (n=5), answers tended to be less detailed and concentrated on general interaction issues, such as:

I would welcome any training that would increase my understanding of the people I would interact with in society. **Res 8**

The notable aspect of this particular reply was the importance given to *understanding* which differs from the general tone of the regular library staff who replied in that it does not focus on language issues. It is also worth noting that this respondent was from an authority with a very high BME population. One could conclude then that a better grasp of the issue comes when people have a vested interest in the topic, either from personal interest such as the Diversity Group or out of necessity as in those who encounter and interact with a variety of library users from a diverse BME background on a day-to-day basis.

5.6. Conclusion

There appears to be a link between how much interest a participant appears to have in the topic and the range and depth of answers provided, including a far better understanding of empathy and cultural competency. This is shown through a comparison of the answers provided by respondents from the Diversity Group with the regular library staff. The Diversity Group respondents were even able to distinguish between sympathy and empathy, even if it was in their understanding and not in their use of the terms. This reinforces the need between *interest* and ultimate *understanding* of the topic. Lack of interest in the subject is one reason for low response rates in general (Phellas, Bloch & Seale, 2012).

The task here then is to encourage interest in the topic for all library staff. This could happen if the eventual training model had an aspect of showing the benefits of the training both to themselves as a person and to the library profession as a whole.

Answers in general, from the regular staff at least, were not very detailed and often lacked in elaboration. Interviews could have been undertaken with those who had provided more interesting replies, however the practical aspects of this were problematic as many such respondents were located in areas geographically distant both from each other and the researcher himself. Interviewing them all would have led to use of much time and resources. The research value of questionnaires is that they are quick to administer and collate (Phellas, Bloch & Seale, 2012).

Moreover, some staff did not send their survey directly back to the researcher as he had requested but instead sent it to one point of contact in the service who then forwarded those replies on. The anonymous nature of the survey would then lead to more time and resources being spent in order to establish which survey belonged to which participant.

Issues that the researcher would tackle here, then, was the need to modify the survey in order to generate a higher quality of response, and also to be more focussed in the sample group chosen.

There appears to be a general lack of confidence in Diversity Training itself with participants preferring to rely on their own personal experiences - including personal contact with BME users - and study over the formal training. When asked what they would like from a training initiative, respondents did focus on more practical skills. This opens up a research path that will be more fully explored in subsequent stages of the research described in upcoming chapters - namely the combination with the training of an informal aspect of that allows for inter-cultural contact with that of a formal aspect which focussed on practical inter-cultural - or, to phrase it as the literature does (Elturk, 2003; Montiel-Overall, 2009; Mestre, 2010), cultural competency - skills.

The diversity trainer interviewed in section **4.8**. felt that a skills based approach worked better than an awareness based one. However, he was speaking in the context of raising awareness for the purpose of reducing prejudice. The present researcher feels that a combination training approach could work if staff and the organisation as a whole understand the library's potential for community cohesion. As such the issue would then shift to this instead of prejudice reduction which would rely more on changing participant attitudes, something that is considered very difficult to do (Clements & Jones, 2008).

Participant experience of Diversity Training appears to be vary quite dramatically from one person to another, with one person describing it as nothing more than a 'broad stereotype' whilst another received cultural awareness from the BME group itself. This implies the lack of a national library strategy coupled with no sharing of good practice. What the participants were all agreed on was the short and infrequent nature of the training, reflecting both the findings in the literature and conclusions from Chapter 4.

The differing responses were also difficult to pin down in terms of their representation. As, for example, the Diversity Group respondents felt that empathy was a high priority for the service, due presumably to their high interest in the issue of empathy, it could also be that those who rated the need for empathy as low were from a library that had little interaction with BME communities. If that were the case, simply having one person from such a library submitting a survey would clearly not be representative.

The closed questions asking about empathy and cultural competency also provided little data as to how well these concepts were grasped by participants. This led the researcher to make a number of assumptions as to the meaning of the data. In order to overcome this, the survey would be modified in both the wording of the questions used and the nature of the questions, using open questions instead of closed. This will be further elaborated in the following chapter, as will the issue of representation. The modified questionnaire would now be used as part of two main case studies that will focus on two different library authorities, asking questions of both staff and library users.

Chapter 6

Case Study: Authority A

6.1. Introduction and Revision of the Survey Instrument

This chapter will introduce the first of two comparative case studies, using a modified version of the Nationwide Survey used in Chapter 5 to be sent to library staff in addition to using a new survey aimed at library users.

With regards to the Nationwide Survey, there was a wide range of responses to the question rating the public library service's level of empathy and whether the library should be empathic in their service to BME communities in the first place. Those from the CILIP Diversity Group were united in their consensus that the latter was essential, but this could be down to the fact that they have a vested interest in the subject. For library staff, ratings were mixed, and this may reflect their personal circumstances, for example, whether or not their particular library had a lot of interaction with BME communities. This created a data gap.

Whilst it was possible to find information about their relevant authorities and the BME populations in their area, the present researcher felt that a more focussed approach would be more suitable. This was due to the fact that from those authorities that replied, only one or two members of staff actually filled in the question. The sample, then, would not be strong enough for any conclusions to hold weight. This, then, creates another data gap.

The present researcher decided focus would concentrate on comparing only two library authorities - Authority A which has a BME population of around 7% (see **6.4.** below) which is comparatively lower than Authority B which has a BME population of around 17% (see **7.4.** in the next chapter).

Profiling the two authorities thusly would give the data more context, and the researcher approaching each authority for the purpose of a case study - by contacting a specific member of management staff who would inform participants that they were taking part in a case study - would, in theory, generate more responses than merely sending out a questionnaire to an individual directly from the researcher.

Another limitation in the survey came when rating empathy and cultural competency. Though a definition was given, a mere rating does not actually prove that respondents had a good grasp of the concept. The present researcher thus felt that asking participants to provide open-ended answers to the question of empathy and to also provide an example of their cultural competency would be a more effective means of investigating their understanding of these two issues. This reflects somewhat a question from Tso's (2007) interviews with library staff and their interactions with a local Chinese community where the interviewer asked staff to provide a workplace example of participants' using or showing empathy. The survey was thusly modified to reflect this change.

Another gap came in the form that, whilst staff were being canvassed for their opinions, library users were not. A new survey was thus created in order to gather their opinions to see how they rated the BME services of their local library authority.

6.2. Aim

The aim of the comparative case studies presented in this and the following chapter is to establish whether library services toward BME populations differ depending on how large or small those particular populations are within a library authority's area.

This aim will be facilitated by the following objectives:

- To provide a more focussed comparison between library staff in an area with a low BME population and with staff in an area with a *comparatively* higher BME population.
- To further compare this with a third group of University students who are studying a Masters programme in Librarianship. Many of these students will have also worked in the academic sector. This will be the focus of Chapter 8. This would provide a new insight - one from people who, as they are studying the subject, have library issues as priority and second from people with a background in academic libraries - from which public library issues could be compared. Moreover, the literature has shown that academic libraries in America have an awareness of cultural competency (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2012; Lazzaro *et al.*, 2014) and this may be reflected in the UK as well.

- To also provide a comparison between library users in both authorities, with an interest in how they viewed and rated their library service in the issue of BME services.
- To provide a further comparison between users and staff from their respective authorities in how each rated those self-same services. To then further compare both user groups with a third group from an area with a very high BME population to see if user expectation of their library service changes depending on how large the BME population is.

This chapter will be focussing on results from Authority A that has a lower BME population.

6.3. Methodology

6.3.1. Case Studies

Silverman (2010) concedes that qualitative research often tends toward small samples due to access and convenience. On a similar note, Davies (2007) asserts that when trying to recruit a large sample becomes problematic it is often better to choose a smaller sample. 'Convenience' and 'Problematic' in the context of this survey is related to the issue of the previous survey having no consideration for the level of BME community interaction, and thus lacking context. Having merely one respondent offering views from an area with a high BME population, for example, is not representative, and so a comparative case study would help draw more representative responses with authorities that differing levels of BME interaction.

Tso (2007) used a single case study in a Masters research project on library staff's ability to empathise with a local BME community; in this case, a Chinese community. Tso stated that the case study was chosen due to the subject - empathy and public libraries - being "a rather new concept in the field" (Tso, 2007: 7).

Building on this, two library authorities were chosen for this thesis to take part in two separate but comparative case studies. A further third study was undertaken with students from the University of Sheffield's 2012/2013 MA Librarianship course.

By using multiple samples, the method becomes a collective case study (Silverman, 2010) whereby multiple studies provide information about a particular generalisation. However, each individual study would be an instrumental case study (ibid.) that allows reflection on a specific issue.

Two library authorities were approached and recruited for each study. The criteria for their selection was that primarily the total BME population that they serve should each differ in size to the other - for example, one authority should have a comparatively larger BME population to the other - and that both should be within travelling distance for the researcher as the user survey would be distributed by hand.

Both would receive a revised online survey for all members of staff to complete. Both surveys would be identical. Library users from each authority would also receive a survey to complete. This latter survey would be in print form and delivered in-hand by the researcher.

Authority A has a very low BME population whilst Authority B has a comparatively larger one, though Authority B's overall BME statistics are slightly lower than the national average. This would allow for a fair comparison between authorities on both ends of the spectrum, thus disallowing for a deviant case which would do nothing but support the researcher's assumptions (Mason, 1996 cited in Silverman, 2010). The two authorities were all both situated within a 30 mile radius, making them fall within geographical distance of one another and of the researcher himself. This allowed for a less time-consuming process for the researcher.

The third study was to provide a comparison between those 'in the field', as it were, in the two library authorities and those who, in addition to working in the profession, are also studying the topic of librarianship as an academic subject. Students of the 2012-2013 MA Librarianship course undertaken as part of the Information School at the University of Sheffield were chosen because of their anticipated knowledge and understanding of the library context. A number of these students also worked in an academic library views, and these views were welcomed in order to provide a comparison from that sector - perhaps in their focus on diversity issues or in their training methodology in general - that public libraries could draw best practice from.

This all would fall under the rubric of strategic sampling (Davies, 2007) whereby different research threads are catered for, in this case through the core sample of the two library authorities and those related to the target group via the research question as manifest in the third study. This allows for the expression of differing views that have a comparative research value (ibid.).

6.3.2. Modifying the Staff Surveys

Davies argues that in constructing a survey, the researcher should first identify a subject area, then draft and re-draft the survey until it is ready. The subject area for this survey was derived from the research aims, questions and objectives.

The main objectives of the survey are to discover how library staff define and understand empathy, how they understand and utilise cultural competency, and how they view current diversity training initiatives and their overall effectiveness.

Questions 1-3 are related to the issue of empathy, both defining it and relating it to public libraries. This is directly related to both research questions. Questions 4-7 are related to cultural competency, including assessing its importance and if staff currently utilise it as a skillset. This is related to the research objective of developing an empathic training model as cultural competency would be the heart of that model. Finally questions 8-13 ask about current training staff may have received - and if they have not, what they would like to receive - which connects to the research objectives of establishing what the method and effectiveness of current diversity training is for public libraries.

The questions on the importance of empathy to the library service for BME communities and how empathic the library service was were now open questions and not closed. Instead of rating the importance of empathy on a sliding scale, respondents were invited to explain why, or why not, empathy was important.

The issue of cultural competency was also expanded, including the initial personal rating of the skill-set, but also adding a question asking participants to provide an example of cultural competency and a further question asking their views on any possible obstacles toward cultural competency. For both the issues of empathy and cultural competency, these modifications would allow the researcher to see how well the participants grasped each concept.

Two further preliminary questions were added: one asking about the participant's work sector, and the second about their role within the organisation. The second would show if views varied between managerial, mid-level and front-line levels. The first question was only applicable for the University student sample as many had worked in multiple sectors, with some having worked in both public and academic libraries.

The survey was conducted online as this would be easier for staff to do whilst at home or during a break at work. The questions were limited to fifteen so as to not overwhelm staff and to keep the survey relatively short, though this in itself was a higher number than the previous survey, with modifications undertaken due to the issues presented above in **6.1**. All replies were anonymous. These steps were undertaken to generate a higher quality of data - the anonymity would allow respondents to be more honest, and the ability to complete the survey at their own time would allow for more thoughtful insights (Schensun, Schensun & LeCompte, 1999). To further facilitate more in-depth answers, most of the questions were open-ended (Bell, 1993) and constructed to be completed within expanding text-boxes.

Requests for participation were done via proxy through the researcher's contact in senior management. The survey was accessed online and hosted on Toluna Quick Survey completion and data collection occurred from December, 2012 to January, 2013.

For the Library User survey please see **6.6** below.

6.4. Ethnic Profile of Authority A

The ethnic breakdown of Authority A is shown here:

Figure 6.1 Authority A Profile (Rogers, 2011; Office for National Statistics, 2012b).

Ethnicity	Percentage of Population	Comparison with National Average (approx.)
White	93.82%	8% higher
Mixed	1.03%	0.12% lower
Asian	1.6%	6% lower
Black	0.78%	3% lower
Chinese	0.3% ¹	0.7% lower

The White population of Authority A includes White minorities such as Travellers and Eastern European migrants. The Chinese population is 0.7% lower of those described in census results as 'Other Ethnicity.'

6.5. Library Staff Survey Results

Presented here are the results of the survey given to library staff from Authority A, along with a sample of responses, to provide context for the discussion and analysis that follows. Spellings have been corrected, but the original grammar and syntax remain. Each of the thematic headings (in bolded italics) map onto each of the survey questions (see **Appendix 4** for a list of actual questions.)

Figure 6.2 Authority A Respondent Staff Roles

18 replies were received in total from Authority A (n=18)

Front-Line	Managerial	Outreach	TOTAL
9	6	3	18

Staff respondents are given an alphanumeric designation such as **A1**.

Defining Empathy in a BME Context

All respondents replied (n=18). Representative answers included the following:

Interacting with people in a way that shows understanding, acceptance and tolerance in their cultural differences and beliefs. Appreciating their beliefs and their way of viewing the world and ensuring that they feel comfortable using the service and receive consideration from the staff. That the services we provide take into account cultural and community differences and provide a high level of service for all. **A4**

Being aware that their understanding and reactions to certain situations etc. may well be different from my own and respecting that. **A7**

It is important to be able to appreciate the needs that arise from other cultures, to place an equal priority on ensuring those needs are understood and catered for as for those of the native culture. **A5**

Recognition of different cultures and the way we deal with issues arising from this. Empathy is a recognition of problems that may arise and how we can/might resolve them together, i.e. material in the right format; signposting to the right organisations etc. **A14**

A willingness to relate to people from different cultures and to understand that behaviour may be different between cultures. Trying to understand what people want not just from what they say but how they behave and picking up on behavioural signals. **A18**

The Importance of Empathy for the Public Library Service in a BME Context

Again all the respondents replied (n=18). Representative answers included:

Empathy is very important for library staff. We need to be able to empathise with a broad spectrum of different people from many different cultures, beliefs and parts of the world in order to respect them and serve them to the best of our abilities. **A9**

Very important. All public have different needs and require different help for their requests. People from different cultures may need additional help so this needs to be taken into account, without appearing patronising. The service should be inclusive. **A12**

However, one respondent did state that such empathy is contextual:

In many cases not particularly relevant but on occasions critical in assisting an individual with a particular problem or question. **A2**

And another, from a managerial position, recognised the role of empathic library staff in cultural awareness:

Our role is to help promote knowledge and awareness of other cultures through books. Displays and events and to provide materials in other languages to provide an equal and accessible service for all. **A11**

Level of Empathy in Their Workplace

All respondents replied (n=18). Representative answers included:

I think that [Authority A] service has a high standard of empathy towards BME communities. Great importance is placed on training staff and ensuring staff provide a high standard of service. **A4**

The library service is very empathic towards BME communities. Access and Inclusion librarians are around if staff are unsure so there is always someone to ask. The library service also runs training sessions form time to time in explaining other cultures. **A17**

An interesting point is that a number of those who consider their service positive qualified this statement by the fact that the library provides non-English stock:

As far as I can tell I think we are. We have relevant collections for each community and these were established very quickly once we realised we had a need for them. Staff are always very helpful towards BME borrowers and we make a point of engaging with the groups wherever possible to ensure they know what we can offer them. **A7**

We provide a wide range of books and leaflets in other languages for people of all ages and cultures. We annually support events like Black history week with events and promotional book displays and provide invaluable outreach services to BME communities in the area. **A11**

The library service tries to be as inclusive as possible but this is largely limited to providing appropriate stock and actively treating all of its users in the same way- they are more focused on equality rather than empathy. **A15**

This positivity goes as far as one respondent (from a managerial position) stating the training they received thirty years ago is sufficient today:

On the whole, the service I have worked for nearly 30 years now has always strived to be empathic to BME communities. I received training very early on in my career in this authority and I don't feel attitudes have changed from that position. **A5**

Others were more pragmatic:

In general terms I believe our staff desire to deliver the best service and would do their very best to be empathetic to all customers. In real terms living in an area of very low levels of BME communities developing understanding is often at a low level. Nevertheless, staff often manage to go to great lengths to try and obtain materials suitable for BME customers and often make a point of highlighting the

availability of materials which are not necessarily apparent to customers. **A14**

Rating Cultural Competency

On asked to rate their own personal cultural competency on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, thirteen respondents described themselves as a 4 (Good) and five described themselves as a 3 (Average).

Examples of Cultural Competency

Only thirteen respondents replied (n=13). Many focussed on language issues:

Promoting dual language picture books to relevant library users. **A9**

Dual language packs are available for any family receiving a Bookstart pack. However, we don't make assumptions about who should receive these packs - there is always consultation with the health service to establish what the individual family wants. **A5**

We are occasionally asked for specific dual language material for very specific ages/ reading levels. I usually help locate the most suitable materials as well as training branch staff in how to access it in future. **A7**

Providing information in dual language where needed; including events and activities focused on different festivals and cultures. **A10**

This last respondent, from an outreach background, was not the only one who mentioned the organising of specific events. Two from management had this to say:

I have organised a variety of cultural activities involving a range of people from the BME and wider community. **A3**

Working in partnership with local Chinese community to hold an event to promote resources and services, assisting Chinese community group to attain funding to begin group, and supporting group in regular sessions in public use ICT. **A18**

Again, as with one of the previous answers, there was one respondent with a more pragmatic approach:

In the past I have been involved in trying to develop collections which suit customers of particular BME communities and working with the groups to identify the extent of need and whether this approach would genuinely help them to feel served or whether it is merely our idea of what would help. **A15**

Implementing Cultural Competency

One person did not reply to this question, reducing the sample (n=17). Six members of staff replied with the answer of 'training' but few offered more elaboration:

Not sure - Cultural awareness training? **A2**

By looking at their training, recruitment and selection processes. **A9**

More training and awareness of different cultures. **A17**

Others focussed on communication and consultation:

By giving the BME community the opportunity to have their say in shaping activities, services and stock. **A3**

By approaching local community groups and asking what would encourage them to use a library. **A6**

Continue to monitor use of services by different cultural groups and look for opportunities to consult/talk to representatives of local BME groups. **A5**

Some respondents seem to identify cultural competency with stock issues:

By being relevant - stocking newspapers, periodicals, books in relevant languages. **A18**

While others had a better understanding:

I think it would help to promote the acceptance of different cultures to people in our communities who are perhaps less tolerant, by having displays and events celebrating the different cultures and beliefs, it would also contribute to greater understanding for all library staff. **A4**

Those "living book" schemes are a good idea, where actual people from different walks of life come in to talk about their lives. **A1**

However one respondent felt that the situation at the moment was acceptable:

I think they are doing very well as it is, under the current economic circumstances. **A10**

Cultural Competency: Obstacles

Two people did not reply to this question, reducing the sample (n=16). The majority (n=11) of those that did stated that economic factors would be the main issue.

Money, money, money....! **A1**

Finance - e.g. it may have been possible to provide newspapers in a range of foreign languages but when cutbacks are being made across the newspaper/magazine stock, some of these titles have to be removed from the stock list. Also books in different languages and events aimed at different community groups all cost money and budgets are small, sometimes non-existent. **A5**

Training costs versus perceived need. **A6**

Mainly budgetary ones - little money available for training, little staff time available as staffing numbers have been cut, virtually no staff time any more to provide activities or displays, no budgets for materials for activities even for children. **A10**

Lack of money for training. Cuts to specialist staff so no-one to go to for advice. **A17**

It is interesting to note that the lack of funding did not just extend to training but, once again, to non-English stock. Other replies included:

The fact that it is not a priority at the moment. **A9**

Staff who do not understand what cultural competency is because they have not had relevant training. **A13**

Different cultures in a widespread area. Training needs to suit locality. **A14**

Ignorance of local communities. Lack of confidence in staff - staff training is essential. Lack of confidence by BME community groups - guided sessions are desirable. **A18**

Diversity Training: Experiences

Eleven respondents had received training (n=11).

A fascinating day at a mosque in Nottingham. Also a diversity discussion day...which raised awareness. **A1**

One day cultural awareness training, with discussions with representatives of different cultural groups. **A4**

It was some years ago and it covered equalities for all users including BME / LGB. It was broad ranging and dealt with issues such as general staff perceptions, stock provision, signage etc. **A7**

Notable in those replies is the fact that the training received was either short or from some time in the past. Also notable is the following reply which hints that the respondent's personal knowledge suited them better than any training:

General awareness including scenarios which were acted out. In reality I am well-travelled and have been to a variety of countries where I have been fortunate to immerse myself in local culture, traditions etc. **A3**

Diversity Training: Empathy

The eleven respondents (n=11) who had received training described if it had helped them be more empathic.

Respondent **A3** again emphasises the importance of their own personal experiences:

The training itself did not, but see my answer previous re: travel, etc. **A3**

This is a strong indication that, for this member of staff, personal interaction with other cultures was a more valuable learning tool than formal training. Other answers to the same question included a variety of mixed responses. Three of the eleven replied 'no' with no further elaboration. Those that replied 'yes' had the following to say:

Yes. I will never forget the young man filling his lungs to broadcast a very musical call to prayer at the mosque. John Vincent was good at making you consider issues you might not have thought of otherwise. **A1**

Yes, it discussed the service from the point of view of the user, from a variety of background. It also got us to consider cultural activity we personally took part in which was influenced by other cultures. **A4**

One respondent stated that it helped more with anti-discrimination issues:

Yes because you could see how stereotypes develop and see discrimination in action. **A9**

Diversity Training: Frequency and Length

From the remaining sample (n=11), respondent answers unanimously (n=9) stated how short and how infrequent such training was. However, some respondents did not see this as a problem:

These were one-off days. I think these things sink into you and stay with you. **A1**

As far as I can remember I have only had one formal day of such training. It lasted 1 day. However, the principals are reinforced

constantly during day to day planning and target setting. As part of my professional qualifications I also did a dissertation on the provision of library services to ethnic minority groups, looking at provision in several library authorities. **A4**

One or two sessions in 10 years, lasting half a day at most. **A8**

The training was at least 5 years ago and lasted for 2 days. **A9**

Diversity Training: Effects

The final question to the remaining sample (n=11) asked about the long-term effect of the training they had received. Again the respondent that mentioned how their travelling helped them better restated this point:

I don't think the training had any effect, but my life experiences have. **A3**

All but two of the other respondents who had received training replied that it had a positive effect (n=9). One mentioned how the training had wider implications:

This type of awareness training is important and has had a lasting effect on the way I work and lead my life in general. **A18**

Another mentioned how it helped with stock-selection duties:

I think it helped me understand that the library service has such a variety of material to help people access the service as best they can, in a way that suits them. Diversity training helps me understand why we have books on tape, foreign language fiction/newspapers, foreign films on DVD, children's books that deal with social issues, large print etc. I think sometimes it needs to be remembered that some members of the community don't wish to access libraries full stop and although we work very hard to promote the library service to all, not everyone will want to take up our offer. **A5**

Those that stated that the training did not help, did not offer further elaboration, aside from one respondent who said:

[It did not help] with how to respond to people and their queries. **A8**

Diversity Training: Expectations

Seven respondents had not received any training (n=7). They were asked instead about their expectations of any training programme. Only four of the seven responded, further reducing the sample (n=4).

An awareness and understanding of other cultures and their needs. Signposting suggestions. Information sharing and project ideas with BME communities. **A11**

Yes - more knowledge on what BME communities would like from us. **A12**

Training would be valuable if only to highlight issues and cultural differences; and give advice on dealing with certain scenarios. Better understanding of different cultures. **A14**

I think that cultural awareness training should be delivered on an ongoing basis, as part of diversity training programmes. **A18**

6.6. Library Users Survey Results

6.6.1. Methodology

The initial questionnaire was sent to the researcher's contact - a senior manager - at the authority for approval. It was rejected as it was felt that the general public would not be aware of any such specialised services without some sort of prompt. As such, question 1 had the following added to it: 'These [specific services] might be...providing books and information in non-English languages, or organising and promoting cultural events?' This allowed the survey to be approved but in retrospect the present researcher feels that this merely led respondents to address only those two issues - non-English stock and the promotion of cultural events - and not any other BME service they may have known about. Leading questions can lead to bias in any potential answers (Bell, 1993).

A library user survey was undertaken for both Authority A and Authority B. A further third survey was undertaken with a separate authority that has a very large BME population (see **7.9.**). Unlike the staff surveys which were conducted online, the user surveys were distributed in person with physical copies of the questionnaire. The central library of each authority was chosen as it was anticipated that the number of users there would be higher. All three were undertaken on a weekday around midday. The time spent distributing the surveys was around an hour and a half for each library. On advice from library staff it was decided that users on the computer and those clearly studying or in the quiet study area should not be approached.

The researcher found it difficult to encourage users to participate in the survey. This is quite understandable as the users were attending the library for their own purposes and not to complete a survey that would impinge on their time. Nonetheless, with regard to Authority A, the researcher was rebuffed a number of times before he had had a chance to explain what the survey was about. Two people promised to complete the survey later but did not.

Knowing that the researcher would be asking library users for their time, it was decided to keep the questionnaire short and so it consisted of only five main questions. The main purpose of the survey was twofold: a) to discover what users thought about public library BME services in general and b) to compare their knowledge and awareness of those service with what the staff believed they were offering.

The present researcher could find no information on the authority's website detailing their services to BME communities. When asked to provide such information, a contact at the authority stated that all their services were inclusive. For specific BME services they stated that they had newspapers and stock in non-English languages and they work with a local BME forum in order to identify which resources are most relevant.

The distribution and data collection of the user survey took place in March, 2013.

6.6.2. Results

Only 10 completed user surveys were received from Authority A (n=10). User respondents are each given an alphanumerical designation such as, for example, **AU1**.

A representative sample of responses are displayed below. Spellings have been corrected, but the original grammar and syntax remain. Each thematic heading (in bolded italics) maps onto each relevant survey question (see Appendix 5 for full list of questions).

Do public libraries have a role to provide specific services to Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) communities?

Figure 6.3 User Replies On Library's Role to BME Communities

Yes - Elaborated	6
Yes - No Elaboration	1
Do Not Know	2

One respondent stated the following:

I do not believe in singling out particular communities for special treatment and so do not wish to reply to the other questions. **AU7**

This reduced the sample to nine for the remainder of the survey (n=9).

Of those that stated 'yes' and gave further comments, one stated that those communities should be willing to learn English and integrate into British society, and the remaining five with further comments, such as:

It is important that we welcome people into our communities as we wish to be welcomed when we go abroad. **AU8**

... [This library] have a whole section...for books in Chinese. They also have newspapers in other languages. **AU1**

Definitely [libraries have a role] - especially information and books in other languages. **AU9**

I've noticed much more for Czech people [such as] displays of books. The children's library is very open to different minorities in books, displays - especially religious festivals. **AU2**

It is difficult to discern whether this was the sum knowledge of these particular respondents knowledge of their authority's BME services or if they were responding to the 'books in non-English languages' caveat added to the question.

Awareness of BME Services

All respondents replied (n=9) Five respondents replied that they did not know of any (n=5). The remaining four focussed on books in non-English languages (n=4).

There are some books in different languages, however I am not aware of the number available. I suspect they are insufficient because I have not seen many ethnic minorities in the library. **AU3**

There is a whole section of books in different languages. **AU1**

Foreign newspapers and books. **AU8**

One also mentioned the provision of books in other languages, but also added the following:

Children's events around different festivals. Visiting authors of different cultures. Visiting musicians of different cultures. **AU2**

Rating the Library's BME Service

The rating was on a scale of 1-5 with 5 meaning 'excellent'. Five respondents did not answer, reducing the sample (n=4). Two rated it as a 4, one as a 5 and one as a 3.

Services the Library Should Offer to BME Services

Only three respondents replied, reducing the sample again (n=3):

More cultural events would be welcomed. **AU9**

There should perhaps be more advertising [for BME services that are available]. **AU3**

[BME groups] to meet in the library to record their experiences of living in a different culture, recording what is said in a blog, website or eBook. Put up posters to advertise [such an event] - the library is a meeting place for different cultures. **AU2**

This last respondent, in their reply to the question about whether the library has a good understanding of their own culture, mentions that living abroad allowed them to understand why BME communities in England could use the library as a source of social and cultural support:

I have the experience of living abroad for 4 years so know how important it was to me to find books in English - [I also realised] the importance of [finding] people speaking English and creating something together. **AU2**

Here then is an example of how a person's life experience allowed them to be empathic towards groups who may have experienced the same sort of emotions and upheaval they had.

Ethnicity of Participants

All nine respondents were White British (n=9) and replied that their library service was knowledgeable about their particular culture.

6.7. Analysis and Discussion

6.7.1. Introduction

As the aim of the study is to primarily canvass library staff views and to only use the user responses to validate the staff in the level of service that they believe they are offering, most of the analysis will be focussed on staff responses with user

responses utilised as a point of comparison. This will apply to both library authorities and so includes both this chapter and Chapter 7.

6.7.2. On Empathy

All the staff respondents saw empathy as a positive thing and valued its importance for public libraries and their interaction with BME communities. Cognitive empathy was described the most (n=14) and this focuses more on an intellectual understanding of others as opposed to an emotional one:

Cultural empathy is an awareness and understanding of the characteristics and beliefs of other cultures - our service should be equal and accessible for all. **A11**

Here the practical implications of the empathy described is limited to concerns of equality and having an accessible service, something the respondent clearly feels is a positive but is an attitude actually criticised by Muddiman *et al.* (2000) in their report on libraries and social inclusion. The authors there state that public library staff believe enough is done for the disenfranchised if the library's services are available for everyone. This disregards the fact that such communities may have differing needs, and without their consultation and communication, the library cannot tailor their service to meet their needs. Instead, there is a universal application of the library service which carries with it an assumption that the library's general provision is suitable for everyone in the community regardless of their background. This 'universal application,' then seems to be what this respondent feels should also apply to BME communities.

There is, however, an understanding from this respondent on an intellectual level that empathy does extend to having an understanding of the other's worldview, here described as 'characteristics and beliefs.'

By this, they may mean what the next respondent further elaborates on:

Recognition of different cultures and the way we deal with issues arising from this. Empathy is a recognition of problems that may arise and how we can/might resolve them together, i.e. material in the right format; signposting to the right organisations etc. **A14**

The 'empathy' - in reality 'sympathy' as discussed below - this respondent is concerned with focuses on making sure that BME users have access to the same sort of materials as any other users: meaning stock ('materials in the right format') and signposting. Nonetheless, so as to not appear too critical, it is worth pointing

out that the staff surveyed all allow for their definition of empathy to lead to a positive, altruistic outcome towards those that they serve.

The issue of signage is brought up by others, too, when describing the type of diversity training they had previously had:

[The training] was broad ranging and dealt with issues such as general staff perceptions, stock provision, signage etc. **A7**

They also had an appreciation of the importance of such empathy for public libraries:

Very important. All public have different needs and require different help for their requests. People from different cultures may need additional help so this needs to be taken into account, without appearing patronising. The service should be inclusive. **A12**

Though understanding and appreciating empathy is commendable, it appears that staff are limited in the deeper practical applications of this, going no further than having a library service that provides particular and relevant stock, that is inclusive and equal, and making the library experience more comprehensible (the use of signage) for those that come to use it.

An underlying assumption here is that those from a BME community have little grasp of English. This does not reflect reality at all. There are language issues from those of an older generation and some of the first-generation immigrants, but many BME communities are now firmly established in Britain with second and third generations being fluent in English. In fact, the Commission for Integration and Cohesion found that people have multiple identities - and some not defined by race or ethnicity - and this is particularly true for the progeny of migrants (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007). These are people who have a unique bi-cultural identity and it does not appear that staff empathy extends to them - at least, not in the form of using the library and its resources in bringing all these communities together cohesively. Indeed, Wilson & Birdi (2008) in their survey on library staff and empathy notes one particular respondent who was quite critical toward current cultural awareness programmes, noting that they focussed exclusively on first-generation immigrant issues and not the needs of the second and third generations.

A12's point about not appearing patronising is thusly ironic as the assumption that people from different cultures needing additional help could be construed as patronising in the first place. The automatic assumption is that those from a different culture are at a disadvantage already. There seems to be little appreciation of an alternative culture as part of the fabric of Britain that a public library could help to harmonise through community cohesion. Again, as Muddiman *et al.* (2000) points out, a universal service is made available to everyone without any input from specific groups as to whether such a service meets their particular needs.

This issue of equating empathic services for BME communities to merely language issues also appeared in Chapter 5 with some of the non-Diversity Group participants, so this may be symptomatic of nationwide organisation culture within the library service. Those who had had more interaction with BME communities or had a vested interest in the issue of diversity as a whole - such as the CILIP Diversity Group respondents in Chapter 5 - had a better grasp of the topic and recognised that BME user needs were more varied.

It would appear, too, that what the respondents both in Authority A and in library staff from the previous chapter are displaying here is sympathy and not empathy. Sympathy as defined by Bennett (1979) is where one assumes the thoughts, feelings and views of others via one's own frame of reference. This is different to empathy where one sees completely from another's point of view without any projection of one's own self. Sympathy is, of course, an admirable trait, however without empathy cultural understanding may not occur as one will always be looking through the other's eyes using one's own cultural and social context and not the other's. This then can lead to a misunderstanding as to what the other needs. Here, in these survey responses, assuming that appropriate stock and signposting is all BME communities need seems to imply that this is what those particular respondents think would be needed had they been in the same situation as a BME library user.

Again, as in the previous study (see 5.5.), the results show that there is need for a training programme that addresses the issue of empathy, the issue of the role of the library in community cohesion initiatives - though this will take an organisational change - and the issue of recognising the broader nature of BME communities, both in their worldviews and their respective needs.

6.7.3. Stock Issues & Preserving the Status Quo

As stated, the main point of contention now appears to be between a library service that relegates BME issues to language and stock issues, and the potential role of the library to facilitate the Government's community cohesion recommendations.

Under the 'Libraries for All' initiative, public libraries are described as a neutral meeting place initiative (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 1999) from which it could be argued that ideas and individuals can meet under the steerage of the wider community (Library and Information Commission, 2000). Such an image of the library would be ideal, in practical terms, as a focus point not just for a meeting place of mutual cultural understanding and appreciation but also as an initiative that adds value to the library service beyond the stereotypical image of merely providing books and little else. As Vincent (2009a) puts it, the public library should become "*the* place for debate, learning and sharing information" (Vincent, 2009a: 144).

This is an idea that at least one library user from this authority already understands:

The library is a meeting place for different cultures. **AU2**

It would be odd, and somewhat discouraging, if a library user could grasp this concept while staff did not. It could be that the user above has some sort of academic background, or previous library experience - the survey was not designed to establish such issues - or it could be that this view of the library is presumed intuitively. It would appear, however, from the results listed here and above that such a role for the library is either not fully being explored or is not being promoted. Individual librarians have mentioned specific schemes that sound interesting, such as:

I have organised a variety of cultural activities involving a range of people from the BME and wider community. **A3**

Working in partnership with a local Chinese community to hold an event to promote resources and services, assisting Chinese community group to attain funding to begin group, and supporting group in regular sessions in public use ICT. **A18**

However these respondents do not go into very much detail, especially as to the nature of the 'cultural activities' mentioned by respondent **A3**. The vast majority of the respondents, however, were keen to point out the dual language stock that they provide which is far removed from the idea of empathic cultural understanding for

community cohesion. It is interesting to note, though, that some of the respondents had some awareness of the importance of this type of cultural understanding:

I think it would help to promote the acceptance of different cultures to people in our communities who are perhaps less tolerant, by having displays and events celebrating the different cultures and beliefs, it would also contribute to greater understanding for all library staff. **A4**

Those "living book" schemes are a good idea, where actual people from different walks of life come in to talk about their lives. **A1**

Here there is a combination of *understanding* leading to *acceptance* as mentioned by **A4** and of the opportunity for cultural *contact* with **A1**. Note that both respondents are speaking speculatively, so whilst they appreciate the need to address such issues, it is clear for these two respondents that very little is actively taking place as a result. However, respondents **A3** and **A18** above do mention cultural activities - this begs the question as to whether some staff are actually unaware of the services other staff are providing. This in itself is not very ideal. All four respondents are from management positions so the discrepancy is not due to a lack of communication between front-line staff and those higher up.

The reliance on dual language stock as being the marker by which BME interactions are judged is highlighted multiple times over, for example:

Providing information in dual language where needed. **A10**

Dual language packs are available for any family receiving a Bookstart pack. **A5**

We are occasionally asked for specific dual language material for very specific ages/ reading levels. **A7**

When the present researcher asked the authority to provide details for their BME activities, he was directed to their dual language stock. This reflects accurately the findings of Roach & Morrison (1999) and Vincent (2009a) where library staff were seen to be content providing a minimal service - mainly stock related - to BME communities as they were not aware of the needs of those communities. They certainly then cannot be expected to go the step further toward community cohesion if they believe they are doing enough already.

Again, the assumption that language issues are the main concern of BME communities shows that the staff have a good grasp of theoretical sympathy - whereby they make assumptions of other people's needs based on what their own

needs would be in the same situation - but not empathy. That they believe enough is being done is summed up neatly by one front-line staff respondent in particular:

On the whole, the service I have worked for nearly 30 years now has always strived to be empathic to BME communities. I received training very early on in my career in this authority and I don't feel attitudes have changed from that position. **A5**

The fact that stock selection is the primary service the authority provides for BME communities is highlighted quite starkly in the following:

The library service tries to be as inclusive as possible but this is largely limited to providing appropriate stock and actively treating all of its users in the same way- they are more focused on equality rather than empathy. **A15**

This is reinforced by the library users' knowledge of such services:

There is a whole section of books in different languages. **AU1**

Foreign newspapers and books. **AU8**

A15's assessment is, at the very least, honest. It notes the aims of the library but also notes that the execution is limited. A possible criticism of this thesis could be that, since responses were not forthcoming and samples small, the researcher may not be aware of initiatives that library authorities provide that may address the concerns presented in the research questions. Nonetheless, that such an honest response has been provided - and combined with **A5's** response that nothing further needs to be done from the training they had received thirty years prior - it shows that there are authorities where such action is not happening. Also, none of the respondents - in response to the question as to what public libraries could do to better improve their cultural competency - cited any good practice from other authorities. If other initiatives are taking place, the promotion and knowledge of them is not widespread. A lot of this mirrors Roach & Morrison (1999) who, over a decade ago, criticised staff attitudes that believed nothing needed to be done and also stressed the importance of sharing good practice. Unfortunately, the latter appears to have been ignored and the former attitude still exists.

If **A15** is a representative comment, then it would imply that public libraries are in need of an initiative that refocuses their efforts toward a more empathic, culturally aware service that does aim for community cohesion - something greater than being inclusive. **A15** is also from a management position so their view is in sharp

contrast to fellow management respondents **A3** and **A18** who feel that cultural activities are taking place in the library.

Given that both staff and users highlighted the presence of dual-language stock, it would not be presumptuous to say that the library feels that this is enough in terms of their interaction with other non-British communities. Most of the respondents rated their own cultural competency as 'average' or 'good' but, on the whole, staff felt that they provide a good service to BME communities:

I think that [Authority A] service has a high standard of empathy towards BME communities. Great importance is placed on training staff and ensuring staff provide a high standard of service. **A4**

The library service is very empathic towards BME communities. Access and Inclusion librarians are around if staff are unsure so there is always someone to ask. The library service also runs training sessions form time to time in explaining other cultures. **A17**

This last respondent hints that training is received in order to explain other cultures. Yet the staff seemed unable to translate this training into anything other than the promotion and provision of dual language stock. Such a criticism may be unfair, though, as the staff may not have had the opportunity to utilise what they had learned in the workplace. Given the image of the library described above, then that would make both the service and the training a fount of wasted potential.

Nonetheless, respondents **A3** and **A18** above both mention that there are a 'variety of cultural events.' Not only do some staff *appear* to be unaware of these events, but also only one library user seemed to be aware of this:

Children's events around different festivals. Visiting authors of different cultures. Visiting musicians of different cultures. **AU2**

The caveat here is that musicians and authors of non-British cultures may not necessarily have visited the library in order to promote cultural understanding. The other caveat is that the other events are aimed at children. If there are adult events such as this, then it was not mentioned to the present researcher when he asked about services to BME communities in general, nor are they very well promoted as the library users were not aware of them.

6.7.4. Community Consultation & Cultural Competency

Past library literature on BME issues focussed on the importance of communication and consultation with other groups. Elliot in 1999 identified the need for consultation and co-operation between libraries and minority groups, and to train library professionals to acquire the skills required to work with diverse ethnic needs. The staff in authority A also shared this viewpoint when asked how libraries could better improve cultural competency:

By giving the BME community the opportunity to have their say in shaping activities, services and stock. **A3**

By approaching local community groups and asking what would encourage them to use a library. **A6**

Again it seems that the foundation is there for cultural competency to happen. Staff can identify empathy and know well its value. Some of them recognise the role of the library in bringing about cultural understanding. Whilst the potential is there, it appears that this particular authority has not taken the next step in terms of developing and initiating a process by which deep cultural understanding can take place. Instead they choose to rest on the fact that they provide dual language stock. This may be due to the fact that they have such a low BME population. This is highlighted succinctly in the following reply:

In general terms I believe our staff desire to deliver the best service and would do their very best to be empathetic to all customers. In real terms, living in an area of very low levels of BME communities developing understanding is often at a low level. Nevertheless, staff often manage to go to great lengths to try and obtain materials suitable for BME customers and often make a point of highlighting the availability of materials which are not necessarily apparent to customers. **A14**

What Elliot (1999) also noted was that the recommendations on consultation and specialist staff were being made both in the 1970s as well as the 1990s. It is interesting, then, that here in the present-day, the same sort of recommendations could still apply. This reinforces Vincent's (2009a) assertion that there has been very little progress in this issue over the past few decades.

Though financial issues dominated in response to the question about obstacles in the path of cultural competency, one was aware of intergroup anxiety - in principle, if not by name - and the issues related to it that would lead to the kind of situations

seen in previous research projects where staff would pass off BME-related queries to BME members of staff (Syed, 2008):

Ignorance of local communities. Lack of confidence in staff - staff training is essential. **A18**

This lack of confidence could lead to the reluctance showed by staff to engage in cultural contact - as described by the Diversity Group respondent in Chapter 5 - and it is encouraging to note that this particular respondent recognises the importance of training in order to overcome this. Indeed, one of the aims of this thesis is to equip staff with the skills and confidence they need in order to interact with BME users with the eventual goal of helping to facilitate community cohesion. Such a reply here then validates this aim.

It must be noted, too, that amongst all the users surveyed in both authorities, this particular authority was the only one where there was a reply hostile to the very notion of BME communities receiving any specific services.

I do not believe in singling out particular communities for special treatment and so do not wish to reply to the other questions. **AU7**

This was the present researcher's first encounter with the notion of topic threat Gunaratnam (2003), whereby the sensitive nature of the topic, perhaps coupled in this case with the knowledge that the researcher was not from the dominant ethnic majority, leads participants to be duplicitous or outright hostile.

Though only a solitary reply, it is precisely this type of attitude that public libraries have the potential to challenge and address.

6.7.5. Budgetary Concerns

The main obstacles toward cultural competency were financial ones. Even then, one respondent linked budgetary concerns with stock issues:

Finance - e.g. it may have been possible to provide newspapers in a range of foreign languages but when cutbacks are being made across the newspaper/magazine stock, some of these titles have to be removed from the stock list. Also books in different languages and events aimed at different community groups all cost money and budgets are small, sometimes non-existent. **A6**

Mainly budgetary ones - little money available for training, little staff time available as staffing numbers have been cut, virtually no staff time any more to provide activities or displays, no budgets for materials for activities even for children. **A10**

So widespread is this feeling that over half (n=8) of those that replied to the question mentioned financial issues. This makes it clear that any potential new training programme would need to be cost-effective in order for it to be attractive to library authorities, and it would also appear that this cost-effectiveness is more of a priority than the foundational role of the library as a centre for community cohesion. This was pointed out by two of the respondents:

Training costs versus perceived need. **A7**

The fact that [this issue] is not a priority at the moment. **A9**

Though a lot of staff looked at the budget issues through the lens of purchasing relevant stock, one respondent was aware of the budget's impact on specialist services:

Lack of money...Cuts to specialist staff so no-one to go to for advice. **A17**

And this tallies with Vincent's (2009a) opinion that a cutting of funds was one of the reasons specialist community librarian posts began to be deleted in the late 90s. All this simply reinforces the fact any new cultural competency model will have to address well any budgetary concerns.

6.7.6. Training

There does appear to have been an element of cultural awareness in the training that some staff had received:

A fascinating day at a mosque in Nottingham. Also a diversity discussion day...which raised awareness. **A1**

One day cultural awareness training, with discussions with representatives of different cultural groups. **A4**

Those of the staff that had received training unanimously described it as being short and usually one-off. This reflects both the literature (Ferdman & Brody, 1996 and Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004) and the findings in the nationwide survey from Chapter 5.

Nonetheless, most respondents found it to be a beneficial experience. This is understandable as much of the awareness training that they had may not have had any practical use and there was no need to develop it further if the library is

primarily focussed on dual-language stock. The following reply makes this quite clear:

Diversity training helps me understand why we have books on tape, foreign language fiction/newspapers, foreign films on DVD, children's books that deal with social issues, large print etc. **A5**

If accurate, this would imply that the training they had received had made a number of assumptions as to what the needs of a BME community were, thus showing good sympathy but little empathy.

One respondent, however, did not find the training valuable and instead relied on their own personal experiences:

The training [did not help]...In reality I am well-travelled and have been to a variety of countries where I have been fortunate to immerse myself in local culture, traditions etc. **A3**

It is interesting to note, too, that this attitude is also mirrored in one of the user replies from the same authority:

[BME groups should] meet in the library to record their experiences of living in a different culture, recording what is said in a blog, website or eBook.

I have the experience of living abroad for 4 years so know how important it was to me to find books in English - [I also realised] the importance of [finding] people speaking English and creating something together. **AU2**

Note that this user's personal experience allows them to state that a BME community's focus would be on cultural issues as well as language ones. This reliance on personal experience reflects the view of **Res 5** from Chapter 5 who believed that personal contact with BME communities helped better than any formal training process. This lends credence to Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis, especially if it is modified for inter-cultural understanding and not just prejudice reduction. Any proposed training model would have to take all such considerations on board.

Those that had no training wanted ongoing cultural awareness:

Training would be valuable if only to highlight issues and cultural differences; and give advice on dealing with certain scenarios. Better understanding of different cultures. **A14**

I think that cultural awareness training should be delivered on an ongoing basis, as part of diversity training programmes. **A18**

Again, overlapping with some of the replies in Chapter 5, there is a need for both cultural awareness and a practical element, here described by **A14** as 'advice' for 'certain scenarios.' As discussed in Chapter 5, it could be argued that a combination of personal experience and some form of formal awareness training may be better in terms of bringing about a skill set that will encourage community cohesion. Of course, the organisational culture of the library has to be geared toward this and not just on stock issues. The personal experience alluded to here could be manifest through the contact hypothesis and by simply having staff meet with and form bonds with those from other communities on a regular basis. This would form an ongoing process for which a more formal training scheme would be added on as a regular, and short, reminder.

6.7.7. Lack of Interest?

When asked about obstacles that a potential cultural competency initiative might face, two of the staff respondents answered as follows:

Training costs versus perceived need. **A6**

Entrenched attitudes and possibly the cutting of funding for specialist services. **A4**

One possible 'entrenched attitude' could be that library authorities already do enough as they provide a wide range of dual-language stock. This then could lead to the assumption that there is no 'perceived need' to develop anything further.

Indeed a general lack of interest seemed to be the norm in the response to this survey, both for staff and library users. The staff questionnaire was sent out twice, the second on the recommendation of the researcher's contact at the authority - someone in high-level management - as the response to the first request was so poor. The contact made a point of making sure to ask that everyone at all levels of staff take time out to complete the survey.

Nonetheless only eighteen members of staff responded in total, a somewhat low number given that it was sent out across the whole authority and not merely to just one library. The researcher also noted that there were recurrent and persistent spelling errors of a basic kind in many of the replies. These errors were corrected when recorded in this thesis, but a possible reason for these could be that staff were rushing to complete them, either out of lack of interest, or because they had other pressing matters to attend to, or both.

Again this could be understandable if, as mentioned above, the entrenched attitude of the library toward BME services is one of language and stock issues. If the whole matter was presented in the form of a value-adding service that may help toward community cohesion then interest may have been higher.

This apathy was also reflected in the user surveys. Of those that replied, many gave short, quick answers, and again, many people focussed on the issue of dual-language stock.

It would appear that, once again, though the potential is there for the library to do something with much more impact regarding this issue, many in both the staff and the public see it as nothing more than a language issue and seem quite content with that. This would indicate that little has changed since Roach & Morrison's study in 1999 where one of their conclusions was that libraries were not pro-active on this issue as they, due to what they viewed was needed, felt that they already did enough. The irony here is that the authors complain that very little had changed with regards to this issue from the 1960s and 70s onward. It would appear that the same criticism still applies a decade and a half on from their study. This reinforces the need for cultural competency training as it would show libraries their own potential role, show them what precisely is required, and guide them in taking steps in meeting these required needs.

6.8. Conclusion

It is clear that the findings collected from both library staff and users within this local authority mirror themes in the literature quite closely. Whilst there is a desire to provide a service for BME communities, this seems to be limited to stock and language issues, thereby making their efforts sympathetic rather than empathic. This leads to a service that makes assumptions on what particular communities need instead of finding out exactly what they need. There appears to be no effort to exploit the library and its resources to work toward a strategy that would bring about community cohesion.

Library users also pointed out the abundance of stock and language issues, though the wording of the question - which was necessary in order to have the survey approved - may have led them in that direction in the first place. It could be argued, though, that the fact the idea of language-related stock was so prevalent in staff

answers, library users may have followed the same route without any need for a leading question.

There are hints towards other initiatives from some members of staff - such as brief mentions of cultural events and community librarians - but these do not seem to be widely known by both other staff and library users.

Any training received is limited and short, and any possible future initiatives are hampered by potential financial constraints.

A new training model, then, could logically focus on:

Education - making a distinction between sympathy and empathy and taking steps to ensure that the latter has a better chance to emerge and develop. The empathy then would lead to more cultural awareness through contact with other communities. This contact will also allow for the service to ascertain exactly what those communities need.

Culture - the organisational culture would have to change so that issues of community cohesion and not language are paramount whenever an authority develops a strategy aimed at BME communities.

Cost-effectiveness - whilst empathy and community cohesion are admirable concepts, library authorities appear to be more swayed by more pragmatic matters such as finance. In order to make the training model attractive, it will have to be financially viable.

There is a fair deal of thematic overlap between staff responses in Authority A and the nationwide survey of Chapter 5. This includes a focus on languages for some and an awareness of the importance of cultural understanding for others. It also includes those that found personal cultural contact a greater help than any formal training process, and those that wished for a more practical aspect to the training in order to deal with difficult scenarios. This was also an issue for the participant spoken to in the first observation (see **4.5.4.**).

This strengthens two possible research paths - one, the need for a practical skill-set best described as cultural competency by Mestre, 2010 and others, which includes an aspect of verbal and non-verbal cues (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005). The second is the need for personal cultural contact, recommended in the cultural-competency framework for libraries by Montiel-Overall (2009), and best

envisioned in the now oft-mentioned contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954). Both would need to be combined in an ongoing process, thus countering the criticism of Diversity Training being nothing more than short and infrequent (Ferdman & Brody, 1996; Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004).

The next chapter will present Case Study B with a library authority with a larger BME population. The authority's presumed experience of BME interaction may provide best practice recommendations that Authority A were not aware of.

Chapter 7

Case Study: Authority B

7.1. Introduction

The results and analysis of the second case study - from a library authority that has a 17% BME population - are presented here. Themes emerge from the staff surveys, from both this and the previous case study, relating to the equation of BME services to stock issues, and also to the desire for training that would equip staff with cultural competency skills that would allow them to avoid unintended offence. User surveys are also discussed, and a comparison is made with users from an authority with a 40% BME population.

7.2. Aim

The aim of these comparative case studies is to establish whether library services toward BME populations differ depending on how large or small those particular populations are within a library authority's area.

This aim will be facilitated by the following objectives:

- To provide a more focussed comparison between library staff in an area with a low BME population and with staff in an area with a *comparatively* higher BME population. This chapter will be dealing with the latter.
- To further compare this with a third group of University students who are studying a Masters in Librarianship. Many of these students will have also worked in the academic sector. This will be the focus of Chapter 8. This would provide a fresh viewpoint - one from people who, as they are studying the subject, have library issues as priority and second from people with a background in academic libraries - from which public library issues could be compared.
- To also provide a comparison between library users in both authorities, with an interest in how they viewed and rated their library service in the issue of BME services.

- To also provide a comparison between users and staff from their respective authorities in how each rated those self-same services. To then further compare both user groups with a third group from an area with a very high BME population to see if user expectation of their library service changes depending on how large the BME population is. This chapter will be dealing with this third group.

This chapter will be focussing on results from Authority B that has a comparatively high BME population. Section 7.9. will focus on user results from Authority C that has a very high BME population.

7.3. Methodology

See section 6.2. in the previous chapter for staff survey design and distribution, and methodological issues related to case studies in general. This chapter will also include a comparative analysis between staff responses from both authorities picking out key themes and/or differences. This chapter will also compare library user responses from both authorities and also a third authority with a very high BME population. The intention here is to see if there is any possible link between the quality and quantity of BME services offered and the size of an authority's BME population. As in Authority A, requests for participation were done via proxy through the researcher's contact in senior management. The survey was accessed online and hosted on Toluna Quick Surveys. Survey completion and data collection took place from December 2012 - January 2013.

7.4. Ethnic Profile of Authority B

The ethnic breakdown of Authority B is shown here:

Figure 7.1 Authority B Profile (Rogers, 2011; Office for National Statistics, 2012b)

Ethnicity	Percentage of Population	Comparison with National Average (approx.)
White	83.05%	3% lower
Mixed	2.08%	0.12% lower
Asian	7.05%	0.45 %lower
Black	2.49%	1.1% lower
Chinese	1.32%	As National Average

The White population of Authority A includes White minorities such as Travellers and Eastern European migrants. The Chinese population is marginally higher than those described in census results as 'Other Ethnicity.'

Non-white BME communities make up approximately 12.94% of the population compared with the 3.71% of Authority A. Such a statistic justifies the comparison of both authorities, even though Authority B's non-White communities are, in general, lower than the national average.

7.5. Library Staff Survey Results

Presented here are the results of the survey given to library staff from Authority B, along with a sample of responses, to provide context for the discussion and analysis that follows. Spellings have been corrected, but the original grammar and syntax remain. Each of the thematic headings (in bolded italics) map onto each of the survey questions (see **Appendix 4** for list of actual questions.)

Only six members of staff replied to the survey (n=6). This was after a request had been made twice for the survey to be distributed. Nonetheless, in comparison with Authority A, the sample here contained a proportionally larger percentage of management staff.

Figure 7.2 Authority B Respondent Staff Roles

Senior Management	Front-Line Management	Front-Line Staff	TOTAL
1	3	2	6

Authority B staff responses are each given an alphanumeric designation such as **B1**, for example.

Defining Empathy in a BME Context

Five out of six respondents replied (n=5). Answers included the following:

Having an understanding of cultural differences - and acknowledging and accommodating these differences. **B3**

It's about treating everyone as an individual and respecting differences. Being aware of individual needs and different cultural approaches. **B5**

This shows some understanding of the significance of cultural understanding.

The Importance of Empathy for the Public Library Service in a BME Context.

Five people replied (n=5). All of those stated that it was very important.

Very important. Everyone is welcome in the library and staff need to be sensitive to different cultural norms of behaviour. **B3**

It's very important but I don't think it has to be particularly hard. Just some basic understanding of differences in cultures and how it may feel to be living in a different culture, e.g.: language differences, assertiveness, fear & alienation etc. **B4**

Very important for a variety of reasons. Most of these are equally important regardless of background, however it must be recognised that libraries play an important role in assisting with integration and community cohesion. **B6**

Again the importance of cultural understanding is highlighted here, as well as the library's role in providing social integration and cohesion. This could very well be due to the fact that this authority has a high BME population.

Level of Workplace Empathy

Four people replied to this question, reducing the sample (n=4). Responses were quite pragmatic.

I believe all staff understand what is expected of them, but as with life in general, adherence may not always be consistent. The libraries in the City which have a higher number of users from BME communities are the most empathic. **B5**

Libraries where the local community is mixed tend to be more empathic, as they build up relationships with individuals from BME communities their understanding and sensitivity grows. The community is reflected in the diversity of materials and events. This is not so common in libraries where the community is still mainly white British. **B3**

Again the issue of cultural awareness came up:

I believe that as a service we are generally empathetic towards BME communities. Staff training has been a great help towards raising this awareness. **B1**

Rating Cultural Competency

On being asked to rate their own cultural competency, three replied with Good, one replied Average and one replied Excellent. One declined to reply.

Examples of Cultural Competency

Only four members of staff offered up an example of their own cultural competency (n=4). This included the following:

Making sure that displays reflect the local community's ethnic make-up. **B4**

Part of my role is to provide the materials for our users and I try to ensure that we provide for the main BME communities in the City with our own materials supplemented by renting materials in languages where there are smaller communities. All managers have recently attended a refresher in equality issues. **B5**

Attending refugee information drop in sessions on behalf of the department. **B6**

Implementing Cultural Competency

Five people replied (n=5). There were a diverse range of responses to this question. This ranged from further training to more positive action recruitment.

Further training which would benefit from training by representatives of the BME community as trainers. B1

If we were in a position to recruit staff, we need to be looking to increase the number of BME staff who work in libraries. B5

Cultural Competency: Obstacles

Five members respondents answered (n=5). Though economic factors were an issue (n=3), respondents did supplement this with other reasons, too:

If training is required, then the reduced numbers of staff we have make it virtually impossible to release staff to attend. We have also lost some key staff who had relevant language skills. B5

Staff availability, budget, unwillingness amongst staff to move between libraries. B6

Lack of knowledge among staff. Budget cuts have led to losing staff with community language skills so impacting on the stock being bought. B3

Diversity Training: Experiences

Five respondents had received training (n=5).

One day cultural awareness training run by [the] Council to provide a cross-section of council workers with an introduction to the different BME communities in [the city]. B1

A series of talks by staff members who, at the time, had responsibility for various BME communities and came from those communities. This covered cultural differences, faith, history, etc. B3

Looking at the main BME communities in [the city], the culture, the journey they made to arrive in [the city], food, customs and how to say some common phrases: Good morning, please, thank you, etc. B5

Diversity Training: Empathy

Only three people replied (n=3):

Not specifically. The emphasis was on introducing us to the background of these different people, with the aim presumably that empathy would come from this understanding. **B1**

Yes, an understanding of some of the difficulties people from certain communities may have in using a public library service. Also an exploration of some cultural differences in behaviour e.g. that maintaining eye contact was considered rude in certain cultures, that saying thank you was not the norm. **B3**

Yes, it was wide ranging so did help. **B6**

Diversity Training: Frequency and Length

Four members of staff replied (n=4) Short and infrequent training sessions were again mentioned. However, the respondents did include further details:

A one day course run approximately 3 years ago. **B1**

It was delivered by our own staff from BME communities, so staff knew who they were, which helped in the discussions. It was a half day including lunch, for each BME [community] and there were back up packs created for each library. **B5**

A single session for the Chinese, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. A whole day dedicated to each. **B6**

Diversity Training: Effects

Four respondents replied (n=4). Of these, they all replied in the positive:

Yes I think it probably did as it taught me a lot I didn't know which has helped in my interactions with these people. **B1**

Yes. Though I think an issue now is when does a user cease to be seen as being from a BME (both from their point of view and staff) Great great grandparents may have come from abroad and another culture, but the family living in Sheffield now may have married across cultures and may not see themselves as being from a BME. That is why I believe it is a better approach to stress that each user is an individual and respect those differences or similarities. **B5**

Yes, to some extent. A little more knowledge hopefully resulted in fewer mishaps and has on occasion informed certain actions. **B6**

7.6. Library User Results

7.6.1. Introduction

The researcher requested the authority to provide details of the services they provide for BME communities. He was directed to the authority's website where services are listed under the umbrella of 'community language information.'

This webpage mentions that some library assistants can speak a variety of languages and that the library application form is in 25 different languages. The page mentions that the library offers a number of resources to help people learn English and help them work towards achieving British citizenship. The availability of books, newspapers, magazines and films in non-English languages is highlighted. There is mention of a 'Diversity Calendar' - though the link was broken when last checked - which is described as 'a list of dates with important cultural and religious significance.'

7.6.2. Methodology

With regards to the user survey, Authority A had requested that question 1 be changed in order to allow users a range of suggestions that would remind them of what BME services the library provides (see **6.6.1.**). This amendment was kept for this authority - though no such request was made from Authority B - in order to maintain consistency.

Again, for the same reason of consistency, the survey was delivered at the authority's central library, around midday during a weekday. Those studying and those using the computers were not approached. Once more, the researcher found it difficult to encourage library users to participate. For example, whilst explaining the survey to one White British man, the user declined as soon as the researcher said the words 'Black and Minority Ethnic' which was the researcher's second encounter with hostility due to the nature of the topic, or topic threat (Gunaratnam, 2003).

The main purpose of the survey was twofold: a) to discover what users thought about public library BME services in general and b) to compare their knowledge and awareness of those service with what the staff believed they were offering.

The surveys were distributed and collected in March, 2013.

7.6.3. User Survey Results

Twelve replies were received from Authority B (n=12). User respondents were each given an alphanumerical designation such as, for example, **BU1**.

Do public libraries have a role to provide specific services to Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) communities?

All twelve replied (n=12). As opposed to some of the Authority A users, the participants here chose to elaborate their replies, and only one - a Kashmiri respondent - outright replied in the negative:

No. The internet now provides advanced and comprehensive resources for BME communities. Public libraries are in a process of collapse. **BU12**

However, other replies were more nuanced. Another respondent from a White British background, had this to say:

I think that in a multicultural society libraries should take the responsibility of promoting certain cultural events but I believe most emphasis should be placed on British culture. This will encourage greater integration. **BU10**

A Somalian respondent stated:

There aren't many specific services to BME communities, with the exception of the Bollywood movie section. There are many books by ethnic and black writers. There are no ethnic help desk workers [and] this could be a reason why there is a lack of specific services. As a multifaith society I believe a public library should be held accountable and encouraged to distribute a wider variety [of services] to BME communities. **BU4**

A White British respondent said:

They do [have a role], along with all cultures. Help in non-English services is a good thing, as long as they provide help in learning the English language. However, in terms of cultural events...the library should play a shared role along with other bodies, yet should strive to maintain its focus and long-held role as a central point for the whole community. **BU1**

Awareness of BME Services

All respondents replied (n=12). Six respondents were not aware of what services the library provided for BME communities (n=6). The remaining respondents provided a variety of answers (n=6), though non-English books were still the most popular response (n=4):

All I am aware of [are] books about different cultures but little to service minorities apart from the promotion of some cultural events. **BU10**

The online service is very good [for BME communities] if you need specific information. **BU3**

Books in non-English languages. **BU5**

World music and [foreign] cinema. **BU2**

Bollywood movie section. Biographies by ethnic writers. Books from different religions.

There could be many other services that I am unaware of. **BU4**

The last respondent is from a BME community, so their not being aware of services for them implies that they were not expecting such services from their library, or that such services are not well-promoted or that such services simply do not exist.

Rating the Library's BME Service

On asked to rate public library services for BME communities on an ascending scale of 1-5 where 5 represents 'excellent', eight respondents did not answer, reducing the sample for this question (n=4). One rated it as a 2 (White British background), two rated it as a 4 (Senegalese and Somalian background) and one rated it as a 1 (Kashmiri background).

Services the Library Should Offer to BME Users

On asked about any particular services the library should provide to BME communities, the Kashmiri responded replied with:

Libraries must promote knowledge. Something they do not do at the moment. The knowledge of different communities should have a depth to show the knowledge value from a library perspective. **BU12**

Others replied with different suggestions:

A talk group with translation for people with a poor level of English.
BU2

Providing important information in other languages...will encourage a greater enthusiasm for reading and learning the language of this country. **BU10**

Hosting cultural events. Storytelling with young children with traditional tales from each culture. Events with song, dance and food, but this may be more to do with getting people of different backgrounds together which I think is good but may be beyond a library's remit. **BU4**

Reading groups welcome to everyone targeted at reading black and ethnic books. As a multi-faith society it is pivotal to have a substantial public knowledge of other cultures in order to minimise prejudice.
BU4

The other eight respondents did not answer, making the sample for this question reduced (n=4).

Ethnicity of Participants

All respondents answered (n=12). Seven described themselves as White British. One was Black, one Kashmiri, one Senegalese, and two Somalian.

Six of the seven White British respondents stated that their library had a good understanding of their own particular culture. The remaining White British respondent stated that they did not know, as did the Black respondent, one of the Somalians and the Senegalese user. The other Somalian stated that the library 'do enough' whilst the Kashmiri user replied in the negative.

7.7. Analysis & Discussion

7.7.1. Low Response

The first thing to note is the low response to the staff survey. As with Authority A, the survey was sent out across the whole authority and not isolated to just one library, and a request to complete the survey was sent out twice. All six replies came during the first request.

This mirrors the point in section 6.7.7. in the previous chapter where that survey was sent out twice across the whole authority and only eighteen members of staff responded. Again, this reinforces the idea, also mentioned in section 6.7.7. that

library staff either lack interest or lack the time to invest properly in this topic. This is surprising considering the comparatively high BME population in the authority which would make one assume that the matter is of a higher priority. Indeed, at one point in its recent history, one branch library in the authority employed staff that were individually responsible for one BME community in the local area. Those members of staff tended to be from the community they were representing, reflecting similar training initiatives experienced by the Diversity Group respondent in Chapter 5.

7.7.2. On Empathy

As with Authority A, staff had a good understanding of empathy on an intellectual level and, like Authority A respondents, valued the importance of empathy for public library interaction with BME communities. However, whereas Authority A staff saw empathy as a means of simply getting BME communities to use the library's available services just like anyone else, a number of the six respondents in Authority B were fully aware of the library's role in utilising empathy in order to develop understanding and social cohesion (n=4). For example, one stated that empathy is:

Being aware of individual needs and different cultural approaches. **B5**

As opposed to some respondents in the nationwide survey and to staff responses from Authority A, this particular respondent noted both the plurality of needs a BME user may have and also the multiple cultural viewpoints. This recognises that there is not a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to the issue and also recognises on some level, given the context of the question, the need for empathy in establishing diverse needs and worldviews. This is reinforced in the following reply:

Everyone is welcome in the library and staff need to be sensitive to different cultural norms of behaviour. **B3**

So the empathy on display here is not merely one where staff acknowledge that BME communities may have language issues when coming to the library - as implied by some staff from Authority A - but one where there is a full awareness that someone from a different culture may have a completely different outlook on life that is then manifested in their social interactions. This shows that staff here have gone beyond the concept of sympathy (Bennett, 1973) to actual empathy

where they acknowledge that the needs, norms and outlook of the 'other' is not the same as theirs, but are still wanting to provide a service that helps the 'other'.

The next reply succinctly validates this point further:

[Empathy is] very important for a variety of reasons. Most of these are equally important regardless of background, however it must be recognised that libraries play an important role in assisting with integration and community cohesion. **B6**

This is the first instance of someone from the library profession directly mentioning the terms *integration* and *community cohesion*. This shows that such ideas are not merely the domain of academic studies or official policy but is instead an actual part of the mind-set of a library professional. However, there are two things to note here: the comparatively larger BME population of this authority may have naturally led this member of staff to seek out and confirm such ideas, and second the respondent is from Senior Management, a role which again may have more awareness of these ideas in general as opposed to lower level management and front line staff. Nonetheless, the responses in general were quite encouraging.

Some of the user respondents, too, recognised the library's role in bringing about integration:

In terms of cultural events...the library should play a shared role along with other bodies, yet should strive to maintain its focus and long-held role as a central point for the whole community. **BU1**

Though one felt this was better done by focussing on British culture:

I think that in a multicultural society libraries should take the responsibility of promoting certain cultural events but I believe most emphasis should be placed on British culture. This will encourage greater integration. **BU10**

This attitude actually mirrors those discovered by Roach & Morrison (1999) where librarians felt nothing need be done for BME communities as the later generations of those communities would become culturally British. Though the library user here is not advocating that nothing be done, they do seem to believe that integration will happen not through mutual cultural awareness and harmony but through a monoculture whereby minorities simply adopt the dominant culture, here being British culture.

Staff recognised that whatever empathic skills libraries had were not uniform across the whole authority. This could imply that there is no centralised training programme or standard by which all libraries follow. Respondents simply felt that it was an issue of pragmatics: the higher the BME population in a given area, the better the empathic response:

The libraries in [the city] which have a higher number of users from BME communities are the most empathetic. **B5**

Libraries where the local community is mixed tend to be more empathic, as they build up relationships with individuals from BME communities their understanding and sensitivity grows. **B3**

This reinforces the point, stated both in the nationwide survey and from Authority A results, that cultural *contact* is essential in order to bring about the understanding needed that could then be used in an empathic way to not only serve BME communities better but fulfil the library's role in bringing about a higher level of cultural cohesion. These two replies show that some library staff from this authority have an implicit understanding of the need for such contact.

7.7.3. Stock & Language Issues

Of those library users who were aware of BME services for their library (n=6), most focussed on stock issues (n=4):

There aren't many specific services to BME communities, with the exception of the Bollywood movie section. There are many books by ethnic and black writers. **BU4**

Books in non-English languages. **BU5**

World music and [foreign] cinema. **BU2**

This follows the trend set by Authority A. Once again non-English stock is the foremost in people's minds when asked about BME services. This is reinforced by the fact that the researcher asked the contact at the authority for a list of BME services they provide and immediate response was to direct him to the library's webpage on language services.

One respondent mentioned certain events:

All I am aware of [are] books about different cultures but little to service minorities apart from the promotion of some cultural events. **BU10**

And one admitted being unaware:

There could be many other services that I am unaware of. **BU4**

None of this is surprising considering that language issues dominate the relevant section on the library's webpage. As opposed to Authority A, however, when staff were asked about an example of their own cultural competency, respondents did not automatically resort to dual-language books. In fact, mirroring the replies given to Question 1 on empathy, they barely mentioned language issues at all:

Making sure that displays reflect the local community's ethnic make-up. **B4**

All managers have recently attended a refresher in equality issues. **B5**

Attending refugee information drop in sessions on behalf of the department. **B6**

Yet even here the potential role of the library is not being explored. Much like how Diversity Training in general is viewed as superficial 'tick box' exercises (Ferdman & Brody, 1996; Gillert & Chuzischvili, 2004), it could be argued that the library's approach to BME services is somewhat similar. There could be a work culture in place that feels that they do enough for BME communities and that there is no need to do anything further. The fact that most of the respondents rated their own cultural competency as 'good' or 'excellent' could be seen to support this.

Another point, however, is that perhaps the authority focuses on language issues because this is what the public expect of them. For example, when asked what BME services they would like to see in the library, user replies from a BME background included the following:

A talk group with translation for people with a poor level of English. **BU2**

Providing important information in other languages...will encourage a greater enthusiasm for reading and learning the language of this country. **BU10**

It is difficult to pinpoint what came first: are the user replies based on an expectation that the library only caters to language issues, or are libraries offering services based on language issues because that is all BME communities want?

7.7.4. Stock Issues: A Different Approach

As both authorities place a lot of emphasis on language and stock issues - though for Authority B this mainly reflected in user perception on BME services coupled with the library's focus on language in the relevant section on their website - perhaps they should both broaden their outlook and include English language stock that would appeal to second and third generation members of BME communities.

This is not to mean that community cohesion initiatives are ignored in order to reinforce the status quo of merely providing 'ethnic' stock, but that if stock is meant to be a part - and not whole - of BME services, then it should be done comprehensively and should not just appeal to first generation immigrants with language issues but also to latter generation English speaking members of those communities.

This though presents its own problems. It is very easy for staff to merely select English language fiction written by authors from a particular BME community and then to assume that those authors will provide an authentic window through which to look at those communities (Syed, 2008). More often, however, is that those authors depict their community in a highly dramatised manner, focussing on the negative aspects, which then latter generation BME members may find inauthentic and even offensive (ibid.). Such an approach may be popular as those particular books may be aimed at wider British community and not minorities and so they reinforce the dominant culture's subconscious superiority, thereby becoming a form of cultural imperialism (ibid.).

Here again the need for consultation and contact is necessary - first, to establish what latter generation BME members need from the library and then, if stock is going to be one of the services provided, to find what authors provide an authentic voice that accurately represents those BME members. Promoting such titles could also bring about cultural cohesion as there is an argument to be made for the influence of fiction in order to form lasting and deep impressions about another culture (ibid.).

7.7.5. Training

When asked how libraries could improve their own cultural competency, one respondent replied with the following:

Further training which would benefit from training by representatives of the BME community as trainers. **B1**

This is a salient point also represented in the literature (Clements & Jones, 2008) where BME communities are actively sought out and consulted with in order to produce the best possible training, provided that all sections of a particular community is represented and that the trainers are fully qualified to do so (Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002)

Unfortunately when asked about obstacles toward a cultural competency initiative, staff respondents reverted back to general language issues:

If training is required, then the reduced numbers of staff we have make it virtually impossible to release staff to attend. We have also lost some key staff who had relevant language skills. **B5**

Budget cuts have led to losing staff with community language skills so impacting on the stock being bought. **B3**

Presumably the staff with community language skills mentioned here are those that may have been from a BME background. Whilst the point that BME communities should be consulted as part of the training process is a relevant one, this should not then lead to BME staff members being assumed to be the first point of contact for BME issues. The point of cultural competency is that all staff should have confidence in this area. If nothing else it shows that community cohesion is possible when people from outside of a specific community are shown to be knowledgeable and empathic towards it.

The fact that language issues were highlighted again once more reinforces the above point that staff automatically assume that all BME services are language related and that there is no further service that they can provide. As with Authority A this presupposes that anyone from a BME community will have a language 'problem' and totally ignores second and third generation members of that community who will be fluent in English and culturally aware. The library - if the evidence shown here is widespread - is not catering towards these latter generations, nor is it taking its place in bringing these people together with the

wider community in an empathic and culturally understanding way. Only one member of staff had some awareness of this point:

I think an issue now is when does a user cease to be seen as being from a BME (both from their point of view and staff) Great-great grandparents may have come from abroad and another culture, but the family living in Sheffield now may have married across cultures and may not see themselves as being from a BME. That is why I believe it is a better approach to stress that each user is an individual and respect those differences or similarities. **B5**

The point that such people would no longer see themselves 'as BME' due to being settled here or cross-cultural marriage is a contentious one, however, and again mirrors Roach & Morrison's 1999 study that librarians felt latter generation BME members would simply become culturally British and so the library had no role and no need to expand on its BME services. Nonetheless, it would be prudent for a library authority to canvass such people today to see how they view themselves, what needs they have from a library service, and how their experiences could contribute to community cohesion in a manner that libraries could adapt.

As mentioned before this authority did once have a branch library where one librarian would represent one community from that area. Most of the time each representative would be from that particular community. It would appear, too, that these librarians were involved in delivering some form of training:

It was delivered by our own staff from BME communities, so staff knew who they were, which helped in the discussions. It was a half day including lunch, for each BME [community] and there were back up packs created for each library. **B5**

A series of talks by staff members who, at the time, had responsibility for various BME communities and came from those communities. This covered cultural differences, faith, history, etc. **B3**

Respondents did not feel that the training delivered had an emphasis on empathy, but did point out, as in the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), that empathy may have been presupposed from the experience, mirroring one of the replies from the Diversity Group respondent in Chapter 5:

The emphasis was on introducing us to the background of these different people, with the aim presumably that empathy would come from this understanding. **B1**

Respondents also mentioned a practical aspect to the training:

...an exploration of some cultural differences in behaviour e.g. that maintaining eye contact was considered rude in certain cultures, that saying thank you was not the norm. **B3**

How to say some common phrases. ' Good morning' please, thank you etc. **B5**

This led to a positive result for one respondent:

A little more knowledge hopefully resulted in fewer mishaps and has on occasion informed certain actions. **B6**

These responses show that a recurring theme for both authorities and for some of those from the nationwide survey is the importance of practical skills that would avoid possible misinterpretation and unintentional offence. There is also a recurring theme of the positive effect of cultural contact with representatives from BME communities.

This, once again, leads to the following premise, now further strengthened due to the multiple reoccurrence of these themes, namely that a form of cultural contact, via consultation with local BME communities, and providing practical advice are all aspects that then could be utilised in a successful cultural competency training programme. Add to this the now oft-mentioned need for a work culture where the library's role as a facilitator for community cohesion is emphasised coupled with strong support from management and, once again, the foundations are there for the library to provide a service that both adds value and offers something unique and useful for the wider community in general.

It would seem that all this particular authority needs is to re-direct their focus in this matter and to add depth to their training programme so that true cultural understanding is aimed for. For example, one respondent stated that the training centred on superficial issues:

[We] looked at the main BME communities in Sheffield, the culture, the journey they made to arrive in Sheffield, food, customs **B5**

Whereas the cultural competency sought for this thesis would allow trainees to have an understanding of the entire worldview of a culture. This type of approach where food and customs are deemed enough as an understanding of other cultures is severely criticised by one respondent surveyed in Wilson & Birdi's (2008) study as it does not address British issues of diversity and multiculturalism and instead

has a first-generation focus. This particular respondent argues that the dual-identity of latter generation BME members (for example, being 'Asian' at home, but then going out, interacting and living in a British culture) provides a unique set of needs that current diversity training for libraries does not address.

As one user from a Kashmiri background states:

Libraries must promote knowledge. Something they do not do at the moment. The knowledge of different communities should have a depth to show the knowledge value from a library perspective. **BU12**

7.8. Comparison with Authority A Staff

This section will attempt to establish any themes - either in agreement or opposition - that overlap between the two staff surveys. It could be argued that. If there are vast differences in the approaches and opinions of the two authorities, this may have come about due to the comparative sizes of the BME communities they serve.

The two data-sets were first coded individually to identify common themes within each set. They were then compared with the other to find any thematic overlap.

Whilst staff members from Authority A were more describing sympathy than empathy, it would appear that staff from Authority B had a better understanding of the latter. Aside from that, the two authorities do seem to have similar approaches - there seems to be a focus on providing only language-based services, mainly consisting of stock, and a culture that implies that this is doing enough. Similarities also abound when comparing the training they had both received, as they were considered short, one-off affairs, though no-one from Authority B stated that the training they had received was enough and nothing further was necessary as one respondent from Authority A had.

One difference in the training received was that staff from Authority B had had training delivered by librarians from BME communities. This led to an appreciation for this method from at least one respondent who included the idea of having such training as a potential approach in developing cultural competency. Authority B staff, understandably due to the larger BME population there, seemed to have an implicit understanding of the need for cultural contact, noting that staff empathy was higher in areas where a library was in a higher BME population.

Other similarities included the fact that, at this stage, staff respondents from both authorities did not seem particularly concerned about the library's potential role as a neutral ground to bring about cultural cohesion, although one respondent from Authority B did manage to explicitly mention it. The overwhelming culture seems to be one of doing enough by providing language services and stock for BME communities. Couple this with the amount of respondents that rated their own cultural competency as 'Good' or above and there seems to be a sense of satisfaction with the status-quo and no desire to further better the service and to push it on in an empathic and culturally cohesive manner.

It would appear, then, in conclusion that staff from both authorities have a lot in common, and this in spite of the comparative sizes of the BME communities they serve. Although some staff from Authority B are theoretically *aware* of the implications of empathy in cultural contact and understanding, this has not translated into a practical service that is any different from Authority A's.

7.9. User Comparison With Authority C

Whilst the next chapter will provide a comparison between staff replies in both Authorities A and B with University students from an academic library background, in this section there will be a brief comparison between the replies of library users from both Authorities A and B with Authority C.

Individual data-sets were obtained for all three authorities, coded for recurring themes within each set, then cross-referenced across all three sets to find commonalities or major divergences.

The ethnic profile of Authority C is shown here:

Figure 7.3 Authority C Profile (Rogers, 2011; Office for National Statistics, 2012b)

Ethnicity	Percentage of Population	Comparison with National Average (approx.)
White	60.06%	26% lower
Mixed	2.89%	0.7% higher
Asian	26.09%	19% higher
Black	3.81%	0.5% higher
Chinese	2.13%	53% higher

As such, the main objectives for this survey was to find out if users from such an authority would have a better appreciation for their library service on the assumption that, due to their larger size, they would receive better services in comparison to the first two authorities.

Once again, those clearly studying and those on computers were not approached. As opposed to the previous two libraries, the central library of Authority C had a more ethnically diverse workforce, especially on the front desk. Whilst the researcher attended at midday on a weekday - to maintain consistency with the previous two case studies - the library was found to be a lot quieter than the previous two attended. As such, only nine completed surveys were received.

The researcher asked his contact at the authority to provide details on what BME services the library authority provides. He did not receive a response, despite repeated emails.

The surveys were distributed and collected in April, 2013.

Of the nine completed (n=9), only two of the respondents described themselves as White British (n=2) while the other seven stated their ethnic culture as simply Asian (n=7). All those from a Black background approached declined to take part for reasons unknown. Authority C users were each given an alphanumeric

designation such as **CU1**, for example. All 9 answered every question. Spellings have been corrected, but the original grammar and syntax remain. A full list of questions is in **Appendix 5**

In comparison with Authorities A and B, the users from Authority C also seemed to have an awareness that library services for BME communities were stock and language based. Nonetheless, users here had a better idea of the potential of the library. Here, one user has an implicit understanding of the library as a neutral meeting ground:

Yes, they do have a role [to provide for BME communities]. They provide resources and a location where people can congregate and socialise. **CU4**

There was a similar reply given by a library user from Authority A. This again implies that such a role is intuitively understood, though it is strange that library users are pointing this out and not more staff.

Other respondents (n=5) were aware of the potential of the library to organise cultural events, but felt that this particular authority was either not doing so, or only doing so in areas with a very high BME population:

Not all libraries provide this service. For example [Branch Library A] is in a predominantly Asian area and provides a good range of minority books and newspapers whereas [Branch Library B] does not. Cultural events are not promoted well. **CU3**

Yes, certainly libraries have a major role to provide all the services presently provided especially in non-English languages. It would help if cultural events are also organised and promoted. I think more awareness is needed for people who do not often visit libraries. **CU6**

This idea was not shared by all. The most positive response came from a White British user who realises that the library needs to reflect the cultural diversity of the city:

Yes, and they go above and beyond [in providing BME services]. The library provides all of the above as [city] is a cultural epicentre. There is information and books for almost every language and diversity in the staff. **CU7**

Again, this last reply concurs with the users from Authorities A and B that language and stock issues are the most prominent BME service available. Indeed, on being asked which of these services they were aware of, the answers were typically focussed on reading material (n=7).

Newspapers in other than English. Indian language books. **CU6**

Newspapers, magazines and books. **CU2**

Books in other languages. **CU1**

Magazines, newspapers and DVDs for ethnic minorities. **CU3**

One respondent from an Asian background replied:

I am not aware of what they provide [for BME communities]. **CU4**

For an authority with such a high BME population, an answer such as this cannot be considered encouraging. This is reinforced when users were asked to rate the service on a scale of 1-5, which elicited a mixed range of responses. One person rated it as a 2, four as a 3 and a further four as a 4. Out of those that rated it as a 4, two were White British, meaning the majority of responses from an ethnic background rated the service as a 3 or below (n=5). It would appear, then, that the BME users here feel that the library is not catering to whatever needs they may have.

This need in particular may just be cultural awareness and understanding. On being asked what services for BME communities they would like to see, some of the Asian respondents (n=3) highlighted the need for cultural awareness.

Better understanding of other cultures. **CU1**

Better awareness of cultural events. **CU3**

There needs to be a promotion of mutual understanding. **CU9**

This was reinforced by a White British respondent who stated:

There is very little cultural understanding and there needs to be a reasonable understanding of various other cultures. However, over the years I have noticed that this understanding along with provision is getting better. **CU2**

Compare this with user replies from Authorities A and B who, in general, were quite positive toward what their particular authority provides for BME communities.

Despite this, all but two of the respondents answered 'yes' to the question as to whether their library understood their particular culture (n=7). The two that replied in the negative were from an Asian background.

Not fully, but the presence of BME staff is useful. **CU3**

Not much [understanding] at all. **CU8**

Again this last response cannot be considered very encouraging for those delivering the library service in this authority.

It would appear, then, comparing these results to the previous two case studies that the larger a BME population grows within a particular area, the more concern there is for library users for cultural understanding. This sentiment is not merely limited to users from a BME background, either, as a respondent from a White British background also echoed these concerns. Not only is the need for cultural understanding greater, but there is also an understanding of the potential of the library in bringing this about, though here it seems to be articulated to merely the promotion and deliverance of cultural events.

However, this concern does not seem to be reflected by the library authorities themselves. With reference to Authorities A and B, staff from both seemed to share similar viewpoints and attitudes, and this did not change despite the fact one authority had a larger BME population than the other.

The first of the two objectives for this survey was to show that, in comparison with the previous case studies, users here would have a better appreciation for their library authority in terms of the BME services they provide. It appears the appreciation is there, but is not for the service as it currently is, but for the potential it has as a role to facilitate cultural understanding.

The second objective was to show that, again in comparison to the previous two case studies, this particular authority would provide a better service for BME communities, as seen by users from those communities. It would appear from this small sample that this is not quite the case. As with Authorities A and B, users here recognised the library's efforts in providing non-English stock and other language based issues, but did not see the library moving forward into providing mutual cultural understanding even though it could do so and, from the general feeling from these replies, there was a need to do so. As such, the authority then provides a BME service no better than Authorities A and B. It could be that they do have such

events but such information was not given to the researcher when he asked and, if they do exist, cannot be very well promoted as users here did not mention them.

A potential conclusion here is that, if these three authorities are representative of a national trend, then the entire culture of British libraries appear to be geared more toward language and stock issues as opposed to cultural cohesion which in turn implies that the prevalent view of BME communities is one that typifies them by their first-generation members who may still have language issues as opposed to their latter generation members who may have quite different needs from a library.

7.9.1. Conclusion

- There *appears* to be an understanding both from library staff and library users that BME services equate to language and stock issues. This was a theme recurrent in both Authorities A and B and some from the nationwide staff survey, and also from library users in all three authorities. This could imply that there is an issue with the library services' organisational culture as a whole where BME is always equated with stock issues and so the service may believe that the needs of those communities are being adequately fulfilled. It could be argued that this then leads to a culture where the library's perception of itself is seen as nothing more than an institute that deals solely in books and not as a facilitator of community cohesion - however, this is a point that needs further research with a larger sample.

- Judging from this sample, as an authority's BME population increases there also appears to be a better understanding of the diverse needs and viewpoints that emerge as a result - though again, this could also be further pursued with a larger sample. Users from a very high BME populated area also had different expectations of the library service. Despite these encouraging views, the practical result seems to be, once again, a BME service devoted to stock and language concerns.

- There does not appear to be an *explicit* awareness of the role of the library to facilitate community cohesion via cultural understanding. This is true for both authorities, bar one lone opinion from a management viewpoint in Authority B and, previously, from those respondents in the national survey from the CILIP Diversity Group. There were some library users - one from Authority A and one from Authority C - who did recognise such a role.

- The training that library staff would prefer included basic cultural competency skills that would allow them the practical knowledge to avoid misinterpretation and unintended offence. There was also a degree of support for personal cultural contact, with some respondents, particularly from the nationwide survey, preferring that to formal training.

In order to provide a different perspective - one from outside the public library sector - the survey was then passed onto the students enrolled in the Information School at the University of Sheffield, most of whom either worked in the University library or were from an academic library background. The results of this survey are presented next in Chapter 8.

Chapter 8

Case Study C: University Students and the Academic Library Sector

8.1. Introduction

The results and analysis of the third case study are presented here using the same staff survey used in the previous two case studies. The sample consists of University students studying the MA Librarianship course at the University of Sheffield. Many of these students also have experience working in an academic library. Highlighting both their knowledge and experience, the analysis and discussion focuses on how answers from this sample compares to the staff from the previous two studies.

8.2. Aim

- To compare results from a sample consisting of University students - most of whom had experience working in an academic library setting with the results from the two staff surveys in the previous two case studies.

As a point of comparison to the two case studies, the survey was given to students from the 2012/2013 MA Librarianship course at the Information School at the University of Sheffield, many of whom also had experience working in academic libraries.

The reasoning for choosing this sample was two-fold. The literature review showed that when Diversity Training - and cultural competency, in particular - was mentioned in relation to libraries, it was mostly in the context of academic libraries (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2012; Lazzaro *et al.*, 2014). If it is the case that academic libraries are further ahead of public libraries in dealing with this issue, then those who interacted or were employed in the academic sector – and many of the students in this sample also had academic library backgrounds - that they could bring further insights or show good practice from which the public library sector could adopt.

The second reason was that Chapter 5 showed that those from the Diversity Group - since they had a deeper interest in the topic as a whole - provided deeper insights than those who were not. It was similarly anticipated that students on a course in library and information science would be able to provide a more informed response, due to both their interest and working experience.

8.3. Methodology

See section 6.2 in the previous chapter for survey design and distribution, and methodological issues relating to case studies in general. The same staff survey used in the previous two case studies was used here. A request for participation was distributed electronically via email to students at the University of Sheffield's 2012/2013 MA Librarianship course with a request for participants. The request was repeated twice.

The survey was hosted and accessed online via Toluna Quick Surveys. Survey completion and data collection took place in December, 2012.

Fifteen people responded to this survey (n=15).

Figure 8.1 University Student Respondent Background

Public Libraries	Academic Libraries	Both Sectors	TOTAL
2	11	2	15

8.4. Results

Presented here is a sample of responses received to each question. Spellings have been corrected, but the original grammar and syntax remain. Thematic headings (in bolded italics) each map onto each of the survey questions (the full set of survey questions is in **Appendix 4**):

Definition of Empathy in a BME Context

Every person surveyed replied to this question (n=15). Responses were similar in as much as they saw empathy as the ability to feel and understand from another person's point of view:

Being able to understand experiences of people from a perspective other than your own. **U1**

[Empathy] is the capability to share and understand another's emotions and feelings. **U2**

Identifying with the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others even when you do not share them directly. **U7**

The ability to put oneself in another person's place, to see things from their viewpoint. This involves an unconscious awareness of signals, implicit information, body-language etc. as well as conscious awareness of explicit information. **U9**

One respondent disputed the premise of the question and believed what was sought was sympathy and not necessarily empathy:

I think empathy is something that you can have if you have personally experienced the situation in question. In this context you could only be empathetic to the situation of people from different cultures if you yourself have experiences being in a different culture to your own. If you have not experienced this than you can only be sympathetic to people from other cultures by imagining how they might feel and try to provide a service that is sympathetic to their needs. **U10**

The Importance of Empathy for the Public Library Service in a BME Context

Again, all those surveyed replied to this question (n=15). Respondents, on the whole, (n=14) were clear of the significance of empathy for library staff using terms such as 'important,' 'essential' and 'crucial.' Only one disagreed:

No more or less important than it is for everyone else. **U14**

For the rest, a range of replies included:

Crucial - libraries serve the community so library services / collections / facilities must be representative of, and useful to, all people from all cultures. This can only be achieved if library staff can empathise, and understand different people's needs and experiences. **U2**

Very important: cultural differences are sometimes big; things taken for granted in UK sometimes are difficult to understand from people coming from a different background. After a basic feeling of respect, librarians should do a step forward, putting in other people's shoes. **U3**

Those from an academic background (n=13) were more aware of the practical implications of this point:

Extremely important. Take the example of someone who has just moved to the UK. Libraries are often the first port of call for people new to this country: they have nothing to do with bureaucracy and everything to do with community. If that first visit is a positive

experience - if staff members always try their best to understand and be understood in return, if they are friendly and helpful and patient - then first-time visitors are more likely to come back. They are also more likely to feel that they belong, not only to their own particular culture, but to the community they live in. **U4**

It is an important part of my job... To be welcoming and to be able to communicate ideas policies and enable customers to get the best from our services. If you cannot understand how another person may be feeling especially when they may be dealing with a different language and culture, you may not build trust and a good rapport. **U13**

Important because I have people from different cultures on my team and I have to be aware of their differences and treat them as an individual and not say anything to upset them inadvertently. **U11**

The Level of Workplace Empathy

All respondents replied (n=15). There was a mixed response to this question. This ranged from the outright negative from a public library background:

From my own experiences, not very. I have worked in two different public library districts and neither provided a vast range of books in foreign languages, and those that it did provide were always incorrectly shelved and looked very messy. Many of the community members also spoke little English but signs and library information was not provided in alternative languages. **U1**

To a positive from an academic background:

Very. I think the composition of the student population in Sheffield is such that this is almost second nature. **U14**

Other responses included the following more balanced replies:

In general, quite empathic, though if language is an issue I don't think that libraries always do the best job at adapting for this. Also, it probably doesn't help that there is very low BME employment in libraries. This means that many library staff must empathise outside their own life experience which is obviously harder. **U7**

Quite good but could do better. **U12**

Not much, because we don't understand people from BME communities and thus are not sensitive enough to cater for their different cultures, beliefs and behaviours. **U15**

Rating Cultural Competency

Eight respondents rated their own cultural competency to be average. Five rated it as good and only two rated it as excellent.

Examples of Cultural Competency

Seven people replied to this question (n=7) and, of those, all were from an academic library background:

I would sometimes spend more time explaining a library procedure to an international student who was new to the university and who seemed to be struggling with understanding the library service. **U11**

I helped a student who was feeling overwhelmed with the complexities of an assignment mixed with the expectations of her family. **U13**

I was serving a student who is from the Far East and I know that from where he is from, his education background environment and technology might be different from here. So I went into more in-depth advice on how he can resolve his problem by letting him know the basic background of our education environment and technology so that he can relate his and ours, in order to adapt his knowledge and skills into a new environment. **U15**

Implementing Cultural Competency

Thirteen people replied to this question (n=13). Many respondents offered ideas that would combine cultural awareness training coupled with some sort of practical aspect:

Cultural competency should be specifically tailored to the community that library serves. It shouldn't be a generic training programme - I think it could be better developed as a dialogue between the library and different cultures it serves. **U4**

It's a combination of awareness (training) and experience. **U14**

First, knowledge and information - i.e. cultural awareness training. Second, try to apply in real situation and have feedback from self and if positive and successful, then keep on doing it - creating a good cycle. **U15**

The theme of dialogue and contact with local communities was further mentioned by other respondents:

Working with different local communities; if the area is mostly populated by white British, maybe take contact with ethnically diverse communities served by other areas, with events to involve the local people. **U3**

Keeping local libraries is really important for this so that public libraries keep a connection with local communities as this will include communities with many people from different cultures. Sending staff on training courses. **U7**

One respondent from a public library background noted the lack of training in their previous employment:

Employ people from diverse cultural backgrounds, have better staff training on the issue (I never received any at either library I worked in), and employ people who can speak different languages. **U1**

Obstacles Against Cultural Competency

All respondents replied (n=15). Aside from financial concerns (n=10), the respondents mentioned the following reasons why a cultural competency initiative could be hindered:

If handled badly it could be seen as a box-ticking exercise which would discourage staff from applying the skillset. **U4**

Maybe some people find it uncomfortable talking about cultural differences through fear of seeming ignorant or insensitive. **U10**

Resistant - human nature Lack of real examples - therefore cannot see the need to embrace it Lack of information Lack of practice Lack of leadership - this is extremely important - the battle is half won if the Director is seeing this as important and taking steps to implement it. **U15**

This last point is pertinent as it agrees with the literature that such initiatives will not succeed without managerial support.

Diversity Training: Experiences

Eight respondents replied that they had had training (n=8). Seven of the eight remaining respondents described their experiences (n=7). All were from an academic library background:

Presentation from a member of staff from Student Services, talking about international students. **U8**

Sessions about how to deal with other cultures both in UK and in overseas students. **U12**

A talk from a member of student services which gave an overview of student experiences and examples of ways in which differing cultures view and react in given circumstances. **U13**

Diversity Training: Empathy

Six of the remaining eight respondents replied (n=6). The responses were quite mixed:

It was overly legalistic and not concerned enough with behaviours and cultural awareness. **U7**

No new information was provided. **U9**

Yes, probably but it's a while ago and I cannot give a specific example. **U12**

Most certainly.... It was enlightening. **U13**

Diversity Training: Frequency and Length

Seven of the eight remaining respondents replied (n=7). All of them stated that they only had the training once, with most saying it had only lasted an hour. Again all were from an academic library background.

Just once for an hour. **U6**

It was a one off and I completed it in about an hour. **U7**

Diversity Training: Effects

Seven of the eight remaining respondents replied (n=7). Responses were mixed:

No. I don't think it was particularly helpful as it was far too concerned with the law and not enough with behaviour and opinions. It would have been better if it included elements on empathising, potential cultural difference and respect. **U7**

Yes, I think I still draw on the advice given and have embedded it in to my everyday work practices. **U13**

The training supported what I already knew, so it helped to assure me that I was performing well, but it could not improve my performance. **U9**

I think it helped to develop my understanding of international students, and hopefully this helps me to communicate effectively with them. **U8**

Diversity Training: Expectations

Seven respondents had not had any training (n=7). Six described their expectations (n=6). They mainly focussed on cultural awareness:

I would hope to gain insight into the different values and customs of people from different cultures to help me better understand and communicate with them. **U1**

To gain confidence on the subject. **U3**

I think that this training would be especially useful in HE libraries, particularly with the increase in international students. I would like to know more about the cultures of the countries where they are coming from. I think it would help me to be more sympathetic to their needs and experience of being in the UK. **U10**

I would definitely like more training on cultural awareness so that I am aware of issues such as religion, for example a team member asked me what breaks she was entitled to in order to pray, and I didn't know and have yet to find out the answer. **U11**

This marked the end of the survey for the seven respondents who had not received any training.

8.5. Analysis & Discussion

The data for this study was analysed individually, with common themes coded. It was then compared with the data-sets for the previous two staff studies - also analysed individually - to find commonalities or major points of divergence.

8.5.1. Validation of the Sample.

It is worth noting that the answers received from the LIS student population were more detailed than those in the two staff case studies, which appears to validate the reasoning behind choosing this particular sample. Though this was anticipated with regard to the students who replied as their primary focus due to their studies would be an intimate interest in a wide variety of library topics, it was also the case for those who came from a solely academic library background. When compared to the apparent low response from the case study respondents, it could be argued that the student sample had strong opinions regarding BME services that they were happy to express.

One respondent from an academic library background felt that an empathic nature was ingrained in them, perhaps due to the diverse range of library users they have to interact with - such as overseas students along with native English students. For example:

I think the composition of the student population in Sheffield is such that this [empathic library service] is almost second nature. **U14**

8.5.2. Empathy

The definitions of empathy provided tended to be a mixture of both emotional and intellectual empathy. Showing an understanding of the question of defining empathy in the context of a BME service, many respondents were able to relate empathy to practical points in service delivery (n=11), such as:

Empathy is being able to view things from someone else's perspective and understand how they are feeling. When delivering a service it is important to be aware of how your words and actions can be interpreted. **U13**

Here the respondent moves from an intellectual understanding of empathy to an awareness of how verbal and non-verbal language is important in cultural interactions. The following two responses also touch on this:

A willingness to understand another person's situation and point of view. Knowing that there is more than one way to communicate and believing that other people are trying their best. Realising that culture shock can affect people in lots of different ways and taking this into account when providing service. **U4**

The ability to put oneself in another person's place, to see things from their viewpoint. This involves an unconscious awareness of signals, implicit information, body-language etc. as well as conscious awareness of explicit information. **U9**

This concurs with Mestre's (2010) assertion that librarians need to know how the cultural context of their own verbal and non-verbal language as a specific *skill*. Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005) makes such a skill an essential characteristic of the culturally competent librarian. It also matches well with Elturk (2003) who states that librarians should avoid making assumptions of others from different communities. It strengthens the findings from the previous two case studies, as well as those from the nationwide survey and the participant who shared his opinions with the researcher from the first observation in Chapter 4.

The question remains then that since these respondents seem to be aware of the issue, did this awareness develop because of training they had received or from on-the-job experience? The latter seems to be the strongest conclusion, only because respondent **U9** stated the following in response to a later question:

[The training] could not improve my performance. **U9**

It could thus be argued that training is necessary, if not to inspire empathy then to, at least, raise awareness of cultural issues in a service delivery context.

Nonetheless, their awareness of verbal and non-verbal skills at least shows an appreciation for cultural competency, once again reflecting well on both the assertions of the aforementioned Mestre (2010) and Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005). Combine this with a similar theme running through many respondents from all the different samples, and it becomes clear that the proposed model for this thesis will have to have, as an essential component, a practical skills aspect under the general rubric of cultural competency.

Perhaps the most effective definition of empathy provided - in terms of the totality of the answer given - was the following:

Empathy is to understand the other person's values, views, opinions and ways of life, without having your own judgement, adding on the subjects. That is to say you don't judge the person, even though that person behaves and thinks differently from yours or others. It is the same as if you are looking through their eyes, or you are in their shoes. **U15**

This combines both the intellectual definition of empathy - the *understanding* of another's worldview - with the emotional understanding - that is being 'in their shoes' - which then leads to the appropriate behavioural change, which in this case is that one doesn't 'judge the person' despite their worldview and behaviour being different from one's own. As a succinct definition it could actually be used, with minor modification so that the worldview aspect is clearer, as a potential aim of a new training model. It also avoids mistaking empathy for sympathy (Bennett, 1979) which transposes the self into the other and thus takes along with it assumed needs, and instead shows a good understanding of at least one definition of empathy where one sees another's viewpoint with transposing the self onto it (ibid.).

Comparing the participants' responses to these questions with the two case studies indicates that the students and academic staff do not automatically assume that BME communities have language issues - as was mainly the case with Authority A - and so their empathy does not merely concentrate on how it would feel to be in a library situation where one did not have a good grasp of the native language. They are aware of other cultural cues, such as non-verbal language and how staff actions can innocuously be misinterpreted, as described here:

We don't understand people from BME communities and thus behave not sensitive enough to cater for their different cultures, beliefs and behaviours. **U15**

This indicates that their empathy, in comparison to the two case studies, could be on a deeper level. The library user from a BME community is no longer an entity defined solely by language issues but as someone whose entire worldview is different and so staff both need to be aware and understanding of this, and also to be able to practically respond to this. Whilst **U15** notes the differing beliefs and needs of BME communities, they also acknowledge that staff do not understand enough about those same beliefs. This further strengthens the point that the proposed training model needs to have a two-fold aspect - one, based on cultural understanding; and two, on skills, once again re-iterating the point for the need for a practical skill-set to be included in the model as well.

As stated earlier, most of the people from this sample group were from an academic library background. As the respondents themselves stated, it was only natural for them to be empathic to those from a BME background due to the nature of the library users they interacted with. One possible conclusion as to why Authority A concentrated on language issues when defining empathy while this sample group and, to a lesser degree, Authority B, did not is that they had more contact with those from a BME background. This again reinforces the need for actual cultural contact to take place in order for a more empathic library service to develop, something previous respondents from both the case studies and the nationwide survey also pointed out; some to the point of preferring such personal contact over formal training as the former had been more beneficial to them. This then means that the cultural understanding aspect of the proposed training model needs to be developed through the use of a contact hypothesis tool.

8.5.3. Cultural Competency

Out of the fifteen people that responded to the question on rating their own cultural competency 46% rated it as good or excellent. This can be compared with Authority B where 80% rated their competency as good or excellent and Authority A where 72% rated it as good. It would appear then that this sample group either lack confidence in their cultural competency or are more honest in how they rate themselves.

Considering that a large number of this group are students on a librarianship course, it could be argued that, by its nature, the course has invited them to be more introspective and they are pursuing the course because they feel that they need to develop further as a member of the library profession. As such a more honest self-appraisal is natural, and this is thus reflected in how they rated their own cultural competency. Also those from an academic background may have had more interaction with BME users and so could make a more accurate self-assessment of their skills. Another possible conclusion - as many respondents belonged to both the librarianship course and had academic library experience - is that because of the course *and* of their background in an academic library setting, they intuitively had a better grasp of the whole issue of cultural competency.

The range of cultural competency examples all came from those of an academic background. These examples all related to front-line issues and not a wider campaign to bring about some sort of community cohesion. This is understandable as this is not the remit of an academic institution, though it could be argued that cohesion in a microcosm such as a university campus would reflect that of the macrocosm in wider society.

I would sometimes spend more time explaining a library procedure to an international student who was new to the university and who seemed to be struggling with understanding the library service. **U11**

I helped a student who was feeling overwhelmed with the complexities of an assignment mixed with the expectations of her family. **U13**

In the first example we have the member of staff assisting the student in coming to grips with their new situation. It is unclear here if the user's issues were linguistic or cultural. The second example shows the member of staff utilising a level of empathy in order to help the library user. On the one hand, the staff member is giving practical help with the assignment and on the other hand is showing

understanding to someone who may come from a culture where family expectation of academic performance is quite high. Again, as very little detail is given, it is difficult to ascertain the process the latter member of staff underwent. For example, had any particular training helped them when faced with this situation or was the member of staff simply naturally empathic?

Mirroring replies from the two case studies, some respondents focussed on signage and positive action recruitment as possible means of improving cultural competency for libraries:

Taking opportunities to employing a more diverse staff and providing training to help with understanding and awareness. **U8**

Staff training, signage in multiple languages. **U6**

Neither of these respondents were from a public library background, so there was not some sort of overspill from the presumed organisational culture of public libraries into their answers. Nonetheless, even here respondent **U8** understands the importance of *understanding* and *awareness*.

Tying into the literature, other respondents in this sample group were aware of both the need to be culturally aware and the need for communication and consultation.

The following respondent summed up both viewpoints well:

Cultural competency should be specifically tailored to the community that library serves. It shouldn't be a generic training programme - I think it could be better developed as a dialogue between the library and different cultures it serves. **U4**

The inter-cultural dialogue mentioned here again lends credence to including an aspect of the contact hypothesis into the cultural understanding part of the proposed training model.

Again the vested deep interest these particular respondents have in library matters and being exposed to academic literature on libraries could allow them to reach such insights easily. Or, once again, simply coming from a library background with a higher number of BME users has allowed them to develop such ideas organically. This is highlighted in the responses given to what obstacles a potential culturally competency initiative could face. They highlight, as does the literature (Ferdman & Brody, 1996), the box-ticking nature of such activities and are also aware of Intergroup Anxiety.

If handled badly it could be seen as a box-ticking exercise which would discourage staff from applying the skillset. **U4**

Maybe some people find it uncomfortable talking about cultural differences through fear of seeming ignorant or insensitive. **U10**

This last point is an example of the third form of intergroup anxiety, namely the fear of causing offence (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). It is also a reinforcement of the idea that this form of anxiety played a part in other research projects whereby staff were unwilling to handle a BME related enquiry (Syed, 2008). Unlike the respondent from the Diversity Group in the nationwide survey who only hinted at the reasons behind staff reluctance in participating outside of their cultural comfort zone, respondent **U10** states it quite frankly here. This further validates one of the purposes of the thesis, namely to give all staff the confidence they need to engage in interactions with BME library users.

8.5.4. Managerial Support & Organisational Culture

As with the literature, one respondent was fully aware that such initiatives cannot succeed without managerial backing:

Lack of leadership - this is extremely important - the battle is half won if the Director is seeing this as important and taking steps to implement it. **U15**

This implies then that the culture of the entire library organisation from top to bottom needs to be in tune with the idea of the library's role in bringing about cultural cohesion. As seen in the previous case studies, though, those libraries in particular appear to have a culture that identifies BME services with language issues, and seem, in general, to be quite content with that level of provision.

With regards to the importance and implementation of cultural competency this sample group show a good understanding and awareness of the issues involved. This would indicate - in contrast to the general vibe from the two case studies - that there are some members of the library profession who would be interested in a cultural competency initiative.

8.5.5. Public Library Criticism

One of the student respondents had previously worked in public libraries. This respondent was quite critical in their assessment of those libraries policies toward BME services. In response to how empathic they thought public libraries were, they replied:

From my own experiences, not very. **U1**

Elaborating on this, however, they seem to define BME services in terms of stock and signage, which has been atypical of public library responses so far:

I have worked in two different public library districts and neither provided a vast range of books in foreign languages, and those that it did provide were always incorrectly shelved and looked very messy. Many of the community members also spoke little English but signs and library information was not provided in alternative languages. **U1**

They also thought little of public libraries training initiatives. On what libraries could do to improve cultural competency, they state:

Employ people from diverse cultural backgrounds, have better staff training on the issue (I never received any at either library I worked in), and employ people who can speak different languages. **U1**

Again language issues are mentioned, and an idea that employing BME staff could lead to better cultural competency. They do not, however, seem to imply that this would be used to simply pass on BME 'issues' to those particular members of staff as they would like better staff training in general. On that point, they are personally keen to have a deeper understanding of other communities:

I would hope to gain insight into the different values and customs of people from different cultures to help me better understand and communicate with them. **U1**

This would imply that whilst their desire for more BME staff was simply to facilitate matters for those BME users for whom language is an issue, they also acknowledge implicitly that this is not the only issue such users would face as they believe they personally could still offer a service to BME users if only they had cultural insight and understanding.

Clearly an initiative whereby they would comprehend a culture's worldview would appeal to this respondent. As implied in the two case studies and the nationwide survey, there appears to be an implicit lack of interest in this issue from public library staff, as shown by the shorter replies given and the low response rate to all the surveys. This particular respondent briefly points this out when discussing obstacles to implementing cultural competency:

Budget, time, staff interest/motivation. **U1**

In general, however, the criticism seems to imply that public libraries are simply not interested in this issue on a deeper level. This also correlates with the two case studies where, though interest is present, it is limited to language issues or stock provision. This, at least, is a sharp contrast to one conclusion of the findings of Roach & Morrison (1999) where the librarians surveyed there felt that nothing needed to be done as future generations of BME communities would become wholly culturally British. As mentioned in the previous case studies, it does, on the other hand, concur with another of their conclusions where librarians felt they had done enough given what they currently offer. It also matches Vincent's (2009a) claim that libraries offer minimal BME services centred mainly on stock and little has changed in over forty years. It is clear then from all the samples that this is a recurring theme.

8.5.6. Training

Around half of those surveyed had not received any prior diversity training. As these were from an academic libraries background, the training that they described was slightly different to that mentioned in the two previous case studies.

Sessions about how to deal with other cultures both in UK and in overseas students. **U12**

A talk from a member of student services which gave an overview of student experiences and examples of ways in which differing cultures view and react in given circumstances. **U13**

Here it is clear that some form of cultural awareness was necessarily a part of the training that they had received. This seems like it was centred on avoiding causing offence as opposed to awareness for cultural cohesion but this again is understandable given that an academic library's focus is more on their students than on the wider community. The issue of avoiding offence implies that this issue is being addressed by academic libraries, though it appears from **U13** this is through hypothetical examples and not necessarily through the adoption of a practical skill-set.

This means that customer care was a focus and cultural awareness considered important, though this experience of training was not uniform:

It was overly legalistic and not concerned enough with behaviours and cultural awareness. **U7**

The same respondent states that the training they received was all online and completed easily in an hour. The short duration of the training was mentioned by other respondents, too, which concurs with both the literature and, much like the lack of progress in the whole issue by public libraries, has now becoming a recurring theme.

Mixed responses were reported as to the actual effect the training had on respondents' workplace performance. This seems mainly due to the type of training they had received. Respondent **U13** is mentioned above as having had a talk about how different cultures react to different circumstances. As a result of this training, they feel that:

I think I still draw on the advice given and have embedded it in to my everyday work practices. **U13**

Whereas respondent **U7**, who had online training and described it as overly legalistic, states:

I don't think it was particularly helpful as it was far too concerned with the law and not enough with behaviour and opinions. It would have been better if it included elements on empathising, potential cultural difference and respect. **U7**

This does reinforce the need for cultural awareness to be an intrinsic part of any training initiative. As with some of the respondents from the previous case studies, the importance of actual cultural contact that comes from personal experience is reiterated by the following:

The training supported what I already knew [from experience], so it helped to assure me that I was performing well. **U9**

However, the same respondent goes on to say about the training in particular:

It could not improve my performance. **U9**

8.6. Conclusions

Reinforcing the conclusions from the nationwide survey it again appears that the more interested a person is in general issues related to the library profession - and diversity in particular, as shown by the Diversity Group responses from Chapter 5 - the more in-depth and insightful their replies to the survey. This is in comparison with both case studies and of the non-Diversity Group respondents from Chapter 5. Add to this the fact that the more BME users staff deal with - as is presumed with those from an academic library background - also leads to more interest and a

better quality response. The conclusion from Chapter 5 then is re-iterated here - the training model needs to engage the interest of staff, possibly by showing them how important this topic is to community cohesion, how libraries can contribute to that cohesion thus adding value to their service.

These more insightful answers led to better, fuller definitions of empathy that moved away from being merely sympathetic - where one's needs are presumed to be shared by others who would be in a similar situation - to seeing from the other's view without judgement.

Many recurrent themes have now been established: the first is the overall lack of progress and perhaps lack of interest, too, from public libraries in this whole issue, resulting in an organisational culture that identifies BME with only language issues and adapts its service provision as a result to that false assumption. The second is the desire for a practical skills aspect to the training, helping staff to be more confident in their interactions with BME users, avoiding both misunderstanding and unintended offence. The third is how some staff relied on - and, in respondents from the case studies and the nationwide survey - preferred on their own personal cultural contact to give them better cultural competency on the job. Whilst academic libraries did have training that involved cultural understanding, it is not clear if it combined both those aspects and, obviously, it would not have been designed with the goal of facilitating mutual cultural understanding and community cohesion. In addition, not all the respondents considered the training beneficial to their workplace performance.

The empirical data gathered in this and the previous three chapters can now be brought together to present a multi-tiered training model that will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 9

The Proposed Training Model

9.1. Introduction

This chapter will introduce the precepts governing the proposed training model. The model will be multi-tiered and based on the principles of cultural competency. It will, by building on staff comments in the previous case studies, include both a knowledge-based element in tandem with a skills-based one. The methodological basis for the model will be introduced, its relation to the literature, and discussions on choosing the communities and evaluation, followed by an in-depth description of the model itself.

9.2. Aim

The primary aim of this model is to develop a resource that public libraries could use as a basis for a training programme with the intention of producing a culturally competent and culturally aware public library workforce who understand BME communities from the perspective of their particular worldview or worldviews.

Should such an endeavour be successful, the workforce could, in consultation and co-operation with those groups, contribute to events and activities that will share this understanding with the wider society and therefore lay the framework through which community cohesion can take place. This will fulfil the library's unique role as a neutral meeting ground and information resource thus both adding value to the service and helping to facilitate current Government policy on integration and community cohesion (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007). Clements & Jones (2008) state that an organisational need is required to provide context for this type of training, and this ideal of the library as a meeting ground to facilitate community cohesion could be the ideal type of organisational need for this particular model.

Using the conclusions generated from the data in this thesis thus far, the model will encompass both the aspects of cultural understanding and practical inter-cultural skills. The cultural understanding will come through repeated personal contact between staff and BME communities, and the practical aspect will be dealt with through formal training.

9.3. Methodological Background

9.3.1. Terminology and Context

The model takes aspects of previous attempts at addressing BME library provision and uniquely marries them into one whole process. Such aspects include the use of specialist community librarians (Vincent, 2009a), the use of cultural primers (see Authority B staff responses from Chapter 7) and underpinning them both with Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis. This thus presents a model that is both knowledge-based and skills-based, the knowledge being that which the library staff learn from regular cultural contact and, in addition to the cultural primer, will lead to a culturally competent skill-set. The *cultural contact* here does not mean the contact library staff have with their BME users on a day-to-day basis, but instead refers to specially organised meetings between staff and BME communities.

The initial step in developing the Diversity Training model was to rename it a Cultural Competency Training Model instead. This disassociates the model from any negative connotations that Diversity Training has (Magdaleno & Kleiner, 1996; Phomphakdy & Kleiner, 1999; Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) and from the term 'diversity' itself, perceived by some to have become watered-down and a negative euphemism for race and affirmative action (Winston, 2008).

As opposed to many current Diversity Training programmes, the model is not primarily concerned with prejudice reduction or discrimination issues. Nor does it assume that library staff are themselves prejudiced or in need of attitudinal adjustments and drastic behaviour modification. The model is solely concerned with being a tool to help library staff aid in community cohesion and mutual cultural understanding - through empathic understanding of different worldviews - for BME communities in wider society. This premise again should defuse any resentment toward the training and, it is hoped, counteract any accusations of 'brainwashing,' a criticism received by the diversity trainer interviewed in Chapter 4.

Though both Mestre (2010) and Tso (2007) recommend that such training should begin either before someone enters the profession (during a university course, for example) or during the induction period, this model is focussed on providing current staff with cultural competency skills. This is not to say that it cannot be adopted for induction purposes (see 9.6.1. below).

9.3.2. Cultural Competency and Previous Research

In addition to the repeated cultural contact, cultural competency is a key point of this model, and a culturally competent skillset is a potential outcome of the successful use of the proposed training. Montial-Overall (2009) provides a conceptual framework to bring cultural competency to libraries. This includes interpersonal cultural contact to bring about cultural appreciation and understanding. The model takes these concepts and provides practical outlets for them.

Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005) give a comprehensive outline of what skills a culturally competent librarian would possess, and is thus a good context for the model as a whole. Presented below is how the proposed model relates to each of the key areas the authors have identified:

Attitude and Values - Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005) state that culturally competent librarians should be aware of the heritage of their own culture as well as that of others and should value the uniqueness people have on a universal, group and individual level. This appreciation of other cultures and valuing them can come about through the regular contact described in this model.

At Level 1 of this model will be library staff dedicated to this community role and so will have the highest amount of cultural contact. It could be argued that the staff taking on these duties will probably have some aspect of these attitude and values already in place, though they could be further ensured by a recruitment process that would add such skills to the essential characteristics of the person specification. Nonetheless, using the contact hypothesis as a basis, it could be expected that the right attitude and values will organically grow out of fruitful cultural contact.

Another point to note is that mutual cultural understanding is the goal of this model. As such, the culturally competent librarian in their awareness and appreciation of their own heritage can be a resource for BME communities wanting to learn about the majority culture. Again, the cultural contact will help to facilitate this.

Knowledge - The authors state that the culturally competent librarian should be always seeking to learn about the communities they serve, and that this, from the point of view of having humility when acknowledging one's own ignorance of others, should be an ongoing process. Again, the *regular* cultural contact with

communities would ensure this. Montial-Overall (2009) also highlights both this cultural self-audit and the "lifelong process of learning about cultural differences" (Montial-Overall, 2009: 200). Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005) also state that librarians should learn by asking questions and, again, being in cultural contact with BME communities would allow them to do so.

Skills - The authors place an emphasis on knowing the value of verbal and non-verbal skills in cultural interaction. The model includes a cultural primer (see 9.53 below) offering practical steps which would help library staff in achieving this skill.

Another skill mentioned is that of being a consultant to others and of doing outreach by working in partnership with minority communities in order to initiate and develop relevant initiatives. Level 1 of the model covers this well by having the community-specific library staff work with the local BME communities in order to learn about them and to organise specific events, here focussed on mutual cultural appreciation and community cohesion.

9.3.3. Choosing the Communities

Clements & Jones (2008) warns that when approaching communities for consultation, organisations need to be aware that people may identify themselves with multiple communities. For example, contact may occur with the Indian community and training tailored to that effect. Another contact may occur with the local Muslim community, and it could turn out that most of them are ethnically Indian, yet two different cultural contacts would still be required as the people from both communities could have wildly differing identities and worldviews. The same would occur when dealing with a faith group that has many different interpretations to it. It would be essential to make sure all are represented. Latter generation BME members could be an example of one representation, as opposed to first generation. Gender issues could also provide differing representations as well. This may require the library service to take advantage of academic research before they begin the consultation process - in order to make sure they know who and what each representation is - or to make an 'open call' for any and all communities to take part.

A problem here is that if there are too many groups, then it could be considered impractical to facilitate cultural contact as it will put a strain on staff resources. This may require staff being divided into groups which allows one group to interact with one community in one session and then another group interacting with a different community in another. The groups would then swap over and, in the time in-between, facilitated by the specialised librarians, can share their experiences with the other. If the contact is bi-monthly and there are only two staff groups it will still allow for four communities to be covered with each group meeting the community at least twice during the year, or alternatively meet eight communities in a year and repeated every year.

Though Roach & Morrison (1999) warn against only offering a service when minority communities are sufficiently large enough instead of basing the service on actual need, they were speaking in the context of library services as a whole. In the context of this thesis, then, the library service may require, based on the wider community needs, to prioritise which BME communities are in need of benefitting from a community cohesion programme of mutual cultural understanding - or, alternatively, who may be in need in the near future so that the service is not accused of being reactive - even if that community is low in number. This could then deal with the possible issue of staff being overwhelmed by too many groups, especially if staff resources are low. However, the ideal situation would still be for staff and resources to be broad enough for the service to interact with all the BME communities in their immediate locality.

9.4. Evaluation Process for the Model

Clements & Jones (2008) and Vincent (2009b) state the importance of quality participant feedback on any training initiative. Authors such as Paluck (2006) and McCauley, Wright & Harris (2000) point to the lack of an effective evaluation process included as part of current diversity training programmes which means systematic research into the success of the training cannot be undertaken. This means that participants cannot reflect on their learning in a structured way and that organisations have no immediate evidence showing that learning has taken place.

Some key points:

- Evaluation can follow a particular methodological model (see **3.6.**).
- Can adopt various tools such as questionnaires and interviews

Evaluation can utilise the tool of written feedback (Vincent, 2009b) through the use of questionnaires (Clements & Jones, 2008) which are used to ascertain the process of cause and effect between the actual training and workplace improvement (ibid.). They can be unreliable as there is no way to ascertain whether genuine feedback is being given or if participants will only say what they believe the trainers want to hear (Davies, 2007). Similarly, it is difficult to assess the impact of the training on the participant's level of empathy, though one option is the Implicit Attitude Test (Pendry, Driscoll & Field (2007); see also **3.4.7.** above) which can help highlight unconscious stereotypes. If practical and cost-effective to do so, library authorities could use the IAT pre-training and post-training to see if any significant changes have occurred amongst the participants. This would then counter the point that participants have no opportunity to reflect on their training and also the point about organisations having no evidence that the training had the desired learning effect.

In terms of written feedback or the use of an interview, it could be used for this particular model if the questions are phrased correctly. For example, the participant could be asked how, as a result of the training and cultural contact they have received, they think a person from a certain community would think and behave in a given situation would give an insight into both how empathic that particular participant is and how much they have understood of that particular culture's worldview. Davies (2007) states the importance of a precisely designed survey in order to bring sensitive information to the fore in participant responses. As such, the present researcher believes that carefully constructed feedback form - either through questionnaires or a semi-structured post-training interview (Clements & Jones, 2008) will probably be the best method to adopt, though authorities that do decide to adopt the model may discover more efficient and strategically effective means. This would be utilising the methodological school of thought known as experimental research into evaluation (Easterby-Smith, 1994 cited in Clements & Jones, 2008).

If such methods such as questionnaires are used, then there should be ample room given to any potential criticisms. Respondents should be invited to offer suggestions for improvement and be allowed to highlight any areas that they felt did not work. Anonymity may allow for more honest responses, and the data generated may prove to be more useful than asking what subjects found effective or helpful - though those questions should be asked, too, so that a comprehensive picture can be formed. The form of these questions - and the precise areas they should cover - would depend on the exact organisational need the model seeks to address for each individual authority, and how that authority adapts the model to their need.

9.4.1. The CIRO Methodology in Evaluation for the Proposed Model

The evaluation model best suited to this model would be Warr, Bird and Rackman's (1970, cited in Clements & Jones, 2008) CIRO model (Context, Input, Results and Outcomes) which is comprehensive in as much as it defines the training need first, then defines how the fulfilment of this need will be displayed in workplace performance, and then identifies the knowledge and skill participants will need to acquire during the training. It also evaluates whether the chosen training methodology is suited to the initial training need. As the present model is concerned with equipping library staff with a new skill-set - that of cultural competency - that will allow the public library service as an organisation to engage in community cohesion, the present researcher feels that the evaluation tools described above should be guided by the CIRO model.

For example, if the training need is to make staff more culturally competent, then the fulfilment of this need will be that it could help libraries initiate and development methods in bringing community cohesion, and the knowledge and skill required will be cultural knowledge plus cultural competency. Evaluation tools can be constructed - such as surveys and interviews - that can ask precise questions related to the CIRO context just mentioned. This again reinforces the idea that participants should be allowed to - and encouraged - criticise anything they found helpful and to offer improvements. However, in the context of such a sensitive subject as diversity, care must be taken to make sure that training organisers can identify when prejudice is the motivation behind any criticism (see **4.8.** above where a Diversity Trainer encountered accusations of brainwashing).

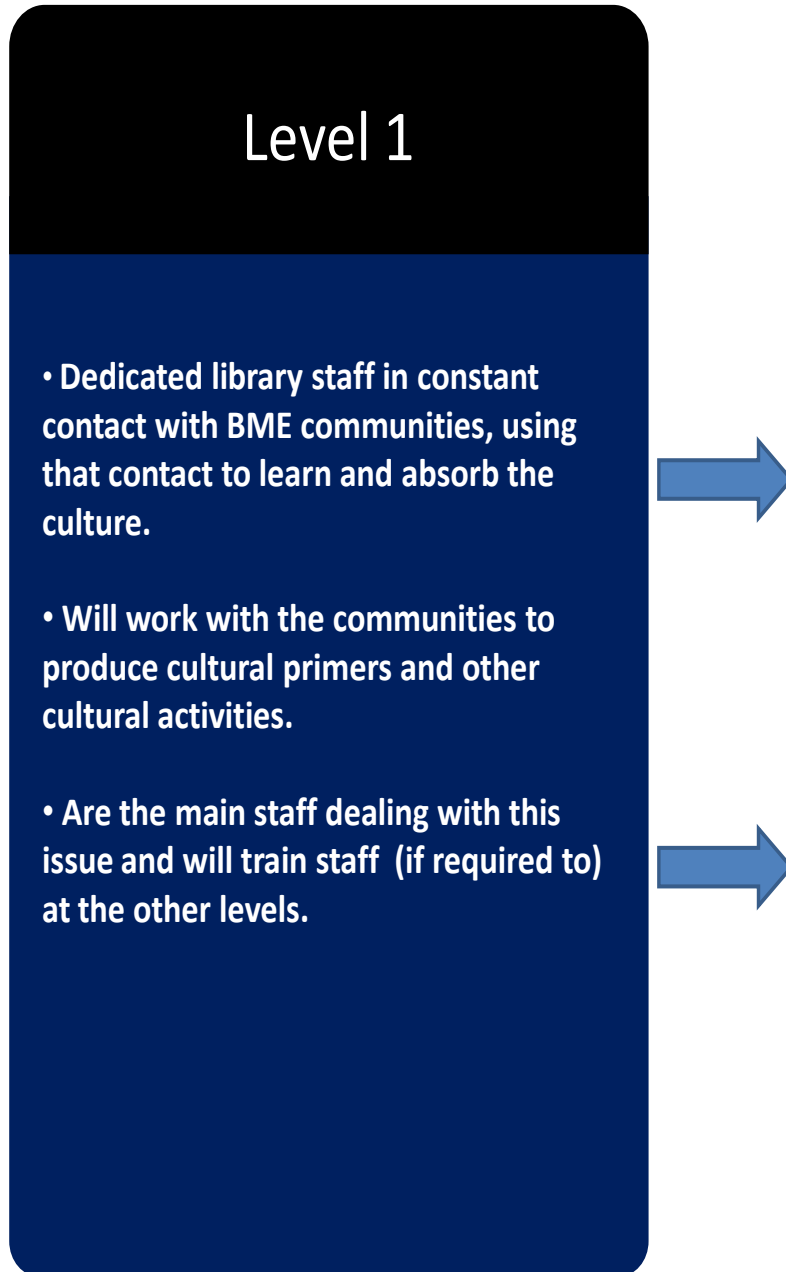
Also, in order not to rely solely on participant opinions of the training - which, if established through questionnaires and interviews, could be both too subjective and potentially dishonest (Davies, 2007) - a neutral observer who is experienced in evaluating training could be utilised, a tool which is a feature of goal-free evaluation (Easterby-Smith, 1994, cited in Clements & Jones, 2008).

9.4.2 Evaluation and Consulting BME Communities

The consultation with BME communities is also essential to the evaluation process. Clements & Jones (2008) make the point that success in the public sector could be defined by public satisfaction with the service. As such, there should be regular consultation with the communities involved to see if the library service has changed in a positive direction as a result of adopting this model by those authorities that choose to adopt it. This would then take on the methodological approach of responsive evaluation (Easterby-Smith, 1994, cited in Clements & Jones, 2008) which takes into account all stakeholder concerns with the training.

9.5. The Model in its Entirety

Figure 9.1 The Proposed Training Model



Level 2

- Other library staff – such as managerial and other outreach work – though not front-line staff.
- Will also have regular cultural contact but not to the degree or frequency as level 1 staff. This enables them to have confidence to promote any cultural events organised by Level 1 staff.
- The cultural contact they have will be introduced to them by Level 1 staff.

Level 3

- Will include all front-line staff who will receive the cultural primer as designed by Level 1 staff working in tandem with their BME communities. This is to equip front-line staff with the necessary cultural competency skills.
- The primer and any other cultural training they require will be provided by Level 1 staff.

The training will consist of a multi-tiered approach of ideally three levels which are organised by the frequency and amount of cultural contact they will undergo, with Level 1 being the highest and Level 3 the lowest. Level 1 staff, due to their more frequent cultural contact, will be responsible for working in collaboration with BME communities to provide cultural primers and any additional cultural training for the rest of the library staff.

Level 1 is further described in detail in section **9.6.1**, Level 2 in section **9.6.2**, and Level 3 in section **9.6.3**.

The library authority identifies the BME communities in its area (see section **9.3.3** above).

Level 1: They have library staff whose job partly covers being the cultural librarian for one (or more, if practical) community.

These librarians do outreach with these communities and have regular contact with them. Through this regular contact they learn about each community and work together to organise events that will help bring about cultural understanding and community cohesion.

The specialist librarians also work together with community representatives to deliver formal training for other library staff, especially in the induction process for newcomers.

Level 2: Other library staff - those who are not front-line and without a dedicated role towards a particular community - and management staff also take part in regular cultural contact in order to learn about the culture, along with the level 3 primer. This then helps them to promote upcoming cultural events or be confident in answering queries during a library-held cultural event.

Level 3: Front-line staff receive a basic primer on each culture (devised by the Level 1 librarians working in consultation with community representatives), along with practical steps in order to avoid both giving and taking offence. This should be refreshed every two years. Levels 2 and 3 could be adopted by academic libraries, too. Level 3 staff will also take part in the cultural contact above if they choose to do so, or if library management deems it necessary. It is not included as being essential in this form of the model so as not to put too much strain on staff

resources, though as mentioned above, levels 2 and 3 could easily be combined if needed.

9.6. Discussion

The model suggests that authorities identify the BME communities in their area in order to begin the process for consultation. If the authority is in an area where the BME population is low, the present researcher suggests that the dedicated community library staff from Level 1 of the model identify the main BME populations in the surrounding area and, if not that, then nationwide, though trying to facilitate regular cultural contact may become impractical with the latter.

The model is split into three tiers with different levels of staff involved on each level. This makes sure that all staff are not overwhelmed with extra duties - thus avoiding role strain (Wilson & Birdi, 2008) - and assures that those on the top tier are those with the most interest as a lack of interest had been cited by respondents in the case studies as being a possible obstacle.

9.6.1 Level 1

The highest tier - and the most important - will involve librarians specialised in BME services working in consultation with those particular communities. As community librarians have existed previously but had been deleted due to lack of funding and the fact that they were not integrated into the mainstream (Vincent, 2009a) these librarians would be regular librarians who have an extra duty related to providing BME services, similar to the Diversity Officer role of US universities (Gose, 2006; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2006) who is responsible for all diversity issues on campus. Indeed, Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) make the point that any successful diversity initiative needs at the heart of it a specialised diversity consultant who can tailor training to meet organisational needs. Muddiman *et al.* (2000), though speaking from the context of social exclusion, gives the view from the library service that staff should go beyond being providers of information to actual educators, and the specialised librarian role of the proposed model would reflect this.

Since these specialised librarians would be regular qualified staff with extra duties that they would be willing to take on, this would ensure that those recruited would have a deeper interest in providing this particular service, but at the same time would not be a separate entity and be integrated into the mainstream. This would

mean that a large amount of extra funding would not need to be set aside in order to create posts that were exclusively specialised for BME services - this would simply be a regular librarian with a few BME-related extra duties. Naturally this would probably require *some* extra financial commitment as presumably the extra duties may require a higher pay scale, but not as much as it would to have a completely new role to create and financially support.

The communication and consultation aspect would be primarily based on the contact hypothesis by which the specialised librarians would, perhaps on a more informal level, get to know the community more personally and learn about them organically. They would then work with representatives of the community - or multiple representatives as the community may not have a monolithic worldview - in order to address the needs of the communities and design activities that would bring about community cohesion. Communication and consultation with BME communities involved in every step of the training process is cited as an essential cause for success in this area (Clements & Jones, 2008).

In addition to providing training to current staff, they will also help provide induction for new starters, as both Tso (2007) and Mestre (2010) highlight the importance of early education regarding diversity issues.

9.6.2. Level 2

The second tier would then involve a mixture of formal and informal training transmitting the knowledge gained by the first tier to staff at a management level. The informal aspect will involve cultural contact as well so that those staff can learn organically from the community and vice versa. The informality aspect is important as it lays the ground for the formation of inter-cultural friendship, an important aspect of contact hypothesis and inter-cultural relation success (Shook & Fazio, 2008; Pettigrew, 1998).

The present researcher considered the use of role-play and forum theatre as a method for this model, as the Second Observation in Chapter 4 suggests that it is a workable method. Indeed, authors such as Stephan & Finlay (1999), Lai & Kleiner (2001) and McDougall (2005) praise the importance of role-taking and role-play in diversity initiatives - with Lai & Kleiner (2001) stating that it allows participants to see and view through another's eyes - and the use of drama as a training tool to

induce empathy via emotional contagion is praised in the literature (Krebs, 1975; Perry, 1975; Barrett-Lennard, 1981).

However, Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) notes how people resent being placed on the spot in such training programmes - as a role-playing exercise inevitably would (McDougall, 2005; Clements & Jones, 2008) - and also states that successful diversity initiatives are non-aggressive and thereby non-threatening. The present researcher finds this argument compelling, and also wishes to counteract any potential resentment that may develop toward the training. Moreover, the empathic aspect is questionable as, without proper preparation, empathy can easily be mistaken for sympathy. Also, the type of 'empathy' envisioned by such authors is one that would allow for the reduction of prejudice (Clements & Jones, 2008) - by putting themselves in the role of the discriminated the participant will then feel the pain of discrimination and choose not to inflict it on others - and not mutual cultural understanding or an understanding of another's worldview.

By making the cultural contact informal, these issues can be avoided, and even the aforementioned Stephan & Finlay (1999) rates the significance of intergroup dialogue. Moreover an informal group contact is more naturalistic, with one criticism of fictionalised scenarios that came from public sector managers is their unrealistic nature which did not mirror actual real-life practice (Foster & Harris, 2005). This again the present researcher agrees with, having attended the Second Observation which included an element of forum theatre and noticing how the scripted scenarios therein were exaggerated with prejudice displayed outright by the characters, whereas it could be argued that in real-life prejudice, in general, will tend to be more subtle, especially in the workplace where there are consequences for such behaviour.

For mutual cultural understanding and an exchange of worldviews, the present researcher believes dialogue is far stronger than role-play, as a worldview in itself is a source of knowledge and without that knowledge - which can only be gained authentically by those that possess it, in this context from the representatives of the culture itself - a role-play situation offers very little.

9.6.3. Level 3

The final tier would be the same but would be aimed at front-line staff. The formal aspect of the training may include more practical tips on how to avoid causing offence, something survey respondents were eager for and, in the context of verbal and non-verbal cultural interaction, reflects the essential skill culturally competent librarians should have according to Montiel-Overall (2009), Mestre (2010) and Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005). The formal training will be delivered by Level 1 staff in tandem with community representatives, much as it was with the first observation the present researcher attended, and can also be summarised in the form of a cultural primer. As such, the formal aspect will be less complex and potentially less divisive than current diversity training initiatives where negative emotional arousal can occur due to the topics the participants are being asked to discuss (Phomphakdy & Kleiner, 1999). By making it less complex, it also avoids 'trainer stress' and puts less pressure on the trainers who are often, according to Clements & Jones (2008), out of their depth in current training programmes due to negative issues arising amongst some participants.

In summary, the training model combines a combination of formal training sessions combined mostly with regular cultural contact with targeted communities. The 'contact' may be simply informal sessions where staff meet and get to know people from that community. Cultural contact also requires conditions for it to be a success (Shook & Fazio, 2008; Pettigrew, 1998). These are: support from authorities, equal status between the groups, working in co-operation toward a common goal and opportunity for friendship. For the proposed model, the informality of the contact should allow for there to be an equal footing between all participants, the support will come from the library authority itself, and idea of bringing about mutual cultural understanding leading to library events to encourage community cohesion should satisfy the condition of co-operation toward a common goal.

Government strategy, as envisioned by the Commission for Cohesion and Integration, to bring about community cohesion involves the use of myth-busting information packs about a particular community, cross-cultural activities and the use of shared public community spaces for meaningful cross-cultural contact (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007). The primer suits the information pack well, and cultural contact coupled with the use of the library as a

neutral ground matches well to the recommendations for cross-cultural activities and meaningful contact.

9.7. Summary

The model presented here is a combination of both cultural contact and cultural competency skills. This combines knowledge - which is derived from constant cultural contact - with skills - which is the cultural competency that arises as a result of the contact. It relies on consultation with the identified BME communities and is on three levels, with each level denoting the amount and frequency of the cultural contact used; Level 1 being the highest.

The model arose from key comments from the previous Case Studies identifying the need for more cultural competency skills. It has the methodological basis of a cultural competency skillset for librarians as described by Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005). Cultural contact is also an essential part of the model as it has been previously identified as a positive way in bringing about cultural understanding (Shook & Fazio, 2008).

Finally, the model can be evaluated using the CIRO methodology combined by evaluation tools such as questionnaires and the Implicit Attitude Test - where unconscious stereotypes are highlighted - both pre- and post-training to show if any impact has occurred on a participant's understanding of a particular culture.

At this point the model was presented to both staff in Authorities A and B via the form of an online survey that invited their comments and feedback. This was done in order to validate the model, and the results are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 10

Authority A and B Staff Survey to Validate the Proposed Model

10.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of a third staff questionnaire sent to both Authorities A and B, which invited their thoughts and comments on the proposed model described in Chapter 9. A discussion follows highlighting key themes that either validate the model or open up further avenues of exploration with regards to improving the model.

10.2. Aim

To invite comments from library staff involved in both Authorities A and B in order to provide validation for the proposed model using criteria listed below in

10.3. Objectives

To ascertain what aspects of the proposed model were considered positive - thus validating those aspects - and what were not, which would then require the requisite changes to the model.

10.4. Methodology

Creswell (2007) describes validation as a way of assessing the accuracy of a researcher's findings. He states that, for qualitative research, there are multiple methods in which validation can occur and not all will apply to a particular project.

Eisner (1991) states that the importance of validation is to bring credibility and confidence to a researcher's interpretation of his or her data and the resultant conclusions that arise. One method of validation is consensual validation, where the opinion of others - when they are qualified to do so - is used.

The authors speaking of validating qualitative research as a whole, however their observations can also be applied to seeking validation of the proposed model - namely, is the model credible and does it imply confidence? As library staff are the intended user group for the model - and that many staff have had experience of some form of diversity training - the researcher felt that they would have the

required knowledge and expertise to be considered for consensual validation/member checking. As the model was developed based on the data received from the case studies, credibility was achieved through the same survey (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, cited in Bryman, 2008).

Both Authorities A and B were asked in a final survey for their opinions on the proposed model. The survey was hosted and accessed online (via Toluna Quick Surveys) and consisted of eight open questions all directly related to the proposed model, inviting comments on the positives and negatives of the model, in addition to anything further that the staff felt could enhance the model.

The eight questions asked for agreement with specific premises related to the model and asking whether respondents would like to take part in a potential training scheme based on the model. Validation was achieved when the majority of respondents stated that they did agree and did wish to take part.

Requests for participation were done via proxy through the researcher's contacts in senior management in each individual authority. The survey was completed and the data collected in June, 2013 for both authorities.

10.5. Results

Only 12 people replied from Authority A (n=12).

Only 5 members of staff replied from Authority B (n=5). The request to complete the survey was sent out twice due to the initial low response rate. On reply to the second request, the researcher's contact explained that this could be due to the situation that all public libraries currently find themselves. So, contrary to the researcher's previous conclusions, the low response may not be due to a lack of interest, but instead due to staff having more pressing concerns such as staff cuts and the threat of library closure.

A range of representative answers from both authorities are reproduced below in order to provide context for the discussion and analysis following. Spellings have been corrected, but the original grammar and syntax remain. Thematic headings (in bolded italics) each map onto each relevant question in the survey. A full list of survey questions is in **Appendix 6**.

Authority A respondents are identified by an alphanumerical designation, for example, **AM1**. Authority B respondents are identified by, for example, **BM1**.

The model as a useful tool to develop cultural understanding for staff

All 12 Authority A staff responded positively to the model (n=12):

Yes definitely. The training model has been well thought through, and contains training at different levels for front line staff and for those doing outreach work. It seems something that could be implemented for only a small cost. **AM2**

It sounds like a very useful tool, particularly in the maintaining of regular specialist contact with groups. I particularly think Level 3 would prove very useful in that when anyone uses a library they are the staff whose initial impressions will often determine whether or not that person continues to use the service or feels it's not for them. This aspect cannot be underestimated as no matter how effective the outreach is, if the library visit itself generates a poor/negative impression it's unlikely you will see them again. **AM1**

Yes it would be a useful tool as all levels of staff receive the training. Regular contact and feedback from different community groups would help. **AM10**

Yes - any tool to break down barriers and inform greater understanding and better communication is always very positive. **AM12**

All five respondents from Authority B (n=5) replied to this question. Interestingly, they did not find anything particularly new or original in the model:

Yes, this is basically the model we used in Sheffield before staffing was dramatically cut and specialist posts cut. **BM1**

Yes, this is a very similar model to that used in Sheffield for many years. Unfortunately due to staffing changes and cuts this no longer exists. At present, it is difficult to imagine the service ever retuning to a point where this might be renewed. **BM2**

Yes actually it looks really good. It seems to be thought through in terms of the various levels and linkages between them. I can see it actually working in practice. **BM3**

Yes, but as front-line staff are the ones who come into contact with library customers of all cultural backgrounds the specialist librarians at level 1 should come from front-line staff. **BM5**

As a grounding premise for the model: Public libraries having a role in developing social integration and community cohesion by having understanding of other cultures

All twelve respondents from Authority A replied positively to this premise (n=12).

Yes, as we should be the central link for the community - it is key, therefore, to identify which cultures are more likely to be using a library in that local area, as there are too many cultures for every person to learn i.e. Wiccan. If the project is to go forward, it shouldn't just focus on the 'biggest' ones, as these are the ones people are most likely to already know about. **AM4**

Yes we are trying to be inclusive in libraries and help to better understanding generally in all forms by providing information for people about everything and anything so it includes cultures as well. Libraries are also the ideal neutral ground where people can come together on an equal footing to share ideas etc. **AM9**

Yes I do. I firmly believe in libraries as serving the community as a whole both addressing individual needs but also as a neutral space for all community groups/members to find out more about the world and their own locality. As a neutral space and on the whole a trusted space within the community, the library is ideally placed to highlight community diversity and promote understanding among cultural groups. **AM1**

Yes, I agree. Libraries are ideally placed, friendly yet neutral places right in the heart of the community. **AM6**

All five respondents from Authority B replied (n=5) and were quite positive in their responses:

Definitely agree. This is a role libraries have long had and should continue to develop - they are key in bringing communities together since no one group 'owns' the library. **BM1**

Yes. Libraries are a resource for everyone and are an important community resource so a) are ideally placed for developing social integration and community cohesion and b) social integration and community cohesion are necessary prerequisites of a library service which serves the needs of the whole community. **BM5**

Interest in taking part in the proposed model

All twelve respondents from Authority A replied to this question (n=12), but provided very mixed replies:

Yes, I think the idea of a cultural librarian sounds very interesting and something I would be interested in exploring. **AM2**

Yes having taken the opportunity to travel and learn about different cultures it is always a positive step to gain understanding and share ideas. **AM9**

I'd love to, but I fear there is simply no time to do anything other than keep the public service going at the moment. **AM6**

I would be interested but would say no as I am over-stretched as it is, am constantly multitasking and failing to get everything done. Sorry! **AM7**

All five Authority B respondents replied (n=5), but answers appeared to be somewhat guarded:

I would like to develop more confidence in approaching some communities. My job involves promoting a project which does involve people from various cultures and although I try to keep informed about cultural differences, it's always good to know more. **BM1**

I'm not clear who will be providing the training. **BM4**

Not sure. **BM5**

Multi-tiered model for all or select staff

All twelve respondents from Authority A replied (n=12) and, in general, favoured the multi-tiered approach where individual levels targeted certain staff as described in the model.

My role as a professional librarian is far more designed towards outreach and staff in branches are very much geared to work within their library so I would say the tiered approach would probably be more practical. **AM1**

I think it is laid out in a sensible structure - this is the same way as our libraries function in general, so it makes sense to carry on in this manner. **AM4**

I think separate levels are realistic and allow some staff to specialise in an area - this could be added to roles of the access and inclusion librarian for example. **AM8**

Staffing dictates that levels could not be undertaken by all, but if librarian team can feedback and support front-line teams, we could successfully learn from one another. **AM12**

All five respondents from Authority B (n=5) replied:

I think maybe for level one it helps if you come from the community or have a deep connection with it - otherwise there is a danger of appearing to be patronising. I do participate in level one but level two would be useful. I would be wary of only using level three - some people (possibly those who most need to read it) will be less likely to absorb or question material in a written form. Level two for all staff would, in my opinion, be the most useful with a chance to engage in conversation with a representative from the culture. **BM1**

It is unrealistic to imagine all staff could take part in all levels. All should receive the basic training, however even this previously proved difficult [here]. **BM2**

I think the 3 levels are the right approach. As front line staff I guess it would be level 3 although I would be interested in the other 2 too. **BM3**

Levels 2 & 3 for all staff. Level 1 definitely for front-line staff, with possible input from higher tiers. **BM5**

Information in the cultural primer

Eleven respondents from Authority A (n=11) replied to this question.

This is quite tricky to answer - I wouldn't want it to be full of stereotypes, but then again a basic information sheet about a culture probably will be made up out of stereotypes by its very nature. As mentioned previously, a list of possible offences i.e. considering all Pagans to be Wiccans, to avoid could be useful, rather than 'do/mention this when they come in'. **AM4**

I don't know: isn't that the point? **AM7**

Breakdown of cultures in area and language needs. Referrals for further help/assistance in the event of language barriers. Specialist contacts for computer assistance. **AM5**

Information from the communities themselves, listening to what they would hope for from their local library. **AM12**

Four respondents from Authority B (n=4) replied:

Information about religious and cultural beliefs. Examples of customs or habits which may influence behaviour in the library or social settings. Myth busting! **BM1**

Naming and quantifying particular "groups" of people in the area. Some key cultural differences. Languages spoken. Contacts for translation. Community groups and leader contacts. **BM3**

I feel its reinventing the wheel as we have done this for some years. Needs to include some positive facts, how to say welcome, an awareness of specific customs or practices. **BM4**

Positives to the Model

All twelve from Authority A (n=12) replied.

Definitely raising awareness both within the community and within the authority by training staff, bringing the community together, working with partners, especially ones not targeted before. **AM1**

If done properly, it may increase understanding between communities. **AM3**

Anything which increases cross cultural understanding would be an excellent thing, increasing social harmony. **AM7**

More staff understanding and awareness and therefore confidence when interacting with the communities rather than fear of not understanding or upsetting a potential user. **AM11**

Four people from Authority B respondents (n=4) replied:

Awareness mainly, which has to be a good thing. But obviously hopefully practical uses in terms of being able to "help" people who may be finding it difficult to access our services. Confidence for us too. **BM3**

It is good that it includes involvement with real people, not just giving out bits of information. **BM5**

Negatives and Obstacles

Eleven respondents from Authority A replied (n=11). Financial and concerns over stereotyping were the most prevalent answers.

Obviously cost. Training costs. Specialist librarians -professional staff have been cut down to the bone and are already stretched. Priority areas ideally identified and specialists put into those districts. **AM5**

Just the normal time and money! But also whether people want to have the opportunity to learn about other people. **AM9**

The time and cost it would take to deliver this in large authorities. Various interpretations staff would make of this. Yet another training session that staff would be expected to attend which would then water down the purpose and message. **AM11**

Stereotyping about a culture and causing greater offence. Ignoring smaller cultures. **AM4**

Danger of putting people into boxes and labels. **AM12**

All five Authority B respondents (n=5) replied.

It's the money thing and the staff availability I'm afraid. We barely have enough staff to keep libraries open. Lots of them are closing and will be on minimum staff with us struggling to even carry out basic functions. **BM3**

Diversity training may be resented by staff if it is imposed. **BM5**

Improving the Model

There were nine replies to this question from Authority A (n=9), however six of those nine (n=6) stated that they could not offer anything further to improve the model, such as:

No, it looks like an interesting idea that could benefit the library's place in the community. **AM4**

Of the others (n=3), responses included:

Before organising any training for staff at any level, the value would need to be discussed with higher level management and our training officer. Training is expensive. **AM3**

Recommendations of further information and reading that staff could do to raise awareness. **AM11**

Only three Authority B respondents (n=3) replied:

I think a very important way to increase cultural understanding among library staff is to increase the number of staff members from BME communities. Unfortunately the current method of recruitment and selection mitigates against this. **BM1**

Money to make it happen. **BM3**

Recognition that BME communities change. Also that diversity training needs to encompass all the groups represented in Sheffield, not just the main ones, and to include some info on why they are here - many as refugees, and asylum seekers who use libraries a lot as it is one of the very few resources available to them. **BM5**

10.6. Authority A Analysis and Discussion

The general response toward the training model was very positive (n=12) and this then leads validation to both the model and the whole of the thesis in general. In spite of this positivity, there were a number of caveats added by some of the respondents:

In an ideal world yes, but there is not the staffing capacity or budget in any authority to have specialist, dedicated staff who do this kind of work in most library authorities, particularly where their BME communities are small. **AM11**

Here the respondent feels that the model is not realistic due to budgetary and staffing issues. It would appear that they have misunderstood how the specialised librarian would work as the model is meant to integrate specialist duties alongside regular librarian duties in order to avoid having to have extra staff that were not integrated into mainstream library duties as had happened in the past (Vincent, 2009a).

The implication that this type of initiative is not a priority in authorities where BME communities are small is not one the present researcher agrees with. Cultural competency should be a skill-set that all library staff have some grasp of as they could easily apply it to other public service jobs or if they moved to an authority with a larger BME population. It is not realistic to assume that all staff will stay in the same locality throughout the entirety of their library careers. That the skill-set is not a priority again reinforces the idea of a public library with an organisational culture that has overlooked the potential of the library service to bring about community cohesion through its BME services.

The issue of finances was mentioned by another respondent, too:

Yes, if we had the money and time to spare. **AM7**

The training model would not, in any terms, be at absolutely no cost, but it is designed to reduce costs by utilising current staff and local communities for training purposes as opposed to hiring a training provider from the private sector. However, the researcher did not explicitly mention this point in the description of the model sent to staff as he was interested to see if the economic aspect would still be referred to and, at the same time, did not want to lead respondents toward the researcher's preconceived conclusion. Nonetheless, it could be argued that a

thorough explanation of how cost-effective this model would be may change people's opinions.

In total only a small number (n=3) mentioned the issue of finances being a problem with this model which is far less than the previous survey where the vast majority mentioned economic issues as being an obstacle toward implementing a cultural competency initiative. This would imply, then, that there is some implicit understanding from respondents about how this model could be cost-effective compared to current training initiatives. For one respondent, this was not implicit, but stated quite clearly:

It seems something that could be implemented for only a small cost.
AM2

Which reinforces the point that a better understanding of the model would reduce any concerns over financial appropriateness.

Another caveat mentioned was the apparent complexity of the model:

I think it would be useful - but I think it would need to be simplified.
AM3

As it is not clear exactly where the complexity lies, the best counter to this would be that the model presented here is still in its infancy and, with further consultation and piloting, could be refined to suit a library authority better should this even be a concern. Only one person mentioned this as a problem so perhaps it may not be a serious issue.

Another issue that also got a sole mention was the idea that the authority does have something similar in place already:

This already happens to some extent anyway in our library service. Regular meetings are held with the BME forum who comment on progress we make in supporting their communities. This doesn't cover a training angle however which would be much better. **AM9**

Whilst the respondent is no doubt accurate, the fact that other staff do not seem to be aware of this existing contact with BME communities - as they have not mentioned it in their replies - implies that these regular meetings are either not well-promoted or of little consequence. Nonetheless, the model could easily be mapped onto existing contacts, something the respondent clearly implies as the element of training - mutual understanding in this respect - is currently missing.

Reflecting the literature well, respondents pointed out how the idea of regular contact with BME communities was a good one:

It sounds like a very useful tool, particularly in the maintaining of regular specialist contact with groups. **AM1**

Regular contact and feedback from different community groups would help. **AM10**

Again this reiterates the idea that the model is validated through both the literature and the staff responses. One conclusion from a previous chapter that is not validated was the idea that staff were unaware of the library's role as a neutral ground to bring about cultural cohesion. This is best summed up in the following:

I firmly believe in libraries as serving the community as a whole both addressing individual needs but also as a neutral space for all community groups/members to find out more about the world and their own locality. As a neutral space and on the whole a trusted space within the community, the library is ideally placed to highlight community diversity and promote understanding among cultural groups. **AM1**

Other respondents also mentioned the library's place as a neutral space (n=3), a term that was not used in any of the questions. This implies, then, that staff are aware of the library's role, but the idea is not prominent in their mind unless faced with an issue that brings it to the surface. This may account for why the idea is not mentioned at all in responses to the initial case-study survey - where staff seemed focussed on language issues for BME communities - but does appear in this survey where the wording of question 2 is constructed around the concepts of social integration and community cohesion. What this does imply is that, in the mind of staff, there does not seem to be a mental link between these two concepts and BME communities which further implies that whatever strategies they do have is either too general or marginalises services to BME communities.

One respondent mentions how they currently implement integration and cohesion:

At [this library] we see ourselves as a community centre as well as library and information centre and we want to appeal to all sections of our community. Our aim is to be welcoming to everyone; we look for ways in which to help everybody who comes in. But that is quite easy for us because we are a village library, and know the majority of our users by name. **AM7**

This implies that they have a general integration policy at hand and no strategies for specific parts of the community, BME or otherwise.

Staff were appreciative and aware of how the model could contribute to community cohesion:

The [model can lead to] interaction between libraries and the various communities; learning on both sides. **AM6**

Anything which increases cross cultural understanding would be an excellent thing, increasing social harmony. **AM7**

Definitely raising awareness both within the community and within the authority by training staff, bringing the community together, working with partners, especially ones not targeted before. **AM2**

The idea that the model could bring communities together through the library service was mentioned by other respondents (n=5). This challenges the conclusion in a previous chapter that staff from this authority had little interest in using the library to bring about community cohesion. It is clear that staff *are* willing and interested to do so. This implies that, if presented in a positive and practical manner, library staff are willing to take the service forward from language and stock issues to a properly cohesive provision that includes BME communities in wider society. Again - comparing the data-set from this survey to the previous ones - staff appeared to mentally compartmentalise stock and BME provision on the one hand, and community cohesion and the role of the library on the other, with no cross-over between the two, unless presented with a model that showed how it could be executed practically.

Nonetheless, there were some respondents that could not divorce BME services from stock issues:

Yes - I do think that libraries have a role in developing social integration and community cohesion. By holding stock for and doing activities and events for specific communities it shows all members of the community that the library is for everyone regardless of their culture etc. **AM3**

I would like to be a Level 2 staff member - supporting colleagues with relevant and appropriate activities/events/stock. **AM8**

Though having those self-same services be expanded to include activities and events is encouraging compared to the previous survey where it was limited to stock and language issues. This again shows staff are able to think more broadly on this topic if it is presented to them in a different and positive fashion.

Issues of tokenism, a possible patronising attitude and stereotyping were brought up as possible negatives to the model:

Stereotyping about a culture and causing greater offence. Ignoring smaller cultures. **AM4**

Danger of putting people into boxes and labels. **AM12**

However, this can be attributed to a misunderstanding of the model, mainly due to the fact that there has been no practical manifestation of it thus far. The constant contact and consultation with BME communities should ensure that these concerns are not an issue. Any form of cultural stereotyping would mark the model as a failure, and the contact hypothesis that forms the ethos of the model is there to provide an authentic way for people outside of a culture to come to understand that culture.

Moreover the authenticity issue will need to be overcome by making sure that contact is made with a representative sample of a particular community. This could be divided by gender, generation - the needs of the latter generation BME members being different to first generation - and different interpretations of that community's culture and religion. It would require both in-depth research and an open-call to all parts of that community in order to make sure that the cultural contact is both representative and authentic. As this point was not explicitly mentioned in the model given to staff, it is perhaps understandable that they would find stereotyping a potential concern.

Misunderstandings also occurred with regards to the cultural primer:

Information about library services that would appeal to each community. Dual language. **AM3**

Here the misunderstanding seems to be that the respondent believed the primer was for users and not staff.

I wouldn't want it to be full of stereotypes, but then again a basic information sheet about a culture probably will be made up out of stereotypes by its very nature. **AM4**

And again here is the same concern (from the same respondent) about stereotyping that consistent cultural contact should overcome.

Respondents were eager to have included information that would be practical and would enable staff to avoid causing offence. This desire for practical wisdom was a point mentioned by other respondents previously from the nationwide survey, to both case studies and the University students and academic library staff. Again, this was an issue unmentioned in the initial case-study survey and, again, once the whole concept was presented to them differently, public library staff - at least, from this authority- were happy to contribute their thoughts and seemed eager to have such a primer in place:

As mentioned previously, [the primer should include] a list of possible offences i.e. considering all Pagans to be Wiccans, to avoid could be useful, rather than 'do/mention this when they come in'. **AM4**

Any key points that are of importance to a specific cultural group other than that I am not sure. **AM1.**

Cultural key facts such as traditions, religion, language, do's and don'ts, social etiquette etc. **AM11**

Another point leading to the validation of the model was the fact that 66% - six (n=6) out of a possible nine (n=9) - of respondents could not find anything further to add to the model to improve it. Of those that could, the following made a relevant point:

Only that there should perhaps be an aspect that could be incorporated by other specialisms in outreach work. I cannot think of anything else specific. **AM1**

If the model is successful, then the researcher feels that it is flexible enough for the library service to use in other areas - specifically, other groups that the library wishes to integrate, as the model does not necessarily have to be exclusively involved with BME communities. If it is very successful, then it could be utilised by academic libraries, other public services, or any organisation that has the need for it.

10.7. Authority B Analysis and Discussion

Again, as with Authority A, the general response to the model was quite a positive one, though the present researcher does not feel it was as enthusiastic as the previous replies. The main reason for this appears to be the fact that Authority B

staff see nothing new in this model, having already implemented something similar in the past. The following reply sums this up well:

Yes, this is a very similar model to that used [here] for many years. Unfortunately due to staffing changes and cuts this no longer exists. At present, it is difficult to imagine the service ever retuning to a point where this might be renewed. **BM2**

Geographically speaking, Authorities A and B are not that far apart. The reaction to the model from Authority A staff was one that implied they saw the model as something unique. It would appear, then, that despite Authority B having had a similar model for 'many years' it was not sharing its best practice with others, a recommendation stressed over a decade ago by Roach & Morrison (1999) for libraries wishing to respond well to ethnic diversity.

Even aspects such as the primer were considered to be methodologically well-worn:

I feel its reinventing the wheel as we have done this for some years. **BM4**

The present researcher is aware that Authority B used to have, in some branch libraries, a BME member of staff that would be responsible for that particular BME community. Also, replies from the earlier survey indicate that it was these same BME staff members that would deliver training to the rest of the staff.

It must then be noted that the model presented here does have a subtle difference in as much as the fact that the librarians that would have extra specialist duties do not necessarily have to be from that particular- or any particular - BME community. In fact, the present researcher would argue that it may be better not to, as one of the purposes of this model was to give staff from outside of a particular community the confidence to serve and be a resource for that community. Whilst consultation with the BME community is necessary, the requirement to actually be from that community is not.

It seems clear that the staff respondents had their old model in mind - with staff representatives of BME communities providing the training - in the following response:

I think maybe for level one it helps if you come from the community or have a deep connection with it - otherwise there is a danger of appearing to be patronising. **BM1**

Such a danger could be overcome simply by staff having confidence about their knowledge of a community and then having confidence about delivering an event or presentation about that community. Again, it is the confidence issue which this model seeks to remedy, specifically the 'fear of causing offence' aspect of intergroup anxiety. If it is an issue, then any such event - whether training for staff or an event for the public - could be delivered by two people, one the librarian with the specialist duties, and the other a representative of the BME community or communities in question. It must be noted that the initial observation the present researcher attended did precisely that.

Nonetheless, the literature, in the form of Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) points out that choosing diversity trainers simply because they are from a particular ethnic background does not necessarily lead to the success of the initiative. What is more important, they argue, is that the trainer or diversity consultant has in-depth knowledge both of the subject at hand and of the methodology to deliver the training.

The same respondent does highlight the importance of staff confidence when dealing with BME communities, so they are aware of the need:

I would like to develop more confidence in approaching some communities. My job involves promoting a project which does involve people from various cultures and although I try to keep informed about cultural differences, it's always good to know more.
BM1

Another respondent reiterates this point when asked about the potential positives to the model:

Confidence for us. **BM3**

Nonetheless, the general tone toward the model was a positive one, as evidenced by the following:

Yes actually it looks really good. It seems to be thought through in terms of the various levels and linkages between them. I can see it actually working in practice. **BM3**

Which gives the model credence and validity, having staff from both authorities speak well of it.

Having had something similar in the past, the Authority B staff were keen to point out the practical execution of the model. For example, the following respondent suggested that the specialist roles go to front-line staff:

As front-line staff are the ones who come into contact with library customers of all cultural backgrounds, the specialist librarians at level 1 should come from front-line staff. **BM5**

A point later reiterated:

Levels 2 & 3 for all staff. Level 1 definitely for front-line staff, with possible input from higher tiers. **BM5**

A front-line member of staff also stated an interest in the other levels:

As front line staff I guess it would be level 3 although I would be interested in the other 2 too. **BM3**

The flexibility of the model, in the present researcher's view, allows it to be adapted to whatever need the library authority has for it. At the same time, if time and resources permit it, it should not be an issue if, after having made staff aware of the model in general, if some members of staff choose to participate in other levels. Like Authority A, though, the multi-level approach is appreciated:

I think the three levels are the right approach. **BM3**

A rationale for this is given by another respondent:

It is unrealistic to imagine all staff could take part in all levels. **BM2**

Another point in agreement with Authority A was the role of the library in bringing about community cohesion. Again, this is perhaps understandable as Authority B has a higher BME population, but whilst Authority A respondents had to be drawn out to mention the library's potential role - to the point that the present researcher initially believed that they had no knowledge of this role - staff from Authority B seemed to be well-versed with it:

Clearly libraries can act as a venue where communities can come together which one would hope, goes some distance to facilitating integration and acceptance. For customer service to reach the appropriate level, some degree of training is also no doubt necessary. **BM2**

The positivity toward the cultural contact, though expressed more frequently and enthusiastically with Authority A, is yet another point of agreement between the two:

It is good that [the model] includes involvement with real people, not just giving out bits of information. **BM5**

Where some respondents from Authorities A and B clearly diverge on is the issue of stock related services for BME communities. Whilst there were some from Authority A that still could not divorce the two, refreshingly not one respondent from Authority B - for this particular survey, at least - brought it up as an issue. This may be due to the fact that having had similar training in the past has shown them that the issue at hand was a lot broader than stock, even if, in practical terms, that was all the authority eventually focussed on.

Another divergent point between the two authorities was that of stereotyping. Whilst staff from Authority A felt that this was a potential danger, Authority B respondents did not mention this at all, again presumably because having had a similar model in place had showed them on an empirical level that it would not be a factor.

Indeed, the main obstacles Authority B staff found were staffing and budgetary cuts that had severely reduced the similar training model they already had in place:

Yes, this is basically the model we used in Sheffield before staffing was dramatically cut and specialist posts cut. **BM1**

Yes, this is a very similar model to that used in Sheffield for many years. Unfortunately due to staffing changes and cuts this no longer exists. At present, it is difficult to imagine the service ever retuning to a point where this might be renewed. **BM2**

It's the money thing and the staff availability I'm afraid. We barely have enough staff to keep libraries open. Lots of them are closing and will be on minimum staff with us struggling to even carry out basic functions. **BM3**

Again, the present researcher feels that this new model differs from the previous one the authority had in place due to the fact that no new staff need to be recruited; instead, specialist duties are added to existing librarian roles for those suited and willing to do so. This may require the authority to offer a higher pay scale for those particular librarians, but this should still be cheaper than creating and recruiting whole new posts.

However, the issue of closing libraries and running on minimum staff is a real issue, highlighted by the fact that the researcher's contact felt that interest was low in the survey due to staff being more concerned about the threat of library closures and job cuts. In an ideal world, the present researcher envisioned that if this model

was proven to be a success and did bring about practical community cohesion then that would potentially add value to the library service which would then - in theory, at least - make it less likely to be faced with cuts. The theoretical underpinnings of this model, however, is available here for those authorities wishing to take it on.

One respondent, reflecting a theme in the literature, worried about the staff reaction to such training:

Diversity training may be resented by staff if it is imposed. **BM5**

It was hoped that by 'rebranding' the training as cultural competency, such an attitude would be avoided. An interesting point is that the researcher, in presenting this survey electronically to staff, did not use the term 'Diversity Training' but this respondent has still picked up on it in this response and also in a response to question 8. As mentioned previously, though, having an emphasis on it being a skill-set may change such an attitude, with the motivation for staff that it will further their career and that such attitude change does come from both motivation and opportunity (Fazio, 1990). Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) make the point that resentment towards diversity initiatives comes from white men who feel threatened that they will be overlooked in their career path in favour of under-qualified tokenistic appointments of those from a minority. This has led to the term diversity itself becoming devalued and a mere negative euphemism for equality issues and affirmative action in particular (Winston, 2008). Since this model is not based on affirmative action, this should not be an issue here.

If, on the other hand, the rationale behind the resentment is due to prejudice, then the contact aspect of the training may change this. Indeed, it would then reflect the contact hypothesis's original aim, that of being a prejudice reduction tool, of which there have been many empirical experiments that show its efficacy in this regard (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). However, it must be noted that none of the staff that replied to any of the surveys mentioned any resentment toward the training at all. This does not mean that such resentment may not exist - those particular people may have simply decided to not take part. It is difficult to say with any certainty either way. The resentment is real, though - it was mentioned quite clearly by the trainer interviewed in Chapter 4 and it came quite bluntly from the library user from Authority A who believed that BME communities should not be singled out for special treatment.

10.8. Conclusion

Staff responses to the model from both library authorities were encouragingly positive. The nature of this positivity differed in that Authority A staff appeared to see the model as something quite fresh and unique whilst Authority B staff felt the model was tried and tested having had something similar in place in their service. This did bring to the fore the issue of sharing best practice.

This leads to a validation of the model as a whole - in that it makes the results of the research credible and inspires confidence in the conclusions reached (Eisner, 1991) - particularly showing that the combination method of personal inter-cultural contact and formal practical skills was the correct approach to take. That very few respondents from either authority could find aspects to add to the model is a further strengthening of that validation.

Common points against the model included the issue of cost and the potential lack of interest in the model, either due to resentment or other factors such as not considering the whole idea as important. Both of these could be dealt with in a fuller explanation of the model, noting the relative lack of cost of doing things in-house as opposed to hiring a private company to handle the training due to the fact that no fee is involved and that the library itself will be the venue for the cultural contact. The present researcher conducted a brief online search for Diversity Training providers in the United Kingdom, and found that fees can range from around £750 for a single session to over £1000. These prices do not include travel costs or the cost for extra materials such as handouts. Moreover, there is an equivalent fee for each separate module that covers a different topic or issue.

The issue of interest and not considering the topic important relates back to the point of the library's organisational culture needing to be changed. A new, related issue that emerged was the idea that lack of interest stems from changing priorities amongst staff - with the threat of library closures and potential job cuts obviously being more important for staff than concerns of community cohesion.

In contrast to the responses received for the previous survey, library staff seem from the findings to be well aware of the library's potential role as a neutral venue in order to bring different community groups together. It would appear then that such concepts, whilst ingrained at some level in staff, only come to the fore if something relevant - such as this model - is presented to them in a way that staff

can make that mental link. This would then lead to the idea that the model needs to be presented to staff in such a way that they acknowledge both the potential benefits of it in facilitating cultural cohesion and the idea that such a facilitation would add value to the library service itself, allowing staff to show that the library still has a place and an important, unique role in the community.

With all these issues taken into consideration, the present researcher feels confident in recommending the model to public library professionals and will, in the following chapter, outline a general summary of the thesis as a whole in tandem with a number of recommendations that will help facilitate the implementation of the proposed model in order to establish cultural competent public library staff who are confident in their ability to help bring about mutual cultural understanding which would lead to the potential for community cohesion.

Chapter 11

Concluding Discussion and Recommendations

11.1. Introduction

This chapter will summarise the research in its totality before discussing key findings and presenting recommendations for library authorities and future researchers.

11.2. Re-iteration of the Aims and Objectives

The thesis aimed to establish the validity of Diversity Training as a methodology for public libraries to inculcate cultural empathy and understanding. This led to the development of a training model that could be used as a springboard for library staff to foster a deeper understanding of BME communities and help utilise the library service to bring about community cohesion (1.2).

The following research questions were addressed (see 1.3):

- 1) Do library staff need to be empathic toward BME communities?
- 2) If so, and to what extent, can such empathy be developed using Diversity Training?
- 3) How can such empathy, in tandem with Diversity Training, produce a library service that has cultural understanding, can promote cultural understanding, and can contribute to community cohesion?

11.3. Summary of the Research Stages

An initial literature review (Chapter 3) drew out a number of issues and criticisms regarding Diversity Training as a whole. These criticisms were then directly witnessed by the researcher through the process of observation (Chapter 4) where he attended two training sessions, one aimed at public library staff, and one aimed at a local authority in its entirety. This led the researcher to canvass the opinions of library staff nationwide (Chapter 5) through the use of a questionnaire, focussing on the issues of empathy and Diversity Training. A lower-than-expected response rate, coupled with a revision of the questionnaire, led the researcher to undertake comparative case-studies between two library authorities (Chapters 6 and 7), and a

third study with University students studying an MA in Librarianship (Chapter 8). Library user questionnaires were also undertaken.

Questions regarding Diversity Training, empathy and community cohesion were asked. User surveys asked whether the public rated their library in terms of its BME service provision. The data generated from these surveys was enough to develop a Training Model (Chapter 9) which was then validated by a further study sent to the library staff involved in the initial case studies (Chapter 10). Throughout the whole process, the literature review was checked for any new research developments on the topic and updated accordingly.

11.4. Discussion

11.4.1. Key Issues - Empathy

- 1) The lack of consensus on a definition of empathy.
- 2) The need for empathy as a tool for mutual cultural understanding and to fulfil the library's potential as a facilitator for community cohesion.
- 3) The misunderstanding of library staff between empathy and sympathy and the problems arising from this.

The majority of library staff canvassed for this thesis agreed that empathy is a crucial element, not only towards BME communities, but to all library users in general. What they initially were unable to convey was the idea of the library's role as a neutral ground through which communities can come together to build a wider community cohesion. This, by necessity, will require empathy as mutual cultural understanding cannot take place until one is able to see the world as the other sees it. Staff, in general, limited empathy to stock and language issues, noting the difficulty non-English speakers would have in using the library. This led to the present researcher erroneously coming to the early conclusion that staff simply had no awareness of the library's potential role. However, when the training model was presented to them, and they were asked specifically about the need for cultural cohesion, staff were both willing and able to speak about the library's neutral role without any further prompting. Nonetheless, the idea of relating BME services to language and stock issues appears to be one related to the culture of the library - even the website of one authority, despite being in an area with a high BME population, focussed entirely on their language services for other communities.

This idea of exclusively linking language and stock issues to BME communities was so absolute that even the library users from those areas could only mention those aspects as examples of services to BME communities.

Whilst there is, surprisingly, little consensus on how to define empathy amongst academics, the literature does attempt to provide some sort of definition: this involves dividing empathy into intellectual - where one understands another on a cognitive level - and emotional - where one is able to experience the emotions of another. Empathy can also be defined in relation to what it is not, in this case sympathy. Whereas, in empathy, one views the world exactly the way the other does, sympathy instead transfers the ego of one onto the other - in short, one can imagine being in another's situation, but then imposes one's own needs into that situation and assumes that anyone else being in that situation would have those same needs. Empathy, then, would be the ability to see emotionally and intellectually from another's worldview without adding any of one's own presumptions and assumptions to that view.

Staff from an area with a lower BME population were able to successfully be sympathetic, but then assumed that this was the same as being empathic. Those from an area with a higher BME population provided slightly better definitions of empathy. By focussing on sympathy, staff limited community needs to stock and language issues, despite being intrinsically aware on some level of the potential role of the library to bring about cultural cohesion. This also led them to unintentionally exclude some parts of the BME community, namely, those from the second and third generation who no longer have language issues but do have needs from their library service.

BME users from an area with a very high BME population (Authority C) were only able to express such needs in the desire for more cultural events, coupled with better promotion for them, and seemed, in general, to be quite dissatisfied with what their library was currently offering them.

11.4.2. Key Issues - Training

- 1) The short, infrequent nature of current training initiatives.
- 2) The superficiality of current cultural awareness programmes, its lack of focus on mutual cultural understanding, its lack of a community cohesion objective.

3) The problem of cost-effectiveness.

4) The difficulty in training people to be empathic.

The training experienced by public library staff canvassed for this thesis matches well what is reported in the literature about Diversity Training in general for both public and private sectors. Namely, that these are programmes that are short and generally not repeated. As to the aims of such programmes, it appears different authorities have different objectives. The second observation that the present researcher attended was a heavily legalistic training session that focussed on reducing discriminatory practices in the workplace. The staff surveyed reported training that focussed on explaining only one particular community, and concentrated on certain aspects of that community such as clothes and cuisine. Others reported legalistic sessions and yet others received no training at all, or training from the distant past - some respondents were quite content with this and others more frustrated. None of the training mentioned seems to have an aim where the library and its staff can gain mutual cultural understanding and then go and facilitate community cohesion.

Different methods appeared to have been used as well, from the forum theatre of the second observation to formal sessions delivered by staff from a particular BME community. Staff from both public and academic sectors were interested in having practical wisdom in dealing with other communities, such as pointers on non-verbal language. This is an implicit request to have cultural competency and the proposed model aims to this first through formal sessions and a primer which will highlight such issues which could then be fleshed out - through mutual questioning - in cultural contact that is friendly and informal.

In general, staff were quite positive about the effectiveness of the training they had received and stated that it had helped them with their workplace duties. However, if one looks at the perspective that a lot of staff were confusing sympathy for empathy and that the services they provided were merely language and stock based, then it is understandable why such limited training would be effective. Had the ethos of the library been to provide empathic cultural cohesion then it is difficult to see how such training would have worked - for example, infrequent training sessions about superficial issues such as food and attire would not have helped at all.

Authority B also noted that they had in place a training initiative that was similar to the proposed model. However, it appears that others were not aware of it - specifically Authority A which is in close geographical proximity to B - and so best practice was not being shared. Though not speaking primarily in a library context, noted diversity trainers Clements & Jones (2008) conclude their diversity trainer's handbook with a chapter on state learning from good practice, especially in the field of such training, implying the importance of it. Of those that do speak in a library context, Roach & Morrison (1999) recommended the sharing of good practice as a tool to aid libraries respond to ethnic diversity.

The main obstacle toward any cultural competency initiative is one of cost. With budget cuts and staff lay-offs, many of the respondents from all sectors surveyed highlighted the economic issue that would threaten any new training model. The present researcher also noted that the two observations attended were delivered by private sector companies which presumably would have been done for a fee. This could imply either a lack of confidence in doing things in-house or a need to push the responsibility onto other parties, especially those portrayed as being more experienced in doing so.

Though the proposed training model would not be without cost, the present researcher feels that it could be delivered at a reduced cost than current private sector options, where general fees would be an issue, additional costs for travel and resources a factor, and where a separate fee would be incurred for each module the library would need.

By keeping it in-house, most of the cost will go toward the logistics of organising the cultural contact and also toward the community primer. Even then, the primer could be something that is placed online on the authority's intranet. The other cost would be to raise the pay-scale of those given added specialist roles. This would still be better than creating and recruiting an entirely new post. As the specialist roles will be given as additional duties to current librarians, it would mean that those staff still contributed to the mainline services and not stand apart, an issue that led to the deletion of similar roles in the past (Vincent, 2009a).

The difficulty in teaching people to be empathic is that while the literature does say it is possible, it offers little in the way of a practical methodology to be able to do so. Emotional contagion is one mooted approach, whereby one views or listens to someone expressing their emotions and shares in that feeling. Another is through

perspective taking, where one simply imagines being in another's place in a given situation. The problem with both is that it can easily overlap into sympathy which again can be limiting from a public service point of view.

In terms of actually developing empathy amongst staff, the best the proposed training model can offer is to give people the motivation and opportunity to do so, two factors that Fazio (1990) state are crucial to bring about any attitudinal change. The motivation will come from the model's description of cultural competency as an essential skill-set, and the opportunity will come through the cultural contact. Of course, cultural competency only becomes essential if the ethos of the library service moves beyond language and stock issues to community cohesion so yet again a change in the service's work culture is necessary. This ethos could be rooted in what Montiel-Overall (2009: 195) terms the ethic of caring. Here, the desire to help and understand others that arises from cultural competency leads to an attitude of genuineness, as opposed to those who feel obligated to engage with others as it is simply part of their job role.

The cultural contact that provides the opportunity has to be of a deeper quality than superficially describing issues of cuisine and so on and so forth. Obviously, the opportunity to ask mutual questions has to be there, but the prospect of long-standing friendships to develop - which is ideal for the purpose of intercultural harmony (Aberson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo, 2004; Shook & Fazio, 2008) - has to exist as well. Having regular contact that is informal, and thereby less threatening, could help to do this. This makes the whole training process go beyond formal talks and become more interactive and organic. Indeed, Von Bergen, Soper & Foster (2002) make the point that successful diversity initiatives happen when they are non-aggressive and focus on civil behaviour. The present researcher believes that regular, but informal cultural contact could reflect this well.

The informality of the contact coupled with the understanding that it is there to create mutual cultural understanding leading to a co-operative effect between the library and the community to bring about social cohesion should all satisfy the conditions for contact hypothesis success: namely, support from authority - in this case the library authority - the groups having an equal status, which should occur as the setting is informal, working together toward a common goal and the opportunity for intergroup friendship (Pettigrew, 1998; Shook & Fazio, 2008).

Obviously not everyone will be eager to take part in such contact, so that the most in-depth and regular contact will come through the librarians with the specialist roles - as described in the proposed model - who would only be chosen for those roles because of their suitability and willingness.

11.4.3. The Theoretical Contribution of this Thesis

The present thesis adds to the general body of knowledge in the following areas: broadening the scope of the contact hypothesis and adding to previous research on empathy, addressing general criticisms of Diversity Training by articulating a *practical* and interactive solution that could be applied in multiple sectors and not limited to public libraries, and adding to the gaps in the literature, especially in the context of public libraries and Diversity Training.

11.4.3.1 Changing the Scope of the Contact Hypothesis and Adding to the Knowledge on Empathy

Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis uses the concept of interpersonal contact in order to reduce racial prejudice. Much of the literature on the hypothesis is centred on this prejudice reducing aspect. Even in recent studies, almost sixty years after Allport's initial theory, the focus is on prejudice reduction; examples such as Pettigrew *et al.* (2011) and their meta-analysis proving that the contact hypothesis can reduce prejudice and Shook & Fazio's (2008) study on promoting inter-racial harmony through the contact hypothesis are prime examples of this.

The Cultural Competency Training Model presented in this thesis uses the contact hypothesis as a methodological base, but changes the focus from prejudice reduction to mutual cultural appreciation and understanding. This takes the hypothesis to the next logical step in its development and opens up potential new research paths. It moves the contact hypothesis from a mere prejudice-reducing tool to a full and practical initiative for cultural understanding.

In the context of empathy, Wilson & Birdi (2008) established the lack of empathy amongst many public library staff. This thesis builds on and supports those conclusions and, in addition to those authors' recommendations, provides a practical and theoretical framework for public libraries to move forward in this particular area.

11.4.3.2 Addressing Criticisms of Diversity Training

The literature review established a number of criticisms aimed at Diversity Training. This included the short, infrequent nature of the training, the negative connotations attributed to the term 'diversity' itself, and the focus on workplace conflict resolution between employees of diverse backgrounds for legal reasons as opposed to any genuine cultural understanding.

Whilst the criticisms were widely discussed, potential solutions were not. The training model in this thesis directly addresses the main criticisms. The training is designed to be an ongoing process, thus negating the short, infrequent nature of previous initiatives.

The term 'diversity' is replaced by the term 'cultural competency.' This is not merely a case of rebranding. Cultural competency is a skillset (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005) that should be presented to employees as an important part of their professional development, highlighting its importance in a multi-cultural progressive society. By putting the term in a positive context, this should counteract any negative associations that diversity previously had.

Finally, the entire focus of the training model on mutual cultural understanding and appreciation changes the ethos of such training away from the legalistic, and the reduction of workplace conflict due to discrimination and prejudice. This is not to state that such issues are not important, but that, like in the contact hypothesis above, Diversity Training in this form moves onto its next logical success. Also, it could be argued that cultural understanding and appreciation will naturally reduce prejudice and discrimination in any case.

A further contribution of this thesis is that, whilst the model was developed in a public library context, the crossover appeal of the training model is quite broad. With some minor adjustments, the model could be easily adopted by other sectors and industries. The present researcher is intending to publish the findings of this thesis not just in public library publications but in other, more general journals such as those aimed at business management.

11.4.3.3 The Literature Gap in the Context of Diversity Training and Public Libraries

The topic of Diversity Training, Cultural Competency and libraries, when discussed in the literature, tends to heavily lean toward any sector other than public libraries. For example, Montiel-Overall's (2009) theoretical outline is focussed on academic libraries whilst Press & Diggs-Hobson (2005) outlines the characteristics of a culturally competent librarian in the context of health libraries. Indeed, academic libraries seem to be at the forefront of this issue, even as recently as Lazzaro *et al.* (2014) and their study into the adoption of cultural competency for American academic libraries.

This thesis then adds to the arguably neglected sector of public libraries. With the data and model presented herein, a catalyst for further research and development could occur in this sector. Using the model to seize the potential of the library as a neutral meeting space to bring about mutual cultural understanding allows both those within and without the profession to look at the public library service with a fresh perspective.

11.4.3.4 General Issues Addressed

The present researcher feels that the repeated cultural contact that is a feature of this model is unique, from the aspect that though Montiel-Overall (2009) provided cultural interaction as a theoretical recommendation, this model offers a practical method of its implementation. Having the model presented thusly in this form also provides easy access for library authorities to use the model and adapt it to their needs. Moreover, though Lazzaro *et al.* (2014) report recent advances in the promotion of cultural competency as a training tool in academic libraries in the United States, the training described therein was of a self-reflective and discursive nature whilst the Cultural Competency Training Model of this thesis is *interactive* due to its focus on cultural contact.

In addition to the cultural contact, the training model also utilises the use of specialist librarians and cultural primers. It has also attempted to address the issue of cost by making all such training in-house and thus not reliant on expensive outside agencies.

Though specialist community librarians have been used in the past (Vincent, 2009a) and cultural primers have also been utilised (see Authority B staff

comments from Chapter 7), the proposed model combines all these aspects and provides a methodological underpinning for them by drawing on the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) and the typical characteristics of the culturally-competent librarian (Press & Diggs-Hobson, 2005).

Building on the use of community librarians, the relevant equivalent here in the model would be the Level 1 library staff who, in addition to their regular library duties, would be a facilitator of community contact and a trainer for library staff. This would ensure that the Level 1 staff would be fully integrated into the library service as a whole, thus deflecting the fate of the community librarian in the past where their organisational isolation eventually led to them being cut (Vincent, 2009a).

The Level 1 library staff's role as a trainer would help both existing staff and newcomers joining an induction. An early acclimatisation of diversity issues, coupled with ongoing training, is recommended by both Tso (2007) and Mestre (2010), and has not yet been put into action. This model aims to rectify that.

Also from a theoretical perspective, this thesis has tied together multiple disciplinary strands from the broader Social Sciences, to Management with regards to Diversity Training in the private sector management, to Social Psychology and Occupational Psychology with its discussions on empathy and the teaching of empathy. These themes were tested against the opinion of public library staff and library users. In addition to attempting to fill a literature gap on cultural competency and libraries that Montiel-Overall (2009) had previously identified and also confirmed in this thesis, this information provides a contextualisation of empathic public library provision to BME communities and could be used as a springboard for other research possibilities.

11.4.4. Limitations of the Research

While much of the themes in this thesis came from triangulated data-sets, and the surveys used in the case studies built upon issues discovered in the nationwide survey, the major limitation in this research is that the surveys used in it yielded low response rates.

It is difficult to pinpoint a reason why. A lack of interest in the topic may be a factor, or - as was the reason given by the researcher's contact at Authority B - staff may be concerned with more pressing matters, such as closures and potential

redundancies. The sensitive nature of the subject may have led to topic threat (Gunaratnam, 2003). There is some support for this - the interviewee in **4.8** had been involved in commissioning Diversity Training and stated that he had often received a lot hostility with accusations of brainwashing. Even the term itself, according to Winston (2008), can elicit defensiveness, to the point that the proposed model did not use the term. In gathering data for this thesis, the present researcher encountered two clear occurrences of hostility - both from library users - and one possible one from a respondent in the nationwide survey.

The ethnicity of the researcher may also play a part. Contact avoidance occurs when someone avoids any contact with the 'other' for fear of causing offence or being labelled as offensive, and is a part of intergroup anxiety (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

One possible way of overcoming this is to adopt a longitudinal study whereby the researcher re-visits the sample repeatedly over a period of time. Whilst Bryman (2008) and Rutterford (2012) both mention that just two visits - as in this thesis - would qualify, Bryman (2008) states further that in the context of the case study, these re-visits could take place over a period of months and years. What this can achieve is to either integrate the researcher into the community under study - if the purpose is observation - or to have multiple visits to apply further methods, such as surveys or focus groups.

This allows the community into study to become familiar with the researcher - if the contact is face-to-face - leading to rapport between participant and researcher which puts the former at ease and allows them to converse more freely (ibid.). Rutterford (2012) adds that in the case of the longitudinal study, the onus is on the researcher to maintain the rapport - through, for example, the sending of cards on special occasions - to keep participants engaged in the research. All this would have been outside the remit of this thesis, but future researchers may wish to take it into consideration (see **11.6**), keeping in mind Rutterford's (2012: 125) warning that "participants may modify their behaviour due to the effect of being studied."

Another issue emerged from the third survey sent to ask about the proposed model. In the previous surveys, library staff seemed fixated on equating foreign language stock issues with BME services, but in the third survey when the topic of community cohesion was brought up, staff were able to articulate thoughtful and valuable responses regarding the library's role in this (**10.6**), including mentioning

the library as a neutral venue even when none of the questions mentioned this at all.

This indicates that survey questions should be direct and clear about the issue being asked, and not too general (Bryman, 2008) though the present researcher still believes that staff automatically linking BME services to stock issues was an important piece of data as well - it shows that staff perhaps compartmentalise issues mentally, with stock and BME provision on the one hand, and community cohesion and the neutrality of the library on the other. Nonetheless, the data in the initial surveys led the present researcher to believe that perhaps staff were unaware of the library's role in community cohesion, and this points to an issue in the phrasing of the questions. On the surface, it did appear that the issue of BME services was a specific, targeted topic; however, it was the community cohesion aspect of the BME issue that was the key issue.

Given that the data was useful, a potential new survey could still have the same questions on empathy, training and cultural competency, but should also have additional questions linking all these themes together under the umbrella of community cohesion.

Finally, only two observations were undertaken for this thesis. Though the present researcher contacted 38 Diversity Training providers to request an observation (4.4), none were actually actively willing, and only managed to attend two due to contacts already in the field. This is understandable given the costs - reaching upward of £500 - charged per participant and so giving a place away for free would not be in their financial interests. Nonetheless, to provide a broader picture of the Diversity Training, further observations covering a variety of different Diversity Training types would be necessary.

11.5. Recommendations for Public Libraries

1) The library service needs to have a clearly defined strategy for empathy

This does not necessarily mean having an academic lecture describing empathy to staff. It can come about through the proposed training model whereby having regular contact with other communities will broaden staff perceptions so that they organically develop empathy without having to have it explained to them.

The *strategy* for empathy is tied to the *need* for empathy and though staff may be implicitly aware of it, the service has to be clear on the link between empathy and developing mutual cultural understanding which then goes a long way toward fulfilling the library's role in community cohesion, thus complying with Government recommendations on the issue.

2) The culture of the library service needs to go beyond language and stock issues

Meaning there has to be an understanding that BME services does not automatically equate to these issues but, again, instead to issues of cultural competency and cohesion. This could take part through the training model in the formal side of the training where it could be explained to staff what the point and purpose of the training is. It should also be reflected in the range and nature of the services libraries offer to BME communities. And again, as it cannot be emphasised enough, the potential role of the library as source of information and neutral meeting ground coupled with Government recommendations on community cohesion would help toward staff understanding.

Stock issues should not be ignored, however, as they do have their place. Stock selection should not be exclusively focussed on non-English works, though. With consultation and communication with BME communities - which again would come about through the cultural contact side of the proposed training model - English stock by BME authors and about BME communities could be chosen and promoted.

Without cultural competency and the potential for community cohesion the proposed training model will be seen as superfluous. It is to the library service's benefit that they change the ethos because, if successful, it would add value to the service as a whole which would then, in theory, make it less of a target for budget

cuts. This ethos has to go beyond *lip-service* to *actual* service - it is no longer acceptable to simply state the potential of the library's role or to state the potential of the library professionals to celebrate cultural diversity in wider society, it has to be practised, and the use of this model is a step, even if just the initial step, in order to provide a practical strategy to do so.

3) The library service needs to be aware of the broad nature of BME communities

This again could come about through the cultural contact aspect of the proposed training model. Libraries need to be aware that BME communities are not exclusively made up of first generation non-English speakers but now consist of second and third generation members with no language issues and who provide a unique fusion of cultures - both native and ethnic - who will have their own needs from the library. It is essential that the library canvass such people to find out exactly what those needs are.

4) The need for libraries to share best practice

If, as has been stated by staff from Authority B, that the proposed training model is similar to one they had had previously, then this needs to be shared with other authorities. Again, not only does it provide a unique service to the community but if the entirety of the library service nationwide is taking advantage of it, then any successes will be more visible, leading to the added value mentioned above.

5) The need to go beyond the superficial

Meaning here that cultural awareness needs to go beyond issues of food and clothes and into both the worldview of the community - which can only happen through empathy not sympathy - and into the issues these communities face in Britain today. The cultural contact aspect of the proposed training model aims to remedy this, but the contact itself has to be of a sufficient quality to go beyond trivialities and needs to be regular and informal. There will be a formal aspect to the training, too, in the form of a primer and some formal sessions which will give tips on things to avoid in order not to cause offence and some facts about the culture and community itself. It is hoped that the latter will be better fleshed out through the cultural contact.

6) To exploit available resources and work within the library's means

The main obstacle mentioned by the staff surveyed toward any new cultural competency initiative was the one of cost. This was to the point that Authority B staff stated that the training model that they had in place had been either scrapped or severely reduced due to budgetary concerns. The present researcher clearly believes that this issue has value for the library service and should be one of its priorities; however, it would not be presumptuous to state that the most authorities do not. The change in priorities will not come until the organisational culture toward this issue changes. If such a change does occur, then libraries should be wary about spending out on private sector diversity training offerings and should instead look at the resources available - and the best resource would be the BME communities themselves - and try, as the model proposes, to initiate things in-house.

7) To take heed of current research

Elliot (1999), Syed (2008), Winston (2008) and Vincent (2009a) all come to a similar conclusion - that a large segment of research on public library BME services has not been taken very seriously, and this has been the case from the 1960s to the present day. Many of the recommendations from this previous research have been crystallised in the form of this proposed model - namely, the need for staff retraining and necessity of constant consultation with BME communities.

Of course, in the context of this thesis, the best way to heed the research would be, at the very least, to consider piloting the proposed model depicted herein, to assess it, and offer recommendations to other libraries, or future researchers on how it can be changed, developed and ultimately utilised effectively. A practical strategy is offered here through this model, not mere lip-service that previous recommendations and statements from the profession may not have.

It is the present researcher's view that the research has not been heeded mainly due to the repeated point about the organisational culture of public libraries in their relation to BME services. Again, a change in the library ethos has to happen and, if it does so, there is plenty of research available for them to make an informed view on strategy and policy.

11.6. Recommendations for Further Research

1) Establish nationwide trends.

The validity of the conclusions in this thesis - such as the premise that the organisational culture of libraries toward BME communities is stock-based only - need to be tested by undertaking a thorough nationwide study. Since this thesis only draws from two library authorities, it would be unwise to claim that the conclusions can be indicative of a nationwide trend, despite the fact that the findings were similar with regard to staff from both those authorities. Establishing such a nationwide trend could further validate the proposed model, or could, alternatively, lead to it being modified as a result of new data.

2) Modification of the proposed model.

The present researcher asserts that the model has sound methodological underpinnings that draws on research such as the contact hypothesis and the cultural competency. Further, in-depth research needs to be undertaken in these two areas and the model modified as a result. The model is not being presented as the end-point of the issue of Diversity Training for libraries, but instead is intended as a springboard by which further discussion and research is stimulated.

3) Changing the agenda of the research.

As mentioned previously, much of the research in BME library provision has gone ignored. It would then appear to be prudent for researchers to present their findings in a manner appealing to public libraries, such as through a practical model as this one, or by emphasising the importance of such issues for the role of a library as a whole. With the public library service under such scrutiny here in 2014, researchers should aim to aid the service by showing how libraries have a positive and unifying role in society in general.

Researchers should not be tempted to follow the previous path of simply discussing stock issues - thus reinforcing what some libraries believe to be enough when dealing with BME communities - and should open up other areas for discussion. Cultural competency and empathy, though present in academic library literature, are still areas which need more in-depth research. The present researcher had to look at other disciplines - such as psychology and counselling - in order to find

anything relevant. Researchers should thus change the agenda of library research by bringing these issues further into the foreground.

Ideally, researchers could work together with public libraries to show how valuable the research is, and to ignore it would be a disservice both to their profession and the communities they serve - the community benefits of a successful cultural competency programme could be immense, and these successes will in turn reflect back on public libraries and will show present-day Britain that they still have a lot to offer.

11.7. Concluding Remarks

The research for this thesis has been conducted at a time when the public library service has come under a number of challenges, such as the threat of closure and the questioning of their very usefulness, and thus questioning their purpose and existence, making them an easy target for authority budget cuts (McMenemy, 2009; The Guardian, 2014).

There is an implicit understanding amongst the library staff canvassed herein that the service has a unique position in disseminating information and awareness about other cultures, and that the library itself is a free and neutral meeting ground that can be used to bring diverse people together. The understanding is there, but perhaps the execution is not. Moreover, it appears that the public and societal perception of libraries does not even extend this far, with libraries judged more on the number of books issued as opposed to their positive effect on their communities (McMenemy, (2007).

It is hoped that this thesis will inform the way in which academic and practitioner discussion of the public library service is framed. Media coverage often implies a lack of awareness of the potential contribution of the public library service to society, and the social justice agenda, but the findings of this research and the proposed diversity training model could contribute to the development of a culturally competent library staff, both informed and informing others, who can work together with the various BME communities living in Britain today with the aim of mutual understanding, empathy and community cohesion.

References

- Aberson, C. L., Shoemaker, C., & Tomolillo, C. (2004). "Implicit bias and contact: The role of interethnic friendships." *The Journal of social psychology*, **144** (3), 335-347.
- Al-Qallaf, C.L. & Mika, J.J. (2013). "The Role of Multiculturalism and Diversity in Library and Information Science: LIS Education and the Job Market." *Libri*, **63** (1), 1-20.
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Addison Wesley
- Amichai-Hamburger, Y., & McKenna, K.Y.A. (2006). "The Contact Hypothesis Reconsidered: Interacting via the Internet." *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*. **11** (3), 825-843.
- Angrosino, M.V & Mays de Perez, K.A. (2000). "Rethinking observation: From method to context." *In*: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds). *Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd edition)*, pp. 673-702. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Association of College and Research Libraries. (2012). "Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries 2012" *ACRL*. [Online]. <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/diversity> [Accessed 26 October 2014].
- Barrett-Lennard, G.T. (1981). "The Empathy Cycle: Refinement of a Nuclear Concept." *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, **28** (2), 91-100.
- Bell, J. (1993). *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide to First Time Researchers in Education and Social Science*. 2nd Edition. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Bennett, M. J. (1979). "Overcoming the golden rule: Sympathy and empathy." *In*: Bennett, M.J. (ed). *Basic concepts of intercultural communication: Selected readings*, pp191-214. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- Birdi, B. & Syed, M. (2011). "Exploring reader response to minority ethnic fiction." *Library Review*, **60** (9), 816-831.
- Black, A. (1996). *A New History of the Public Library: Social and Intellectual Contexts, 1850-1914*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

- Bloch, A. (2004). "Doing social surveys." *In*: Seale, C. ed. (2004) *Researching Society and Culture (2nd edition)*, pp. 163-178. London, England: Sage Publications
- Bramel, D. (2004). "The strange career of the contact hypothesis." *In*: Lee, Y-T., McCauley, C., Moghaddam, F. & Worchel, S. eds. (2004). *The psychology of ethnic and cultural conflict*, pp. 49-67. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Social Research Methods*. 4th Edition. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Buchheimer, A. (1963). "The Development of Ideas about Empathy." *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, **10** (1), 61-70.
- Buschman, J. (2003). *Dismantling the Public Sphere: Situating and Sustaining Librarianship in the Age of the New Public Philosophy*. Westport, CT, USA: Libraries Unlimited.
- Cho, J. & Trent, A. (2006). "Validity in qualitative research revisited." *Qualitative Research*, **6** (3), 319-340.
- Chowdhury, G., Poulter, A. & McMenemy, D. (2006). "Public Library 2.0: towards a new mission for public libraries as a "network of community knowledge". *Online Information Review*, **30** (4), 454-460.
- CILIP. (2013a). "Equal opportunities and diversity statement" *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals*. [Online].
<http://www.cilip.org.uk/cilip/how-cilip-works/equal-opportunities-and-diversity-statement> [Accessed 25 October 2014].
- CILIP. (2013b). "Community, Diversity and Equality Group - About Us" *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals*. [Online].
<http://www.cilip.org.uk/community-diversity-and-equality-group/community-diversity-and-equality-group-about-us> [Accessed 25 October 2014].
- Clark, K. (1980). "Empathy: A Neglected Topic in Psychological Research." *American Psychologist*, **35** (2), 187-190.
- Clements, P. & Jones, J. (2008). *The diversity training handbook: a practical guide to understanding and changing attitudes*. 3rd Edition. London, England: Kogan Page

- Commission on Integration and Cohesion. (2007). *Our Shared Future*. Wetherby, England: Commission on Integration and Cohesion.
- Coplan, A. (2011). "Will the real empathy please stand up? A case for a narrow conceptualization." *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, **49**, (s1), 40-65.
- Creswell, J.W & Miller, D.L. (2000). "Determining Validity in Qualitative Enquiry." *Theory into Practice*, **39** (3), 124-130.
- Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Dawson, M. (2004). "Diversity joins the mainstream at Guy's and St Thomas's." *Human Resource Management*, **12** (7), 15-17.
- Davies. M.B. (2007). *Doing a Successful Research Project*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (1999). *Libraries for All: Social Inclusion in Public Libraries*. London: Department for Culture, Media and Sport.
- DeWalt, K.M. & DeWalt, B.R. (2002). *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Eisenburg, N., Shea, C. L., Carlo, G. & Knight, G. P. (2014). "Empathy-related responding and cognition: A 'chicken and the egg' dilemma." In: Kurtines, W.M., Gerwartz, J. & Lamb, L. eds. (2014). *Handbook of Moral Behavior and Development. Volume 2: Research*, pp. 63-68. New York: NY: Psychology Press.
- Eisner, E. W. (1991). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Elliott, P. (1999). "Research into public libraries and ethnic minorities in the UK, from Clough and Quarmby to Roach and Morrison: a review article". *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, **31** (3), 174-177.

- Elliot, R., Bohart, A.C., Watson, J. C. & Greenburg, L.S. (2011). "Empathy." *Psychotherapy*, **48** (1), 43-49.
- Elturk, G. (2003). "Diversity and Cultural Competency." *Colorado Libraries*, **29** (4), 5-7.
- Falicov, C.J. (1995). "Training to think culturally: A multidimensional comparative framework". *Family Process*. **34** (4), 373-388.
- Fazio, R.H. (1990). "Multiple processes by which attitudes guide behavior: The MODE model as an integrative framework." In: Zanna. M.P. ed. (1990) *Advances in experimental social psychology, Volume. 23*, pp. 75–109. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Ferdman, B.M. & Brody, S.E. (1996). "Models of Diversity Training." In: Landis, D. & Bhagat, R.S. eds. (1996) *Handbook of intercultural training, 2nd Edition*, pp. 282-303. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Foster, C. & Harris, L. (2005). "Easy to say, difficult to do: diversity management in retail." *Human Resource Management Journal*, **15** (3), 4-17.
- Gillert, A. & Chuzischvili, G. (2004). "Dealing with Diversity: A Matter of Beliefs." *Industrial and Commercial Training*, **36** (4), 166-170.
- Gladstein, G.A. (1983). "Understanding Empathy: Integrating Counseling, Developmental and Social Psychology Perspectives." *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, **30** (4), 467-482.
- Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New Brunswick, USA: Aldine Transaction.
- Golafshani, N. (2003). "Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research." *The Qualitative Report*, **8** (4), 597-607.
- Gold, R. L. (1958). "Roles in sociological field observations." *Social Forces*, **36** (3), 217-223.
- Gorman, G.E. & Clayton, P. (1997). *Qualitative Research for the Information Professional: A Practical Handbook*. London, England: Library Association Publishing.

- Gose, B. (2006). "The Rise of the Chief Diversity Officer." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, **53** (6), B1-B5.
- Guardian, The. (2014). "The Guardian view on the loss of public libraries" *The Guardian*. [Online], 14th August.
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/aug/25/guardian-view-loss-public-libraries> [Accessed 25 October 2014]
- Gulshue, G.V. (1993). "Cultural-Identity Development and family assessment: An interaction model." *The Counseling Psychologist*, **21** (3), 487-513.
- Gunaratnam, Y. (2003). *Researching 'Race' and Ethnicity: Methods, Knowledge and Power*. London, England: Sage.
- Halperin, E., Crisp, R. J., Husnu, S., Trzesniewski, K. H., Dweck, C. S., & Gross, J. J. (2012). "Promoting intergroup contact by changing beliefs: Group malleability, intergroup anxiety, and contact motivation." *Emotion*, **12** (6), 1192-1195.
- Hussein, A. (2009). "The use of Triangulation in Social Sciences Research: Can qualitative and quantitative methods be combined?" *Journal of Comparative Social Work* [Online], **2009** (1), 1-12.
http://jcs.w.no/local/media/jcs.w/docs/jcs.w_issue_2009_1_8_article.pdf [Accessed 27 October 2014].
- Irvine, A. (2011). "Duration, Dominance and Depth in Telephone and Face-to-Face Interviews: A Comparative Exploration." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, **10** (3), 202-220.
- Johnson, A. (2007). "Unintended Consequences: How Science Professors Discourage Women of Color." *Science Education*, **91** (5), 805-821.
- Johnson, R.B., & Onwuegbuzie, A.J. (2004). "Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come." *Educational Researcher*, **33** (7), 14-26.
- Krebs, D. (1975). "Empathy and Altruism." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **32** (6), 1134-1146.
- Kreitz, P.A. (2008). "Best Practices for Managing Organizational Diversity." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, **34** (2), 101-120.

- Lai, Y. & Kleiner, B.H. (2001). "How to Conduct Diversity Training Effectively." *Equal Opportunities International*, **20** (5/6/7), 14-18.
- Lazzaro, A.E., Mills, S., Garrard, T., Ferguson, E., Watson, M. & Ellenwood, D. (2014). "Cultural Competency on Campus: Applying ACRL's Diversity Standards." *College and Research Libraries News*, **75** (6), 332-335.
- Library and Information Commission. (2000). *Libraries: The Essence of Inclusion*. London, England: Library and Information Commission.
- Listwon, A. & Sen, B. (2009). "Public library services and the Polish community in England: case study." *Library Review*, **58** (4), 290-300.
- Loo, R. (1999). "A structured exercise for stimulating cross-cultural sensitivity." *Career Development International*, **4** (6), 321-324.
- McCauley, C., Wright, M. & Harris, M.E. (2000). "Diversity Workshops on Campus: A Survey of Current Practice at US Colleges and Universities." *The College Student Journal*, **34** (1), 100-114.
- McDougall, A. (2005). "Diversity in the Spotlight." *Industrial and Commercial Training*, **37** (5), 240-243.
- McMenemy, D. (2007). "What is the true value of a public library?" *Library Review*, **56** (4), 273 -277
- McMenemy, D. (2009). "Public library closures in England: the need to Act?: EDITORIAL." *Library Review*, **58** (8), 557 - 560.
- Madera, J.M., Neal, J.A., & Dawson, M. (2011). "A Strategy for Diversity Training: Focusing on Empathy in the Workplace." *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, **35** (4), 469-487.
- Magdaleno, G. & Kleiner, B.H. (1996). "Global Trends in Managing Cultural Diversity." *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, **3** (3), 31-36.
- Matthews, N. & Roper, V. (1994). "Section 11 Funding: Its Changes and Implications for Library Provision for Ethnic Minority Communities." *Library Management*, **15** (3), 5-13.
- Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

- Mestre, L. (2010). "Librarians Working with Diverse Populations: What Impact Does Cultural Competency Training Have on Their Efforts?" *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, **36** (6), 479-88.
- Montiel-Overall, P. (2009). "Cultural Competence: A Conceptual Framework for Library and Information Professionals." *Library Quarterly*, **79** (2), 175-204.
- Muddiman, D., Durrani, S., Dutch, M., Linley, R., Pateman, J. & Vincent, J. (2000). *Open to All? The Public Library and Social Exclusion. Volume One, Overview and Conclusions*. Wetherby, England: Resource.
- Mullings, C. (1984). *Crus Guide: 7. Observation*. Sheffield, England: Centre for Research on User Studies.
- Nordgren, L.F., Banas, K. & MacDonald, G. (2011). "Empathy Gaps for Social Pain: Why People Underestimate the Pain of Social Suffering." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **100** (1), 120-128.
- Norman, A. (2006). *CILIP Membership by Ethnic Origin*. London: Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.
- Office for National Statistics. (2012a). "Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales 2011" *Office for National Statistics*. [Online]. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt-ethnicity.html> [Accessed 25 October 2014].
- Office for National Statistics. (2012b). "2011 Census: KS201EW Ethnic group, local authorities in England and Wales" *Office for National Statistics*. [Online]. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rft-table-ks201ew.xls> [Accessed 25 October 2014].
- Paluck, E. L. (2006). "Diversity Training and Intergroup Research: A Call to Action Research." *Journal of Social Issues*, **62** (3), 577-595.
- Pelligra, V. (2011). "Empathy, Guilt-Aversion, and Patterns of Reciprocity." *Journal of Neuroscience, Psychology and Economics*, **4** (3), 161-173.
- Pendry, L.F., Driscoll, D.M. & Field, S.C.T. (2007). "Diversity Training: Putting Theory into Practice." *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, **80** (1), 27-50.

- Perry, M.A. (1975). "Modeling and Instructions in Training for Counselor Empathy." *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, **22** (3), 173-179.
- Pettigrew, T.F. (1998). "Intergroup contact theory." *Annual review of psychology*. **49** (1), 65-85.
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2005). "Allport's Intergroup Contact Hypothesis: Its History and Influence." *In*: Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. eds. (2005) *On the nature of prejudice: Fifty Years After Allport*, pp. 262-277. Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). "A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. **90** (5), 751–783.
- Pettigrew, T.F., Tropp, L.R., Wagner, U. & Christ, O. (2011) "Recent advances in intergroup contact theory." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. **35** (3), 271-280.
- Phellas, N.P., Bloch, A. & Seale, C. (2012). "Structured Methods: Interviews, Questionnaires and Observation." *In*: Seale, C. ed. (2012). *Researching Society and Culture (3rd edition)*, pp. 181-244. London, England: Sage Publications
- Phomphakdy, R. & Kleiner, B.H. (1999). "How to Eliminate Discrimination in the Workplace." *Equal Opportunities International*, **18** (2, 3, 4), 43-46.
- Pittinsky, T.L., Rosenthal, S.A., & Montoya, R.M. (2011). "Liking Is Not the Opposite of Disliking: The Functional Separability of Positive and Negative Attitudes Toward Minority Groups." *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, **17** (2), 134-143.
- Press, N.O. & Diggs-Hobson, M. (2005). "Providing Health Information to Community Members Where They Are: Characteristics of the Culturally Competent Librarian." *Library Trends*. **53** (3), 397–410.
- Reed, G. (2014). "The Antithetical Meaning of the Term 'Empathy' in Psychoanalytic Discourse." *In*: Lichtenberg, J.D., Bornstein, M. & Silver, D. eds. (2013) *Empathy I*, pp. 7-24. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Riccucci, N.M. (1997). "Cultural Diversity Programs to Prepare for Work Force 2000: What's Gone Wrong?" *Public Personnel Management*, **26** (1), 35-41.

- Riesch, C. & Kleiner, B.H. (2005). "Discrimination Towards Customers in the Restaurant Industry." *Equal Opportunities International*, **24** (7/8), 29-37.
- Roach, P. & Morrison, M. (1999). "Pursuing the wind of change: Public library services in a multicultural Britain." *Asian Libraries*, **8** (4), 112-117.
- Rogers, S. (2011). "The ethnic population of England and Wales broken down by local authority." *The Guardian*. [Online], 18 May.
<http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2011/may/18/ethnic-population-england-wales> [Accessed 25 October 2014]
- Rutterford, C. (2012). "Research Design." Seale, C. ed. (2012). *Researching Society and Culture (3rd edition)*, pp. 118-133. London, England: Sage Publications
- Ryan, G.W. & Bernard, H.R. (2003). "Techniques to Identify Themes." *Field Methods*, **15** (1), 85-109.
- Sanger, J. (2003). *The Compleat Observer? A field research guide to observation (Qualitative Studies Series 2)*. London, England: The Falmer Press.
- Santos, J.R.A., Mitchell, D. & Pope, P. (1999). "Are Open-Ended Questions Tying You in Knots?" *Journal of Extension*. [Online]. **37** (4).
<http://www.joe.org/joe/1999august/iw2.html> [Accessed 24 October 2014].
- Seale, C. (2004). *Researching Society and Culture*. 2nd edition. London, England: Sage Publications
- Seale, C. (2012). *Researching Society and Culture*. 3rd edition. London, England: Sage Publications
- Schensun, S., Schensul, J. & LeCompte, M.D. (1999). *Essential Ethnographic Methods: Observations, Interviews and Questionnaires (Ethnographer's Toolkit, Volume 2)*. California, USA: AltaMira Press.
- Schmidt, P. (2004). "An approach to diversity training in Canada." *Industrial and Commercial Training*, **36** (4), 148-152.
- Shook, N. & Fazio, R.H. (2008). "Interracial Roommate Relationships: An Experimental Field Test of the Contact Hypothesis." *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, **11** (4), 425-437.

- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. London, England: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2010). *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. 3rd Edition. London, England: Sage.
- Söderholm, J. & Nolin, J. (2014). *Collections Redux: The Public Library as a Place of Community Borrowing* [Online]. [http://www.hb.se/PageFiles/63009/Söderholm and Nolin - Collections redux.pdf](http://www.hb.se/PageFiles/63009/Söderholm%20and%20Nolin%20-%20Collections%20redux.pdf)[Accessed 13 April 2015].
- Soni, V. (2000). "A Twenty-First Century Reception for Diversity in the Public Sector: A Case Study." *Public Administration Review*, **60** (5), 395-348.
- Stephan, W.G., & Finlay, K. (1999). "The Role of Empathy in Improving Intergroup Relations." *Journal of Social Issues*, **55** (4), 729-743.
- Sue, D.W. & Sue, D. (1990). *Counselling the Culturally Different: Theory and Practice*. 2nd edition. New York, USA: John Wiley.
- Swanson, D.R. (2002). "Diversity programs: attitudes and realities in the contemporary corporate environment." *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, **7** (4), 257-268.
- Syed, M. (2008). *Recognition & Empathy: The portrayal of the British-Indian Community in English language fiction, and library selection & promotion of such fiction*. MA, University of Sheffield.
- Teddle, C. & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Thomas, G. & James, D. (2006). "Re-inventing grounded theory: some questions about theory, ground and discovery". *British Educational Research Journal*, **32** (6), 767-795.
- Toi, M. & Batson, C.D. (1982). "More Evidence that Empathy is a Source of Altruistic Motivation." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **43** (2), 281-292.

Tso, H.M. (2007). *Social inclusion and public libraries: is the ability to empathise an essential attribute for community librarians to better serve their ethnic minority users?* MA, University of Sheffield.

Usherwood, B. (2007). *Equity and Excellence in the Public Library: Why Ignorance is Not Our Heritage*. Hampshire, England: Ashgate.

Vincent, J. (2009a). "Public library provision for Black and minority ethnic communities - where are we in 2009?" *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, **41** (3), 137-147.

Vincent, J. (2009b) "Inclusion: Training to tackle Social Exclusion" In: Brine, A. ed. (2009) *Handbook of Library Training Practice and Development (Volume 3)*, pp. 123- 146. Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Von Bergen, C.W, Soper, B, & Foster, T. (2002). "Unintended Negative Effects of Diversity Management." *Public Personnel Management*, **31** (2), 239-251.

Wentling, R.M & Palma-Rivers, N (1999) "Components of Effective Diversity Training Programmes" *International Journal of Training and Development*, **3** (3), 215-226.

Williams, D.A. & Wade-Golden, K.C. (2006). *What is a Chief Diversity Officer?* [Online].
http://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/diversity/docs/What_is_a_Chief_Diversity_Officer.pdf [Accessed 23 October 2014]

Wilson, K. & Birdi, B. (2008). *The right man for the job? The role of empathy in community librarianship*. Research Project, University of Sheffield.

Winston, M. (2008). "Diversity: the research and lack of progress." *New Library World*, **109** (3/4), 130-149.

Appendix 1

Telephone Interview Questions:

- 1) How are you personally involved in Diversity Training?
- 2) How important are the following for local councils:
 - a) Diversity Training?
 - b) Empathy?
- 3) Could you describe the training you commission?
- 4) How is the training evaluated?
- 5) Would do you think would make the ideal Diversity Training programme?
- 6) What are the barriers towards this ideal programme?

Appendix 2

Information Sheet

University of Sheffield

Information School

Research Project: **How effective is diversity training for public libraries in producing empathic culturally-competent staff?**

- You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Feel free to ask any questions if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

The Project

Public libraries are envisioned to have a unique and neutral part to play in mainstream affairs independent from potential bias and sensationalism from the media, thus sharing ideas steered by the local community (Library and Information Commission, 2000). In order to be able to serve the local community properly, employees should be able to interact with the various cultures that make up modern Britain in a forward-thinking and culturally sensitive manner.

As such, diversity training is an essential part of a librarian's training process, and one that - apparently - has been quite neglected. The purpose of this project, then, is to redress that imbalance, by developing a diversity training model tailored to the needs of public libraries, one that focuses on cultural appreciation and awareness as well as equipping library employees with anti-discrimination knowledge and skills. This is a skill-set known as cultural competency.

This project's context for this type of training is one that focuses on an appreciation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. The research is intended to last over three years, from September 2010 to September 2013.

Your Participation

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and you can still withdraw at any time without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to in any way. You do not have to give a reason.

Questionnaires will be undertaken completely anonymously, and participant names and locations will not be recorded or disclosed in any analysis of answers given therein.

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will help libraries and library staff contribute to multicultural Britain by developing competencies that will dispel negative stereotypes and create better cultural understanding and appreciation.

If the project should end earlier than expected then you will be notified and all data that you provided will be destroyed unless you make an explicit request to access it yourself. If you have a complaint about any aspect of your participation then please contact in the first instance my supervisor whose contact details are provided below. If you do not feel your complaint has been handled to your satisfaction, then please contact Philip Harvey, the University's Registrar and Secretary at: registrar@sheffield.ac.uk.

All information collected will be kept strictly confidential and will remain password-protected. Participants can ask for access to any information related to their involvement at any point during the research and can ask for the information to be destroyed if they wish. Participants will not be identified in any reports or publications, unless they have given their explicit and written permission. Only the researcher and his supervisor will have access to any data gathered.

As the project is interested in canvassing personal views with regards to diversity and diversity training, all that is required from you to achieve the project's objectives are your personal opinions on the subject.

It is hoped that the results of this research will be consolidated in the form of a PhD thesis which should be available for you to access from the University some time after September 2013.

The Information School at the University of Sheffield has ethically approved this project. Once again, if you have any complaints regarding any matter in which you or the information you provide has been handled please contact the supervisor (s) for this project:

Briony Birdi

Email:

My contact information is:

Mostafa Syed

Tel:

email:

Thank you for taking part!

Appendix 3

Pilot Questionnaire



Information
School

This is a short questionnaire for a research project designed to help public library staff gain confidence and cultural awareness – with a focus on cultural empathy - in interacting with people from a Black and Minority Ethnic background.

1) How would you personally define empathy, especially in the context of serving and understanding people from different cultures?

2) On a scale of 1-5, where 5 is the most important, how would you rate the importance of empathy for library staff in serving and understanding people from different cultures?

1 2 3 4 5

3) On a scale of 1-5, where 5 is very high, how empathic do you believe the public library service is toward BME communities?

1 2 3 4 5

4) Cultural competency is the ability to be able to understand, communicate and interact with people from different cultures in a confident manner.

On a scale of 1-5, where 5 is very well, how would you rate your own personal cultural competency?

1 2 3 4 5

5) Have you ever received training that helped you better understand the cultures of others? This training may have been referred to as ‘Diversity Training’ or Cultural Awareness Training.’

YES NO

If **YES**, go to questions 6 -9.

If **NO**, go to question 10.

6) Please describe briefly what this training entailed and whether or not it helped you with your job.

7) Did this training include any element that helped you gain empathy for people from different cultures?

8) How often did you receive this training?

9) Do you believe that it had a long-term effect on how you performed in the workplace? Please give reasons for your answer.

10) Please describe whether you would like such training, and what you would expect to gain from it?

Appendix 4

Case Study Staff Survey (adapted into Toluna Quick Surveys online)



This is a short questionnaire for a research project designed to help public library staff gain confidence and cultural awareness – with a focus on cultural empathy - in interacting with people from a Black and Minority Ethnic background. Please complete the questionnaire in this Word document using the expandable text boxes below then return to me at lip10ms@shef.ac.uk.

Your sector:

Public Libraries

Academic Libraries

Private Sector/ Workplace Libraries

1) How would you personally define empathy, especially in the context of providing a service for people from different cultures?

2) How important is empathy for library staff in serving and understanding people from different cultures? Please explain your answer.

3) How empathic do you believe the library service is toward BME communities? Please explain your answer.

4) Cultural competency is the ability to be able to understand, communicate and interact with people from different cultures in a confident manner.

a) On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your own personal cultural competency in the context of serving library users?

1. Very weak 2. Poor 3. Average 4. Good 5. Excellent

b) If applicable, please give at least one example of how you used such a skill or competency in your workplace.

5) How do you think public libraries could develop and implement cultural competency?

6) What obstacles (if any) do you think could hinder the implementation of a cultural competency skillset in the workplace?

7) Have you ever received training that was intended to help you better understand the cultures of others? This training may have been referred to as ‘Diversity Training’ or Cultural Awareness Training.’

YES NO

If **NO**, go to question 8.

If **YES**, go to questions 9-12.

8) Please describe whether you would like such training, and what you would expect to gain from it?

Thank you for your participation!

9) Please describe briefly what this training entailed.

10) Did this training include any element that helped you gain empathy for people from different cultures?

11) How often did you receive this training and how long was each individual training session?

12) Do you believe that it had a long-term effect on how you performed in the workplace? Please give reasons for your answer.

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix 5

Case Study User Survey Questions

This is a short questionnaire for a PhD project at the University of Sheffield researching public library services for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. Please could you complete the survey and either return it to myself or the staff before the end of your visit.

Thank you for your time and co-operation.

1) In your opinion, do public libraries have a role to provide specific services to Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) communities? These might be, for example, providing books and information in non-English languages, or organising and promoting cultural events.

2) Which of these services are you aware of in your local library?

3) How would you rate these services, on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent?

4) Are there any particular services (that are not currently offered) you think your local library should provide to BME communities?

5) a) Which ethnic culture do you belong to?

b) Do you believe that your local library has a good understanding of your own particular culture?

Appendix 6

Staff Survey Questions on the Proposed Cultural Competency Training Model (uploaded on Toluna Quick Surveys)

Q1 Having looked at each stage of the model, do you think that it could be a useful tool to develop cultural understanding for staff? Please explain your answer.

Q2 The training model is based on the premise that libraries have a role in developing social integration and community cohesion by having understanding of other cultures. Do you agree with this premise? If yes, please explain why. And if no, please explain why.

Q3 Would you be interested in taking part in the training this model describes? If yes, please explain which aspects interest you. If no, please explain why not.

Q4 The model is multi-tiered. Do you think each level should be for all staff, or do you think individual levels would be more suitable for particular staff? Which level(s) would you personally like to participate in?

Q5 The model includes designing a brief A4 primer with information with a particular culture in the library's local area. What sort of information would you like to see in this primer?

Q6 Considering the model as a whole, what positives could you see from such an initiative?

Q7 What negatives or obstacles could you see against it?

Q8 Is there anything that you would like to see added to this model in order to improve it or to meet the needs of the library?